More than 300 million people live in the United States. Most of us are crowded together in large bustling cities. We are on the cutting edge of technology, enjoying the conveniences of email, telephones and text messaging, faxes, and the Internet. And with each convenience of our modern society, we are promised greater ease for living and...even better... a greater ease for connecting people.

Yet we are lonely. *Terribly lonely.*

Although I don’t have any research data, I’m more and more convinced that loneliness has become an epidemic. Whether it’s listening to a client in my office, talking with a friend, or assessing my own emotional state at times, a universal theme to our complex lives is *loneliness.* So why, when we have the capability of being so connected, do we feel so *disconnected*?

One reason is the aforementioned cutting-edge conveniences. As people spend more time on the Internet, text messaging, or playing games on computers, they are actually spending far less time interacting with the people around them. We’ve also become much busier in our society, coming home exhausted at the end of the day and too tired to engage in true community. So, we spend our evenings mentally decompressing in front of the TV or computer, replacing real relationships with the superficial fluff of Internet networking sites. I can certainly attest to this dilemma. After counseling all day, my brain is tired and my energy is spent. It’s much easier to send someone a text or write an email than it is to have deep conversation.

Change in family life is another reason for loneliness. A century ago, most families were very large with extended family living close by. Today, the system has not only shrunk, but it’s much more common for family members to move thousands of miles away to new jobs, new marriages, or new adventures. (Just ask my parents!☺) Loneliness can also be caused by poor or unhealthy relational patterns due to circumstances in childhood development, such as unaffectionate or overly critical parents. Others may withdraw from social situations because of low self-esteem, fearing rejection or abandonment.

No matter the reason, loneliness is a bigger problem for more people today than at any previous time in history. The ironic fact is this: if you are struggling with loneliness...*you are not alone.* So what is the cure for this epidemic of loneliness? Let’s go to Scripture, which is fully sufficient to address any struggle we might have.

First, the story of Adam and Eve attests that God intends for us to share our lives with other people. As a matter of fact, loneliness is the first thing that He named *not good* (Gen. 2:18). God recognized Adam’s need for companionship with someone like himself—a need built into man by the God who formed him (Gen. 2:7). We all have this need to be loved and to belong. The Bible speaks often about marriage, family, and friendship.

Breaking the cycle of loneliness must begin with honestly evaluating our lives for any unhealthy patterns which may be at the root, such as hiding behind a computer, isolating, or simply staying too busy for relationship. There may also be unchangeable circumstances which must be accepted, such as the loss of an important relationship or moving away from old friends. And there may be new measures to be taken: making an effort to meet new friends, getting involved in a cause, or participating in community functions.

Yet, at the end of the day, to expect anyone else to take away our loneliness is asking too much. There is only *one* relationship in which our deepest needs can be met. It is the fellowship that God longs to have with us. When we accept God’s gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, we enter into communion with the Creator of the universe. God Almighty becomes our Heavenly Father and He places within us His Holy Spirit, whose presence will comfort and guide us always (John 16). An ever-growing, dynamic walk with the God who will never leave nor forsake (Heb. 13:5) is the solid foundation on which all other relationships can be built. We combat loneliness by taking full possession of the abundant life God offers through His holy presence and fellowship. Ask Him to give you a deep knowledge and love of Him, as you study His Word and converse with Him in prayer. Then trust Him to overflow your empty cup with His unfailing love! (Psalm 143:8)
prayer requests & praise reports

Pray for the clients of Restoration Place. Although their ages and stages of life vary greatly, they all need one thing: the healing touch of God.

Pray for Cindy to have wisdom, discernment, strength and energy as she meets with clients. Pray also for safe travels, as she gets away in August for a vacation. Pray for refreshment and rejuvenation.

Please pray for the financial provision of the ministry so that these women may continue to receive affordable counseling.

board member spotlight

This month our board member spotlight is on Donna Thomas. Donna and Cindy first met in 2004 during the start-up of Hannah's Haven, a Christ-centered home for women. The Lord knit their hearts together in a special way, as they both have a deep passion to see women walk in freedom. Cindy remembers being so impressed, not only with Donna's expertise in nonprofit management and grant writing, but also in her sweet spirit and deep love for the Lord.

Fast forward to January 2008, when at a board meeting it was suggested that we really needed someone on the team who had skills in obtaining funding for nonprofit organizations. Cindy stated, “Well, we need to ask God to bring that person to us because I have no idea who it would be.” Two weeks later she received an email from Donna. Here is an excerpt: “It has been a while since we’ve spoken. I am really sending you a long overdue email. For some months now, the Lord has been laying it on my heart to contact you in regards to being a part of the RPM board... You may or may not have a board opening, but I feel we should meet to see how I could be of service to this ministry.” Needless to say, we were all amazed by God’s very clear (and very fast!) answer to prayer!

Donna and Cindy met together and felt that this was indeed the Lord’s plan for this current season of RPM. Donna officially joined the board in March.

Donna and her husband have three children, ages 11, 9, and 5. They attend Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Greensboro. As mentioned, Donna brings invaluable skills to our team, including nonprofit management, grant writing, program development, substance abuse counseling, and case management. We are so very blessed to have Donna as part of our team!

grant-writing training

Obtaining grant money has been on our “radar” since the inception of the ministry. In all things, God’s timing is perfect, and we have finally come to the place of being ready and able to pursue this.

As mentioned in the Board Member Spotlight, when Donna Thomas joined our team she brought with her much experience in nonprofit management and grant writing. And she will soon be graciously using these skills to help Restoration Place.

Over a six-week training course, Donna will be teaching volunteer participants how to write a grant. The outcome of this training will be mutually beneficial to RPM and to the participants. Each person will participate in the education, completing various assignments, and gaining free grant-writing training. The result will be a general proposal template for RPM that will then be used to further develop grant proposals for various funding opportunities.

Please pray for the committee as we begin this endeavor in August. Please pray for the group’s cohesiveness, productive use of our time, and above all, that God would be glorified through it all.

new website!

We will soon be launching an updated website! Michele Forrest has done an incredible job of redesigning the site so that it is more functional and easier to manage. She’s also given it a fresh look and added some really cool new features, such as an RSS feed for the newsletters and the option to donate online! ☀ Check the site very soon for the new and improved design!

Many thanks to Michele for her help! You can find out more about her services for nonprofit organizations at www.unangledweb.net.

goodsearch.com reminder!!

Did you know: if 100 RPM supporters use GoodSearch.com for an average of only 2 internet searches per day, the estimated annual revenue generated for RPM is $730.00!? What an incredibly simple way to support this ministry!

Please remember to use GoodSearch.com and list Restoration Place Ministries as your charity!

Restoration Place Ministries exists to restore dignity, virtue, and honor to women through Christ-centered counseling, teaching, and training. Funding for Restoration Place, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, comes from individual donations and fees for services, primarily one-on-one counseling. A significantly reduced fee schedule is available for women who would not otherwise be able to afford the help they need.

Support from individuals and other sources make Restoration Place Ministries possible.

All contributions are tax deductible.

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