

Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of
Heart t' Heart

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A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 17 – Issue 10

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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My Testimony Continues to Be...

One of the most often voiced concerns about HDDMFB and HtH is the emphasis that is placed specifically on Christ. Many people think that by doing this we are somehow slighting or forgetting the supremacy of our Heavenly Father (which is impossible when you come to Christ--for He always brings you into deference and worship of the Father.)

I would like to attempt, once again, to explain to those needing to understand "the way" out of addiction, why it is absolutely ESSENTIAL to come to Christ first (so that He can then lead us and prepare us to return to the Father and enjoy the Gift of the Holy Ghost).

THERE IS A REASON FOR EMPHASIZING CHRIST BEFORE HEAVENLY FATHER, SPECIFICALLY IN ADDICTION RECOVERY.

When a person is trapped in addiction, it is Christ (through the Light/Spirit of Christ) who is the person's first contact with the Godhead. (Just as in Alma the younger's experience in Alma 36:18).

It is Christ who, of the three members of the Godhead, is called and commissioned of the Father to go into the darkness of sin and separation from God through His Light and Spirit and be the sinner's first contact with God.

He, Jesus Christ, is not called "the Savior" for nothing.

When a person has fallen so far into the darkness of the Liar's influence, that they feel like they are in the "darkest abyss," it is neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost that is their salvation, their hope, the member of the Godhead they need to cry out to. It is Christ. (Consider again Alma 36:18 and Alma 38:8.)

This is the nature of addiction--no matter what action (or actions) it is manifesting in. It represents a degree of bondage to the Liar that

(My Testimony..., continued from p. 1)

ONLY the intervention of “one Jesus Christ, a son of God” can free the person from. This is just as true of addiction to food as it is to addiction to s~x or drugs.

Addiction represents bondage to the Father of Lies. Whether he’s been able to bind you that surely with lies about food or s~x or money or perfection or whatever.

This is why addiction will not be eliminated by prayer to the Father, or by receiving guidance from the Holy Spirit in matters affecting others such as church callings, parenting, etc.

Only after the addict has come to Christ directly and established a totally dependent relationship on Him (made Him the Father of their rebirth– i.e. their recovery experience; see Mosiah 5:7), can He then lead them back into worthiness to associate closely with the Holy Spirit and with the Father.

It is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit that comes to a person when they are in the bondage of addiction. It is Jesus Christ.

He is the one who descended below all things so that HE might succor us. *Run to us*. Come to us in our hour of need, in our lost and fallen state.

It is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit that comes to a person’s rescue when they are in the bondage of addiction. It is Jesus Christ.

The easiness of the way—looking to the Messiah, the Savior. That is the symbol that Moses raised up. The brass serpent was not a symbol for the Father, but for the Son, for the Messiah. Is this just so simple and plain, we can’t see it?

The fact of the church being called The Church of Jesus Christ is not a coincidence or a convenience

or just pretty language. This is HIS church, and the people in it are His, given to Him by the Father. (See D&C 50:41.)

He is the God of the Book of Mormon. (See the title page that is worded thus: JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD.) By the way, those capitals are original.

If you truly internalize the Book of Mormon, you are going to come to Christ as your Savior. That is the purpose of the book. To bring the serious student of it to a vision of just how central and alive and available a relationship with Christ must be in all order to be led past the devil’s snares (Helaman 3:29).

Under the so very subtle influence of the adversary, we have marginalized the Savior in our lives. We use His name. We work in His field (kingdom), but we do not know Him. He is to us like the Father was to the good son in the parable of the prodigal’s return.

Thanks for the chance to share this testimony. I cannot deny it, for I know by the Power of the Holy Ghost and my testimony of the Father Himself, that Christ is "the way" out of addiction---and there is NO OTHER WAY.

In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Colleen H. ☐



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WHAT IF?...!!!

(Here is a great bit of sharing done by our online meeting leader one morning a couple of months ago. We hope you will be as blessed as we were at the meeting that morning for "hearing" it.)

...With this realization comes the freedom to hold up our heads with dignity, to step free of the anger, the blame and the shame. We are not victims. We never were. We are conquering heroes and heroines, given nothing we are not equal to IN CHRIST... (He Did Deliver Me from Bondage, p. 89)

As an addict, because I am different in what I can and can't do compared to others, and because powerlessness without God is my truth and my reality, I have thought of myself as "less than." I've come to realize that this kind of comparing and judging myself is actually a form of the pride that Pres. Benson defined in his amazing talk on pride so many years ago. (*Ensign*, May 1989, p. 4.) It is a reflection that I am judging myself negatively. And what do I get back if I judge myself negatively? More negative judgment that reinforces my negatives. Ugh. Unconsciously I'm choosing something I don't want.

Okay! That's a great truth to know. That is a great starting place, the truth! Why do I judge myself harshly? Why do I compare myself with others and come up feeling short? Why do I view my family as a failure compared to someone else's? Because I have believed the lie that God is comparing me to others. Because I have believed that I have to earn love by having obedient children and high or busy callings, and because I've believed I'm not enough just the way I am. Because I believe I have to be someone different to be worth it or worthy of God's infinite, abundant, free-flowing mercy and grace.

