



## Newsletter No. 41 May 2012

Helpline 0407 55 8819

Website [www.caring4U.org.au](http://www.caring4U.org.au)

*because we love each other as Jesus loves us. John 15v12*

### NSW Christadelphian Support Network



*Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends in the Lord,*

***I recently began Scripture teaching with a group of 8 year olds at a local primary school.***

*Although I taught for many years in the TAFE system, this was my first time with younger students (apart from Sunday School.) It has given me a sincere appreciation for the tolerance of those of you who do this for a living. It is also a great way to test one's ability to master the fruits of the spirit – especially patience.*

*Anyway, I rocked up on Day One and joined the other teachers in the office, where we waited for the bell to signal the end of recess.*

*We were escorted to our classes by a team of eager 6<sup>th</sup> graders. My room was in one of the demountables at the very back of the complex, up numerous stairways and across a series of quadrangles. In one of these, a teacher was delivering a spirited anti-bullying lecture, which seemed like an auspicious beginning.*

*The classroom looked small, although that may have been because every square inch of walls, windows, and - somewhat to my dismay – the only white board – was covered in vivid images of produce, the seasons, various community festivals, paper chains and drawings. Any spaces that remained had this week's spelling words, the class rules and numbers one to infinity in modern oval script.*



*I thought I would get a head start before the class arrived by writing my name for them. Try finding space to write "Laudenbach" on a whiteboard adorned with sufficient decoration for several Christmas trees. I cautiously removed one or two pictures and wrote in very small letters.*

*In the next 5 minutes approximately 20 kids shuffled in and sat on the floor. This was slightly more than I had anticipated, however I introduced myself and we got underway.*

*The first activity was fairly simple, and I thought, relatively foolproof.*

*I asked them to fold a piece of A4 paper into 3 parts to make name plates. Big mistake! We had it folded into quarters, halved, flat, and torn into pieces. (of course the one who ripped it immediately wanted a replacement!)*

*Writing their first name in the middle segment in a dark colour produced results at the top, bottom, both sides and in letters everywhere from 4 mm to several centimetres high, mostly in pastel shades. One kiddie wanted to spend the next 15 minutes decorating it with flowers.*

*There was a knock on the door, A woman with a clipboard entered, apologised, and announced that 2R were in the wrong room. Would all those in 2R please leave and go next door? With a great deal of scuffling, about half the group moved off. We gathered the unused name plates into a pile and started over.*

*As I launched into Genesis 1, I began to identify class stereotypes, for example, two Hermione Grangers with hands permanently waving in the air regardless of whether they knew the answer.*

*A small face peeped cautiously around the door and three 6<sup>th</sup> graders sidled in. "Excuse me, but is anyone here in the wrong room?"*

*We had already done that routine so I told him 2R had gone next door. The young spokesman was not to be deterred.*

*"Could you please check?"*

*Eager to help, one of the Hermiones suggested I call the roll. Right – that would be the scrap of paper thrust into my hand when I arrived – the piece I was assured I would not actually have to use!.*

*I eventually located it and called the roll with minimal interruption from disgruntled kids whose names I mispronounced. We seemed to have the correct number so after a suspicious glance around the room to make sure we weren't hiding anyone, the 6<sup>th</sup> graders filed out.*

*Our precious half-hour was rapidly eroding. I asked the class to go to their seats for the next part of the lesson. Half of them sat down.*

*"I don't have a seat Miss!" I cast a speculative glance around a room full of benches and tables. Those seated explained that some of the children were usually in a different room and only came to this one for Scripture.*



*"Well could you please find somewhere to sit so we can move on?" They did so and I handed out the workbooks. Inevitably we were a couple short.*

*Another knock at the door. Three adults this time. Their only explanation: "We're here to look at the ceiling".*

*"Be my guest" I wanted to add "and 2 hard-boiled eggs!" but I doubted they would appreciate the reference. (For those unfamiliar with the Marx Brothers "Night at the Opera",*

*there is a scene where about 20 people cram into the stateroom of an ocean liner and Groucho and Harpo keep ordering hard-boiled eggs...?... Oh well...you had to have been there....!)*

*The door swung wide and the regular class teacher bustled in. Seeing me in full flight, she stopped. "Oh – did the bell go?" I said I had not heard it, however it was obviously time to pack up.*

*"Umm – OK – who is sitting up nice and straight and would like to collect the books?" I chose a suitably rigid girl on the end row. There was an immediate outcry –*

*"But she did it last time!" I sighed as the little girl smugly picked up books.*

*Promising to choose someone different next time, I threw everything into a green enviro-bag and scraped the blu-tac off the board. The teacher firmly directed the children to take out their journals.*

*It was in all an interesting experience, despite the interruptions, and I did go back for another round. It's fun to engage with the children and a great opportunity to reinforce their Bible knowledge.*

*With love in the Lord,*

*Susie Laudenbach*

# NSW C.S.N. Seminar      May 12<sup>th</sup>



## Non Violent Communication Connecting to Others with Empathy and Compassion

YOUR PRESENTERS: Geoff and Lauren Watson

### WHAT IS NVC?

NVC is an approach for communicating with others that values and respects the other person as much as yourself. It has been developed and refined by a psychologist, Marshall Rosenberg. This approach now crosses many international boundaries, including Marshall's personal work in Israel and the Palestinian West Bank.

