

Journey To



LIFE

"You have shown me the path of life."
Psalms 16:11



12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600
www.adventistrecovery.org
Email: nadhm@nadadventist.org

THE NEWSLETTER OF ADVENTIST RECOVERY MINISTRIES, sponsored by NAD Health Ministries

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Editorial Perspective Beginnings

As another calendar year begins, I am reminded of two beginnings. The first of these took place in 1934. An alcoholic by the name of Bill Wilson was invited by his friend, Ebby Thatcher, to attend an Oxford Group meeting. The meeting was held at the Calvary Episcopal Church located in Manhattan, New York City. At the time Bill and his wife, Lois lived in Brooklyn Heights just 4 miles from the meeting location. Through the spiritual 6 steps of the Oxford Group and "carrying the message" to other alcoholics, Bill was able to find and maintain his sobriety.

It was while on a business trip to Akron, Ohio in 1935 that Wilson met another alcoholic, Dr. Robert Smith. As the message of recovery was shared with Dr. Bob, he too found sobriety. In turn they brought words of encouragement and the Oxford Group's 6 steps to other alcoholics in Akron. Together they co-founded Alcoholics Anonymous and expanded the 6 steps of the Oxford Group to the 12 steps of AA which are still used by hundreds of 12 Step organizations (such as Narcotics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Sexaholics Anonymous, Workaholics Anonymous, Celebrate

Recovery, and The Journey to Wholeness). Today there are millions of people throughout the world who are finding freedom from obsessive thinking and compulsive harmful substances and behaviors as a result of this beginning.

The second beginning I just became aware of a few weeks ago. A pastor friend of mine, Tony Romero, currently serves as pastor of the Historic Manhattan Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is located just a mile and a half away from where Bill W. discovered the spiritual program of the Oxford Group that led to his finding freedom from his alcoholism. I hope you'll read Pastor Tony's article/report of what today is happening in this historic church and of the fifteen 12 Step groups that are now meeting there.

Each day can be a new beginning with Jesus Christ. I hope you will consider and help provide for 12 Step meetings – including The Journey to Wholeness – to meet in your church and community. To learn more, visit our website and attend a training: www.adventistrecovery.org.

Ray Nelson, MDiv, MSPH
adventistrecovery@gmail.com

ARMin Mission and Vision

Our Mission:

Promote healing and freedom from harmful practices by providing resources and training to facilitate recovery.

Our Vision:

Healthy people growing in a relationship with Christ by using principles of God's Word and choosing healthful practices aimed at finding freedom from harmful habits and addictive behaviors.

Potential Objectives/Goals:

- Promote healing (individually and corporately) utilizing the healthy, balanced principles of God's Word
- Provide resources to churches and individuals in order to raise awareness and educate regarding the root of dysfunctions that create disunity within individuals, families, churches and communities through unresolved trials, troubles and tragedies
- Train individuals to facilitate ongoing support groups and mentoring in a safe, nurturing environment

We believe that as we heal from life's trials, troubles and tragedies, we become inspired and committed to reach out to others as a result of gratitude for our personal healing; to care for others because our lives are so enriched by Christ's forgiveness; and the blessing of the freedom we have experienced due to His unending grace and mercy.

The Healing Value of the **12** STEPS

Step 6—

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

Biblical Comparison

“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land.”

—Isaiah 1:19

Steps to Christ Chapter 5
Consecration

Upcoming Events

January

National Stalking Awareness Month
www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week

January 23-29, 2017
<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-facts-week>

February

Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) Training

February 10-12, 2017
Soquel, CA

Visit <https://www.adventsource.org/as30/event.registration.list.aspx> for details and to register. This training is for those interested in learning about ARMin and how to host a Recovery Group at your church.

More information about ARMin is available at <http://www.adventistrecovery.org>. The US Surgeon General recently released a report on the problem of addictions in our communities. Our churches need to be prepared to meet this pressing need and to share the power of God in setting all free from destructive addictions.

Health Sabbath 2017

February 11, 2017
Visit www.nadhealthministries.org for resources to use, including sermon notes and powerpoint slides.



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #6 Challenged by a Lack of Patience and Humility

A long while ago an acquaintance of one of my friends moved from the city where he had taught in a public school for many years to the beautiful state of Vermont. The tree covered mountains and picturesque farms were very attractive to him.

Due to deafness in the city he was without his teaching job. So he decided to move his family away from the evil influences of the city to the rural environment of a state where people would jokingly say there were more cows than people. Not too many months passed and it became very apparent that it is easier to get people out of the city than to get the evil influences out of the city out of people. One day I stopped by their rented housing and was informed that they were now subscribing to a television cable service. When I was shown the magazine that came with the subscription, I noticed that the service contained many X-rated movies with “adult sexual content” and “violence.” The evil influence and temptations of the city were now present in their house.

