

Compassion

A Quarterly Newsletter



Vol. 1, Winter Issue



A Message from the Executive Director

Greetings on behalf of The Renaissance Christian Counseling Center. We welcome you to the premier edition of *Compassion*, our quarterly newsletter. The Center is an Outreach Ministry of Morning Star Baptist Church, where Bishop Dwayne C. Debnam serves as pastor.

This publication is designed to provide you with pertinent information on our wide range of programs and services. We are committed to the emotional well being of the community. We fulfill this commitment by offering an array of professional services for individuals and families.

We believe God wants you to experience wholeness in your heart, mind, and soul. Our minds are powerful and we only need the willingness to make simple adjustments that will position us to be prosperous and in good spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental health. Our ultimate desire is "that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well" (3 John 1:3, NIV). Remember, sometimes "all it takes is knowing someone cares."

Minister Carla J. Debnam, MS, LCPC

ABOUT THE RENAISSANCE CENTER

The Renaissance Christian Counseling Center is a community based pastoral counseling ministry designed for individuals, couples, families and groups experiencing difficulty in a number of life areas. Services are offered in the areas of Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Domestic Violence, Crisis Intervention, Youth and Family Counseling, and Personal Spiritual Development.

The Center's services are delivered in a compassionate, confidential, non-threatening atmosphere conducive to the healing of the total person. Comprehensive assessments are conducted in an effort to guide the development of an intervention plan that will assist with success. Professionals, including Pastoral Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, Certified Rehabilitation Counselors and National Certified Counselors staff The Center.

The Center is located at 10 Winters Lane, just three blocks from MSBC Ministries in Catonsville. The Center is serviced by MTA buses #15, #23 and #77. For specific directions, fees and payment information, call The Center at (410) 747-3360.

WHAT IS TRADITIONAL COUNSELING VS. CHRISTIAN COUNSELING?

Counseling is a form of guidance in which a trained professional offers advice or education about specific problems in living.

The goals of traditional counseling are to assist the client with sorting out areas needing improvement in his or her life; to provide a safe environment in which to explore and express feelings and/or thoughts about these areas; and to develop better methods of addressing these issues. Furthermore, therapy requires persistence and patience.

On the other hand, "Christian counseling," has an emphasis on Biblical values and teaching. When we refer to Christian

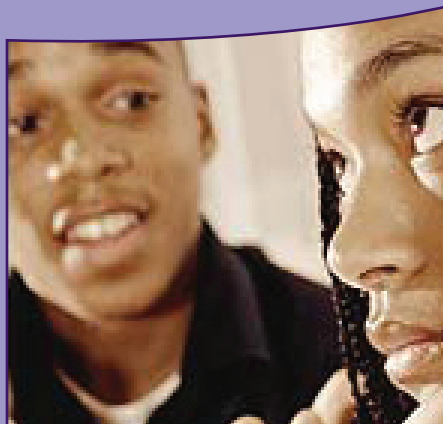
counseling, we are not simply implying that a Christian is performing the counseling. Rather, we are suggesting that the counseling is based on the values of Christianity. Counselors provide advice based on the Bible's definition of how we ought to think, act, and relate as commanded by the Scriptures. At the same time, these counselors possess the professional training to address issues by using both traditional and Christian counseling techniques.

A FRESH START

Each year we resolve to manage our lives better, earn more money, and—most importantly—find greater happiness and peace of mind. In order to do this, we must strive for balance in all areas of our lives. Looking for a fresh start? Consider examining these areas:

- **Your Mental Health:** Your emotional and cognitive health comprises your overall mental health. It is important to know that what you think, ponder, and reflect upon may affect you positively or negatively. You should strive to maintain a positive attitude which assists in sustaining your emotional wellbeing.
- **Your Spiritual Health:** Experts have recognized stability in an individual's life when he/she attends church, engages in religious practices (such as consistent quiet time and devotion), and participates in community activities. Your spiritual life is a resource to help you address feelings of anger, anxiety, sadness, or depression.
- **Your Family/Social Health:** This area is measured by your decision to form and maintain healthy relationships. These relationships could be with family, friends, and co-workers. It is in this arena that communication skills, social skills, self-esteem, and self-confidence are developed and enhanced.

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- **Your Financial Health:** Research shows that poor financial management, unemployment, downsizing, and financial restraints are leading cause of stress. Address your financial health today by reviewing your budget, spending and saving habits. Morning Star offers a comprehensive Financial Stewardship Program for church members and the community. Call The Center for Excellence at (410) 747-8153 for specific program information.

WE MISS YOU!

On average, The Renaissance Center handles some 45 weekly appointments. Just as important as the appointments we address, are those which are missed or not scheduled at all. Perhaps it's been a while since you've been to The Center but you still feel that you need our services. Please feel free to contact us at (410) 747-3360 to schedule an appointment. We miss you!



GROUP COUNSELING VS. INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

During your individual counseling session, a counselor may make a recommendation for you to attend a group session. Group counseling can be useful in a number of areas including Anger Management, Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence, Self-Esteem, and Stress Management.

When people interact freely in a group setting, they are able to give as well as receive support, offer alternatives, and eliminate adverse behavior. Group counseling has been found to be a very effective means of treatment and, in some cases, the best form of treatment for a particular individual or a particular type of concern. In some instances, the group counseling will be recommended in addition to your individual sessions. Please see this suggestion as a positive step toward your healing.

The following group sessions are currently meeting at The Renaissance Center:

- **Gifted** – a support group for girls ages 12-17. Topics of discussion include self esteem, confidence, and potential. Gifted meets on Tuesday evenings from 5-6 PM. Sessions are free, however registration is required.
- **Resolve** – an anger management group for adults. Problem solving skills and relaxation techniques are emphasized. Resolve meets on Thursday evenings from 7-8 PM. Six week sessions are offered for a minimal charge of \$60. New sessions begin in the Spring.

HERE COMES THE BRIDE

If you're engaged, you are likely in the midst of securing a catering hall, selecting invitations, deciding on floral arrangements, or choosing the appropriate music for the ceremony. In the midst of making these decisions, we encourage you to consider Premarital Counseling. Research has shown that couples who have participated in Premarital Counseling enjoy a more successful marriage.

The Renaissance Center offers non-denominational Premarital Counseling Services. The Center also offers the Prepare/

Enrich Marriage Enrichment Program. Call The Center for rates and session information.

WHY IS MY CHILD SO ANGRY?

The Renaissance Center offers comprehensive anger management programs for adults and young people. Most recently, The Center is focusing its attention on this issue as it relates to young people. Anger is a strong feeling which can affect one socially, emotionally, academically, and even physically. Many statistics show the effects of teen anger:

- A 2001 national survey of high school students found that 1 in 3 high school students had engaged in a physical fight. 4% of the students were hurt badly enough to need medical treatment.
- According to the 2002 National Gang Trends Survey (NGTS) there are more than 731,500 gang members and more than 21,500 gangs in the United States.

These statistics are alarming. As a society, we know that children need love, understanding, and, most often, a listening ear. The Renaissance Center Staff is able to listen with the professional expertise which can identify issues and point young people and their families toward winning solutions. Call The Center if you are asking the question, why is my child so angry?

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB

The Renaissance Center invites you to view our website at www.therenaissancecenter.org. The website provides pertinent information on our services, location and staff. You can also download some of the forms you'll need to set up an appointment at The Center. We are currently working on a redesign of our website. We'll keep you posted.

Compassion is a quarterly publication dedicated to supporting the services offered by the Renaissance Christian Counseling Center.

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