

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,

Resolving to Take Steps 4, 5 and 10

I'm fascinated by the similarity of excuses all addicts use when they can't leave their 'drug' of choice alone. Whether it is drugs, alcohol, unhealthy eating, sexual in nature or any other addiction, it's the same story: "I can't do anything about it. I'm locked into it. Where will I go if I leave it? What will become of me? I have to stay here and go through with 'it' again today, participate again today." These men and women are racked and tormented by their temptations.

Racked and tormented. Wait a minute, those words are pretty familiar. There's a precedent for what to do when you're racked and tormented with something.

And never, until I did cry out unto the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, did I receive a remission of my sins. But behold, I did cry unto him and I did find peace to my soul. (Alma 38:8)

There's the clue to obtaining remission from the torment of our temptations. Like Alma, we need to face our temptations and sins and call out to the Lord for mercy. Here's another clue:

Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls. (Alma 37:33–34)

What good recovery works do you still need to do? What good works have you become weary of doing? Or haven't even started yet? Steps Four and Ten, maybe?

Coming unto Christ, coming unto the truth—plain and sharp though it may be to do so—is one of the necessary steps required for remission from sin and temptation. Avoiding Steps 4 and 10 is often what is preventing us from finding His

Resolving to Take Steps 4, 5 and 10

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peace and His conscious companionship. More reading, more studying, more meetings are not enough. Hanging out on the forum pages, reading and writing to each other is not enough. All those things are good as far as they go but they are not a substitute for working the Steps—all the Steps, including 4 and 10.

Coming unto Christ is the spirit and truth found in both inventory steps. You can start using the 10th Step right now, today, in the moment of your temptation. In the moment that you are reaching for whatever it is that tempts you, that is *the* moment to cry out in your heart, “O Jesus, Thou Son of God (acknowledging Him as the Messiah, the Savior—*your* Savior), *have mercy on me!*”

And He will.

An invisible hand felt only in a spiritual realm within you will reach down and pull you up. Imagine yourself on a hike in the mountains. You stray from the marked trail and find yourself on a slippery slope. Imagine the hand of God picking you up and placing you back on the trail.

While we are relieved to be off the slippery slope, we sometimes find ourselves angry and frustrated also. “Why didn’t the Lord pick me up and place me at the end of the trail, at the mountain top? Why does He put me back on the trail, where I may falter and fail again?”

Sorry, but there’s no ‘ta-da’

In the moment of temptation, that is the moment to cry out in your heart, “O Jesus, Thou Son of God, have mercy on me!”

And He will.

in this program, no grand moment of triumph allowing us to live ‘happily ever after.’ God will not deprive us of the adventure and the growth, and at least some of the pain of continuing on our journey

So, since we’re on the trail for life, so to speak, we might as well hoist our packs and tackle Step 4. Here’s how simple it is: Right now, repeat with me, “I am powerless without God (Step 1), but in and through Him I have all the power I need to complete this journey (Step 2), and I am ready to turn my whole life (past, present and future) over to Him (Step 3) by taking these first three steps over and over again—as often as needed—to get me up and over Step Four.”

We are even as we were—mortal, human, frail, foolish, powerless. But God has all power to make the most scarlet sins, whether committed by or against us, white and pure as snow. Believe that.

Now pick up a pen and paper and write your inventory. Whether you are doing Step 4 or Step 10, divide your life or the

recent past, into smaller increments. List both the wounds you have sustained and the wounds you have inflicted. As you ponder what to put on your list, repeat with me, “Here is the life I have lived up to this point—the good, the bad and the ugly—all of it. Lord, I present it to thee so I can finally forgive (myself and others) and go on.” Write it out until the whole sad, foolish, pitiful, embarrassing, heart-breaking mortal drama is laid out. No more hiding burdens, trying to pretend you’re “just fine.”

When you are done, do not hesitate to go forward and take Step Five. In this Step, you do what the pioneers had to do—unload and leave behind the “stuff” of the past, so that you can continue on your journey up the trail toward the mountain top, toward the Promised Land. We who have gone this way before you promise you the journey is worth it. Don’t allow fear to stop you. Fear is an illusion, cast up by the Father of lies, and based upon the lie that you’re a victim of your addiction or of the Liar that feeds off your pain.; the lie that Jesus Christ has any other desire but to relieve you of every burden you’re finally willing to admit and lay down.

What if we all chose 2006 as the year to do Steps 4 and 5?

—Colleen H. □

A Beautiful Mind—The Insanity of Addiction

Last week I rented the movie *A Beautiful Mind*. I had seen the movie several years ago, but this time, watching through the eyes of a recovering addict, I saw some amazing parallels between the schizophrenia of the main character of the movie and my own insanity of addiction. John Nash, whose life the movie examines, was a brilliant mathematician who begins to lose his mind. He sees people who don't really exist. These demons eventually entice him to do things he doesn't want to do, causing great harm to himself, his family and his career. [Sound familiar, anyone?]

