

# PRESSING ON...

"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14



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## The Power of Forgiveness Part I: Why?

■ by Debi Mitchell, MS, LMFT



"Without forgiveness, there's no future" –Desmond Tutu

"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." –Jesus (Matthew 7:14-15)

### What is forgiveness and what is it not?

Although definitions of forgiveness vary, most will agree that forgiveness involves letting go of negative feelings toward an actual or perceived offender. It is making a choice to let go of your right for revenge, and not through simply ignoring that it happened.

Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. Choosing to let go of anger, bitterness, or a host of other bad feelings that occur when someone hurts us or someone we love is not the same as saying it was okay. Choosing forgiveness does not necessarily change the accountability of the person responsible.

### Why should I forgive?

The benefits of forgiveness and the costs of holding grudges have been widely researched. Here are some things to consider:

1. **Relational:** If we choose to hold a grudge, we are choosing to remain negative toward someone - this creates additional barriers and throws off the balance of power/equality in any remaining relationship. Choosing to let

go of the anger removes one barrier toward reconciling that relationship. Negativity also infects our mindset and our mood, which can cause us to behave with irritability toward those who have done no wrong.

2. **Emotional:** Research has also shown that those who forgive have fewer depressive and anxiety symptoms than those who hold grudges. Picture someone you have not yet forgiven and think about the emotions you are experiencing. Enough said.
3. **Health:** Research has shown that forgiveness has tremendous health benefits, particularly with the cardiovascular system. Do you struggle with high blood pressure, a high resting heart rate, or an overall strain on the heart? Forgiveness can help there.
4. **Lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse:** It makes sense when you think about it. Since many people drink and/or use substances to "feel better" or "forget," letting go of negative emotions gives you fewer reasons to use them in the first place!
5. **Greater spiritual well-being:** We are made spiritually alive by accepting the forgiveness offered through Christ. An unwillingness to pass on that

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forgiveness separates us from God. Knowing we are forgiven gives us the boldness we need to reach up as sinful people to a Holy God and live in relationship with Him.

As Easter approaches, remember the forgiveness Christ is offering you, accept it, and choose to pass it on. It will be the best gift you ever give yourself.



Debi Mitchell is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist  
She enjoys working with children, adolescents, and adults in our Schererville location.

# ADHD



## | Part II: Adults & ADHD

■ by Dr. Janet Irvine, Clinical Psychologist

**B**y definition, the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder exist from early childhood throughout adulthood. While many of the hyperactive symptoms “wear themselves out” over time, most adults continue to complain that their minds race, concentration is poor, attention to details and picking up relational cues can be difficult. Often ADHD adolescents and adults are at high risk for substance abuse, poor job performance, financial problems, and difficulties with relationships.

However, many have found ways to put their high energy, creativity and drive into highly successful careers and enjoyable, purposeful lives. Many ADHD adults have found gratifying careers using their ability to think on their feet, multi-task and act quickly and creatively. I’ve met highly successful ADHD surgeons, firefighters, FBI agents, entrepreneurs, managers, lawyers, and contractors. The list goes on and on.

An earth-changing example of a person whose ADHD was transformed into a world-changing force was Christ’s apostle Peter. Peter was known for his impulsive, thoughtless comments, high reactivity, and short fuse. Jumping the gun, making promises he could not keep, and lopping the ear off a bystander all reveal a man who was often lacking in forethought. Yet Jesus never gave up on him; in fact he bequeathed on him great responsibility and affirmation. And Peter himself was one of the first to fearlessly run to the open grave of the resurrected Jesus! Peter was transformed into a person of relentless, fearless and zealous missionary work. While Peter might have been a natural candidate for leaving massive writings about his life with Jesus, such a task was not for him. He wrote only two short books, but he preferred to be off and running! He chose to live an energetic and hard-driven life as Christ transformed his ADHD characteristics into qualities that served to spread of the Kingdom of God.

