

How Adverse Childhood Experiences Can Affect Your Adult Health

Almost 60 percent of American adults say they had difficult childhoods featuring abusive or troubled family members or parents who were absent due to separation or divorce.

Nearly 9 percent say that while growing up they underwent five or more “adverse childhood experiences” (ACEs) ranging from verbal, physical or sexual abuse to family dysfunction such as domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or the absence of a parent.

This data was reported in the Dec 17, 2010, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In the report, Dr. Lee M. Sanders, an associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine says, “There is a connection of these events to lifelong implications, not just for mental health for adults, but also for physical health.”

Valerie J. Edwards, team lead for the Adverse Childhood Experiences Team at CDC’s National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, says that a person who has several of these events is more likely to become obese, get cancer or have heart disease. In the report, Edwards said. “This is serious and it’s not just a quirk of statistics. It’s a real relationship.”

The Faith and Health Link

As the experts have indicated, if left unaddressed, issues like these childhood traumas can likely affect one’s emotional

health in adulthood. Over time, these emotional issues can affect one's physical health. Deep-rooted emotions and beliefs associated with such trauma such as anxiety, resentment, shame, low self-worth, rejection and unforgiveness can play havoc with one's endocrine, cardiovascular and immune system, resulting in a host of chronic diseases.

In general, medical practitioners do not care for these issues of the soul that are at the root of these diseases. This is where faith in the healing power of God and his Son Jesus comes into play. Jesus' compassion, love and power expressed through his followers and accompanied with prayer, can bring inner healing to the soul of these traumatized individuals. This inner soul healing then favors improved physical health.

The sooner a child or young adult can come to experience the deep love and healing power of God, through Jesus, the more likely they will not succumb to these long-term emotional and physical health problems. Healing and restoration is part of the life transformation that God desires His children to experience in this life on Earth.

Such experiences of healing and improved personal **wholeness** can be a witness and encouragement to others of God's love, grace and power. It can also enable healed these healed individuals to better give their life away in service to others. In all this, God receives glory.

It's sad that the statistics in this report are what they are, but it's good news to know that God is still in the business of healing and restoration of His children. Our role as believers and followers of Christ is to be a conduit of this message and His love.

Related Scriptures

- *"A merry heart does good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones" (Prov. 17:22, MEV).*
- *A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the*

rottenness of the bones” (Prov. 14:30, MEV).

- *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, MEV).*
- *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 14:18-19, MEV).*
- *“Immediately he rose, picked up the bed, and went out in front of them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this” (Mark 2:12, MEV). {eo}*

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