

Journey To



LIFE

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

ADVENTIST
recovery
MINISTRIES
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

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Editorial Perspective

Endings

Another year is almost at an end. How do we live each day to bring glory to God in this season that is often filled with celebrating and parties? Too often the days during this end time of the year are not much more than a blur of frenzied activity. Rather than a time to reflect on life and appreciation for God's many gifts, the days and nights are clouded with mind-numbing addictions to just get by.

Recently, I read *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*, a book by Atul Gawande, M.D., MPH. Dr. Gawande, is a surgeon, writer, and public health researcher. In this his fourth book, he writes about the medical professions' attempts to improve life as it nears its end. Too often, the goal is to extend life, through medical and surgical interventions, when the quality of the older person is diminished. On many occasions the elderly are overmedicated. Dr. Gawande offers many examples where the elderly are encouraged to maintain their quality of life by remaining in their own homes with a family member or friend to assist them. One of the biggest challenges in caring for the geriatric population is to place them in nursing homes

that lack the advantages of being able to provide stimulating natural activities such as caring for gardens and animals. The exciting stories this book contains of creative alternatives to the traditional care for the older generation inspire others to reproduce similar ways to provide for their care in the communities where they live. The lessons to be learned from life as it nears its end can be applied to the earlier stages of life as well.

This issue of the *Journey to Life* contains the conclusion (Part II) of Dr. Harvey J. Burnett Jr.'s feature article, "The Impact of Traumatic Life Events: Reactions and Resilience." Resilience enables a person, whether near the end or earlier in life, to recover from the traumatic events that impact their life and helps them deal with PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder).

Until next year, I hope you will have the peace and understanding that God is able to provide through the life of Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Ray Nelson, MDiv, MSPH
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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 5—

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

Biblical Comparison

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another that you may be healed.”

—James 5:16

Steps to Christ Chapter 4

Confession

Upcoming Events

November

Native Heritage Month

Contact your Native Ministries leader for more information.

Great American Smokeout

November 19, 2016

American Cancer Society

250 Williams Street NW

Atlanta, GA 30303

(800) ACS-2345 (227-2345)

<http://www.cancer.org>

International Survivors of Suicide Day

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

120 Wall Street, 29th Floor

New York, NY 10005

(888) 333-AFSP (2377)

(212) 363-3500

info@afsp.org

www.afsp.org/coping-with-suicide-loss/

international-survivors-of-suicide-loss-day

Health Ministries Sabbath

February 11, 2017

Watch for upcoming resources



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #5 Testimony of a Sex Addict

Step 5 is about honesty and vulnerability at three crucial levels – with God, with myself, and with another human person.

The important role of honesty in these same three levels is repeated again in the closing paragraph of the final recovery story in the Big Book of AA:

Above all, we reject fantasizing and accept reality. . .

AA led me gently from this fantasizing to embrace reality with open arms. And I found it beautiful! For, for at last, I was at peace with myself. And with others. And with God.

Wow! What more could a person want, and that was Eden's reality, Adam and Eve's experience of shared intimacy with each other and with God, until interrupted by the serpent's planting seeds of doubt through fantasy and downright falsehood.

After eating the forbidden fruit, any feelings of ecstasy were soon replaced by never-before-known feelings of fear, shame, and guilt so overwhelming that instead of welcoming another evening encounter with their Creator, they hid from Him.

Although disappointed, God is not taken by surprise and immediately initiates a cosmic recovery program based on self-sacrificing love with Jesus Himself at the center! So our life is a journey which, by my choice and by the grace of God, may also become a healing journey, a spiritual pathway to an Eden restored.

And Step 5 is another way station on my journey, another opportunity for further progress from fantasy to reality, from falsehood to truth, from self-centeredness to other-centeredness. Simply looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my faith. Confessing my sins, claiming His forgiveness and finding the publican's prayer my own -- *God be merciful to me, the sinner!* (NASB) Lk 18:13

Also moving from selfish isolation to vulnerable fellowship, leading with my weakness and claiming His strength! As members of the family of God we confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another for healing, in His time, and according to His will. (James 5:16) We are on our way home.

