

May is Mental Health Month. The Missions and Outreach Ministry seeks to increase awareness about mental illness and mental health, and bring focus to our support of the Live Oak Counseling Center, (LOCC), formerly the Columbia Pastoral Counseling Center, a ministry which is supported by our church both financially since 1991, and by membership on the Board of Directors for the Center since 2006. Currently, Karen Coker and Wayne Brown are serving on the Board for LOCC. LOCC receives financial support from 6 Presbyterian churches in the Columbia area and from client fees. Their mission is to provide professional and affordable mental health counseling and outreach services for persons struggling with life issues and to offer opportunities for spiritual growth and wellness.

As a non-profit organization, the Center is always seeking funds to assist clients who cannot afford to pay the full fee, to enable them to have access to the counseling and therapy they need (see the statistic on unmet treatment needs below). Please consider a donation to their Care Fund, which allows contributors to designate gifts in honor or memory of a loved one. Brochures for the Center, including more information about their services and a form for contributions, are available in the Atrium and Potts Hall.

Fast Facts About Mental Illness:

- Mental health problems are more common than cancer and heart disease combined.
- 81.6 million Americans (1 in 4 – 25%) experience some form of mental disorder each year.
- 54% of children with emotional and behavioral disturbances drop out of school.
- In 90% of suicides for both children and adults, mental illness is the attributed cause.
- Most common mental illnesses are anxiety and depression.
- More than 50% of adults and 70% of children and adolescents are not receiving any treatment for their mental illness.

(source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, courtesy of Live Oak Counseling Center, 2016.)

The “best-practice” treatments for mental illness today are highly effective. The staff at Live Oak Counseling Center includes five licensed and experienced therapists who are dedicated in helping each person gain health and wholeness. Services include individual, couples and family therapy, child and adolescent counseling and support groups. Clients come to LOCC to deal with anxiety, depression, grief issues as well as family struggles.

If you or someone you know would like to confidentially talk with a counselor please contact the center, either by e-mail at admin@liveoakcounselingcenter.org , by phone at 803-256-1033, or in person at 600 King Street, Columbia, SC 29205 (located behind Shandon Presbyterian Church).

DID YOU KNOW? There are four simple steps you can take to improve your mental health today: a healthy diet, regular exercise, relaxation, and plenty of rest. As a bonus, your physical health will improve too! (source: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/sites/default/files/May2013%20FactSheets.pdf>)