



# FOCUS Newsletter

a newsletter for women in difficult relationships, feeling emotionally and spiritually alone

Issue 6 2007

## How do you honor an ungodly man?

**H**e has offended you and caused you great pain. He may have abandoned you or subjected you to indescribable abuse . . . or both.

Time after time you have held onto a flicker of hope that he would change. You've earnestly prayed for God to break his hard heart, but instead his heart has become more foolish, more evil, and more resistant.

This man may be your husband or your father. **How do you honor a husband or father whom you don't respect?**

How do you teach your children to honor a father who doesn't deserve it? Do you feel like a hypocrite when you help them pick out a Father's Day card while you harbor feelings of resentment, anger, and deep hurt?

Is it fair to teach your children to honor their father when he dishonors

your name in their presence, or when he fails to be involved in their lives and show them a father's love?

**Perhaps it is not fair, but it is right!** Not by my standards, but by God's. One of the ten commandments states, *"Honor your father and mother."*

This commandment is one that ends with a promise: *"If you honor your father and mother, you will live a long life, full of blessing."* (Ephesians 6:1-3)

Jesus confirmed the importance of this command, adding that we should take care of our parents financially when they are in need (Mark 7:10).

In his article in *New Man* magazine, Ken Canfield writes, "Here's how one woman described her situation:

*"Do not rejoice when your enemies fall into trouble.*

*Don't be happy when they stumble.*

*For the Lord will be displeased with you and will turn His anger away from them."*

*Proverbs 24:17-18 NLT*

'I was abused by my father and I could not respect him in any way until I began to deal with the condition of my heart and ask for healing.

Then over the years I was able to visit him. I took time to sit with him, to talk to him, call him on the phone, and I even wrote him a note.

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Then in time I realized the love and respect I was showing him was coming from another Father who was helping me work through my own pain.

Finally I even helped him financially until he died last year.'

When your heavenly Father has showered His love upon you, it empowers you to forgive and extend grace to your earthly father.”

Forgiveness is a difficult step, especially when the person hasn't changed and is still inflicting pain upon you or your children. But harboring feelings of hate and anger can cause emotional and physical damage.

Gary Smalley, founder of Today's Family, compares anger to a “deadly acid, soaking into your skin and building up like a can of tightly-compressed poison. Left untreated, it erupts and sprays over those closest to you, inflicting the same wounds on your family that your father [or your children's father] passed on to you.”

No matter what your children's father has done to you or to your children (or continues to do), it is important to your spiritual health and the emotional growth of your children to look for the good qualities in him and give thanks for them.

If you can't think of any good qualities, try to see him as a wounded creation of God for whom Christ died.

**Ask God to help you see him through the eyes of Christ, with love and compassion instead of hatred and contempt.**

Does this mean that you also have to trust this person and become vulnerable to more abuse and mistreatment? Absolutely not!

*When your heavenly Father has showered His love upon you, it empowers you to forgive and extend grace . . .*

You may never be able to establish a warm, trusting relationship with your father or your child's father, but you can offer forgiveness because you have been forgiven.

Forgiveness is a gift which releases another person from their offense against you. Refusing to forgive is like keeping the offender locked up in a cell where you can look at him every day and remind yourself of the pain he has caused you. The problem is . . . you are the real prisoner when you don't forgive!

So how can you honor someone who is a scoundrel at his best?

- ◆ Recognize that he is a hurting person who needs spiritual healing.
- ◆ Focus on his good qualities and talk about them with your children instead of harping on his failures.
- ◆ Pray for him and ask God to work in his heart. Encourage your children to pray for him too.

- ◆ Quit trying to manipulate justice or expect fairness. Leave all the revenge to God, and stop wasting your time trying to get him to do what you think is right. Give it up and leave it in God's hands.
- ◆ Be careful not to rejoice when he goes through hard times, or “gets what he deserves.” If you do get pleasure from his misfortune, ask God to forgive you.
- ◆ Develop a hunger and thirst to know God better. Dig deeper into the scriptures to learn more about God's character and Jesus' love. The more you learn about God, and the more you experience His love toward you, the more you will have to extend to others . . . even those who have offended you.
- ◆ Do what you know is right even if he does not reciprocate or appreciate it.

