

Life *equipping* News

Volume 4, Issue 2, 2014

Grateful reflection on self and life
is an art that should be mastered
for attaining restful sleep!

Imparting HOPE

Igniting PASSION

Inspiring LIFE

WELCOME....

The LIFE newsletter is produced quarterly. We hope it inspires you to pursue a life that is free and driven by purpose and passion

Our desire is that the articles will inspire, encourage and equip you on life's journey.

We all have one life to live and the choices we make today will impact all our tomorrows.

Today choose to live and love, your LIFE!

We would like to acknowledge Pam Visscher as copy editor.



Candy Daniels

Director, Counsellor, Nutritionist, Chaplain

Jodie Chambers

Counsellor, Chaplain

Anna Marie Steyn

Counsellor

IN THIS ISSUE

The perfect diet	3
Story - Who I am	4
Exercising your Brain	5
What's your pain	6
Overcoming your pain	7
Seminar News	7
The typewriter	8
In celebration of Life -	8
Self Harm	9

Cover Photo - LIFE Images
Berwick - Australia

International Affiliations

Danolene Johanessen

Director Dream Kidz, South Africa

Amritha Perera

United Arab Emirates

Our mission is to
Impart HOPE
Ignite PASSION
Inspire LIFE

www.lifeinternational.com.au

info@lifeinternational.com.au

www.facebook.com/lifeaustralia

THE PERFECT DIET

Have you ever wondered what the perfect diet is? Have you searched the world over and perhaps even tried a few diets only to find that there is no such thing as the perfect diet. A diet is essentially the foods we decide to consume or refrain from.

We know that we require food to sustain us. If we go for long periods of time without food we will get weak. When it comes to food it does matter what we consume, as this has an effect on the quality of our life.

Just as our body requires good nutrition so does our mind, brain and spirit. So, how do we feed these elements that make us a complete person? Our functionality is dependent on what we feed our body, mind, brain and heart.

The perfect diet for a long fruitful life is as follows. Apart from eating foods that are good for your physical heart, I would like to introduce you to foods that are the key to a healthy emotional heart.

The key ingredient for a healthy emotional heart is love. Yes, that four letter word that many struggle to define just as they struggle to define the perfect diet. Love to me is about believing and knowing that I belong and that I am accepted just the way I am for who I am.

To feed the heart what is required is relationships. Superficial relationships are like eating sugar. It makes you feel good

only for a short period, you keep being drawn to it but it is not satisfying neither is it good for you.

Talking about sugar, did you know that consuming too much sugar can restrict your brain from functioning to its optimal levels? Sugar has an effect on the hormones in the brain that manages our behaviour and moods. Feed your brain with foods rich with new experiences that bring you pleasure rather than pain.

Our mind is our control centre. Feeding the mind on negativity is like eating junk food. Our minds need to feed on positive thoughts. Replace every negative thought with at least 3-5 positives. This will change your attitude and life.

Now we all know the right types of foods to feed our physical body. Each individual is unique and will need more of something and less of something else. The best way to know what is best for your physical body is to pay attention to how your body feels after food.

The food we consume should give us physical strength as well as mental strength, it should further sustain our heart and our minds. The perfect diet will keep you feeling good and enjoying life. The next time you think about diet consider your heart, brain, mind and body. Your diet will either add to your life or take from it. Enrich your diet and enrich your life.

Candy Daniels

LIFE talks - stories

I received a caption the other day and it meant something to me as it gave me a chance to reflect on my journey in life. It goes like this “ When I look back on my life I can see the pain I’ve endured, the mistakes I’ve made and the hard times I’ve suffered. When I look in the mirror I see how strong I’ve become, the lessons I’ve learned and I’m proud of who I am.” Reflection is sometimes good for one’s soul as it causes you to look at things in your life that either needs to change or that has changed.

For a long time I was wondering what goes through someone’s mind who wants to commit suicide, or commits adultery, what causes them to get to a place of utter desperation that will cause them to either call it quits or to allow themselves to become smitten with another man or woman. I experienced it not so long ago, where I felt so desperate that I wanted to let go of life. I didn’t believe that there was anyone who will miss me or who would need me to stay and fight the emotions that overwhelm me at times.

Not so long ago I experienced the overwhelming feeling of being needed by another. Though it didn’t go anywhere, nor did the other person know anything about it. I experienced the feelings of being needed and wanted by someone other than my husband. You might read this and for a instance wonder “how could she! how is it possible”.

We judge and find fault, because we all think that it could never happen to us, as that was my very thought once upon a time. In the beginning of my marriage I felt strong and secure, everything was full of roses and I

didn’t see the thorns that were hiding behind the other roses, until I picked it up and I experienced overwhelming pain of those things that we can’t hide away from or even run away from. It overwhelms you.....