But *what if* I desire to believe (Alma 32:27) something different? There is a lot of power in those two little words, "What IF?" They represent a pivotal point in the process of rebirth. *What if* I can take my false beliefs to the Lord and ask Him to apply the cleansing power of the atonement? *What if* in place of my false beliefs, he will fill me with light filled, loving beliefs, line upon line, precept upon precept? *What if* He could do this as often as I need Him to--even if it's every day, every hour? *What if* He could? Oh, I would want that! Do you feel your desires swelling?

In this process ... I find myself changing from a pity-filled victim, hating myself for my addictions, to a grateful addict.

In this process (facing the truth of my powerlessness without God, the truth of my false beliefs, letting that timid little "*what if*" swell into desire, and letting desire lead me to take the baby steps God gives me), I find myself changing from a pity-filled victim, hating myself for my addictions, to a grateful addict (defined as a fallen-state mortal who is nothing without God). I find myself being changed from a fear-filled Mormon, to a faith-filled Saint whose heart is expanding, being delivered from the bondage of limiting beliefs. I begin to have new eyes, a new view of my life. I find myself feeling grateful for the experiences that have brought me to become a "new creature" with a new perspective, new paradigms about what the gospel of Jesus Christ means to me.

As the reading says, I'm am not a victim, but an agent who co-created my mortal path with loving Parents and a loving Savior who comprehends the desires of my heart and knows the personal plan for my salvation, a plan which my Spirit remembers, but my natural mind forgets. My experiences as an addict have purpose, a teaching purpose that I chose so that I would know how to condescend and succor others, and have the ability to testify and KNOW for myself the condescension of God. So "having come to a knowledge of the goodness of God" (Mosiah 4:6), I can testify because I KNOW! He keeps the

promises He made to me in the premortal counsel when I accepted and co-created my mortal mission. He condescends into hell to rescue me and lift me up as often as I call out in my need. That is my living witness. And, not only does He lift me up, He gives further light and knowledge abundantly, as fast I am able to let go of the old and receive it. I *know* this from *being* with Him, not from *doing* more or better. And I believe this testimony can change the world, one heart at a time.

Loved ones, we addicts back peddle a lot. We self-sabotage because of our inner false beliefs. But as long as we keep coming back, God will deliver us. If you feel deliverance is far off, it is only an illusion. Keep coming back, it works. Thanks for *being* here, and *being* truthful. You lift me up as you share your "strength, hope, and experience..."

Peggy M. □



FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND CHRIST

As I pondered recently the epistles of John in order to prepare for a Gospel Doctrine lesson titled "God is Love," I was amazed at how full John's teachings are of the principles the Lord has been guiding me to in my 12-step recovery work.

Permit me to share a few passages with you, along with my comments on them. (Words in square brackets are my comments, and words in italics are changes to the King James version made in the Joseph Smith translation)

1 John 1

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full [through your fellowship with God and Christ and the saints].

5 [How do we enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son?] This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [Note 1 John 5:17 that says "All unrighteousness is sin", meaning there are no "big sins" and "little sins", just sin.]

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us

What does it mean to have fellowship with the Father and with Jesus Christ?

Father is inviting me to have a daily walk with him – to converse with him every hour, even every minute.

D&C 107: 18, 19

18 The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church—

19 To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.

Enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father and Jesus! What a blessing! How do we receive that blessing? I believe that's what John is talking about when he says "our fellowship is with the Father and with Jesus." And I believe John is telling us how to achieve that fellowship.

Turn to Christ. Ask him to apply his atoning blood. Repent every time you sin. Ask him to take all desires for evil out of your heart. Walk with him. Abide in him. Make him your favorite friend. Spend time with him.

As you do, he will fill you with his love. He will take you in his arms, and heal you from your addictions, your compulsions, your weaknesses, your sins, your spiritual illnesses. Sometimes, he will also heal you from your physical illnesses, but it is SO much more of a blessing for him to heal you from your spiritual illnesses than from your physical ones. If you are healed spiritually, if you are filled with his love, if he becomes your best

friend and your most fervent desire is to be with him, then your physical illnesses really don't matter, because it matters not whether you are in this life or the next. Your fellowship with him and with Father can exist here, or it can exist in the next world, in like measure. It can exist whether your life is easy or your life is hard. For some of us, it is our hardships that bring us to that fellowship with God. For some of us, it is our addictions. Perhaps there are some who find that intimate personal relationship with God without needing hardships or opposition, but I suspect most of us do not fall into that category that do.

As you strive to be close to God and Jesus, take advantage of the blessings of the temple. As you serve "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" in the temple, by doing ordinance work for those beyond the veil who cannot do it for themselves, you can enjoy the communion with them referred to in D&C 107:19. And you can enjoy the communion and presence of God and Jesus.

