

Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of
Heart t' Heart

November 2009

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 19 — 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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JESUS, SAVIOR, PILOT ME

At one of the recent early morning Heart t' Heart meetings, our reading was from Step 5 in *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage*. There was one particular phrase that caught my attention and resonated with the sound of a booming drum:

"...one of the worst things the Saints can do for each other is to appear to be too perfect—that by refusing to admit our struggles and maintaining instead the appearance of perfection, we sow seeds of discouragement." (p. 73)

Then one of the persons sharing mentioned the "wreckage" of their life. I was struck by the honest use of this word, for that is how I see my life now. I feel the need to share about my own wreckage and continuing rescue, with the intent to sow seeds of hope, for that is what I have found in Christ.

While I was growing up and as a teenager, I tried very hard to give the appearance that "all was well." I thought it my duty and responsibility to show the world that my family was doing fine, to put on a good and brave face. After all, we had a significant church history, my parents were German immigrants and our ancestors had endured all sorts of trials and persecution for their faith and the general world history and calamity of WWII. I had to be strong for them, for the tradition. We did everything that was asked of us: we were "active" in the church, fulfilled all church assignments and service, and I even served a "faithful" mission.

However, increasingly, I felt the burden and strain to my soul and I was sinking fast. I had an older brother deep in alcoholism, a lust addict father, and a mother who was a world class co-dependent and perfectionist. All this time I was a raging lust and porn addict myself (my own coping mechanism which had started around the age of 10)... and "no one knew."

Well.... I knew.... and God knew.

(Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me--continued from p. 1)

As I've come into this miraculous journey called recovery, the Lord has helped me to now see how I tried to keep the airplane of my pride aloft by my own sheer will-power, by relying on self-sufficient methods. I placed all my trust in my ability to just try harder, do better, be more faithful, relying on the talents and gifts given to me from my Father in Heaven. It sounds so wonderful, so enduring. But, I rarely acknowledged my real neediness, my growing out-of-control life, the ever increasing tailspin, the fear and loneliness. I tried to drown my sorrows in my own self-satisfaction and self-reliance. But, something was definitely wrong. My "coping mechanisms" weren't working as well as they had (or ever did). I was being slowly consumed by them. Addiction was destroying my life. All at once, I got a glimpse of the landscape of my pride and I was terrified. I was in a plane with out fuel, without lift, without direction... and it was doomed.

When it finally crashed, it crashed hard. It felt just like all the news images you might ever have seen of an airplane disaster, with all the pieces strewn about, mostly unrecognizable. So many of the things I thought were so important were torn to pieces and mangled. But miraculously, the Lord kept me alive. He is gently lifting and pulling me from the heaps of wreckage, and five years ago He dropped me into the miracle that is Heart t' Heart and the 12 Steps. And for a while, I thought "all is well" again.

But that wasn't the end of my recovery. I've realized that I was still wandering up and down the mangled mess of my life, looking at the pieces, seeing the good and the bad and repeatedly turning to the Lord, saying, "Hey, the left wing is still in one piece... There's the starboard engine, and the seat from the front row, and isn't that the cockpit?... I think this thing will still fly!"

In other words, I am realizing I've been clinging to the pieces of my past, desperately holding on to my faded security, wanting still to try and salvage anything remotely recognizable.... the memories, the traditions, the things that helped me feel better about myself, things that helped me "just get

through" the moments of loneliness and fear. How insane addiction is! How merciless my own pride. My own best efforts, and others, however well meant, created this disaster, and yet I have kept on turning back to them.

Lately, I have again felt the Lord ever so kindly and gently holding me, helping me to let it ALL go - to begin to walk away, to build a new experience in a life that is grounded in truth and love and faith... grounded not in my abilities, or anyone else's... but grounded in Him.

My Jesus is so amazing.

