

Care Capsule[®]

Capsules of motivation to dispense care and kindness

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Do You Have Two Ears? Or Three?

— Dr. James R. Kok

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Everyone has two ears. You can see them (if they're not covered by hair). They are standard equipment. But do you have a third ear? If you do, it's not on the tip of your nose. It's not on your chin. It can be anywhere! But, it is important that you have one. Here's why:

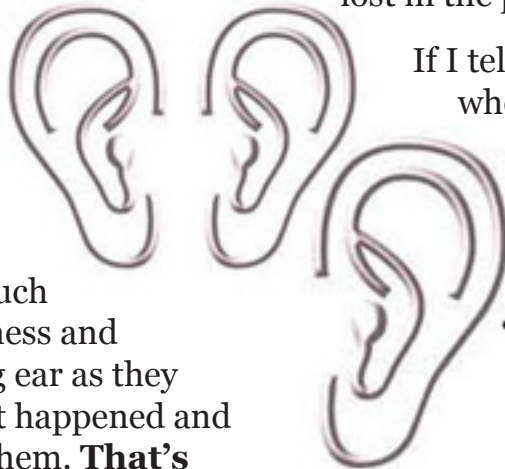
Injured and distressed folks need to receive care and compassion.

They need a touch of loving-kindness and then a listening ear as they talk about what happened and how it is with them. **That's your normal two ears.** More than anything else, these folks need to tell the story of what happened. They usually need to tell it a number of times. Such talking is a natural way of letting the reality sink in and become real and then manageable.

Losing a wallet or breaking a finger may not qualify as major

losses or injuries, but even such minor incidents get better by talking them out to a caring and compassionate friend.

If I tell you I lost my wallet, what is the first thing you think of? Probably you wonder how it happened or how much cash was lost in the process.



If I tell you I broke my finger, where does your mind go with that? With most people, the first thought is a memory when they or someone else smashed that

part of their body. That is the way our minds work. Show me or tell me something and it carries me directly into a similar circumstance in my own memory.

Unfortunately, what we think of first—that which immediately comes into our minds—is also what provokes a memory and that writes the script for what we will say: “You

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Three Ears

Continued from page 1

lost your wallet? That's nothing. My wife left her purse in the State Park Women's Room with \$500 in it and we never got any of it back."

Another kind of reaction to a friend's bad news is on a different level. Many of us immediately jump into the fixing role. If you share with me that you broke your finger, I instantaneously bring forth ways of repairing it, or speeding up recovery: *"Broke your finger? Here is what you should do and it will be as good as new in ten days...."*

Some of us remember something similar and that is what we talk about. It may be interesting and even helpful, but because of bad timing, it is likely to be an inappropriate way of showing concern and compassion for a hurting or upset person. It can show little or no evidence of being personally touched or sympathetic.

The life of one working hard to express care and kindness must take on a different assignment. Distressed people need a touch of Love, which is also a touch of God.

This is where the third ear comes in.

"Lost your wallet? What a bummer!" As plain and casual as it sounds, "bummer" is a word that says, *"I understand you are in dismay."* It is loving-kindness in capsule form. It is a spiritually relevant word.

"Broke you finger? Ow. That can hurt a lot." Again, the heart is speaking. "Ow" connects with their

pain. It is an expression of love trickling into the hurting person. As ordinary as that may sound, it is the loving Lord Jesus, living in one's heart, who has reached out to the injured party and tuned in to their pain. It is compassion.

The third ear hears more than the simple facts

that were picked up by the two ears. The third ear hears the emotions, the concern, the grief, the pain that underlies the facts. Our work, as people who show care and demonstrate kindness, is to express compassion—to show the love of God. God is compassionate. God feels with us. That is what the word compassion means: "to feel with". And spiritual maturity is the process of letting the Love of God flow out of our hearts into others, rather than limiting our attention to the 'facts of the case'.

The third ear hears the feelings of the one who is hurting. The other two ears hear his words, his explanation, his story. While our ordinary two ears are working at their specialty—facts and information—our third ear tunes into distress, heartache, confusion, fear, frustration, anger, sadness.

This special ear tunes in to our own heart and our own hurts. We put ourselves in the other's place and either recall or imagine what they are feeling. Then that realization is put into words as a caring gift to the one we are listening to: *"Oh, that is so sad!"* or *"Oh, that must have been very frightening."*

Listening with our third ear is not easy. It takes effort and concentration to zero in on what

the other is most likely feeling. Responding from that source often means biting our own lip to keep from saying what immediately comes to mind. It may require changing a way of life that has always tried to fix or has started to talk about the first thing that came to mind. A new habit may need to be developed.

