

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,

Jesus Did Not Judge My Stable

Previous to my exposure to the true principles in the Twelve Steps, I had not given Jesus Christ more than passing notice as I worked away in my Father's kingdom. I held multiple church positions. I had no fear in bearing many children. I threw myself into every project that I perceived the prophets of the Lord calling me to tackle. I loved God so much. I loved (still do) His church so much. I was grateful for the safety of the busy structure of "deseret" (the beehive). Lots of duties and lots to do, do, do.

I believed in Christ. I always had. I believed He was literally the Son of God. I believed the New Testament story of His short mortal life. I believed the Book of Mormon's testimony that He had also visited His "other sheep." I believed that He had appeared with the Father to Joseph Smith. I believed He had revealed the reorganization and restoration of His original church. And I would do anything to receive His revelation through His prophets.

But I never caught the repeated witness from virtually *all* the prophets, especially the Book of Mormon prophets, to come unto Christ, myself. Come to Him personally and directly. I had never thought of Him as a central character—the central character, in fact—of the Godhead, designated, set apart, and delegated with the power and authority to be my personal Savior. A Savior for right here, right now, in the trenches, on the long, hard trail of my own mortal journey.

And then I came to the Twelve Step program and these principles of recovery told me that I needed to make a connection with God, specifically a God that was willing and able to save me. I came back to my chosen faith, my beloved Mormonism, and I heard President Benson giving talks like "Born of God," and bearing his testimony about the Book of Mormon, and it felt like the connect for me—the next step on my God-called journey of awakening. I read President

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Benson's talks over and over, and I began to read the Book of Mormon with "an eye single to His glory." I was not trying to ignore my Heavenly Father. I did not and have not ceased to pray to Him on a daily basis. But the Book of Mormon was filling me with another witness of Jesus Christ and His central place in the Father's plan to save me.

Jesus Christ came alive for me. Of course, the truth was (and still is) that He was always alive. I was the one that was "dead" to Him. I had ears but I heard not. I had eyes but I saw not. I had a heart, but until I sought Jesus Christ personally and poured my desperate need out to Him—not to the exclusion of the Father, but before the Father (just as the people in 3 Nephi 19 did)—I discovered that I understood nothing of salvation, except work, work, work, work. Work out your own salvation on your own. Don't bother God until you can figure things out on your own and get yourself straightened out. Then, when you've made yourself worthy, then, and only then will God allow you in His presence.

What? How could I ever, on my own, make myself worthy of anything. Without God, I am nothing. I had to have God come to me in my nothingness and rescue me from my lost and fallen state. I couldn't rescue myself and then return to Him. I had to come just the way I was.

Come to Christ as you are. He knows all about you, and He knows all about how to bring you out of your sins, one day, one step at a time. Lean on Him. And when leaning isn't enough, let him carry you.

I finally did. And I found the Father's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, waiting for me. He was waiting to pick me up, dirty and marred and scarred and wounded and beaten and bloody and soiled with all my foolish, ignorant and deliberate mistakes—as I was. He was there. I felt His arms of love. I heard His words of counsel and wisdom. I began to study the scriptures with Him as my teacher and study partner. I read a verse of scripture and turned to Him with an open mind and "discussed" it with Him. I allowed Him to show me the connections and applications of that verse or verses to my own life experience and needs.

It was amazing!! God lives!! Here! Now! I've met a Man who knows all about me and my weaknesses and foolish choices and my needs and my pain, and He has the never ending, ever

flowing well of living water (His presence and His words) for me. And He's willing to do the same for anyone who wants to come and believe and receive Him. Come unto Christ and be perfected in Him. Not in some BC (before Christ) attempt to clean up your own act. Come to Him as you are. He knows all about you, and He knows all about how to bring you out of your sins, one day, one step at a time. Lean on Him. And when leaning isn't enough, let him carry you. Be still. Stop struggling to free yourself from the horrible thorns of sin (yours and others against you) that you've become entangled and caught in. Lay still in the arms of Jesus. Listen for His words of truth—truth that is whispered to you in kind, merciful tones. His voice among all the other voices in your mind is the voice that is always kind but always honest. Always merciful, but always leading you gently and patiently toward the ordinances and covenants of His restored church.

This Christmas season (and forever after), whether you think of your life as a busy, well-to-do inn or a dark, dirty cave of a stable, please make room for Him and let Him come in and make of you His own mansion.

—Colleen H. □

Getting Under the Umbrella

At the end of many Twelve Step meetings, they say “Keep coming back, it works.” I hear two messages in that little slogan. First, keep coming back to the program because the program works. Second, keep coming back to the program, to meetings, to God because “coming back” works.