Moses before the people of Israel entered the promised land of Canaan, instructed them to “drive out the inhabitants of the land,” and “destroy all their stone and metal idols and all their places of worship” (see Numbers 33:51,52).

To find the promised heavenly Canaan land represented by Canaan in this Bible scripture, it is necessary to drive out the evil inhabitants of our lives. This begins with a readiness to have God remove all defects of character.

Isn't it amazing how God's instructions to Moses often correspond to the steps we need to take in our recovery.

Aiden N.

In many ways my life was a series of miracles. I wish I had time and space to tell you about all of them. Events surrounding my early life led to my being raised as an Egyptian. The education I received was the best the nation offered. You might say I am a slow learner. After 40 years, I decided it was time to defend and deliver the people (the Israelites) of my birth from slavery.

One of my character defects was a lack of patience. Impulsively, I killed an Egyptian slave driver who was beating one of my countrymen. The next day when I attempted to settle an argument between two Hebrew men, they asked if I would kill them as I had the Egyptian the day before.

At this point in time, I realized I would not be accepted back in Egypt or by the people I hoped to deliver from bondage. I ran to the country of Midian where I found love, acceptance, and marriage in a family of shepherders. I guess you might say I learned humility during the next 40 years in the desert raising and caring for the sheep.

When God called me from a burning bush to return to Egypt, I didn't want to go. God told me that my brother Aaron would go with me to ask the man then serving as pharaoh to: “let my people go.” The ten plagues – all of which were God's miracles, finally convinced the pharaoh to let us go and worship in freedom as we asked.

While on our way through the Sinai wilderness to the promised land of Canaan, on one occasion, I was instructed by God to strike a rock and water would be provided for the Israelite nation. To lead such a large group of people who complained and criticized my leadership on this wilderness journey often tried my patience. A second time when the people were without water, I was told by God to speak to a rock. Impatiently and contrary to God's instructions, on this occasion I struck the rock twice. The LORD then told me that because Aaron and I failed to demonstrate His holiness we would not enter the promised land. After 40 years of wandering in the Sinai wilderness, I died on top of Mt. Nebo where I could look over the Jordan River to the promised land.

By God's highest power and grace, I was resurrected and had the privilege, along with Elijah, of encouraging Jesus on the mountain now referred to as the Mountain of Transfiguration just before His crucifixion. I wish I could share more of my life and God's love, acceptance and forgiveness; but, time and space are not available to do so now.

Moses



Opening Doors to The Greenwich Village Community

The call came to my cell phone early one afternoon. My cell phone number is on the church voice mail suggesting to film production companies, that if they want to rent the church for production purposes, to call me.

The call I received was not from a film production company, but from a gentleman seeking space for an AA group he was a member of. This was the start of a relationship with 12-Step groups that now number 15 in total.

I was concerned about the request due to the conservative nature of the church I pastor and its Board; however, I told the gentleman that I would get back to him. I had taken advanced courses in Pastoral Counseling at Blanton-Peale and one of the many courses dealt with addictions and the role pastors and churches must take in helping groups such as 12-Steps.

Space is very costly here in Greenwich Village, New York City where rents for a studio apartment can easily reach \$4,000.00 per month for a space measuring 400 square feet.

Churches and Synagogues and other houses of worship are the only places that offer the kind of space and at a price that is affordable to most of these groups. The board was reluctant at first to grant them permission to use our space, but after

suggesting that indeed, this was the ministry and sort of outreach that we must be involved with.

The board after some discussion approved this one group to start meeting in one of our rooms located in the church. The word soon got around that Manhattan Seventh-day Adventist Church was a welcoming place. Suddenly, another group phoned and wanted to meet with me.

Three middle-aged men came to that meeting, and shyly stated that they needed a place for their group to meet. They were familiar with Seventh-day Adventists and noted “We understand your church is a conservative church, by what we found on the web.” I agreed that indeed was the case, but my ministry is open to all.

One of the men then stated, I need to tell you that we are a Gay men’s AA group and wonder if you would still rent to us and allow us to meet at your church. I told him of course you can, I would just have to ask the board to see if they will allow one more group to use our venue.

The man literally grabbed my arm and tightly said “God bless you.” He seemed shocked that I said yes and told him his group would be welcomed. Personally I wasn’t really sure, but I didn’t tell him that. The board agreed finally and now this group is beyond thrilled to be here and have a new home

continued on page 4

Resources

Journey to Wholeness:



A series that can be used in support groups or small groups as a resource to facilitate recovery

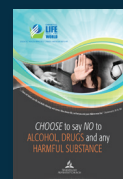
of breaking away from harmful practices and strengthening an intimate relationship with God in the Journey to an abundant life. Facilitator guides and participant guides can be purchased in our online store at www.AdventistRecovery.org

Journey to Life Newsletter:



This bi-monthly newsletter is available in English, Spanish, and soon in French as well. Print a free pdf copy, download, or register to subscribe and receive it via email at www.AdventistRecovery.org

Choose Full Life Resources:



These are posters, calendars/bookmarks, booklets that can be used to share with others 10

Ways to Choose a Full Life embarking on a Journey to Recovery. For more information and to place an order please go to www.NADHealthMinistry.org and check out the online store. The Choose Full Life theme song is also available for download.