Keep the focus on them

If, when we jump into another person's ordeal, we reach back into our memory, or we move into how to repair the situation, something backward happens. Immediately, the one in distress is listening to us. The injured one, who should be talking, is now politely paying attention to what WE have gone through, or what we advise THEY should do. Feelings have been left behind.

Death in the family, marital breakdowns, job loss, and other unwanted blows may need hours of talk. Some folks pay a therapist for the chance to tell their story. That

is how vital it really is to talk. But good friends, being loving instruments of a loving God, can be enormously helpful, too. And it starts with an open heart that realizes and names the heartache, listens to the lament and the circumstances, "weeps with those who weep", accepts anger and anguish in any form. And always, fight down the urge to tell your own story or hand out remedial suggestions. Doing that is being a loving Jesus to another.

Caring for those who are hurt is a spiritual exercise. Prayer and reflection may help a lot as we endeavor to let God's loving spirit, the love of Jesus, flow through us

Many of us immediately jump into the fixing role

The third ear hears more than facts

instead of just saying whatever comes to mind. Spiritual sensitivity is a lot more about being present and listening than it is about talking. The third ear is spiritual sensitivity.

Listening

So let's talk about listening. Here is a handful of special rules every caring listener must follow in order to be effective:

1. The wounded and grieving need to talk. Most of the time those who have been hit by something devastating or frightening are feeling a strong urge to put into words what they have gone through and what is percolating in their hearts.

2. The loving listener will hear their account, listen to their feelings, and accept their tears.

3. The caring friend is not there to cheer or fix them. Helpfulness does not depend on finding words that brighten the scene or distract them, or make them smile.

4. One's helpfulness is mostly in being present. Showing up is 90% of helping. It is powerfully spirit-lifting when caring people show up after a painful loss or injury. You are God's presence. Your presence is strong love medicine, just by itself.

5. A loving prayer is talking to God in clear and specific words about their hurts and heartaches. It names the painful issue and asks God to bring them comfort. God already knows about it, but the caring person still puts it in words.

6. Healing will happen. God takes care of that. We are instruments of compassion.

One Mouth

Continuing our attention to this strange-looking face, you will notice that having three ears leaves less room for a mouth. To be a good listener, you have less need for a mouth. Talking is not nearly as important as listening. When we follow the urge to talk, we bring up our own stories; we try to comfort with the usual pat phrases; we try to fix the problem and offer advice.

Leave the mouth silent. Your presence with the other person, and your willingness to listen as they need to talk, is healing to them. And now, as you listen with your third ear; as you listen to their emotions and feelings, you can bring in another important part of your anatomy — your brain.

When your brain is engaged as you listen, the person's words don't go in one ear and out the other. You store away pieces of their story that tell what is most important to them as they go through this. You listen for what they are NOT saying; the things left unsaid are often quite relevant. You pay attention to the whole person—not just the words they are saying.

Sometimes there are times of prolonged silence and the listener may feel the need to help the hurting person talk a little more. So a question is asked. But questions are not advisable when someone is hurting. Questions move people into their brains. They have to think. There is nothing wrong with thinking, but hurting people need the opportunity to spill out their feelings.

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Partnering for a Care Conference in your area !

We would like to work with your team to schedule a local mini-conference that would make it easier for people in your area to attend.



We had a number of wonderful events in Garden Grove, California (13) but not everyone could make the trip to the west coast.

So, we are working on several smaller conferences in various parts of the United States.

How would you like to help host one in your community?

We will offer as much help as you would like, drawing upon our past experience. You can determine the topics, speakers, schedule any way you want — or we can work alongside your people in developing those things.

And . . . Dr. Jim Kok will come to speak (*no honorarium required*) to share the Care and Kindness vision.

Drop us a line at: ShowUp@careandkindness.org to let us know of your interest. Then we can begin planning together!



Do You Notice My Pain?

— by Craig Bourne

If someone staggered toward you with an arrow sticking out of his chest . . . and blood dripping from the wound . . . you would probably recognize that the person might be in massive physical pain.

Admittedly, an arrow in someone's chest is pretty obvious! But, around you every day are people who have been wounded with arrows of loss and heartache . . . **can you see their wounds?**

Just because a person is not bleeding — is not crying out in pain — does not mean that his wound is any less severe.

