

Journey To



LIFE

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



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Editorial Perspective Self-will Run Riot

// "Self-will run riot" is an expression which Bill W. (Wilson) uses, on page 62 of the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book, to describe the alcoholic. The same expression will also fit the shopaholic, workaholic, sexaholic and bookaholic, as well as all who are addicted to drugs, food, ideas, and activities.

'Self-will' is stubbornly and selfishly pursuing one's own will. "I want what I want when I want it and I don't care who or what is harmed," describes the person who is obsessively and compulsively controlled by 'self-will'. People and property are often damaged as a result.

In a recent *Reflections Recovery Center* blog (<http://www.reflectionsrecovery.com/self-will/>) self-will is described as "the willfulness that comes from our lowest drives, the ones that seek pleasure, seek to avoid or deny pain, and generally keep us from the harder but far more rewarding things that God's Will, our highest will, wants." The writer then mentions opting for 'fast food' rather than cooking something that is more healthful or putting ourselves in triggering situations that 'sabotage' recovery efforts as illustrations of self-will.

The following are thoughts relative to Philippians 2:12, 13 from the book *Christ's Object*

Lessons, page 161 concerning fear and self-will in the process of obtaining our own salvation:

God does not bid you fear that He will fail to fulfill His promises, that His patience will weary, or His compassion be found wanting. Fear lest your will shall not be held in subjection to Christ's will, lest your hereditary and cultivated traits of character shall control your life. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Fear lest self shall interpose between your soul and the great Master Worker. Fear lest self-will shall mar the high purpose that through you God desires to accomplish. Fear to trust to your own strength, fear to withdraw your hand from the hand of Christ and attempt to walk life's pathway without His abiding presence.

We need Christ and His hand on the steering wheel of our lives as we continue on the 'journey to life'.

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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 3 —

“Made a decision to our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.”

Biblical Comparison

“O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will but as You will.”

— Matthew 26:39

Steps to Christ Reading

“The Sinner’s Need for Christ”

Upcoming Events

National Recovery Month – September 1-31
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

(800)662-4357 Toll Free

SAMHSAInfo@samhsa.hhs.gov

www.recoverymonth.gov/

ARMin training – North Pacific Union (NPUC), Oregon.

The NPUC will hold a union wide ARMin training for October 3-5, 2014 in the Portland, Oregon. This training is a collaboration between NAD, NPUC and Adventist Health. Please save the date to attend. To register go to our Adventist Recovery Ministries website under events www.adventistrecovery.org or email us at AdventistRecovery@nad.adventist.org.



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #3

A few years ago, I would have told you that I made this step. I would have said, “Yes, God has full control over my will and my life.” Now, I can call myself a liar. I’ve done the Twelve Step program twice. In my first journey, I soared past the first two steps. I knew that I was powerless. I knew that God was the only one who could help me. Yet, I was trying to do it on my own. I would create rules and regulations for myself and for my relationships. I confidently exclaimed that I was never going to stumble or fall deeper into my addiction. Then, I fell twice as hard and it killed my spirit.

My reality proclaimed my self-deceit. I had never made the decision. Of course, I said that I did (when I got baptized). Yet, I wasn’t living it. I had deep-rooted trust issues. I couldn’t trust my community, my family or essentially, God. Honestly, I couldn’t even trust myself. Imagine being in a room, no doors, and no windows. It’s pitch black. My eyes tried to adjust, to find some light but it couldn’t eradicate the darkness. It’s a scary place to be.

I couldn’t make the decision because I didn’t fully grasp God. I finally understood that I didn’t need to. Step 3 is part of the process of understanding God in the midst of my addiction. I learned about His love and grace. Realizing that He accepts me for me allowed me to relinquish control. I couldn’t make a decision without knowing how he cares for me. As I trust Him more, I can turn over my entire being to Him. Yet, I have to constantly make the decision to turn over my will and my life to Him. By giving up, I win.

