



# LIFELINES

*Restoring Hope and Rebuilding Lives*

The LifeLine Counseling Center Newsletter April 2009



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[www.lifeline-counseling.org](http://www.lifeline-counseling.org)

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## About Us



**LifeLine Counseling Center** is a faith-based nonprofit agency whose mission is to provide educational and counseling services with a focus on emotional and spiritual well-being. All LifeLine counselors are licensed professionals with advanced degrees and a minimum of twelve years clinical experience. They understand the complexities of a painful past and partner with clients to create restorative new scripts for the future.

The homey offices at the Moses Gamble House offer a safe, comfortable place to explore feelings, examine life experiences and develop strategies for positive change.



**Brenda Duarte, Licensed Professional Counselor**

As I was driving through town one day recently, I noticed a sign in the back window of the vehicle in front of me that read "Due to lack of funding the light at the end of the tunnel has been temporarily shut off". This is somewhat reflective of the general sentiment that seems to permeate our world today—the feeling that each day we are stepping deeper and deeper into the darkness. The financial aspects of our lives have taken a dismal turn and there seems to be no end in sight. This in turn produces stress, impacts relationships, and threatens our personal security.

Interestingly, economic downturns always have a way of upending the established order of things. It forces us to change focus and reorder priorities. Having fewer resources often helps us remember and rely on life's more important basics. This may include simple, inexpensive

pleasures such as a summer barbecue, walking the dog, reading a book, going on a picnic or watching a ball game with friends.

Adversity often allows valuable time for something magical to happen. It gives us the opportunity to reacquaint ourselves with our real priorities and in the process discover or rediscover inner resources that lost their way in the course of greater prosperity.

*"Adversity often allows valuable time for something magical to happen."*

We only have one life and each day is a gift of opportunity for more time with friends, family and those we love. There is no dress rehearsal. Don't miss out on all those valuable, priceless moments that can never be recaptured. They will endure as the silver lining in the darkness and the true light at the end of the tunnel.

**MOPS** Dr. Joy Carroll  
Mothers of Preschoolers **Speaks to MOPS**



Dr. Carroll was guest speaker at the March MOPS meeting with over 50 in attendance. The topic was "Helping Preschoolers Make Good Choices". The group was very attentive and there were plenty of great questions. MOPS meets the 2nd Thursday of the month, 9 to 11:30 am. Contact Sally Joines at 982-4960.



**A Therapy Group for Women With  
A History of Sexual Abuse**  
Led by Tracie Walker LCSW  
May 16, 30, June 13, 27, July 11, 25  
12:30 to 1:30 pm  
For more info, call 981-7400.



## The Greatest Treasure



**Carla Winchester**  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

A year or so ago, my friend, Lane was in therapy and her therapist told her, "You need girlfriends." So Lane started a weekly spiritual group that I am privileged to be a part of.

In my profession, I see many women who are without good support resources and find themselves unable to rely on their families. They feel isolated, empty and depressed.

I encourage them to seek and

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## The Unburdened Heart

### KEYS TO FORGIVENESS

**Dr. Joy Carroll, Psychologist**

- ◆ Forgiveness fallacies and myths
- ◆ Knowing who to forgive
- ◆ Making an effective forgiveness plan
- ◆ Strategies for forgiving when you don't know how
- ◆ Self-forgiveness

**Flyer & registration info:** online at [lifeline-counseling.org](http://lifeline-counseling.org) or call (865) 981-7400  
**Where:** First Baptist Church of Maryville, Room 215, Family Life Center (2nd floor)  
**When:** April 21, 28, and May 5 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm  
**Tuition:** \$15 total for the entire series. Scholarships are available. *The Art of Forgiving* is recommended and will be available for purchase at \$12 per book.



## The Connection Between Thoughts and Emotions

**Tracie Walker LCSW**

It has been said that feelings are all in one's head. The fact is, what we tell ourselves about our experiences does affect our feelings about them.

Our mind constantly interprets our experiences. Automatic thoughts are instant assumptions, often unconscious, that impact our reactions to events and shape the experience in either a negative or positive way. Often this occurs so quickly that it is beyond our conscious awareness.

The automatic thoughts we generate may be based on previous experiences in relationships, early childhood or traumatic events. Automatic thinking can sometimes cause us to respond as if the same experience is repeating itself. This may happen even if the previous incidents are not identical but offer just a shadow of similarity.

