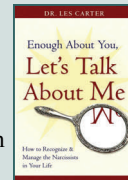


RECOMMENDED RESOURCES & SUPPORT**Enough About You,
Let's Talk About Me**
Dr. Les Carter

Dr. Carter's insights about those with narcissistic tendencies provide a clear definition of narcissism and helps the reader understand the pain and confusion family members, spouses, friends, and employers feel about their relationships.

Dr. Carter offers valuable insight into how to change our own attitudes and responses and maintain healthy boundaries.

**VICTIM ADVOCATE TRAINING**

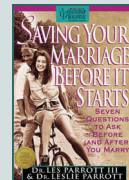
SPM provides a 20-hour Victim Advocate Training each October. This training is designed to equip pastors, youth and lay leaders with the tools they need to provide education and support to victims of abuse in their congregations and communities.

Each participant will have the opportunity to learn about abuse from a Biblical view, learn about the dynamics of abusive relationships and ways to respond to victims with understanding and compassion.

**Saving Your Marriage
Before It Starts**
Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott

The Parrott's have a passion for helping those in their twenties and thirties build the skills they need to nurture healthy marriages.

Workbooks and a video series for this book are available and make this a good resource for pre-marital counseling group or young adult classes. The Parrott's tackle some thorny questions with authentic hope and encouragement.



UPDATED 2006 ADA COUNTY RESOURCE DIRECTORIES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN FEBRUARY!
Cost including binder and tabs is \$35.00. Refills are \$15.00.
Call or e-mail the SPM office for your copy.

Contact us at 323-2169 or splace@spro.net



Safe
Place
Ministries

P. O. Box 4892
Boise, ID
83711
208-323-2169

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
BOISE ID
PERMIT NO. 157

We want very much for **SAFE PLACE NEWS** to be a helpful resource for many people. With this in mind, permission to duplicate this newsletter for free distribution is granted. Any quotations or references to it should give proper credit to SAFE PLACE MINISTRIES. We encourage input and suggestions. Send correspondence to:
SPM, P. O. Box 4892, Boise, ID 83711, or call 208-323-2169.

An annual tax deductible gift of \$10.00 is welcome to help cover expenses.

SAFE PLACE NEWS

*Promoting safe places, consistent with the character of Christ,
for women and their families to heal and grow.*

Issue 28

May 2006

DANGEROUS DATING

Chad and Jessica met at their church single adult fellowship during their Junior year in college. Chad was new to the group. He said he had recently transferred from another university and seemed eager to find a place to fellowship and serve. Jess felt honored when Chad asked her out and she was really impressed with how he treated her. He was a perfect gentlemen and Jess felt treasured and special for the first time in a long time.

Just before Christmas, Chad took Jessica to a beautiful riverside inn for dinner where he had arranged for the restaurant to place a diamond ring surrounded with roses on her dessert plate. Jessica was overwhelmed and speechless. They had talked about both of their dreams for graduate school and internships. With school and work schedules, their dating relationship had seemed like a whirlwind. She had not thought deeply about where their relationship was going, but she didn't want to burst the bubble of happiness surrounding

them on this special occasion as Chad slipped the ring onto her finger and told her how much he loved her.

Then, almost overnight their relationship began to change in subtle way



that left Jessica feeling confused. Chad began pressuring her to get married right away. He began to ignore her boundaries. He wanted more of her time away from her friends and family and seemed jealous of her time at work. Then without notice he quit school, got a job that paid well and told her that she would never have to work. He could provide well for both of them and she would be free to stay at home and care for their children.

Jessica, feeling ambivalent and isolated, decided to spend Spring Break with her older sister, who had always given her wise advice in the past. Chad didn't want her to go and began, in a teasing kind of way, to belittle her for not being able to think for herself.



Jessica, like thousands of other young women, is experiencing the beginning stages of an abusive relationship for which little in her experience has prepared her.

Recent research indicates that 1 in 4 young women in the United States have experienced physical violence in a dating relationship. When the definition of dating violence was broadened to include verbal/emotional abuse, where the definitions were carefully explained to young men and women, 85 per cent of teens reported that they have been, or know someone who has been, in an abusive relationship.

Continued on page 2

Inside this issue:

Dangerous Dating	1
Dangerous Dating	2
Dangerous Dating	3
Resources & Support	4

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Forrey
Judy Gordon
Kim Peake
Tim Rosenvall
Thom Wierenga
Rob Zaklan

STAFF

Nancy Edwards
Executive Director
Linda Bothman
Education Resource Coordinator
Jackie Thompson
Social Services Director
Nancy Pitts
Client Care Provider
Angela Hills
Support Services Manager
Gail Rubelt
Office Assistants

(continued from page 1)

Many teens and young adults would not stay in a relationship with an openly violent person, but like Jessica, they have little knowledge of the precursors to physical violence in their own dating relationships. Christian teens may be so thrilled that they have found someone who shares their faith and values that they overlook the words and actions that point to deep character flaws hiding under a charming exterior. Jessica, for instance, had decided as a young teen that she wanted to date only those who shared her faith and that she wanted to stay sexually pure until her wedding. Chad had no such convictions but pretended to be a sincere Christian believer, attending worship services, volunteering his time and energy to church activities and basking in the praise given by Jessica's group of friends and ministry leaders. Jessica's peer group thought he was a great guy, in fact many envied Jessica and Chad's relationship and told her so.

When Jessica arrived at her sister's home, her sister encouraged her to do three things: (1) listen to her misgivings (2) ask the questions that were behind those feelings and thoughts, and (3) look at her own goals and boundaries to determine if her relationship with Chad fit her goals and if not, which ones was she willing to give up in order to be with him.

