

# The Center for Medical Missions'

## *e-Pistle*

### June 2009

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CMDA continues to lead the way for medical professionals' right of conscience. If you have been following this subject, you know that there is talk of rescinding the recently established conscience protection regulations for healthcare providers who do not want to participate in abortions or other procedures they find morally objectionable. For more on this very important subject visit the [www.Freedom2Care.org](http://www.Freedom2Care.org) website. With CMDA in the lead, the more members we have, the louder our voice. If you've been considering becoming a member of CMDA, now is a great time for you to join your voice with 15,000 others. Missionary membership in CMDA is free. Just go to the [www.cmda.org](http://www.cmda.org) website where you can complete a membership application.

Dave Stevens continues his article on the use of time in this month's e-Pistle. Rev. Stan Key's devotional is about God's view of masculinity and Dr. Koteskey writes about computer sex. There is also a piece that tells of an online resource for CMEs should any of you need help with that.

I hope you will find this month's e-Pistle helpful. Susan

Here is a list of articles that follow:

- [Points on Time](#) – by David Stevens, MD
- [Cura Animarum](#) – by Rev. Stan Key
- [Resource – Essential Evidence Plus](#)
- [Computer Sex or Me](#) – by Ron Koteskey

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## **Points on Time**

### **Section XII: Taking Care of One's Self**

**By David Stevens, MD**

#### **Cont'd from last month**

5. Pick Your Priorities – Once you have your goals; schedule them according to their importance. It may make sense to get some small tasks out of the way so you can handle a big one, but at other times you need to block time out for a bigger task and ignore smaller goals so you can get the big item accomplished. Sometimes I put a sign on my door, "If it is an emergency, come in. If not, check back later. I'm focused on a project." It may be a presentation, an article to write or a sermon. I've learned that interruptions stifle the concentrated creativity needed for some things and I need to prioritize them and block out

time. I've also learned that some tasks are better done at different times of the day. I think and sound better on audio projects if I do them early in the day. By the end of the day, I do not sound so energized. Menial tasks, doing an expense report for example, can be accomplished late in the day when my energy has dropped.

One of the most common time management mistakes is to focus on the urgent to the detriment of strategic goals that move your life or ministry forward. Prioritizing your goals and scheduling time to work on strategic items makes a big difference.

6. Sole Search - There are certain things others can do and certain things they can not. Do what only you can do first. Obviously, no one else can be a husband to my wife Jody, but where I can get tripped up is spending too much of my time on things others can do as well or better while neglecting what only I can do or must do. Visiting staff can not run your healthcare ministry, create new programs or develop good management systems so they can see patients and free you up for the tasks that strategically move you forward.

Sometimes you need to train others to pick up things they can learn to do to help you out. I'm perfectly able and well trained to carry out the garbage. My mother taught me to do it at an early age but at our house, Jody's dad who lives with us is the sanitation manager! I spend my time doing things around the house he can't do.

Search out the things that only you can do. They are the most important things to focus your time on.

7. No Way – The more successful you are, the more people will ask you to do. They will want you on their board, committee or advisory group. They will want you to speak and share your insights or consult on a patient they are perplexed about. The real skill is analyzing what you should do and not do and then to learn how to say a diplomatic "No." People won't accept that you don't have time as an excuse but they can't argue with, "That unfortunately doesn't fit into my priorities right now." Another strategy to employ is to then suggest someone else who you think can accomplish well the service they desire. Of course ask permission to suggest their name if you want to keep your friends!

Sometimes you may need somebody to protect you from undue pressure to do more. That may be your spouse who you have made a commitment to be at home with more or your supervisor. For example I asked my board to establish a board parameter that stated I could not serve on other institutional boards without their permission. It is now easy for me to say no to requests that come in that I don't really want to take because the board provides protection for me. I can focus my time on critical goals and priorities.

8. Time Tracking – It is worth keeping a detailed log of how you are spending your time every once in a while. It is like counting calories. You may think you are staying on your diet but when you examine your diet diary, you find that you really are not. A time log reveals the truth of what is really going on. One of my time logs revealed I was spending way too much time on e-mail each day. I began dictating more and kept my answers shorter. I set a time in the morning that I wanted to have my e-mail done by and worked towards

that goal. I picked up the phone more often since it took less time if there was a complex issue. I would have wasted lots of precious time if I hadn't identified this problem through time tracking.

9. Flex Time – Some things are going to take longer than expected so you need to build some margin into your schedule. This flex-time can be used to get ahead on menial tasks or to devote to long term projects if it is needed. It also improves your chances of completing all your goals on time while decreasing your stress. It also gives you time for interruptions, divine appointments and to minister to people when operations arise.