Harold B.

My sexual addiction began as an adolescent viewing women in their underwear pictured in catalogue and newspaper advertisements. In addition to the secret viewing of these pictures, I added cross-dressing. For me these activities provided opportunities to escape my father's criticism and getting the belt or being kicked by him. At times, from my perspective (including that of my mother, brothers and sister), he was very hard to live with. His image as a pastor respected in public, unfortunately, it seemed to me, in the home was often very un-Christlike. It was also hard to hear the heated arguments behind the closed doors of my parent's bedroom.

After finishing college and the seminary, like my dad, I also became a pastor. A few years later I got married to a wonderful and understanding woman. When secretly participating in what at that time was my chosen inappropriate sexual activity, I would rationalize and tell myself that it was a supplement to appropriate sexual relations with my wife. With a computer and the easy access of internet pornography (which is referred to as the "crack cocaine of sex addiction"), I find another form of sex addiction that is extremely enticing and very hard to resist.

Unfortunately, as the years went by, the early sexual activity which provided immediate pleasure left me with negative feelings of guilt and remorse. It seems that most of the car accidents and other accidents while working on house or yard projects resulted from weakness of mind and body due to my selfish sexual activity just prior to the accident. It wasn't until just before spending some time in rehab back in the '90's that I came to fully understand the seriousness of this addiction.

I now realize that freedom from my sex addiction and recovery is a process that requires time and commitment to working the 12 Steps of groups such as Sexaholics Anonymous and the Christ-centered Journey to Wholeness. Through the grace and power of Jesus Christ, I can have the assurance that freedom from sexual addiction and all other addictions is possible.

Anonymous

The Impact of Traumatic Life Events: Reactions and Resilience – Part II

The Importance of Resilience

A factor that seems to contribute to the reporting of fewer PTSD symptoms is resilience (Bonanno, 2004). Generally, resilience is the ability to learn, grow, adapt and rebound from adversity and angst, while maintaining healthy levels of functioning across time that result in positive feelings and encounters (Bonanno, 2004; Burnett & Wahl, 2015; Everly, Welzant, & Jacobson, 2008; Wagnild & Young, 1993). Furthermore, there are multiple factors or characteristics that comprise resilience (i.e., hardiness, positive emotion, laughter, honesty, tenacity, self-control, and optimism) which is the resultant of various pathways (Bonanno, 2004, 2005; Mancini & Bonanno, 2009; Everly, 2012). For instance, Southwick and Charney (2012) suggested at least 10 resilience coping mechanisms that are effective in managing trauma stress (i.e., realistic optimism, moral compass, religion and spirituality, social support, and physical fitness). Burnett and Wahl (2015) found that resilience may function as a protective buffer between an acute distress state and the chronic state of burnout. Other factors such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, education level, level of trauma exposure, income change, fewer chronic diseases, absence of depression and substance use, and recent and past life stressors were found to be predictors of resilience (Bonanno, Galea, Buccarelli, & Vlahov, 2007; Myers & Wee, 2005).

Resilience in Action – Positive Ways to Reduce the Impact of Traumatic Life Events

While sitting on the Mount of Olives with his disciples, Jesus warned them that traumatic life events will continue to occur and intensify prior to his return: “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains” (Gen 24:6-8). In other words, we will continue to experience the “flood-gates of woe” as mentioned earlier in this article. Therefore, exposure to such traumatizing events will continue to have an impact on people of all ages that can manifest in a range

of posttraumatic stress reactions. Although this may seem bleak and pessimistic, the reality is that God has blessed us with the ability to resile in the face of adversity: “I can do all this through Him who gives me strength” (Phil 4:13).

As mention previously, resilience is about being able to adapt to change in the face of adversity. More importantly, resilience is also a choice, which may come more easily to some than to others. Likewise, the majority of people are able to recovery despite encountering a traumatic life event. Regardless, there are several strategies that you can implement to help prevent or reduce the impact of the event, along with building a resilient mindset (*see Table 3*).

