

# Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of  
Heart t' Heart

July 2009

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 19 – 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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## LUST

A few years ago, I felt the Lord begin to help me understand, on a bit deeper level, where my addictions began. I found it confusing that I had SO MANY addictions, and that the longer I was in recovery, the longer the list seemed to become. Thus began a several year long lesson about LUST!

I was shown, in a most gentle and tender way that, at least in part, lust was at the base of all my addictions. I lusted after food - greasy, fatty, sugary, salty, unhealthy food. I lusted after the sensation of being drugged in one way or another, for the attention or applause of others, for more and more of the things of this world--for status. I lusted for belonging, for acceptance. What a shock it was to realize that lust was there, running through almost every particle of my being.

I could feel that there were certain physical manifestations of lust that happened inside my body and my brain, even over things. I could feel myself begin to salivate, my heart rate begin to rise; a numbing kind of feeling started to come over my brain, a "lightness" or numbness in my heart... Then, as I progressed towards the object of my desire, more and more manifestations began to develop until I finally delved into whatever it was that I wanted, and then a sense of drugged -out "okay-ness" enveloped me, and everything was alright. Until the next time, and the next and the next....

Lust, as I once knew it, is insatiable. If I act on it, there begins a domino effect where indulging once is too much, and a thousand times is not enough.

### RECOGNIZING LUST AS A CALL TO HUMBLE MYSELF

Up until very recently, I have felt a disdain for the lust that lives in me. A sense that I need to run away from it, and just not allow it to exist in my being . . . yet, it never goes away - the Lord has left it in me. The scripture from Ether 12:27 comes to my mind and heart:

And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they

**(Lust--continued from p. 1)**

humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

I just LOVE this scripture! I can't count the number of times the Lord has shown me a different twist on what this really means. I won't list them all here, but just a couple.

In the light of this scripture, I have come to realize that when I am seeing how incredible weak and wretched I can be, when I am seeing my pride for what it is, and all that means in my life and the lives of those who deal with me, when I feel sick and worn out by my lust - I can know that I am coming unto Christ. I can know that noticing these things is NOT bad, but a sign of the grace of God. I can know that I can keep turning to Christ, in faith, and HE will make weak things become strong unto me.

There was a time when I thought this scripture meant that the Lord would take AWAY my weakness - that I wouldn't be as weak. HE taught me something VERY different.

He has turned my lust into a warning signal! When I start to feel those physical and mental and emotional manifestations of lust, He has taught me that this is something to pay attention to and rejoice in - not run away from. My lust is a gift - now - and perhaps it always has been; I just couldn't always see it.

It may sound crazy, but I am only trying to say what Paul said:

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.  
10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

When I see it for the gift it is, my heart is awakened to my incredible weakness, my insatiable NEED for

God. In other words, lust highlights for me that I am in a danger zone. It awakens my senses to a destructive vein that still lives in me, but because of the mighty change in my heart - given through the Grace of God - I no longer desire those things. Lust reminds me of that. THIS is a very GOOD thing.

I always thought the lust would be taken away. I thought my addictions would be taken away. I thought that somehow life would start to run more smoothly, and I would just be blessed for coming unto Christ. It hasn't turned out that way. I still feel lust. I am still an addict. I still have struggles in life, and if I will allow it, I am MOST blessed in all of these things.

Why? Because Jesus Christ has become my Friend. He has breathed life into my very messed up soul, and continues to talk to me and walk with me despite the mess I'm in, despite my lust. He has left these things with me for my good. For what I am coming to see as THE most valuable blessing there is . . . HIM.

Thanks for listening!

Mary S. ☐



**2009 Heart t' Heart Annual Conference**

**"He Delivered Me  
From All My Fears"**

**(From Psalms 34:4)**

**August 14 & 15, 2008**

at

**UVU, in Drem Utah**

**Registration has begun,**

**The registration form is posted on the front page of the HtH Forum & was mailed out with the May issue of Heartbeats.**

**We hope to see you there!**

# ADOPTING HIS WILL AS OUR OWN

From my writing this morning on Step Seven:  
Lord Jesus, please teach me to surrender my weaknesses to Thee. What is within my power to do to prepare to be reborn and receive this mighty change?

