



# OVERCOMING POWERLESSNESS

BREAKING FREE WITH OCP

VOL. 1, Issue 2  
JULY 2009

Quarterly Newsletter

Empowering Women



## UPCOMING EVENTS

19 SEPTEMBER  
REV VOLUNTEERS  
PIZZA PARTY

20 OCTOBER  
"AUTHENTIC  
HAPPINESS: YOU  
CAN HAVE IT"  
DR. ANITA  
MARCHASANI

14 NOVEMBER  
COMMUNITY DAY  
@ BON TON

COMMITTEE  
MEETING 2ND  
WEDNESDAY OF  
EVERY MONTH

GROUP MEETINGS  
22 SEPTEMBER  
6:30PM

23 SEPTEMBER  
10:00AM & 6:30PM

## Domestic Abuse 101

The U.S. Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) defines domestic violence as a "pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner".

The definition adds that domestic violence "can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender", and that it can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic, and psychological

Characteristics victims may feel might include, but are not limited to, feeling afraid,

feeling intimidated, being given the silent treatment, feeling put down, feeling bad about yourself, being called names, feeling crazy, feeling guilty, feeling humiliated, being depressed, feeling anxious. Having what you say twisted around to mean something it wasn't meant to mean.

Patricia Evens, author of The Verbally Abusive Relationship and many other books says:

### VERBAL ABUSE ENDANGERS PEOPLE:

- Verbal abuse creates a pretend world
- Verbal abuse ostracizes its victims and isolates them
- Verbal abuse denigrates and diminishes human beings
- Verbal abuse invades a person's inner world and self-definition
- Verbal abuse is kept hidden and seldom discussed
- Verbal abuse may seem normal to some
- Verbal abuse coerces people to protect perpetrators

What does verbal/emotional abuse mean to you?

I know for me it meant facing the reality that I had married a man that was emotionally unavailable to me, it meant being ignored by him, it meant getting the silent treatment from him, we couldn't talk about anything. It meant doing things he wanted to do and not doing anything I wanted to do. It was a horrible existence and I didn't have a name for it.

After wondering about my situation for many years, and praying for help and guidance, I began to join support and prayer groups, read every book I could find on the subject and questioned a counselor for answers.

### **That's when I learned I was in a verbally & emotionally abusive marriage.**

What does verbal/emotional abuse mean to you? Please let us hear from you. Your names will remain confidential. My email address is [fawlady@comcast.net](mailto:fawlady@comcast.net). I would love to create a forum where we as victims and survivors, can share our lives and what has worked for each of us, in an effort to put an end to verbal and emotional abuse.



Mrs. Wendy Sledd giving her personal testimonial as a child abuse survivor.

*"The struggle of life is one of our greatest blessings. It makes us patient,, sensitive, and Godlike. It teaches that although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it"*  
- -Helen Keller

## First Annual Flying Free Event

The Flying Free Fundraiser on May 16th at Jane and Michael Rice's home in New Oxford was an incredible milestone for Overcoming Powerlessness. It was a huge success with close to 65 in attendance and profits came in at \$3,300 through the silent auction and personal donations!

Committee members who met regularly to put it all together were Christel Emenheiser, Dr. Anita Marchesani, Jane Rice, Wendy Sledd, and Bonnie Wilt. Other contributors/helpers included Lisa Calkins, Betsy Hoffer, Esther Koblitz, Carlotta Shelton-Lopata, and Fred Wilt.

Sponsors for the event include Metro Bank, and the Lancaster Interchurch Peace Witness.

All proceeds from the event benefit Overcoming Powerlessness. We are looking for committee members to help us put together next year's event. If interested please contact Bonnie Wilt at [bonwilt@aol.com](mailto:bonwilt@aol.com)

## A Personal Story

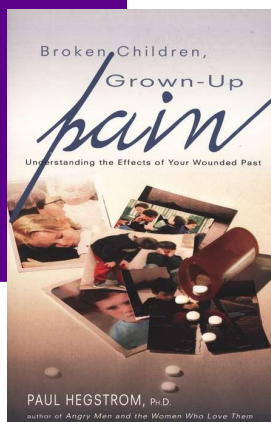
In mid-January of this year, my husband and I separated. Shortly thereafter, I filed for divorce. Being an independent person, it was hard for me to reach out for help. But not having any family in the area mandated the need for some kind of support.