I testify that as you make your relationship with Christ the central focus of your life, the day will come that he will wrap you in the arms of his love, and you will know that he lives and loves you.

If you have a temple recommend, I urge you to spend as much time as you can with your brothers and sisters beyond the veil, and with Father and Jesus, in the temple. Open your mind and heart to them and they will begin teaching you things you never realized.

Take a notebook and leave it in your locker, and after each session, write down the thoughts and impressions that have come to you during the ceremony. Write down the name of the person you officiated for. Perhaps you will meet them again, in this life or the next.

Ask Heavenly Father questions during the ceremony. Try and understand why things are done the way they are done, what the symbols mean.

Study what the scriptures say about how we communicate through the Spirit, for it is through the spirit that we communicate with God, with Jesus, and

with those who are on the other side of the veil—who I believe are part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn.

If you do **not** have a temple recommend, I urge you to study Mosiah 4, and seek a personal relationship with your savior, and go to your bishop and ask him what you need to do to get a temple recommend, and make it the central focus of your life. As you learn to rely on the Savior each day, I promise you that a change will come in your life, and the day will come that you can enter the temple worthily, and there experience the peace that surpasseth understanding, and deepen your relationship with the Lord and with his children.

I testify that as you make your relationship with Christ the central focus of your life, the day will come that he will wrap you in the arms of his love, and you will *know* that he lives and loves you. You will want nothing more than to continue to feel that love, and to have everyone you know feel that love. Nothing in life will compare to that experience. The things you once thought important will fall away, and your whole focus will be "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" All desires for evil will be taken from your heart, and you will want to do nothing but share his love with others. That day may come much sooner than you expect, or it may not, but it will come, in the Lord's time.

I bear this witness in the name of Jesus Christ, who is my Lord and Savior and Redeemer and my best friend. Amen.

Keith H. □

THE TRYING OF MY FAITH

I want to share something that the Lord has helped me to understand (through "capturing", something I learned at Heart t' Heart.)

I was reading through some old posts in my journal and came across this entry from nearly two years ago. I truly think the Lord directed me to read this entry tonight. I feel like I have been pounded with temptation the last couple of weeks. And although the Lord has blessed me to stay sober, I have felt to complain about the temptation. So he directed me to find and read what he taught me nearly 2 years ago. Here's the entry.

Tonight I happened to run across (or rather the Lord

directed me to) the first chapter of James. This is the same chapter that started the Restoration of the Gospel when Joseph Smith read James 1:5 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

But it was the verses preceding and following verse 5 that really caught my attention tonight.

Verses 2-4 Quote:

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

James teaches that I should be joyful at being tempted. After all didn't I shout with joy in the premortal life when Father accepted Jesus' plan to send us to earth to be tempted? The rejected plan (from Satan) would have eliminated temptation.

Its kind of ironic that the one who proposed a plan that would have kept me from temptation is the very one that is here now tempting me. And I, who was joyful for the chance to be tempted, now murmur at the difficulties of enduring it.

James is teaching me that the "trying of [my] faith worketh patience" (something that I desperately need to develop). He even says that patience ultimately will make me perfect or complete, "wanting nothing". So it sounds to me like I cannot attain perfection, or be whole, without temptation. So what am I complaining about!

Then I read on in verse 12:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

I believe this is what is referred to in D&C 81:6 "And if thou art faithful unto the end thou shalt have a crown of immortality, and eternal life in the mansions which I have prepared in the house of my Father." What greater blessing could I ask for?

Verses 13 and 14:

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of

God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

There is nothing sinful about being tempted. EVERY man (and woman) is tempted. That is one of the reasons for this earth life. But God does not tempt me. It is I who allow myself to be "drawn away of [my] own lust, and enticed." So I shouldn't bemoan the fact that I am tempted. But I must never, ever FLIRT with or entertain temptation (for that is a sin).

Then verse 15:

"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

I must always remember that no matter how far down the road of recovery I get, I can never let up my guard. I must always remember that when "lust hath conceived" (been entertained, flirted with), "it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

But I shouldn't bemoan the fact that I am tempted, for through this process the Lord will help me to develop patience, progress towards perfection, be made whole, and ultimately receive a crown of immortality and eternal life.

That is why it is so important for me to admit my powerlessness. To admit that I can't entertain lustful thoughts even for a moment! For it surely will bring forth sin and ultimately death. I know this from sad experience over and over again. But I shouldn't bemoan the fact that I am tempted, for through this process the Lord will help me to develop patience, progress towards perfection, be made whole, and ultimately receive a crown of immortality and eternal life.

I am so thankful tonight to my loving Jesus for directing me to this old journal entry and reminding me once again of His intimate knowledge of my needs as He leads me along, slowly but ever so surely, into his open arms.

John F. □

Oct & Nov GSB Contributions

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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.

Phone Meetings

Tuesday-6:00 pm, PST
Wednesday-7:00 pm, MDT
(See website for details)

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- 1 In-depth study/analysis of principles found in Steps or Traditions
- 2 Personal experiences with the Steps, Traditions, Tools – how they 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

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