

*The Counseling Center is a mental health program of the Community House in Hinsdale.  
We've helped youth, adults and families change and grow for over 40 years.*

## **Busyness: When to Get Help**

**By: John Fiene, LCSW**

I frequently meet people that feel busy all day, everyday. They express feeling caught in several paradoxes:

- Despite feeling busy all the time, they never feel they are getting enough done.
- The faster they get things done, the faster other things come up that they have to do.
- They no longer wish to be busy but feel required to be busy by their commitments.
- They are too busy to work towards not being busy.
- In the moments they are not busy, they are unsure what to do with themselves. Often, they spend hours busily dividing their attention between cell phone, computer and television screens.

Persistent busyness may lead to feeling unhappy, cynical, futile, unable to measure up, and out of control. Some people use unhealthy ways of coping, including: drug and alcohol abuse, self-injury and social isolation. Often, people wait until they are experiencing the issues named above before they turn to a therapist for help.

If you or a loved one is experiencing an overly busy life, it may be a good idea to seek help sooner rather than later. Benjamin Franklin said, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Together, we can work to find a way out of the cycle of busyness and a path toward fulfillment, meaning and happiness.

"In modern society most of us don't want to be in touch with ourselves; we want to be in touch with other things like religion, sports, politics, a book - we want to forget ourselves. Anytime we have leisure, we want to invite something else to enter us, opening ourselves to the television and telling the television to come and colonize us."

— Thích Nhất Hạnh, Being Peace

We at the Counseling Center have helped many adolescents and adults live meaningful and joyful lives.

Call us today to set up an initial session and begin the journey.

(630) 323-7500 ext. 239

"Usually when we hear or read something new, we just compare it to our own ideas. If it is the same, we accept it and say that it is correct. If it is not, we say it is incorrect. In either case, we learn nothing."

— Thích Nhất Hạnh

# GETTING CENTERED QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## Meaningful Living

By: John Fiene, LCSW

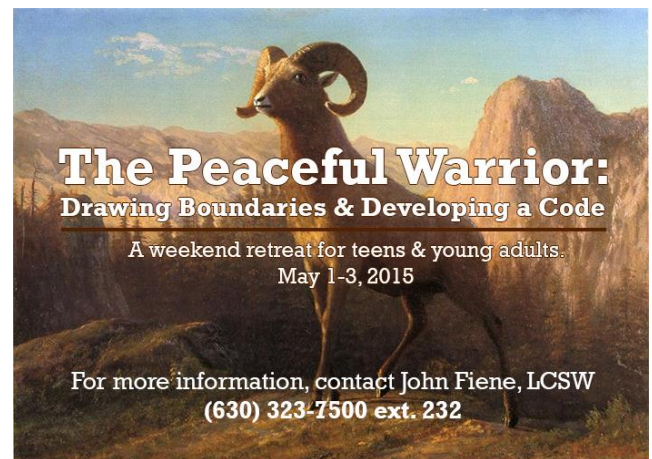
In my work as a psychotherapist, many people have asked me, "What is the meaning of life?" To this question I reply, "to live meaningfully."

To live meaningfully, we must consciously choose actions that strive toward a goal we deem worthy of our lives. Discovering this goal is frequently an essential part of therapy, and it may take lots of time, exploration and work. Often a person will ask, "I want to start searching. What should I do?"

Below is a list of activities that have helped people begin their search for meaning.

- Limit yourself to one hour per day of screen time: television, computer, phone use.
- Read a lot – at least one book per week.
- Find an author that you love and read all of their books.
- Meditate, sit in silence and breathe with no distractions.
- Volunteer your time directly helping people at a shelter, food bank or hotline.
- Be vulnerable with others and share about your dreams, aspirations, fears, sadness and excitement.
- Be genuinely curious and ask other people lots of questions about their lives.
- Listen to what others have to share.
- Listen to music without doing anything else.
- Find or create gifts for loved ones.
- Write poems or journal about something you've experienced or read about.
- Walk or sit in a park or forest preserve.

- Draw or paint from imagination and explore the symbols/meaning.
- Have the time you spend with others be meaningful, joyful and/or silly.
- Spend time in silence, contemplating, wondering, envisioning, and daydreaming.
- Exercise in moderation.
- Write songs/make music alone or with others.
- Attend groups, workshops or conferences on topics that are meaningful, important or interesting to you.



Contact us to learn how to participate in The Peaceful Warrior retreat! We will be learning tools and skills to live an ethical and moral life.

This is a day retreat beginning the evening of Friday, May 1st and ending on Sunday, May 3rd in the evening.

Space is limited, so register early!

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THE Counseling CENTER

A Program of  
The Community House