

From the Grove

A MENTAL WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

by Dr. Wanda Hall-Myers

Do You Need to Shift Your Focus?

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”
--John 16:33

During a recent Bible Study, Pastor led a discussion related to why it is easier to focus on the negative instead of the positive? In other words, why do we tend to focus on the “*tribulation*” portion of John 16:33 instead of the “*be of good cheer*” portion? Of course, he emphasized and encouraged us to “*be of good cheer*”.

The discussion caused me to think about the importance of perspective and the role it plays in our thoughts and behaviors. As a psychologist, I see the power of an individual’s thoughts play out regularly...sometimes making a situation much worse and other times making a situation much better. Therapy can help people shift their perspective and help improve understanding that *what* you see in life is greatly influenced by *how* you see life.

Perspective

Perspective encompasses a person’s attitudes, beliefs, experiences, views and values. Perspective influences your choices in life as well as your opinions. It can be thought of as the lens in which you view the world.

Take for example, the image of the glass. Do you see a glass that is half full or do you see a glass that is half empty? Your answer will be based on your perspective and all that it entails, as mentioned above. (Side note: Some research associates half full responses with optimistic perspectives while half empty responses are associated with pessimistic perspectives). The point I want to make is that you have a perspective, and your perspective shapes your thoughts and behaviors.

So, how do you see things? Do you only see tribulation? Or do you also see good cheer?

Be sure to read next week’s newsletter. It will delve deeper into perspective and how your self-talk influences your perspective.

ACTION PLAN

Pay close attention to the thoughts you have over the next week. Simply notice what you tell yourself.

