



PRACTICAL FAMILY LIVING, INC.
 P.O. BOX 1676
 APPLETON, WI 54912
*Located in Kenwood Center
 off Midway Road in Menasha, WI*

NONPROFIT
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Appleton, WI
 Permit No. 94

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

For more resources, visit our website at

www.pfl.org

We Appreciate You!



Encouraging and Strengthening the Family

UPCOMING CLASSES!

Putting Fear in its Place by Brenda Spina, M.S., LMFT, LPC
Overcoming fears that feed unhealthy behavior.
 Monday evenings, January 26 - February 16, 2015

Cultivate Your Marriage: Couples Intensive
 by Christine Vander Wielen, M.S.W., LCSW
Marriage can be wonderfully fulfilling. Learn ways to cultivate and enhance your marriage
 Thursday, February 5 and February 12, 2015

Spouses of the Sex Addicted
 by Carrissa Pannuzzo, M.A., LMFT-T, LPC-T
A therapy group to inform, support, and help heal spouses experiencing the betrayal of sexual addiction in marriage.
 Thursdays, January 22 through March 12, 2015

Ways to donate:

- Stop in at Practical Family Living, Inc., 1476 Kenwood Dr., Menasha, WI 54952
- Send your donation to Practical Family Living, P.O. Box 1676, Appleton, WI 54912
- Phone 920-720-8920 to call in a credit card donation.
- Go to our website at www.pfl.org to donate online.

Practical Family Living is supported by you. If you have felt this ministry has helped you, then please help others to hear our message by giving your tax deductible donation. Thank you!



Vol 21 / Issue 5
 December/January 2015

Skills and Hope

Practical Family Living is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing affordable healthy relationship principles to the public.

Radio Log

BROADCAST WEEKDAYS

12:45 pm
 91.5 FM – WEMY (Green Bay)

12:45 pm
 91.9 FM – WEMI (Appleton)
 101.7 (Fond du Lac, Ripon)

8:30 am
 1330 AM – WVHI (Evansville, IN; Kentucky; Ohio; Illinois)

7:30 pm
 Shortwave Dial 7.490 and 13.595 (Florida)

Program Themes

December 2014
 Grief at Christmas
 Why Men Pull Away
 Family Conflict and the Holidays
 God Fathers Us
 Boundaries
 A Look at Greed
 Be Still and Know

January 2015
 Stress and the Brain
 Realistic Expectations for Stepfamilies
 An Audience of One
 Healthy View of Self
 Healthy and Unhealthy Shame
 Don't Argue with a Woman as You Would a Man
 Put an End to Bullying
 A Child Faces Divorce

**For excellent therapy call:
 920-720-8872**

www.pfl.org



PRACTICAL *family* LIVING NEWS

The Home Place

By Lynda Savage, M.S., LMFT, LPC

Here in Wisconsin a sense of home is often connected to where ancestors settled a farm. Many know of the routine on a cold December evening getting chores done in the barn, then coming in to eat in a warm house, and settling before bedtime. In our minds, we all probably have a sense of the early years in our own lives when adults in our family came in from the outside, ate, and settled down for the evening. For those of us whose forebearers actually farmed the land from untilled fields and woods, we call that place of our ancestors “the home place.”

We all have a home place of some sort; a place in reality or in our mind where we go to sit in front of a figurative warm comforting fire of contentment. When we can't get to our “home place” we experience a yearning for it. That is, to be settled, to find the missing piece, to have completed that which feels lost somehow.

Last evening while texting a friend and thinking about writing for this newsletter, I asked her: What impressed you to start getting serious about Jesus? She replied: “I am an only child. It made an impression on me at a bible study that he is my brother. Didn't feel alone anymore.”

People don't feel alone in the home place where Jesus is. The deepest longing we have can be said to be from our ‘private room’ so to speak. The room we have kept hidden

for so many reasons. The door to that room is one you can safely and securely open to Jesus. He is gentle and already knows what is in that room. Jesus is gentle love, wanting to be home with you, even knowing all about you. “... I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” (Rev. 3:20) What yearning might you have for being securely at rest and peace? Invite Jesus into your ‘room.’ Jesus is gentle to surely lead you to your home place with Him.



