

we help people become more fully alive



INSIDE:

Back to Normalcy:
tips from some counselors

From Dan's Desk

Easy Ways to Support
Valley Christian



SHINE THE LIGHT

September is Suicide Prevention Month, so as a mental health organization, we want to help raise awareness for this heartbreaking reality. When you register for Shine the Light, you're acting as a beacon for those stuck in the darkness. Since this is a month-long event, we're asking you to commit to running, walking, biking, or just generally being active for at least one mile each day.

You can help us raise awareness by:

- ~ Registering for the event at runsignup.com/Race/ND/Fargo/ShinetheLight
- ~ Sharing the event on your social media pages
- ~ Posting photos of yourself being active and using #shinethelightvc
- ~ Sharing inspiration you find using #shinethelightvc

One mile each day for 30 days will help end the stigma of mental illness, and in return, shine light on the fact that there are many people who are willing to help, and allow those who need counseling for any issue to seek it out in confidence.

BACK TO NORMALCY

IDEAS FROM SOME OF OUR COUNSELORS

As we transition back into a sense of normalcy, here are some tips and ideas from our children & teen counselors. If you find your child needs a bit more help, we have 14 counselors in five communities that would love to assist you in caring for their mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

What Will You Bring into the Future with You?

Ellen Zaeske, LICSW

Likely we all have had some change occur in the time we were at home or "in shelter." Maybe consider what was the newfound discovery or habit you may have started that you would like to bring into the future with you. It may have been a new eating or sleeping habit, spiritual discipline, relaxation technique or family communication style. I found a new Christian spiritual guide for daily devotions to meditate on when I first get up in the morning that I plan to continue to use. How about you?

Talk About the Ducks

Naomi Erkenbrack, LICSW

Life is full of paradoxes - where opposites are true in the same situation. I find it helpful to teach kids about this concept: "Pair 'a Ducks" (a cheesy play on the word paradox, but easier to remember). In every situation, there is a "yuck duck" and a "yay duck." Some of us tend to focus more on the yuck ducks, which often steals our joy. Adults have good intentions in trying to steer kids away from the negatives and point them to the positives. However, it's not very validating, which leads to kids rejecting these suggestions and whine even more! I find it more helpful to allow kids to talk about the negative, label it as the "yuck duck" part of the situation, and then encourage them to find the "yay ducks." It's even more effective when we embrace the language as a family, sharing our own yuck and yay ducks in our days. After all, ducklings like to model after their leader!

Handling our Fears in the Midst of a Pandemic and Social Unrest

FROM DAN'S DESK

We are experiencing an unprecedented time in our country's history. My 99-year-old mother recently told me that she has never encountered anything like this in her whole life. Isn't everyone experiencing fear in one circumstance or another?

Often, we do not share our fears with others because we feel we will be seen as weak. Yes, I know the Bible tells us "not to fear." In fact, we are told that 365 times in scripture. Through these scriptures, I think God is also telling us that we will fear. That is an assumption. When you are afraid, what do you do with it? Psalm 56:3-4 says "When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?"

Have you been able to express your fears during this time? When we avoid our fears, they only get stronger. Dealing with our fears begins by acknowledging them. The Psalmist gives us good wisdom concerning the first person we should talk to about our fears. In Psalm 62:8, we are told to "trust Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge." 1 Peter 5:7 tells us to "cast our anxieties on Him for He cares for you." Also, because God uses people in our lives for comfort, validation, and guidance, we can share our concerns with others. You might find a trusted and respected friend to share your fears with. Often, just processing your fears outside yourself can help you see them in a different light.

I will admit that the events of our present day have caused me fears as well. We can use our fears to think through constructive ways we can change things for the better. There is real power in prayer and certainly that is something we can do.

What I find most comforting are the promises of God in scripture. Isaiah 41:13 promises "For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear, I will help you." I would also encourage you to read all of Isaiah 40. It speaks of the sovereignty of God in ways that can put our current world into perspective. God put the stars in place and knows them by name. It is He who puts rulers in place and removes them just as easily. Our world situation is not out of His control.

Thank you for letting me share with you things that have been going on in my mind and heart during these incredibly difficult times. Please remember that we have trained counselors who can help you with whatever you may be going through.

Call us - we can help.

I pray that God blesses you as we move into the future. Trust the One who loves you and cares for you!

 DAN BORSHEIM, CEO



YOUR PARTNERSHIP MEANS SO MUCH TO US AND TO THE CLIENTS WE SERVE. \$40 PER MONTH CAN ENSURE THAT THOSE WHO NEED COUNSELING ARE ABLE TO RECEIVE IT. WITH OFFICES IN FIVE COMMUNITIES, OUR REACH IS GREATER THAN EVER. THANK YOU!