As a *technique* it is remarkably simple to learn and remember. Yet as an *approach to communicating* it requires a lifetime of practice.

What is exciting for us is that it is directly relevant to finding Christ's voice in a way that enables us to communicate with compassion and empathy.

### WHAT YOU WILL DISCOVER IN THIS SEMINAR

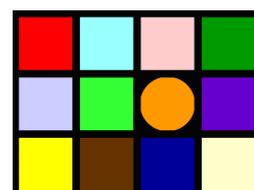
- How the *technique* of NVC works to value the feelings and needs of other people you are connecting to everyday
- How NVC as *an approach* to communicating can alter the way you think about expressing compassion and empathy
- Where you can go to find further resources and skills

**Sat. May 12th 2012    SHAFTESBURY ROAD HALL**  
**5pm – 7pm then dinner**

**A tasty meal will be provided  
at reasonable cost.**

**If you are coming,  
please book in with  
Tina Burgess  
9635 0538**

tinabur@optusnet.com.au



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# Good Thinking

*Using tools from Cognitive Therapy to overcome unhealthy life patterns*

## **Review of the seminar presented in February by Anna Thompson a Clinical Psychologist**

Anna used a pleasing combination of hands on activities and information presentation to explain to us what really makes us feel and respond the way we do to the situation or the words and actions of another person.

It is how we see something or someone and what we think about it or them that really influences how we feel. It is our thoughts and beliefs about an event that significantly influences our emotions and actions. It is all closely linked to our perceptions.

Anna helped us to look closely at our automatic thoughts, our thinking distortions, challenging our own thoughts and choosing to think realistically instead of having unhelpful thoughts.



### **Automatic thoughts**

Some of our thinking is so habitual that it is automatic and we may not be conscious of those thoughts. There are three kinds of Automatic thoughts:

**Neutral thoughts**, e.g. "I think I will buy some bread today."

**Positive thoughts**, e.g. "This is something I can really do well."

**Negative thoughts**, e.g. "I often find it hard to concentrate. I must be really stupid."

Negative automatic thoughts are the ones that can cause us emotional distress. Being aware of your feelings and your thoughts

is the first step to feeling better. If thinking influences feelings, then it makes sense that if you want to change the way you feel, you need to change the way you think.

### **Thinking Distortions**

The following is a list of the most common thinking distortions. With practice and discipline you can overcome these thinking distortions to think more realistically and feel better.

*"Change your thought and you change your world." Norman Vincent Pele*

**Catastrophising** – Saying to ourselves that something is the worst that could ever happen. We can catastrophise things that are happening now or things that may happen in the future.

**Realistic thinking** –

*things are not usually as catastrophic as they feel at the moment.*

**Mind reading** – Jumping to conclusions about what other people are thinking without enough evidence.

**Realistic thinking** – *We can guess what other people are thinking but we never really know unless they tell us honestly. And if we don't know, does it really matter?*

**Overgeneralising** – Taking one specific instance and make a sweeping generalisation.

**Realistic thinking** – *Generalisations are rarely accurate all of the time.*



**Black and White thinking** –Seeing things in extremes, with no middle ground.

**Realistic thinking** – *things are rarely black or white, they are usually a shade of grey.*

**Personalising** –Assuming that something is directly connected with us.

**Realistic thinking** – *It's not all about you!*

**Discounting the positive** –Making a habit of finding reasons to dismiss the positive, focusing only on the negative aspects of a situation.

**Realistic thinking** – *We need to count all the evidence, not just focus on one side.*

**Emotional reasoning** – Telling ourselves that because we feel a certain way, that's how it really is.

**Realistic thinking** –*Feelings are different from facts!*

### **Predicting the future (fortune telling)**

Assuming we know with absolute certainty what is going to happen in the future. Treating our predictions about the future as certainties rather than just predictions.

**Realistic thinking**- *We can make predictions but we can never be 100% sure what is going to happen in the future.*

**Labelling**-Placing a fixed, global negative label on yourself or others.

**Realistic thinking** – *We can't accurately sum up a whole person with a label. We need to distinguish between a person's actions and the person as a whole.*

**Shoulds** – A rigid and inflexible belief about the way things "should" be.

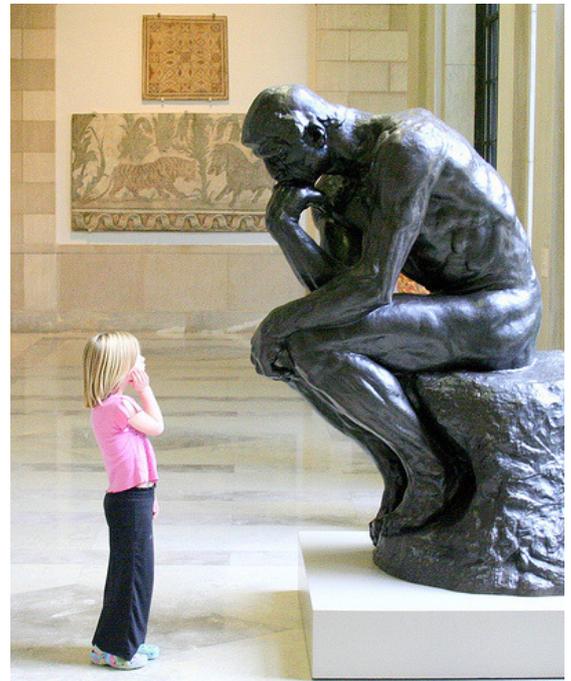
**Realistic thinking** – *Life experiences don't always match my ideals about how things 'should' be. It will work better for me to be flexible enough to accept this.*

