

## 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,*

## An Abstinent Day Comes in Two Parts

There are two equally essential parts to receiving the gift of an abstinent day.

### Knowledge of His Will for Me

First, I must go to the Lord, asking for His counsel, His direction, His Mind, His will (all synonymous words) concerning my addiction. In other words, He can give me exactly the right set of guidelines, whether general or very specific, for conducting my behavior *today* in regards to my weakness. He can make "weak things become strong" unto me.

I ask, "Lord what would Thou have me do in regards to this subject in my life today?" I ask with as much belief as I can honestly muster, knowing that it doesn't have to be perfect for Him to respond favorably to my request. (Mark 9: 24). I trust that if I ask Him for "bread" (or in this case, inspiration, revelation, guidance, counsel), He's not going to give me a "stone" (Matt. 7:9).

As I ask, I sit waiting for an answer, my pen and my journal in hand. I pay attention to the kind, meek, gentle thoughts or impressions that come to my mind. I trust that these thoughts and impressions are being introduced into my mind by God, through the Light of Christ and/or the Gift of the Holy Spirit. I write these thoughts down. They become *the plan* for conducting myself in relationship to my area of weakness (addiction) today.

I have been surprised, as I've practiced this way of securing or anchoring my plan of abstinence, to find that the Lord does not treat me like a mindless, opinion-less robot. I eventually came to believe and trust His desire to reason together with me and to hear *my* truth, even as He is telling

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me His truth. In other words, the God I now understand does not dictate to me like a master commanding a slave or servant, or even as a boss instructing an employee. He counsels me as a tender Parent would counsel a beloved child, as one mutually beloved friend would counsel with another. He is open to feedback and even to negotiation. He cares about my thoughts and feelings and He is willing to reason together with me (Isaiah 1:18). He wants the plan to literally be *our* plan, *His and mine*, developed as we communicate one with another.

That being done, I now have a plan—a prayerful plan. A plan that I received from God. This plan may sound a lot like some of the best theories of science or learning of men that I've received through reading or counseling with "experts," but that makes no difference, because in receiving these ideas from God in answer to my prayer, they become *His* word to *me*, personally. These ideas are now *confirmed* to me, *likened* to me, *fitted* to me—and *I can trust them*. I can stop second-guessing them and compulsively looking for the "better" plan.

But asking for knowledge of His will for me and forming a plan is only the first half of having a good day. Having a plan—even one that is personalized for me by the counsel of the Lord—is not all I need. It may be the *ideal* plan, but I am still missing the "power to carry it out." (Step 11.)

**The difficulty of the challenge is not the determining factor in whether I will succumb to temptation. Choosing to turn to Christ, to cry out in my mind and heart for His grace—that is the determining factor.**

### The Power to Carry Through in the Face of Temptation

As I now sit with my God-given plan in writing before me, I am not done with my need for God. In fact, my need for God has just been established. Without His power (grace), there is no way I can carry out the plan He's given me.

I can't just say the equivalent of, "Thanks for the help, Dad. I'll take it from here." After all, Step One doesn't say I'm clueless to know what to do. It says I am *powerless*.

Now, with my plan in hand, I must get up and go out into my world and follow that plan, put it into action. There is no way I can do that unless I'm willing to look to God (continually) to live. (Alma 37:47)

Like a naive child, I thought having a plan—being humble enough to come to God and ask for knowledge of His will—was enough to cast all temptation

out of my life. This is not true. Having a plan, even being committed to the plan with all my heart, does not exempt me from the temptations of the Liar who is abroad in the earth.

So, after years of believing in personal revelation so explicit and immediate that I could ask the Lord a question and expect (believe) and receive an immediate answer, after years of writing those answers down and then finding myself at the end of the day having failed to obey them, I've finally realized: *I don't have any more power to obey the plan He gives me than I had knowledge before He gave the plan to me.*

I must have the Lord's Spirit and direct help to both know what to do *and* to carry through with doing it. Nothing in my successful day is done without Him. Nothing.

I must be humble enough to repent as often as necessary in a day—or in an hour, if need be. And I need to repent quickly, to return to Him at the *beginning* of a temptation, not after it has swept me away to act out. Some days, some hours will be harder than others. But the difficulty of the challenge in that hour or that day is not the determining factor in whether I will succumb to temptation. Choosing to turn to Christ, to cry out in my mind and heart for His grace—that is the determining factor. That is what brings me to the end a day, still abstinent.

—Colleen □

# Will Ye Not Watch With Me One Hour?

Colleen H. wrote:

*There's an old saying in the AA program about sponsoring, "If you want what we have, then do what we did." I hear so many cry for lack of "bread or drink," for lack of love, of understanding, of fellowship, of affection and esteem from others—from a spouse, parents, etc. And yet they are too busy to spend one hour a day with the Lord.*

*Will ye not watch with me one hour? (Matt. 26:40)*

**T**hank you, Colleen! I am certainly guilty of crying to the Lord for lack of all of those things you mentioned. And yet, how willing am I to spend that hour with the Lord.

