

The Twelve Steps of Heart t' Heart

- 1 We admitted we were powerless over compulsive addictive behaviors* – that our lives had become unmanageable. (Mosiah 4:5; Alma 26:12)
- 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. (Mosiah 4:9; Alma 26:12)
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. (2 Ne. 10:24; Omni 1:26; Mosiah 3:19; 2 Nephi 4:34)
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. (Alma 15:17; Mosiah 4:2; Jacob 4:6–7; Ether 12:27)
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. (Mosiah 26:29; Alma 22:18)
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. (Helaman 3:35; 2 Nephi 31:19; Mosiah 2:20–21)
- 7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. (Alma 36:18; Alma 38:8; Moroni 10:32; Mosiah 5:2; Alma 34:15–16)
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. (3 Nephi 12:9; 3 Nephi 12:24; 3 Nephi 12:44–45)
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others. (Mosiah 27:35; 3 Nephi 12:25; Mosiah 26:30)
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. (2 Nephi 4:18; 2 Nephi 10:20; Mosiah 26:30)
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. (2 Nephi 32:3; Alma 37:37; Helaman 10:4)
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others still suffering from the effects of compulsive behaviors and to practice these principles in all our affairs. (Alma 5:7; Mosiah 27:36–37; Moroni 7:3)

*Any problem may be inserted here, in place of "compulsive addictive behaviors." Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by A.A. World Services, Inc.

Dearest Friends:

Resist Not, and Let the Lord Work His Own Miracles

Recently, I was made aware of a situation where one of our fellows in Heart t' Heart, with joy and rejoicing in their heart at discovering an LDS version of Twelve Step recovery, went to their local church leaders and received a very unsupportive—even negative—reaction to the idea of starting a Heart t' Heart group in their area. In response, this excited, hopeful person felt some disappointed, negative energy arising in their own heart. This situation has led me to record the following personal thoughts. I share them with all of you in a spirit of humility and love.

Our policy toward our local leaders, no matter what their reaction to Heart t' Heart, has always been one of respect and obedience. Heart t' Heart was created to be a complement and a support to one's involvement in the Church. "The Church" is *the true Church of Christ restored in these last days*, namely The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Heart t' Heart is nothing when compared to the authority and saving power found in Church ordinances through the Priesthood.

If, through involvement in Heart t' Heart, a person is not feeling an increased testimony of the truthfulness of the Church, then they are not receiving inspiration from the same Spirit that inspired the writing of *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage* and the creation of Heart t' Heart. The "He" in *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage* is the Christ of Mormonism, the Christ of the *Book of Mormon*, the Christ of the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph, and the Christ that is preached at every General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If a person is receiving inspiration from the same Spirit that inspired this work from the beginning, they will feel an increased appreciation and awe at the majesty of the Restoration, an increased gratitude and affection for the prophets and apostles, and an increased willingness to trust the Lord in and through His Church—as represented by other fellow mortal-members (ward and stake leaders).

I want to set one record straight—the record that is based on *my* testimony and my involvement in this work—and that includes *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage*, the creation of Heart t' Heart, and anything else

Open Sharing: Changing Our Attitude Makes the Difference

November 10, 2002 (Sunday)
8:40 a.m. The first thing I want to write about this morning is yesterday. I just used my little pocket-sized day-planner to write a log of what happened yesterday. It was good to do that. I had a wonderful day, all things taken together. I was really into the truth of realizing that it is how we choose to define our life, ourselves, our challenges, our blessings *and* our setbacks—positively or negatively—that primarily determines the mood of our mind and body.

This morning, however, I got up and instead of going right to God and to His call to me to write (guided by prayer and a verse or two of scripture), I diddled around, having a “normal” person’s first couple of hours. Getting up, talking to my spouse, meandering out to the kitchen, getting some food, coming back to my office, doing some “housekeeping,” checking my email—just the typical morning of the normal person. And for the last hour, I’ve been dealing with such *depressed* feelings.

I don’t know how other people do it. I don’t know how they get through their days without reaching out and tapping into—believing and receiving—conscious contact with God. I mean, just the heaviness of everyday life feels like a terrible weight on my shoulders, even though nothing that bad is happening. I don’t know if some of that is because I’m getting older, physically... or mentally. Maybe, I’m just wearing out and/or reaching my capacity emotionally. Maybe people die (give their bodies permission to

deteriorate) because there’s only so much each one of us can bear of the heaviness and loneliness of this celestial existence, that feels so very far from God. (When in reality He is only a very thin veil away from us.)