(Waiting and listening...)

Step Six comes to mind; “Become entirely ready to have God remove all your character weaknesses.” This is in preparation for Step Seven, which is; “Humbly ask Heavenly Father to remove your shortcomings.”

I have tried to do Step Six several times, and I guess I’m more ready than I once was, but I can’t give Him my whole heart unless I “own” or control my whole heart. Nevertheless, I give Him what I have—and ask for grace to give the rest. I have also asked on many occasions for Heavenly Father to please “remove my shortcomings and character defects.”

Perhaps He is doing that now, just more slowly than I would wish? Or am I still harboring the wish that I would not have to change, that I can still do as I wish and not have to do without it? I do have that wish somewhere inside me. Do I have to lose that wish completely before I can be changed?

Lord Jesus, please teach me to surrender my weaknesses to Thee. What is within my power to do

I can add strength to your pushing if you push, add strength to your pulling if you pull, but until you choose a direction and move, I cannot add strength to inertia. You must choose to make it your will, and own it as your own desire and not just mine.

to prepare to be reborn and receive this mighty change of heart?

*It is all within your power if it is within your will. You can ask to have your desire to follow me become stronger than your desire to follow your own will. This is the part of you which I will not touch or force—you must make that choice and adopt it as your will, not simply that you’ll go along with “what the Lord wants.” I can add strength to your pushing if you push, add strength to your pulling if you pull, but until you choose a direction and move, I cannot add strength to inertia. You must choose to make it your will, and own it as your own desire and not just mine.*

Then I ask Thee, Lord, if Thou wilt please make my desire to follow You become stronger than my desire to follow my own will. Help me to adopt Your will as my own and desire that, so that I am then trying to do my own will as well, rather than simply trying to do Your will while wishing to do something else.

Scott □

## THE VITAL NECESSITY FOR AN INSIDE-OUT APPROACH

I have been pondering recently the many ways people try to recover from addiction. Some enlist the help of others to report to. Some put software on their computers to make it harder to get to pornographic websites. Many meet with their bishops regularly to report their status. Since I joined Heart t' Heart over 11 years ago, I have attended face-to-face meetings, usually twice a week, online meetings on occasion, I have read and captured from 12 Step literature, worked with a sponsor, etc. All of these things can help, but by themselves, they are not enough, or even the most important part of recovery.

The thing that has really made a difference in my life, and the thing that I find the need to increase in my life whenever things get harder, is nurturing my relationship with my Savior. For me, that has

included listening to inspirational talks and wholesome music, but most importantly, conversing with my Jesus in my journals--writing my thoughts to Him and recording what I perceive as His answers through the Holy Ghost to me. Hearing the words of the Savior in my mind has been the most amazing experience of my life. It has taught me who He is, and what He is like--that He is infinitely more patient and loving than I ever knew. I think this knowledge may even be a prerequisite to recovery. How can we come to the Lord unless we can put our faith and trust in Him? How can we decide to let Him be in charge of our lives unless we can be sure He will do with us only that which will be to our good?

Why is this the most important part of a recovery program? Because it is only through this personal, one-on-one relationship that our carnal nature can be changed. It is through knowing the Savior and spending time with Him that our desires are changed from those of the carnal man to those of God. The more we spend time with the Lord, the more we become like Him. That is how the people of King Benjamin had their hearts changed..."by the Lord Omnipotent" that they had no more desire to do evil, but only good continually (Mosiah 5:2). This is the "inside-out" approach. This is recovery that goes deep enough to last.

The sad thing is that the other ways--relying on outside "help" (sometimes read "pressure") to be abstinent, can actually backfire. When a man or a woman feels they are being forced to behave in a certain way because of another's supervision or guardianship--because a bishop or spouse is "watching,"--the desire to make one's own decisions can assert itself and lead the addict to act out--just to show he can make his own choices. If the change is not heart-deep, others' help can feel restrictive, and a violation of the divine gift of agency. Thus, a program that sets up rules and barriers and consequences can actually increase the likelihood of relapse. The only sure method is to have our hearts changed by the Lord, and that can only happen when we come to know Him for ourselves.

