

# Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of  
Heart t' Heart

August 2008

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 18 – Issue 7

## 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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## ABIDE WITH ME, 'TIS MORNINGTIDE

This morning when I had just barely woken up, I laid there thinking all sorts of thoughts. Gradually they became more and more negative until suddenly I realized that I had not yet thought a thought about or addressed a thought to the Lord. I had not yet renewed my commitment to look unto Him in every thought. I was at the mercy of the adversary.

For example, one of those first unprotected and uninspired thoughts was about going to church. "Hmmm, it's Sunday again. That means church at 9:00am. Geesh, I wish I had one morning I didn't have to go somewhere." Now, you would think that was the negative thought, wouldn't you? No, the really negative, separated-from-God thought was yet to come. "You have to go to church. After all, you know how your ward already thinks about you—that you're on the verge of apostasy—anyway." Now that's a negative thought!

It was at that point that I realized that I had been awake for those several minutes, thinking thoughts that were not protected and presided over by the name and presence of Jesus Christ. Immediately, I cried out to the Father for the Holy Spirit to grant me His most precious gift - the words of my Saviour and Friend, even Jesus Christ. My thoughts were instantly led to a version of Alma's prayer (*Alma 36:18*):

"Dearest Lord Jesus, I don't want to think another unaccompanied, uninspired thought this day. I can tell that without Thee and Thy protecting counsel and comfort, my thoughts are already being used as a battle ground to tempt me towards the 'gall of bitterness' and the 'chains of everlasting death,' or in other words, spiritual separation from Thee. I do not desire to live under this kind of influence and spirit today. I desire Thee and Thy precious guidance all of this day. Enter into my heart and my thoughts, dear Lord. I give Thee my permission, my consent."

Suddenly, the words of a familiar old hymn began to echo through my mind, with a slight but significant change:

"Abide with me, 'tis morningtide,  
The day is coming on."

**(Abide With Me, 'Tis Morningtide, cont. from p. 1)**

Instantly, a willingness to get up and begin my day began to replace the half conscious lethargy only moments before. Up until this point, I had been awake physically, but not awake in the way Alma spoke of in Alma 5:7, when we "awake unto God." Once again I became aware that as the darkness of the last days continues to grow, I must either awaken to God, or I will be overcome with depression the Liar is trying to rivet to my heart with his lies.

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How well I remember a time, a few years ago, when I spent day after day in a depressed state of mind. It was my daily fare. When I wasn't doing nothing, I was acting out with some form of compulsive, self-defeating and even destructive behavior. My inability to pull myself out of my despair made me seriously doubt my sanity. Activity in the church didn't do anything to counteract the negative, lying influence I was at the mercy of before the Twelve Steps showed me how to come to Christ and dedicate myself to Him and take upon myself His Holy Name and Influence.

Today I thank God for the blessing of knowing this principle that humbles me so quickly every morning, that within minutes of becoming conscious has me singing a "new" song with words that greet Him each new day:

Abide with me, 'tis morningtide.  
The day is coming on.  
The shadows of these last days fall,  
The darkness seems so long.

Within my heart a welcome guest,  
Within my home abide.  
O Savior, stay this day with me;  
Behold, 'tis morningtide.

Abide with me, 'tis morningtide.  
Thy walk today with me  
Shall make my heart within me burn  
As I commune with Thee.

Thy earnest words will fill my soul  
And keep me near Thy side.  
O Savior, stay this day with me;  
Behold, 'tis morningtide.

Abide with me, 'tis morningtide.  
And lone will be the day.  
If I cannot commune with Thee,  
Nor find in Thee my way.

The darkness of the world, I fear,  
Would in my heart abide.  
O Savior, stay this day with me;  
Behold, 'tis morningtide.  
O Savior, stay this day with me;  
Behold, 'tis morningtide.

Colleen H. □



## CONSCIOUS CONTACT: WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?

I have been thinking recently about the idea of being in "conscious contact" with the Savior. For me, this is a real key to staying abstinent. Every time we act out, we have to admit that we have turned our attention away from the Lord. If we were really fully conscious of Him being right there with us, there is no way we would act out. That is the main trial of mortality. We kept our first estate, when God and Jehovah were right there with us, and we saw them, and we didn't have to do anything to invite them into our consciousness. The truth is, they are still right there with us, but because of the veil, we don't perceive them unless we choose to. If we choose to believe and acknowledge that we can have the personal attendance of our Savior every minute of the day, we see that He is there. In order to act out, we have to turn away from Him, shut off our awareness of Him, and our desire to have Him in our lives. It doesn't change where He is, only our ability to perceive Him. So the injunction in the scriptures to "pray always" and "never cease from praying in your hearts" is the key to

inviting His presence in our hearts and minds. This is the only thing that gives me the power to resist temptation--my willingness to have the Lord in my consciousness. He is always there, I just have to let Him in. This, to me, is the meaning of His statement, "I stand and the door and knock..." The door is the door of our awareness, our being awake, our willingness to participate in "Conscious Contact."