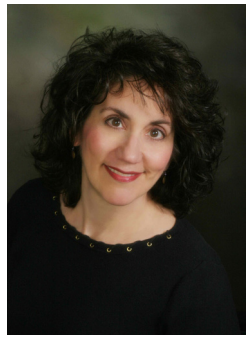
*Be sure to go to
PFL.org for informative
 and healing articles,
 podcasts like these, and so
 much more!*

AN INSIDE LOOK...

The We/They Mentality (Brenda Spina)	2
Positive Impact by Positive Thought (Christine Vander Wielen).	2
Fight for Your Right (Carrissa Pannuzzo)	3
Upcoming Classes	4

The We/They Mentality

By Brenda Spina, M.S., LMFT, LPC



Evangelism is one of those things that is not naturally comfortable for me. Going door to door once as a teenager, my comfort level grew a little as I interacted with strangers. The memory imprinted on me is when the young woman I was with offered to help a woman with her groceries. The woman invited her in and they spoke of God's salvation.

I do not remember if the woman accepted Jesus, however, she did express a renewal of hope. This event revealed how I thought of those who seemingly did not believe the way I did. My uncomfortable feelings were quite selfish. My predetermined mindset was based on looks as to how a person may respond or if they were "worth" hearing about the love of God.

This was a we/they mentality. This mentality can be difficult to discern. Now, hopefully older and wiser, I believe we all tend to do this. That is, see our way as better, our church as the "right" church, our behavior as more godly than those around us, elevate our own thinking above another, see those less fortunate in life as somehow less than us, and being on the "in" crowd as a sign of greater spirituality.

This mentality is destructive. Although perhaps temporarily necessary in something like sports, the we/they mentality undermines the inclusive nature of God's grace and mercy. He died on the cross extending His grace and mercy to all if they but receive it. Even though we may not understand, all peoples are created by and loved equally before the Lord. This truth is a

Positive Impact by Positive Thoughts

Our Brain Chemistry

By Christine Vander Wielen, M.S.W., LCSW

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." Psalm 139:14

Several years ago, a major university conducted a study to determine if there was a difference between boys and girls. The researchers confirmed what is intuitively and experientially known; boys and girls are different. Not only are we different as genders, but we are also different as individuals.

King David, the writer of Psalm 139, informs us that we were fearfully and wonderfully made. The Lord created us uniquely and specially for His purpose and glory. Our fingerprints, footprints and even voiceprints

Life is a team effort. We are all standing on someone else's shoulders. Each of us is somebody to God. Brenda Spina

much needed mindset for families and churches to function loving manner.

Paul in his discourse to the Jews in Acts 13 states, "Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles." (NIV) The Jews in leadership nurtured the we/they mentality to the point in which they became prideful, arrogant, and unwilling to be corrected or taught. When anyone entertains the we/they type of mentality (unknowingly at times), those around them feel shamed, humiliated and like they do not belong. No wonder people dislike Christians who think this way.

Are there ways to avoid this mentality: A testimony of God's love having eternal consequence for the hearer? Yes! Here are some things to consider as you come before the Lord:

- Do you respond with curiosity to those who think differently than you about God?
- Are you willing to discover how they came to those assumptions?
- How might your compassion and respect pave the way for the person opposite you to experience God's love?
- If God asks you to help someone in some practical way, would you do it?

Responding with curiosity, compassion and respect does not mean you agree. It means you respect their experience. Seeing people as created by and loved equally by God is one way to reveal the heart of God. You can still speak the truth of His salvation. God's grace, mercy and salvation is for ALL. Not just those we deem worthy to receive it.

are like no other person's. We each have a unique biology, physiology and even psychology. Furthermore, we each have our own thought patterns.

Our thoughts are now known to literally reside in our brains and actually take on physical forms. These forms called neurons resemble trees. Positive thoughts are full with many branches, places of connection, and patterns. However, negative thoughts take on a form that is similar to a withered tree. One thought can set off another and another in what



is called a "cascade effect." One negative thought can easily lead to another and another unless we consciously work to stop it.

