Jane sat at the kitchen table with her head in her hands. She recalled the interactions she had with her spouse over the holiday season. “Why does everything have to be so complicated and confusing,” she asked herself. Her spouse’s behavior was a series of tantrums much like the behaviors she saw in her small children.

She felt like she was raising four children instead of three. She wanted to be a wife instead of a “mommy” to her husband, Sam, but she was caught up in his outburst of rage. When was he ever going to grow up?

Over the years she made excuses for him when the explosive episodes occurred as she calmed the children and herself. She knew he grew up in a family that had trouble with conflict. Anger was not handled wisely. Demeaning words were spoken and a lack of healthy connection existed.

Sam detested both his father and mother. In their presence he would cower as an adult, yet he would bring the whole family to visit them stating he wanted the children to have a relationship with their grandparents.

Sam claimed he never wanted to act like his parents, but he was exhibiting all of his parents’ behaviors to his own family. That was so confusing to Jane. If he sees the abuse as damaging from his own past, why does he continue the cycle to those he is supposed to love?

Men and women have been asking the same question as they deal with their abusive relationships. In 1 Corinthians 13:11-12, it says, “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.”

Some people remain in their childish ways because they are stuck in childhood experiences. According to Paul Hegstrom in his book, Broken Children, Grown Up Pain, this is called Arrested Development.

Arrested Development encompasses:
- Childhood wounds that impede one’s emotional development
- Physical and chronological growth occurring in spite of the lack of emotional development.
- Holding on to fears and rejection because of the childlike emotional state

Reactive lifestyles are developed. Wounds become the driving force to one’s behaviors. Little if any forethought is given to the best way to react to situations. One reacts instead of learning how to respond.

Moving from a childlike state to maturity is possible though. The developmental reconstruction encompasses:
- Identifying our wounds from childhood
- Recognizing that we react instead of respond
• Identifying our reactive lifestyles (anger, withdrawal, criticism, etc)
• Deciding to let go of the pain from the wounds one has experienced
• Moving forward into maturity as we forgive and let go

There is hope if one is willing to look deep inside and do the work necessary with God directing us along the way.

If we don’t take these steps, we will live in anger and hatred. Character traits will develop that will be detrimental to ourselves and others. These traits include:

- Self-centeredness
- Indecisive
- Reject authority
- Dishonest
- Untrusting of others and their intentions
- Keeps an account of all those who have hurt them and how
- Controlling
- Abusive
- False personality
- Needing immediate gratification
- Emotional pressure cooker

People who exhibit these traits will have difficulty finding authentic relationships and will not be able to build emotional intimacy as they reach adulthood.

It is important to identify the traumas that can arrest normal development in childhood. It will give clarity to the wounds we experience. Trauma can be placed into different categories.

**REJECTION**

Since rejection is a more subtle destroyer, it can have a more lasting and damaging effect to the spirit of the person. Rejection can include:

- Abandonment
- Critical spirit
- Perfectionism
- Insults
- Neglect
- Sarcasm
- Lack of physical touch

**INCEST/MOLESTATION**

The abuser in these cases are often a person in authority, a loved one, a caregiver, or a peer. The most basic boundary, our skin, is violated. The child’s value, self-esteem, privacy and body are compromised leaving the child feeling responsible for his or her own trauma. This leads to a life of self-blame and self-persecution. The child feels flawed and defective.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Paul Hegstrom defines emotional abuse “as any communication, admonition, or reproof that does not uplift, edify, or bring conflict resolution.” It consists of neglect and condemnation. Destructive statements like the following influence our self-concept.

- ‘I wish you were never born.’
- “Can’t you do anything right?”
- “You can’t be my child when you do something like this.”
- You will never amount to anything.”

Our belief system about ourselves is formed by what we have been told and how we have been treated. Over time more layers of negativity from others towards us adds to the distortion of our self-concept. We lose sight of our identity that is found in Christ.

**PHYSICAL ABUSE**

The presence of physical abuse creates distrust and fear of others. The feeling of powerlessness overcomes the individual. With heightened frustration, isolation, and anxiety, the child has difficulty telling anyone about what happened.

If these traumas are not dealt with, it can lead to the cycle of abuse being repeated in another generation and another child is wounded. Children are a gift from God. Each one of us are responsible to do our part to stop the abuse that creates broken children with grown up pain later in life.

*Paula Silva*

Is This Abuse?

Every day behind closed doors domestic violence is occurring. The Christian community is not exempt from this destructive use of power by one individual over another.

Outsiders often dismiss abuse if someone is not being hit, but there are many types of abuse that fall under the heading of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a repeated pattern of behavior to gain power and control over another individual.

