

THE PEACEMAKER CENTER

FALL 2009

THE PEACEMAKER CENTER

103 Garris Road
Downingtown, PA 19335

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Kennett Square, PA

(Hours by appointment)

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OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Deb Michaud, President

John Clark, Treasurer

George T. Keyes, Secretary

Judy Reid, Executive Director



OUR MISSION

The mission of The Peacemaker Center is to help people find peace with God, themselves and with others through biblically-based counseling and conflict resolution.

The Peacemaker Center is open to anyone for help with:

- Individual, Group, Family Counseling
- Marital Counseling
- Grief and loss issues
- Depression
- Anger management
- Eating disorders
- Addictions
- Surviving sexual abuse
- Life Coaching
- Financial counseling
- Preparing for marriage
- Conciliation
- Other mental health issues

HIDDEN WOUNDS BY MARK AKERS (M.A.)

Abuse is an unfortunate reality in our sin-stained world. We see the damage of physical abuse where a husband batters his wife, or we hear about twisted child sexual abuse. There

is also another type of abuse that all too often goes unnoticed. It leaves no sign of visible bruises or markings as is often the case with physical abuse.

It is an abuse that damages us from the inside out, that bruises our souls and leaves its invisible scars upon our hearts. This type of abuse is called *emotional abuse* and nearly everyone has experienced its effects in one form or another. Anyone who has ever experienced abandonment, neglect, physical abuse or sexual abuse has also experienced emotional abuse because all abuse is emotionally destructive. To find healing for this emotional and psychological damage is the very reason why victims of abuse need to (and do) seek counseling.

Although it often occurs with other forms of abuse, there are situations where only emotional abuse occurs. I know this happens because it happened to me. In this article I'd like to briefly outline three points regarding emotional abuse – "Hands Off" – an introduction to emotional abuse, "Hidden Wounds" – a brief look at the emotional, physical, and mental damage caused by emotional abuse, and "Hope and Healing" – a starters guide towards the path of finding hope and recovery.

"**Hands Off**" - Emotional abuse can happen without someone "laying a hand" on you. It can occur because of abandonment and neglect (especially with children), or through verbal abuse. God speaks to this in Prov. 12:18, "*Reckless words pierce like a sword...*" and in Prov. 15:4, "*...a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.*"



Mark Akers

Some characteristics of this type of abuse include: Ignoring of your feelings, negative criticism, degrading name calling, manipulating you with lies and contradictions, publicly humiliating you, threats (i.e., hurting you or someone you love, or threats of leaving you), devaluing you, attempts to control you, always putting you at fault, doing damage to your possessions, and withholding of affection or approval.

"**Hidden Wounds**" – The wounds from this type of abuse are often unseen or hidden because they are wounds of the "soul" or what the Bible calls the "heart". Often people who are emotionally abused are frightened or confused and will pretend everything is okay, when they are hurting and "dying" inside.

If you have been or are being emotionally abused you may feel any of the following emotions: Fearful of the abusive person, depressed, anxious, intense guilt, exhaustion, feeling trapped and or powerlessness, insecurity, anger, hopelessness, unloved, chronic dread, the need to make excuses for the abuser's behavior, etc.

Emotional abuse may also cause you to experience negative physical symptoms such as: fatigue, insomnia, raised blood pressure, increased heart rate, headaches, etc.

This abuse can affect you mentally and may result in an inability to think clearly or cause reduced problem solving capabilities. You may find yourself continually 'zoning out' or experiencing decreased productivity at work. You may also find yourself isolating yourself from people and/or social situations, not telling anyone about the abuse you're experiencing.

Emotional abusers use false and hurtful words to control and wound their victims. When you are constantly being criticized, or called names, and you may begin to believe what you hear. You then internalize these "false beliefs"

[Article continued on back...]

ROMANS 12:18

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

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Hidden Wounds [article continued from front...]

about yourself and begin to live out of them which often leads to negative or dysfunctional behavior. Recognizing these "lies" and replacing them with truth is one of the keys towards recovery and changing dysfunctional behavior.

"Hope and Healing" –

Although much more could be said, here are a few "starting steps" towards getting on the path.

Step 1 – Admit to yourself you are being (or have been) emotionally abused. It is all too easy to deceive yourself and pretend like everything is okay. If you are being emotionally abused call it like it is.

Step 2 – Remember Who is in control.

Fear of the unknown about what will happen after you expose the abuse often keeps us from seeking help. We must remember that if we know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior then we have an advocate on our side Who loves us and wants the best for us (Romans 8:28-39).

Step 3 – Seek counsel and support from others. If you are in an emotionally abusive situation or have been emotionally abused in the past you do not have to suffer alone. Seek counsel from a pastor or member of clergy and/or make an appointment with a professional Christian counselor today.

Mark Akers is a former intern with The Peacemaker Center. Currently he is a "Minister in Training" at Christ Evangelical Free Church (Lehighton, PA) and a counselor on staff at Foundations Christian Counseling Services (Allentown office). He can be reached at 484-560-3481 or at makers@foundchristcounsel.org.

References

Engel, B. (2002). *The emotionally abusive relationship*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Vernick, L. (2007). *The emotionally destructive relationship*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers.

OUR NEEDS:

The Peacemaker Center is in need of the following for their newest location in Kennett Square:

- Matching chairs for waiting area
- Desks
- Chairs
- Bookshelves
- Office supplies
- Laptop
- Interior decorating

The center is always looking for:

- Bibles to be given away
- Library resources
- Children's books
- Children DVD's

The center is available to do seminars and classes. Just some of the topics are:

- Anger Management
- Forgiveness
- Chronic Pain
- Grief
- Freedom through God
- Pre-marital
- Understanding Boundaries

Call or email for info!



SAVE THE DATE



Mark your calendars for **Friday, March 19, 2010** for The Peacemaker Center's Annual Fundraiser Banquet. We will be celebrating our 10 Year Anniversary!

Silent Auction Items needed:

- Sports Theme baskets
- Spa gift certificates
- Phillies, Eagles, Flyers tickets
- Chocolate Theme baskets
- Restaurant Gift Certificates
- Bed & Breakfast Gift packages
- Vacation home week



Mindy Starns Clark

Our guest speaker will be Mindy Starns Clark. She is the bestselling author of the "Million Dollar Mysteries" series and the "Smart Chick Mystery" series, as well as the

nonfiction how-to guide *The House That Cleans Itself*. A singer and former stand-up comedian, Mindy is also a popular inspirational speaker and playwright. Born and raised in Louisiana, Mindy now lives near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, with her husband, two teenage daughters, and two dogs. For more information, visit her website at: www.mindystarnsclark.com.



PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE
THE PEACEMAKER CENTER
FRIDAY, MARCH 19TH 6:00 - 9:00 PM
celebrating Ten Years of Service!