



# CARING

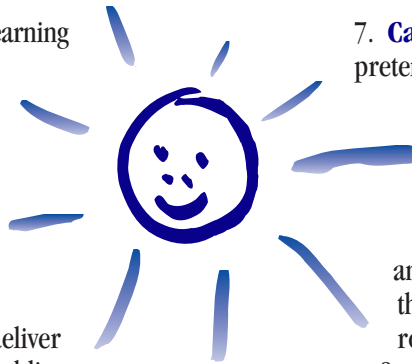
A service of your *Caring for the Mind* and  
Employee Assistance Programs

## Make a Memory with Your Child

*Summer vacation for your children is almost here! Your kids probably think it would be fun to do something with YOU!*

Don't make the following ideas into structured learning experiences. Just have fun! Best of all, you'll be making special memories.

1. **Share yourself.** Volunteer with your child for a community organization that needs help. For example, you might volunteer to read at an organization for at-risk children.
2. **Meet a hero.** Bake cookies together and deliver them to a firehouse or police station. The public safety employees will appreciate the treat. Your child will meet real heroes, see the fire station and fire truck up close and learn a valuable lesson about giving.
3. **Swing together.** Snuggle together in a swing. Read books to each other. Watch the butterflies and birds.
4. **Wash cars.** Create a car wash for toy cars.
5. **Dance in the rain.** On a rainy day, take your child outside to jump in mud puddles, catch raindrops and dance around.
6. **Go buggin'.** Find as many different kinds of bugs as you can and watch them.



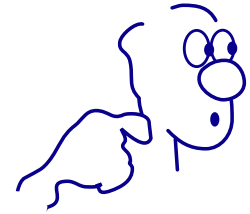
7. **Camp out.** Place a small tent in your backyard and pretend it's a fort or a playhouse. Cook out and eat there. You can create the same effect with sheets over a clothes line.

8. **Get your hands dirty.** Put on some old clothes and let your child help with yard work. They love digging in the dirt, pulling up weeds and watering plants. You might even let them grow their own garden vegetables. Plant sunflowers and roast the seeds later.

9. **Make homemade ice cream.** It's not hard!

10. **Visit a farm to see the animals.** Visit a cotton field. Go fishing.
11. **Work on a family history together.** Interview older relatives. Older children can videotape the interviews. Create a family tree and scrapbook. Learn what was happening in the news when your ancestors were living.
12. **Take photos.** Buy disposable cameras and let your child explore his world through its lens. Put the photos on the refrigerator or a cork board. Talk about why he/she took certain photos.

## Your Inner State is Showing



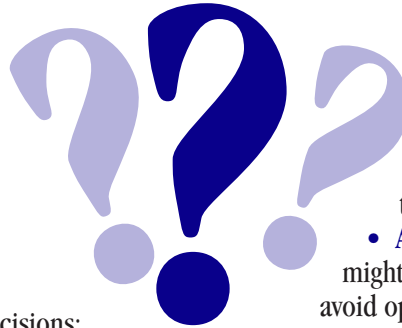
Orison Swett Marden in *The Miracle of Right Thought* wrote: "Did you realize that it is possible to read in your face and manner the record of your thoughts; that your face is a bulletin board upon which is advertised what has been going on in your mind for years?" Read that thought again and think about it as it applies to you. Now think about it as it applies to those close to you.

The expression on your face isn't the only reflection of your inner state. Your finances, your health and your relationships also reflect what's going on inside. To change our lives, we have to be aware

that our habitual thinking creates our outer conditions. Emmet Fox makes this statement in his book *Make Your Life Worthwhile*: "Truth is that your outer conditions – your environment – are the expression of your mentality and nothing more. They are not cause; they are effect. They do not come first; they follow after. . . . You do not have faith because things are going well. They are going well because you have faith . . . Man is not limited by his environment. He creates his environment by his beliefs and feelings. To suppose otherwise is like thinking that the tail can wag the dog."

# Why We Don't Make Decisions

*If you've had an important decision to make and it's been on your to-do list for a long time, it may be that you're cleverly finding ways to avoid facing it.*



Here are some of the ways we avoid making decisions:

- **Hurrying past the problem.** We don't stop to define the problem, so we can't address it.
- **The loop.** We just dither and dither and never make a decision, so it stays on the "to-do" list forever.
- **Detour.** We decide we need more information, resources and advice before we make a choice.
- **Interruptions.** Just when we are about to decide, some emergency pops up that makes us drop what we're doing.
- **Deflection.** You were about to make a decision on one issue, but a new issue comes up. Logically, the new issue takes precedence, so the original issue gets dropped.

- **Tunnel Vision.** You already know the answer you want and you go after that answer. You don't address the true nature of the issue that needs a decision.
- **Embarrassment.** If you're afraid something embarrassing might be discovered, you guide the process away from the issue.
- **Avoid the undesirable.** If you think someone might disagree with you, you exclude that person and avoid open discussion of the issue.
- **Groundhog Day.** Remember the movie? Make the decision, but before implementation, you reopen the issue again.
- **Waiting for the Right Person.** There needs to be someone who is responsible for this and you simply can't go forward until that person is found. It just wouldn't be right.
- **Death by Inaction.** Undermining the implementation of a decision is just as ineffective as never making the decision at all.

If you recognized some of these avoidance tactics, acknowledge it and take action. Remember, maintaining a heavy backlog of undecided issues is cumbersome and emotionally draining.

## Practical Miracles



We all have the capacity to create practical miracles in our lives when we live by some basic principles.

- **Believe in miracles.** To change your life, you have to believe that change is possible. This allows you to open your mind to what could be.
- **Live as if you are free to do what you want to do.** Accept control of your life. Truly, you have far more control of your life than you think. Changing the way you talk to yourself makes a world of difference. For example, change "I have to . . ." thinking to "I choose to . . ."
- **Love unconditionally.** All relationships have hills and valleys. It's easy to blame the valleys on the partner. The reality is that when your partner does something you don't like, it's your own expectations that upset you. It is not your partner's job to change. It's your responsibility to let go of negative feelings.

- **Give as if you already have everything you need.** Give with a generous spirit. Giving anonymously adds a special twist.
- **Work as if money doesn't matter.** When we work for money instead of the joy work brings and the contributions we can make, we lose touch with our deeper needs. Ask yourself, "How would I spend my time if I did not need money?"
- **Assume that everything will be okay . . . and relax.** Worry prevents us from solving problems.
- **Recognize that the world is charged with a life force.** People call this life force by different names – spirit, creativity, nature, God.
- **Feast as if you can have whatever you want.** Deprivation doesn't create meaningful change. You create miracles by exploring and delighting in your deepest desires. Ask yourself: "What would I do if I weren't afraid . . . were doing work I loved . . . had more time . . . were satisfied with my marriage?"



### About CARING

*CARING* is a quarterly publication of the Business Resource Center of the Pastoral Institute. It is designed as a resource to help you cope with the challenges of daily living at home and at work. Your *Caring for the Mind* and Employee Assistance Programs provide counseling for you and your family when you face personal and family concerns. To make an appointment in Columbus, call (706) 649-6500. In Lanett, AL, call (334) 644-1172. In other areas, call (800) 649-6446 to get a referral to a counselor in your area.

Please send comments about this publication to: Editor—Delane Chappell, 2022 15th Avenue, Columbus, GA 31901 or email [dchappell@pilink.org](mailto:dchappell@pilink.org)