Can you really do all these things? Not a chance! But God can . . . and His power is yours if you ask for it and receive it.

## Letters/E-Mail



Dear FOCUS,

I have a very tight leash on pretty much everything as far as my independence goes. I really am not sure what options I have, but I know things are only getting worse and he is making life very difficult for us. I really do not know what to do at this point. I just thought reaching out for help could at least give me some hope in getting away from this.

I wish I could attend the [support group] meeting, but I honestly feel it is a very dangerous step to try and go out alone without his knowledge. I know I sound pathetic. I am very frightened of him. I just don't know what to do.

I am not in immediate danger, but that can change at the slightest error in his eyes. The abuse is not so much physical, but there are many holes in my walls and cabinets these days from his anger being redirected from me personally to the walls and cabinets. I fear pushing him over the edge.

—Email

## In The News . . .

**MD** – During an interview with Laura Giuliani, the wife of Oriole player Jay Gibbons who came on camera to promote a fundraiser to help stop domestic violence, Mid-Atlantic Sports Network's Rick Dempsey said, "If he doesn't start getting a few more hits, you might grab him around the neck and rough him up a little bit." Continuing the botched joke, Dempsey added, "All right, I'll domestically violate him if he doesn't start getting some more hits."

*Baltimore Sun* columnist Rick Maese found little humor in Dempsey's remark, writing, "Broadcasters who are paid to perform, enlighten or entertain carry a degree of social responsibility. Even if Dempsey is sorry after the fact, his comments perpetuated a caveman culture that has no problem turning a blind eye or sharing a locker room chuckle over something that just isn't very funny." In the same column, the Family Violence Prevention Fund's Brian O'Connor said, "If you're in any kind of position to reach the general public, you can't afford to take this issue lightly." Dempsey later apologized.

*Reprinted and adapted from "News Flash" (<http://www.fvpf.org/newsflash>), an online newsletter of the Family Violence Prevention Fund.*

## FOCUS Support Groups

- Eustis, **FL**—Saturdays 10 a.m. to Noon. Call Sherry at 352-434-9310
- Savannah, **GA**—Saturdays. Call Patty Jean at 912-629-4720
- Aurora, **IL**—Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. Call Brenda at 630-370-0138.
- Wheaton, **IL**—1st and 3rd Saturday at 9:30 a.m. Call Joan at 630-690-0976.
- Wood Dale, **IL**—2nd Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Call Paula at 630-595-7023.
- Lexington, **KY**—Saturdays at 9 a.m. Call Leslie at 859-224-1619 (x 143).
- Madisonville, **KY**—Thursdays at 6 p.m. Call Brenda at 270-825-2423.
- St. Louis, **MO**—Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Call Sylva at 314-918-7647
- Akron, **OH**—2nd and 4th Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Call Patty at 330-631-1319
- Olmstead Falls, **OH**—Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Call Sally at 440-234-8430
- Knoxville, **TN**—Tuesday at 7 p.m. Call Roberta at 865-470-2820 (x226).

If you are interested in starting a support group in your area, contact Paula Silva at 630-595-7023.

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## You Can't Keep a Good Man Down!

*"The righteous face many troubles, but the Lord rescues them from each and every one." Psalm 34:19*

We used to tell my dad that his guardian angels worked overtime protecting him from all the life-threatening situations he got himself into.

It wasn't because he was fool hardy and accident prone that he got himself into so many scrapes. Maybe we'll never know whether the mishaps were "accidental" or a sinister plot by the enemy to destroy the backbone and guiding force of our family, and a bright light reflecting God's love to many prisoners in darkness.

As a young boy, Dad lost his left eye when his knife slipped as he was whittling. Over the years, there have been several incidents which could have claimed his right eye and left him totally blind.

Once he was kicked in the face by an angry calf, and the area beside his right eye was ripped open. Another time he got a piece of steel in his right eye. In both incidents, it was a miracle that he was not permanently blinded.

