



Seventh-day Adventist® Church
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Connecting for Health. Connecting for Life.

The Value of Freedom

In her own words Ellen White wrote: On Sunday, June 23 [1873], I spoke in the Methodist Church of Salem [Oregon], on the subject of temperance. **The attendance was unusually good, and I had freedom in treating this, my favorite subject.** I was requested to speak again in the same place on the Sunday following the camp meeting, but was prevented by hoarseness. On the next Tuesday evening, however, I again spoke in this church. Many invitations were tendered me to speak on temperance in various cities and towns of Oregon..." [*Temperance*, 260, emphasis supplied]

There was a time when the Adventist Church was well known for its work in the lines of temperance, including stop smoking programs, drug and alcohol use prevention, and of course the broader definition of temperance that includes avoiding all harmful substances and behaviors. But does this continue today?

Certainly, there are active churches and professionals advocating for and working towards freedom from addictions -- but as a whole, what are we doing as a church body?

The good news is that there are excellent resources available to help support the recovery journey. The North American Division has provided, for over 10 years, a 12-step Christian program for peer support, called *Journey to Wholeness*. We have also launched the first of yearly "Recovery Sabbaths" to help raise awareness among our churches. Recognizing the role that trauma plays in the addictive process, we are also soon to provide broad-scale efforts in addressing the traumas that all of us have suffered in one form or another.

"What is addiction, really? It is a sign, a signal, a symptom of distress. It is a language that tells us about a plight that must be understood."

Alice Miller, Psychologist

It can be tempting to ignore the issue of addictions or assume that we aren't the ones struggling with them. So let's consider some of the challenges often faced by addicts. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, addictions can include the inability to cope with variety of life stresses, mood swings related to the addictive drug or behavior, impaired judgment and insight, increasing levels of lying, stealing, or violence, lack of



interest in previously enjoyed activities or social relationships, mental and emotional pre-occupation with the addictive substance, breakdown of social and religious values, and other biological, psychological, and sociological problems.

We may not realize that addictions include not only tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs, but also eating, gambling, internet, love, sex, exercise, work, and shopping. In fact, any behavior that we are unable to control and leads us to live unbalanced and unhealthy lives may be an addiction.

These behaviors, if untreated, can get so severe that we lose our relationships with loved ones, with God, and even with ourselves. But there IS HOPE for freedom! Through appropriate and timely interventions, it is possible to break free; however, stigma, fear, or shame can prevent us from seeking the help that we need.

So perhaps it's time to reassess our own thoughts and feelings on this. The word "addiction" is surrounded with such negativity that we may be tempted to ignore it. But if Christ promises that the truth will make us free, then shouldn't we seek the truth about addictions? Our communities need the power that we know Christ has over addictions. Our fellow church members do, too. And perhaps the truth is



Scan the QR code to take a survey on your happiness level.

Discover the Connection Between
Happiness and Exercise



Holiday Fruit Tart

By Gemalli Austin, DrPH, RD

Whether it's for a Christmas get together or a cozy winter treat, this fruit tart will be a great addition to the holiday season.

Click image to get the recipe or visit nadhealth.org/recipes.

TOGETHER IN MISSION

Save the Date NAD Health Summit, April 2-8, 2023

Don't miss this opportunity to make a difference. The annual North American Division Summit on Abuse is free and virtual. Tune in to the [Facebook livestream](#) for practical presentations from industry experts, and learn about tools *you* can use to help create safe churches and communities.

For more information, you can head to <https://www.enditnownorthamerica.org/2022summit>



Registration Coming Soon

Health Everlasting

Here's a short video of the 2022 NAD Health Ministries Year-End Report. You'll get an update of what Health Ministries has accomplished this year as well as what to look forward to in the future for 2023. There's an option to download the video for sharing within your network. We pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and wisdom as the next year soon approaches.



Foundations of Faith Community Nursing

There is hope and help for any and all addictions. Some drugs of choice may be classified as substances that are addictive. Other “drugs” of choice include processes and activities that are out of balance in a person's life. Join us as we look again at the temperance work of the church during Recovery Sabbath, and become trained as a Journey to Wholeness facilitator to help others find freedom through Christ. [Learn More](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Adventist Ministries Convention Replenish

January 8-11, 2023

Join us at the ministries convention, “where we will provide ministry leaders the opportunity to come away and be REPLENISHED with God.” Utilizing the scripture text of: I'll refresh tired bodies, I'll restore tired souls. -Jeremiah 31:25. For more information please go to adventistministriesconvention.com.

Mental Health Sabbath

February 18, 2023

We are starting this new year, with our first health emphasis sabbath on mental health—an ever important topic. Utilize this Sabbath to learn about mental health in your churches and communities and how our Lord can restore. Visit nadhealth.org/sabbaths for details.

2023 Health Summit In-Person Event

April 2-8, 2023

Join our in-person event to receive training, education, inspiration, and to network with fellow health ministry leaders. Visit NADhealth.org/summit for details.

Monthly Focus on Happiness

50%

Approximately half of
all happiness is
determined through
intentional activity.

14%

Happy people are reported
to live 14% longer

Activities & Resources Help Foster Happiness:

Best Possible Future: “Science tells us that a positive attitude and optimism really work to make you happier and therefore more productive. Try writing down your best possible future.

Whether it comes true or not, writing down your best possible future will make you happier.” [Click here](#) to gain access to the happiness worksheet

Need Help?

If you are feeling alone and having thoughts of suicide—whether or not you are in crisis—or know someone who is, don't remain silent. Talk to someone you can trust.

Call or text [988](tel:988) or chat at 988lifeline.org

Strengths & Weaknesses Exercise

Discover Your Strengths: “To increase your knowledge of your own strengths beyond those you already know, and to notice patterns in your energy levels and disposition, try tracking your strongest and weakest work over one month. To do this task, take a moment to pause periodically throughout your day and ask yourself “How do I feel after each task I've completed? Am I energized and engaged? Or am I bored or frustrated?”

[To begin, click here.](#)

WORDS OF HOPE

“Happy are the people who are in such a state;
Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!”

-Psalm 144: 15 (NKJV)