To the man with the arrow in his chest, it is unlikely that you would say, *“Don't feel bad, at least it wasn't a poison arrow,”* and just keep walking past him. More likely, you would say, *“My gosh, you must be in terrible pain. Let me call an ambulance.”*

This is what we are called to do: **notice another's pain and offer help.**



Offer words of sympathy and concern. Too often, 'advice' is given to the injured one or there are admonitions to 'keep a stiff upper lip'.

Too often we hear suggestions made to the suffering person that she should be thankful that things aren't worse than they are.

Too often we hear suggestions made to the suffering person that she should be thankful that things aren't worse than they are.

Have you sent us your email address?

Many people have sent us an email at ShowUp@careandkindness.org to provide us with their email address so that we can send the **Care Capsule** to them online.

With all the new technology that surrounds people today (email, Facebook, Twitter, texting, iPads, iPhones, etc.), we have heard occasional remarks that printed material is a bit behind the times.

On the other hand, if you are one who enjoys holding a publication or a book in your hands, we are happy to continue sending printed copies to you.

What do you think? If you would like to receive future issues as an attachment to your email, please send us your email address.

Send it to –
ShowUp@careandkindness.org

So . . . here's your homework assignment! Look for people who have been wounded. Look for people who have been struck by an arrow, even if it is not readily visible. Then offer comfort. **Offer care and kindness. Use your third ear!**

A 4-year-old child was next door neighbor to an elderly man who had just lost his wife.

When the child saw the man cry, the little boy went over into the man's yard and climbed on top of the man's lap and just sat there.

When the boy's mother asked him what he'd said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."

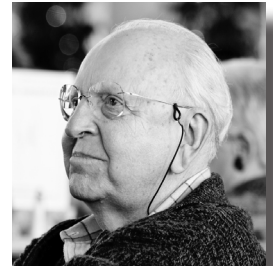
Care & Kindness Conference

Greater Indianapolis Area

to be held at

First Presbyterian Church, Noblesville, IN

September 7-8, 2012



Schedule

Friday 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Saturday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Speakers are from Indiana Attorney's Office, Good Samaritan Network, Anderson University, Ball State, Calvin College, Indiana University

Topics include 13 Secret Behaviors, How Kindness Changed The World, Caring for Impaired Seniors, Autism, Bullying, Grief and more...

For further details, check out the Indianapolis pages at www.careandkindness.org

Designed to teach, inspire, convince, and motivate Christian people to give loving-kindness more regularly, every day, and everywhere they go.

- Child care is available for young families
- Private home lodging (if desired instead of a hotel. Ask for details when you submit your registration.)

For registration or more information:

fpc-noblesville@ori.net

edandjudy@1000hours.com

or phone (317) 773-2383

Do you have a Kindle?



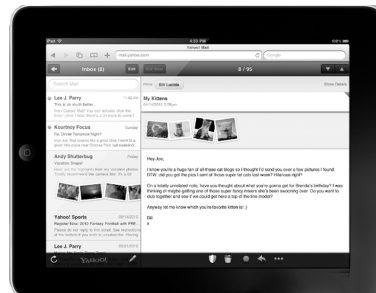
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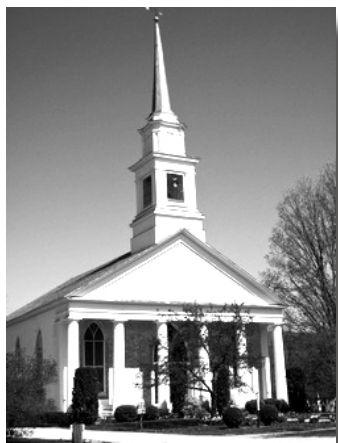
— NEW —

Care & Kindness Conference

in Castleton, Vermont

to be held at

Castleton Federated Church
504 Main Street, Castleton, VT
October 19 - 20, 2012



Another regional conference!

If you weren't able to attend the one in Indianapolis, look at the advantages of this one !

- ✓ The beautiful fall colors of Vermont
- ✓ Great inspirational addresses by Dr. Kok
- ✓ Motivational and educational workshops

Schedule

Friday 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Worship and Key address by Dr. James Kok

Saturday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Addresses by Dr. Kok, breakout sessions, Q & A time, panel presentation, and a special topic: "Pastor's Plea: The Case for a Care and Kindness Ministry"

A catered lunch will be available for a small fee.