He barely escaped death many years ago when his tractor slipped off into a ditch and turned over. The tractor had steel wheels which would have crushed him had he not landed out of their circumference.

As a coal miner, logger, and farmer, there were many times when he came home with bruised and bloody fingers and hands from trying to outmaneuver or repair machinery and motors. We often wondered what words he uttered when he mashed a finger or cut his hand, but as far as we knew the strongest language he ever used was "dat blame it!"

**One of his grandsons believes that he is indestructible, and refuses to believe that granddad will ever die since he keeps bouncing back from every adversity.**

Grandma has a different perspective, however. She is the one who has rushed him to the emergency room, bandaged

his wounds, and experienced the anxiety of wondering whether he would survive these death-defying feats and whether he would be blinded or permanently disabled.

Once while using a blow torch inside the cab of a truck, he was blown out of the truck by a sudden explosion. **On fire from his head to waist, he jumped into a ditch filled with water and put out the flames.**

In severe pain, he drove the tractor back to the house where water was poured over his entire body. After placing a towel with ice over the second-degree burns, Grandma drove him to the emergency room. When the ER clerk delayed getting him treatment, Grandma marched into the emergency room herself and demanded immediate attention because he was in so much pain.

He was burned from the corner of his eye to the waist. A topical ointment helped stop the pain temporarily, and he went home. Later he visited a neighbor with an unexplained gift of removing pain from a burn. Although no one can scientifically explain what she did, the pain was gone and no significant scarring occurred from the burns.

Dad has also had some narrow escapes at his fishing "resort" on the lake. He is a pro fisherman who likes to get up at dawn and fish until lunch time, take a nap after lunch, and then go back out on the lake until dinner time.

Late in the fall or early winter, he stayed overnight in the mobile home "resort" and turned on the heater before going to bed. Because the temperature was a little chilly, he slept in coveralls to keep warm.

Around midnight, he woke up feeling extremely nauseous, dizzy, and unable to stand up. **Determined to get help, he crawled on his stomach out of the trailer and up a gravel hill to the neighbor's house.** He was taken to the hospital where the doctor diagnosed an inner ear problem.

Two weeks later he went back to the lake for an overnight stay which proved to be near-fatal. The next morning Dad's neighbor noticed that his truck was still parked in the driveway (which meant he had not left to go fishing). Feeling uneasy, the neighbor went to check on him. **Dad was lying on the floor of the trailer, unconscious, and blue in color.**

Another neighbor (who was a nurse) was summoned and performed CPR while they were waiting for an ambulance. She later told the family, "We almost lost him." On the way to the hospital in the ambulance, he was screaming incoherently at the top of his lungs, and the paramedics almost lost him again.

Once again, the doctor diagnosed an inner ear infection. Skeptical at this diagnosis, my brother took a small hamper in a cage and left it in the heated trailer for three or four hours. Upon his return, the hamper was almost dead. His suspicion of carbon monoxide poisoning was confirmed, and repairs were made to prevent any further recurrences.

That old saying, "You can't keep a good man down," is true when applied to my dad. Retirement didn't keep him down, because it gave him an opportunity to start a new business cutting timber.

Replacing a shoulder joint didn't keep him down either. After his surgery, many people thought his logging career would be over. Only four months after the surgery, he was back in the woods wielding the chain saw and building up muscle.

At 79 years old, he is legally blind, but that doesn't stop him from farming and ministering to prisoners at two state penitentiaries twice a week. Best of all, he's my dad, grandfather to my son, and husband to my mom.

