



# THE INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES OF NORTH TEXAS

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## Eight "C's" to a Better Life

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These are "times that try men's souls." It is hard to stay positive when the media bombards us with negative news all day and all evening. To help you hold on to a positive outlook, which impacts your mental health, consider these thoughts:

1. Be open to **Change**. Yes, change is inevitable in our lives. Jobs come and go. Marriages happen and then unravel leaving us with anger and disappointment in the one that we thought we would love forever. Children are born, grow up and leave the nest. Our investments go up and invariably go down just when we thought we had it made. The person who is unwilling to adjust to changes in their lives will become bitter and old before their time.
2. Realize that you have a **Choice**. You can choose to be happy and positive. You can choose to treat your spouse and children with love and respect. You can choose to avoid toxic people at work. You can choose your work. You can choose who you want to love. You can choose life!
3. Understand the limits of **Control**. If you try to "control" or change your spouse or children to fit your needs, you will meet with resistance and failure. The only person who you can control or change is you. You can, however, motivate your spouse or children to become more cooperative and loving by modeling cooperation and love.
4. Improve your **Communication** skills. Instead of yelling at the kids, berating your spouse, or admonishing an employee when they "screw up", practice the art of using "**I**" messages instead of focusing on "**You**" messages. "Junior, **I** worry about your safety when you stay out after Midnight." "Honey, **I** would like to unwind for about 5 minutes when I get home from work before we talk about your day." "Susie, **I** was embarrassed when **I** heard about the way one of our customers was treated."
5. Take **Care** of yourself and your loved ones. You need a proper diet, plenty of rest and lots of exercise to stay healthy. Schedule those annual health and wellness exams as well as vision, hearing and dental care. Also, tell your loved ones how much you love them. They never get tired of hearing that!
6. Try **Cooperation** and team work to get jobs done quickly and efficiently. The *Lone Stranger* who insists on doing everything his or her way may find himself or herself eventually isolated. Good ideas become great ideas when you listen to team mates.
7. **Connect** with your friends and extended family on a regular basis. With today's technology, media, e-mail, internet and cell phone connections, it is possible to stay current with what is happening in the world and with your friends and family. Sign up for a social networking site, such as **Facebook**, and consider the possibility of connecting with classmates and friends from long ago.
8. **Cope** with losses in your life. As we age, we deal with loss of function because our bodies don't always do what we want them to do. As our children grow up and have lives of their own, we face loneliness and isolation. After retirement, we feel useless and unappreciated for our years of service. Those are beliefs that we must change to have a healthier outlook and enjoy the wonderful years ahead.

If you or anyone in your family needs counseling for a career change or personal counseling to address losses or changes in your life, check out our web site at [www.texasicounselors.com](http://www.texasicounselors.com). Our rates are affordable.