I have seen the blessing of this relationship in my own life. I have never had an internet filter on my

computer. (I don't have any young children in my home, so the issue of them being accidentally exposed to pornography is not an issue. It's only about what works for me.) Because the Lord has taken the obsession out of my heart, I can be on my computer, or on the Internet, and be perfectly safe. That is not bragging--It is not my doing. It is a miracle of the Lord's, and I give Him full credit and glory for it. I have had times when my wife was gone on a trip for several weeks and I have been the only one at home--and I have still not acted out, because the Lord has put the filter on my heart, not on my computer. My abstinence does not depend on whether my wife is looking over my shoulder or not.

The Lord invites me to take Him with me through my days--to let Him be my best friend and walk with me and talk with me. That is the greatest protection I have ever experienced. It's what works for me.

Phil H. □

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON STEP ONE--ADMITTING I CAN'T MANAGE MY WAY OUT OF ADDICTION

I could begin by sharing on my stubborn resistance to admitting that my life is "unmanageable," as Step One asks of me.

My insistence on having to contribute some part to the triumph over my addiction always makes me think of Korihor--the anti-Christ--who preached that men prosper by "management of the creature" (Alma 30:17). Any success I've ever obtained by trying to manage my addictive behavior, trying to focus on it, decide about it, etc. has always failed me sooner or later. Oh, I've avoided acting out for a while, but that wasn't the same thing as having the urge to act out taken away. Or even deeper yet, the FEAR of the urge to act out has never left me.

Most recently, the Lord has led me through several years of sitting still and letting Him demonstrate for me His degree of patience and longsuffering and kindness toward me, even in my addictive behaviors. I think I am finally understanding that it isn't just the behaviors that He was intending, all along, to heal me of, but even more eternally important—it was my feelings of lifelong terror and obsession toward my weaknesses.

In other words, He has not only required me, this time around, to turn to Him to remove my weaknesses, but He's also required me to sit still (and forego outward change) and instead sink deep into the reasons (character deficits in me) that He had for giving me these weaknesses to begin with (Ether 12:27).

**He has not only required me, this time around, to turn to Him to remove my weaknesses, but He's also required me to sit still (and forego outward change) and instead sink deep into the reasons (character deficits in me) that He had for giving me these weaknesses to begin with.**

Always in the past (these 20+ years of knowing the steps and falteringly applying them), I came to Him in a sense of urgency about my addiction, filled with anxiety and impatience, desperate for Him to give me the power to manage this "creature" that I am and to keep this evil disposition of mine toward my addiction in check. And He gave me what I asked for—all kinds of external checks and controls—several times, and I lost lots of weight and appeared all wonderfully healed. Everyone that wanted outward "healing," (weight loss) defined me as their latest hope.

But, still harboring deep in my character, were deficits and spiritual immaturities like impatience and judgmentalness toward myself (and others—though I pretended I was patient and

accepting of them). I also suffered from a huge lack of humility that manifest itself in a deep lust for others appreciation and admiration of me.

Today, the Light of His Spirit keeps growing stronger and stronger in my mind and heart---the at-one-ment keeps becoming more and more effective in my life, and I am watching myself lose all obsession towards my previous addictions. And they are losing their hold on me (Satan is losing his hold through them.) Every morning feels like Christmas---and the gift is the gift of my delivered, liberated self. I have no idea how many years in mortality I have left to rejoice in this state of newness of life in Christ, but it doesn't matter. Just one day lived in His Spirit, in conscious contact with His counsel and comfort, is as sweet as a thousand years.

Colleen H. □

## RISE, PRAY, READ, WRITE!!!

**M**ay I add my testimony to that of Colleen, that the formula PRAY, READ, WRITE has been for me the key to my recovery.

