

## Village People



*It's 8:45am and I need to drop my 2-year-old off at Mother's Day Out to make it to work in time. I get her loaded in the car and try to start it. Nothing. My battery is dead and my husband is traveling for work. We have no family that lives in town. I'm frustrated and overwhelmed. I need help. What can I do? (I will come back to this illustration later in the article).*

### COMMUNITY

Community is such a vital aspect of mental health and is often one of the most overlooked. Our individualistic culture offers much in the area of professional growth, the "American Dream" of having the ability to own our own homes and reach personal goals, and to experience life to the fullest on our own terms without having to be concerned with others. I am grateful, proud, and fortunate to live in the United States. I also see a gaping hole developing in the area of community that concerns me for the future of my family and fellow citizens. Our busy-ness and multiple activities have us in the car running from place to place barely having time for dinner with our own families, much less for having dinner with others. What price will I pay if I overlook the true need and benefit of having "a village"?

What do I mean by a village? I mean true, impactful relationships with community members outside of family who engage regularly and meaningfully in each other's lives. Communities are groups of people, typically sharing at least one common interest or similarity. Some examples of local communities could include: workplaces, churches, social clubs, sports, parenting, and cultural communities. The basic premise involves a connection between people and further relationship built on that connection. Thinking now,

*continued on page 2*

## HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 8 pm  
Friday, 8 am to 5 pm  
Saturday by appointment

## Acorn CES [excerpt from Blog]

Renee Pfeffer, LPC Intern supervised by Eren Turner  
LPC S

*Working to strengthen families, children, and the community*

- 1) **Become aware of your feelings.** When you are feeling upset, angry, or confused, try to specifically name your feelings. What kind of upset or angry are you feeling? (irritated, sad, hurt, afraid, lonely, etc.) Anger is a secondary emotion. Try to find the primary one; which is more vulnerable such as hurt, fear, or pain. When a feeling arises, being curious about it instead of judging the feeling really helps to identify what's going on for you. For example, when a feeling arises like jealousy, hurt, or sadness, ask yourself, "I wonder what is going on for me?" instead of saying to yourself, "you shouldn't be feeling that sad."
- 2) **Accept and express your feelings.** You can say to yourself, "I'm feeling (name feeling) right now because (situation that happened)." Recognize there may be grief in the situation because of any type of loss or unmet expectation. Give yourself some time to feel that. It's okay to not be okay. Don't run from it. Choose ways to express your feelings. It can be through speaking them out loud, talking with a trusted friend, journaling, or praying.
- 3) **Take care of yourself in a healthy way.** Have compassion on yourself like you would for a close friend if they were having the same feelings. Go for a walk, take a bath, listen to music, and let yourself know that you won't feel this way forever. Once you allow yourself to feel the feelings, you will be likely to release them after a while.



Renee, ext 702

Our Staff will be at Corinth Family Fun Day, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 10 to 3. We would love to meet you!

who is your village? While certainly family members play a vital role in our lives, I'm asking you to think beyond them to community members as well. Do you have people in the community you regularly engage with? Do you both invest and receive emotionally in and from them? Is your life impacted and impactful beyond your home?

#### WHAT'S THE POINT?

Thinking about those questions, allow me to revisit the initial example I gave of my situation above. I was able to call a close friend from church who not only jumped my battery but helped me get a new one and ensured I had transportation for the remainder of the day. Certainly I could have called a mechanic or tow truck but the cost and hassle would have increased my stress and prohibited me from making it to work on time. While this was not an emergency, it serves to show how engagement with others helped ease a burden in my life. I think also about my children and how grateful I am that I am working to build a safe and healthy community around them. I want to model and teach them how to serve others and see the world beyond themselves. When our focus is outside of ourselves, it helps reduce feelings of depression, negative self-worth, and lack of value. Community builds feelings of cooperation, connection, understanding, and love.

#### HOW DO I BUILD A VILLAGE?

Some of the ways that I seek to build relationships involve attending church and pursuing relationships beyond Sunday morning pleasantries; going to community events, such as plays and sporting events; meeting with a group of moms weekly and sharing parenting struggles and successes; making sure that my schedule has time to invite others to have a meal with our family; and meeting with a discipleship group every week. It's not easy to balance family, work, responsibilities and social commitments but I have found that the joy and comfort I receive knowing I have others to help me on my journey has made every sacrifice worthwhile!



I'd love to talk with you more about building community. Please call or email me with any questions!

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Knowing The Signs

APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2-3 FREE

Join Acorn Staff and Denton Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition to learn the Signs of Suicide and what to do if you suspect it.

### MAKING MEALS MATTER

APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>, 3-4:30 GROWING A HEALTHY CHILD

APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>, 3-4:30 PORTION SIZES

APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup>, 10-11:30 RETHINK YOUR DRINK

APRIL 23<sup>RD</sup>, 3-4:30 PICKY EATERS

Join Acorn and Integrus Health Education Services for \$25 a couple per class or \$80 for the entire Month. A series of nutrition education topics designed to provide parents with new information and practical tips for feeding their children healthier meals without a fight.

### CORINTH FAMILY FUN DAY

April 30<sup>th</sup> 10-3

Join Acorn at this fun festival! Watch our friends from Marshall's ATA Demo Team.

- Our bilingual counseling program is taking clients for a waiting list for Deborah Hundley, LPC Intern.
- We are looking forward to celebrating Children's Mental Health Awareness day on May 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Join us at WATCH Denton's Summit meeting on May 12<sup>th</sup>. CCHAPS data will be presented and we have an amazing guest speaker coming.

If you are interested in joining us, referring to us, or just finding out more about the exciting new things we are doing, call us! We can schedule a 15 minute phone consult to talk about just about anything. 940-222-8703.

Call today! Our staff of therapists work with you and your family to become stronger and closer, from 2 to 82! Renee, Laura, and Ashley have openings for new clients or for presentations. We are currently putting people on a waiting list for our bilingual therapist, Debbie Hundley LPC Intern who will begin seeing clients of all ages in June.

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