



SAMARITAN COUNSELING CENTER
OF THE CAPITAL REGION

SOLUTIONS

A Quarterly Publication Offering Help and Hope for Your Mind and Spirit

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 2

SILENT SAMARITAN FUND

AUTUMN 2004

SAMARITAN COUNSELING CENTER

and
Capital Region
Theological Center
present

Part Three of the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Series

Sponsored by Siena College
and Lilly Endowment, Inc.

From Idolatry to Grace: The Spiritual Work of Marriage

This workshop will explore the spiritual work of marriage. Themes such as forgiveness, acceptance, grace and redemption are all important themes in marriage that are often not addressed. Marriage can be a crucible for spiritual development.

(Please see details on page 3.)

Invest in Hope and Healing

David C. Olsen, PhD

How do you measure a good investment? If you are like most people, you hope for a solid rate of consistent return over time. The last few years in the stock market has made that difficult.

Investments, however, also measure our core values. The scriptures suggest that our "treasures" reveal where our heart is, or where our core values are. That is, where we invest our money shows what we truly believe in.

Ask yourself, what really matters and what is really worth investing in? In the end the answer may be obvious. Invest in Hope! Invest in people who have lost hope and need help rediscovering it.

Each person who finds healing and hope touches others, in turn creating ripples of community action.

Silent Samaritans invest in helping people rediscover hope and healing. Silent Samaritans are people who make a yearly contribution to the Silent Samaritan Fund. They understand that the fund is used **only** to provide assistance to people in need.

Silent Samaritans understand that they are investing in both the present and in the future: in both individuals and in their community.

Specifically, Silent Samaritans' investments assist:

- ❖ At-risk adolescents, who without intensive intervention may not finish school
- ❖ Victims of sexual trauma
- ❖ Couples struggling to make their marriages work
- ❖ Clergy who confront burnout and the pressures of ministry
- ❖ People who need hope and healing

Silent Samaritans know that investing in people who have lost hope and need healing helps build a positive future.

Each person who finds healing and hope touches others, in turn creating ripples of community action.

This is a powerful investment.

Consider partnering with us as a Silent Samaritan, a person of quiet strength and generosity.

Invest wisely. Invest in what you truly believe in. Silent Samaritans make an investment every year in both hope and healing.

Inside This Issue...

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Last year your contributions helped us reach our goal of \$25,000!

This year we must raise \$30,000!

Group Therapy Opportunities

Please call (518) 374-3514 for information about all groups and workshops.

▶ All Groups are facilitated by a therapist and are completely confidential. ◀

BROTHER'S KEEPER CLERGY SUPPORT

- ◆ Ongoing, bi-monthly meetings
- ◆ Focuses on how a pastor can best respond to the day to day challenges of working with a congregation.
- ◆ Offered in Scotia and Albany
CONTACT: Keli Rugenstein (Scotia) Pam Ennis (Albany)

CLERGY SUPPORT & DISCUSSION

- Confidential support and discussion for
- ◆ Parish difficulties / challenges
 - ◆ Life changes
 - ◆ Moves and decisions
 - ◆ Spiritual direction and collegiality
CONTACT: David Olsen or Doug Stephens

WOMEN AND DEPRESSION

- ◆ 90 Minutes weekly, ongoing
- ◆ For women dealing with depression
- ◆ Focuses on issues pertinent to women, their families and their lives, and seeks to empower participants
- ◆ In conjunction with individual therapy
CONTACT: Pam Ennis

WOMEN TRAUMA SURVIVORS

- ◆ 90 minutes weekly, ongoing
- ◆ Focuses on the present and on interpersonal relationships
- ◆ In conjunction with individual therapy
- ◆ Offered in Albany and Scotia
CONTACT: Pam Ennis (Albany) or Patty Gillen (Scotia)

Samaritan Counseling Center Special Programs

Five Ways You Can Invest in Hope and Healing

❖ Project PASS (Parents And Schools for Students)

This is an innovative, community-based family therapy program, which serves at-risk students who are in danger of failing school. Samaritan Center therapists work systemically with the student, family members, friends, teachers and school administrators to address the academic and behavioral issues concerning the adolescents. Meetings and sessions may be held at the Center, or the school.

❖ Project Recovery

Many times, survivors of sexual abuse face a daunting recovery that can include symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression, insomnia, eating disorders, suicidal feelings and relationship difficulties. Funding is necessary to help support both men and women on their road to recovery.

❖ The Couple's Clinic

The reality in today's society is that 50% of all marriages end in divorce. Building a healthy marriage in the midst of multiple pressures is difficult. Couples need all the support they can receive to create long-lasting, healthy marriages. This project helps couples build stronger marriages and families through marital therapy and community workshops.

The Couples' Clinic offered a free "Marriage Check Up Workshop" to the surrounding communities and intends to continue the community-based support for couples in trouble.

❖ Women's Project

The statistics for women are staggering: more women than men report having depression; women are more vulnerable financially to the realities of divorce, losing a spouse and single parenthood. Women are more likely to be victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. This project supports the unique needs of women for all of the issues that they face each day. Our Fund subsidizes counseling sessions for people without employment or health insurance.

❖ Clergy Institute

The burnout rate of clergy is staggering. The Clergy Institute provides therapy, support groups, workshops and church consultations to help support the needs of clergy. ☺

Annual Fall Breakfast

The Second Annual Fall Breakfast kicks off the 2004-2005 Silent Samaritan Campaign. ☺

Recommended Reading

The Hidden Lives of Congregations

Israel Galindo

Review by Keli Rugenstein, LCSW

No matter how long you've been a pastor, you're not exempt from church problems. That's because churches are made of people – and people aren't perfect. There are some constants among congregations that once understood, can be harnessed for the good of your corner of the kingdom. In his book, *The Hidden Lives of Congregations: Discerning Church Dynamics*, Israel Galindo has put together recent findings on church dynamics in light of family systems theory.