Unhooked:



This is a 28 part series produced by ARMin and Hope Channel,

highlighting different type of addictive behaviors, real stories, and experts comments on effective treatment. The ultimate goal is to bring hope for recovery in Christ. You can watch the series weekly Hope Channel or direct TV channel 368. The complete DVD with all episodes will be available for purchase in October. For previous episodes and more information go to: www.hopetv.org/unhooked or www.adventistrecovery.org

Featured Article *continued from page 3*

where they can meet together.

After one year of working with the board and their getting comfortable with concerns about heating costs, room use etc. we now have 15 12-Step groups meeting at Historic Manhattan Seventh-day Adventist Church. I love it.

The groups are made up of several Alcoholic Anonymous or AA groups, a men's LGBTQ group, a women's only AA group, Al Anon groups, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Debtors Anonymous and a SCA or Sexually Compulsive Anonymous. These are all gifted, talented and bright individuals from all walks of life, and I consider them part of our ministry here in the Village.

Approximately 400 people from all the groups combined now call Historic Manhattan Seventh-day Adventist Church their home, and we are privileged to have them share the venue with us.

At Christmas we give a gift to each group designed by one of our Community Service leaders, filled with good food. The gift boxes are ready to be handed out to the five 12-Step groups that meet on our busiest night, Thursday nights.

Each group that received a gift box loved the gift and are universally happy to receive the gifts, an annual tradition now that we plan to continue for many years to come.

I would encourage all of our churches to open their doors to wonderful groups that could use the support. It adds clarity to ministry and is a true blessing to the church.

We thank God that we can share and keep our church operational from Sunday through Thursday and every one of these groups I fully consider part of our ministry to the community.

*Tony Romeo, Executive Pastor
REACH-NYC
reachnyc.romeo@gmail.com*

NEWS

Join us for the next Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) Training, February 10-12, 2017, Soquel, CA. Visit <https://www.adventsource.org/as30/event.registration.list.aspx> for details and to register. This training is for those interested in learning about ARMin and how to host a Recovery Group at your church. More information about ARMin is available at <http://www.adventistrecovery.org>.

Vibrant Life is offering discounted pricing of their Stop Smoking issue, now through February 2017. Visit www.nadhealthministries.org to download an order form, or call 1-877-212-6732 or email rebecca.hilde@pacificpress.com.

The US Surgeon General recently released a report on the problem of addictions in our communities. Our churches need to be prepared to meet this pressing need and to share the power of God in setting all free from destructive addictions.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

Recovery related news, pictures (protect anonymity of individuals in meetings) and upcoming recovery and awareness events can be sent for future newsletters. Please send these to Ray Nelson, *Journey to Life* Editor – adventistrecovery@gmail.com and/or Angeline David, Adventist Recovery Ministries Director – recovery@nad.adventist.org

Director's Message



One of the keys to a successful ministry is Evaluation. This means looking at how well we are reaching our goals. It involves investigating our methods, the tools we use, how well equipped our personnel and volunteers feel, how our attendees are improving. In other words, taking a detailed look at all the big and small aspects of the ministry and asking some hard questions. The New Year is perhaps a convenient time marker for doing this.

So maybe this is a good time to see how you are doing in your personal ministry and how your church is doing in its ministry to the community. Are we making the kind of impact that our neighbors need? Do they appreciate our presence? Are we giving them a true picture of Christ – one that is drawing them closer to Him?

It's not easy to ask these questions. Consider king Solomon, who, near the close of his long and hectic life, states "I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun" (Ecc 2:11, NASB). I can't help but wonder what would have happened if Solomon took the opportunity to assess the direction that his life was going much earlier. Would he have felt that it was so futile? Or would he have responded to God's Spirit leading him in the path that leads to fullness of joy?

Solomon had built a glorious temple to the Lord, but over time it was defaced and degraded, and finally left in ruins. Centuries later, through much prayer, planning, and providential leadings, Nehemiah sets out to reestablish the temple as a center for worship and as a light to the world. His words bring cheer, hope and courage to the nation: "I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, 'Let us start rebuilding.' So they began this good work." (Neh 2:18, NIV).

There is a time to build, and there is a time to rebuild. Whatever phase your ministry is in, I pray that the Lord strengthens your heart and hand for this good work.

*Angeline B. David, DrPH, MHS, RDN
nadhm@nadadventist.org
Health Ministries / ARMin Director
North American Division*