

Elephants in the Family Room: *When Family Life Gets Hard*

Suggested Resources

Note: By highlighting these materials, Village Church does not state or imply that all material provided within every one of these resources will prove helpful for every person's/family's unique situation. In addition to exploring these materials, we encourage people to seek additional perspective from other wise, trusted people and resources, so they can develop the best possible approach for their unique situation.

Parenting children who have special physical/developmental challenges

- Michael S. Beates and Joni Eareckson Tada, Disability And The Gospel (Crossway, 2012)
- Joni and Friends is a ministry committed to extending the love and truth of Jesus around the world to people affected by disability. Visit joniandfriends.org and click on "Help and Resources" or "Education and Training" to learn more.
- PALS is a Village Church ministry offering 1-on-1 support on Sunday mornings for special needs children who are in elementary school and middle school. For more information, contact Martha Dondit (martha.dondit@vcgurnee.org; 847.244.6606 x186).
- THRIVE is a Village Church ministry oriented towards teens and young adults with special needs; this ministry meets on Sunday mornings as well as once a month on Friday evenings. For more information, contact Pastor JP Mertens (jp.mertens@vcgurnee.org; 847.244.6606 x185).

Parenting children through foster care/adoption

- Karyn B. Purvis, The Connected Child (McGraw-Hill, 2007) and Created To Connect: A Christian's Guide to The Connected Child (empoweredtoconnect.org/guide)
- Bethany Christian Services is one of many Christian agencies which come alongside families who are either currently involved with foster care/adoption, or who are considering these options for their family. Visit bethany.org to learn more.
- Village Church offers a foster care/adoption small group which supports and encourages adults who are responding to God's leading to open their homes/families to additional children. For more information, contact Craig Worrall (craig.worrall@vcgurnee.org; 847.244.6606 x202)

Severe/chronic health situations – either personal experience, or caring for loved ones

- John Dunlop, Finding Grace in the Face of Dementia (Crossway, 2017)
- Andy McQuitty, Notes From The Valley: A Spiritual Travelogue Through Cancer (Moody, 2015)
- Village Church offers a Caregiver Connections group which prayerfully connects, educates and supports people who, for any reason, are providing long-term care for family members or other individuals. For more information, contact Craig Worrall (craig.worrall@vcgurnee.org; 847.244.6606 x202)

End-of-life issues; grieving the loss of a loved one

- John Dunlop, [Finishing Well To The Glory Of God](#) (Crossway, 2011)
- Samuel J. Hodges and Kathy Leonard, [Grieving With Hope](#) (Baker, 2011)
- GriefShare is a ministry which helps people mourn the loss of a loved one in ways that help them experience God's grace and strength during the grieving process. Village Church offers GriefShare groups during the fall and spring semesters each year. For more information, contact Pastor JP Mertens (jp.mertens@vcgurnee.org; 847.244.6606 x185) or visit griefshare.org.

Help for troubled marriages

- Gary Chapman, [Loving Your Spouse When You Feel Like Walking Away](#) (Northfield, 2018)
- Timothy Keller, [The Meaning Of Marriage: Facing The Complexities Of Commitment With The Wisdom Of God](#) (Penguin, 2013)
- Gary Thomas, [Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage To Make Us More Holy Than Happy?](#) (Zondervan, 2015)
- Family Life Today is a ministry devoted to developing godly marriages and families who change the world one home at a time. Visit familylifetoday.com - click on "Resources", then click on "Marriage" to learn more.

Abuse

- Dan Allender, [The Wounded Heart: Hope For Adult Victims Of Childhood Sexual Abuse](#) (NavPress, 2018)
- Lindsey A. Holcomb and Justin S. Holcomb, [Is It My Fault? Hope And Healing For Those Suffering Domestic Violence](#) (Moody, 2014)
- Leslie Vernick, [The Emotionally Destructive Relationship](#) (Harvest House, 2007)
- Focus Ministries provides encouragement, education, and assistance to women and families struggling in difficult circumstances, including spousal abuse. Visit focusministries1.org and click on "Resources" to learn more.

Parenting children who struggle with issues of sexuality

- Tom Gilson, [Critical Conversations: A Christian Parents' Guide To Discussing Homosexuality With Teens](#) (Kregel 2016)
- Mark Yarhouse, [Understanding Gender Dysphoria](#) (IVP Academic, 2015)
- Harvest USA provides books, blogs, and webinars which address a wide range of topics related to teens/young adults and sexuality - including same-sex attraction and gender identity issues. Visit harvestusa.org and click on the "Resources" tab to learn more.
- Living Out is a ministry dedicated to helping people who experience same-sex attraction to remain faithful to Biblical teaching on sexual ethics and to flourish at the same time. Visit livingout.org to learn more.

Mental health issues

- Gillian Marchenko, Still Life: A Memoir Of Living Fully With Depression (IVP, 2016)
- Amy Simpson, Troubled Minds: Mental Illness And The Church's Mission (IVP, 2013)
- Matthew Stanford, Grace For The Afflicted: A Clinical And Biblical Perspective On Mental Illness (IVP, 2017)
- Key Ministry seeks to connect churches with people who are dealing with a wide range of family challenges, including issues related to mental health. Visit keyministry.org and click on "Mental Health" to learn more.

Sexual/pornography addictions

- Stephen Arterburn, Jason Martinkus, and Shelley Martinkus, Understanding And Loving A Person With Sexual Addiction (David C. Cook, 2018)
- Steve Gallagher, At The Altar Of Sexual Idolatry (Pure Life Ministries, 2016)
- Ted Roberts, Pure Desire: How One Man's Triumph Can Help Others Break Free From Sexual Addictions (Regal, 2008)
- Covenant Eyes is an online resource that provides accountability for people who are seeking to remain pure in their use of the internet. Visit covenanteyes.com to learn more.

Substance abuse/addictions

- John Baker, Life's Healing Choices (Howard, 2017)
- Jerry Dunn, God Is For The Alcoholic (Moody, 1986)
- Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered ministry which helps people find freedom from the hurts, pains, and addictions which they battle. Celebrate Recovery groups are offered at churches throughout northeast Illinois, including Immanuel Church, North Point Church, and The Chapel. Visit celebraterecovery.com to learn more.

General

- Henry Cloud, Changes That Heal (Zondervan, 1993)
- Henry Cloud & John Townsend, Boundaries (Zondervan, 2017)
- Robert McGee, The Search For Significance (Thomas Nelson, 2003)
- Paul Tripp, How People Change (New Growth Press, 2008)
- CPYU is a ministry lead by pastor and author Walt Mueller which is committed to building relationships between parents and teens through bridging the cultural-generational gap between them. Visit cpyu.org to learn more.
- The Hope Line is a ministry led by veteran youth/family pastor Dawson McAllister which aims to provide practical help for the serious issues people face, pointing people to the hope that can be found in Christ and his Word. Visit thehopeline.com and click on "Ebooks" to download free resources.

- White Stone Resources provides counseling from a Christian perspective, supporting people who are dealing with challenges related to marriage, parenting, mental health, trauma recovery, and numerous other issues. Visit whitestonerresources.com and click on the “Counselors” tab to learn more.