

Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of
Heart t' Heart

August - September 2006

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 16 — Issue 8

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 the decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. (*2 Ne. 10:24; Omni 1:36; 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, 24, 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. (*Mosiah 27:36-37; Alma 5:7; Moroni 7:3*)

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Dearest Friends,

One of the most important concepts in sustaining a lasting recovery, is to realize that it won't be a *perfect* recovery—that you'll experience times when staying on course will feel very, *very* hard. You may even falter and slip again. Even if you do slip in acting out, don't let Satan convince you of the lie that a slip is a complete and permanent failure. He wants so much to get us to all believe that about ourselves. He wants us to believe that if we do not "get it" (abstinence) immediately and get it permanently and perfect, then we are in his power. That's a lie. He's a Liar. He has been from the beginning. And perfectionism is one of his greatest lies. Remember how he wanted to be God (the Son of God, the One on the throne, the One in charge). His whole plan was based on forcing everything and everyone to be 100% perfect. No choice; no wandering path of experience that gives us the chance to learn for ourselves. Not in his plan. Oh no.

It was Jesus (Jehovah, then) who was willing to let us have our chance to learn by our own experience what works and what doesn't work—and then to pay the price for us, to buy us the blessing of being able to experiment (Remember Edison and the 1,000 ways he tried and failed to make the light bulb work before he got it?) and learn for ourselves that wickedness (trying to do what Father has told us doesn't work) will never bring happiness—at least not the lasting kind.

And the same thing is true of the 15 years this newsletter has been in existence. We've had a few times when we've missed issues. I'd guess that in 180 copies, we've maybe missed 10. So, we hope you'll forgive the last couple of months, as we've had to combine June and July, and now August and September. We've had some changes in our production staff, as well as some personal challenges that have slowed down our delivery. We are so grateful for your patience through these kind of moments.

We remain ever your very grateful and loving fellows in this great work of carrying the message of recovery from addiction (and mortality in general) through our Savior's perfect love and unfailing rescue.

— Colleen H. ☐

Bill's Original Version of His Mighty Change

(Taken from pp. 120 – 121 in *Pass It On: The Story of Bill Wilson and How the A.A. Message Reached the World.*)**

Now, he and Lois were waiting for the end. Now, there was nothing ahead but death or madness. This was the finish, the jumping-off place. “The terrifying darkness had become complete,” Bill said. “In agony of spirit, I again thought of the cancer of alcoholism which had now consumed me in mind and spirit, and soon the body.” The abyss gaped before him.

In his helplessness and desperation, Bill cried out, “I’ll do anything, anything at all!” He had reached a point of total, utter deflation – a state of complete, absolute surrender. With neither faith nor hope, he cried, “If there be a God, let Him show Himself!”

What happened next was electric. “Suddenly, my room blazed with an indescribably white light. I was seized with an ecstasy beyond description. Every joy I had known was pale by comparison. The light, the ecstasy – I was conscious of nothing else for a time.

Then came the blazing thought, ‘You are a free man.’

“Then, seen in the mind’s eye, there was a mountain. I stood upon its summit, where a great wind blew. A wind, not of air, but of spirit. In great, clean strength, it blew right through me. Then came the blazing thought, ‘You are a free man.’ I know not at all how long I remained in this state, but finally the light and the ecstasy subsided. I again saw the wall of my room. As I became more quiet, a great peace stole over me, and this was accompanied by a sensation difficult to describe. I become acutely conscious of a Presence which seemed like a veritable sea of living spirit. I lay on the shores of a new world. ‘This,’ I thought, ‘must be the great reality. The God of the preachers.’

“Savoring my new world, I remained in this state for a long time. I seemed to be possessed by the absolute, and the curious conviction deepened that no matter how wrong

things seemed to be, there could be no question of the ultimate rightness of God’s universe. For the first time, I felt that I really belonged. I knew that I was loved and could love in return. I thanked my God, who had given me a glimpse of His absolute self. Even though a pilgrim upon an uncertain highway, I need to be concerned no more, for I had glimpsed the great beyond.”

Bill had just had his 39th birthday, and he still had half his life ahead of him. He always said that after that experience, he never again doubted the existence of God. He never took another drink.

Footnote: **Moroni 7:13** tells us that anything that teaches a man to do good and love God is given of God. This statement makes Bill’s experience a moment of “gold standard” quality truth for LDS people to claim for their own (as Brigham Young counseled us to do).