Table 3

Positive Ways to Reduce the Impact of Traumatic Life Events

Area	Resilience Behavior
Spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain/engage in faith practices • Daily prayer and meditation • Reading and studying religious literature • Finding meaning and purpose
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept the things you cannot change and focus on the things you can change • Maintain a balanced life (including living one day at a time and enjoying one moment at a time) • Being self-aware (including knowing your limits and accepting that there will be days you are not at 100%) • Daily relaxation and activities that help reduce stress • Regular contact with nature • Engaging in creative expression • Maintaining adequate boundaries (including saying “no” when necessary)
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular exercise • Maintaining a nutritious diet (including no use of alcohol, tobacco or other substances) • Getting adequate sleep
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building social support networks • Helping and caring for others • Seeking help • Civic and service engagement
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a sense of humor • Structuring time • Caring for pets • Journaling • Talking to others

In closing, traumatic life events are a reality for now, but not forever. Always remember and take comfort in these two Bible promises: “For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jer 29:11) and “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor 4:8-9).

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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

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[Editor's note: This is the second part of Dr. Burnett's article. The first part of his article appeared in the September-October issue of the Journey to Life]

NEWS

On November 17, the US Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy published a landmark report on addictions in America. It reviews the science of substance use, misuse, and disorders. Access the report online at <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov>.

Adventist Recovery Ministries Awareness Day was held at the Cambridge Seventh-day Adventist Church on October 15, 2016. Eddy and Cindy Travis, who lead a Journey to Wholeness group at their church in Concord, NH, shared their testimony of how Christ's power in their own journey of recovery has led them to minister to the needs of others. The Cambridge Church has now started a group that meets every other week, laying the groundwork to begin their own Journey to Wholeness program under the leadership of Marilyn St. Fleur, Curtis Luke, and Leroy Smith.



Vibrant Life has produced an update to their issue on stop smoking for the New Year. Special promotional discount price is available through February 28, 2017. Contact Pacific Press to order, or call 1-877-212-6732.

One in five deaths in the United States is caused by smoking.

It's a fact, cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States. It's no surprise, then, that 79 percent of smokers want to quit. Fortunately, it is possible to kick the habit—and this special issue of *vibrant life* can help! In these pages, a team of doctors, dietitians, and health educators share their best tips, advice, and encouragement to help people successfully stop smoking.

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TO ORDER: Call 1-877-212-6732 Fax 1-800-253-7439 Email rebecca.hilde@pacificpress.com

Director's Message



This is without doubt my favorite time of year. The holidays have always been special to my family. I remember the Christmas tree we had one year when I was a young child in India. Decorating, cooking special meals, and spending time with family are all a part of fond memories and on-going traditions. Although we are thankful to God for His blessings all year round, there is something about Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year that deepens my gratitude and enlivens my praise.

But in the midst of my joy, I can't help but remember that the holidays are not so happy to many individuals living right around us. Maybe someone who is reading this newsletter is dreading this time of year. It could just be the seemingly endless list of things to do in preparation, or crowded malls and traffic lanes, or over-commercialization. Or perhaps someone does not have happy childhood memories they can hang onto. Perhaps the loneliness they experience seems more marked this time of year. Some still feel caught in abusive or hurtful lifestyles or relationships, and the holidays don't give any hope of freedom.

And it is for that very reason why I believe the holidays are so important. When the angel came to comfort and instruct Joseph about Mary's expected Child, he says "thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). And that is the message that we should continue to compassionately share with everyone.

Regardless of anyone's personal faith or convictions, they are being bombarded with sights and sounds of the holidays. Why not also share with them the message of hope of deliverance from captivity to addictions? Because the Deliverer has come, and is coming again.

I pray that you and I will have an opportunity this Season to share the song of Zion:

When the Lord restored the captives of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.
Restore our captives, O Lord...

Psalm 126:1-4

Angeline B. David

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