

Saving Families, Saving Lives - 412-366-1300



Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry

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Since 1966

Spring/Summer 2016 Newsletter

Thank You For Helping Us Minister to the Grieving

Your support of Anchorpoint enables us to reach out to the broken-hearted not only through counseling but also our Grief Support Group. When you contribute to helping one person like the woman who shares her story below, you also have a profound affect on the others this person influences:

We are sharing this testimony from our Golden Anchor Gala for those of you who were not present. This woman's powerful story and courageous delivery of it moved us to both laughter and tears.

"Webster defines grief, '*the state of being forcibly deprived of.*' This is where my story begins. My husband of fifty years died unexpectedly on January 27, 2003 as the result of an invasive test for tissue samples. This test was required before he could be cleared for knee replacement surgery. The test caused a piece of plaque to break loose, causing a heart attack. He survived the heart attack, however, the part of the brain required for breathing was deprived of oxygen. The diagnosis was brain death. He was connected to life support on Friday and on Monday they disconnected it. After several minutes he died. The entire family was overwhelmed and devastated at the sudden loss of the family patriarch. It was difficult for me because I did not want to add to their grief. I postponed my own grieving.

Life goes on...different than before and not of our choosing. Dealing with death leaves a great deal of responsibility to survivors. I like to think my husband would have approved and enjoyed his funeral. It was a celebration of his life. To quote Phyllis Diller, 'a thin line separates laughter and pain, comedy and tragedy, humor and hurt.'

After some time I realized I needed professional

help. Some of the first experiences were too structured for me. I had already been writing, and making pictures was not for me.

I think it was through a church bulletin that I read about Anchorpoint's bereavement meetings. Those meetings are now known to us "regulars" as Jay's

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Please Share Your Memories with Us: Anchorpoint is getting ready to celebrate 50 Years!

Would you share your Anchorpoint (North Hills Youth Ministry) memories? How has this ministry impacted you as a volunteer, client, or donor?



We need your input as we put together a 50th Anniversary Celebration. Please send your photos, stories, testimonies, etc. to the address below or marketing@anchorpointcounseling-ministry.org. Thank you.

Inside this issue: • Helpful resources for you or a friend. • Details about upcoming events. • Ways your contributions have improved the lives and wellbeing of those we serve.



Formerly North Hills Youth Ministry Counseling Center
800 McKnight Park Drive, Suite 802 • Pittsburgh, PA 15237-6504
www.anchorpointcounselingministry.org • 412-366-1300
Building hope and promoting healing and learning through faith-based counseling and support services.
We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. - Hebrews 6:19

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group. I came to realize how angry and pitifully lost in pain I was. Through hearing and sharing and the patient guidance of Jay, I came to realize how to grieve. I could not expect anyone else to do it for me but I did not have to do it alone. I have made some very good friends through those meetings. We learned to listen to each other, to promise ‘what happens in grief sessions stays in grief sessions.’ I think Las Vegas borrowed that from us! We tell our stories, seek relief from our pain and confusion, cry together and eventually learn how to laugh.

One of the lessons I now appreciate happened after one of our meetings. The church’s parish social minister approached me and commented that we had such a lively group. We shared a few conversations after some of the meetings and eventually she asked me if I ‘would like to help with the funeral planning ministry.’ At first I was appalled...of course not...I’m still in recovery! Let me think about it....YES. Now I selfishly realize that giving comfort to others helped me to allow others to comfort me.

In his homily three years ago, Pope Francis said, ‘To suffer is to take the difficulty and carry it with strength so that the difficulty does not drag us down.’ From that quote I got the message you build your own strength by reaching out to others and in turn they help you.

Many thanks to Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry. You have successfully accomplished your mission.”



"I see that I am not alone in my situation."

Anchorpoint's **Grief Support Group for Widows and Widowers Over Fifty** meets twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. The group is hosted by St. Sebastian's Church. Private counseling sessions are also available at ACM with a compassionate therapist.

Call Anchorpoint today at 412-366-1300 to register for this grief support group or to schedule a private counseling session.