So now, as I reflect I realised that where I am now, is not where I was before; what I was, I am not anymore. It made me smile, for I didn’t commit suicide when I felt overwhelmed and anxious, and I didn’t fall into another man’s arms and lose everything. First of all the grace of God that kept me, the love of God that embraced me, the power of God that sustained me, and lastly sisters (friends) who prayed for me. I called out when it was all dark and their prayers carried me out of those dark circumstances.

Now I am sitting here, looking at my life through a mirror and I see the journey I have been on, where I was, where I am and where I am heading, and I am proud of who I am. I have learned to manage those things that sometimes overwhelm me or make me anxious. I have realised the power in knowing WHO I AM and WHOSE I AM!

Anonymous



EXERCISING YOUR BRAIN

We all have levels of coping and strategies we use to deal with things when they go wrong. For some the distance between coping and not coping is wide, while for others it is not so wide. In psychology this can be called our window of tolerance.

If you think of a window, our tolerance is our ability to stand in front of the window and observe the world, while the world observes us. When we are not coping we move out of the window and into our 'uncomfortable zone.'

The distance between comfortable and uncomfortable is different for each person, however, we all have a window of tolerance, and we all spend a lot of energy trying to stay within it. When we are out of the window we may have feelings of panic, nervousness and rage or at the other end feelings of lethargy, low motivation and depression. How can you not only keep in the window but widen the view?

Exercise.

Easy, well there is a catch. The best time to do these exercises is when you don't want to. Your brain likes drama, so when everything is going well it doesn't think the exercises are necessary, however, when you find yourself outside the window, the brain decides it will do the exercises. The exercises help to bring you back into your window but it does not widen your view, so you stay stuck in

the same frame of life. The window can also be made smaller through experiences of trauma in your life and you begin to spend more time in the 'uncomfortable zone.'

Here are two exercises to try to help widen your window.

To calm down use breathing exercises. Controlling breath is a way to trick your emotions into believing you are in control. Use a normal breathe in and out. Hold your hand as though you are holding a pen. As you breathe normally in, float your hand up from approximately your naval to eye level. As you breathe out normally, draw a squiggly line down. If you are in public and can't 'draw' your lines, try thinking of your breath as going up a highway and down a winding road.

When feeling lethargic or depressed you need to wake your body up. Your body tells you to sit still or lie down and your brain thinks there is nothing it can do. You may find yourself fading out or difficult to concentrate. Movement is the key. Wiggle your toes in your shoes, move your legs, stand up or for something crazy, give yourself a pat down in your arms and legs or start waving your arms around.

Happy exercising!! And remember the best time to try is when you first start feeling yourself heading into the 'uncomfortable zone.'

Jodie Chambers

What's your PAIN?

Have you ever experienced pain? I know you are wondering if I am actually from this planet asking such a question. The reason I asked this question is because I am curious to find out what your first thought was. Did you first think -

- ♦ physical pain - the pain that you experience in your body. Most often you can pinpoint it to a particular region in the body even if you can't explain what it feels like
- ♦ emotional pain - the pain that you experience as a sensation in your body. Most often you might point to a region in your body where you feel it, you might describe it with emotional words or as a sensation of feeling angry, sad, happy, scared...
- ♦ spiritual pain - the pain that you experience or feel in your body. Most often you will struggle to explain the it, you might point to it being in your chest, heart or just above your stomach or below your chest.

Can you define the pain you experience into one of the above categories? If I ask you the question have you experienced pain and you answer yes; let me tell you, you are not alone.

There are many causes of pain. Although our bodies are strong internally and externally, the way we look after them or neglect them has a lot to do with the cause of the pain. Pain is a symptom that something is not right, it is not the problem. Chronic pain is pain that is ongoing, while acute pain is short lived. Chronic pain regardless of how or where

it is experienced, can lead to depression if not dealt with appropriately.

The cause or problem of spiritual pain is fear, it is experienced when a person doesn't experience love. Love is such a deep word that I would like to break it down a bit further and say that in this respect love is about being accepted and knowing that you belong. Being loved is one of the most fundamental needs we have as human beings. It is the foundation that gives us worth and purpose. It is not enough to know that we are loved; love has to be experienced for it is about connection. This experience gives assurance and plants the seed of belief which then needs to be nurtured.

Emotional pain is experienced when those who we think, know or believe love us let us down stealing our peace. The cause is most often lack of security. When we lack security we have no basis for building emotional resilience. This weakens our immune system physically as well as mentally. Security or peace is our second most fundamental need.

Physical pain is experienced when our body gets hurt. At times physical pain can be experienced due to prolonged emotional or spiritual pain. The cause of physical pain is the lack of freedom. Freedom to move and be who you are. The freedom of expression that comes from having joy and contentment. This is our third fundamental need.

