

THE AACCS ANCHOR

A Publication of Asian American Christian Counseling Service, Inc.

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” Hebrews 6:19

December 2008

Sustaining AACCS for the Next Generation

By Eleanor Huang, LCSW
Co-Vice-Chair, Board of Directors

Sustainability is a popular term these days. To say that a human or environmental system is sustainable is to say that it will last for many years, that it will grow with future generations. To say a system is not sustainable is to say it will not last very long. Concepts such as continuity, quality, commitment, support, restoration, transparency, maintenance, integration, affirmation, respect, conservation, prosperity, growth, capability, and adaptability are values usually associated with sustainability.

In the absence of an Executive Director this year, it has been a privilege to work with the administrative staff as the ED Consultant, assisting in the maintenance of internal operations, strengthening the infrastructure, and providing guidance and direction on matters related to clinical practice. Sustainability has been a focus for me – how do we sustain our mission with limited resources, where do we invest our energies, and how do we grow with and adapt to the on-going challenges of the marketplace?

Even though answers to these questions remain complex, God has been affirming and faithful. As we approach 2009, I am reminded that the seeds of AACCS began in my living room in 1979, nearly 30 years ago. The longstanding commitment of the board and administrative staff is remarkable. Equally remarkable is the collective commitment of our faith community. Your persistent prayers on our behalf and generous giving through the years have allowed us to serve the community for a generation.

Sustaining AACCS for the next generation is our greatest challenge. Our clients are no longer the baby boomers, but their children and their children's children. How to balance the need to fund our infrastructure (such as paying the rent, insurance, telephones) with our desire to keep our services affordable is always an exercise in faith. In these harsher economic times, we know that the stresses of unemployment, decreasing assets and income will create a greater need for our services. We expect to see more individuals, marriages, and families in distress. Recognizing AACCS's call to be accessible to the most financially vulnerable, we leave our infrastructure needs at the Lord's feet and strive to continue offering services at deeply discounted rates. The Emory C. Campbell Fund, in particular, was established to provide the lowest possible rates to single parents, the unemployed, the uninsured, and those who have no other means of supporting counseling sessions.

Whether through your on-going prayers or financial support, please continue to walk alongside us in 2009. Your remembrance of AACCS will be gratefully received. Because of confidentiality issues, there are many stories we wish we could tell you; triumphs in healing and restoration. Although these

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Counselor's Corner: Mei-Leng Lin, MFT - Sharing the Vision



My Background and Spiritual Journey

I was born and raised in Taiwan where Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism have had much influence. Into my adulthood, I was worshipping my ancestors and false gods of whom I was fearful. The deaths of several of my family members reinforced my fears and strengthened the bondage and stronghold in my life. I had never heard the gospel and I was living in darkness.

It was not until I came to the U.S as a foreign student to study accounting at North Carolina State University in 1981 that I began to see the hope and the light through an American student who was a living testimony of Jesus. I was able to experience God's love for the first time through my friend Claudia, who was a wonderful gift in my life. Experiencing my very first Thanksgiving holiday with Claudia's Christian family had a significant impact on my life and it eventually led me to commit my life to follow Jesus Christ in 1983.

The past twenty-six years has been a journey of radical transformation. It has been a long journey of discovery in God, my Creator, with whom I've learned I can indeed have an intimate relationship and whom I can call my "Abba Father". *"There is none to compare with Thee; If I would declare and speak of them, they would be too numerous to count"* (Psalm 40:5). It is as if He has taken away a pair of dark sunglasses I once had on, so that I can see the Light and He has caused me to want to be a light unto others.

Through the help of a Christian counselor, God ministered to me and brought healing to me for the many losses of family members. As a result, my life was transformed, and I myself conceived a desire to become a Christian counselor. I strongly believe that God can use a Christian counselor as an instrument, by His Holy Spirit. I believe that wounds can be healed and that individuals and relationships can be restored, to be able to receive a fullness of blessings, so that individuals can truly embrace their identity as "a child of God".

I then became involved in providing lay counseling for a period of about two years. It was during that time, that, through various signs and God speaking to me through passages such as Isaiah 54:2-3 and Isaiah 55:1-9, I confirmed God calling me to become a professional counselor. So in 1999, I officially resigned from my long-term career of 16 years as an Accountant and began pursuing an MFT degree. I received my M.A. degree in Psychology with an emphasis of Marriage & Family Therapy in 2001.

Working with AACCS

I began working with AACCS in 2000. I appreciate that AACCS continues to hold on to the truth and that AACCS testifies of God's faithfulness, as it serves the community in addressing mental/emotional health needs as well as amenably meeting spiritual and financial needs. I have enjoyed the staff of AACCS who hold the same faith and desire to serve God with integrity. I personally have been blessed and have experienced God's love, grace, and mercy in my experience with AACCS.