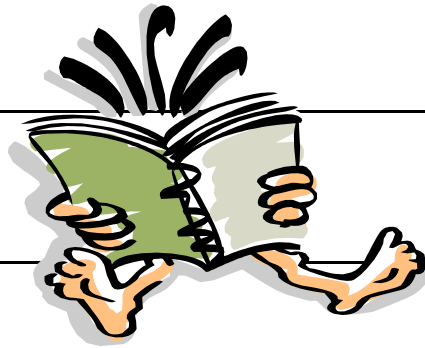
**Happy Father's Day, Dad!**

**We love you!**

**Thanks for being a godly man!**

**Lord, keep those angels on their toes!**

## Book Review



*No Visible Wounds*  
by  
Mary Susan Miller, Ph.D

Mary Susan Miller is an experienced counselor who works with abused women. In her book she identifies the many types of nonphysical abuse—verbal, emotional, psychological, social, and economic—and explores why this outrageous treatment of women continues in our society.

This book also includes stories of many survivors who have escaped their abusive relationships, and offers guidelines on how to protect oneself from an abuser.

There are four major sections in this book:

- ◆ What is nonphysical abuse?
- ◆ How does nonphysical abuse happen?
- ◆ Reactions to nonphysical abuse
- ◆ Can you make it stop?

This is an excellent resource which provides answers and offers hope for healing.



## Recipe of the Month

### *Skinny Smoothie*

- 1 medium sized banana
- 1/2 cup low-fat plain or lemon yogurt
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1/4 cup fresh raspberries
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend on high until smooth. Serve in a tall glass over ice. Garnish with banana slices and fresh raspberries.

## Words That Heal



*Do not be afraid of the  
terrors of the night,*

*nor fear the dangers  
of the day,*

*nor dread the plague that  
stalks in darkness,*

*nor the disaster that strikes  
at midday.*

*The Lord says, "I will  
rescue those who love me.*

*I will protect those who trust  
in my name.*

*When they call on me,  
I will answer.*

*I will be with them  
in trouble.*

*I will rescue them and  
honor them.*

*I will satisfy them  
with a long life*

*and give them  
my salvation."*

*Psalms 91:5-6; 14-16 NLT*

# The Profile of an Abuser

It's not easy to identify an abusive person by his appearance. An abuser does not grow horns and look like a snorting bull just before he smacks you across the face or hurls an arsenal of verbal weapons at you.

Many abusers are very charming, well-dressed, cultured people who act one way in public and another way at home. It is wrong to characterize an abuser as someone who is a drug addict or an alcoholic because most abusers are not either of those.

"Researchers in the field of abuse have drawn a variety of profiles of abusive men after years of working closely with them. These researchers identify eight groups of batterers:

1. Men unable to control their impulses, who change swiftly in a Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde pattern
2. Men who demand strict adherence to rules and, with no emotion, mete out punishment to those who break them
3. Men who are rebellious, hostile, dependent, and low in self-esteem
4. Men who are aggressive and antisocial
5. Men who exhibit great and inexplicable mood swings
6. Men who are outwardly pleasant, but unable to handle rejection, and aggressive when they feel their wife or girlfriend has let them down
7. Men who are excessively dependent, anxious, and depressed
8. Men who show only minor signs of the other seven characteristics and have no psychopathology

**It is believed that the majority of abusers do not act out of mental illness, but instead from the socially developed use of immature or neurotic defense mechanisms to satisfy—or seek to satisfy—the emotional needs that may have been unfulfilled in childhood.”<sup>1</sup>**

What are defense mechanisms? They are the ways people handle conflicts. One person may handle failure by blaming someone else or striking out in rage while another person may either deny it or laugh it off.

Most abusers use three defense mechanisms: repression, acting out, and projection.

## Repression

Repression is collecting deep hurts, fear, anger, and unexpressed feelings inside until those feelings spew out like a volcano on an unsuspecting victim, giving the abuser a feeling of relief and power over a weaker person.

The abuser may have grown up with a overly strict, controlling father who belittled and beat him for the slightest infraction. All through childhood the abuser may have repressed his anger in fear of further retaliation from his father.