Brittany Hill

Testimony

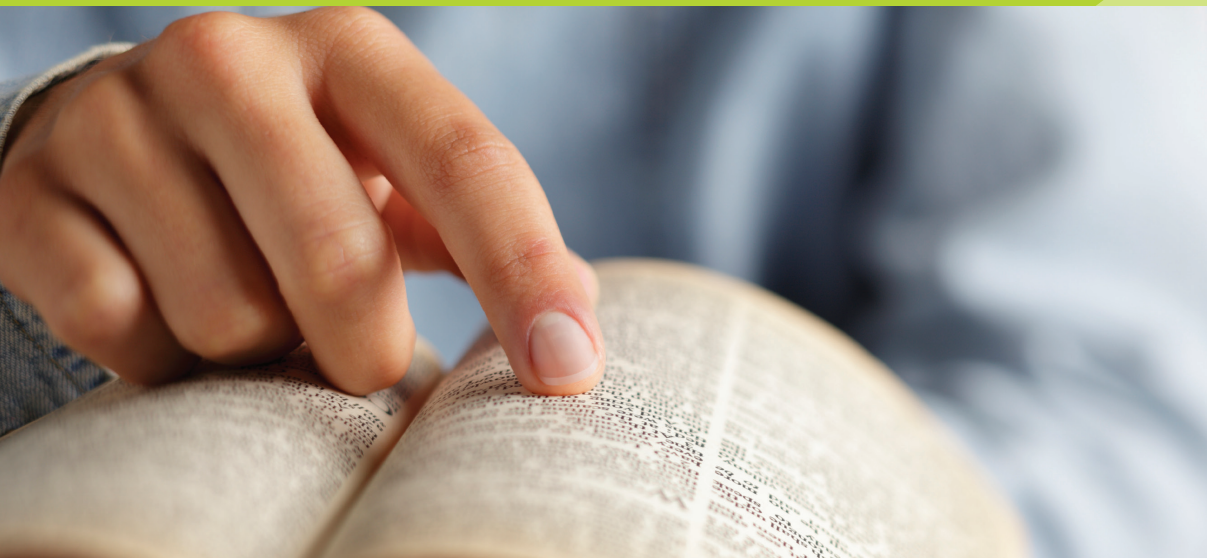
I’m not sure if it was part of my mother’s overall plan to help keep me on the straight and narrow or not, but in my teen years I was assigned the task of spending the night in the hospital with an alcoholic uncle as he underwent a detoxification program to overcome alcoholism. That evening he exhibited increasingly more bizarre behavior and seemed to become further detached from reality. I watched, as he got angry, sad, wept uncontrollably, yelled, and carried on incoherent conversations.

Whatever my mother had in mind about teaching me of the dangers of alcohol worked magnificently! I have never had a drink in my life and while there are some days in ministry where I think that it could possibly help I have resisted the temptation. But she could not protect me from a danger that I, like so many other young men, seem to inevitably encounter. At age 9 I stumbled across a single page of a crinkled up hard-core pornographic magazine.

Fast forward to my early 30s and I’m a full-blown porn addict. The problem with detecting a porn addict is that the evidence is dramatically more subtle than alcoholism. There is no odor, no staggering, about. Pornography does its primary work on the inner life of a man or woman. The depth of my addiction would eventually become tied to anonymous viewing and acting out with Internet pornography.

Eventually my wife would discover my secret and confront me. This would ultimately serve as a major breakthrough though she would have to endure the agony of my repeated relapses. I believe it was fear that kept me ensnared for so many years - it is a deep fear of intimacy and of being truly known by others. Eventually porn’s grip was broken as I confessed my long held secret to a mentor and friend. Coupled with my wife’s earlier confrontation that confession set me on a path toward sobriety and recovery. Finally, I thank God for the strength each day to live free from the power of this addiction.