The image comes to my mind that our situation is really like a child who agrees to wear a blindfold and ear-plugs for a day to learn

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what it feels like to be blind and deaf. We agree of our own free will, but then, after the handicaps have been put in place we begin to regret it and pout about it. This is harder than we thought. Even though we’re still in God’s presence (His presence is everywhere according to **D&C 88**), we can’t perceive that presence unless we listen very carefully. And to “see” our Heavenly Parents, we have to be still and let the Holy Spirit bring their image into our spiritual eyes (the eyes of our understanding.) That’s too hard. It’s not enough. It’s not the wonderful, always available relationship we used to have with our Parents. We’re bummed.

And maybe we’re even bummed at our big brother, Jesus. After all, He said this would be such a “great” experience. We should have known someone as grown-up and spiritually mature as He would define “great” differently from the rest of us. But we believed Him, in large part because we could recognize the truth so much better before we started wearing blinders and ear plugs (before we started this mortal wilderness trek).

The Eternal Reality is that heaven and all we knew before—all the feelings, all the situations, all the People—are only a thin veil away. They’re all around us in the form of angels ministering to us, guiding our thoughts and our steps if we will allow them to, turning our thoughts toward any good thing, anything that entices us to think hopefully, gratefully, humbly.

I love the story of Lehi’s dream in **1 Nephi 8** and how it says that he found himself in a “dark and dreary wilderness.” Then, when he cried out to God (after the space of many “hours”, or in other words, a *long* time), he found himself quite suddenly on a “great and spacious plain.” In other words, suddenly, he could see for great distances—his perspective and vision were opened up. I felt a very plain impression that what changed was *not* Lehi’s geographic location, but rather his attitude (or definition) of where he was. Life is a dark and dreary wilderness without the Lord. And, once I turn to Him and do what it takes to demonstrate my willingness and desire to make conscious contact with Him, the very same cir-

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A Declaration of Dependence on God and Freedom from Codependency

(The miracle of the following excerpt from this sister's pages and pages of recovery writing, is that she is changing the unrighteous traditions of generations of antagonistic relationships between family members, and gradually, month by month, those relationships are getting better. Please note: the name "John" is a pseudonym.)

I know that I'm accountable for me. I can offer my son, John, the chance to go to counseling and have a safe place to heal by letting him go into a rehab-program. Here in our home, I have five other children whose safety I must consider. I will go the distance with John, but I won't make the journey for him. He has to make the journey. I'll be on

one side and Jesus will be on the other. There are others who love him—friends and family—who will help, too. Even his dad will help, though we are no longer living with him. But none of us can heal for John. Before he comes home, I need a commitment from him that he will follow the rules of our home. I have been dominated for most of my life, and I refuse to be dominated any longer by anyone.

I will continue to heal and become a healthier person, acknowledging that I am accountable to God for my thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. I will continue to learn in family therapy how to be a better parent and to set up a healthy family structure. I will

no longer turn the power of my choices over to anyone else. I will own my own issues.

I will provide the children with a safe, loving, supportive environment—free of intimidation and fear. I acknowledge that I can only control myself, but I can set boundaries and rules that can be chosen by the children or ignored with consequences accompanying that choice.

I will be available to listen to grievances from the children. I will take them under advisement and take them to the Lord for guidance. I will treat the children with dignity and respect. □

—P.J.

Program from the Prophets

As daughters of God, you cannot imagine the divine potential within each of you. Surely the secret citadel of women's inner strength is spirituality. In this you equal and even surpass men, as you do in faith, morality, and commitment when truly converted to the gospel. You have "more trust in the Lord [and] more hope in his word." 15 This inner spiritual sense seems to give you a certain resilience to cope with sorrow, trouble, and uncertainty.

You cannot imagine the gifts and talents each of you has. All women have appealing features. I do not refer to model-type appeal, but rather that which comes from

your personality, your attitude, and your expressions. I urge you to enhance the natural, God-given, feminine gifts with which you have been so richly blessed. None of you should be so content that you cease to care about how you look or act. In his day, President Brigham Young encouraged women to get an education. This is still good counsel, but I hasten to add: in all your getting, do not lose your sweet femininity.