***This book is available from AA World Services.*



We All Need Reminders

Going to Overeaters Anonymous to lose weight opened to me a world of spirituality. Then coming to HtH seeking spirituality that is Book of Mormon based opened a new relationship with my Savior. Even with these huge blessings, my focus gets skewed, or I just get overwhelmed by life and start grasping for the straws of those past lies of addictive living. I want to whine, “Why can’t I have it now, Lord, why can’t I have the abstinence, the freedom, the total understanding, all of it NOW?” Getting closer to the Lord has helped me to trust Him and His timetable more, but I still need frequent reminders of the basic goal: to have a saving relationship with Christ, to know Him and Heavenly Father. I find those reminders in meetings, here on the forum, in communications with my sponsors, and in my daily conscious contact with my Savior.

– K.T. □

An Analogy Of Powerlessness

I was pondering this morning what powerlessness really means in my life. Here are some of my thoughts:

On a certain river, there is a waterfall which will destroy anything that goes over it. The banks of the river at the approach to the waterfall are sheer cliffs, jutting straight out of the ground, with nowhere to moor, and the current is swift and deadly. Any boat or craft caught within a mile or so of the falls can feel the definite pull, and if the craft ventures too close to the falls, it becomes caught in a current that is simply too strong for it. The steersman can turn straight against the current, push the motor to full power and still be swept backward, inch by inch, then foot by foot. He cannot go to the sides to moor because of the cliffs.

It is foolish to play with the current, but some do. Once caught, a vessel is powerless to return to safety on its own accord, but some deny their powerlessness. Because they can turn against the

current and postpone the deadly drop, or because they can move from side to side (or even turn and move with the current), they have the illusion of power. But they are powerless in one most critical way: to overcome and escape the insistent pull which dooms them.

And so it is with sin. The nature of my fallen state is to be pulled by the deadly current of sin. But, praise his name, God has provided a way to escape, a spiritual lifeline, and that lifeline is Jesus. Because of Jesus and the nature of sin, what I need to do is not fight the current, but find the lifeline of Christ and then hold on to Him as tight as I can.

As I draw near to Jesus, I cling to his safety line and find myself being pulled against the current, away from the destruction that would otherwise await me.

Sheldon □

Any Good Works I Do

Moroni 7:13 -- But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.

Any good works I do must be “inspired of God.” I could look at this in two ways: 1) that if I do good works and seek to love and serve God, then my intent proves I am inspired of God, or 2) that I need the inspiration first, and then what I do will surely be good, and invites me to love and serve God through direct interaction with Him. I am only beginning to understand that the second way is the way, in my opinion, God intends us to work.

For so many years, I honestly thought if I worked hard enough, striving for perfection, I could somehow prove my love to God. I missed receiving

the sure knowledge that what I did was of God, for I was trying to earn His favor rather than do His will.

Why is this evil? Because it separates me from Christ. It makes me my own savior, rather than bringing me to Christ to save me, to send forth His power into my life through His love for me, through the gift of Him in my life. It is settling for much, much less than Christ wants me to receive. He wants me to follow Him, and if I am not seeking inspiration before I work, before any service I give, then I cannot follow Him. I am serving Satan in my pride that I am doing this “good” thing, myself. I am then denying Christ has anything to do with *my* good works and cannot be His child (receiving the change of heart, or spiritually born of Him into life *with* Him). (Moroni 7:11-19; Mosiah 5:7, Alma 5:14)

~ Peggy B. □

The Trial Of Our Patience As We Wait Upon The Lord For Healing

Yesterday our Gospel Doctrine teacher shared this quote from President Kimball's book, "Faith Precedes the Miracle" (p. 97). I thought immediately about how it relates to our need for patience in our recovery, and why the Lord does not grant us instant relief from our addictions.

"If we looked at mortality as the whole of existence, then pain, sorrow, failure, and short life would be calamity. But if we look upon life as an eternal thing stretching far into the premortal past and on into the eternal post-death future, then all happenings may be put in proper perspective.

"Is there not wisdom in his giving us trials that we might rise above them, responsibilities that we might achieve, work to harden our muscles, sorrows to try our souls? Are we not exposed to temptations to test our strength, sickness that we might learn patience, death that we might be immortalized and glorified?

"If all the sick for whom we pray were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would be annulled and the basic principle of the gospel, free agency, would be ended. No man would have to live by faith.

"If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil—all would do good but not because of the rightness of doing good. There would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no free agency, only satanic controls."