My Passion

Being a cross-cultural and tri-lingual therapist (I also speak Taiwanese & Mandarin), my greatest interest and burden is in treating immigrant couples, immigrant parents and their children, and "Parachute Kids." I have much sympathy for immigrant parents, who make great sacrifices for their children. I have much sympathy for their grief over the loss of family they had to leave behind, as

well as their struggle of having to face the challenges of a new culture and language. I also have sympathy for the immigrant children, as they experience their own losses and adjustments, and may have anger and resentment as a result. I have advocated for adolescents who have cried out in need of emotional connection, while pretending they were tough. My heart has ached for the “*Parachute Kids*” as I have sensed their deep pains and hurts in fighting desperately to “fit in” to this society, even before they have had an opportunity to form their own identity.

I have also worked with families of multicultural backgrounds and with those from the low-income population whose children are severely emotionally disturbed and my heart goes out to them as well. For the past seven years, in addition to AACCS, I have also worked as a Child & Adolescent Therapist for a county contracted agency. This experience has deepened my belief in using a strategic approach and performing a whole person assessment.

I have always enjoyed working with married couples to help strengthen their marital relationship, by working with them in the areas of conflict resolution, improving their communication, etc.

During my graduate studies, God also put a burden in my heart to one day use my counseling skills to minister to missionaries and spiritual/church leaders. I consider them an isolated population whose resources may be limited due to their position.

Sharing the Vision

Recently, I had an opportunity to share my personal vision for serving the Asian American population with my colleague at AACCS, Peggy Tsui, MFT and to listen to Peggy share her vision with me as well. Together, with my background and experiences as mentioned above and Peggy’s background and experiences in counseling and in teaching parenting classes and providing other workshop presentations, Peggy and I believe we are equipped to reach out to and help the immigrant population. We hope to be able to provide different workshops for our various target groups within the immigrant population. For example, we have become aware of a large population of immigrant wives who are lonely due to their husbands traveling overseas for business, and who are struggling in their marriages and struggling in raising their children due to language barriers, cultural adjustment issues, identity and self-esteem issues, etc.

Our Covina Office

With this vision for serving the immigrant population, we identified our target community as those residing in Walnut, Diamond Bar, Hacienda Heights, Rowland Heights, and City of Industry, and I began searching for a location for an AACCS satellite office within this region. As I searched within this community for three months, the need among our target population for appropriate mental health services was re-confirmed to me on many occasions. I believe that it was in further confirmation of God’s heart for this particular population that He has provided us with our new AACCS office location in Covina. Praise the Lord!!

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How Can We Learn to “Benefit” from Problems?

By Ken Yabuki, MFT, AACCS Board Member

When confronted with a problem, the human tendency is to respond with the “fight or flight” reaction, which seems to work most of the time. But when it does not, we face a crisis. We search for answers but sometimes find none that is adequate. We ask for advice from others, which may or may not be helpful. All of this constitutes a painful, or at least unpleasant, experience. Therefore, problems are hardly ever welcomed. According to the Bible, however, there are ways to “benefit” from life’s problems. For example, the Apostle James tells us that we can actually rejoice when we face trials because they can work in our lives to produce in us the character and the abilities that we lack in order to adequately deal with the situation, which is why those trials became “problems” in the first place. The Apostle James encourages us to look at the problems of life in a very different way from which many are accustomed to. The Phillips translation of James 1:2 makes the passage read most strikingly: “When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers (and sisters), don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends!” How is this possible? How can we learn to “welcome” problems? Here are a few Biblical guidelines that can help us learn to gain from life’s problems so that we need not fear them as much when they come, even though we may not be able to welcome them with open arms.

- ◆ Learn to find strength in weakness (II Corinthians 12: 7-10)
- ◆ Learn to persevere (James 1:2-5)
- ◆ Learn to take our burdens to the Lord (Matthew 11:28-30)
- ◆ Learn to pray “Not my will but God’s will be done” (Matthew 26:39)
- ◆ Learn to give thanks in all circumstances (I Thessalonians 5:18)
- ◆ Learn to reject anxiety (Philippians 4:6-7)
- ◆ Learn to be creative (Romans 12:2)
- ◆ Learn to empathize (II Corinthians 1:3-7)
- ◆ Learn to accept help from others (II Corinthians 8:13-14)
- ◆ Learn to accept pain as normal part of life (Hebrews 12:11-13)

Every crisis we face can help develop character in us if we approach it with the Biblical perspective and we can become more useful instruments of God’s grace. When we face life’s problems with a Biblical perspective, they seem to become less stressful and they can actually help us become stronger. As we face a bumpy road ahead economically and politically, we have an opportunity to go deeper in our relationship with the Lord, which is our ultimate goal in life as Christians.

Ken Yabuki has been on the AACCS board since 1987. As a licensed marriage and family therapist (MFT), Ken is also on the clinical staff of AACCS. Ken has been in the field of mental health over 30 years and is currently working full-time at Gateways Mental Health Center in Los Angeles. A graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree, he has also spent over 40 years in Christian ministry, most recently as the English-speaking pastor of Union Church of Los Angeles until he retired in 2005. Ken and his wife, Georgia, are blessed with a grandson, Nicholas, born to their son, Preston, and his wife, Kathy.

A Poem

By Deborah A. Doyle

Today, I pray for others, Lord,
Who seem less blessed than I,
That in your love and mercy,
You'll heed their desperate cry.

