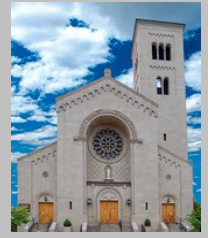


# Parish Nurse Newsletter



Spring - 2010

**“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”**

**Mahatma Gandhi**

*The practice of forgiveness has been shown to reduce anger, hurt depression and stress and leads to greater feelings of hope, peace, compassion and self-confidence. Practicing forgiveness leads to healthy relationships as well as physical health. It also influences our attitude, which opens the heart to kindness, beauty, and love.*

## **The Nine Steps of Forgiveness by Fred Luskin, PhD**

1. Know exactly how you feel about what happened and be able to articulate what about the situation is not OK. Then, tell a trusted couple of people about your experience.
2. Make a commitment to yourself to do what you have to do to feel better. Forgiveness is for you and not for anyone else.
3. Forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation with the person that hurt you, or condoning of their action. What you are after is to find peace. Forgiveness can be defined as the "peace and understanding that come from blaming that which has hurt you less, taking the life experience less personally, and changing your grievance story."
4. Get the right perspective on what is happening. Recognize that your primary distress is coming from the hurt feelings, thoughts and physical upset you are suffering now, not what offended you or hurt you two minutes - or ten years -ago. Forgiveness helps to heal those hurt feelings.
5. At the moment you feel upset practice a simple stress management technique to soothe your body's flight or fight response.
6. Give up expecting things from other people, or your life, that they do not choose to give you. Recognize the "unenforceable rules" you have for your health or how you or other people must behave. Remind yourself that you can hope for health, love, peace and prosperity and work hard to get them.
7. Put your energy into looking for another way to get your positive goals met than through the experience that has hurt you. Instead of mentally replaying your hurt seek out new ways to get what you want.
8. Remember that a life well lived is your best revenge. Instead of focusing on your wounded feelings, and thereby giving the person who caused you pain power over you, learn to look for the love, beauty and kindness around you. Forgiveness is about personal power.
9. Amend your grievance story to remind you of the heroic choice to forgive.

## **HEALTHY SNACKS FOR CHILDREN**

1. Peel a banana and dip it in yogurt. Roll in crushed cereal and freeze.
2. Spread celery sticks with peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins. Enjoy your “ants on a log.”
3. Mix together ready-to-eat cereal, dried fruit and nuts in a sandwich bag for an on-the-go snack.
4. Smear a scoop of frozen yogurt on two graham crackers and add sliced banana to make a yummy sandwich.
5. Top low-fat vanilla yogurt with crunchy granola and sprinkle with blueberries.
6. Mix together peanut butter and cornflakes in a bowl. Shape into balls and roll in crushed graham crackers.
7. Fill a waffle cone with cut-up fruit and top with low-fat vanilla yogurt.
8. Make a mini-sandwich with tuna or egg salad on a dinner roll.

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

### HEALTH OBSERVANCES FOR 2010

#### March is National Nutrition Month

- Balance your plate with the right portions of a variety of foods. Half your plate should be filled with vegetables, one fourth with lean meat, poultry or fish and one fourth with grains. To round out your meal, add a glass of fat-free or low-fat milk and a serving of fruit for dessert.
- Try changing from a large dinner plate to a smaller one. It may help you feel satisfied with reduced portions.
- Start your meal with low calorie foods like fruits, vegetables and salads. Then move on to the main course and side dishes.
- Know when you've had enough to eat. Quit before you feel full or stuffed. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that your body is getting food. When your brain gets this message, you stop feeling hungry. So, fast eaters—slow down and give your brain a chance to get the word.
- Get plenty of fiber from fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Fiber can help you feel full longer and lower your risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- Find your balance between food and physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness—plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

#### April is Alcohol Awareness Month

**Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse**  If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?

#### May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Research indicates that those who consistently help other people experience less depression, greater calm, fewer pains and better health. They may even live longer.

##### Consider some recent research:

- Students who performed five acts of kindness a day increased their happiness
- Providing emotional support to others significantly decreased the harmful health effects of certain kinds of stress among older people
- People who donated money to charity got a boost in a feel-good part of the brain, as revealed in brain imaging research

##### Consider these tips for helping others—and yourself:

- Calling a friend to see how she's doing
- Serving your spouse breakfast in bed
- Letting a car in front of you on the highway
- Smiling at a stranger in the street
- Holding the elevator door for your co-worker

**This information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment.** Questions about any specific condition or patient should be referred to a licensed physician or practitioner.

**Contact Parish Nurse Sandra Gans, RN for information or resources.**  
**304-622-8500 or [sgans@ma.rr.com](mailto:sgans@ma.rr.com)**