This book is divided into three parts: Understanding the Congregation, Understanding the Hidden Lives of Congregations, and Understanding Leadership in the Congregation. Topics such as Congregational Lifespan, Spirituality Style, Congregational Identity and the Functions of Congregational Leadership are presented in a reader friendly format. This book is not about church growth nor is it a 'how to' book.

Not a cookie cutter approach, Galindo allows the reader to apply the constants he presents in his book to their own unique situation. A deepened understanding of the hidden forces that shape a congregation will allow the pastor to see the bigger picture and develop a solution that fits one's own particular congregation.

This book is available from the Alban Institute at www.alban.org.

What is a Silent Samaritan?

Silent Samaritans are people of strength who want to invest in people needing hope and healing. They donate between \$100 and \$1000 a year, knowing that all money goes into the Silent Samaritan Fund. They know that the fund is used only to help those who cannot afford the cost of therapy. ☺

What is The Silent Samaritan Fund?

Each year the Samaritan Counseling Center provides tens of thousands of dollars in client subsidies, and the requests continue to grow. The Silent Samaritan Fund, established in 1989, uses donations from area churches, congregations, local businesses, and the public to help those people who can not afford the cost of counseling. The Silent Samaritan Fund is an ongoing campaign to help those without health insurance or even employment, receive the services they need. ☺

Upcoming Events

Brother's Keeper Clergy Support Group

With Keli Rugenstein, LCSW and
Rev. Pamela Pater-Ennis, LCSW-R.

Date: First and Third Friday of each
month, ongoing.
Time: Scotia: 8 AM to 9:30 AM
Albany: 10 AM to 11:30 AM
Place: Samaritan Counseling Center
220 N. Ballston Avenue, Scotia
First Church in Albany,
110 N. Pearl St., Albany
Cost: \$35 per meeting

Please call (518) 374-3514 for more
information or to register

From Idolatry to Grace

Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2004
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
(lunch is provided)
Place: Sarazen Student Union Building
Room 241-243, Siena College

This workshop will explore the spiritual work of marriage. Themes such as forgiveness, acceptance, grace and redemption are all important themes in marriage that are often not addressed. Marriage can be a crucible for spiritual development.

Pre-registration is required. Please call Capital Region Theological Center at (518) 462-2470 for more information.

Spiritual Retreats for Survivors of Sexual Trauma

- Half-day Retreat at First Reformed Church
December 4, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
in Scotia, NY
- Overnight Fowler Camp and Retreat Center
May 13-14, 2005 in Speculator, NY

These retreats will explore the hurt, anger, confusion and betrayal resulting from sexual abuse. The format will include group therapy sessions, quiet time, journaling exercises and a concluding healing worship experience.

Schedules and costs to be announced. Please contact Pam Ennis or Patty Gillen at (518) 374-3514 for more information.



**WATCHING THE AUTUMN
LEAVES IS A LOT LIKE
RAISING KIDS. FIRST THEY
TURN ON YOU, AND THEN
THEY FLY AWAY.**

**AND NEXT THING YOU
KNOW, YOU LOOK OUT
THE WINDOW AND THEY'RE
BACK!**

CONSULTATION CORNER

Reducing Fall Stress

David C. Olsen, PhD
Modified from *Business Review*
September 10-16, 2004

The symptoms of stress vary. Sleepless nights, chest pain, increased alcohol consumption, dread of facing Monday morning and boredom may all be related to stress. Add this to the impact of shorter days, holiday visits and expenses, and harsh weather that the fall season signals.

Steps to Reduce Stress

So how can we deal with stress more effectively? The simplest place to start is by looking at ways we actually increase our own stress response.

- First, start by exploring your belief systems. The way events are interpreted colors how you experience the stress. Beliefs such as "I need to perform perfectly," or "I need to make my coworkers happy," or "It's all up to me" magnify stress. Such beliefs easily can lead to black-and-white thinking, which makes any negative into a "catastrophe." Working with a coach or therapist to modify these beliefs, or how you interpret stressors can be helpful.

- Second, some troublesome beliefs emerge from our experiences in our families. For example, roles we played earlier in life, such as needing to over-function, stay with us in our work roles. If we over-functioned growing up, we are probably still over-functioning at work, adding more stress to the job. Unfortunately,

the more we over-function at work, the more people demand and expect of us.

If we grew up in a family with high levels of stress, trauma, or dysfunction, we can develop a sense of hypervigilance that leaves us scanning anxiously.

If we never felt noticed or validated growing up, the need for validation can lead us to overwork as a way of getting noticed or feeling accepted, leading us to work longer and harder in an effort finally to receive some of what we missed earlier in life. And the more we are anxious and need to be liked, the more difficult it is to set clear boundaries and limits to what we do at work.

- Third, be aware of "pile-up stress." Dealing with a difficult marriage, an acting-out adolescent, or an aging parent on top of a demanding job magnifies stress significantly.

- Finally, sometimes we work too hard and create stress to avoid looking at other things in our lives. Ernest Becker's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Denial of Death*, was a powerful reminder that we can overwork as a way of overriding powerful existential issues, loss, loneliness, marital or family problems, and other difficulties.

So it is possible to decrease your own stress level. Check your belief systems, explore some of the issues you bring from your family of origin, and ask yourself what work is helping you avoid. And don't wait too long to get some help. ☺



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Samaritan Services
Individual, Couples, Family & Group Therapy
Educational Workshops
Professional/Organizational Consultation

Office Locations
Schenectady/Scotia, Albany, Rensselaer
Clifton Park, Jonesville, Ballston Spa
Johnstown, Wilton
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to schedule an appointment.

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