John eventually recovers to the point that he goes to Princeton University to see if they will give him his teaching position back. The dean, knowing of his illness, is concerned. He asks, "John, what about the...you know...are they gone?"

John answers, "No, Martin, they're not gone and maybe they never will be. But I've learned to ignore them and they pretty much leave me alone now. That's what it's like with all our dreams and our nightmares. We've got to keep feeding them for them to stay alive."

Martin presses, "But they'll haunt you." John replies, "They're my past, Martin. Everyone's haunted by their past."

I was struck by the similarities to my addiction. I had

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allowed it, for years, to slowly but surely erode my agency until I found myself unable to make choices. I was truly insane in many respects. I found myself doing things I didn't want to do, and those things hurt myself, my wife, my family, and my career. I felt I couldn't help myself—and I was right. It has only been through my sweet Savior's perfect love that I have been able to find healing and recovery.

I began down this road of recovery 14 months ago, and although I have less than 5 months of sobriety I can see that since I have stopped feeding my "demons" they have begun to die. They may never disappear completely, but they are withering away from starvation. They are weakened, their power over me diminished dramatically. They will always be part of my past, but I pray that through the grace of God they will never again be part of my future.

At the end of the movie, John Nash is reinstated as a

professor at Princeton and eventually receives the Nobel prize. In his acceptance speech, he relates how he has spent his life searching for answers and logic through numbers and equations. Then, looking directly at his wife, he says that in the end he found that "it is only in the mysterious equations of love that any logical reasons can be found."

I, too, am grateful to my wife for loving me in the face of all of the pain I caused her over the years. It was her love that helped me to believe that I was loveable, that maybe God could love me, too, even in my unworthiness. I am so grateful for the merciful love of my Savior who gathered me into His loving arms the instant I made a feeble attempt to invite Him into my heart. Over time He has changed my heart, and for that I will praise Him forever. He still has much work to do, of course. I am only in the beginning stages of this great remodeling job the Savior has begun. But oh, how I rejoice in His patience, in His power, and in His love.

God bless us all.

—John F. ☐

*"God, give me
grace equal
to my day."*

—Pres. Wilford Woodruff

Hope in Christ: Repentance and Renewal

The Bible dictionary defines repentance as “a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world. Since we are born into conditions of mortality, repentance comes to mean a turning of the heart and will to God...” For me, repentance is not possible without hope in Christ. It is through Him that I gain the desire to be like Him. This is the fresh view about God that I have needed in my life.

James E. Faust said:

Some time ago in South America, a seasoned group of outstanding missionaries was asked, “What is the greatest need in the world?” One wisely responded, “Is not the greatest need in all of the world for every person to have a personal, ongoing, daily, continuing relationship with Deity?” Having such a relationship can unchain the divinity within us, and nothing can make a greater difference in our lives as we come to know and understand our divine relationship with God and His Beloved Son, our Master. As Jesus said in the great Intercessory Prayer, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). We should earnestly seek not just to know about the Master, but to strive, as He invited, to be one with Him, to “be strengthened with

Repentance—“a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world.”

might by his Spirit in the inner man” (Eph. 3:16). We may not feel a closeness with Him because we think of Him as being far away, or our relationship may not be sanctifying because we do not think of Him as a real person.

How can we receive the personal blessing of the Master’s divine and exalting influence in our own lives? Since our own feelings are sacred to us and cannot be disputed by others, let us begin with those quiet assurances which occasionally can come to all of us and which we know are true. We cannot always prove these verities to others, yet they come as a form of knowledge. Is this part of the divine that ferments within us, reaching to its source? Is it not like a personal witness of truth flowing through the thin curtain that separates this world from another? Is there not a yearning to understand in your mind what is in your heart, a feeling that you cannot give utterance to because it is so unspeakably personal? In answer, the Master said that quiet reality can “speak peace to your mind concerning the matter.

(James E. Faust, “That We Might Know Thee,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1999, 2)

The scriptures are one of the main gifts in my life that help me seek a personal, ongoing relationship with Deity and thereby obtain hope in Christ. It hasn’t always been that way for me. At one time I saw myself as a failure as I read the scriptures. The Lord gradually led me to the understanding that this was a lie. I learned how easy it is to reverse the order of scriptures or miss the promises within. (See “Benjamin’s Promises” from *He Did Deliver me from Bondage*.)

I began to read the scriptures more carefully and pay attention to these things. Familiar scriptures took on a new meaning. For example, I used to look at the words of King Benjamin as something I could never accomplish. Rereading them in this new light taught me differently.

Benjamin teaches us to love God, to pray, to repent and to humble ourselves before Him. Then, after tasting of God’s love, we should always retain a remembrance of His goodness and longsuffering towards us.

If ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the

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knowledge of the glory of him that created you.

(Mosiah 4:12)

Benjamin continues with more promises:

Ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to his due. And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God and fight and quarrel one with another...but ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another. And also ye yourselves will succor all those that stand in need of your succor. (Mosiah 4:13-16)

These promises, that I previously thought were commands, are beautiful. This brings me much hope in Christ. I've noticed these promises at work in my own life. When I choose to allow fear into my heart, I often do or say things that I regret. When I choose to retain in remembrance my Father's goodness and longsuffering towards me, the desire to hurt or injure others is removed in that moment. And in that moment, I feel able to teach my children righteousness and to keep His commandments. I'm not alone in my efforts. It is a gift. It is hope.

I found these same types of promises in other scriptures.

Moroni tells us to pray with all the energy of heart to be filled with charity, the pure love of Christ. The promises follow:

That ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as

It was hard to believe that simply thinking about Christ could make a huge difference in my life. My perfectionism told me I needed to act my way into heaven. The scriptures teach differently.

he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. (Moroni 7:48)

Moroni later admonishes us:

Come unto Christ and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind, and strength. (Moroni 10:32)

Again the promises follow:

Then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot. (Moroni 10:32-33)

Another gift I have received

has come through my willingness and my efforts to keep Christ in my thoughts at all times. I cannot do this on my own, but I have found that my *willingness* is rewarded. I am assisted in my efforts, and I am given hope. The more that

Christ is in my every thought the more my heart is changed toward Him.

Ezra Taft Benson said:

We are accountable for our thoughts and what we think about. Our thoughts should be on the Lord. We should think on Christ. (Ezra Taft Benson, "Think on Christ," *Ensign*, Mar. 1989, 2)

At first, it was hard to believe that simply thinking about Christ could make a huge difference in my life. My perfectionism told me I needed to act my way into heaven. The scriptures teach differently. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7) Christ teaches, "Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not." (D&C 6:36) And, in the Sacrament prayer, we witness to "God, the Eternal Father that [we] do always remember [Christ], that [we] may have His Spirit to be with [us]." (Mor. 5:2)

When Alma was racked with torment and harrowed up by

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the memory of his many sins, he remembered being taught of Jesus Christ, who would come to atone for the sins of the world. He said:

Now, as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness...And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more...And oh, what joy...yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain! (Alma 36:18-20).

Later Alma taught:

cry unto God for all thy support; yea let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and withersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever. (Alma 37:36).

M. Russell Ballard said:

My message to you today, my brothers and sisters, is simply this: the Lord is in control. He knows the end from the beginning. He has given us adequate instruction that, if followed, will see us safely through any crisis....Quite simply, our one hope for spiritual safety during these turbulent times is to turn our minds and our hearts to Jesus Christ. The prophet Mormon taught: "Ye shall have hope

through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise. "Wherefore, if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope." (Moro. 7:41-42) (M. Russell Ballard, "The Joy of Hope Fulfilled," *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 31)

cheer in this worship of my King... (Heartbeats, Dec. 2005)

I know my Savior lives. Like Nephi stated, "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 know that Jesus is mine personally. I know He took a moment only for me in the Garden of Gethsemane. He not only atoned for my sins and

There is always hope for me in Christ when I choose to look to Him in my thoughts and to allow Him to cradle me in His arms.

Colleen H. put some of my feelings beautifully this past Christmas:

The miracle of [repentance and renewal is] discovering that He loves me so much, He is willing to come into my stable—my dirty place where all the animal-like, mortal weaknesses and sins are—and be born into my life, right here, right now, as soon as I open my eyes and ears and heart to Him....Christmas is all about Jesus humbly coming to me in my lowly stable, being born into my heart (my "manger," or the seat of my spiritual nourishment), blazing as a "new star" to guide me through my life, singing in a glorious song of angel's voices walking with me and bringing me good

inadequacies, but He felt all of my joys and all of my sorrows. There is no one who knows me as He does and He loves me as I am. There is always hope for me in Christ when I choose to look to Him in my thoughts and to allow Him to cradle me in His arms. Without Him I am nothing.

Michael McLean wrote these words that are dear to my heart:

There is hope
for every soul that's lost.
There is a way back home,
no matter where you roam.
Let His love heal you
and lead you there.
There's a place
for every heart in pain
where there's no hurt and
there's no shame.
Let His love reach you and
teach you every hour.

—Penny □

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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

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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- Capturing from the scriptures, Big Book, He Did Deliver Me
- Open Sharing with positive recovery messages
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What’s inside this issue of Heartbeats...

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- **A Beautiful Mind—The Insanity of Addictions.** Seeing similarities between addiction and mental illness.
- **Hope In Christ: Repentance and Renewal.** There is always hope for me in Christ when I choose to look to Him in my thoughts and to allow Him to cradle me in His arms.

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