As we all grow in Christ, He transforms negatives into positives. Presenting ourselves to Christ as willing servants is the first step. Prayers might be brief (naturally!!) but God can take any open heart and change it for His purposes. ■

Good website:

<http://www.ncpamd.com/adhd.htm>

Google: 50 Great things About ADHD

**Consider some of these tried and true tips for those with ADHD:**

- **Develop a strong support group of families, friends and church members to encourage and help.**
- **Seek structure and time management materials to set goals and manage life tasks. Write things down! Get a planner! Find someone who is an organizer to help keep you on task.**
- **Consider medication (really).**
- **Use psychotherapy (professional counseling) to help in developing a better sense of self and assisting in developing and following life goals.**

**Above all, have faith that God uses all of us, despite our quirks, since “He can do more than we can ask for or imagine.”**



*“Impulsive Pete”*



*Janet Irvine enjoys working with children and families in our Orland Park location.*

# Boost your Self~Esteem

■ by Veronica Grijalva, MA, Staff Therapist

**S**elf-esteem is defined as our sense of personal worth and ability that is fundamental to our identity. This involves how much we feel valued and loved by others as well as how much we accept ourselves. **Self-image** is a term to describe our mental picture of ourselves. A lot of our self-image comes from our life experiences and interactions with other people. This contributes to overall self-esteem.

A healthy, or high self-esteem leads to appreciating our worth and taking pride in our abilities. An unhealthy, or low self-esteem can lead to feelings of worthlessness and a lack of confidence. A low self-esteem usually develops in childhood. Causes of low self-esteem can result from abuse, excessive criticism, negligence, unrealistic expectations of oneself, bullying, and other negative experiences. For example, excessive criticism by a parent or authority figure may become the norm for a child. Thus that child grows to develop a negative inner voice. That inner voice begins finding fault automatically and even unconsciously. High self-esteem can be promoted by a loving environment which includes encouragement and support.



Everyone can experience fluctuations with self-esteem at certain points in life. Some short term factors can diminish one's self-esteem such as unemployment or the loss of a romantic partner. In turn, a person with low self-esteem can learn ways to build up to a healthy self-esteem. A healthy self-esteem is important for success in school, careers, friendships, and romantic relationships.

#### Ways to boost self-esteem:

- Self care: Eating well, sleeping enough, and exercising are all givens for feeling healthy. This helps your mental image stay positive.
- Pamper or reward yourself once in a while
- Replace negative self-talk with affirmations. Positive affirmations are positive statements you can tell yourself to remind yourself of your strengths, abilities, and achievements.
- Come up with your own list of achievements. They can be major or minor. Did you pass an exam recently? Join a fitness club? Even daily "successes" can be listed: making dinner, making someone laugh, paying a bill, etc.
- Shift focus from the things you do not like about yourself to your positive qualities. Keep those readily available as nice reminders of your worth.
- Examine your personal appearance. Your dress and hygiene can affect the way you carry yourself. Even colors you wear can have an influence on the way you feel. Are your clothes clean and neat? Do you wear only dark shades? Try changing it up to a bright shirt or accessory. Practicing good posture makes you feel (and look) confident.
- Help someone out. Volunteer at a local charity or offer a friend a helping hand. The feeling of making a difference and that your help is valued will feel great.



*Veronica Grijalva sees clients in our New Lenox & Orland Park locations.*

## New staff...



#### **Christine Ferber, MA, LCPC**

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## Our Mission Statement

Promoting health and wholeness through professional counseling,  
consultation and education from a Christian perspective.



## 1973—2013 Celebrating 40 years of God's Faithfulness

"As I look over the history of Chicago Christian Counseling Center, I am overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude for all of the support we have received over the years. Men and women, churches and business have given generously to help us provide professional Christian counseling to the hurting in the communities we serve."

"For 40 years the Center has been a blessing because of the faithfulness of donors, therapists and staff. I pray that God will continue to allow us to serve and be a blessing for many more years to come."

- Mel Jonkman, Executive Director



Mel Jonkman, M.Div.  
Executive Director

"We are so appreciative of the love and support we received from the therapists at Chicago Christian Counseling Center. You were instruments of mercy that our Lord used to rescue me. I cannot thank you and the Lord enough."  
- Client and her husband

# Thank YOU for helping change a piece of the world!