Sometimes the unexpected exceeds your flex time. That is when it important to be flexible and extend your deadlines or find another solution. My schedule allows a half hour for supervisory meetings but one person I supervised always was there 15 minutes longer because their area of responsibility was complex. I had to flex and make that appointment 45 minutes and help that person to be more organized so we could accomplish everything in that length of time.

10. Get Down – All of us need time to relax, refuel and restore. You need down time. Don't forget to schedule time for fun and laughter. Spend time doing your hobby or visiting friends. Exercise and get adequate sleep so you can function at your best. These and other activities restore your energy and creativity and allow you to live a balanced life. They also help you to use your time efficiently. When you are tired or anxious, your creative juices don't flow and many things take twice as long to do.

I could add more principles but these should get you going on improving your time usage. Peter Drucker said it well, "Until we can manage time, we can manage nothing else."

I love improving my time management because it has instant awards – I get more done. I have more time for hobbies, recreation and relationships. Most importantly, I can make a greater difference in ministry and individual lives because I have been a good steward of God's time gift to me.

I don't want to spend time. I want to invest it. Don't you?

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## **Cura Animarum**

**By Rev. Stan Key**

Our culture is all mixed up when it comes to gender. Women want to act like men. Men want to act like women. Clothing, hair styles, the work force, the military.... It seems that the mindset of our day is that men and women are identical, only with slight variations in anatomy. But try as we might we cannot erase the distinctions that our Creator has formed into the very depths of our being. Masculinity and femininity are not traits of secondary significance (such as eye color or height). No, our gender goes to the very depth of our identity and self-understanding.

In his book *Wild at Heart*, John Eldredge writes about one essential difference between men and women: strength.

A man is a dangerous thing. Women don't start wars. Violent crimes aren't for the most part committed by women. Our prisons aren't filled with women. Columbine wasn't the work of two young girls. Obviously, something has gone wrong in the masculine soul, and the way we've decided to handle it is to take that dangerous nature away... entirely.

Eldredge points out that our society today wants to deal with this reality by treating masculinity as a problem. Take away all that is fierce, wild and passionate in men and we will have a better world, we seem to think. In other words, we want men who are more, well, more feminine.

The answer however is not in this direction. God's goal is not to eliminate masculinity but to redeem it! While masculine strength can produce villains, if channeled in the right direction, it can also produce heroes.

If a neighborhood is safe, it's because of the strength of men. Slavery was stopped by the strength of men, at a terrible price to them and their families. The Nazis were stopped by men. Apartheid wasn't defeated by women. Who gave their seats up on the lifeboats leaving the Titanic, so that women and children would be saved? And have we forgotten – it was a Man who let himself be nailed to Calvary's cross. This isn't to say women can't be heroic. I know many heroic women. It's simply to remind us that God made men the way they are because we desperately need them to be the way they are. Yes, a man is a dangerous thing. So is a scalpel. It can wound or it can save your life! You don't make it safe by making it dull; you put it in the hands of someone who knows what he's doing (pp. 82-83).

Rise up, O men of God!

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## Resource

I have recently been made aware of a resource I thought I would tell you about. I understand, in the past, CMDA had negotiated with InfoPoems to provide free access to their evidence based research review. That company has been sold and is being relaunched as Essential Evidence Plus. Many of you already receive the SCAN and you may not need access to anything more but I know more and more of you are involved in training and need access to research. So ... if you have access to the internet or a hand held, you might want to check out <http://www.essentialevidenceplus.com/>. I am not making a recommendation – only making you aware of a resource you may want to check out.

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## Computer Sex or Me?

## **By Ron Koteskey**

Married 34 years with three adult children, Dave and Ginny sat back to back in their home office. Ginny was scanning down through the inbox of her email when her heart lurched. One message was from an old boyfriend, and she clicked on it. As she put it, "Opening that email occupied one second of my life, but that one second changed everything. I sat between the only two men I had ever loved. I was connected to one via the Internet, and the other was seated less than two feet behind me." She began emailing Mike several times each week, rushing to the computer each morning and reluctantly leaving it in the evening. They secretly called each other. Ginny and Mike set up a time to meet....

Dave, Ginny, are real people who have written their stories. They have had the courage to be open and vulnerable because they know they are not alone in what has happened in their lives and want to give hope to others.

### **Is this something new?**

Of course, sexual temptation and lustful thoughts have been around for thousands of years. Adam and Eve tried to cover their nakedness (Genesis 3). The Ten Commandments forbid a person from coveting a neighbor's spouse (Exodus 20). One night King David couldn't sleep and while walking on his roof saw a beautiful woman bathing — and sent to find out about her (2 Samuel 11). Jesus said that we must not even eagerly desire someone sexually (Matthew 5).

