

FITTING ALL THE PIECES

Central Michigan District Health Department
HIV/AIDS Case Management Program

October 2008

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FORGIVENESS

What is forgiveness?

There's no one definition of forgiveness. But in general, forgiveness is a decision to let go of resentments and thoughts of revenge. Forgiveness is the act of untying yourself from thoughts and feelings that bind you to the offense committed against you. This can reduce the power these feelings otherwise have over you, so that you can live freer and happier life in the present. Forgiveness can even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

Doesn't forgiving someone mean you're forgetting or condoning what happened?

Absolutely not! Forgiving isn't the same as forgetting what happened to you. The act that hurt or offended you may always remain a part of your life. But forgiveness can lessen its grip on you and help you focus on other, positive parts of your life. Forgiveness also doesn't mean that you deny the other person's responsibility for hurting you, and it doesn't minimize or justify the wrong. You can forgive the person without excusing the act.

What are the benefits of forgiving someone?

Researchers have recently become interested in studying the effects of being unforgiving and being forgiving. Evidence is mounting that holding on to grudges and bitterness results in long-term health problems. Forgiveness, on the other hand, offers numerous benefits, including:

- * Lower blood pressure
- * Stress reduction
- * Less hostility
- * Better anger management skills
- * Lower heart rate
- * Lower risk of alcohol or substance abuse
- * Fewer depression symptoms
- * Fewer anxiety symptoms
- * Reduction in chronic pain
- * More friendships
- * Healthier relationships
- * Greater religious or spiritual well-being
- * Improved psychological well-being



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Clinic Dates

October 24, 2008
9:00am—4:00pm

November 21, 2008
9:00am—4:00pm

December 19, 2008
9:00am—4:00pm

Clinic is located on the
2nd floor of the county
building in Harrison.

Look for the Family
Planning clinic sign

Look out for trick-or-treaters this
month



Catrina's Corner

We sure had a terrific speaker at last month's support group. I know that many of you for whatever reasons were unable to attend, but you all are in luck. Ms. Eiseler has agreed to return this month and speak again for us. This time she will be discussing the concept of forgiveness. We have more than likely all been in need of forgiveness at some point in our lives, but we also have all probably been in the position to forgive others as well. Forgiveness can be an extremely healing process for everyone involved.

Our dietician will be back from her maternity leave this month so for those of you who will be at clinic this month, come prepared with your questions. Kati's really excited to see everyone again! We will also be offering flu shots at the October and November clinics. If you are not scheduled to come in for clinic, but would like to stop in for your flu shot, please just give me a call.

Fall is here and winter will be coming quicker than we realize so be sure to winterize your home as best as you can. Much heat can be lost around windows and doors. Filling in these gaps is relatively inexpensive, easy to do, and will go a long way toward keeping your home warmer. I know that heating costs are expected to rise this winter, so if you believe that you may be faced with a heating dilemma, please contact me before it becomes a crisis. Often it takes days to get a program or emergency assistance in place to handle the situation and that may make for some really cold toes while you wait. I look forward to seeing you all soon at group and clinic. Take care and stay warm.

Commitment To Change

Ready.

Willing..

And Able...

Making Health A Priority

KATI'S TIPS

When someone close to you is lost, it is normal to experience a wide variety of emotions. Grief is one such emotion which may make it difficult to perform normal activities. Losing a loved one can also cause major changes to your daily routine and make it difficult to cope. Often this leads to a negative effect on not only your mental well-being, but your physical well-being as well. In fact, people experiencing grief and loss are often at a higher risk of not meeting their nutritional needs. You may find yourself not wanting to eat due to a lack of appetite, lack of motivation, or because you now have to eat alone. Or perhaps you have never had to do the grocery shopping, meal planning, and cooking before and you lack the experience or skill needed for these roles. Whatever the case, if you are suffering from grief or the loss of a loved one and find that you are having difficulty eating because of it, there are many tricks you can try to not only help you meet your nutritional goals but to help you adjust to life after loss.