Healing happens from inside out. Treating the pain can mask the problem. Treat the problem and soothe the pain for joy, peace and love which will give you freedom.

Candy Daniels

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERCOME YOUR PAIN!

Physical/body - doctor

Emotional/Soul - counsellor

Spiritual/Spirit - chaplain

There are other areas of pain as well, yet the above are often the starting point. Keep in mind that pain

- ♦ Is not an accurate measure of the problem
- ♦ Pain is common but not normal
- ♦ Ignore the pain and the problem will get bigger
- ♦ Pain will lead you to the source of the problem when you get the right guidance.

Ways to overcome pain

- ♦ Courage - accept the fact and truth that you are in pain. Then seek assistance
- ♦ Persistence - you may not find the right person who will understand you or diagnose the issue the first time. You must persist till you find the answers you are seeking
- ♦ Vulnerability - seek the truth, speak the truth, know the truth
- ♦ Perspective - focus on the solution rather than the issue
- ♦ Determination - control the pain before the pain controls you



LIVING LIFE

SEMINAR

LIVING LIFE - release, revive, restore

We explore the significance of self care to awaken your awareness to the body, mind, spirit connection in order to live life.

These events are interactive, exploring fun and healthy ways to create change through experiences that challenge our thinking, feelings and behaviour.

Looking forward, empowering you to dream and seeing you shine!

For further details or to book into our May 2014 seminar visit us at www.lifeinternational.com.au

To release, revive & restore your life!

Have you considered hosting a **LIVING LIFE** seminar to empower and improve health, morale, productivity of your most valuable asset?

The Typewriter

Some of you may remember the days of the typewriter and the typing pools, getting ink on your fingers when changing the ribbon and the mess with carbon paper. Others of you may have heard people talk about the old typewriters but never used one.

I have an old typewriter in my office and sometimes I get it out for the children to have a play with. There have been some very interesting questions asked about using the typewriter, however none about how it may work. This has left me wondering how children view the world and how they solve problems.



It took me a while to realise that the children didn't have a concept of 'return.' On the typewriter when you get to the end of the page, the bell rings and you pull on the arm to wind up the paper and return to the beginning of the page. Children would ask me "what's that?" when the bell rang and then report that the machine was 'broken' when they could no longer type because they had come to the end of the page. I found myself stuck for words to explain how they needed to manually move the paper as this seemed simple to me. I was also left wondering why they didn't try and 'fix' the problem. They just sat back and asked questions.

I started thinking about the concept of getting old and the idea of not being relevant in today's society. What I came to realise is the children could only sit and ask for help because that is what they do when the computer doesn't work, or they press more buttons to try and make something happen. They are left to sit helplessly waiting for someone to tell them what to do next. When things go wrong for me I begin looking into how it is supposed to work and try and figure out what has gone wrong. I tend to do less of that as I get older, not because I'm not interested but I have been told, and have learnt from experience, that 'fiddling' can get you into more trouble.

In our modern society are we teaching children that all they need to do is press a button and things will happen and if they don't happen then they are helpless to do anything about it? Do we discourage them from making discoveries because they are not experts? How do we encourage them to be curious about how things work, what makes the parts move, and how is it put together?

Jodie Chambers

In Celebration of Life - Lakshman Peiris (1934-2014)

Our condolences to Amritha and family on the loss of their dad and grandfather. Lakshman was a man who loved life and lived passionately for what he believed. He inspired many by his words and even more by his actions. He was bold, courageous, adventurous, one who stood by the Word of God, and demonstrated the love of Jesus Christ with eagerness. It was a pleasure knowing him and I am certain his legacy will live on through his children.

Candy Daniels

WHEN SELF HARM MOVES IN NEXT DOOR.

Self-harm is one of those things we wish didn't happen but all of a sudden we discover someone we know is self-harming. Then we quickly have to make a decision about how we are feeling about this. Some of us might experience disgust, others sympathy, or even confusion, or all of these emotions all at once. At this point we have to decide how to act around the person who is self-harming.

Normally we don't know how to act around someone who self-injures and we either stare, ignore them or in our effort to try and act normal we make it so obvious that we are uncomfortable around them that it makes us feel even worse and more uncomfortable. Let me put your mind at ease; it is ok to feel uncomfortable.

Parents who discover their teenagers are self-harming go into this spiral of self-doubt, self-blaming, guilt, maybe depression, anger, or all of these emotions at once. But let's take a look at what self-harm is. I refer mostly to teenagers but the statements are true for everyone.

