

Clarke Counseling Center

Monthly Newsletter

January 2010



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Conscious Dating Class



Are you a conscious or an unconscious dater? Come find out for yourself and discover how to say "YES" to what you want in a relationship and "NO" to what you don't want.

On February 20, 2010 - Learn how to be in control and become a "chooser." Most of all, learn how to find the love of your life and the life that you love.

For more information or to register now, click [HERE](#).

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Greetings!

I look forward to bringing you a newsletter each month from Clarke Counseling Center. The goal is to help you have a happier, more fulfilling life. To do that, I specialize in the following:

- [Life Coaching](#)
- [Adult AD/HD](#)
- [Marriage and Family Therapy](#)



If you know of anyone who would appreciate receiving these newsletters, please forward this issue to them by clicking the button below. If they are interested in continuing to receive the newsletters, they can sign up.

Sincerely,

Sherry Clarke MA, LCMFT

Emotional Literacy

A Surprising Key To Fulfilling Relationships



"He's doing it again!" Heather* cried. She laid her head on a tear-soaked pillow and recalled how many times John had done "it" in their twenty-year marriage. What was "it?" It was the annoying way John would walk out of the room or spend more time alone in his office when there were emotional issues to

discuss or resolve.

When John lost his job, the "alone time" got even worse. And his time in the office wasn't just to update his resume or to search for a new job. Heather knew he spent a great deal of time playing video games as well. She recognized that she resented John for abandoning her to the hard work of parenting three teenagers by herself.

It all came to the surface when their fifteen-year-old son came home from a school activity smelling of marijuana. Heather looked at John across the dinner table and knew he smelled it too. After dinner, John made a beeline to his office and shut the door. That was the last straw. Heather burst into tears and ran to their bedroom. She just felt so tired and angry from having to do all the work herself. And it's not like she hadn't tried to talk to John about how she was feeling. But it seemed like every attempt to do so resulted in driving him further away.

Was she doomed to be a "single parent" within their marriage?

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What could she do? Heather didn't realize that the basis of John's behavior was "emotional illiteracy." Just as we treat people as if they know how to read written language (literacy), we often assume people have the ability to first recognize, process and then discuss their emotional lives (emotional literacy). John could not begin to discuss the way he felt because he simply did not know what he was feeling. And being emotionally "illiterate" about his own feelings, John was not comfortable discussing the feelings of others.

With help, Heather learned more about emotions and that it is never too late to become more emotionally literate. She was surprised to discover that while she was adept at recognizing various emotions within herself, she needed to learn ways to process those emotions before "spewing" them on others. It took some patience on her part, but when Heather boosted her own emotional literacy she saw a new openness in John. He seemed less threatened and more open to learning some of the things she had been learning.

Heather and John are certainly not alone. Just as we all differ in how well we read, we differ in how well we deal with emotions. Emotional literacy within relationships has a profound effect on those relationships. Becoming more emotionally literate can produce a more fulfilling relationship.

*No actual names are used. This story is fictional, but represents actual issues common to many relationships.

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Interesting Quotes

"Marriage has no guarantees. If that's what you're looking for, go live with a car battery." (Erma Bombeck)

"The man who says his wife can't take a joke, forgets that she took him." (Oscar Wilde)



"No matter how love-sick a woman is, she shouldn't take the first pill that comes along." (Joyce Brothers)

"Love doesn't make the world go round, love is what makes the ride worthwhile." (Elizabeth Browning)

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