PHYSICAL ABUSE
- Slapping, Hitting, Pinching, Choking,
- Shoving, Beating, Punching, Pushing, Grabbing, Kicking, Pinning Down
- Poking, Twisting limbs, Pulling hair
- Burning, Binding, Throwing things
- Locking out, Restraining, Blocking exits
- Attacking with an object or weapon

VERBAL ABUSE
- Name calling
- Shaming
- Blaming
- Insulting, Ridiculing
- Demeaning
- Using words or voice to destroy self-worth
- Accusing
- Profanity
- Demanding/Ordering
- Countering
- Discounting
- Blocking and Diverting discussion of issues
- Verbal abuse disguised as a joke

EMOTIONAL ABUSE
- Humiliation, Manipulation
- Withholding emotional support, Silent treatment,
- Undermining
- Mind control-crazy making
- Badgering
- Deceiving or lying
- Depriving of sleep
- Driving recklessly
- Isolation from friends and family

SPIRITUAL ABUSE
- Taking scripture out of context
- Twisting and perverting the meaning of scripture
- Putting down a person’s faith
- Isolating from church support
- Not allowing the victim to attend church
- Dictating when and where the victim attends church

SEXUAL ABUSE
- Sexually degrading attitudes
- Rape
- Forcing someone to engage in frightening or unpleasant sexual acts
- Forcing reproductive decisions
- Pornography
- Exposing partner to sexually transmitted diseases
- Demanding sex
- Forcing someone to dress in a sexually provocative way
- Adultery

FINANCIAL ABUSE
- Having to give an account of money spent
- Bank accounts and property titles in abuser’s name only
- Little or no access to money
- Having to put one’s paycheck into an account without having access to the money
- No say in how money is spent
- Given an allowance or having to beg for money for basic needs
- Using victim’s social security number and/or forging the victim’s signature to open up credit cards or for legal documents without permission

USE OF CHILDREN
- Verbally or physically abusing children
- Threatening to take children away
- Threatening to hurt children if the mother does not obey
- Manipulating the children to side with the abuser and disrespect the mother

PETS AND PROPERTY
- Breaking and destroying things (computers, cell phones, electronic devices)
- Punching holes in walls
- Killing, hitting, or threatening a pet
- Damaging victim’s car
- Taking out the battery and other parts of the victim’s car

Scripture clearly states what the Christian community is called to do “Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel; Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness.” Ezekiel 45:9

Paula Silva
UP COMING EVENTS

CERTIFICATE TRAINING FOR FACILITATORS OF FAITH BASED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE SUPPORT GROUPS

14 CEU'S AVAILABLE FOR COUNSELORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

APRIL 4-5, 2014
9:00 AM—5:00 PM

COMFORT INN SUITES
17 W 445 ROOSEVELT RD.
OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL 60181

FOCUS MINISTRIES INC.
OFFERS FAITH BASED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAINING

THE SECRET!

Behind closed doors is a cancer that has permeated our Christian community and is destroying our families.
This is called DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

"Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel. Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness." Ezekiel 45:9

APRIL 5, 2014
OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL

This training is for lay people and professionals, 7 CEU’s will be offered.
HOW COOL ARE YOU?

In our society today, a “cool” person can be defined in many ways. According to the dictionary, “cool” can refer to one’s demeanor and appearance

- Marked by calm self-control (a cool negotiator)
- In a casual manner; nonchalant (play it cool)
- Composed
- Collected
- Unruffled
- Imperturbable
- Detached
- Excellent; first-rate
- Acceptable; satisfactory

God looks beyond one’s demeanor and appearance to search the condition of each one’s heart. In 1 Samuel 16:7 (NKJ), But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

In Psalm 1, God outlines some elements of cool.

- Does not walk in the counsel of the wicked
- Does not stand around with sinners
- Does not sit with those who mock Him
- Delights in what God says
- Reads, ponders, and orally recites God’s Word
- Plants themselves so they will grow spiritually and produce the fruit of spiritual growth
- They do not dry up in their faith
- Whatever they do prospers

Do you possess God’s elements of cool or do you dwell on how society defines you? Society is ever changing and redefining, but God remains the same. His view of us is never wavering for He never goes back on His Word.

If you are questioning whether you are “cool” or not, look in God’s Word to see how God views you.

- God says you are special/important for you were made in His image—Genesis 1:27
- God knows you intimately that even the very hairs on your head are numbered—Matthew 10:29-31
- You are known by God even before you were conceived—Jeremiah 1:5
- You are not a mistake, for all your days are written in God’s book—Psalm 139:15-16
- You are God’s child and He is your Father—1John 3:1
- God loves you with an everlasting love—Jeremiah 31:3
- God rejoices over you with singing—Zephaniah 3:17
- You are my treasured possession—Exodus 19:5
- God is your greatest encourager—1 Thessalonians 2:16-17
- Christ came to demonstrate that God is for you, not against you—Romans 8:31
- You are very valuable to Christ—Matthew 6:26; 12:12
- You are a child of God—Luke 20:36; John 1:12; Romans 8:14-17; 1 John 3:2
- You are fearfully and wonderfully made—Psalm 139:14

No matter your status in life, you physical appearance, your intelligence, your abilities or lack of, God thinks you’re “cool!” Look in the mirror and say, “I’m cool because God says so!” You don’t have to be good enough to be accepted. God accepts you as you are. From there he will grow you up into the person He designed you to be if you give him your heart.