I think if there is any one thing that has been most instrumental in bringing me closer to my Savior (and thus to recovery), it has been this process of capturing that I learned through *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage* and *Clean Hands, Pure Heart*.

I no longer question that our church leaders receive revelation, for I have begun to experience it in my own life. Not because I am more worthy. Not because I am more learned. But simply because I am spending time with Him. I have come to know and trust my Savior through counseling with Him, and have become willing to allow Him to touch my heart, to change my heart.

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Many times I have been brought to tears as I have re-read how the Lord has counseled me the night before or a few days before. Sometimes it touches me more profoundly when I review it later than it did when I originally experienced it. These "counseling sessions" with Jesus have been the most spiritual experiences I have ever had in my life. I am amazed how merciful and kind and forgiving the Lord is to me. He knows my needs and desires even better than I do. And He is so anxious for me to experience the peace and joy that only He can give.

And yet, even with all of these wonderful experiences it is still hard. I am so weak. I am pulled in so many directions (even with good things) that I still struggle to spend an hour each day with the Lord.

A couple of weeks ago the Lord counseled me to spend my lunch hours with Him. I decided I would start bringing my lunch to work giving me more time to counsel with Jesus. I close my office door and capture from the scriptures.

What a wonderful experience it has been. I spent the first week capturing the first 17 verses of Alma:32. I can't believe how my heart has been touched, my mind enlightened, and my spirit lifted. And all this from just 17 verses of a chapter in Alma that I thought I knew forwards and backwards. I haven't even started on the famous part yet!

This week, however, I had lunch meetings with clients. I have not been able to use my lunch time for capturing. Today I got back to my new routine and it was like a glorious reunion with an old friend!

Although I am far from perfect in this, I am progressing. I am on the path, headed in the right direction. And I know my Jesus will continue to support me in my efforts to come to Him. I know life will still be hard—but not as hard as trying to do it on my own; not as hard as living the never-ending cycle of my addiction.

The Lord's yoke truly is easy, brothers and sisters, and His burden is light. I praise His name and thank Him for his mercy and his love.

—John F. ☐

# What the AA Third Step Prayer Taught Me

We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our Maker, as we understood Him: God, I *offer myself* to Thee—to *build* with me and do with me *as Thou wilt*. Relieve me of the *bondage of self*, that I may better *do Thy will*. Take away my [*addictions*], that *victory* over them may *bear witness* to those I would *help* of *Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life*. May I *do Thy will always*. We *thought well* before taking this step making sure we were *ready*; that we could *at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him*. (AA Big Book, p. 63.)

**Offer myself:** It must be a free and willing offer on my part. Coercion is not His way. He's patient, always waiting for me to come to Him—when *I'm* ready, not when He's ready. It is an act of total agency on my part.

**Build, do, as Thou wilt:** He has far better insight into how to make of me what I can be, what I already am in His perspective. He has no veil over His perception. He knows perfectly who I really am *already*. He's just waiting to teach me, lovingly, who that is and help me become that person.

**Relieve [me of] bondage [of] self:** He will take away the misperceptions I have of myself and who I *think* I am. He will take away the bondage of thinking I have to do it all on my own, that I'm alone without a mooring in

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this life, that I have to figure things out by myself. He will relieve me of all that and in its place He will step into my life in a such a powerful way I will never be the same again. He will be at the head—totally and completely, the old self gone.

**Do Thy will always:** I will do His will always because we will now be one in purpose. No guesswork, no feelings of lack of worth, of not mattering. We will be as one, totally committed to each other.

**Take away addictions:** Addiction will be gone because I'll be grounded in Him, swallowed up in His desires for me. No argument anymore. No desire to destroy myself because I'll understand who I am. I will see myself through His eyes. It is a gift He will give me.

**Victory, bear witness [to] those [I have been placed in this life to] help, Thy Power, Thy Love, Thy Way of life:** I will now be in a position to bear witness to others of His Power, His Love and His way of life because I will be living it. I will be a humble example of what all of us can become when we put Him first in our lives.

**Do Thy will always:** I will automatically be doing His will.

Through this born-again process, He has become my only God and salvation. I will go to Him for everything, be swallowed up in His will.

**Thought well, ready, at last abandon [myself] utterly to Him:** This is a big step. It requires a lot of sacrifice (mostly of self-will). It has taken a long time for me to get here (many, many years). Is there any other way? Why would I want another way? His burden is light and easy. Let me fall into His arms now—never to return to the old me again.

—Teri J. □

*“and after I had prayed  
the winds did cease,  
and the storm did cease,  
and there was a  
great calm.”  
(1 Nephi 18:21)*

*No matter what storm  
is raging in my heart,  
after I pray there  
comes “a great calm.”*

*Always.*

*Every single time.*

*Without fail.*

# He Who Created Worlds Cares About Me

I was thinking the other day about the following verses.

