

Journey To



# LIFE

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



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## Editorial Perspective Available Resources

Addictions . . . The list to which people are chained seems to be almost endless and growing every day. Stressful activities (whether at school, work, stores, home or church) lead many to self-medicate, with drugs and harmful habits, to escape the negative feelings.

Isn't there a better way to cope with these negative feelings of unhappiness, fear, self-doubt, worry and shame? Yes, and it doesn't cost anything except willingness to stop cheating themselves. Most are not living life at its best, because they are not taking full advantage of the resources available to them right where they are.

The best resources are those that come in the form of people who are supportive and loving as Christ loves. Jennifer Jill Schwirzer's article in this issue reveals the exciting power of love as a resource, which is able to confront and provide what is needed for the addict to find freedom from his or her addiction.

The most successful 12 Step groups (Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Sexaholics Anonymous) and

Christ-centered groups (such as The Journey to Wholeness) are those that have loving people participating. They help each other deal with life's challenges in better ways other than with their substance use/abuse or harmful addictive behavior.

To be this kind of loving, supportive resource to an addict, Jesus Christ needs us (His disciples):

1. "To be with Him."
2. "That we might be sent forth to preach."
3. "And have power to heal sicknesses, and cast out devils."

Notice that before His disciples minister to others they must first be WITH HIM. There is a world of people waiting for His disciples to be "with Him" who then can effectively serve the needs of the addicted.

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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 12—

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and practice these principles in all our affairs.”

### Biblical Comparison

“If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.”  
— 1 Peter 4:11. (NIV)

Steps to Christ Chapter  
Rejoicing in the Lord

## Upcoming Events

**January**  
National Stalking Awareness Month  
<http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org/about>

Emotional Wellness Summit  
ARMin Training  
January 13-17, 2016  
Orlando, Florida  
<http://www.nadhealthsummit.com>

National Drug Facts Week  
January 25-31, 2016  
<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-facts-week>

**February**  
Toward an Understanding of Addiction  
February 1 – April 18, 2016, Mondays, 7:00 p.m.  
PMC Music Room - Berrien Springs, Michigan  
[adventistrecovery@gmail.com](mailto:adventistrecovery@gmail.com)

National Eating Disorders Week  
February 21-27, 2016  
<http://nedawareness.org/>



## 12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #12 Testimony

### My Journey, My Story

Perhaps the greatest blessing that comes from working a program of recovery is not sobriety from mood-altering substances or freedom from other compulsions such as controlling, people pleasing, work, food, or sex, but rather a real, living connection with God. Step 12 calls this a “spiritual awakening” and this term aptly describes the process of moving from the spiritual bankruptcy characteristic of active addiction to the place of intimacy with God that is a core element of recovery. This intimacy springs from gratitude for knowing God’s love as manifested on the cross. Jesus’ death and resurrection makes it possible for the addict to live in the freedom from slavery (Romans 6) and in the newness of life that characterize the Christian rebirth experience.

It’s no wonder that addicts are compelled to “carry this message” to others, for it truly is good news. The message is one of personal experience of having been and continuing to be delivered moment-by-moment from the sin and death of an addict life. We feel compelled to tell others how they too can find the freedom that we have. We continue to attend meetings so that we can share our experience, strength and hope with others. As we continue to grow, we share our process with others not driven by a need to “fix” them but rather that they might come to know the love of God which passes understanding (Ephesians 3).

Every part of our lives is changed through recovery as “we practice these principles in all our affairs.” This is both a conscious and unconscious process. We are daily faced with decisions about how to live. These decisions can be costly in terms of time and inconvenience, but gratitude for what we have received leads to self-sacrifice. Soon, this life and selflessness simply becomes a part of us. We do good because we have habitually invited God to inhabit us, and he is now, with our permission, living his life out in and through us in every aspect of our lives. Who would not be attracted to this life of recovery.

David Sedlacek

Our families give us the foundation for relationships. It is here that we learn values and morals about work, school, friends, church and God. Sometimes we are taught what it means to be responsible, productive, loving children. Other times health eludes us and there are no apparent signs as adults that we learned anything other than dysfunction as a child.

My father was an alcoholic so addiction played a major role in my childhood experiences. It was difficult to find any sense of wholeness or well-being. My days were filled with constant questions and not many answers. At some point I stopped asking, went silent, and waited to be rescued from this family where I knew I didn’t belong.

As a little girl I was taught that God loved everybody but I couldn’t understand when all of the abuse and violence was going why no one came to “rescue” me, not even God.

I now know that God truly was with me and yes, He was watching over me. I also know He placed me in the only family that could provide what I would need to develop into the woman I am now. As an adult, God sent some friends into my life who would not let go of me. He sent them to practice Isaiah 61:1-3 in my presence and to show me how involved God had been in loving me into relationship with Him. They helped me look at my heart and acknowledge the struggle and anger I was having with God. I didn’t know I could do that and I didn’t know that God and others would listen to my story and still love me.

The Bible says, “And they overcame by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony.” Your testimony is your story and it is an important part of the journey to wholeness to tell that story!!! I hope this serves as an encouragement to tell your story!!

Joanne P.



### The Love Cure for Addiction

As I researched infant bonding for my latest book, a far-reaching reality slowly dawned on me: God created us for a peace found only in love. Here's that reality in neurological terms: A baby's brain has only two modes, based on two entirely dependent variables (meaning that either both variables are present or neither are). The variables are security and attachment, or put in the negative, anxiety and detachment. Picture baby skin to skin with mommy, cooing contentedly, then baby pulled away from mommy, flaccid little arms flailing, immediately emitting the gurgly squawk of tiny newborn vocal cords. Babies can't have peace outside of relationship, and neither can big babies like you and me.