When I first attended Heart t’ Heart meetings, I was still consumed with pride. I felt I just needed a *little* help, a little reading in the literature, a little more time and I would have this addiction conquered. What I didn’t have was the understanding that what was needed was a total overhaul. I needed to admit my total bankruptcy. I needed the whole program, to get a sponsor, to devour the literature, to really work the steps. I needed to do the writing, to be willing to make this a life-long commitment.

What I found was that the Lord’s blessing of rescue and redemption from my addiction was available, but it wasn’t cheap. I had to give my whole self to it. Then it became easy.

I picture recovery like this. It is raining—raining a deadly, poisonous rain that will kill me if I stay out in it. The Savior stands near me with a large, protective umbrella. But He doesn’t chase me down with it. He stands still and waits for me to come to Him. When I do, when I get close to Him and stay close to Him every day, I am protected. When I wander

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away from Him, I get poisoned.

What does it take to get that close to the Savior? I learned in Heart t’ Heart that I could capture from the scriptures and as I wrote about what I had read, the Spirit would reveal more to me, specifically about myself and my challenges. I also learned that I could talk with my Jesus, that I could write the thoughts of my heart in my journal, and that He would answer me—thoughts would come into my mind that I could phrase in His words to me, and I began to come to know the Lord and to know how much He loved me. When I learned that the Lord accepted me and

cherished me, my own self-disdain began to melt away. All of this is what I mean by “getting under the umbrella.”

During this process, I felt more and more willing and able to surrender my will to His, to listen for the promptings of the Spirit, and to obey them. When the Spirit prompted me to pray, I prayed. When the Spirit prompted me to read and capture from the scriptures, I did. That is what has worked for me.

I still need the Lord, every day. He will walk with us through every step of every day if we will keep our mind and our attention on Him. He takes away temptation when I surrender it to Him, but if I haven’t connected with Him that morning, I don’t feel as willing to surrender the temptations to Him. In other words, I can’t pick and choose which parts of the program I use. I have to use them all.

—Phil H. □

*For unto
us a
child
is born,
unto us
a son
is given.*



A New Understanding

The opening song in Sacrament meeting today was “Come Follow Me.” In my fifty years, I have sung this song many times. Today was different. As I sang the first line of the second verse, tears came to my eyes.

Is it enough alone to know that we must follow Him below?

I heard, “Is it really enough, Nannette? Is it enough alone to know that you must simply follow Me?” The tears were in reaction to this tenderly expressed question placed in my mind by my loving powerful Savior.

I—who have spent a pharisaical lifetime adding to the list of detailed requirements for having what I refer to as “the true day” and then whipping myself for not measuring up—am so grateful for this simplified instruction to simply, moment by moment, follow Him.

—Nannette □



Glorying in Plainness

I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus, for he hath redeemed my soul from hell. (2 Nephi 33:6)

I am so amazed at the way thinking of Jesus as my personal Savior and Friend has changed my heart and is changing my life. He has become my Lord, my Jesus, here for me now, in my heart, and everywhere I go. This is a new and glorious God I never, ever imagined—a God who lives and breathes and wondrously cares for me. Mine. I can visualize Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, suffering for me. His arms are stretched wide, joyously triumphant, intimately tender as I come to Him.

I admit, it takes glorying in plainness, the way a child speaks plainly—without fear or guile. We need a simple, childlike faith in Him, spoken almost bluntly. This kind of speaking of Christ is not often heard in our midst. But it is there, preserved for us—for me—in the words of Nephi. This is the wonderful, direct language that pierces my soul when I have slipped into some form of deception. When I take back my pride, this is the language that stops me short and catches my breath. I have learned to love plain speaking.

This plainness of speaking takes a commitment to truth deeper than anything I’ve ever felt before—a reverence for Him

Christ is the Source that quenches my thirst and fills my hunger for righteousness, for through His Atonement I become freed from guilt and sin and filled with His Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth.

that calls for honesty. I hunger and thirst for truth and find no peace until I’ve dredged to the bottom of it in my challenges and in my sins. In truth, I’m finding life and hope as I brave coming to it. I am awed that when I step up to claim truth, it is as if truth is a stone, rolling forth through all my family.

Speaking in plainness takes glorying in the Spirit of Truth, through my Jesus. We experience an utter need for Him, and Him only. In plainness. In truth. Rejoicing in the redemption that comes with walking in truth with Him. He is the Source that quenches my thirst and fills my hunger for righteousness, for through His Atonement I become freed from guilt and sin and filled with His Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth (3 Nephi 12:6).