### **Questions to ask when challenging a thought**

- # Is this thought true?
- # What evidence do I have for this thought?
- # What evidence do I have against this thought?
- # What happened in the past? What have people actually said?
- # Realistically, how likely is this outcome? Realistically, how bad would it be?
- # Are there any other possible explanations or outcomes?
- # Even if this thought is true, is it a **helpful** thought for me to be focussing on?
- # What would be more helpful to focus on?
- # What would a good friend say if they knew I was thinking this thought?
- # What would I say to a good friend of mine if I knew they were thinking this thought?
- # What does God's truth say about this thought?

*"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought** to make it obedient to Christ"*

*2 Corinthians 10:5*



Anna gave us this list of recommended resources:

**Books:**

- **Change Your Thinking** Sarah Edelman (ABC Books)
- **Reinventing Your Life** Jeffery Young and Janet Klosko (Plume)

**Website:**

**Centre for Clinical Intervention** (Western Australian Government)  
<http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/> for workbooks and resources for mental health practitioners

**iPhone apps**

iCBT  
TD Pro

***“You are today where your thoughts have brought you.  
You will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you.”  
James Allen***

Cyndy Mogg

## **Minding Your Mind**



The biggest risk factors for dementia are –

- getting older, and
- your particular genes,

**neither of which you can do anything about.**

However you can take some steps to minimise your risk by controlling your lifestyle and habits.

This won't guarantee that you will never get dementia, however studies of large groups of people do indicate that those who adopt a “brain-healthy” lifestyle have a reduced risk of developing the condition.

### **1) Mind Your Body**

- Exercise aerobically at least 20-30 minutes, 3 times a week. You can walk, jog, dance, cycle, swim, garden – anything that gets the body moving and the heart pumping.
- Resistance or weight training builds muscle strength, coordination and maintains bone density.
- Maintain flexibility and do balance exercises like dancing, stretching, tai-chi, pilates and yoga.

## **2) Mind Your Diet**

- Reduce saturated fats.
- Eat mainly lean meat, chicken and choose low or no-fat products.
- Eat protective foods.  
HDL or “good” cholesterol foods include mono and poly-unsaturated fats, olive oil, avocados, olives, nuts, seeds and fish.

Omega-3 fatty acids: soy and canola oils, fish – especially oily fish like Atlantic Salmon, mackerel, Southern blue fin tuna, trevally and sardines – once or twice a week.

Antioxident-rich food:

Prunes, raisins, blueberries, other berries, spinach, brussels sprouts, plums, broccoli, beetroot, oranges, red grapes, red capsicums, cherries, kiwifruit, onions, corn, eggplant.

Folate: Oranges, mandarins, bananas, rockmelons, strawberries, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkin, sweet potato, parsnips, whole grain cereals and oats, peanuts, meat and soy.

Include Sufficient Vitamins

Food sources are best, but consider supplements if needed. Not more than 400 mg Vitamin E daily.

Drink Water. Keeping hydrated is important unless medically advised to restrict fluids. Drink 6-8 glasses of water a day.

Avoid excessive caffeine or alcohol as these remove water from the body.



## **3) Mind Your Brain**

- Do mind games like crosswords, number and word puzzles, chess, draughts, cards.
- Read, write, talk to people, use a computer, take a course.
- Pursue cultural activities and hobbies – plays, concerts, jigsaws, painting, sewing, carpentry.
- Do activities around the house like cooking and gardening.

## **4) Mind Your Health Checks**

- Mind your weight and avoid obesity.
- Mind your blood pressure and seek help if it is too high.
- Mind your cholesterol.
- Mind your blood sugar levels.

## **5) Mind Your Social Life**

- Keep in contact with family and friends.
- Participate in church groups, social and cultural groups.
- Keep working or become a volunteer.
- Enjoy conversations with people.

## **6) Mind Your Head.**

- Avoid head injury.
- Always use a seatbelt.
- Take care when you are a pedestrian.
- Use protective headgear when riding and playing sport.



## **7.) Mind Your Habits**

- Don't smoke.
- If you drink alcohol, just have 1-2 drinks a day, with one or two alcohol-free days a week.
- Reduce stress and get a good night's sleep.
- Your lifestyle and habits can make a big difference to your health, and may reduce your dementia risk. Remember...it's never too early to Mind Your Mind.

Reprinted from *Alzheimers Australia*, Dementia Awareness Month