

Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of
Heart t' Heart

January 2008

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 18 – Issue 1

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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STEPS 1–3: SURRENDERING TO THE TRUTH ABOUT MY ADDICTION...

Hi, I'm Colleen, and I'm a mortally addicted person. Without God delivering me, there is absolutely no hope for me to achieve or maintain recovery.

As I was "listening" to the sharing in the online meeting this morning, the thought went through my mind: The truth is we're not just discussing overeating, this morning. And if this were a pornography meeting, we wouldn't be discussing pornography. We're discussing addiction, this morning. Plain and simple. Addiction. And there's only one way to be rid of an addiction—you have to be delivered from it. You don't work your way out of it. You don't think your way out of it.

You come to God and you beg Him to take it from you. You have to be rescued. Snatched.

It doesn't happen by "fighting" or negotiating with it, or gaining more understanding of it. Those original AA's didn't go through all of this tracking through their beliefs, their sorrows, their hurts, their past—that science insists we must do—doing all this psychoanalyzing and soul searching, to prepare themselves to be free of the compulsion to drink. They came to God and said, "God, I offer myself to you to do with as you see fit." And that included never touching the "stuff" again.

It was only after that surrender to God, and taking Step Three (accepting His will for them—that they couldn't drink alcohol with impunity, that they had to be willing to allow Him to take it totally out of their life) that they were able to honestly face the rest of their life and their experiences. It was after getting some sobriety that they were able to stand to face the 4th step.

(Steps 1-3: Surrendering..., cont. from p. 1)

In the 3rd step, we surrender to God on the terms He's set up in our life. And one of those terms is that we are imperfect, and that we can't have life turn out the way we want it to, and we can't use our addiction and have peace and serenity. And so, the 4th step follows. Now, that we're willing to trust God in all things, and let life be on His terms—now we're ready to look at the fact that even though we've messed up in a lot of ways, even though we've been so fearful, angry, foolish, etc., . . . He's bigger than that.

After all, He's taken my addiction right out of my inclinations. He's done something (changed my heart is what the Book of Mormon calls it.) He's done something to me, upon my desperately sincere request. He's flipped a switch in that place in me where my deepest desires reside. As a "modern," a disciple of science, I wonder, "How does He do that?" It must be the equivalent of going into my brain and changing neuro-pathways. Causing signals to go down different pathways. Cauterizing the circuits where my thoughts used to flow without the slightest resistance. Now there just seem to be no pathways.

We forget that when we bring something to Christ to heal, we're bringing it to the Creator of this

It's important for me to see my weaknesses and my failings, . . . sort of like counting the way-too-few fishes and loaves of bread before the feeding of the 5,000. So that I can appreciate the miracle I'm about to experience.

universe, the One who spoke and the elements organized themselves into a world. Maybe that's how He changes our neuro-pathways, so that there's no desire to respond to the temptations. Here comes the temptation, here it comes! Like having a raging bull or bear charging at you. And

like an invisible shield, something causes the bear or bull to glance off and go right on by, and fade back into the distance.

And that's why I'm ready for the inventory process in Step 4. It's okay to look back, once I've seen God at work in Steps 1-3. Now I know God can work miracles. From this place of neutrality toward my addiction, I'm ready to look at my weaknesses. I know Someone who's equal to them. I'm ready to look at my present weaknesses (issues) too. He can handle them all--past and present.

It's important for me to see my weaknesses and my failings, . . . sort of like counting the way-too-few fishes and loaves of bread before the feeding of the 5,000. So that I can appreciate the miracle I'm about to experience.

It's not a matter of me working it through, or working it out, or qualifying, or getting it right, or figuring it out, or figuring out why I do it, or what happened to me in my childhood that started it. Of course I can go ahead and try to do all that for just as long as I need to, . . . but in the end, after all (of what I think I have to do) is said and done, . . . the bottom line—the line waiting for me at the end, at the bottom—when I finally hit the bottom of the depths of humility—the bottom-line is "Come unto Christ and be perfected in (by) Him." . . . and if and when I finally get around to doing that, . . . once again, I am back in tune with the rest of Moroni 10:32, . . . I am unable to deny the power of God. I have to start raving about the power of God, again—like I did in HDDMFB. Why, because it is by the grace (enabling power, saving power, brain-circuit altering, heart-changing power) of God that I am saved. Snatched. Redeemed. Made free. Delivered!

I bear testimony to these truths in the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

CH. □



AS THE DEWS FROM HEAVEN

The 28th exercise in the 3 in 30 Exercises for food addiction is:

“28. There's an old slogan in 12 Step recovery work that sums up the first three steps: "I can't. God can. I think I'll let Him." Look up the word "let" in the dictionary, and then read D&C 121:45. Ponder and write about just whose will it is that "allows" change to take place in our attitude and in our subsequent eating behaviors.”

Let:

1. to allow or permit: *to let him escape.*
2. to allow to pass, go, or come: *to let us through.*
3. *to grant the occupancy or use of* (land, buildings, rooms, space, etc., or movable property) for rent or hire (sometimes fol. by out).
4. to contract or assign for performance, usually under a contract: *to let work to a carpenter.*
5. to cause to; make: *to let one know the truth.*

D & C 121: 45 “*Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.*”

It is only the Lord who causes change to take place—if I'll *let* Him.

I love the phrase - "distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven." As I think about this I think of how I so often try to *force* things to happen - put things in motion. I think of the contrast of turning a tap on and watering a delicate flower in my garden with the nozzle on full.

