2-2019

Righteousness by Faith and the Third Angel’s Message — 2

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How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime

Although the research originated in the late ’90s, the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) study continues to be a source of discussion in various arenas — secular and within the church.

It is recommended that the importance of the study be discussed in pediatricians’ offices and schools. Andrews University is intentionally looking at the 10-point questionnaire which gives the ACE “score” while considering risk and protective factors for our youth.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) along with Kaiser Permanente sought to research the effects of trauma on health outcomes. Originally, the intent was to look at obesity, diabetes and other health concerns that affect Americans daily. Surprising to the researchers was the fact that if an individual struggled as a child due to traumatic events such as abuse, neglect or having a parent in prison, these could develop significantly to “epidemic” proportions, affecting their physical health later in life. Not only were the percentages high in impact to physical health concerns, but other risks increased such as alcoholism, drug use, depression, suicidal tendencies and the inability to maintain employment on a consistent basis.

Sometimes in our churches, we pride ourselves, believing that because we have an excellent health message, good schools, and a focus on children and families, our children are untouched by adverse childhood events. The ideal score would be zero but, sadly, that is not always the case.

For example: Did you often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or that your family didn’t look out for each other, family loved you or thought you were important or special? Was your parents ever separated or divorced? How would your child answer this question?

ACE questionnaire: theannainstitute.org/Finding%20Your%20ACE%20Score.pdf

There are counseled to “make use of the remedies that God has provided. Pure air, sunshine, and the intelligent use of water are beneficial agents in the restoration of health” (Ellen G. White, Healthful Living, p. 247).

Sunshine is the best source of Vitamin D, and is naturally made in the body when sunshine hits the skin. Therefore, if there is limited sunshine, it could affect the level of Vitamin D in the body. Very few foods provide Vitamin D unless added by man. Then the product is referred to as “fortified.”

Why is Vitamin D important?

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, so it is helpful in developing strong bones. It also helps with muscle development, boosts the immune system, helps cell growth, aids in stabilizing blood pressure, and decreases inflammation.

Inadequate levels of Vitamin D is fairly common. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), approximately one in four people are affected by inadequacy which can lead to deficiency. In children, a Vitamin D deficiency can lead to a condition called rickets. This is where the bones become soft and the legs bow out. For adults, the symptoms may include depression, anxiety, fatigue, lack of endurance, rising blood pressure, brittle bones, muscle weakness and chronic pain. The symptoms may be vague and can be present in other conditions, so it is important to discuss this with your healthcare provider.

It is worth having a conversation with your healthcare provider to determine if a simple Vitamin D blood test is necessary. For those who are deficient, treatment may be as simple as an over-the-counter remedy or a prescription strength Vitamin D. Your healthcare provider will go over your results with you and determine what treatment, if any, is best for you.

We are instructed, “Life in the open air is good for the body and mind. It is God’s medicine for the restoration of health. Pure air, good water, sunshine, the beautiful surroundings of nature — these are His means for restoring the sick to health in natural ways. ‘To the sick, it is worth more than silver or gold to lie in the sunshine or shade of the trees’” (Ellen G. White, Counsels on Health, p. 163).