The following are things research has discovered about self-harm:

- ◆ Approximately 1% of the population has at one time or another used self-inflicted self-injury as a way of coping with an overwhelming situation or feeling in their lives. This involves teenagers as well as grownups.
- ◆ Teens who hurt themselves are not trying to commit suicide. Some teens who self-injure might be suicidal and think often about death, but their self-injury is a way of coping with the pain in their lives and as one teenager told me: I am cutting to live. It becomes a habit - an addiction.
- ◆ There are many ways people self-injure and it could involve cutting, pinching or burning (amongst others) themselves.
- ◆ People who self-injure are not crazy and don't always warrant hospitalization.
- ◆ When teenagers injure they are not trying it for attention. Talking to teenagers indicates that they are actually doing this as a cry for help. Most teenagers who self-harm hide their scars from adults, especially their parents. They feel ashamed and scared of being found out. They will harbour their secret for a long time, taking great pains not to let those closest to them know about it for fear of rejection.
- ◆ Self-inflicted wounds are not a way of being accepted at school. There might be cliques of friends at school and they might share a common trait of self-injury but they are not harming themselves to be part of the group.
- ◆ It is not only people with other serious psychological problems who harm themselves. It is true that some people have some serious psychological problems and self-injure but it is not true of everyone

- ♦ Girls and boys typically self-injure in different ways. Boys might be more indirect in how they seek self-injury and might try high-risk behaviours such as extreme sports rather than cutting for example. Girls more commonly fall into a pattern of self-injury but there are many boys who self-injure.
- ♦ Self-injury is not just a phase if the cuts are superficial. The severity of the self-injury has very little to do with the feelings you might have. People have different levels of tolerance and find different ways they hurt themselves.



What is the pain about?

Pain is not always a bad thing and we all have had an experience with pain feeling good. For example, firmly massaging an aching muscle, or scratching an itch, or even diving into a cold pool on a 40 degree day. Some scientists state that sudden pain releases endorphins, a biochemical that produces a kind of high in the brain. This might be one of the reasons why self-injury becomes addictive for some people. We want to feel good.

What do I do when I self-injure?

We don't have to self-injure. However, if there is self-injury involved, it is not as simple as simply stopping because the underlying cause and the triggers will have to be worked through and alternative ways of dealing with emotional pain be discovered. It is a journey; it is not a quick fix. But there is a hope of being able to face the day, working through our pain and coming to like ourselves again. Self-harm is also about not feeling good about ourselves.

What if my daughter or son self-injures?

Remain calm and assure them of your love and your concern for their well-being. They need to know that you are there for them no matter what, even if it feels that your world is falling apart. Understand that this is their coping mechanism and therefore the focus should not be to 'stop the self-harm' but rather looking at alternative ways to relieve the distress. Don't trivialise their feelings or situations which might have led them to self-harm. Don't punish them or try threatening to withdraw your care and love. Encourage your child to speak to someone they can trust, i.e. school counsellor, chaplain. Find someone you can confide in, to try and work through your own emotional distress.

What are the signs of self-harm?

- ♦ Cutting, scratching, or pinching (enough to cause bleeding and leave marks)
- ♦ Banging or punching objects or self to the point of bruising or bleeding
- ♦ Ripping and tearing of skin
- ♦ Carving words or patterns into their skin
- ♦ Interfering with the healing of wounds
- ♦ Burning skin with cigarettes, matches or hot water
- ♦ Compulsively pulling out large clumps of hair
- ♦ Deliberately overdosing on medications when this is NOT meant as a suicide attempt.

There is a First Aid Mental health acronym used when dealing with Mental health issues and I share it here with you. This is from the Youth Mental Health First Aid Manual:

A - Approach the young person, assess and assist with any crisis

L - Listen non judgmentally

G - Give support and Information

E - Encourage the young person to get appropriate professional help.

E - Encourage other supports

Lastly, be gentle to yourself. Be gentle to the person who is self-harming. It is a journey of self-discovery and healing. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Further assistance can be obtained from the following services or please don't hesitate to contact us.

Anna Marie Steyn

Mental Health First Aid Website Australia: www.mhfa.com.au

Shapiro, L. E. (2008) *Stopping the pain – a workbook for teens who cut & self-injure*. Instant self-help books, USA.

Eating Disorders:

www.eatingdisorders.org.au

Depression & Anxiety:

www.beyondblue.org.au

<http://moodgym.anu.edu.au>

<http://brave.psy.uq.edu.au>

www.nimh.nih.gov

www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au

Mental Health Crisis number: 1300 369 012



©Life International Pty Ltd

For Questions, Comments and
Subscriptions or to use any of the
material contained in this
newsletter please contact us
through

enews@lifeinternational.com.au

www.facebook.com/lifeaustralia

www.lifeinternational.com.au