You sisters do not know the full extent of your influence. You sisters enrich all of humanity. All human life begins with you. Each woman brings her own separate, unique strengths to the family and the Church. Being a daughter of God

means that if you seek it, you can find your true identity. You will know who you are. This will make you free—not free from restraints, but free from doubts, anxieties, or peer pressure. You will not need to worry, "Do I look all right?" "Do I sound OK?" "What do people think of me?" A conviction that you are a daughter of God gives you a feeling of comfort in your self-worth. It means that you can find strength in the balm of Christ. It will help you meet the heartaches and challenges with faith and serenity. □

James E. Faust, "What It Means to Be a Daughter of God," Ensign, Nov. 1999, 100

A Bible, A Bible, I Already Have Three Bibles!

I was thinking about an amazing event that happened to me just over a month ago that eventually lead me to start recovery. While this experience is very personal and sacred to me, I do want to share it with you.

Soon after my second wife left me (an event that was hauntingly familiar), I really hit rock bottom. Feeling hopelessly depressed, I remember sitting in my graduate class, deciding that I was finally at the end of my rope. “Why even try to do what is right anymore,” I thought, “when I eventually just get screwed in the end anyway... I might as well give up trying to be good and just go enjoy myself.”

I decided right then and there, that as soon as class was over, I would go check out the all-nude strip bars in a nearby city. Although I had always been curious and definitely tempted, I had never really seriously considered doing this. However, on this particular day, I decided to do it. As I was walking from my class to the parking terrace, I kept thinking about how sad my life was. I remember thinking I had finally been beaten, so all I could look forward to was the strip bars.

As I walked to the parking terrace, a man standing at the entrance asked me if I wanted a Bible. I looked at him and at the pocket-sized Bibles and asked, “Are you from the Gideon Society?” He told me he was. I quickly said, “Thanks anyway, but I already have three Bibles at home.” I was a bit surprised at his persistence when he said, “Why don’t you take one

anyway—perhaps you can pass it along to someone else.” I thanked him, took the small Bible, and hurried into the parking structure. I was in quite a rush in anticipation of seeing live nude women.

About halfway up the ramp to my car, I started thinking—“In the

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past few years I have been taking classes here, I have never seen anyone giving out Bibles before. Hey, this really sucks! I am on my way to try to enjoy myself with naked women, and some guy just gave me a Bible. Now, I am going to feel guilty the whole time. What kind of a bizarre coincidence is that? What are the odds of this happening?” I wondered.

Then, like a delayed reaction, it hit me. I suddenly realized that it was no coincidence at all. Upon reaching my car, I had to struggle just to get the key into the keyhole, since at this point I was shaking and my tears were distorting my vision. I sat down in my car and cried like a baby. I knew God had given me a sign. The Spirit powerfully confirmed this realization.

I quickly decided a course alteration was in order. I started for home with the intent of contacting my bishop. I had difficulty maintaining my composure as I drove. I kept marveling about this Bible

from God, and then wondered to myself if there was a specific message I was supposed to read. I pulled over and flipped through the pages to see if anything jumped out at me. Then I saw it. Inside of the back cover at the top of the page, I found the message that God had intended for me—“God Loves You.”

I started to cry again. “God told me he loves me...He just told me he loves me,” I repeated in my mind. Below these three glorious words was the text of John 3:16. A few lines further down, I read more that sunk deep into my soul, “For the wages of sin is death.” The Spirit confirmed this was the other message from God. I continued to cry, remembering my original course was to go lust after women, to commit adultery in my heart. I prayed for forgiveness with more sincerity and more gratitude than I had ever felt before.

When I arrived home, I called the bishop without delay. I met him at the church and told him of my experience. I confessed all of my sins. I left his office with a resolve to avoid all pornography by installing some Internet restriction software on my computer. I did pretty well with my resolve, but within a week’s time, I started experiencing severe feelings of withdrawal.

A week after all this happened, I stopped by a friend’s house and told him this story. I mentioned that although I was determined in my resolve, I was intensely craving pornography. I told him that I wanted to go get some porn, anything that I could get my hands on. He told me about a support

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Open Sharing: Changing Our Attitude

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cumstances become “a vast and spacious plain.” That’s exactly what has happened again this morning—just in this one half-hour of using writing to stop my “normal” morning and open my mind to the Presence of God. Thanks for letting me share. □

—Colleen H.

A Bible, A Bible...

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group that could help me. A few days later at my first Heart t’ Heart meeting, I felt the Spirit tell me clearly that this was where my “course alteration” was intended to lead me. I have been attending the meetings every week since, and plan to always continue to do so.

Looking back on these events, I marvel at how God positioned His people to be in the right places at the right time, to help me get away from the path of sin that leads to spiritual death. I feel I am just now getting back on the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life. Great drops of blood from my Savior pave this path back to God. Mere words cannot express my true gratitude for His precious life, given freely on my behalf. Jesus is the Lord. Although I still slip and fall, and continually need to repent, He has saved me from my sins.

