

## 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,

## Giving Up the Battle—Again

Often, when someone asks us how we're doing, we answer with an expression like, "Oh, I'm hanging in there," or "I'm muddling through," or even "I've not given up the fight, yet." Recently, that last expression went through my mind and an alarm went off, due, I am sure, to my recent reading of Alma 24. If you remember, Alma 24 covers the story of the "Anti-Nephi-Lehi" people who laid down their weapons and refused to fight anything or anyone (similar to the description of the recovering alcoholic from *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 84, 4th Edition).

There are people who spend years in recovery, desperately striving—fighting, slashing and hacking away at their weaknesses (enemies), just certain that the last thing in the world they should do is "give up the fight." I was like that.

"Give up?" I cried. "What do you mean? That's wrong, wrong, wrong! I can't give up. You must be deceived to be telling people to give up!"

What I didn't realize is that genuine, peaceful, hopeful, miraculous recovery (in other words, deliverance) comes from giving up. It comes from giving up to the Lord.

"Let go and let God," has been a repeated phrase heard in recovery circles for years.

"What?" I've cried. "Let go? What do you mean by that? I can't let go! Don't you know that it is only 'after all that I can do' that I can expect God to help me? You must be off-base to be telling people to 'Let go and let God.' No! No! No! I will never give up. I will never surrender!"

And so the Lord has had to wait a long time for me to surrender to Him. Over and over again I've tried a superimposed, "outside-in" approach to controlling my addiction—the Atkins diet, Weight Watchers, the Zone, the 40-30-30 Formula. Every time, those efforts have run out of

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power and faded—and failed. And every time, the adversary has been right there to tell me that it was I who failed. “See, you’ve failed again,” he would taunt me, doing all he could to keep me from thinking the truth—that it was the approach that had failed, not me. He didn’t want me to realize that, just as the prophets have taught, as long as I’m trying, I haven’t failed.

In the last year, though, I think the Lord has finally caught up with His wandering lamb, yet again. He has been doing all He could to gently guide me to once again let go of trying to fight my own battles (with food, weight, life, anything or anyone), and to drop my weapons (fear, food plans, impatience and disgust at myself and others for being so weak and imperfect). He’s been inviting me to surrender, not to my weakness, but to Him. He has been restoring me to sanity, reminding me to spend my time and energy on 1) looking to Him and 2) entering into His rest.

**I see myself to be like the parents of the stripling warriors who refused to take up their weapons of war, even in their defense, for fear of the spiritual damage they would inflict upon their own souls.**

Gradually, I am becoming willing to keep my eye single to His glory—and to His calm, confident way of behaving in the face of great evil, as He did with Satan in the wilderness and as He did before Pilate and the cross. Truly, He has shown by His own calmness in the face of great evil that there is nothing to panic about and no reason to pick up my “weapons.” Can you imagine what kind of weapons He could have picked up and used against the evil around Him? Thank God

literally, that He doesn’t believe in fighting evil. It’s very likely there would be no earth left, if He had taken that militant, unpeaceful attitude!

While some people may honestly receive revelation from the Lord to wage war on their enemies (as did Helaman and the stripling warriors), I am not one of them. I see myself to be like the parents of the stripling warriors who refused to take up their weapons of war, even in their defense, for fear of the spiritual damage they would inflict upon their own souls. Like them, I have come to know that I must cease fighting anyone or anything. It may seem like a completely paradoxical way to live, but it is the only way to live that gives me the ability to “enter into His rest,” and let go of my addiction to the battle.

—Colleen □

*Only in the complete surrender of our inner life may we rise above the selfish, sordid pull of nature. We should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I cannot imagine peace in a world from which God and religion are banished.*

—President David O. McKay

# The Whole Package

An addiction to pornography brought me to Heart 't' Heart seven years ago, and I am grateful to report that the Lord has changed my life and my behavior through the principles of the Twelve Steps. He continues to give me a remission of that addiction as I continue to turn to Him in my temptations, which, while they have lessened in intensity, still occur.

