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Communications

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Jamie Hughes chose career path that utilizes his love of writing

One of the more valuable lessons Jamie Hughes learned as a psychology major at Gardner-Webb University kept him from making the wrong career choice.

His professors in the School of Psychology came from different backgrounds and shared their personal experiences with students. He also heard from a variety of guest speakers who could shed light on possible jobs and career paths.

“Learning about a first-hand experience from one instructor steered me away from a job offer I received prior to graduating,” he shared. “That was invaluable, because even though I was thrilled to have the offer, I knew from what I heard that the organization was not a good match with my personal beliefs and goals.”

The career path Hughes chose has allowed him to utilize his love of writing along with the concepts he learned at GWU. As a way to deal with his own struggle with depression, Hughes has been journaling and writing poetry for several years. He said studies have shown that writing about traumatic events, deep fears, anxieties, emotions, painful experiences and memories has health benefits such as long-term improvements in mood and depressive symptoms.

Desiring to share the healing benefits of writing with others, he created “Writing for Well-Being,” a therapeutic writing class, after reading about similar groups in the United Kingdom. The course is offered in the upstate South Carolina region and helps participants explore and express important emotions and circumstances in their lives through various writing methods.

While leading the writing classes, which are more of a support group than a lecture, he relies on many of the principles he learned as an undergraduate.

“The counseling portion of my degree instilled such basic principles as listening, questioning, group process, and confidentiality,” he stated. “The professors at GWU also stressed ongoing education for any field of work in order to stay relevant and to build expertise.”

The small class sizes at GWU also enabled his professors to demonstrate how to care for individuals.

“I have attended lectures at larger schools and the lack of personal attention can’t compete with the individual care we received at GWU,” he offered. “I was able to spend one-on-one time with teachers, not only discussing assignments but the deeper psychological and spiritual meanings of the material.”

Hughes lives in upstate South Carolina with his wife, children and pets. Besides being the founder and facilitator of Writing for Well-Being, he is also a certified instructor and journal facilitator, as well as the author of two books, “The Jesus I Know,” and “The Game Plan for Defeating Depression.”

As important as writing is to Hughes, sharing that blessing with others is equally as important. His desire to help others has been the driving force behind Writing for Well-Being and a new workshop titled, “The Power of Forgiveness,” which focuses on helping people recognize and overcome obstacles to forgiveness.

“Learning to explore this principle using personal writing methods can bring freedom from bitterness, guilt, and doubt,” shared Hughes, “and this workshop will begin that powerful process. My greatest desire is to share hope with people who might only see darkness or pain in their lives. Writing is such a dynamic and beautiful art form that leads to healing like no other treatment can.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University’s purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).