I realize now that I have had a sexual addiction for many years. I am so grateful to all who have helped show me how to be free. I only hope that one day, I too can be in the right place at the right time—and perhaps “pass it along to someone else.” □

—Joe B

Dearest Friends

Continued from page 1

I shall ever be blessed to share: *My testimony, my recovery, comes directly from personal revelation based in the Restored Gospel of Christ. I declare to the world, and to all who believe in Christ, that I found this degree of sanity, this degree of relationship with Jesus Christ, in and through the words of the prophets and the teachings of Mormonism.*

I also want to bear testimony that I know for myself what it is to be misunderstood and incorrectly judged by fellow mortals in the church—including some of my local leaders over the years. But when those moments came, the God of my understanding, the Christ I have tried to introduce to others through *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage*, instructed me to “be still,” and submit to my leaders. In every instance, time after time, I have seen the Lord work miracles around and in spite of those times of misunderstanding. Things have always turned out *better* than I could have hoped or imagined.

I plead with you who are finding strength through the vehicle of LDS Twelve Step fellowship to prayerfully seek this same Jesus that inspired the creation of Heart t’ Heart. This is the Jesus of the *New Testament* who taught His disciples the Beatitudes. Please go back to **Matthew** and to **3rd Nephi** and read again just what the “poor in spirit,” the “meek” and the “lowly in heart,” are promised. Power in Christ comes from being even as He was—surrendering to life on Life’s terms (in His case, surrendering to life on His Father’s terms).

I once heard someone point out that there is not one word in

Christ’s teachings that denounces the evil of slavery, yet there is not a single Christian nation where slavery continues. This is a perfect example of what He meant when He said, “Resist not evil.” If you are filled with *this* spirit of love and

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trust of God in all things, you will be so busy being hopeful and happy and helpful wherever you can find opportunity, that the “evil” (misunderstanding) you are tempted to fight against will be absorbed eventually. I know. I have lived it.

Translation or summary of all this: Don’t hassle with your local leaders about this program. Don’t bring it down to any kind of confrontation. Be tender and merciful and kind in your attitude. Be patient and long-suffering. Use nothing except persuasion, even if that persuasion must come through months of internalizing, living and modeling these true principles in your own life. Let others see your good works (which His Spirit in your life empowers you to do), and be persuaded that they can trust this program of recovery. I promise you: The testimony of your own peace and recovery, and your increased love for and faith in Christ and His kingdom, will be the most powerful testimony you can bear.

—Colleen H. □

Lifelines – Short thoughts on Recovery

“If you will put God first in your life, everything else will either fall into its proper place or drop out of your life entirely.”

President Benson promised it. I believe he spoke as a prophet of God, which means the same as if God promised it. I guess my hesitancy is I’m afraid all the good things, the things I *want* to do, the things my heart dreams of doing—those will be the things that drop out of my life. And the icky things, like laundry and house cleaning, will be the things that stay. And that is so stupid of me to think like that, because I know—I KNOW—that part of the measure of my creation is to do the things that call to my heart. These things that I love so much are part of my mission in life, part of the reason God sent me here when and where He did. Doing those things is part of putting God first. □

Without conscious contact with a power far greater than my own...I cannot maintain anything resembling sanity or serenity. (*He Did Deliver Me*, p.v)

That’s the key to my jumbled life. I’ve taken off in so many directions on my own, under my own steam, my own power; not always checking to see if it was the direction the Lord wanted me to go. Now I’m going in so many directions at once, I don’t know which end is up! But as this program has proven time and time again, Christ can bring me peace. He can bring me serenity and sanity. No matter what the problem, He can guide me to an answer.

When I remember Him, when I work the steps (which is a way of remembering Him, because it brings me back to Him, centers me in Him), I “lose my desire to do evil; to do that which separates me from God...I start hoping and trusting.” That’s what all the problems I’m facing at work, at home, in my family are about—I don’t have hope or trust. I don’t hope or trust that my house will ever be clean and organized; that my businesses will ever run smoothly and in the black; that I’ll ever be caught up to where I can work from a place of

peace and forward planning, rather than playing catch-up; that my children will be able to work out their own problems; that my husband and I will ever have time together; ...