Some automatic thoughts are true, and some are based on mistaken perceptions or erroneous assumptions. The following are common types of erroneous conclusions or thinking errors that can cause negative feelings such as depression or anxiety.

**Jumping to Conclusions:** Framing the situation in the worst possible light; automatically concluding a negative event will happen

**Mind Reading:** Making assumptions about how others

will act or what they will think  
**Fortune Telling:** Anticipating a negative outcome before the outcome has been established

**Overgeneralizing:** Assuming that a negative event is part of an endless pattern

**Polarized. All or Nothing Thinking:** Perceiving life situations in discrete all good or all bad terms; one small problem or perceived flaw defines the entire experience

**Personalizing:** Taking responsibility or assigning personal blame for anything that goes wrong

With awareness and practice, we can correct negative automatic thoughts by stopping to identify and evaluate what we are thinking. Then mistaken perceptions can be challenged and mentally rewritten so we have a clearer, unencumbered view of our experiences.



## Project LifeLine

*Restoring Hope and Rebuilding Lives*

**An eBay sale to benefit LifeLine Counseling Center's programs for hurting adults, children, & families**

Your donations can make a real difference!

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**Donated items accepted March 23 –April 17 (tax deductible)**  
**May 2nd, 8 am-12pm-Project LifeLine sale at LifeLine Center**

- How Project LifeLine Works:**
- Bring or mail donated items to LifeLine Counseling Center Monday-Friday between 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, March 23-April 17. Items can be delivered at other times by appointment (865-981-7400). **See [www.lifeline-counseling.org](http://www.lifeline-counseling.org) for more details.**
  - Items will be sold on eBay and the selling price minus eBay/Paypal handling fees go directly to LifeLine client care.
  - **To purchase a LifeLine eBay item,** go to [http://donations.ebay.com/charity/charity.jsp?NP\\_ID=29361](http://donations.ebay.com/charity/charity.jsp?NP_ID=29361) to see a list of donated items for sale by LifeLine Counseling Center. This is our page at [www.ebaygivingworks.com](http://www.ebaygivingworks.com).

See our website for more information about **LifeLine!**  
[www.lifeline-counseling.org](http://www.lifeline-counseling.org)


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## The Greatest Treasure

cultivate close friendships. We all feel stress related to parenting, work, finances, or relationships. The support of friends helps us have the courage and safety to deal with the difficult times and experience joy. Healthy friendships not only offer support but hold us accountable for our goals and choices in life.

Some people feel lonely because they believe they are the only one dealing with a particular problem. Most people feel stress, but when they are isolated, it is easy to believe they are the "only one." Friendships foster interaction and exchange that offers the opportunity to discover that others have similar struggles and feelings. Lack of interpersonal connections and friends greatly impedes the process of working through depression, anxiety or other issues.

We all need friends and it's OK to admit this. In these difficult times I feel even more grateful for my friendships. Getting together with my close girlfriends doesn't cost anything but the benefits are priceless.



## SURVIVING TOUGH TIMES

**Joy Carroll, Ed.D.**

- ★ **Acknowledge and grieve the losses.** This may include loss of home, income, employment or loss of important relationships. The grieving process may involve stages of shock, denial, anger and acceptance. Once past the denial stage, productive anger and acceptance can help you move forward.
- ★ **Be attentive to your body** and take time to exercise, rest, and refresh. Keep a daily or weekly journal, writing about the difficult changes and feelings in your life.
- ★ **Reset priorities and decide what is really important.** You may discover that caring relationships are far more valuable than things. If supportive friendships and family relationships are lacking, find ways to make new contacts that give you encouragement. Avoid relationships that are non-supportive.
- ★ **Adversity is often the doorway to new opportunities.** Challenging times call for flexibility and a willingness to do things differently. Educate yourself about your situation and generate a number of possible solutions. Knowledge is a powerful tool that can help you make wise choices.
- ★ **Develop a viable step-by-step recovery action plan.** Commit to the plan by putting it in writing and sharing it with someone who can be your encourager and cheerleader. Take it one day at a time, stay focused and keep your eye on your goals, maintaining a mental snapshot of the desired outcome.

## Co-Parenting After Divorce



Co-Parenting Classes led by Dr. Joy Carroll will be offered May 12, 19 and 26 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. These classes are approved by Blount County courts. For more info, call (865) 981-7400 or see [www.lifeline-counseling.org](http://www.lifeline-counseling.org).