

# ASSOCIATED COUNSELING AND WELLNESS CENTERS

INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE AND FAMILY COUNSELORS

## COMMUNITY MATTERS

### LOVE HAS NO BOUNDARIES—BUT MARRIAGE DOES



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Many people think that boundaries are like a "keep out" fence that distance you from your spouse. In fact, appropriate boundaries bring you closer in marriage. Respect is one of the foundational aspects of a close and healthy marriage. We all want and deserve respect. Below is a list of boundaries and ways to show your spouse respect. Employing these suggestions will have a very positive effect on your marriage.



#### **Secrets are appropriate for birthdays and Christmas! Otherwise secrets are very damaging to a marriage.**

Secrets and lies are cousins. Secrets are unexpressed lies and have no place in a close relationship. Secrets often are about money and relationships. We do not have to share things from our past that we have repented of and that do not affect your relationship today.

**Keep your mate's flaws private.** Do not discuss your spouse's flaws with your family or friends. This is very disrespectful to your mate. The first person you should talk to is your spouse. Sit down and have an honest discussion about the problem. If your mate's flaws become damaging to your relationship, seek out the help.

On a similar note, **keep your marriage problems private.** Seek help from a Marriage Counselor. Sometimes even reading a good book on the subject may help; especially if the two of you read it together. Sharing your problems with family or friends tends to polarize the situation. Rarely, even if we are sure about it, is the person we go to objective. After all, they are our friend or family member and they care about us so much that they may not be objective.

**It is important to create appropriate division of household chores and parenting responsibilities.** In the current day and age often there are two wage earners in the home. When mom stays at home with the kids, she can be just as, if not more exhausted than dad.

**In a marriage, there is no place for close "personal" friends of the opposite sex.** This can create significant problems in a relationship. Affairs often develop out of situations where a person goes to their friend because "they are not being understood" at home. When the "friend" steps in and fills that role it is fertile ground for an affair to develop. You may say that you are not that kind of person to let that happen. As Marriage Counselors, we hear those very words from many couples who come to us to try to heal from adultery. Be wise and make your spouse your only close friend of the opposite sex.

One of the biggest complaints people make when they come in for marriage counseling is that they do not feel like they are number one with their spouse. This is true for men and women. It could be friends, work, hobbies, extended family, children or many other things. The best marriages always have husband and wife putting their spouse first.

Marriages thrive on closeness. Find ways to return to the closeness you once had. Look for ways to reduce boundaries between you and your spouse, leaving only healthy boundaries, and create healthy boundaries between your relationship and the outside world that protects your marriage.

To talk with one of our Marriage Counselors, call 708-597-0032 in the South Suburbs or 815-929-0099 in the Kankakee Valley area.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

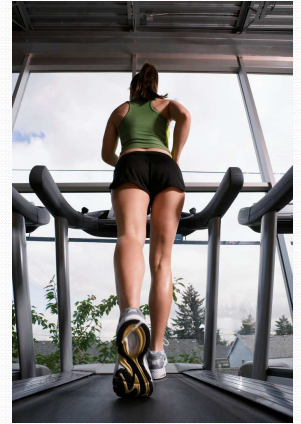
SUBMITTED BY DONNA @ FITNESS PREMIER’S THIN AND HEALTHY PROGRAM—MANTENO

The evidence is growing and is more convincing than ever! People of all ages who are generally inactive can improve their health and well-being by becoming active at a moderate-intensity on a regular basis.

Regular physical activity substantially reduces the risk of dying of coronary heart disease, the nation's leading cause of death, and decreases the risk for stroke, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure. It also helps to control weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles, and joints; reduces falls among older adults; helps to relieve the pain of arthritis; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and is associated with fewer hospitalizations, physician visits, and medications. Moreover, physical activity need not be strenuous to be beneficial; people of all ages benefit from participating in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week.

Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, more than 50% of American adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits. 25% of adults are not active at all in their leisure time. Activity decreases with age and is less common among women than men and among those with lower income and less education.

Insufficient physical activity is not limited to adults. More than a third of young people in grades 9-12 do not regularly engage in vigorous-intensity physical activity. Daily participation in high school physical education classes dropped from 42% in 1991 to 32% in 2001 (CDC, 2002).



**Fitness Premier, 32 North Oak Street, Manteno, IL 60950, (815) 468-6000 [www.fitness-premier.com](http://www.fitness-premier.com)**

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD NUTRITION

WRITTEN BY KATHY HASSAN, MA, BRADLEY COUNSELOR

Since moms are no longer at home cooking balanced meals, our means to nutrition has turned to fast foods. Even dining out does not offer the same benefit of good nutrition, when so many foods are loaded with preservatives and high levels of sodium and sugars. Many of us eat out a minimum of once a week, even if it is a breakfast sandwich or a cappuccino while driving to work.

Good nutrition should be a part of our lifestyle. The “Food Pyramid” refers to the basic food groups and daily recommended portions. This guideline:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Individuals with a chronic health condition should consult their health care professional for a diet that is appropriate for them.

Obesity, diabetes, heart and vascular diseases are on the rise in this country. We encourage everyone to get back to the basic balanced meal and recommended portions. Then we can enjoy the results.

## STAFF PROFILE



**JAMES ODOM, MA, LCPC—MIDLOTHIAN**

James specializes in a wide range of issues such as alcohol/substance abuse, vocational counseling, anger management, stress, relationship/family problems, as well as mood disorders such as depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorders. He is also experienced in the treatment of childhood and adolescent issues.

James received his Masters degree in Community Counseling from Governors State University. He earned a Bachelors degree in Psychology with a minor in Mental Health and an Associates degree in Mental Health, with a concentration in Substance Abuse, from Prairie State College.