Brooks L. ☐



CAPTURING FROM CLEAN HANDS, PURE HEART

In *Clean Hands, Pure Heart*, Phil H. writes:

Of course, in this remaking process, many things will have to be left behind. In truth, I thought the prospect of giving up not only my addiction, but actual portions of my character or heart, sounded dauntingly painful! After all, being your typical mortal, I don't like pain. Obviously. My addiction was proof of how far and how long I could run from the discomforts of everyday life... (p. 149)

What stands out to me right now is the sentence "I don't like pain." Before recovery, I was in denial about the pain in my life. I've said before in recovery meetings that I used to think I was the most emotionally healthy person around! Wow! I cannot now believe that I once sincerely believed that! What denial and ignorance that represents! I am so glad that I can recognize my pain for what it is these days. I think being able to acknowledge pain and emotions is one of the most important things the Lord has brought about in me, and is essential for healing to happen. He is showing how my emotions are not only in me but are all mine, generated by my own heart. I can no longer

honestly blame anyone else for my feelings.

I strongly believe that as God changes me, my feelings will change; that in the same old situations, I will begin to react in new, healthy ways as He heals my perceptions and beliefs and teaches me truth. And as Phil said, this is dauntingly painful. I am wailing like a baby more often than not, but I am wailing to the Lord, and offering Him all of myself in the process.

Like finding out about how much pain there is in me, I am finding out other things that don't look very pretty. I am learning to honestly face just who I am, and I don't always like who I am. But that is far better than the hate for myself that has seethed in me for so many years. I have a LOT more respect for myself than ever because of the honesty I am practicing. I think this is the beginning of learning to love myself.

Only He knows how to bring me to where I need to be. He is in charge. I hope I am surrendering as well as He needs for this to be accomplished: that progress is in His hands as well. Christ is strengthening me to come unto Him.

For someone who is unfamiliar with the depths of her own heart, I am having to leave to the Lord whether I fit this quality of surrender or not, just as I am having to leave to Him so many other things. Only He knows how to bring me to where I need to be. He is in charge. I hope I am surrendering as well as He needs for this to be accomplished: that progress is in His hands as well. Christ is strengthening me to come unto Him. I am so grateful He has increased my desire to know Him, and has increased my faith in Him. I have hope that He will become the entire focus of my life, the entire foundation of my hope and healing, the entire rock of my salvation. There is no other way.

Karen T. ☐

THOUGHTS ON THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

As a contracts manager and former lawyer, part of my job involves paying close attention to how the parties to a contract were legally formed. Contracting parties may include a natural person, a corporation, a limited liability company, a partnership, a limited partnership, or a trust, among others. Each has different ramifications for contracting, accounting and tax purposes.

So I was very interested when someone pointed out recently that our Heart t' Heart fellowship is none of those. It is nothing more than a collection of individuals who share a desire to stop participating in compulsive addictive behaviors. We are bound together by no more than our common desire and the 12 traditions of Heart t' Heart.

I believe that the traditions of Heart t' Heart are a set of inspired principles that allow the Lord to give Heart t' Heart a special capability to bring his children to Him.

He has said "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, as touching one thing, behold, there will I be in the midst of them." (D&C 6:32)

Let me comment on just the first tradition.

In Heart t' Heart individual recovery depends on the loving, supportive fellowship of the group. Without acceptance and unity there can be no fellowship and thus no recovery.

This tradition states that only through fellowship is recovery from our addictive behavior possible. We are taught in our Heart t' Heart meetings that "we neither interrupt nor engage in dialogue with another speaker's sharing. Twelve step meetings are not designed to be encounter groups or advice giving sessions of any sort. Commenting or giving advice discourages the individual's own ability to hear the Truth as spoken to their hearts directly by the spirit. (2 Nephi 32:3)" (excerpt from meeting

format).

We show love and support to each other through respecting each other's right and responsibility to seek the guidance of the Lord's spirit in our lives. Not commenting or giving advice means we do not judge each other, but simply give encouragement and support through our presence, our love, and our prayers for each other and our fellowship.

Does not this kind of fellowship and support mirror the way our Father in Heaven works with us? It has been my experience in my recovery journey that my Heavenly Father does not judge me or condemn me or shame me. He waits patiently for me to express my desires, hopes, dreams, fears and worries through my words to him and through my actions. Then, when I invite him to do so, he speaks softly to my heart, suggesting, encouraging, and occasionally reproving, but always in the most gentle, loving and patient way possible.

