

Wellness Week ; In Photos

All feature photos by Marybeth Zawistowski



Bruce Baumgartner, 1984 Olympic Gold Medalist in wrestling, was on hand to kick off the ceremonies.



Students check out the Health and Wellness fair.

A Collegian Photo Feature



Brookside Fire Dept. volunteers, Jim Webster & Scott Schuller, demonstrate how to immobilize an accident victim.

Dangerous Emotions

By Debra L. Malone

On Tuesday, April 5th, Father Frank Chiamonte, a Dr. of Psychology presently directing the Ecclesia Center here in Erie, spoke in the Niagara lobby on the "Dangers of Human Emotions". Fr. Chiamonte focused his talk on two major areas, aggressive behaviors and perfectionism. His initial steps were to offer background on the underlying motivations for such behaviors. The Father states that perfectionist and aggression are only symptoms of fear, deeply rooted in our unconscious.

He stated these fears are established in childhood, often the result of parental actions. According to Fr. Chiamonte and other psychologists of the Humanistic philosophy, this is called "conditional love". The theory states that a child will believe he is good and worthwhile only if he meets the conditions required by his parents. An example of this is the child who receives praise and affection only after completing a task to the satisfaction of the parent.

The result of this according to the Humanistic theory of Dr. Carl Rogers, who founded the philosophy in 1980, based on Maslow's previous work, is that the child will develop in an atmosphere of unconscious fear. The child will constantly fear failure, which will mean he is not worthy of love.

Fr. Chiamonte states that these fears are unconscious and the actions of aggression or perfectionism merely symptoms. As this child grows he becomes isolated by these deep set fears. He is afraid to move within the mainstream of society for fear people will recognize his inadequacies and thus reject him. He therefore, attempts to conceal

his fears through action. According to Fr. Chiamonte, this gives his fear power and enables him to function.

Fr. Chiamonte states that aggressive action is not limited to violence. There are many subcategories of violence, including drug and alcohol abuse, self mutilation, nonviolent crimes, and basic hostility toward the world. All of these can occur in combination and to different degrees.

The perfectionist, although as severe as the aggressive, is socially accepted, and therefore not generally treated. However, this condition is as severe as any aggressive act. The perfectionist is always unhappy and insecure, believing their self worth is based on their ability to achieve.

The results of either of these behaviors can be severe. Fr. Chiamonte states that "no one will do anything to harm himself or another unless driven by a deep seated fear." Due to this the potential for external and internal violence is always present. Often when these personalities realize their coping methods are only intensifying their feelings of loneliness and fear, they result to suicide. Father states the "18 to 21 age group has the highest incidence of death by suicide."

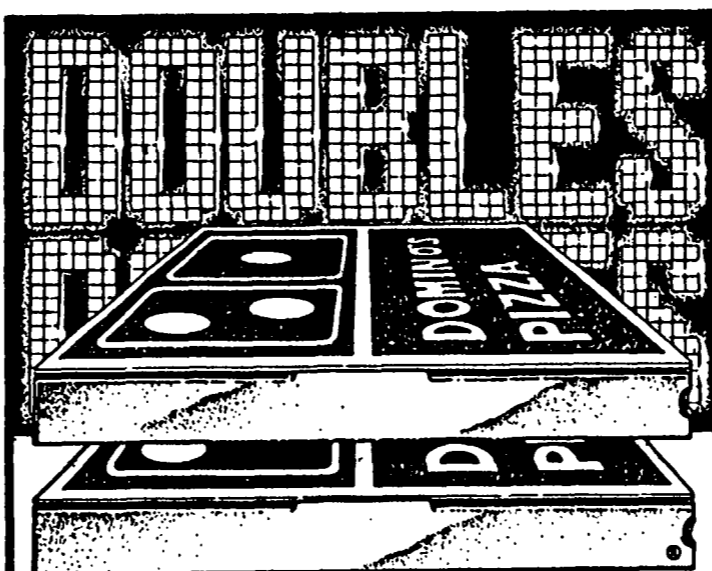
Although accurate in many of his statements, the Father fails to address other causes of predisposition to suicide. The biological factors of depression, or the coping methods of a family unit, have others within the family committed suicide?, or even the effect of attention seeking gestures that went too far, as well as, learned coping methods within the family unit were not taken into consideration. However, the focus of his talk was excellent in the specific area he addressed and Father Chiamonte greatly increased the awareness of those present. As stated by Father Chiamonte, "it's not the fact that a person exhibits a behavior, but the severity of the behavior that must be considered." Therefore, an occasional drinker is not an alcoholic, nor a dedicated studier a perfectionist. Behaviors exhibited in the extreme are dangerous, both to oneself and others, and should be treated as soon as possible to ensure a happy productive life.



Staff and students brave a windy Monday morning to attend the opening ceremonies of Wellness Awareness Week.

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