The Lord doesn't just concern Himself with the worst problem in our lives, however. He cares about all of it. In my case that includes many years of unhealthy eating. Since joining Heart 't' Heart, I have had some periods of remission from this addiction as well, but that has been more sporadic.

A couple of years ago I had a good stretch of abstinence and lost about 40 pounds. I was feeling good and, according to my wife, looking better as well. But then I did the "grand experiment," convinced that I could go back to some of the things I had given up eating. I gained back about 75 percent of the weight I had lost.

I have not felt that my overeating has had nearly the negative impact on my spirituality as my sexual addiction did, but recently I have observed something that might be worth sharing. I have continued to call on the Lord and have tried to stay close to Him because I know it is only through Him that I have been able to be abstinent from acting out

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sexually. I know it is only through His power that I will be able to stay clean in the future.

I need Him if I am to remain sober. No argument there. But because I have been sloppy about my overeating abstinence, I have noticed a tendency to hold back—to not be as close to the Lord as I have been in the past.

I guess my thinking has run something like this: "Lord, I need you to keep me abstinent from my sexual addiction, but please don't bring up that other thing (my eating)."

In counseling with Him, I have not given Him much of a chance to talk with me for fear of Him reminding me of the eating. What a silly attitude! I

have never known Him to be intrusive, overbearing or demanding in our relationship. He only reminds me very gently. His invitations are so mild, they hardly seem like He is talking to me at all. I don't know of anything that is easier to do than to resist an impulse of the Spirit. It is up to me whether I want to surrender my will to His. He is so gentle about the issue of my agency. Why should I be afraid to be close to Him?

Recently I have felt a growing willingness to be more abstinent in my eating. I think it has only been since I have started opening my heart to Him in this area that I have seen more clearly that I have been pulling away from Him.

Addiction is so subtle. The enemy of our peace is so subtle. I am grateful for the Lord's patience, for His loving kindness, for His "tender mercies!" I pray that I can become more and more willing to "let go and let God" because He won't until I do.

—Phil H. □

Let Go  
and  
Let God

# Change My Heart, O God

**A**s I have struggled to get back on the wagon after a recent slip (having had 3.75 months of sobriety), I am finding it hard to let go of the inward desire to sin. My heart is not broken and contrite, and I am not humbling myself enough. I don't desire to sin; I want to change, totally and completely. But the nagging urge to sin returns deep inside, so deep it seems almost physical.

I long for a time—I believe it will come—when my thoughts and feelings will be pure, without guile, without ulterior motive, when I can look on all human beings with charity. I wish that day were today.

I want to see myself as the Savior sees me. I know He sees more potential in me than I can see right now. I want to *feel* close to Him, *be* close to Him and accept His gift of sanctification and whitening of my crimson soul.

I hope that today I can trust Him, come unto Him, let Him take away my desire to sin. I want to allow Him to replace my fear and my dependence on the arm of my flesh, with His strength in dealing with life's challenges.

—Anonymous □

# Waiting on the Lord

**I** don't know how many years Jesus worked to become a carpenter. Even for Jesus there were many years of preparation, of doing things that *seemingly* had nothing to do with His earthly mission. It *seems* that the preparation time was disproportionate to the three years of His ministry.

Considering this, I've come to realize how important preparation time is and how important the *seemingly* unimportant is. The times in my life when I don't know where the Lord is leading me are just as important as when I feel Him leading me. There is a purpose in my not knowing. This season of waiting is given so that I can learn to wait.

