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COUNSELING AGENCY



Health Matters

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Gateway to a Healthier You

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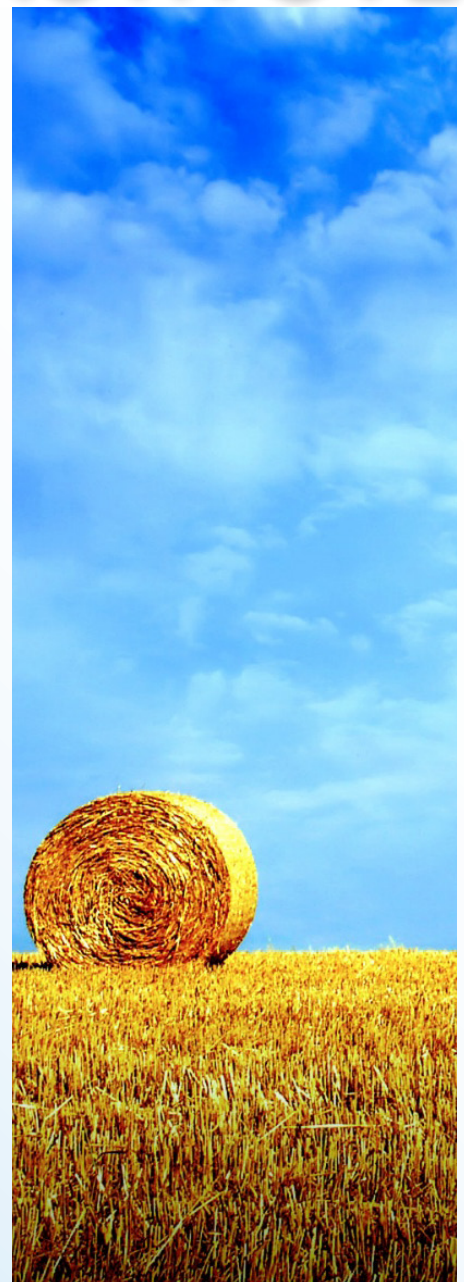
Seek to Improve *Your Relationship*

Donita Waggoner, M.Ed, LPC

Good communication is essential for any relationship. Keeping your partner “in the know” is a daily task that requires effort. No matter how long you have been together or how well you know each other, your partner can’t read your mind. When arguments arise, they can often be traced back to a lack of communication or a miscommunication.

- Are you truly listening to your partner, or simply thinking of what you will say next? We can get so comfortable with our spouse, that we forget to listen.
- Do you fight fair? This is a common issue where couples will bring up the past in an effort to “win” the argument. Try to stay focused on the current issue. It’s not about winning, it’s about finding a solution you both agree on.
- Keep an open mind. In a conflict, most of us want to feel heard and understood. Try to really see the other side, and then you can better explain yours. (If you don’t ‘get it’, ask more questions until you do.) Your partner will more likely be willing to listen if they feel heard.
- Realize that personal responsibility is a strength, not a weakness. Effective communication involves admitting when you’re wrong.

For more assistance getting your relationship on track, contact ATS-FOCUS at 580.242.4673 or in OKC 405.767.9476.



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Remember When...



By Brian Wright MCP, LPC Candidate

In today's society kids have everything to do indoors and little desire to do any activities that involve the outdoors. However when today's parents and grandparents think back to childhood, many of us remember roaming the neighborhood from dawn to dusk, getting in trouble for not being home at the right time. Often times we were only inside when we had to be. All other time was spent outdoors with my friends swimming, fishing, exploring, hunting and, even though we didn't know it, creating and learning as our imaginations ran wild. We did not have televisions and video games to provide instant fun with the push of a few buttons – we had to create our own entertainment. When you talk to kids today, though, it becomes clear that society is changing. Kids now spend much of their time indoors and video games seem to be an avid staple of the childhood growing up experience.

Have you ever heard of “nature deficit disorder?” Richard Louv wrote in his 2008 book, “Leave no child inside” about this disorder and its effect on today's children. Louv notes 10 rules for parents; one of these is be a positive role model. We should not use the excuse that we are too busy, but rather make a point to go outside ourselves and involve our families when we do so. Families can plan field trips, go to parks, play games and do many other things that involve the entire family outdoors.

Although the gadgets (television, video games, cell phones, etc) provide easy and instant captivation for children, teens and parents alike, consider what the whole family is missing - the profound stillness of the outdoors, the wild beauty of nature. Think about the reassuring perspective we all gain when we can see ourselves as part of something infinitely larger: the ocean, a forest, a field of tall grass. Prepare yourself for the fight; your kids will fight back. Make sure you introduce your children to the wonderful things they can experience outdoors; they will benefit and so will you.

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- Any other personal problem

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