What amazing things the Lord knows in His wisdom. He truly does know better than we do what is for our best good.

I really had to think about the phrase, "If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil." I saw it was true that if all prayers for relief were answered immediately, we would pray because of the immediate blessings, not because we love the Lord or were exercising faith, and thus our opportunity to develop faith and love of God would be taken from us. We

need the trial of our patience or there could be no chance for us to exercise faith and wait for the healing.

What amazing things the Lord knows in His wisdom. He truly does know better than we do what is for our best good.

-- Phil ☐

Obedience from a Distance or a Close, HtH Relationship?

I once heard the question asked, "Are you coming to God because you LOVE Him, or because you want to use Him?" That was a rude sounding question and at first I was offended. But then I stood still and gave it some reflection, applying it, pondering on it in my own reality (life.) How often do I go to God SIMPLY because I want to hang out with Him. By contrast, how often do I go running and whining when I need something from Him.

I too have thought in terms of "Okay, Lord, what do you want me to do? I'll just stand over here on the other side of the room (figuratively speaking, of course) and from WAY over there, You can tell me Your will for me and I'll go carry it out."

And the whole time, what God (both my Father and Elder Brother) want is for me to COME TO Them. "Come here, child. Come here, little one. Come here, beloved sister. Let us encircle you in our arms of love. Come closer. It isn't just your obedience We desire first and foremost; it is your love. We want to have a close, intimate, walking-talking, sharing heart to heart relationship with you. We know that out of our closeness to you, will come more righteousness than you could ever imagine on your own."

SUCH A DIFFERENCE---mere obedience (from a distance), or loving communion, up close and personal. I'm the one who decided which my spiritual life with God would be like. They love me beyond reason and always have and always will. They know what to do about the messed up, dirty, covered with mud (mortality) person I've become in my fall. I am so grateful to *know* this about them.

-- Colleen H. ☐

Using the 12 Steps to Deal with Multiple Problems --

Taken from a thread on the Forum pages

One of the greatest blessings in this fellowship is the online forum pages. For those who don't get there often, we would like to share the following "thread" of thoughts:

I have a silly question to ask about this program. I have a lot of issues I need to overcome... codependency, low self-esteem, excessive yelling at my kids, etc. Do I need to go through the 12 steps for each thing separately, or is the 12 steps something that will help me with all these problems at once? -T.L.

Reply from J.F.: The Blessings Are in the Journey

The 12-Step journey (as I seek recovery from my primary addiction) has certainly helped me to see other character flaws that I need to deal with. And the Lord has blessed me with some progress with those issues as He has blessed me with some recovery in my primary addiction.

For me it is a bit mixed up. I focus on recovery from my primary addiction, but I find that I need recovery in other areas to have recovery in my primary addiction. So there is a little bit of back and forth, but my focus remains on finding recovery from my primary addiction. And of course the focus for all of it is on my relationship with my Savior.

But I'm coming to believe that the 12-step process is a journey, not a destination. I believe (and hope) that I will be working and re-working the 12 Steps for the rest of my life. As the Lord grants me a degree of recovery from one trial He makes me aware of another that needs my attention. This whole process is not as cut and dried as my addictive, perfectionist mind would like it to be. It is certainly not a "one step a week for 12 weeks and you're cured!" type of program.

The blessings are in the journey, not the destination. The peace comes in measured doses as I am ready to allow my Savior into my heart to change my desires and align my will with His.

Reply from T.K.:

I think the 12 steps embody the Savior's invitation for us to "come unto Him and find rest to our souls." The 12

steps lead us to the Yoke of Christ....then help us get situated....and then they help us to begin working with our "yokemate" which is Christ. The 12 steps are designed to lead us to the yoke and take that yoke upon us. Never is there any suggestion that the yoke is removed while we are alive.

The 12 steps are an invitation to *alifestyle* of inventory and repentance, inventory and repentance, inventory and repentance...from moment to moment, until the day we die. What the 12 steps do not represent is the idea of being *done* with our recovery. To look at the 12 steps in such a light is to assume that at some point we will stop needing Christ!!

The 12 steps are about daily living in the arms of our Savior, cleaving to Him (Jacob 6:5).

