

THE GENESIS THERAPY CENTER

Fall 2011

The Four Horsemen of the Relationship Apocalypse

By Patricia Roy-Petrick, PhD, LCPC

John Gottman, a prominent psychologist who has studied 2,000 couples, has described four negative behaviors that can be lethal to a relationship. They are criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling. We all have complaints about our partners, but complaints are different from criticism. A complaint addresses the specific action that your partner has failed. A criticism is more global and can include using negative words about your partner's character or personality, and it ups the ante by adding blame and character assassination.

The second horseman is contempt, which is the worst of the horsemen because it conveys disgust. Some ways of demonstrating contempt are by using sarcasm, cynicism, name calling, eye-rolling, sneering, mockery, belligerence, hostile humor and being demeaning. Contempt will lead to more conflict rather than reconciliation. The third horseman is defensiveness, which is a way of blaming your partner and it will also escalate the conflict. Essentially this is a way of saying "The problem isn't *me*, it's *you*."

The fourth horseman is stonewalling. This is not conventional stonewalling, as in being stubborn; this is more like actually putting up a stone wall to shut you off from your partner. This is sometimes done to avoid a fight, but it will in fact, ensure the fight will continue. Your partner may feel as though you are not interested, or don't care, about what he or she is feeling. Any of these horsemen can be detrimental to your relationship. If you need help with your relationship, you can read *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* By John Gottman. If you are having trouble working through the issues yourself, you can schedule an appointment with one of our couples' therapists.

Learning Through Giving

We want to introduce a new program, *Learning Through Giving*, that was developed to raise financial support for our ongoing work in underserved elementary schools in the south suburbs. We have been working in these schools doing drug and alcohol prevention, violence prevention, and addressing individual students' social and academic needs.

Learning Through Giving's goal is to raise \$10,000 by July 2012 to support this work. To raise the funds, there will be a series of fundraising events around Chicago that will include food, raffles and silent auctions. Please join us.

Southport Lanes and Billiards

33325 N Southport Ave
Chicago, IL 60613

Saturday, November 19th

7:00pm - 10:00pm

\$35 per person

Event Fee Includes: Unlimited Domestic Draft Beer, Wine, Soda, Appetizer Buffet and Bowling!

Silent Auction and Raffles

Donations are tax deductible. 100% of funds raised will be used to fund the work provided by Genesis Therapy Center in the schools. For more information about *Learning Through Giving* and upcoming events, please visit the website www.LearningThroughGiving.com, or contact Mike Anton at 708-535-7320 ext. 20, or by email at Mike_Anton@genesistherapy.org.



“Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma - which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.”

Steve Jobs

Upcoming events:

CEU Training Friday Oct 28, 2011

Family Life Transitions: Their Influence on the Marital Couple

Michael Ideran, D.Min., LCPC, LMFT
Michael Anton, Doctoral Candidate at Argosy University of Chicago

Trainings are held at the Orland Park Civic Center 14750 South Ravinia Ave, Orland Park from 9am to 4pm.

Call 708-535-7320 to register or for more information.

We offer ongoing support groups for parents and ongoing social skills groups for children.

Please call 708-535-7320 to get more information about times and locations.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

*Dear Therapist,
My husband is depressed and I don't know what to do to help him. His medical doctor gave him an antidepressant, but it doesn't seem to be helping. He seems angry all the time and doesn't want to talk? What can I do?
Worried in Oak Lawn.*

Dear Worried,
Living with a partner with depression can be both heartbreaking and frustrating. You may want to educate yourself about depression and know that he is not alone - more than 18 million Americans have depression. Depression may be affecting your husband's thinking, energy, motivation and communication. Try to be a good listener and a supportive friend. You may want to join your husband at his next doctor's appointment and give some feedback on what you have been witnessing. It is also helpful to know that finding the right medication may take multiple tries. In addition to medication, talk therapy and life style changes have been shown to improve depression. A therapist could help your husband to address any problems and to develop skills to help manage his depression.

Finally, make sure you are taking care of yourself. Make sure you are eating properly, exercising, getting proper sleep, pursuing your own interests, and developing your own support system. Partners of people with depression often find themselves also depressed. If you find that you are having difficulty coping, you may want to seek out treatment with a therapist yourself.

Answered by Cheri Tobolski, MA, LCPC

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14 W Burlington

Oak Park, IL
1010 Lake Street

Schaumburg, IL
930 W. Higgins Rd.

Aurora, IL
31 S Edgelawn Drive

Oak Lawn, IL
9411 S 51st Ave.

Oak Lawn, IL
5201 S 95th Street

** Polish speaking therapists
available at this site*