



# Christian Counseling Ministries

of Western New York, Inc.

Compassionate Care to  
Guide Your Healing Journey

## Did you know?

**The Crown Jewels contain the two biggest cut diamonds on Earth.**

*"An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels."*

– Prov 31:10

**Honey will never go bad and you also don't need to refrigerate it.**

*"My child, eat honey, for it is good, and the honeycomb is sweet to the taste. In the same way, wisdom is sweet to your soul."*

– Prov 24:13-14a

**You can hear a blue whale's heartbeat from its 400 pound heart from more than 2 miles away.**

*"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."*

– Ezekiel 36:26

**The lyrebird can mimic almost any sounds it hears – including chainsaws.**

*"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"*

– Matt 6:26

**Pumpkins, squash and gourds are all technically the same species.**

*Then God said "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."*

– Genesis 1:29

## From the Executive Directors Desk

It seems like just yesterday when we ushered into 2023. At this time of year, when we walk into a store, retailers flood us with displays for the holidays ahead. I wonder to myself how much do we lose today by being consumed and flooded with thoughts about tomorrow? The busyness of today can create an open door for our minds and emotions to be weakened. In many cases we can't avoid the burden of meeting our responsibilities, but we can manage our thoughts and emotions. For many this becomes very challenging, especially as we head into a busier time of the year.



The Word gives us some perfect guidance, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own"* (Matt 6:25). Learning to be present in the moment, enjoying the small gifts the moment can give us, fills our hearts with joy that may have been lost in the busy and responsibilities. As we turn our attention in this newsletter to selfless caregivers it is important to find 'the moments' to bring joy into today.

CCM continues to address the needs of today. We have been busy this year with meeting counseling needs of children and adults, working with community partners and grantors which we are extremely grateful for, and exploring new opportunities. We have had the privilege to be available to also serve community businesses and churches who had needs which our organization could provide. In addition, we have been diligently continuing our process of setting a strong foundation for future services. This can be a building and testing of faith.

I am so grateful that we are not alone on this journey. Trusting God is crucial in the helping work that we do. As Jesus told his disciples that He needed to go away but promised a Helper, the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, He will teach and bring remembrance to the disciples (and us). Then He said, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."* (John 14:27)

Peace can be found knowing Jesus is for us. In the quiet moments as long as we are willing to hit pause on our day and call on our Helper the Holy Spirit. We take in a few deep breathes and slowly release them picking out the simple joys that can be found in a moment and have a grateful heart for our Helper, God will meet our needs as we serve to meet others. Learning to manage our todays through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit can definitely have an impact on our tomorrows.

Blessings,  
Yvonne Banks

## Marriage and Family by Hilary Grooms, LMFT

Did something stressful happen to you this week? You bring it up to your partner, but instead of listening, they give you advice or criticize you and you end up more stressed out than before. Or perhaps your partner frequently ends conversations accusing you of not listening to them. Either way, someone isn't feeling heard in the relationship.

The key to successful discussions with your partner is to learn how to have stress-reducing conversations. In a stress-reducing conversation, one partner speaks and the other practices active listening. This means that they listen to understand, stay focused on their partner, and express support and validation.

What's missing from your conversations with your partner? Identify the gaps in your communication and focus on filling them on both sides so that you both feel heard.



FRIENDSHIP NOW connect smile healing  
 kindness • COMPASSION purpose  
**caregiver** healthcare patience  
 long term sense  
 respect trust GRACE  
 support LOVE UNCONDITIONAL nurture  
 time activity mobility dignity family THERAPY  
 inclusion community

## Tools for Managing Caregiver Burnout

- Taking breaks from caregiving when possible. Explore finding a local respite caregiver.
- Involve friends and family who can help you with caregiving duties, or who can simply provide you with emotional support.
- Finding a therapist or someone similar you can confide in about your own feelings
- Participating in a support group
- Formal supports, such as educational or government agencies that provide information and support to caregivers or to the people they take care of.

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CCM is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) ministry. A financial gift to our Charitable Care Fund can make accessibility to high quality mental healthcare a reality for Caregivers in need of care in our community.



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## Caregiver Burnout

by Michael Finnegan, LMHC

Caregiving is an essential role undertaken by individuals who provide physical and emotional support to loved ones requiring assistance due to health issues or disabilities. However, the demands of caregiving can often lead to a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion known as caregiver burnout.

One of the causes of caregiver burnout can be the constant stress associated with providing care for another person. Caregivers often face overwhelming responsibilities, sacrificing their well-being in the process. A cycle of caregiver burnout is formed and maintained by continuing to provide care in a stressful environment or situation, while having a lack of healthy coping skills, not taking the time to “recharge” oneself, and having negative thoughts about oneself and the situation they are in. (PsychologyTools.com)

Caregiver burnout can manifest itself in various ways, sometimes with symptoms resembling those of chronic stress and depression. These symptoms may include chronic fatigue, sleep disturbance, headaches, irritability, anxiety, hopelessness, loss of motivation and increased vulnerability to illness due to a depletion of the immune system. Caregiver burnout can also negatively affect the caregiver’s relationships with others, including the

person they are providing care to.

To address and prevent caregiver burnout, the caregiver would benefit from several strategies. Caregivers should set aside time for activities that will help to recharge their physical and emotional health. This may include exercise, creative endeavors, naps, prayer or meditation, reading, or listening to music.



It may benefit to remember that the scriptures report that Jesus himself often needed time away from ministering to the crowds. Luke chapter 5:15-16 states, *“But the news about Jesus spread all the more, and great crowds came to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Yet He frequently withdrew to the wilderness to pray.”*

## KIDS CORNER

by Erin Andrade, LMSW

*Caring for a child’s mental and emotional wellbeing and setting healthy boundaries with their digital usage go hand in hand.*

### DIGITAL WELLNESS: PARENTING TIPS

- » Children: Under 2 yrs: 0 screen time or use for educational purposes only  
 2 yrs. – 5 yrs: 1 hour weekdays, 3 hrs total on weekends  
 6+ years: parent guided healthy usage
- » Turn off all screens an hour before bedtime
- » Restrict electronic devices at the dinner table or during family activities
- » Chores, homework, and other activities may need to be completed first
- » Model good screen time behavior yourself