The fellowship we all desperately need, addicts or not, is fellowship with our Father in Heaven and our Savior.

His love and patience has transformed my life.

As we give this kind of acceptance and non-judging love to those in our fellowship, and feel it given to us from others, we begin to learn the nature of our Heavenly Father.

The fellowship we all desperately need, addicts or not, is fellowship with our Father in Heaven and our Savior. As addicts, we are blessed with an especially keen reminder of that need through the negative effects of our addictive behaviors in our lives. And through the inspired traditions which form the basis of our fellowship together in Heart t' Heart, we learn to model their behavior toward us, and in doing so, recognize their influence more clearly in our lives, ultimately leading us to a full, rich, rewarding fellowship with them.

Keith H. □

THE NEED TO KEEP MOVING AHEAD

Dear Lord,
I am thankful for another day. Grateful for being reminded, when a stray thought pops up, to surrender it to thee and to call on thy name.

Mosiah 24:

21 Yea, and in the valley of Alma they poured out their thanks to God because he had been merciful unto them, and eased their burdens, and had delivered them out of bondage; for they were in bondage, and none could deliver them except it were the Lord their God.

22 And they gave thanks to God, yea, all their men and all their women and all their children that could speak lifted their voices in the praises of their God.

23 And now the Lord said unto Alma: Haste thee and get thou and this people out of this land, for the Lamanites have awakened and do pursue thee; therefore get thee out of this land, and I will stop the Lamanites in this valley that they come no further in pursuit of this people.

24 And it came to pass that they departed out of the valley, and took their journey into the wilderness.

I need to see this as an image of deliverance and change. First that the Lord is in the process of delivering them so they express their thanks—something I need to do more of now. Just because I am not yet out of the woods doesn't mean I can't express gratitude for whatever distance has been traveled. Even if they are (I am) not yet secure in freedom, they have (I have) been led from the daily, continuous bondage they were (I was) under.

Second, I need to see it as an image of change and moving ahead. That while the people are grateful, the Lord seems almost to interrupt them and say, "Be on your way, they are coming after you. Get going and I'll stop them here." This is like me, being grateful while on my journey. But the Lord

knows I need to complete the change—to keep heading towards a whole other place—before the past catches up with me. I need to keep forging ahead and he promises to stop the powers and pull of the past from getting to me.

Even in gratitude I must continue my journey to whatever place lies ahead, lest the past reach out and grasp me again. Lest I allow the past to reach out and grasp me again.

Scott □

OUR SAVIOR'S LOVE

This capturing from Hymn #113, “Our Savior’s Love,” was a particular blessing to me a few weeks ago:

[My] Savior’s love shines like the sun with perfect light

His light is so perfect that it is not possible to miss the fact that it is there—from the time the sun comes up until it sets it is very obvious that it is shining.

... as from above it breaks through clouds of strife.

The clouds of strife that it has to break through for me are the clouds of inner turmoil. The sun is always above the clouds—there is no such thing as clouds above the sun; my inner turmoil isn’t more important than His love for me—so why don’t I focus on His love instead of my inner turmoil? Why don’t I feel the warmth of His love and see clearly with the accurate perspective in the light He provides, how things really are? He gave me my weakness so I can be humble so that I can experience His grace which is sufficient as long as I can be humble and have faith in Him so that He can make weak things become strong unto me?

Lighting [my] way, it [Christ’s love] leads [me] back into His sight,

I picture someone holding a flashlight or a lantern in the dark and making the path clear for me—in this case He is sending light from Himself so that I can find my way back to Him with His help; maybe He

even walks beside me at times to help me find the path that leads to Him.

...where [I] may stay (I don’t have to leave the light that He provides for me) to share eternal life.

I won’t be there alone—it’s not just for me; He will be there along with others who understand.

The Spirit [has/is a] voice of goodness [as it] whispers to [my heart gives me] a better choice than evil’s anguished cries;

Evil’s anguished cries tell me everything that can go wrong and remind me of everything that has gone wrong and rob me of my courage and sap my strength and tell me I can’t handle difficult situations and distract me from repenting and doing my part to have Christ’s atonement active in my life.