*That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God. (D&C 76: 24)*

*Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins—from whose loins ye are, namely, my servant Joseph—which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them. (D&C 132: 30)*

*And he beheld also the inhabitants thereof, and there was not a soul which he beheld not; and he discerned them by the Spirit of God; and their numbers were great, even numberless as the sand upon the sea shore. (Moses 1: 28)*

I am sure there are a few more I have not listed, but I trust the point is made: We worship a Being who is the Creator of “worlds without end.” Worlds!—Without end!

The difficult problems we face here in mortality, of the intellect (physics, chemistry, engineering, etc.) and of the

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heart (abortion, morality, cultural differences, hunger, world war)—these problems, and their solutions, reside in the person and presence of Jesus Christ, the *Creator* of worlds without end!

But as amazing as this is, the scope of it, what *really* is amazing about the Lord—and the knowledge that has descended upon my soul the past few years of my life—is not so much the *magnitude* of creation, but the Lord’s *intimate* and *personal* caring for me, as illustrated in the following verses:

*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.*

*But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

*Fear ye not therefore, ye are of*

*more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)*

Can you just feel the love and tenderness in His words as you read them?

The Lord wants us to know that, even with the reality that He is the creator of the universe, He is not a distant god. He loves us. He even misses us! Because of the veil, we do not remember Him. We do not remember what it was like to look into his face, to sit at His feet as He taught us, to feel His tender embrace. To *know* as we are *known*. (See 1 Corinthians 13:12.)

As Phil points out in *Clean Hands, Pure Heart*, our relationship with Christ is not a new relationship. It only seems new, awkward, distant, difficult, etc. because of the veil, because Satan is constantly lying to us, trying to make us think Christ is an ogre of some sort. And we sometimes believe this because we are estranged from Him due to the Fall.

I could go on and on and on. My heart is so full today. As Nephi did, I glory in *my* Jesus, *our* Jesus, and in His goodness unto us! (See 2 Nephi 33:6.)

—Tom K. □

# Facing My Sins Honestly Means Bringing Them to Christ

*And now, my son, I would to God that ye had not been guilty of so great a crime. I would not dwell upon your crimes, to harrow up your soul, if it were not for your good.*

*But behold, ye cannot hide your crimes from God; and except ye repent they will stand as a testimony against you at the last day.*  
(Alma 39:7-8 )

In my experience, our sins only stand up against us if we hang onto them. For me, my sins are the way to come to God! It is Satan who told Adam and Eve to hide in the garden. It is Satan who seeks to tell me that my sins keep me from God.

God expects me to sin. When I bring my sins to the Lord, an amazing thing happens—I feel His love! I find Him in the truth of who I am and what I have been.

As I face my sins honestly, bringing them into the light of day before God rather than seeking to hide them, they become a vehicle for me to repent—to turn to God. The *only* sins that will stand as a testimony against us at the last day are those sins that we haven't given to the Lord. They will testify that we did not believe Christ enough to allow Him to redeem us from them.

—Peggy B. □

## The Allegory of the Ugly Tree

As I was walking up to the temple this morning, I noticed all the pretty trees starting to bud. Since spring is not fully here, they are all still quite bare. You can clearly see the structure and the shape of each tree. There were beautiful rows of lovely, tall, straight trees all the way up the walk, their arms lifted to the sky as if praising their Creator.

Then all of a sudden, without any warning at all, right at the head of the gate, framing the beautiful temple behind them, were these two crooked, gnarly, deformed, ugly trees! Their branches grew off to one side, twisted and lopsided, with hugely swollen knots and gnarls at every joint. What a shock to the eyes!

My first thought was: Why did they put these ugly trees right here? They are an eyesore. They don't belong. They mar the beauty of the rest of the temple grounds.

My second thought was: I'm so glad there's a place at the temple for ugly, deformed trees—a place in the gospel for the often spiritually ugly and deformed people, like me. The ones who sometimes worship in a lopsided way, still learning how to lift their branches straight.

My third thought was: I bet when they leaf out, these are the most beautiful trees on the premises.

—Karlene B. □

*Dates set for  
2006 Heart t'  
Heart Conference*

*July 14 & 15  
UVSC  
Orem, UT*

*More details  
to come.*

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*\*If a donation is not accompanied by a group number, it is listed as a Private Donation.*

## HEART T' HEART

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# Online Meetings

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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

**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).**  
 General Focus. Book Study:  
 HDDM. Open Sharing. Colleen  
 (435)245-4744; philh22@comcast.net

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- 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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- **Facing My Sins Honestly Means Bringing Them to Christ.** The only sins that will stand as a testimony against us at the last day are those sins that we haven't given to the Lord.
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2006 Conference Dates:  
July 14 & 15, 2006

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