



Perspectives

From Southwestern Pennsylvania's
oldest interfaith counseling agency

For information and appointments
412-661-1239
1-877-661-9623, ext. 16

Summer 2011 Volume 4, Issue 1

FRIENDS OF PPI

A Word from the Executive Director Randall Hoedeman, Ph.D.

For more than 45 years, the Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute (PPI) has responded effectively to our region's mental-health needs through a variety of professional services including: individual, marital, and family therapy; psychiatric consultation; career assessment; consultation and training for clergy and congregations; and continuing education for mental-health professionals.

PPI exists to enhance the health of individuals, families, and communities through an interfaith ministry of counseling and education that integrates the resources of faith and the behavioral sciences. At the heart of our mission is our commitment to serving, and helping to integrate, the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—in all of our programs and services. In the process, we seek to build on the strengths and resilience of our clients to improve their overall health, wellness, and quality of life.

This mission focus is one core value that will never change. At the same time, I am pleased to inform you of an organizational change that is on the horizon. Winston Churchill once said that there is nothing wrong with change—so long as it is in the right direction. In that spirit, we will be forming an auxiliary association for fundraising and development called **Friends of PPI**. Participation in this new and innovative group is open to all past and/or future donors who would also like to support PPI's outreach and mission with their time, energy, and creative ideas, in addition to their generous and faithful

financial donations! More information about the group will be shared at a Wine Mixer set for December 1. Save the date and look for upcoming information!

Our remarkable growth this past decade has brought with it an increasing number of clients who desire and can benefit from our services but cannot afford our full fee. Cutbacks in state and county funding have exacerbated the problem. More than ever, we need Friends of PPI to help us fulfill our commitment to helping as many of these clients as possible.

Becoming a Friend of PPI will enable you to fulfill your passion to serve and will help us to better fulfill our mission to clients in need. It will also give you an important seat at our organizational table as you share your time, energy, and creative ideas with representatives from the PPI board and staff. This is a great opportunity for you to accompany and shape our journey into the future, and to have a direct hand in our remarkable impact on our region. If you are interested in learning more, please contact me at 412-661-1239, ext. 14 or randy@ppi-online.org.

friends of
PPI

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Randall Hoedeman, Ph.D.

MINISTERIAL ETHICS WORKSHOP FOR PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY

At the invitation of Vera White of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, PPI was asked to develop and present an all day ethical training workshop for pastors new to the Pittsburgh Presbytery. This invitation was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen PPI's connections with the Pittsburgh Presbytery in our position as a validated mission agency of the Presbytery. The two PPI presenters at this event in March 2011 were Joanne Bassilios, M.Div., LCSW and Jean Kolbe, LCSW. Jean and Joanne were able to build on a solid foundation for the workshop established by Hetz and Barbara Marsh, who previously were long-term presenters for the training.

The purpose of the workshop was to explore appropriate ministerial relationships in the role of pastor. Topics covered included a review of ethical standards of conduct, boundary setting, confidentiality, sexual conduct, addiction markers, healthy self-care, financial dilemmas, copy-right guidelines, and developing support systems. Case studies and discussion groups to apply ethical decision making were a stimulating way to explore the differing ideas about how to respond in challenging situations.

If you are interested in a workshop on any of these topics for your organization, please contact Joanne Bassilios at 412-661-1239, ext. 43.



To obtain the official registration and financial information for PPI, call the Pennsylvania Department of State, toll-free within Pennsylvania at 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

SAVE THE DATES!

SECOND ANNUAL PPI GOLF OUTING

Edgewood Country Club
Thursday, September 15, 2011
<http://ppi.ennect.com/events/2011golfouting>



WINE MIXER FRIENDS OF PPI

Thursday, December 1, 2011
Details TBD



WELCOME BACK TO DR. SARI!

We are pleased to announce that as of July 1, 2011, Dr. Colleen Sari will be returning to PPI as one of our consulting psychiatrists. Dr. Sari previously worked at PPI, then for the past several years has been very involved through serving on the Board of Directors. Dr. Sari will see clients three days a week, and is board certified to see children, adolescents, and adults. Welcome back!!



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DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

Written by Therapist Sean Burns, M.Div., LCSW



Bullying is all too common in our world today. Most people associate bullying with school age children and adolescents at recess, lunch, or study hall. Bullying is more common than that. Bullying can be found in a variety of places and settings. Bullying can occur in the workplace, at church, and in

families. Bullying is defined as repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons, the targets, by one or more perpetrators. Children as young as preschool age can be the targets or the perpetrators of bullying as has been studied by researchers and observed by preschool teachers and leaders.