STAY COOL and HANG OUT WITH GOD!

Paula Silva
Excerpt from TEEN FOCUS Curriculum
Thoughts to Ponder

Sometimes we create our own prison choosing to live in darkness and captivity of abusive relationships.

We expect God to remove us even though we refuse to take the first step out of the darkness and walk into the Light.

You hold the key to your own prison. Are you willing to unlock the door?

Words that Heal

And the Lord said,

“Listen to what the unjust judge says,

And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones,

who cry out to him day and night?

Will he keep putting them off?

I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.”

Luke 18:6 NIV

Domestic Violence Training for Churches/Groups/Organizations

Topics:

- What is Domestic Violence?—A Closer Look at Verbal, Emotional, Sexual, Physical, and Spiritual Abuse
- Characteristics of an Abuser/Why Does He Do That?
- Recognizing a Victim of Domestic Violence
- Why Women Stay or Leave/Developing a Safety Plan
- How Does Domestic Violence Affect the Family Especially Children
- Teen Dating Violence
- What Can the Church Do?
- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling
- Signs that the Abuser Has Changed
- Church Safety Plan/Risks
- Becoming an Anchor in the Storm/How to Help Someone in an Abusive Relationship

Development of Domestic Violence Program in Churches

- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling Victims and Abusers
- Development of Domestic Violence Policies and Procedures for Churches
- Step By Step Approach for Churches to Address the Issue of Domestic Violence
- Training for support group leaders
Prayer Requests & Urgent Needs

Urgent Needs:
- New board members with expertise in fundraising, marketing, and the law
- An office space to accommodate the increasing need for the ministry

Praises:
- Dedicated support group leaders
- Development of TEEN FOCUS relationship workshops

Prayer Requests:
- Pray for our TEEN FOCUS team as they develop our teen program
- Pray for a facility for our FOCUS Women’s Center. It would enable us to expand our services
- Pray for funds to hire much needed staff
- Pray for board members as they make critical decisions regarding the direction of the ministry
- Pray for women and families who contact our FOCUS Women’s Center.
- Pray for pastors’ wives that are being abused.
- Pray for individuals, churches, and businesses to commit to monthly giving.
- Pray for all the FOCUS support group leaders
- Pray for houses in IL, to be donated for use as transitional homes.
- Pray for churches to understand the gravity of domestic violence and will develop appropriate responses.
- Pray for FOCUS as we plan for 2014.
- Pray for those that come to the ministry for help that do not know Jesus.

Upcoming Events

- April 4-5, 2014: Partners in the Journey Training (Support Group Leaders Training), Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- April 5, 2014: Faith Based DV Training, Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- June 6-7, 2014: Partners in the Journey Training (Support Group Leaders Training), Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- June 7, 2014: Faith Based DV Training, Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- Oct. 3-4, 2014: Partners in the Journey Training (Support Group Leaders Training), Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- Oct. 4, 2014: Faith Based DV Training, Oakbrook Terrace, IL

The FOCUS team is available to come to your church for a women’s retreat, seminars, workshops, DV training or other speaking engagements.

The mission of FOCUS Ministries is to provide a safe place for teens, women, and families who experience domestic violence and abusive relationships to find hope and healing in Jesus Christ.

Funding: FOCUS Ministries is a not-for-profit 501 c3 organization funded by contributions and grants. If you would like to help us minister to hurting people through our educational materials, support groups, counseling, and financial assistance to victims of domestic violence, please send your gift to FOCUS Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 2014, Elmhurst, IL 60126 or online at www.focusministries1.org. A tax-deductible receipt will be provided for all contributions.

FOCUS Ministries (and all individuals affiliated therewith) disclaims any personal liability for information presented within this newsletter or in seminars, workshops, and support group meetings. You should always consult a professional for medical, psychological, legal, financial, or biblical advice.
O Lord, You Alone Are My Hope! Psalm 71:5 NLT

Ways You Can Help FOCUS Ministries

Please consider making your online purchases from Shaklee through: www.focusmin.myshaklee.com/us/en/ A portion of your purchase will be credited toward FOCUS Ministries. More on: Shaklee

Go to GoodSearch.com. Enter FOCUS Ministries as your favorite charity in the box provided, verify and search. The search engine is powered by Yahoo! and each time you search, designate FOCUS Ministries as your charity, verify and search. GoodSearch will then make a donation to FOCUS.

Go to GoodShop.com. Enter FOCUS Ministries as your favorite charity in the box provided, verify and browse the online mall.. Choose from over 500 popular online merchants from Best Buy to Wal Mart. A portion of your online purchase will be donated to FOCUS Ministries and the shopping experience through GoodShop is exactly the same as going to the online retailer's websites directly.

Please Choose FOCUS as your favorite charity at iGive.com. You can help FOCUS Ministries when you make online purchases! For more information, please visit http://www.focusministries1.org/igive.asp.