And why do I not have this hope and trust? Because I haven’t looked to God for it; or at least, I haven’t looked to God daily, regularly, always, for it. I’ve looked to the “arm of man”—palm pilots, planners, schedules, my own reasoning. They all fail, and will always fail, eventually. Only with God as the source of my hope and trust can I have any peace. □

I spoke to a group recently about my time in recovery, using the Twelve Steps and gospel to recover from multiple compulsive addictive behaviors. It was a strong message of hope and recovery, how it works in my life, with examples from my most recovered times and my most spiritual, faithful experiences.

Afterwards I felt like such a hypocrite. From what I said, people in the group would think I was fully recovered, or at least, much more recovered than the reality of my life shows me to be. They wouldn’t guess that I sometimes go days without praying, reading the scriptures and capturing; that recently I’ve been binge eating, fantasizing about what my life would be like “if...”. This guilt of this hypocrisy drove me to repentance, to pray in my heart for forgiveness and a return to sanity and recovery.

After several days prayer and reflection, I realized what a kind and beautiful circle of learning God gives to me when I look to Him. There was no sin in what I shared last week. It was true—all of it. When I work the steps, when I turn to God, my life works. When I don’t work the steps, the fear and compulsions return. That was my testimony last week and it is my testimony today; and it is a true testimony. My message of hope and recovery to “those who still suffer” (myself included) is no less true or valid just because I sometimes live the other side of it—the negative proof of a true concept. □

New Meetings

If your meeting time, meeting place or contact person changes, please be sure to notify us so we can update the meeting list. Mail or fax the New Meeting Registration/Change Form to:

Heart t' Heart • P.O. Box 247

Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

Fax: (801) 796-0923

or you can call:

(801) 796-7605 or

(888) 790-7040 (toll free)

Mon - Fri • 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (MST)

Heart t' Heart Board Meeting Report

The Heart t' Heart General Service Board recently met for the fall quarterly meeting. Some of the topics of discussion included:

- Current pamphlets are under review to bring them in line with the policy of not meeting in LDS church buildings.
- New pamphlets and literature that have been sent to typesetting are: New Meeting formats, What to Expect at a Heart t' Heart Meeting, To Priesthood Leaders. These should be ready in a few months and will be announced in the newsletter when they are available.
- Cassette tapes of Heart t' Heart's 2002 Conference are being held up. The recordings are in the process of being edited and will hopefully be available soon.
- Plans are already underway for th 2003 Conference. Anyone who'd like to help can contact us at PO Box 247, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062 or email hthorder@hotmail.com
- We are looking into holding board meetings via an internet chat which would allow those living outside Utah to participate.
- There is an open invitation to anyone in Heart t' Heart to attend the board meetings. Then next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2003 in Salt Lake City. Please call or email for address and time.

October's GSB Contributions

We appreciate the contributions sent to our main office. They are used to cover expenses, create printed materials, and to send information to those inquiring about Heart t' Heart.

ID-06	\$25.00
MO-1	\$60.00
UT-06	\$33.00
UT-22	\$30.00
Private Donations	\$66.67

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Heartbeats

P.O. Box 247

Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

New Subscription Renewal

Subscription Rates:

USA & Canada — \$12.00/year

Please remit in **US funds** via credit card, check or money order made payable to Heart t' Heart. Do not send cash. Send this form with payment to the address above.

We encourage reader contributions to Heartbeats. Ideas for articles:

- In-depth study/analysis of principles found in Steps or Traditions
- Personal experiences with the Steps, Traditions, Tools; how they work in your life
- Capturing from the scriptures, Big Book, He Did Deliver Me
- Open Sharing with positive recovery messages
- Program from the Prophets – quotations from modern prophets with a “recovery” message
- Short quotes, thoughts or one-liners

Send articles to: Heartbeats
P.O. 247, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062
hthorder@hotmail.com

Submissions are considered a donation to Heartbeats and imply granting of one-time publication rights. Submissions will not be returned. Submissions may be edited for space and content at the discretion of the editor.

What's inside this issue of Heartbeats...

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- **Changing Our Attitude Makes the Difference:** Accepting the eternal reality of our lives leads to peace.
- **A Declaration of Dependence on God and Freedom from Codependency:** One woman's written declaration of change and recovery within her family relationships.
- **Program from the Prophets:** Excerpts from “What It Means to Be a Daughter of God,” James E. Faust, Ensign, Nov. 1999.
- **A Bible, A Bible, I Already Have Three Bibles!:** An unexpected encounter brings a personal message from God.
- **Sharing Moments:** Miscellaneous personal sharing and capturing from various sources.
- **Report on the recent Heart t' Heart Board Meeting**

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