Phil H. ☐

## APPROACHING THE THRONE OF GRACE WITH GRATITUDE

**T**he 2008 HtH Conference was a spiritual feast. I was so happy to be reunited with so many friends.

Because of some slips I have had with my primary addiction, I did not feel right about leading a workshop at the HtH Conference this year. I am grateful that I can "Keep Coming Back." Perhaps next year will go better.

I thought it might be okay to share my notes from what I had prepared. It was written to share with you, my friends. That has not changed despite my slips. Take what speaks to your heart and "leave the rest."

=====

Hello, my name is Tom, and I'm an addict.

I want to express my gratitude for being able to share my thoughts with you today.

At the end of Hebrews chapter 4 we read:

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

He knows us through and through. All of our thoughts and actions are known to Him. He knows the way to

heaven. If we follow in His footsteps, we'll arrive in the same place where He is. He understands everything we go through, just as if He had lived through it Himself. But, unlike us, He possesses the knowledge and strength necessary to overcome these things.

Because of this, we can and we should approach Him with complete confidence, knowing that He can render aid according to our needs and wants.

Expressing gratitude can be one of the ways we can "Come Boldly Unto the Throne of Grace." After coming to the throne and receiving help, we should always render thanks for the help we receive.

Where our focus lies is a very important part of overcoming our addiction.

When I first came to Heart-t-Heart, I was under the mistaken impression that my focus needed to be upon my filthiness - the embarrassing and wicked things I found myself doing in order to cover deeper hurts and problems.

For most addicts, this seems like a natural and logical course of action. How can I stop doing something if I don't focus on it? Shouldn't I be focusing on my filthiness?

**I believe there is a word for our "being focused on the Lord's goodness in our lives." The word, for me, that describes this kind of focus is gratitude.**

One eye-opening scripture the Lord gave me that helped me understand this paradox is found in 1 Nephi 15 verse 27. Nephi is interpreting the Vision of the Tree of Life for his brothers. He says:

27 ...the water which my father saw was filthiness; and so much was his mind swallowed up in other things that he beheld not the filthiness of the water.

Distraction is not always a bad thing. If we are so distracted by the GOOD THINGS that are happening in our lives that we fail to focus on the BAD THINGS -- under these conditions, our being distracted is a GOOD THING, is it not?

I believe that this is what the Lord wants, in a manner of speaking. He wants our focus to be on Him and His Goodness in our lives...so much so that we take less notice of the negative, including our addiction and our need for acting-out.

I believe there is a word for our "being focused on the Lord's goodness in our lives." The word, for me, that describes this kind of focus is gratitude.

Now, I don't know about you, but for me, "focusing on the Lord's goodness in my life" was a bit of a challenge, because you cannot focus on something you can't see. And you cannot see something you are not looking for. You have to open your eyes to it. We cannot focus on the Lord's goodness if we are looking for it in the wrong places. Our expectations need to change. We need to broaden our vision. We need to take off our blinders. There is a new reality and a new way of looking at the world. It is waiting for us.

In Moroni 7:16 it says:

16 For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

I want to make mention of this phrase:

"every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ"

Sometimes we fail to realize that the Lord wants US to be actively looking for the ways in which He is enticing us and persuading us to believe in Him. He desires for us to begin actively looking for evidence that He is helping us, whether or not His help complies with our expectations. Rarely will His help arrive in the package we expect it to. The reason for this is that He Himself has a much broader view of our lives, an eternal perspective. He knows what needs to be worked on, and in what manner, and in what order.

The very essence of gratitude is learning to look for and love what is -- instead of endlessly wishing for something different.

Looking for and loving how the Lord chooses to bless us

is also part of how I would define gratitude.

Now, I want to switch gears for a minute, and discuss one of the subtleties of gratitude that some of us may not recognize.

Gratitude is much more than having a focus on the Lord's goodness or learning to look for and love the ways in which He chooses to bless us. Gratitude blesses US!

God does not counsel us to be grateful because His ego needs feeding or even because He feels "hurt" when we don't recognize His hand in our lives.

God wants us to express gratitude because gratitude expressed contains within itself the gift of God revealing Himself and His ways UNTO us. In the midst of our THANKING Him -- we always receive more from Him during our uttered thanks.

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Gratitude is God's GIFT to US ---- not our gift to God. Isn't that neat to think about?

True gratitude always blesses the person rendering thanks.

Here are a few examples from scripture that describe this process--

D&C 78 says:

17 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you;

18 And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.

19 And he who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious; and the things of this earth shall be added unto him, even an hundred fold, yea, more.

20 Wherefore, do the things which I have commanded you, saith your Redeemer, even the Son Ahman, who prepareth all things before he taketh you;

Jer. 30 says:

19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

2 Cor. 4 says:

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

As we express gratitude for God's blessings, God grants us insights, not only into the blessings we thank Him for, but He also expands our minds so that we become able to recognize other ways He is blessing us and helping us, as well as how He is helping those around us!

My own experience with this happened very gradually. I began listening to the Lord's invitation to stop focusing on my addiction and to first notice and then express gratitude for the other ways He was blessing me. And it worked. I began to thank Him for the successes as well as the apparent failures in all areas of my life, for both are manifestations of His love, or at least they can become so if we choose or allow ourselves to see them that way.