Graphic images and explicit writing have been around as long as artists and authors have existed. What has changed is that the computer has made these images and writings affordable and anonymously available to anyone anywhere anytime.

### **How often does this happen?**

At this point research has not been done to determine the percentage of missionaries involved. *Christianity Today* surveyed pastors in the USA and found that 37% of them had a "current struggle" with cyberporn, Internet-based pornography.

People interested in computers and missions attending the annual International Conference on Computing and Mission wrestled with the dilemma of what to do when they found evidence of pornography on missionaries' computers. They had questions about who to tell and what to do. No one knew how large the pornography problem was but based on what the techies were finding on the computers, there seemed to be one. Two of the leaders wrote an article which became the core of a whole issue of EMQ devoted to missions and the Internet. They hoped this would spark a discussion of the whole problem. No "letters to the editor" ever appeared, and the authors received no letters from mission administrators about it. Virtually no one is talking about it yet. It is the "elephant in the living room" that no one mentions.

### **Isn't my spouse too spiritual to get involved in cyberporn?**

People with higher scores on measures of spirituality are less likely to get involved in many addictive behaviors, such as gambling, smoking, alcoholism and other types of substance abuse. Since cyberporn is relatively new, no studies on its relationship to spirituality were done before the turn of this century.

Current evidence suggests that spirituality is not a protection against involvement in cyberporn. In fact, people who seem to be more spiritual may actually be more vulnerable to it. A study conducted by psychologists at Indiana Wesleyan University and reported in 2006 in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* found that those with higher spirituality scores were less likely to become sexually addicted, as the authors had expected. However, the study also found that those with higher spirituality scores were MORE likely to become compulsively involved in cyberporn. The more involved people were in religious activities and the more central the role of faith was in their lives, the more likely they were to access Internet pornography. The more people felt a sense of belonging and support in the faith community, the more likely they were to view cyberporn.

### **What can I do if my spouse is involved?**

- First here are some things to stop doing (if you are doing them).
- Stop blaming yourself. Regardless of what your spouse says, you can never be attractive enough or sexy enough or anything else to keep her/him from the computer sex.
- Stop participating. Looking at the pictures, watching the videos, sending email or instant messages or connecting with someone via skype (with or without webcams) will only make things worse.
- Stop being the Director of Spouse Security. Your spouse will find ways around anything you do to get to the computer sex.
- Stop trying to decide whether the problem is sin or sickness. It is both—and more. It has social, spiritual, physical and psychological implications as well as others. It is a sinful obsession with neurochemical bases.

Of course, you want to meet your spouse's needs, such as emotional, social, sexual and spiritual ones among others. You can be available to encourage, support and pray through struggles with cycles of sin, shame and silence. You can break the silence and encourage your spouse to make the following changes.

- Accept responsibility. The problem is not with you, with parents, with society or with anyone other than the person hooked on the computer sex—your spouse.
- Confess. Your spouse needs to confess to God, to you and to at least one other person (several others are even better).
- Repent. Repentance means more than to feel regret or sorrow. It means to turn from what one has been doing. In this case it means that your spouse will stop the behavior, stop computer sex.
- Become accountable. Of course, one is always accountable to God, but your spouse will need at least one other person of the same sex who will hold her or him accountable. This has to be a personal relationship, not just something like reporting to a parole officer.

This person has to be someone your spouse can call at any time — and who will call your spouse as well.

- Have **accountability partners on-line** who receive a history of the web sites you visit each month. For a few dollars a month "[Covenant Eyes](#)" will e-mail or snail-mail two persons of your choice a history of all the Internet sites you visit. You will be able to view your own history, but you will not be able to change it. You may pick your own accountability partners, or they will find one for you. See [www.covenanteyes.com](http://www.covenanteyes.com) for more information.
- Participate in a weekly group meeting. Sharing one's struggles in a group setting and listening to others share is part of overcoming this problem.
- Be willing to seek professional mental health help if needed. Your spouse (and perhaps you) may need the help of a psychologist or counselor to supplement what is happening in the group.

Note that these changes are something you want to support, not something you can require. Although it is theoretically possible for someone to accept responsibility, confess to God and repent — and then be over the compulsion for computer sex, it rarely (if ever) works. People are usually unable to do this on their own - or if forced by someone else.

Christian workers required to be in accountability groups are just as likely to revert or repeat as those who are not in such relationships. They just lie to their accountability partners or groups. The person has to want to change for the accountability relationships to be effective.

For a more complete treatment of this topic as well as other topics please visit [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com) or [www.crossculturalworkers.com](http://www.crossculturalworkers.com) (no mention of missions/evangelism). Also please let your non-medical colleagues know about these free resources.

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