President Lorenzo Snow said:

...when Jesus lay in the manger, a helpless infant, He knew not that He was the Son of God, and that formerly He created the earth...He grew up to manhood, and during His progress it was revealed unto Him who He was, and for what purpose He was in the world. (Conf. Report, 1901)

Jesus had to wait. He had to learn things that didn't seem to relate to His mission. He had to learn and grow—just like me. Understanding this, my addictions appear as great gifts. They have brought me to the

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absolute end of myself, and in this process, they are teaching me to wait. I am learning to wait upon the Lord, to wait for abstinence as it gradually unfolds in my life, to wait for strength to continue forward in the things He would have me do—to wait and allow His purposes to unfold in my life, in His way, and in His time. My gifts (addictions) have taught me that I have no power over this, and I must wait.

In the meantime, I have the great blessing of seeking Jesus, the Savior and Redeemer of the world. I have the blessing of learning to wait upon the Lord and allowing Him to build a firm foundation of humility in my life—allowing Him to give me His grace when I am ready to receive it, learning all the while that waiting is a quality my addictions didn't allow me to taste.

Waiting is a central quality of God. He waited some 40 plus years for me to finally come to the end of myself. What a blessing it is for me to learn to wait on Him!

—Mary S. □

# Caught in the Act

In *Clean Hands, Pure Heart* there is a question that prompted the following thoughts. I wrote them in my journal, first, but then I felt it might help someone if I shared them.

First, the question (pg. 44): *Read of the Savior's kindness toward the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1–11). Suppose you were "caught in the act" of your addiction and were taken to Jesus. How would you feel? What do you imagine He would say to you? Can you imagine Him speaking to you as gently as He spoke to this woman? Write some gentle words you feel He might speak to you.*

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I imagine a look of sadness in his eyes. Immediately, what horrible shame I would feel. I believe he would call me by name and say "John\*, there are so many good things you could do right now. You cannot even comprehend the beginning of the blessings I wish to share with you."

He would then encourage me to turn away from my addiction and turn my heart to Him and to sin no more, just as He did the woman caught in adultery.

He would talk to me of the strength He offers me if I will turn to Him. He would say "I understand addiction. I understand the bondage that enslaves you. There is a way to break those bands, and it is through Me. Turn to Me with all your heart. Study my scriptures and you will see how to gain

**The only way to gain the strength to overcome addiction is to turn to Christ throughout my day (every hour, every minute) and admit my nothingness, admit His strength, then seek and do His will. I must give my life to Him.**

and apply my strength in your life to overcome this.

"Above all, you must learn to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life. He will guide you and protect you. He will bring you peace despite the issues you've struggled with in your life. Look to me in the mornings, remember me throughout the day that I have given you, look to me in the evenings and report to me before you go to bed."

He would continue, "Oh John, do not let Satan control you. He seeks your complete misery. He wants nothing good for you. Come unto Me that I may heal you."

As I pondered and wrote these thoughts, I felt that even though the Savior would feel sorrow that I had turned to sin to satisfy my soul instead of to Him, I did not feel any condemnation from Him. I felt only that

He has a deep yearning to teach me how to overcome my addiction and my pride through His strength.

I felt the power of His strength while doing this exercise. I testify that His power is real and that He wants all of us to come unto Him so we can have that strength. I understand that the only way to gain the strength to overcome addiction is to turn to Christ throughout my day (every hour, every minute) and admit my nothingness, admit His strength, then seek and do His will. I must give my life to Him.

Lastly, I felt in my mind that the promise is true that the Father wants to give me all things. I cannot even begin to comprehend the glory, joy and peace which He and Jesus (*my* Jesus) have in store if I endure well, turning my life over to them. Although I can't begin to comprehend it, I feel the peace which assures me it is true.

Glory to God! He lifts those who are down, He binds the broken heart. I love that the Savior spent his mortal life among sinful people teaching them and lifting them. I believe that He would have come to me to help me! I love Him.

I pray for His strength today because I know that I cannot stay sober on my own. I pray for another wonderful day of recovery through Him.

—John □

(\*The name John is a pseudonym for this author.)

# A Metaphor: I've Been Diagnosed with Leprosy

I have been diagnosed with leprosy. It is becoming an increasingly modern plague in all quarters of the world.