Amazing things keep popping up to validate this. For starters check out a TED Talk video [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=johann+hari+ted](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=johann+hari+ted) in which a man named Johann Hari studies addiction and concludes that we've got it wrong. He cites a fascinating study where researchers put two water bottles in a rat's cage, one with plain water and the other heroin-laced. The rats quickly drink themselves into junkies. Then the researchers ask if perhaps the stark, lonely cage itself contributes to the rats' addictive tendencies, and create instead a

rat playground, complete with bits of cheese, colored balls, and lots of other rats. This time around the rats almost never drink the heroin water. One observer says that maybe we shouldn't call it addiction, but rather bonding. It just so happens that in the absence of healthy bonds, we bond with inanimate things that mimic the brain chemistry of relationships. Therefore the best preventative for addiction to drugs is "addiction" to healthy, godly, happy love.

Reading this type of thing can increase the despair of already-lonely people, who, according to John Cacioppo of the University of Chicago, are multiplying by the day. Cacioppo says loneliness has increased from 20 percent in the 80s to 40 percent today.

A generation after social media took over, the research about its use correlating with loneliness has begun to pour in, validating the strange phenomenon that the most technologically-connected generation is also the least actually-connected. I recently shared a talk about loneliness with a group of older folks and they really resonated with these findings. They remember the days when people sat around the dinner table and talked.

Let me speak into the despairing cycle into which many of us have tumbled. We know we need

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.hopetv.org/unhooked) or [www.adventistrecovery.org](http://www.adventistrecovery.org)

*continued on page 4*



## NEWS

### SOUTHWESTERN UNION ARMin Training

Over 50 people attended the ARMin training sponsored by the Southwestern Union in Keene, Texas on November 9-11, 2015. This last training of the year brought together people from all conferences of the Union and beyond. They were pastors, lay leaders, and health professionals eager to become involved and left inspired to begin and expand the Recovery Ministry in their local congregations.



### 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](mailto:adventistrecovery@gmail.com) and/or Katia Reinert, Adventist Recovery Ministries Director – [recovery@nad.adventist.org](mailto:recovery@nad.adventist.org).

### Featured Article *continued from page 3*

to love and be loved. We feel the absence of it in our lives. But the sheer momentum of broken relationships and failure to bond causes us to wonder if we were the ones Thoreau spoke of when he said, “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.” The hippies called for peace and love but achieved neither. Humanists believe that we can generate these goodnesses, but, try as we might, we come up empty. It would have been cruel of God to create us with this yawning chasm of need and then allow us to tumble into a fallen, loveless world to scratch out our existence in futility if—and if is a big word here—He hadn’t met the emergency with Himself. When horizontal relationships fail, and they will, we can still go vertical. “He reached down from heaven and took hold of me,” Ps. 18:16. God reached down in sending Jesus to re-bond heaven and earth. He reached down in inspiring His Word, His love letter to all people. God reaches down moment by moment through His Spirit to re-bond with you. When human relationships fail, there is still love. “Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Savior died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, ‘Follow Me,’ and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him.” *Desire of Ages*, 480.

You don’t have to spend your life in anxious detachment, the infant within wailing for a warm embrace. No matter what, where, and who you are, because of Him, you can love and be loved.

How has God revealed His love to you lately?

*Jennifer Jill Schwirzer, LPC  
Director ABIDE Counseling*

*Source: <http://jenniferjill.net/the-love-cure-for-addiction/>  
July 13, 2015 Blog Post*

### Director’s Message



Many of you know that I have transitioned from NAD to the General Conference Health Ministries department, and I am pleased to announce that a new leader has been nominated as the ARMin Director for NAD. The new ARMin director, Dr Angeline David, will start her role as leader in March, and I have no doubt God will use her powerfully as she leads ARMin for the NAD these next five years. She will meet the ARMin Committee members during the first meeting on January 14, during the Emotional Wellness Summit.

I would like to thank the ARMin Board for their passion for this ministry and their invaluable contribution. I also would like to express my deepest gratitude to Pr Ray Nelson for the fine job of editing this newsletter and also for having a deep commitment for this ministry for over a decade now. His involvement and leadership have been critical. I also would like to thank Drs Sedlacek, McBride, and Whyte who have dedicated their time and expertise in helping train other leaders to start ARMin in their local congregations. We have conducted training in 6 of the 9 unions in NAD with nearly 500 participants being equipped. Without the contribution of these and other volunteers, this ministry would not have been possible. Ultimately, God is to be praised for every single blessing and step forward for ARMin.

May each of us follow God’s plans in 2016 as we partner with Him in loving people, and sharing with them the hope that is in us. I ask for your prayers on behalf of Dr David, and myself as we each follow God’s calling on our new roles. I look forward to help expand the reach of ARMin throughout the world as we equip leaders and expand resources that may be used in other Divisions.

Thank you in advance for your prayers and for all you did and do to support this ministry.

Grateful in His Service

*Katia Reinert*

*Katia Reinert, PhD, RN, CRNP, FNP-BC,  
PHCNS-BC, FCN*

*Former NAD Health Ministries / ARMin Director  
Current Associate Director for Health Ministries  
General Conference of SDA.*