Anchorpoint Staff

Executive Director

Rev. Dr. Ron Barnes, LSW

Counselors:

Sr. Mary Jane Beatty, CDP, MSEd, LMFT
Rev. Don Ludwig, LSW
Jennifer McCaslin, MA, NCC, LPC
Robin Rishel, PHD, LPC
Barbara Smith, MA, CAADC, CCDPD, LPC
Jay Sperling, MSEd, LPC
Don Shar, MA, NCC

Education & Support Groups:

Cassy Wimmer, LSW,
Groups Facilitator, Community Education
Joan Wolf Schenker, MEd,
Family Life Specialist/Parent Coach

Tutoring

Sandy Niekum, MEd,
Tutoring Program Manager
Joanne Novak & Leanne Bentz, MS,
Tutoring Program Assistants

Administration:

Denise Patsko, Director of Development
Wendy Cibula, Communications Coordinator
Lisa Feraco, Office Manager
Laurie Bunguard, Assistant Office Manager

Wish List Thank You!

Restaurant Gift Cards or Prepared Meals Needed: A delicious free meal is provided to the moms and children who attend the SPIN for Single Moms Support Group at ACM on Wednesday evenings. We have been blessed with local churches and restaurants who have prepared meals and individuals who have donated gift cards so that we can purchase meals. We are in need of meals for the fall and winter of 2016. Call Cassy at 412-366-1300 for more information on quantities and to reserve a date to treat stressed out moms and families with a worry free meal.

Volunteer Tutors: Substitute tutors for the remainder of the year as well as tutors for the fall are needed. Call Sandy Niekum at 412-366-1300 ex. 123 to apply.

Office & Mailing Volunteers Needed: Answer phones, stuff envelopes, and more fun. Call Lisa Feraco at 412-366-1300 x100 for details.

Event Participants/Volunteers/Sponsors:

- **Walkers/Sponsors for the HighMark Walk (Saturday, May 14)**
- **Concession Volunteers for the US Open in Oakmont (June 13-19)**
- **Golfers for our Golf Classic on (Friday, September 16)**
- **Sponsors/Silent Auction Items:** For the Golf Classic & Golden Anchor Gala

Your Continued Prayer Support and Friendship.



Don't Let Bitterness Rule Your Life

By Cassy Wimmer, LSW Groups Facilitator & Staff Therapist

The Bible warns about the impact of bitterness and anger. It's "poison" will harm you and your loved ones. If bitterness is a "root" growing in your heart, it's time to pull it out! You can take healthy actions.

According to studies including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 85% of all diseases have a strong link to your emotional state. Some experts believe the real percentage is even higher. Tingling, difficulty thinking clearly, heart palpitations or tightening of the chest, increased blood pressure, headaches, pressure in the head or sinus cavities, fatigue, digestive imbalances, insomnia, anxiety, depression, skin problems (including eczema), heart attack, and stroke can all be manifestations of your emotional state.



Stop letting your past control how you experience the present; pick a few of the following anger-busters to practice in your life.

- **Take a break.** Did you know that it takes 20 minutes for your body to come down from its fight-or-flight mode? Leave the room. Talk yourself down by saying the same things you would say to a friend in this situation. Do whatever it takes to get your heart rate down and start thinking clearly.

- **Make a list of your accomplishments.** What is good in your life? What do you do well?

- **Be present in the moment.** What is going on around you right now that you can enjoy and participate in fully? Dwelling on the past can't change the past, it will only ruin your mood now.

- **Practice good health and mental health.** Eat healthy, find exercise you enjoy, compliment yourself, relax and don't let yourself get over-burdened, grow a support circle, find a spiritual outlet, and see a therapist if you need to.

- **Mindfulness.** This approach teaches you to ground your emotions, noticing and accepting your feelings without judgement. Acknowledging emotions helps us work through them and move on, and the relaxation tools mindfulness provides are very beneficial.

- **Engage in a relaxing activity.** For example, color a picture or take a candle-lit bath. Practice breathing slowly while you do this.

- **Accept yourself.** Accept that you have negative feelings, and that it's ok to have them. Experience the good and bad

feelings, working through them without judgement. It's ok to go back to a feeling you thought you'd worked through.

- **Know yourself.** Discover what triggers your anger and plan ahead for it. What happens in your body right before you lose your cool? Can you remove yourself from the situation before you get to that point? Practice different ways of calming down to discover what works for you and what doesn't.

- **Set Boundaries.** You are in charge of what your relationships look like. Defining the behavior you will accept in a relationship is healthy and necessary. This structure allows our relationships to flourish, as both parties know what is expected.

- **Learn Assertiveness.** Tell people why you feel the way you feel, taking ownership of your feelings. Let people know how their behavior affects you without blaming or becoming aggressive.