The 12 steps DO work, but they do not work without some effort on our part. And when I say effort....what I really mean is.....surrender. Surrendering the old man of sin to the Lord and letting Him take over. Admitting our powerlessness. Pleading unto Him for rescue. Becoming willing to do His will. Fully repenting of our sins. Believing in and accepting His forgiveness. Continuing in our surrender. Sharing the message with others. And when we start to "feel pretty good about things" and to finally experience *real* freedom from our addictions.....those feelings are an invitation to keep working the 12 steps in other areas of our lives!! Now that we have "tasted" of the fruit...and found it to be sweet and to be all that it promises.....we move on to the next thing...and the next....and the next. It never ends

I'm coming to realize that living these 12 principles is a life sentence. But don't let that discourage you. I have some really good news. This never being done is not a miserable experience of bondage like our addiction was. It's a marvelous awakening to our partner who is Jesus Christ. I can think of no one who is more loving, patient, kind and forgiving. To realize that our recovery is "never over" is the same thing as being 8 years old and being told that every day will be a new Christmas morning for the rest of your life. What greater gift could there be!

(Thanks to T.L, J.F., and T.K for their fellowship on the online forums.

With love,
Colleen



God Hath Not Given Me the Spirit of Fear

I am not just an addict. I am a daughter of God who has an addiction. I have lost my free agency in relation to the escape of my choice (compulsive overeating). But because I have come to understand what being a daughter of God means, I have also learned I can be delivered from the addiction within my spirit if I so truly desire it and am willing to do the footwork it requires. What are some of the characteristics of my addiction for which I seek His grace?

1. I am forgetful. Like the alcoholic who walks down the same street, into the same hole, countless times over, I do the same, destructive behaviors over and over which cause my spiritual and physical anguish. I can't seem to remember that I am choosing death, not life. But if I remember just one small, simple step to come unto Him, he will prompt me to remember all other things I need to practice to be relieved from my addiction on a daily basis.

1 Nephi 15:11 -- "Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said? - If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known unto you."

2. I have a heart of fear. Fear of the future, fear of trust, all fears have been the primary emotion I've known in life. Slowly I'm learning there is another way. Through his merciful kindness, I experience slivers of "rest and peace," and I am letting go of my tightly clenched control of life. My prayers lately have been "Help me to become as a child: submissive, obedient, and running to you with all my heart, with all of my concerns.

An excerpt from a book *Desperate for God* by Nancie Carmichael describes me well: "God, I feel

so alone. Sometimes it seems impossible to go on. There are times I cry out to You, but I don't know if You're listening - or even there. Yet something pulls me, draws me. I know You are there, but I am desperate to really know it - to know that You are involved in my life. I come to You, Lord - terrified and scared - in need of the basics, in need of my daily bread, and I come to You because You are my Father. Forgive me for trying to get everything figured out first. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name." Matthew 11:28 says "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God hath not given [me] the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"

I will always remember the awakening I had upon first reading these words in the first edition of HDDMFB: "... put God first in my life, but how do you do that? The answer is so easy and simple that many won't believe it: I put God first in my life by putting Him first in my days - one day at a time." (p. 6) I have dozens and dozens of journal entries detailing the light and life the Savior has given to me because I put this simple practice into action of reading, writing, and praying unto Him (almost) daily. I have hope, I have some recovery, and I hope for much more as He continues to have mercy upon me.

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God hath not given [me] the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" - even so it is as I remember to come unto Him whatever my weaknesses and sins. He has already overcome them all and will lift me up if I but ask, seek, and knock.

-- Kathryn M. ☐



August – September GSB Contributions

ID-10/Idaho Falls \$150
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Editor's Note: Please remember, the opinions shared in Heartbeats are of the person sharing. We hope and pray that you will read, ponder and pray for direct inspiration and counsel from the Lord. Take what you feel confirmed in your own heart concerning the sharing and toss the rest.

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: HDDMFB. Open Sharing.

OL-01 – Tuesday through Thursday, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA). General Focus, Book Study: HDDMFB. Open Sharing.

OL-03 – Saturday, 7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA). General Focus, Book Study: HDDMFB. Open Sharing.

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We encourage reader contributions to
Heartbeats. Ideas for articles:

- 1 In-depth study/analysis of principles found in Steps or Traditions
- 2 Personal experiences with the Steps, Traditions, Tools – how the work in your life
- 3 Capturing from the scriptures, *Big Book* or *He Did Deliver Me From Bondage*
- 4 Open sharing with positive recovery messages
- 5 Program from the Prophets – quotations from modern prophets with a “recovery” message
- 6 Short quotes, thoughts or one-liners

Send articles to:

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