I do need to be aware of difficulties ahead and I do need to accept the past and how it has shaped me, but I need to put my focus on faith, and trust that God is mindful of me, that He has always been mindful of me, that He is doing what is best for me in present time and that He has always done what was best for me and that He will never stop doing what is best for me! I need to trust that the experiences of the past were for my learning and that the challenges ahead are for me to learn from; my mistakes are to further my learning; the challenges others present to me are for my learning! Oh, yes, I love to learn; it’s just the lab that I hate!

Loud may the sound of hope ring til all doubt departs,

I refer to the message of HOPE by President Uchtdorf "The Infinite Power of Hope"!

And [oh, how I want to be] bound to Him by loving ties.

In April Conference of April 1989, Elder Marvin J. Ashton quoted George Q. Cannon as saying that there is not one of us who God hasn’t cared for and caressed and devised a plan to save and given His angels charge concerning.

I need to remember that God cares for me and about

me and that as His spirit child he lovingly caressed me and that He has never stopped loving me, that He wants me to come home to Him having learned the lessons I need to learn and having done what He wanted me to do when He sent me here to earth—the very things I agreed to do before I left Him. He cares so much about me that He has actually given angels the responsibility to look after me and help me. I think of "firmness of mind." Oh, how I need it. It is so easy to get distracted from my primary goal of living the way the Savior taught and actually forget Him as I go about my daily activities.

After pondering on how and why He loves me I thought of the word "bound." I thought of binding quilts, and binding wounds, binding a calf's legs for branding, and the song the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings "I Am Bound for the Promised Land" and the phrase "bound and determined." I got out a very comprehensive dictionary and found that bound can mean several things: 1) to tie together; hold together; fasten; and the synonyms are: connect, attach. 2) to cause to stick together. 3) to hold by some force; restrain. 4) to hold by a promise, love, duty, or law; the synonyms are: oblige, constrain. 5) to put a bandage on. 6) to put a border or edge on to strengthen or ornament. As a verb it means to be stuck fast; as a noun it means anything that binds or ties. There was one term that I thought can apply here: "bind oneself to" meaning to agree to something; establish an association. Whatever it means in this song the ties that bind me to Him are loving.

[Dear] Father, God of all creation, hear [me] pray in reverence, awed by Thy Son's sacrifice. Praises [I] sing. [I] love Thy law; [I] will obey. [My] heavenly King, in Thee [my heart rejoices].

I don't remember when the last time was that I prayed in reverence awed by the sacrifice Christ made for me. Maybe I ought to think about His great Atoning Sacrifice before I kneel down or at least before I begin prayer. I have sung His praises a lot. I do love the laws that have protected and blessed me throughout my life, and I've really tried to obey my Heavenly King and been very distraught and fearful when I've known that I've disobeyed what He wanted me to do. But that isn't necessary. Like the people of Alma I can hush my fears and pray and receive whatever message I need to be able to "Lift up [my] head and be of good

comfort (Mosiah 24:13)." I hadn't thought of comfort as anything but good, and I wondered why Alma used the adjective good. Then I thought of the comfort I receive from practicing my addictions and it is anything but good. I have never once benefitted from eating food that made me sick and I've never once benefitted from trying to please other people instead of trying to please God.

When I'm thinking straight my heart does rejoice in my Savior and in His availability and His love for me as Heavenly Father's daughter and His Spirit sister, I also rejoice in the opportunity to repent and that repentance is valid and that He helps me do it. In one of my desperate prayers I told Him that I felt like I'd lost my integrity by breaking the promise to never again put anything in my mouth that could harm me; I told Him I didn't know how to have self-respect any more. The gentle answer that came was: You can have self-respect because you are my daughter and because I love you. I felt a great burden lift because I said a small pitiful prayer.

Merlene H. ☐

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**

Send articles to:

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October GSB Contributions

Online Meeting..... \$45

TOTALS..... \$45

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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 a 7th 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

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- 5 Program from the Prophets – quotations from modern prophets with a “recovery” message
- 6 Short quotes, thoughts or one-liners

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