What happens when we have negative thoughts, and hang on to anger, frustration, disappointment, fear or hurt? According to neuropsychologist Dr. Caroline Leaf, each thought we have creates a chemical reaction. When we experience love, joy, happiness, peace and passion, chemicals flood our brain that increases our ability to feel these positive emotions. However, when we experience the negative emotions, an abundance of the same chemicals flood our brain and we become over loaded. Dr. Leaf calls this overload "chemical chaos." If this chemical chaos occurs too often, it can result in inflammation of the brain.

Our thoughts are built by our minds, wills and emotions. Negative thoughts can adversely affect our health if left unchecked. Scientists now estimate that 87% - 95% of illnesses come directly from our thought life, regardless if the illness is mental, emotional or

Fight for Your Right

By Carrissa Pannuzzo, M.A., LMFT-T, LPC-T



...to party! If you grew up in the 90's you may remember this song. It's about a teenager who, instead of fulfilling his school and home responsibilities, would rather party. He is raging against the consequences that follow his behaviors.

If you are a parent, you have had to deal with children fighting against reality. (Yes, your body really does need sleep. Or, no you cannot play video games for hours on end without becoming a vegetable.) This experience is probably quite familiar and you may or may not have set down the appropriate boundaries and consequences with your own children.

But what about the rest of life? Even if you don't have children, you have likely come across people who rage against boundaries. Boundaries are property lines. What belongs to me? To you? Things like thoughts, feelings, actions, choices, attitudes, etc. It's not uncommon to have confusion about what belongs on your property. It's a marker of what you will allow and will not allow, what is important to you and what is not.

And to take that even further, what happens when others are confused about boundaries and actively try to overtake yours? Typically the resistance encountered from boundary breakers consists of: angry reactions, guilt messages, physical resistance, and several others. The book *Boundaries* by Drs. Cloud & Townsend speaks directly to these reactions and others.

When someone responds to your boundaries with

physical. With age, our brains can grow and thicken, therefore increasing the surface area. This increase allows for more processes and connections to take place.

In His infinite mercy, God created our brains to be changeable and moldable. This change is evident in our thought life also. Romans 12:2a tells us "do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." With the Lord's help, our minds can be renewed. In Philippians 4:8, Paul teaches us "finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

Sources:

Leaf, Caroline. "Dr. Caroline Leaf." Dr. Caroline Leaf. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Nov. 2014

Leaf, Caroline. "Dr. Caroline Leaf How to Rewire Your Brain." Google. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Nov. 2014.

Leaf, Caroline. Who Switched Off My Brain?:

It's a false assumption to believe that: "If you loved me, you'd know how I feel."

anger this person is displaying a character problem. This person lacks self-control so he or she tries to exert "other-control". When the "other" does not bow to that control the boundary breaker gets angry.

The neat thing about boundary development is that, as you develop healthy boundaries, you do not have to take that other person's anger on yourself. You can respond with, "It appears that you are angry because I choose to ..."; "It's hard for you when I have other things to do, isn't it?", or "I realize this is disappointing to you. I would be willing to help by (doing something)." In these responses you're empathizing with their upset but you're making it clear that it's their upset. In other words it's their feeling and their choice to feel that way. (If the person is physically threatening in their anger, be sure to create distance.)

You can use this same tactic with those who try to make you feel guilty for making a choice that they do not like. ("I can see that this is frustrating for you. I'm sorry you're having a hard time with it.") Recognize that guilt is not used for your good, but to manipulate and control and it only works if you let it. If a guilt message works on you, it was your choice to allow it to work. Take control back by deciding in your heart what you are willing to give (2 Corinthians 9:7) and give whatever it is with cheerfulness and not out of guilt.

Developing boundaries can be a tough road – but it's worth it! For more help with boundaries, check out the book referenced above or call the Center for Family Healing in Menasha, WI to schedule an appointment or inquire about Boundaries therapy groups.