The forms of bullying include verbal, relational, psychological, physical, and even work interference. The degree of severity of bullying varies from preschool age children to adults in the workplace. However, the effects on the targets are damaging and cause problems. In children the effects of bullying can be seen in behaviors that include increased passivity of the child, withdrawal from activities, complaining of bellyaches prior to being dropped off at school or taken to the bus stop, no longer wanting to play with former friends, and many more. In the workplace bullying can result in lower employee productivity, higher employee

turnover, increased use of sick days, and more problems at home as anger and frustration may be carried home. The challenge with workplace bullying is that 80% of the behaviors are legal and do not cross the line into harassment or abuse.

What can be done about bullying at schools? Many school districts are providing training to teachers and a curriculum to teach students. This is a good start, but what do you do if your child is the target of bullying? What tools do you have to take on bullying at your workplace or church? Sean Burns, therapist at PPI, has presented this material at Cross Roads Presbyterian Church to the preschool teachers and leaders as well as to a Sunday school class. Sean has also presented information on workplace bullying at a local community health clinic. If you would like to schedule a presentation for your organization, please contact Joanne Bassilios at 412-661-1239, ext. 43, or Sean Burns at ext. 71.

“BEST CASE” CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Written by Therapist Jean Kolbe, LCSW

Conflict between any two people in a significant relationship is at some point inevitable. Some people, when they sense conflict brewing, try to avoid it. Some want to dive in to solve the issue, while still others get gridlocked on their differences. Well-respected researcher Dr. John Gottman of the University of Washington in Seattle, WA has been studying couples for more than 30 years. He describes several types of stable, happy couples with very different attributes, yet which “are similar in that they all have a 5 to 1 ratio of positive-to-negative exchanges.” This trait generates a healthy climate of positivity, and leads to what Gottman terms a positive “emotional bank account” that helps couples regulate and repair conflicts successfully. Gottman has identified other variables that either contribute to relationship satisfaction or dissatisfaction, particularly in the area of positive outcomes in conflicts.

Two of Gottman’s basic principles for de-escalation in conflict are: (1) women need to learn to “soften the start-up” and (2) men need to learn to “accept influence” from their partner. Gottman’s research has shown that in general, women bring up the conflict issues 80% of the time. Women tend to be more attuned to the relationship, and therefore more aware of areas of concern. The “**softened startup**” approach to conflict includes strategies such as using humor, expressing affection, softening the complaint with an affirmation of positive efforts, and moderating tone of voice and nonverbal cues. For men, “**accepting influence**” includes responding non-defensively, openness to the concern, validation of the other’s perception, and accepting influence. Each partner needs to show respect to the other, while recognizing and accepting differences.

Even with problems that are considered ‘perpetual’, that involve basic differences in personality, what matters the most is the affect with which the conflict is addressed, whether or not the conflict is resolved. (By *affect*, Gottman means the observed emotional expression of the individuals.) Another way to say this is, the process is more important than the outcome.

Learning to have a healthy, respectful dialogue around an issue is essential as you build trust in your process of decision-making. The most corrosive negative behaviors, which Gottman calls “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse”, to avoid are: criticism (personal), defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling.

So, the next time you find yourself headed into a heated debate with a loved one, experiment with applying some of these principles! Ask yourself: Do I need to be softer in my complaint? Do I need to be more open to my partner’s influence? What change in attitude and affect can I make to “turn towards” vs. “turn away” from my partner? Remember that *how* you fight is more important than *what* you fight about. For further reading on this topic, check out Gottman’s book *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. If you feel stuck in some unhealthy patterns, consider counseling as one option for investing in improving the relationship.

Comments in quotation are taken from The Marriage Clinic, by John Gottman.

Perspectives

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"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
Psalm 34:18

IT'S EASY TO BE GREEN!

In order to save trees and money, please consider signing up for our e-newsletter. You can go to our website at www.ppi-online.org.

To be removed from the list, contact Julie Pasquarelli at 412-661-1239, ext. 26 or e-mail fiscal@ppi-online.org.



PPI BY THE NUMBERS

143
licensed therapists

26
office locations

5
county service areas

1700
clients/families in past year

585
subsidized or free care clients

\$90,000
in subsidized or free care

WAYS TO SUPPORT PPI

PPI needs your help in supporting our client aid fund. Please consider making a contribution!

- Give online at www.ppi-online.org
- Mail a donation to PPI, Attention Julie Pasquarelli, Fiscal Director
- Become a sponsor or player for our Golf Outing! Visit the website to learn more: <http://ppi.ennect.com/events/2011golfouting>
- Designate your United Way contribution. Check the box for specific nonprofits, add PPI's name, or use our code #1231.

Our thanks to Minuteman Press for their ongoing discount for the printing of this newsletter!

We depend on your support to meet this need! Thank you for your help!