When eating becomes difficult for you, try some of these tricks below. If these do not work for you, please talk to a registered dietitian or nutritionist who can provide more individualized advice.

- ◆ Instead of a few big meals each day, split your meals up into five or six mini-meals that you eat throughout the day.
- ◆ Eat even when you don't feel hungry.
- ◆ Eat a wide variety of foods to optimize the nutritional value of your meals.
- ◆ When you make a meal that is too large for you to eat on your own in one sitting, refrigerate or freeze the leftovers for another meal. Make sure to use safe food practices!
- ◆ Plan your meals in advance and shop with a

shopping list.

- ◆ Make plans to eat your meals in the company of others when you can. Either invite friends over or, if this isn't available to you, eat in a public place.
- ◆ If you do eat alone, try eating with music or television playing in the background.
- ◆ Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement daily to supplement your meals as a way to ensure that you are receiving all of the nutrients your body needs to function at its best.



continued...FORGIVENESS

Why do we hold grudges and become resentful and unforgiving?

The people most likely to hurt us are those closest to us — our partners, friends, siblings and parents. When we're hurt by someone we love and trust — whether it's a lie, betrayal, rejection, abuse or insult — it can be extremely difficult to overcome. And even minor offenses can turn into huge conflicts.

When you experience hurt or harm from someone's actions or words, whether this is intended or not, you may begin experiencing negative feelings such as anger, confusion or sadness, especially when it's someone close to you. These feelings may start out small. But if you don't deal with them quickly, they can grow bigger and more powerful. They may even begin to crowd out positive feelings. Grudges filled with resentment, vengeance and hostility take root when you dwell on hurtful events or situations, replaying them in your mind many times.

Soon, you may find yourself swallowed up by your

own bitterness or sense of injustice. You may feel trapped and may not see a way out. It's very hard to let go of grudges at this point and instead you may remain resentful and unforgiving.

How do I know it's time to try to embrace forgiveness?

When we hold on to pain, old grudges, bitterness and even hatred, many areas of our lives can suffer. When we're unforgiving, it's we who pay the price over and over. We may bring our anger and bitterness into every relationship and new experience. Our lives may be so wrapped up in the wrong that we can't enjoy the present. Other signs that it may be time to consider forgiveness include:

- * Dwelling on the events surrounding the offense
- * Hearing from others that you have a chip on your shoulder or that you're wallowing in self-pity
- * Being avoided by family and friends because they don't enjoy being around you

- * Having angry outbursts at the smallest perceived slights
- * Often feeling misunderstood
- * Drinking excessively, smoking or using drugs to try to cope with your pain
- * Having symptoms of depression or anxiety
- * Being consumed by a desire for revenge or punishment
- * Automatically thinking the worst about people or situations
- * Regretting the loss of a valued relationship
- * Feeling like your life lacks meaning or purpose
- * Feeling at odds with your religious or spiritual beliefs

The bottom line is that you may often feel miserable in your current life.

Taken from MayoClinic.com

Support Group

October 20, 2008	Loss and Grief...continued
November 17, 2008	To Be Announced
December 15, 2008	To Be Announced
January 19, 2008	To Be Announced

Support Group meets 5:30-7:00pm. Call Catrina at 989-539-6731 ext. 8221 for location and directions

Websites

www.thebody.com
www.cmdhd.org
<http://moranutrition.com>



Contact Information

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1000 W. Cedar
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-4573

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
789 N. Clare Avenue
Harrison, MI 48625
989-539-2141

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
655 E. Cedar Avenue
Gladwin, MI 48624
989-426-9295

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
301 South Crapo – Suite 100
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
989-772-5938

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
4473 South 220th Avenue
Reed City, MI 49677
231-832-2247

Northern Lakes Community Mental Health
2715 S. Townline Rd.
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989-366-8550