- **Forgive.** Bitterness allows an offending party to continue to hurt you, over and over every time you ruminate on the situation. Forgiveness is about setting yourself free from their grasp. The health benefits of forgiving are astonishing. Using the above-mentioned techniques, work continuously toward forgiveness, if not for your wrongdoer, then for yourself.

If you need help working through issues of anger and bitterness, Anchorpoint can help. Call to schedule an appointment with a counselor who can work with you on healthy coping strategies for a peaceful future. Call ACM today at 412-366-1300.



"I honestly didn't know the skills to save my marriage--or if it was worth saving--before this class!" - Participant in Marriage Workshop

Your generosity helps us to help families connect. Thank you!

Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry

June 20, 2016 thru August 5, 2016

Summer Tutoring Program

This program is designed to meet the unique challenges and needs of our students. One-on-one tutoring provides the opportunity for individualized instruction geared to student strengths and weaknesses. Customized lessons, taught by certified teachers, focus on the review & re-teaching of key concepts that the students need to master in order to be successful in the upcoming school year.



Subjects: KG to 12th Grade

READING – Sight Word Development, Phonics, Comprehension, Reading Fluency

MATHEMATICS – General Math, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry Trigonometry, Calculus

ENGLISH – Grammar & Composition

Students may sign up for one or more subjects

Flexible Summer Scheduling

- Monday – Friday, 9:00 – 3:00 (*an evening hour may be offered*)
- Schedule tutoring for 1 – 5 days/week
- Choose 1 hour or 1½ hour sessions
- Once scheduled, sessions will be the same days/times each week

Affordable Tutoring!

The cost for tutoring is determined by a sliding scale (based on a family's gross income and the number of people in the family). *Fees range from \$10.00/hour - \$25.00/hour.*

Full payment must be made on or before the start of the program. If necessary, ½ of the total fee can be paid at the beginning of the program with the remainder due on or before July 15, 2016. **Please Note: Refunds cannot be given for missed sessions; however, every attempt will be made to reschedule.



For more information and to register your child, contact Sandy Niekum at 412-366-1300 x123 or tutors@anchorpointcounselingministry.org

Can You Volunteer with us during the 2016 US Open?



Be a part of golf history while having a positive impact on struggling families.

Anchorpoint has been given an opportunity to raise funds for client services by staffing a beverage tent at the 2016 US Open. **Individual and group volunteers welcome.** Invite a friend to volunteer with you. Pass this on and check with your church, small group, or office. Reserve a shift to volunteer together.

Volunteers Still Needed for the following Days:

- Wednesday, June 15
2 Spots for 9 am to 5 pm
- Thursday, June 16
1 Spots for 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, June 19
3 Spots for 11 am to close

Call us at 412-366-1300 for more information and to reserve your volunteer spot for this exciting event.





Ten Great Reasons to Walk with Anchorpoint!

By Denise Patsko, Development Director

The 2016 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community Pittsburgh happens on Saturday, May 14, 2016, at Stage AE on the North Shore. Here are ten great reasons to get off the couch and join us:



1. Walking strengthens your heart.
2. Walking lowers disease risk.
3. Walking helps you lose weight.
4. Walking prevents dementia.
5. Walking tones up legs, bums and tums.
6. Walking boosts Vitamin D.
7. Walking gives you energy.
8. Walking makes you happy.
9. For a \$30 donation you'll get an awesome new Highmark t-shirt!
10. You can help raise money to support students participating in our Youth Development Program in need of academic, relational, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Register to walk as an individual, a family, join a team or form a team of your own at www.walkforahealthycommunity.org. If you can't walk with us, you can still register as a virtual walker and raise funds for Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry.

Volunteer Tutors Needed!

Make a difference for a child struggling with school work.

- **Substitute Tutors:** We need substitutes to fill in occasionally during the remainder of the school year (April and May).
- **Volunteer Tutors/Teachers:** We are also seeking tutors/teachers for the fall.

For more information, please contact, Sandy Niekum at 412-366-1300 ex. 123.



"I'm very grateful for the tutoring program at Anchorpoint. I have seen many benefits from my child going there. Some of them are her grades have improved, her self-esteem has gone up, and her attitude about going to school is also better. Everyone at Anchorpoint is very knowledgeable and helpful. I don't want to think of our school life for our child if I would not have found Anchorpoint tutoring." –Parent of a child in tutoring



ACM's services are here & affordable because of YOU!