As Jessica spent time with her sister, time alone and time in prayer, she began to realize she was on the verge of giving up some things that were very important to her. The change in Chad after he gave her the ring puzzled her. He had asked her to give up her dreams and pressured her to give up her boundaries. She truly valued her friendships, but she had all but given them up because her relationship with Chad left little time or energy to connect with them.

Jessica, however, did more than focus on Chad. She was somewhat surprised at her own willingness to go along with Chad's desires. She liked the feeling of being in love and the romance was fun, but more and more the relationship revolved around his desires, not the goals they had shared in the beginning.

Jessica made several decisions about the relationship that she planned to share with Chad when she returned. First, she decided her boundaries were important and non-negotiable. She wanted to finish her degree before she married, with a commitment from him to actively support her desire for graduate training. She did not want to compromise her spiritual values and substitute physical intimacy for a deepening emotional intimacy and she did not want their relationship to revolve just around each other. She wanted to slow the relationship down, to allow time for them to explore the many areas that they had never discussed, and time to meet his family and see how he related in other environments.

Jessica wrote out what she wanted to discuss with Chad and returned eager to share her heart with him, sure that he would be willing to listen and they could work together to strengthen their relationship. Chad, however, did not like Jessica's newfound strength. He accused her sister of interfering and called Jessica a weakling for being so easily influenced, unable to think for herself. He stated that maybe if she couldn't trust him they should call the engagement off, then he walked out. Jessica tried to call the next day. Chad didn't answer. Two days later, a beautiful bouquet was delivered with an apology and an invitation to dinner. Jessica accepted both, then called her sister to ask her to pray — for courage to honestly confront what had happened.



Chad holds several beliefs and actions shared in common with those who are self-absorbed and abusive in relationships. These beliefs fuel the behavior and can serve as red flags to warn others to proceed with caution. [The questions that we have included are not exhaustive nor are the behaviors they suggest true of every person who chooses to abuse. They are simply to help you begin thinking about the correlation between what a person believes and how that works out in his relationships. The word 'he' is only used for readability. Abuse crosses all gender and social lines.]

◆ **A sense of ownership**

- Does he always choose where you will go and what you are going to do?
- Is he critical of the way you do things? Does he always have a 'better way'?
- Does he correct what you say or tell you how you should think?
- Does he want you to account for your time when you are away from him?
- Does he become jealous if you talk to a male friend, business associate, pastor?

continued from page 2

*Above all else,
guard your heart,
for it is the wellspring
of life.
Proverbs 4:23 NIV*

*Who is wise and understand-
ing among you?
Let him show it
by his good life,
by deeds done in the humility
that comes from wisdom.
James 3:13 NIV*

*Even a child
is known by his actions,
by whether his conduct
is pure and right.
Proverbs 20:11 NIV*

*Love is patient,
love is kind.
It does not envy,
it does not boast,
it is not proud.
It is not rude,
it is not self-seeking,
it is not easily angered, . . .
I Corinthians 12:4-5 NIV*

- ◆ **A sense of entitlement**
(You 'owe' me or the world revolves around me)
Does he believe you 'owe' him special treatment?
Is every problem in his life always someone else's fault?
Does he label others (stupid, lazy, crazy) if he doesn't get what he wants at work, at church, among friends, or from you?
Does he get angry when he doesn't get what he wants?
Can he serve others? Save for desired possessions? Delay gratification?
- ◆ **An inability to empathize or show compassion**
Does he show compassion for others when they are hurting?
Does he hurt you or others and then say he is 'just kidding'?
Does he hurt others emotionally or physically and then blame them for being 'too sensitive' or 'weak'?
Does he say he is sorry but then continue the same hurtful behaviors?
Does he hurt animals or children?
- ◆ **An unwillingness to take directions from others**
Does he become defensive if you or others disagree with him?
Does he listen to others and then ignore or belittle their input?
When you bring up a concern, does he attack, blame, minimize or ignore you or your opinions?
Does he use Scripture to get you to do what he wants but not apply it to himself?
Does he have rigid opinions about men's and women's roles in marriage and society?
- ◆ **A need to control**
Does he try to control your time, activities, money, children, thoughts, opinions, what you wear, when you see your friends and family?
Do you have to account for your time whenever you are away from him?
Does he call you repeatedly throughout the day to keep tabs on you?
Does he become verbally or physically aggressive if he can't control you or others?
- ◆ **Prince Charming**
Did he sweep you off your feet with charm and romantic gestures?
Is he pushing for too much (emotional, physical, sexual) intimacy too soon?
Has he shared intimate details of his life and invited you to do the same within hours, days or weeks after meeting?
- ◆ **Pretender**
Is he different in public than he is when he is alone with you?
Does he have close male friends?
Is he evasive about his past or have huge gaps in his personal history?
Is he addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling, or pornography yet denies or minimizes their effect on his behavior?

We rarely hear stories like Chad and Jessica's. The Chads rarely see anything wrong with their behavior and nothing right about seeking help. The Jessicas are almost always already married, often for several years, and are facing the pain of living in an abusive relationship and dealing with the effects of the abuse in themselves and in their children's lives. Jessica, as a single woman, has a difficult choice to make. The woman in an abusive marriage faces a complex series of difficult choices and emotions that surround her beliefs about marriage, divorce, pain, her children's needs and emotions, support (financial, emotional, spiritual), and her relationship with God. Most often she must think through these complex issues after years of having her dignity and worth attacked in relationship with her spouse.

It is *our* hope that young men and women, their parents, teachers, mentors, church leaders and pastors will recognize the beliefs and actions that are the precursors to abusive relationships and use them to make wise, and safe, dating decisions.