For those depressed and lonely,
Please be their constant guide...
And show them they are not alone,
For You are by their side!

For those in pain of body...
Dear Lord, please make them whole,
And those who doubt...increase their faith;
Reveal their glorious soul!

Feed those who live in hunger,
House those who have no home,
And free this world from hatred:
Show us we all are one.

Dear Lord, thank you for listening,
And answering this prayer,
This world seems much less frightening,
Just knowing that you care.

Do you have an inspiring story, poem, or article that has edified and uplifted your spirit which you would like to share with our readers?

Please submit them to jkim@aaccs.org.
All editing rights held by AACCS; we will be careful to consider confidentiality and appropriateness for our readers.

Used Vehicle Donations

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The Next Generation

(Continued from page 1)

stories are held close to our vest, we know that our clients have gone back to their homes, churches and communities with changed lives, changing lives – offering praises to a loving, faithful God. This is sustainability in another sense -- helping our clients preserve and maintain their faith in the midst of life crises and emotional pain, a faith that can and will grow with future generations.

“This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God....men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.” (2 Corinthians 9:12, 13)

Eleanor Huang is an AACCS founding board member. As a licensed clinical social worker, she has a special interest in eldercare. In addition to being our Executive Director Consultant, she is currently a psychiatric social work consultant at an adult day healthcare center in Torrance. Born and raised in Los Angeles and the South Bay area, she is married to Tom and has two children, Marlo (28) and Andy (24). Her family attends Palos Verdes Baptist Church.

Sixteenth Annual Art & Sharon Yokoi Memorial Golf Tournament

Paul Sawasaki, Board of Directors

AACCS hosted its 16th Annual Art & Sharon Yokoi Memorial Golf Tournament on October 10, 2008 at Los Verdes Golf Course. With perfect weather, over 100 golfers had a wonderful time playing golf on a course with spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean and Catalina Island.

The Staff and Board of Directors would like to thank the golfers and the many sponsors for their generous support. In spite of the tough economic times, we were able to raise over \$17,000. With these funds, AACCS will continue to provide counseling services to many individuals, couples and families that are in need in our community.

A special thanks also needs to be given to all the volunteers who gave up their time to make this a successful event. Their hours of preparation and support allowed for a very enjoyable experience for the golfers from the time they arrived to register until the time they left after the dinner and awards.

We look forward to seeing everyone again on October 9, 2009. May God continue to bless you!

Clinical Staff Update

June Sano, M.F.T., AACCS Clinical Director

AACCS is celebrating the licensure of Danette Lew and Jeanie Chou Brand. Danette is now a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Jeanie Chou Brand, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. We rejoice with them in their accomplishments! We now have 20 licensed and 8 pre-licensed therapists on our clinical staff.

We also regret to inform you that we chose not to renew our lease for our Orange County office and have discontinued services in this location as of the end of November.

However, we are excited to share the good news that we have opened up a new satellite office in Covina and have been offering services at this location since November 1st. The Covina office will facilitate our efforts to provide professional Christian counseling services to the East San Gabriel Valley and beyond. It is located at:

1175 E. Garvey, Suite 102
Covina, CA 91724

16th Annual Art & Sharon Yokoi Memorial Golf Tournament October 10, 2008

*Thank you to the Sponsors, Donors, Participants and Volunteers
for making this year's golf tournament another success!*

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Men's "A" Flight

1st Place – Dennis Yoshihara
2nd Place – George Chuang
3rd Place – Jon Kagawa

Men's "B" Flight

1st Place – Tommy Shimizu
2nd Place – Yosh Fukumoto
3rd Place – Paul Sawasaki

Men's "C" Flight

1st Place – Daniel Rodriguez
2nd Place – Steve Choi
3rd Place – Dan Nakauchi
16th Place – Glen Higuchi
25th Place – Doug Lam

Women's Flight

1st Place – Barbara Sadahiro

Women's "C" Flight

1st Place —Alice Kimura

Low Gross

Men's – David Cole
Women's – Kim SooKyung

Longest Drive

Men's – Al Ebright
Women's – Macy Lew

Closest to the Pin

Hole #3 – Ken Matsui
Hole #12 – Hiro Kono
Hole #17 – Robert Chang



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Satellite offices in Torrance, West Los Angeles, Los Alamitos and Covina

AACCS in the Greater Community

September 15, 2008 *"Missionary Debriefing Training,"* TeachOverseas, Alhambra, CA
Carol Miyake, LCSW

October 18, 2008 *"Helping Those Who Grieve,"* New Life Christian Church, South Pasadena, CA
Rhonda Gee, MSW

November 22, 2008 *"Pre-field Missionary Preparation, Caring for Missionaries on the Field, and Caring for Returning Missionaries,"* co-sponsored by World Christian Fellowship and AACCS, Canaan Taiwanese Christian Church, Mountain View, CA
Pastor Ron Miyake and Carol Miyake, LCSW

UPCOMING:

February 14 –15, 2009 *"Living in Our True Identity,"* World Christian Conference, Alliance Redwoods Conference Grounds, Occidental, CA
Pastor Ron Miyake and Carol Miyake, LCSW

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