



Valley Center Counseling

Life Transitions Newsletter: Summer 2009



*Dear Clients,
The hazy lazy days of
summer are upon us!
After enduring the
June gloom, thoughts
of long days at the
beach or summer
vacations with our
families fill our
thoughts. Since most
families are busy
during the summer, I
have decided to write
only one hot Summer*

*Newsletter for you to read at the beach or lying in
a hammock under the shade of an oak tree.*

*Hard economic times certainly have hit not only
California but the United States with the nation
wide unemployment rate exceeding 9%. The
feature article addresses how to stay in good
mental health during these difficult economic
times. Hope your summer is relaxing and fun!*

Many blessings,

*Penny Blazej, LCSW, BCD
Licensed Clinical Social Worker*

How to Stay Positive in These Challenging Economic Times

Right up the street from our home in Valley Center, seven of our neighbor's homes are going into foreclosure. We cannot help but ask, how can this happen to such good, hard working people? I am sure that most of you can relate to this either directly or by knowing someone who is losing their home. So how does a family survive such a devastating loss?

Being the daughter of a "great depression" survivor, my father's voice comes to mind giving me wise advice. I can hear him saying, the most important thing is family – pool all your resources and work together. He told us about how each member of his family would contribute to the well

being of the family. How great Uncle Jack would go to the pier fishing often times catching the family's evening meal. Or how all his brothers and himself would wait until low tide and go crabbing, digging for clams and gathering mussels. He really knew the meaning of "If the Tide is Out the Table is Set". He fondly remembered how his mother would negotiate with the deli owner always coming home with much more than what her dollar could buy. Or how his father would take any work, including digging ditches all day long, to keep a roof over his family. Though there was little money for entertainment, my father would remember the elders getting together, playing cards all night long, providing much needed fellowship and laughter. With everyone pulling together, this large family was not only able to survive but built lasting loving memories.

We can learn a few things from our forefathers, like: join forces together – work hand in hand – trade services – share what you have with those in need – count the blessings of the family instead of the losses – things can always be replaced but not family – ask for help if you need it and give help if you can, just to mention a few.

As I look back over my life, recollecting stressful financial times, these memories are also accompanied by wonderful memories of helping family and friends. My family never asked why I came to visit them around dinner time – they just always set another place at the table. Or retired couples "renting" me rooms so I could continue to attend college (the rent would not begin to cover all the wonderful meals they prepared for me). Or when professors would pick up the tab for pizza and soda while their TAs would correct exams – and boy could we eat pizzas. These thin financial times, however difficult, were also abundant in care and love.

I remember a sermon, given several years ago, where the priest spoke about the difference between your inner circle needs versus your outer circle needs. He stated that the inner circle consisted of your family, friends, health and faith. He contrasted this with the outer circle - possessions

like car, house, vacation, jewelry, clothes, job etc. He said it was fine to enjoy the outer circle things but that people get into trouble when their outer circle became equal to or more important than their inner circle. This sermon really put things into perspective for me. He was so right – we must keep our inner circle healthy and the focus of our lives so if the outer circle falls away, like in these economical times, we will not be losing ourselves.

So how do you survive these financially bleak times? Focus on your inner circle, help others and count the blessings that you do have.

Book Reviews

“Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia”. Second Edition by Alison C. Basted, M.D. This is the best book on this disorder that I have read to date. I give it 10 out of 10! The author explains complicated medical systems in easy to understand language. He also gives a comprehensive summary of all the recommended treatments to date. This is a must read for anyone who has this disorder and for their family members as well. You can order this book directly from

www.amazon.com

Books on my reading list for this summer: *“Three Cups of Tea”* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *“The Body Broken”* by Lynne Greenberg and *“Surrender”* by Susan Coyle. I’ll give you my recommendations in the September newsletter.

Wise Words

A colleague of mine was relating the wise words of someone who was losing their home. He said, *“Our family is like Chocolate milk – it is the same whether it is put in a fancy cup or a paper cup.”*

“Blessed are the flexible for they do not get bent out of shape.” Unknown

Announcements

Well, I did not win the Honorary Valley Center Mayor race, but sure had great fun! Ron Cowen, Principal of Valley Center High School was this year’s choice. Congratulations Ron!

Escondido Gallery is presenting a “Local Color” art show which ends August 11th. I have one piece in the show titled “King”. It is a watercolor of an African lion. Since this is a people’s choice show, go down and enjoy the many works of art. Don’t

forget to vote for your favorite (mine was a color photo called “Mushrooms”!)

Breathing Space



La Jolla – August (tides out so the table is set)

Just for Laughs

Last year I replaced all the windows in my house with that expensive double-pane energy efficient kind. Today, I got a call from the contractor who installed them.

He was complaining that the work had been completed a whole year ago and I still hadn't paid for them.

Hellloooo - just because I'm blonde doesn't mean that I am automatically stupid.

So... I told him just what his fast talking sales guy had told me last year; "in ONE YEAR these windows would pay for themselves" "Hellloooooo? It's been a year!" I told him.

There was only silence at the other end of the line, so I finally just hung up.

He never called back. I bet he felt like an idiot.

Remember – laughter is the best medicine!!!!