**“Statistics indicate that a large percentage of abusive men were themselves abused as children. That they as adults, as a means of relieving the rage packed years earlier into their subconscious for survival’s sake, disgorge it on their women follows logically.**

What weaker person can they find? Who more helpless than the woman dependent on them for their survival as they once depended on their father? Obviously the children of a wife abuser are equally dependent on him, yet he abuses them less frequently; first, because society is more watchful of child abuse than of wife abuse; and second, because it is to his advantage to use his children not as an object of abuse but rather as a weapon of abuse against his wife.”<sup>2</sup>

It is believed that even though a child has been abused by a parent, they will continue to defend them to anyone who points out their parent’s wrongdoing. Some abused children will even lie to defend their parents, deny that they suffered any abuse, make up excuses for injuries that were inflicted upon them, and often believe they deserved the ill treatment from their parents.

This is because parents represent a security base for children, something they can count on in life, and they will do anything to keep it intact. As they grow, they identify more and more with their abusive parent (the good guys punishing the bad guys), finally taking on the role of the abusive parent by inflicting abuse on their girlfriends and wives.

## Acting Out

This defense mechanism is a very immature behavior in which the abuser acts out his anger instead of allowing himself to feel it because the tension is too much to bear.

**Abusive acting out includes screaming, breaking or throwing things, destroying someone else’s property, and all types of physical violence (from pushing and shoving to battering).**

If an abusive man learned to manipulate both parents as a child in order to get his way (if one parent says no, go to the other parent who might say yes), he has learned the fine art of manipulation which can be used as an adult to control his wife through implied threats and other nonphysical abuses. If an abusive man repressed his rage as a child, he may now act out the rage at his wife which he dared not hurl at his parents.

## Projection

**“Projection grants the abuser self-righteousness** because on the conscious level he sees himself as the perfect husband, and the defense mechanism works to obliterate what seethes in his unconscious. On the conscious level his wife becomes a helpless failure, his responsibility to keep in line and make over, and the defense mechanism works to render him blameless. As a result, he feels no more guilt over his treatment of her than the schoolmaster who raps the knuckles of the spitball-throwing student or the slave owner who rapes his wife’s housemaid.”<sup>3</sup>

The abuser who uses projection as his defense mechanism often says, “You always start it!”, “You won’t do what I tell you.”, “You made me hit you.” One man, who was screaming at his wife, said “Don’t get so hysterical” when she hadn’t even said a word! Another more psychopathic abuser assaulted his wife and then accused her of assaulting him!

Although the above research into the behavior of abusive men may be valid, it would be unwise to leave out the spiritual dimension in which men are influenced and guided by evil rather than by the Spirit of God. Even though a man may have been abused as a child and suffered great pain, **he still has a choice** to seek healing from the Lord and freedom from his evil thoughts and actions.

Some abusers have embraced evil and are permeated with the desire to inflict pain and destroy anyone who exposes or confronts them. **All the understanding and therapy in the world won’t penetrate their darkness. Turning to God is their only hope.**

<sup>1</sup> No Visible Wounds, Mary Miller (p. 115-116)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid (p. 119)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid (p. 122)



## Partners In Ministry

- YES! I would like to receive FOCUS Newsletter each month for 1 year at the rate of \$15 per year.
- I want to partner with FOCUS to educate churches and individuals about domestic violence and help families suffering from the trauma of abuse. Here is my faith promise of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month as God provides. Here is my one-time donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to use where most needed.
- I want to support FOCUS Women's Centers and Homes of Refuge and provide salaries for staff. Here is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ or my monthly pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Enclosed is my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide complimentary copies of FOCUS Newsletter to women and organizations who cannot afford a subscription.
- Count on me to be a prayer warrior for this ministry. Please send me specific requests.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip

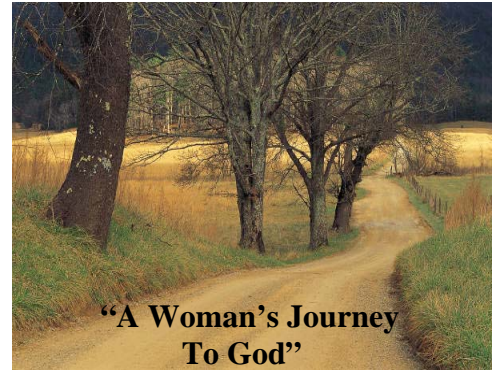
Mail to FOCUS, P. O. Box 323, Hanson, KY 42413