No divorce is ever easy. Sometimes the dynamics in the process throw in a certain amount of additional craziness. This is where I was one morning as I stood in my shower praying for help. I remember thinking, "God, I can't be the only

woman in this kind of situation. If only there were other women I could talk to . . ." About an hour and a half later, a local lender from York called to tell me that I was on her mind. She knew I was going through a rough time and said, "Cindy, you need a support group and I know just the right one." She then put me in touch with Bonnie Wilt and OCP. I am still incredulous by God's direct and speedy answer to my prayer!! What an incredible blessing this group and Bonnie herself, have been. So many

times I have wondered how I would have made it even to this point if it were not for their support and encouragement that enabled me to keep my vision clear during the most traumatic event I have ever had to endure. What a wonderful and positive group of women! Listening to their stories is a reminder that I am not alone. May Overcoming Powerlessness continue to thrive and grow in order to reach out to other women during the crazy times in their lives.

- Cindy Miller



## Recommended Reading ...

**"Broken Children, Grown-Up Pain: Understanding the Effects of Your Wounded Past** by Paul Hegstrom, Ph.D author of *Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them*. This book helps the reader to recognize the scars of childhood and shares the practical methods for facing the pain. Hegstrom points to the place of healing and freedom to pursue authentic relationships and build healthy emotional intimacy with others.

## From the desk of the Executive Director...



Dear Friends,

It's pretty hard to believe that summer will soon be ending! It seems that after July the 4th, it runs away from us. OCP will be starting its fourteenth year in September operating support groups and serving the needs of women. Right now we are taking a break from groups until then. Of course, the work of OCP doesn't actually take a break. It continues with meetings, projects, interventions, emergency calls, individual sessions, scheduling, networking, and office work.

We just served our last game at the York Revolution concession stand July 24 with a wonderful crew of 21 volunteers! It is quite a job recruiting that many people on a Friday evening. For the June games we had assistance

from an angel, Denise, who sent ten people from her company to help us.

We were thrilled to experience our first fundraising event, *Flying Free*, at the home of Michael and Jane Rice back in May. What an incredible event and recognition of the much-needed work of OCP. I enjoyed meeting many new friends there.

In June we welcomed a guest, Norina Bentzel, Principal of North Hopewell-Winterstown Elementary School. Norina shared her survival story of being attacked in 2001 by a man who entered the school building welding a two-foot long machete injuring eleven students, two teachers and herself. Though Norina was seriously injured and physically incapacitated for awhile, her physical injuries healed. But the emotional wound of this life-altering event is taking a very long time to heal.

**Emotional wounds left by trauma take twice as long to heal as any physical wound.**

OCP is currently looking for individuals who feel a passion to serve and lead as a board or committee member. We offer positions in several areas of leadership and appreciate any recommendations you may have.

I greatly look forward to our fall schedule with guest speakers and upcoming workshops and building stronger and new relationships. Please join us to keep Overcoming Powerlessness alive and well. With no paid staff, all our work is accomplished through volunteers and donations. My prayers and good wishes are with you!

Enjoy the rest of your summer!  
Bonnie Wilt



## Flying Free May 2009



### Personal Rights

- ♥ **I HAVE THE RIGHT** to form my own opinions and to express those opinions.
- ♥ **I HAVE THE RIGHT** to change my mind.
- ♥ **I HAVE THE RIGHT** to have needs and to have those needs be as important as other people's needs.
- ♥ **I HAVE THE RIGHT** to make mistakes.



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## Power Tips

- ◆ Power must be shared for a relationship to work.
- ◆ Reclaim a life of dignity by defending your truth and standing up for what is right.
- ◆ Lay claim to every fundamental human right because you are equal to others.
- ◆ Envision yourself in a peaceful environment with non-abrasive people around you.

## Assertion Statement

"thank you for asking me, but I'm not going to be able to..."



**Your opinions are important  
Comments, questions, letters, and  
donations are always welcome Send  
to [ocpowerlessness@aol.com](mailto:ocpowerlessness@aol.com) or call  
717-741-5000**

*Overcoming Powerlessness is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization listed with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations and incorporated within the Commonwealth of PA. It is dedicated to the education, support, and awareness of individual who seek to break patterns that maintain psychologically abusive behavior in order to begin a journey toward personal growth and overcoming powerlessness.*