Part of that key, for me, has been to become willing to go to any length to know God, including rising early even when I don't feel like it. So, I have modified Colleen's formula and for me it is now RISE, PRAY, READ, WRITE. I have felt strongly impressed by the Spirit to share that formula with my family, with those I home teach, and most recently, in a sacrament meeting talk yesterday.

Heavenly Father loves us without limits. He wants us to come back to Him. He loves us, and He misses us. He does not want to lose a single one of His children, and He stands constantly ready to welcome us with open arms if we will turn to Him. I *know* that, for He has told me that, and He has shown me that in His love and acceptance for me.

As I prepared my talk for sacrament, and pondered D&C 9:8,9 (behold, you must study it out in your mind, etc.) I was powerfully struck by the realization that the Lord was teaching Oliver how

to study the scriptures, and that part of His instruction to Oliver was to *write down* the words God gave him!

Remember, in D & C 8, after Oliver had asked Joseph if he, Oliver, could perhaps help translate the gold plates, the Lord told Oliver he could make the attempt, and that the Lord would tell him in his mind and in his heart, through the Holy Ghost, which is the spirit of revelation, and which is how God prompted Moses to part the Red Sea.

But Oliver was not able to translate, and in D&C 9, God gave him additional instruction in revelation.

I was amazed at the new insight from a scripture I have read hundreds, perhaps thousands of times. I am so grateful for the "divine imagination" with which God has blessed each of us, whereby He can speak to our minds and our hearts, if we will ask, then record His answers. That's all.

Keith H. ☐

## HE LIKES HELPING ME

**T**hank you for creating a safe place for people like me who struggle with addiction.

The Lord is so good to me. I just want to publicly thank Him and acknowledge His goodness.

Lately I have experienced an increased realization that He likes helping me with work. I have noticed that when I am working on something I will often have a thought come into my brain that feels different than my normal thoughts, more pure and clear.

Several times I have brushed the thought away, and persisted in the course of action that I thought was more promising. Several hours later I will be sitting there, frustrated, and I will remember the thought that I chose to ignore. I will try the idea, and it will help me break through and reach a solution.

I am humbled by this experience. I have resolved to try and listen more carefully to that voice, trusting

the promise that it is possible to grow in that "light" until the "perfect day".

I hope that I can learn and change. I hope that I can stop focusing on being a profitable servant. Of trying to earn or feel deserving of His respect or love, which He has always freely given me from the beginning, without money and without price.

Tom K. ☐

## MY TESTIMONY OF GOD'S PATIENCE

**I** am so struck with the testimony we're hearing here this morning of the gentleness of the Lord in showing us our weaknesses--or any truth for that matter.

I am reminded of the Prophet Joseph's statement: "God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, . . ." Especially that part about "as [the person] is able to bear [all things]

I have found in my recovery journey that He waits upon me to be ready, to be "able to bear" the truth---even the truth about my weaknesses---and even the truth about the weaknesses of others who have hurt me. He does not force any truth on me that I am not ready to face yet.

And so, I have found, my experience with these principles of inventory (Steps 4 and 10 and 5) to actually be very tender, gentle, loving experiences, administered by a loving God--Savior and Father in Heaven and Holy Spirit, as one. Never have I felt Them shame or even blame me for these things, but instead just love me out of wanting to keep harboring them and acting out over them. Truly, They (the Godhead) are doing what I have heard in 12 Step fellowships all the way back to AA--They are LOVING ME BETTER. Thanks . . .

Colleen H. ☐



## June GSB Contributions

Online Meeting..... \$30

TOTALS..... \$30

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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-05 - Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).** Food Focus, Book Study: AA Big Book.

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

### Phone Meetings

Thursday-11:00 am, MDT  
Sunday-4:00 pm, MDT  
(See website for details)

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Individuals can donate to Heart t' Heart at any time! We especially encourage those who participate in the Heart t' Heart forum, e-mail meetings, or other situations where at 7<sup>th</sup> tradition is not collected to donate on an individual basis. Mail in this form or use the website shopper at: [www.heart-t-heart.org](http://www.heart-t-heart.org)

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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 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

Send articles to:

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