

Summer 2012



Evie Cunliffe earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Williams College, completed post bachelor's coursework for the California Teacher's Certificate at Cal State, and obtained her Master of Arts in Counseling from Liberty University. She did her internship at Pike Creek Psychological Center in Delaware and at the Elijah School in Maryland.

Evie is an active member of The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Landenberg, PA, where she and her husband of 27 years are members. They have three children. Christy is an RN, living and serving God in Africa, Jenny is in graduate school in counseling and David is a student at Liberty.

Evie works part time as the guidance counselor at the Elijah School where she works with students in middle and high school.

Evie enjoys working with children and teens, combining her years of experience teaching with her experience and training in therapy. She also enjoys working with women who are dealing with issues such as depression, anxiety, trauma, and relationship challenges. Her therapeutic approach uses Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

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The Science of Exercise and the Brain

(comments based on the book, *Spark*, 2008, by John J. Ratey, MD)

What is the relationship between the brain and body? Can we help our children to learn more effectively and reduce the effects of ADHD and anxiety through exercise? Can we reduce depression, stress, and anxiety in ourselves? In *Spark*, Dr. Ratey presents research demonstrating that physical activity positively affects the brain and can help with all of the above issues. While we all may hope that there is a cause and effect relationship between the brain and the body, Ratey shows us that there is and provides solid research to back this up.

Spark begins by describing a PE program in Naperville, Illinois, begun 20 years ago. The program took children who were struggling in school academically and required them to become involved in a regular fitness program before the start of school each morning. The results have been significant. Not only have these children performed better in their schoolwork, but also they have been less fidgety and tense and more motivated in the classroom (Ratey, p. 35).

The reason that exercise helps people goes beyond the age-old assumption that "exercise will tire the kids out." Instead, exercise strengthens the brain on the cellular level, allowing more neurons to plug into productive work in the brain. Research has also discovered a family of proteins working inside of the brain, called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factors). While neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine carry out the signaling in the brain, the BDNF take care of the actual circuitry in the brain. Exercise releases these BDNF into the system, improving the actual functioning of the brain cells. Hormones are also released during exercise, and, when they combine with BDNF, the individual is able to learn more efficiently. All of these beneficial processes also increase concentration, and reduce impulsivity, depression and anxiety.



So, find some kind of exercise that you and your kids enjoy and exercise your way to better mental and physical health!

Written by Evie Cunliffe, New Counselor at The Peacemaker Center

Galatians 6:9-10

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people.

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Welcome to Our New Intern Susan Payne

Susan is currently completing her M.S. in Christian Counseling from Philadelphia Biblical University and began as an intern at The Peacemaker Center in May, 2012. She received her B.S. from Miami University and her M.S. from Gallaudet University, both in Speech Language Pathology. Susan has worked as a licensed SLP for the past 18 years and has experience with children, teens, adults and seniors. She has worked with people of varying ages and communicative abilities and is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). Susan enjoys helping families adjust to the challenges of communication disorders, whether diagnosed as children (fluency, autism spectrum, Down's syndrome) or later in life (aphasia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's).



Susan shifted to the field of counseling due to her desire to address the emotional and spiritual challenges people face when life takes unexpected twists and turns. She is especially interested in interpersonal communication and relationships, emotional and spiritual healing, spiritual formation and growth, and grief and loss adaptation. Susan is sensitive to struggles related to finding joy, hope and peace amidst difficult life circumstances. Susan's approach focuses on identifying and changing entrenched patterns of self-protective behavior and unhealthy core beliefs. She believes heart-level change (attitudes/beliefs) is possible through God's transforming presence and grace. Her hope for her clients is in "the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we may comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God".

Susan's husband, Brett, is the Associate Pastor at Goshen Baptist Church in West Chester, where she is actively involved in home group, women's, and spiritual formation ministries. Together, Brett and Susan have provided pastoral pre-marital and couple's

Volunteers Needed!



Our gardens are beautiful but need your help. We need volunteers to help tend our flower beds. We are also looking for volunteers to help out with graphic design, editing newsletters, writing grants, fundraising, receptionist, and many others!

Many Thanks to our wonderful volunteers, some who faithfully serve each week, and some who have helped with special projects. We appreciate each one of you!

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Special Thanks to Chester County Paint and Design for donating the paint for painting the offices and for the crew who painted them!



Biblically based conflict resolution and counseling services

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