"Kindness, wrapped in love, is at the heart of Jesus' spirit."

I am more convinced than ever that the most crucial element for continuing to make the world a better place is inspiring people into lives of loving-kindness."

— James Kok

Details about the conference are not finalized as this issue of the Care Capsule goes to press, but the Vermont pages on our website, www.careandkindness.org, will be kept up with the latest information available. As the date of the conference approaches, check out those pages for finalized details.

For registration or more information:

Email: castletonchurch@yahoo.com

Phone: (802) 468-5725

Mail: Federated Church of Castleton, PO Box 57, Castleton, VT, 05735

Care and Kindness 101

Our goal is to encourage lay leaders and church members to become more aware of the opportunities to minister in caring and compassionate ways to those around us.

The conference will include discussions on how churches can begin a care and kindness ministry, how to set time aside each day to minister to someone, and how to follow God's leading in reaching out to others.

The conference will include time for participants to ask questions and to share their experiences with care and kindness ministries.

Keep climbing upwards! You may never reach the top, but it's definitely in that direction.

— Ashleigh Brilliant



Light Notes

Ten Adult Truths

1. Sometimes I'll look down at my watch 3 consecutive times and still not know what time it is.
2. I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.
3. There is great need for a sarcasm font.
4. Map Quest really needs to start their directions on #5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.
5. Bad decisions make good stories.
6. Can we all just agree to ignore whatever comes after Blue Ray? I don't want to have to restart my collection ... again.
7. I'm always slightly terrified when I exit out of Word and it asks me if I want to save any changes to my ten-page document that I swear I did not make any changes to.
8. I keep some people's phone numbers in my phone just so I know not to answer when they call.
9. How on earth are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?
10. Nothing is more embarrassing than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.

Three Ears

Continued from page 3

They need to let their distress, heartaches, worries, and anger flow from their hearts and spill from their lower regions. Questions move them to their heads. They have to think. The flow of emotion is stymied by questions.

What to say, or not to say

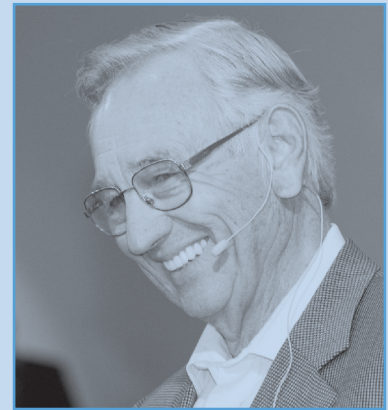
Instead of questions, another kind of remark is recommended. If one is sitting with a grieving husband whose wife has died, a sentence like this might stimulate the catharsis such a heartbroken man needs: *"It doesn't seem possible."* Or *"she was such a wonderful person."* Another tack would be to share a memory: *"She always asked me about my mother."*

Such statements stay with feelings. They naturally fit the emotions of the hurting man and probably he will respond on the feeling level rather than ponder or reflect in his head about what was asked.

Going back to the lost wallet vignette, one might say something like, *"Everything stops when you lose a wallet."* And for the broken finger say, *"That can mess a lot of things up for awhile."*

So listening is also about responding. The third ear hears the hurt, the excitement, the fear. And the caring person encourages talking from the heart, sharing, even weeping, to facilitate the healing process and to communicate loving kindness.

Loving kindness involves entering another's pain—not trying to fix it.



Dr. James R. Kok has written a definitive resource detailing the key essentials in becoming a more caring person in his latest book, **"The Miracle of Kindness"** (available at major bookstores, in either paperback or eBook editions.) A handful of basic tools—wrapped in courage—are the secret to changing the world through intentional acts of kindness.

As the **Koach Of Kare**, Dr. Kok has been a pastor at the Crystal Cathedral for the past 28 years and heads the Care Ministry department of the church. He is the author of six books and numerous articles, and he is the founder of the Conference on Care and Kindness.

**Compassion
is feeling your
hurt in my heart**

***Don't be afraid
to give some of
yourself away
... it will all
grow back.***

— Ashleigh Brilliant



NO, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT TWITTER.
I LITERALLY WANT YOU TO FOLLOW ME.

--JESUS

Care Capsule

A publication of Care and Kindness Ministries, as an outgrowth of the Conference on Care and Kindness. Our web page is at www.careandkindness.org. For a free subscription to **Care Capsule**, send an email to ShowUp@careandkindness.org

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