

# EXTRA! from the Creek

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**the Church at Dyers Creek**

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This week we're passing along to you  
a page from the

## *Pastoral Counseling Papers*

### Are We Having Fun Yet?

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Too many people don't have fun. They go through their days with a morbid sense of doom so that people—even family members—don't like to be around them. And their mood can actually be contagious. Still, you can decide to have good days, to find pleasure in your surroundings, and to be a person others enjoy being with. So what are some things you can do to be at your best—to have fun?

**Work up a sweat.** Exercise every day—twenty minutes or more. Of course, you need to work hard enough to get a little sweaty! The chemicals you produce during exercise make you feel good. Find a few activities you especially enjoy doing: bicycling, skateboarding, jogging, jumping rope, or just walking with a friend.

**Think positive thoughts.** Focus your mind on the good things in your life, even the things you like about yourself, the things you enjoy doing. Try to capture and hold onto those good feelings so you can remember them when you need to.

**Find a listener.** Find a good friend who'll listen to you without judging you, who can keep confidences, who will hold you accountable. And to keep such a friend, be that kind of friend in return.

**Relax.** Relaxation relieves stress. You don't have to let your surroundings and circumstances constantly determine your moods. Anytime you know you need to relax, try taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly—several times. Or try taking a momentary break from your busyness and focus on some aspect of God—His goodness or holiness or love or special blessings to you. Or

concentrate your attention on something immediate. You'll feel better because you'll have left the past and not gone into the future by exploring the present.

**Let others see you smile.** Determine to smile at everyone, see the humor in things, laugh out loud, and enjoy life. You don't have to be the class clown, but you can be known for your playful outlook on life.

**Go for natural highs.** Take delight in the things around you rather than seeking a release through artificial means like drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Find activities (a stroll through a naturally beautiful setting) that can give you satisfaction through participation.

**Be grateful.** Think of the things in your life that you're grateful for. Maybe even write out a list and keep adding to it. Keep it handy so that you can refer to it later. Make it a habit of thanking God for all of it.

**Compliment others.** A sure way to feel good is to compliment others on their achievements or attitudes. And by looking for the good in others, you will begin adopting and putting into practice those same traits.

**Become an optimist.** Spend a day seeing the world like a glass half full rather than a glass half empty. Others like to be around optimists – it gives them hope.

**Dream.** Think about what you'd like to achieve – in a week, a month, or a year. Then start taking little steps to achieve that goal. Don't follow someone else's dream – make your own!

#### **Sources**

Pat Palmer & Melissa Alberti Froehner. *Teen Esteem* (Impact)

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