Bernie Anderson



Connecting the dots: The Bible and Psychology in Recovery

Perhaps the single most significant experience in my clinical training came early on when as part of my internship I was assigned to the Alcohol Treatment Unit at the VA hospital. Having been raised in a Seventh-day Adventist environment, I had had no direct exposure to addictions. As a Clinical Psychology graduate student, I had had very limited course work on the subject. There my life was, at the intersection of three fields (addictions, psychology and religion) that have seldom seen each other eye to eye. I still remember walking to the smoke-filled room occupied by the VA Substance Abuse Counselors and taking a seat to learn from them that I was the first “normie” who had set foot in that office. I quickly learned of their distrust for the mental health professions: “talking to an addict one on one, you are always outnumbered”, they advised; “talk is cheap, especially if you haven’t walked the walk”. Being a witness to the meetings and participating in groups was profoundly moving as I could see the transformation before my eyes of men (there were no females at the time) who walked off the street running from something, now embracing honesty and responsibility.

After almost three decades of clinical work since my time at the VA, there is virtually not a day that goes by where the lessons learned at the Alcohol Treatment Unit are not informative and for which I remain deeply grateful. Shortly after the VA, I graduated and got my first job at Patton State Hospital, a large forensic hospital that housed individuals with severe mental illness remanded by the courts of the State of California following the commission of a crime. A majority of the admissions either had a concurrent substance problem to a major psychiatric condition or had a substance induced psychiatric state. For this population (often referred as having a dual diagnosis), the fairly confrontational approach I had learned at the VA did not work.

The assumptions of the pure addictionologists were simply incorrect for this population, as were the assumptions of the pure scientists who at the time questioned the value of the 12 Steps. Being that Patton State Hospital was a government facility, the explicit use of religious language or beliefs were forbidden, thus, it could not be incorporated into active treatment. Things have since changed as there is a culturally more receptive environment to diversity in general, and to generic spirituality in particular. Furthermore, there is an increasing openness to the reality that people with addiction conditions also face emotional problems (depression, anxiety and trauma to name a few) that need to be properly addressed.

In some ways, the worlds of addiction and Clinical Psychology had connected in my professional life, but the world of faith was in the periphery.

I consistently encouraged the clients I was seeing in my outpatient practice to attend 12 Step groups if they struggled with an addiction, and in that way, spirituality became a part of their care. But I was not using the “principles of God’s Word” in my clinical work as stated in ARMin’s Mission and Vision. Over the last decade I have, and this is what it looks like:

Ellen White states that, “the true *principles* of Psychology are found in the Bible”. A principle is a foundational idea, and organizing set of concepts upon which interventions can be developed. This is one scriptural principle (among others) that I found helpful in working with addictions: *spirituality is an indivisible and inseparable component of being human*.

This means that all humanity is created to worship God, and that regardless of cultural experience, we all seek something of someone to worship, which sometimes has a religious content. I find Jesus’ statement in John 7:37 to provide the concepts to understand

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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

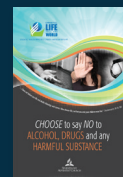
of breaking away from harmful practices and strengthening an intimate relationship with God in the Journey to an abundant life. Facilitator guides and participant guides can be purchased in our online store at www.AdventistRecovery.org

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



NEWS

Global Launch of ARMin

The first ARMin training for international leaders took place in Geneva, Switzerland, where over 1000 attendees gathered for the 2nd Global Conference on Health and Lifestyle. Over 30 attendees took the 3-day intensive course to be equipped for launching this ministry at their local region. (picture caption: attendees at the ARMin training in Geneva)

Recovery Conference Call

Every Sabbath morning from 8:00 to 8:30 am Eastern Standard Time, a conference call is hosted by Into HIS Rest Ministries that focuses on a recovery topic related to emotional healing. This call began approximately one year ago, and is facilitated by one or more individuals skilled in recovery. The call begins with prayer. The facilitator speaks for approximately 15 minutes about a topic that integrates biblical concepts into recovery. The final 15 minutes is used for participant questions and comments, and the calls end with prayer. Anyone interested in joining this call may do so by calling (712) 432-3066. Access Code: 203255.