As I began to do this at my place of employment, I started to realize even more just how much the Lord was blessing me! I realized that He was, indeed, giving me as gifts, not only the challenges I encountered, but also the inspiration to see them through. As I began thanking Him for these things, I was able to receive more and have my mind opened to things I had not considered. Concepts that had eluded me for years started to make sense to me.

As I grew in this, it also occurred to me what a wonderful blessing it was to have such a neat co-worker. He was not of my faith, but I was and I still am, amazed at his wisdom and understanding of life and of people around him. I learned a lot just listening to him and being around him. I was able to see that God loves all of his children and blesses them with insight and

understanding no matter what their faith, or even if they have no faith or belief in Him at all. This was really eye-opening for me.

My counseling with the Lord in writing has blessed my life in surprising ways. It really has become scripture for me. During the preparation of this talk the Lord reminded me about some things I that I needed to talk about. These things were in my journal. He did not tell me where, just that there were some things I needed to share. How neat it was to read through past entries looking for these precious gems from the Lord to me. As I paged through my journal I could not help but notice how loving and responsive the Lord has been concerning so many varied topics of concern during the past year. My love for Him and my gratitude has grown that much more from doing that searching in my journal.

In this and in countless other areas, the Lord has shown me the nature of gratitude. As I have learned, over a process of years, to exercise my faith and express gratitude for what He has revealed unto me, and for the ways He has chosen to bless me -- I have found myself freed from the very addiction I was so concerned about in the beginning. For me the key was receiving the Gift of Gratitude. Doing so allowed His liberating power to flow into my life in greater abundance.

The Lord asks us this question in D & C 88:33:

For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift.

People are generally happier when they have gratitude in their hearts. We cannot be bitter, resentful, or mean-spirited at the same time we are full of gratitude!

Henry B. Eyring said:

Remembrance is the seed of gratitude which is the seed of generosity. Gratitude for the remission of sins is the seed of charity, the pure love of Christ.

Thank you, my brothers and sisters for letting me share these thoughts with you today.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Tom K. □

# THE VOICE OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES: "BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT HE IS GOD"

The following exchange of testimony—words of personal experience with God’s goodness—recently took place in the HtH Forum. If you haven’t visited the Forum lately, perhaps you should take another look at all the wealth of recovery experience shared there.



Dear Sister

This is in response to your post in the spouses forum and for others that find it helpful.

I read this a while back online somewhere. There was a psychologist working with a man that struggled with SSA and he told the man "if I had a pill that would cure this right now in my desk I would not give it to you." "Why?" the man asked. "Because God has such a pill in His desk and I know you have very sincerely asked for it many times and He has not given it to you."

You see God always has our best interest at heart. Everything we deal with in life is designed to bring us the most possible good. Remember that is His work and glory to bring us immortality and eternal life. (Moses 1: 39) This gift of weakness is given to us by God for our good. Like an obstacle course makes us stronger for navigating it, this will make us more pure and closer to God. What we need to do is trust God, trust that He is working it all together for our good. And He will do just that as we humble ourselves, be patient and get out of the way and let Him do it. Forgive the weakness in others knowing God is at work with them also. I have found that when I remember this I have more peace and more joy in my life. God knows what is best for each one of us and we will advance the most when we are humble and accept whatever He would have us endure. I don't claim a lot of success at that but I do see it as the only true path and only hope for me.

Tim A.



Tim,

I am in tears as I sit and read and reread your sharing. I cannot tell you how perfectly it fits the last few years of

my life. I don't know how to describe the last few years of my life, because I have never been so required to trust God as He has "brought me the most possible good," by bringing me down into the depths of humility deeper than I've ever known before, and asked me to do nothing but observe His patience and kindness to me even in my imperfections and weaknesses.

I never, never knew before what it meant to "be still" like this, and "know that [He] is God"--as in be still and wait upon Him. The obstacles this time haven't been cleaning up my outward behavior and appearance. The obstacle course has been so deep in my character, in my very being. I have never sat still and let God work "all things"--even my weakness--together for my good like this. I am astounded and awestruck.

Thank you, Tim, for the gift of this post. And, as one, I thank God for the mysterious, paradoxical nature of this miracle.

Colleen H.



Tim:

I have felt the same thing from God. His unwillingness to give me the magic pill. Not so much unwillingness but inability. He cannot move faster than our willingness and our preparation with which He is preparing us.

He is a God of truth. He cannot lie to us about how fast our recovery needs to go...and magically curing us in an instant would be tantamount to lying to us. It would give us all the wrong signals and would set false and unrealistic expectations. Which addicts certainly don't need MORE OF. In my own life, it has been unmet expectations at the root of my addiction. I have expected so many things, from God, from myself, from others around me....that simply do not match-up with how things work in the Celestial Kingdom. God is willing to work with me, but He cannot do so AND cater to my impatience and my timetable. It is I who must submit willingly to HIS timetable and "good pleasure."

I still have a long way to go. As I look back at the years since I entered into a recovery program, I cannot deny that "He knows best" how to help me...and what things and in what order.

Tom K.



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

### Phone Meetings

Sunday-4:00 pm, MDT  
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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