Thank you for your generosity in helping us bring hope to so many families.

Pass this on to a friend in need: We're currently accepting clients for...

Professional Counseling

Individual, Couples & Families Welcome. We are here to help you face and resolve significant issues such as:

- Anger & Forgiveness
- Depression & Anxiety
- Emotional, Physical & Sexual Abuse
- Marriage & Family Problems
- Peer Pressure & Bullying
- Conflict Management
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- Faith & Meaning
- Loss & Grief
- School Difficulties
- Self-esteem
- Separation & Divorce
- Parent Coaching

If a life transition or unexpected crisis feels overwhelming or challenging, we can help. Call us at 412-366-1300 to begin the healing process.

Special Events: Save the Date & Join us!

Help ACM to raise awareness and critically needed funds for families who need our services.

Pittsburgh Gives Day

Tuesday, May 3 - 8 am to Midnight

Visit PittsburghGives.org and donate to ACM online.

Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

Saturday, May 14 - 9 am at Stage AE

Family friendly event! Walk with us or organize a team of walkers! Can't make it? Please support another ACM walker. To register visit www.walkforahealthycommunity.org

2016 US Open in Oakmont

Concession Volunteers Needed

Monday, June 13 thru Sunday June, 19th.

Call Denise to reserve a shift: 412-366-1300.

Golf Classic and Silent Auction

Friday, September 16 at Olde Stonewall Golf Club

The Golden Anchor Gala and 50th Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, October 27 at the LeMont Restaurant

Dinner and Awards Ceremony.

Stay-Tuned for additional 50th Anniversary Celebration Opportunities to be Announced.

Thank you for remembering us during your company's United Way Campaign.



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Support Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry by designating United Way Giving #354. Thank you.

Support & Educational Groups Registration Now Open

Call 412-366-1300 to register for the next session and for more information regarding costs and topics covered. Do not let a lack of financial resources keep you from registering. Scholarships & Sliding Scale payments are available.

- **Grief Support Group for Widows & Widowers Over Fifty—** Hosted by St. Sebastian's in Haber Hall on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month, 1:00 to 2:30 pm.
- **Self-Care for Women—**Mondays: 6:00 to 8:00 pm.
- **Life After Divorce—**Tuesdays: 6:00 to 7:30 pm.
- **Sanctuary for Teens—**Tuesdays: 4:00 to 5:30 pm.
- **Siblings of Children with Disabilities—**Mondays: 4:30-5:30 pm
- **Life Skills Group—**For children who need help learning how to interact in a socially appropriate way. Tuesdays: 4:30-5:30 pm
- **Custodial Grandparents—**Wednesdays: 12:30 to 2:30 pm.
- **SPIN For Single Moms—**1st & 3rd Wednesdays: 6:30 to 8:00 pm at ACM or the 4th Monday: 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the Center of Bellevue

Workshops...Invite Us to Your Location

ACM Staff will facilitate the topics of your choice at your site, school, church, or library. Visit our website for more information on sponsoring and hosting a workshop: AnchorpointCounselingMinistry.org (Click on the Education & Support Tab)

• **Parenting & Family:** Equip parents, grandparents and youth leaders with the tools to help navigate youth successfully through childhood and adolescence.

• **Marriage & Relationship:** Topics for married couples and singles.

Summer Tutoring Program

June 20 – August 5, 2016: Space is limited. To learn more and register your child, call Sandy at 412-366-1300 ex. 123

Private Parent Coaching

If parenting feels like a battle for you, there is help. Moms or Dads of children preschool through high school can benefit from personal parent coaching. Call Joan at 412-366-1300 ex. 118

Mental Health First Aid Training

For pastors, lay leaders, & others interested in learning how to respond to mental health crisis.

**Saturdays, April 9 & April 16 • 9 am to 1pm
Nativity Lutheran Church in Allison Park**

This 8-hour course like CPR, prepares participants to interact with a person in crisis and connect the person with help. First Aiders do not take on the role of the professional but will learn through this training to answer the questions "what do I do?" or "where can someone find help?" To register, call ACM at 412-366-1300.

Stay In Touch & Keep Up to Date with ACM!

Follow us on Facebook or Twitter. Join our email list: A sign up link is available on facebook page and our website: AnchorpointCounselingMinistry.org.