Attendees at the ARMin training in Geneva, SZ



Participants simulate a 12-Step group and talk about their experiences.

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 Katia Reinert, Adventist Recovery Ministries Director – recovery@nad.adventist.org.

Featured Article *continued from page 3*

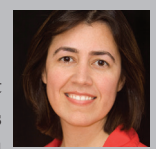
this principle from a Christian perspective on the spiritual life. “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, 38 and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” I believe Christian spirituality then has three components: One, human spiritual thirst is universal and found in all cultures. Second, the thirst is quenched by connecting with Christ. Third, believing in him leads to continue drinking the “living water” which satisfies the deepest thirst (John 4:7-15).

Each component, I suggest, responds to distinct but integrated neurobiological and psychological systems (for a summary of the research supporting this assumption, please see my chapter in the 2011 book “*A Christian Worldview and Mental Health: Seventh-day Adventist Perspective*” published by Andrews University Press). When the Bible speaks of spiritual thirst or hunger, it uses a compelling language, akin to what is experienced when the neurobiology of the *Seeking System* is turned on. Others refer to this system as the “reward circuitry”, which is an essential engine for addictive disorders. The Psalmist uses the analogy of the “deer longs for stream of living water, so my soul longs for your oh Lord” (42:1). Augustine of Hippo makes a similar statement that may resonate more closely for those in recovery: “restless is the soul until it finds rest in Thee”.

The second component, the coming to Christ, I believe speaks about the nature of the relationship with the Lord: “love the Lord with all your mind” (Matthew 27:37) can only be experienced in the context of feeling safe with him. The professional literature refers to this as the *Attachment System*. The third component found in John 7 is believing in him – not necessarily believing in a doctrinal corpus, but having a clear idea about who God is. The research on the *Theory of Mind* informs us as to how human develop beliefs about what is on the mind of another. In summary, human restlessness, longings and addictive tendencies can find deep satisfaction in a close and intimate relationship with Christ as we come to know him as he is. The ministry to those in recovery can then seamlessly be grounded on principles found in the Word of God, guided by a Christian spirituality that opens new vistas to integrate current neurobiological and psychological knowledge, and develop specific interventions that “promote healing and freedom.

Dr Carlos Fayard, is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Chair of the Program in Psychiatry and Religion, Loma Linda University School of Medicine, and the Assistant Director for Mental Health Affairs, Health Ministries Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Director’s Message



It was with great interest and enthusiasm that hundreds of people from all over the world learned about Adventist Recovery Ministries at the 2nd Global Conference on Health and Lifestyle in Geneva, Switzerland.

I was particularly amazed at the compassion towards the suffering and the passion for recovery ministries demonstrated by several leaders who attended the ARMin training at the conference. Many have already been engaged in a similar ministry in many parts of the world. An example is a couple from Germany who volunteered to start a 12-step meeting in their church despite many challenges. They started using a Christian 12-step manual and have hosted meetings in the community for nearly 10 years. They feel the manual they use is outdated and now they are looking forward to have the *Journey to Wholeness* series translated into German for their use.

Another attendee from England - recently baptized into the Adventist church and who struggled to break the addictions in his life - learned about the conference and the ARMin training and although the registration was already close he went by faith, as he felt called by God to do engage in this ministry. God made a way! He was delighted to attend the training and left motivated and committed.

Likewise, attendees from China, Africa, Austria, Inter-America, and several European countries, made a commitment to initiate this needed ministry in their territory. The culture may be different, but the addictions and the journey to recovery follow the same path. Christ knows no boundaries of nationality or culture has intended that this ministry should grow to reach many others around the globe.

We have the privilege to serve. Let’s get ready for and take advantage of the upcoming trainings scheduled ahead. God will empower you to walk beside others in this journey.

Katia Reinert

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