—Peggy B. □

Pitching our Tents

And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water. (1 Nephi 2:6)

I bet you can't imagine how my little thought offerings could include something about this, the tiniest of verses. That was my opinion too as I came to this verse and looked heavenward with a challenging glint in my eye. Then the following thoughts came and I had to smile back at the One who challenges us to liken all scripture unto us.

Addicts are constantly looking for a new solution. We think the problem lies in our plan of action and not in our willingness to wait upon the Lord's instruction and power. Sometimes we receive instruction but have a difficult time connecting with the power

to act. We are so willing to throw the baby out with the bath water. We get discouraged. We start searching once again for a new solution.

Recovery is learning to embrace the knowledge and power we have received until further notice from the Lord, and not being blown about with every wind of self help. Recovery is knowing that the Lord's plan for us today is what we have received to this point. Recovery is understanding that God is not a God of routine. Sometimes we will be asked to pitch our tent, sometimes we will be required and empowered to make changes.

Pitching your tent in the Lord's wilderness (that place of reliance on Him) is temporary. But pitch it we must until we receive further instruction.

—Anonymous □

Step 10: Using the Scriptures for Daily Inventory

One of the most important and humble things we must do if we are to "liken all scripture unto ourselves" is to be fearlessly willing to liken even the bad guys unto ourselves. "How am I like Lamien and Lemual?"

We must be courageous in our willingness to look at the thoughts and actions of those

scriptural men and women who struggled and even seemed to completely fail in living the gospel and learn from their experience.

We do this by asking the same question that the Apostles were willing to ask of Jesus in regard to the betrayal: "Lord, is it I?" (Matthew 26:22)

—Anonymous □

It is essential to have Christ at the core of our lives. In these "perilous times," oh, how we need Him! He is the source of strength and safety. He is light. He is life. His peace "passeth all understanding." As our personal Savior and Redeemer, He invites us, one by one, with outstretched arms to "come unto Him." I testify that He is always there, His merciful, loving arms outstretched.

— Anne C. Pingree

Would I Be a Good Missionary?

This morning I've realized I wouldn't make a very good LDS missionary! My testimony has changed.

Although I do absolutely believe this Church has the Restored Gospel and that we are led by a prophet, chosen by the Lord to head the Church; although I have no question Joseph Smith was an inspired prophet of God, called to do the mortal part of the work of the Restoration; although I consider the Book of Mormon to be the word of God, and the most important scriptures to help me understand His dealings with men—these beliefs are not the core of my testimony anymore. My core belief is of my Savior's reality—that He lives and loves me, that He paid for my sins and is doing all He can do to redeem me and bring me safely home. Everything else is of secondary importance.

So why wouldn't I make a very good missionary? Because I see other good people, not Latter-day Saints, who are devoted to the Savior and serving Him in their own worshipful ways. It is simply not for me to judge if they are finding Him in all He is and in all He can do for them. I believe the Lord is still working through them, counseling with them, leading them where He wants them to go. I even believe that some of the ministers of other faiths are called of God to the work they're doing because God needs someone to help those

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who will never join the LDS Church. How is what I have any better than what they have, if they are finding the Lord?

I know the answer to this. What they have is good, as far as it goes, but they don't have *all* that Christ wants them to have—not without the priesthood authority, not without the scriptures they deny as being the word of God, not without all the blessings offered through membership in Christ's reorganized Church, the gift of the Holy Ghost, instead of the light of Christ, of baptism with Christ's authority, of marriages sealed for eternity, of priesthood blessings for the sick—so many, many blessings.

Well, maybe I'd make a good missionary after all. I think it's important to respect the spiritual experiences of others before trying to convince them they need something more. Before I was awakened to the Savior in my life, I wouldn't

have made a good missionary because I thought I had all the answers. I was so defensive about the truthfulness of the Church, of Joseph Smith as a prophet, and of the Book of Mormon, that I missed the most important part of having a testimony—that Christ lives! I didn't know Him then.

Now, knowing Him and testifying of Him may be just what my extended family needs to hear from me so they may understand the rest of the truths I know.

—Peggy B. □

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OL-04—Sunday through Friday:
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General Focus. Book Study:
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Colleen (435)245-4744;
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

OL-03—Saturday, 7:00-8:30 a.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).
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- Open Sharing with positive recovery messages
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What’s inside this issue of Heartbeats...

- **Dearest Friends: Jesus Did Not Judge My Stable.** Come to Christ as you are. He knows all about you, and He knows all about how to bring you out of your sins, one day, one step at a time. Lean on Him. And when leaning isn’t enough, let him carry you.
- **Working the Whole Program.** When I learned that the Lord accepted me and cherished me, my own self-disdain began to melt away.
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And more...

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