But I refuse the diagnosis and I refuse to call myself a leper. It is a vile disease, I tell myself, and the patient is often viewed as the vilest of people.

I am a leader, in my own way. I am a great man, in my own sight. I am honorable, in my own mind. And I've done a lot of great things for a lot of people, in my own view. But all is for naught, I say, if I must acknowledge my leprosy and my status as a leper.

And so I stay in the shadows of darkness where I think people can't see my leprosy, if indeed I have it. But still, some seem to discern something is wrong, even as I try to hide myself from them.

I wish there was a simple solution to curing my leprosy. I wish the solution were as simple and going down to the river and washing seven times. I wish that were the cure. I would go down to the river and wash seven times. I would do it, if I believed that taking those seven steps would help me become clean of my leprosy. But, of course, water in a river cannot make me clean. And I am not a leper, I keep telling myself.

Surely, it must take some great thing, some complicated way, to make one clean of leprosy. And I've searched high and low for the great and complicated way to be cured of

**I believe the Lord's promise. So, today, I begin to bathe in the river, and to incorporate the Twelve Steps into my soul; for I have leprosy, and I am a leper. And the Great Physician says he came to heal me, not the man who claims he is whole.**

leprosy, if I have it. I've become learned about many self-help methods of curing leprosy. And I've done many great things to try to cure myself, should I need to be cured. But as I reject this notion of having leprosy, I also refuse the treatment for leprosy, should I have it.

Then my doctor tells me there are not seven, but twelve steps to curing leprosy. That's more complicated than seven. Twelve is overwhelming to me. Twelve is too many for me to handle. So my doctor tells me to start with the first step, then the second. So I start with the first.

But then my doctor tells me that even the twelve steps won't make me clean. If I were to bath in the river seven times, or seven times seventy, he says, the river would not make me clean.

But, he says, if I will humble myself by practicing twelve simple steps, inspired and proven steps to recovery, I can recover from leprosy through the Great Physician toward whom each of the twelve steps direct me.

And my doctor says I don't have to wait until finishing the twelve steps to be made clean by the Great Physician. My doctor tells me that, for those who come unto the Great Physician, and exercise faith unto repentance, "immediately the leprosy [is] departed from him, and he [is] cleansed (Mark 1:42; Luke 5:13; see also Matthew 8:3), although he must remain vigilant so that the leprosy does not return.

"Immediately?" I ask in disbelief. Then my doctor reminds me of the Lord's promise, "if ye will repent and harden not your [heart], immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you." (Alma 34:31.)

I believe the Lord's promise. So, today, I begin to bathe in the river, and to incorporate the Twelve Steps into my soul; for I have leprosy, and I am a leper. And the Great Physician says he came to heal me, not the man who claims he is whole.

—Anonymous □

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## HEART T' HEART

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# Online Meetings

To attend one of the online meetings go to:  
<http://www.heart-t-heart2.org/chat>.  
**(Note: New address.)**

All are welcome to attend. If this is your first time, review the information on the regular Heart t' Heart webpage:  
<http://www.heart-t-heart.org>.

**OL-04—Sunday through Friday:**  
 Every morning, 6:30 a.m.–7:30 a.m.  
 General Focus (MST).

**OL-02—Tuesday, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).**  
 General Focus. Book Study:  
 HDDM. Open Sharing.  
 Colleen (435)245-4744;  
[colleenh99@comcast.net](mailto:colleenh99@comcast.net)

**OL-01—Thursday, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).**  
 General Focus. Book Study:  
 HDDM. Open Sharing. Mary S.;  
[mtshaver@mts.net](mailto:mtshaver@mts.net)

**OL-03—Saturday, 7:00-8:30 a.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).**  
 General Focus. Book Study:  
 HDDM. Open Sharing. Colleen  
 (435)245-4744; [philh22@comcast.net](mailto:philh22@comcast.net)

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# Heartbeats

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- 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  
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## What’s inside this issue of Heartbeats...

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