## Upcoming Events

- **Aug. 2007**—Release of our book, *Violence Among Us: Ministry to Families in Crisis*
- **Sept. 12-15**— Exhibitors at the **American Association of Christian Counselors World Conference** in Nashville, TN
- **Oct. 3**—Presenting **Domestic Violence Seminar for Evangelical Child and Family Agency** in Wheaton, IL
- **Oct. 20**—Presenting **Domestic Violence Seminar at Rockford Rescue Mission** in Rockford, IL
- **Nov. 11-16**—Trip to California to attend the **Ultimate Leadership with Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend**

If you would like the FOCUS team to come to your church for a women's retreat ("A Woman's Journey To God"), seminar on domestic violence, or other speaking engagement, please contact us as soon as possible as our calendar for 2007 is quickly filling up!

Contact Brenda at 270-825-2423 or Paula at 630-595-7023 or by email at [contactus@focusministries1.org](mailto:contactus@focusministries1.org).



### "A Woman's Journey To God"

*A weekend retreat for women in pursuit of God*

If your church would like on-site training to help you minister to families dealing with domestic violence, please contact us by email at: [contactus@focusministries1.org](mailto:contactus@focusministries1.org)

## NEW: Virtual Office!

Join our free virtual office (forums, Bible search, lots of links and free downloads) by going to our website: [Focusministries1.org](http://Focusministries1.org) and signing up. You can communicate with others and us on lots of interesting topics!



**FOCUS Ministries, Inc.**  
P. O. Box 323  
Hanson, KY 42413

270-825-2423 KY  
630-595-7023 IL  
[Focusministries1.org](http://Focusministries1.org)

**Our mission is to encourage women who are struggling in difficult circumstances to find strength and hope in Jesus Christ. “O Lord, you alone are my hope.” Psalm 71:5 NLT**

**Endorsement:**

“These women are called, prepared, and surrendered to their crucial ministry. The stamp of God is on their lives and work. It’s my prayer that God will use their gifts across the world to draw thousands of women to the hope that Christ provides. This is one ministry I’m sold on.” **Dr. Larry Crabb**, New Way Ministries

**Funding:**

FOCUS Ministries is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization funded by contributions and grants. If you would like to help us minister to hurting women through the distribution of printed materials, support groups, workshops, transitional housing, and financial assistance to victims of domestic violence, please send your gift to FOCUS Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 323, Hanson, KY 42413 or donate online at [focusministries1.org](http://focusministries1.org). A tax-deductible receipt will be provided for all contributions.

## Prayer Requests & Urgent Needs

**Urgent Needs:**

- **Storm doors and entry doors** with deadbolt on both entrances.
- **Replacement windows** at KY Women’s Center
- **Insulation** for attic
- Professional **grant writer**

**Praises:**

- **Brenda** is almost fully recovered from her surgeries and is working full time in the ministry.
- Donation of a **new furnace and air conditioner**

**Prayer Requests:**

- Pray for the young woman who has come to live in the FOCUS Women’s Center
- Pray for the editing and publishing of our book, **Violence Among Us: Ministry to Families in Crisis.**
- Pray for individuals, churches, and businesses to commit to **monthly giving.**
- Pray for all the **FOCUS support group leaders** in the U.S.

- Pray for God to send **people** alongside us who have expertise in development, fundraising, public relations, and grant writing.
- Pray for **property** near Elmhurst, IL to be donated for IL Women’s Center and transitional housing.
- Pray for **property** to be donated for Women’s Retreat Center.
- Pray for **houses** in IL, KY, and MO to be donated for use as transitional homes.
- Pray for funding to provide **scholarships** for women to attend our weekend retreat, “A Woman’s Journey to God,” and our “Train the Trainer” seminar for support group leaders.
- Pray for more **invitations** from churches to train pastors, staff, and congregations about domestic violence.

*O Lord, You Alone Are My Hope! Psalm 71:5 NLT*