Sometimes I think that's how I approach things. I'll get it done, gosh darn it, and I'll get it done now and quickly - cause I'm a doer - in fact my family teases me, “Mom's a doer, she has to get things done right now and her way is the only way.”

I am really starting to learn and understand that

there are some things - lots of things - (all things?) that I have to *let* God figure out. In my prayers today I have felt that total loss of what to ask for, I am at that point where I just don't know what to do about my situation and I have to just ask Him to open a door for me and to help me know what to do and to patiently wait and make the best of my here and now.

I am like that delicate flower and as I let Him fill my bowels full of charity, and let him garnish my thoughts with virtue, my confidence does wax strong and I do feel His presence in my life and an understanding of His will and power distills upon my soul. It doesn't come blasting in like the full throttled water nozzle - it just appears as if from nowhere - just as dew seems to appear as if from nowhere - from heaven.

It is only the Lord who causes change to take place—if I'll let Him.

Dew is so gentle and beautiful and when I look at the dew drops on my flowers early in the morning they magnify the beauty of those plants - revealing the details of the leaves and making the colors more vibrant.

Wow, that could be me - if I can just let Him, I too will feel more beautiful, more vibrant. I think I'll let Him!

Colleen D. ☐

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ONE OF THE BLESSINGS OF KEEPING A JOURNAL

I was reading through some old posts in my journal, recently, 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

Quote:

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?

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.

Verses 13 and 14:

Quote:

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:

Quote:

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."

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. ☐

THIS GIFT THAT CHRISTMAS REALLY IS

A couple of days ago, a person at work shared with me how awful she felt, because she could feel she was gaining weight. I TOTALLY understand this feeling, because it has happened to me again, and AGAIN, and AGAIN, and AGAIN. I asked her if it was Christmas that had caused the problem, and she replied that it was

partly Christmas, but it had started before Christmas. I listened to her. It was given to me to listen. I didn't feel impressed to share anything or give any advise—just *understanding*. I KNEW where she was coming from.

I felt that her comments were a kiss from heaven. She reminded me so graphically of how I used to feel after each and every Christmas. She reminded me of this gift that Christmas REALLY is. She reminded me of the miracle God has wrought in my life.

I just stand in awe at the miracles that flow from the mighty change of heart.

I think this is the fourth or fifth Christmas where I have lived in neutrality towards food, and all my several other lusts. But I'm writing on the food forum here, so I'll concentrate on that, although I do believe that all addictions are pretty well the same - at least all of my addictions are.

I just stand in awe at the miracles that flow from the mighty change of heart.

No bingeing. No eating the foods that are toxic to my body. No desire to eat those things. No panicking about what to eat and what not to eat. No panicking about will I fall or not. No panicking about the potential temptations.

Just a continuing flow of love, and nurturing to my Spirit. My spirit which is hungry and thirsty for God. A deeper understanding that there IS NOTHING that will fill my endless hunger. NOTHING. NOTHING but God.

At one of our family suppers, a couple of our friends were very disturbed that I wasn't eating dessert. They tried very hard to convince me to at least try some - that it wouldn't do any harm. The discussion went on for several minutes. Finally, one of them said that if he couldn't eat dessert, there would be no point in living. Of course, the only fat

you could find on this guy is on his earlobes.

I just feel so grateful that Christmas isn't about food for me anymore. I certainly DO very much enjoy the foods that I CAN eat. There is nothing so nice as a beautiful Fuji apple, or a nice Japanese orange. The pears are really nice at Christmas. When I was eating out of my lusts, I couldn't even taste the sweetness of fruit, but today, it is so wonderful to me. But Christmas has changed for me - so much of the fluff and flutter has faded away, but standing in the midst of it all - the chaos, and noise - which I really try to stay away from - is Jesus Christ. MY Saviour and Redeemer.

I had no food hang-overs this Christmas. I didn't gain any weight. My life went forward as it always does - with me trying to live in the truth in my heart - not knowing what to expect next, but believing that Jesus LIVES, and knowing that as I walk with Him, in Truth, He will walk with me.

OUR GOD IS AWESOME, and I am ever grateful for days, and months and now years of sobriety. I do not brag of myself though. I pray that you will know that - I glory in God, in my very awkward and messy way. He lives . . .

Mary S. ☐



A TWELVE STEP VILLANELLE

I weep into the dark and lonely night
And tremble under crash of ivory tower
Until Jesus comes, embracing me in light.

In awe of His almighty power
I learn to trust that in the very hour
I weep into the dark and lonely night

His hand will come and sinfulness scour
From my heart, all that teaches me to cower
Until Jesus comes, embracing me in light.

My sins, forgiven through His dower
Of grace, my heart begins to flower.
I weep into the dark and lonely night

Over pride-inflicted wounds that now are
Heart-felt aches, confessed in tearful shower
Until Jesus comes, embracing me in light.

All that I am, I give to Him as vower--
Loving Him. My thoughts, no longer mine but ours,
I weep into the dark and lonely night
Until Jesus comes, embracing me in light.

Peg W. ☐



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 they work in your life
- 3 Literature Study – Articles based on quotes and capturing from any approved literature sources: the Scriptures, AA, SA, NA, HtH, etc.
- 4 Open Sharing – Articles with positive recovery messages
- 5 Program from the Prophets – Articles based on finding support for the principles in steps in the public talks of the Prophets.
- 6 Short quotes, thoughts or one-liners

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Online Meetings

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<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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