

Journey To



LIFE

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



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Editorial Perspective

Free At Last

Forty-five years ago, Doctor E. E. Cleveland, Seventh-day Adventist pastor, evangelist and church administrator, wrote a book titled, Free at Last. Having lived much of his life in the deep South, as a black African American he personally knew the injustice of racial prejudice and discriminatory practices. He actively participated in and advocated support of the civil rights movement during the '50's and '60's. However, of much greater importance than freedom from oppression in this world, Cleveland spoke and preached of real freedom from the problems and slavery of sin in this old world. A freedom from the presence of sin that will take place when Jesus Christ returns. As the prophet Isaiah predicted, God's people in that day will say: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isaiah 25:9. (See also I Thessalonians 4:16,17.

Several recent escapes from prison, including that of the Mexican drug lord, 'El Chapo' highlight the fact that freedom from being incarcerated is not real freedom. Such fugitives are hunted down until they are killed or returned to prison.

The Devil, through cherished sins/addictions, is seeking to keep us from the lasting freedom God offers. For this reason, Peter counsels: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour." I Peter 5:8.

The only real freedom in this world and the next, comes through Jesus Christ. He promised: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36. This freedom includes freedom from any and all obsessive thinking and compulsive, harmful behaviors and addictions.

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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 9—

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.”

Biblical Comparison

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

— Matthew 7:1-5 (RSV)

Steps to Christ Chapter
Growing Up Into Christ

Upcoming Events

Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
(July 1-31, 2015)

For more information:

Contact: Maria Jose Carrasco | National
Alliance on Mental Illness | 703.312.7883 |
majose@nami.org | <http://www.nami.org>

ARMin training Schedule: **SAVE THE DATE**

- Southwestern Union (SWUC),
Dallas, TX (October 9-11, 2015)
- Emotional Wellness Summit
(January 13-17, 2016) **SAVE THE DATE!** More info at
EmotionalWellnessSummit.com

For more information about the above trainings go to www.adventistrecovery.org or call 301-680-6733.



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #9

One of the texts that is often associated with Step Nine is Matthew 5:23-24. “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”¹

It is interesting, in pondering Step Nine, to pay careful attention to the word “remember.” Actually, it is in Step Eight that we “remember” the names of people who might have something against us and make a list. But I believe it is telling that the word is found in the text associated with Step Nine as well. The Greek word is *mimneskomai*, and for me, the different ways that it is translated in the New Testament helps me to understand the way I am to “remember” the things for which I am to make amends. Sometimes the word refers to something flashing through my mind, other times it refers to things that I keep in my mind and reflect on.

For me, having something flash before my mind while I am “standing at the altar” is usually indicative of insight brought about by openness to the Holy Spirit. These flashes often come when I am bowed in humility and powerlessness. But though the Spirit sends these flashes, it is my conscious choice to keep them in my thoughts and reflect on them. Reflection on the insights of the Holy Spirit is one of the lost spiritual habits, I believe. This shallowness keeps us superficial rather than transformed Christians.

I will know how best to make amends, and to whom, when I can think things through with the Holy Spirit along these lines . . . “what was going on in my life when I offended?” “Why was this going on?” “What does God’s Word say about what was happening, or about the offense?” “How will life work better now that I have accepted this word of truth?”

When the Holy Spirit has changed the flash of insight into a steady light of truth, it is a glimmer of God’s unconditional love—both for me as well as for the person to whom I will make amends. I have no need to fear making these amends because I have been assured that perfect love casts out all fear.

Kathy Beagles.

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* (2001). (Mt 5:23–24). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

Testimony

Hello, my name is Angela, I’m a Believer, and I will be an alcoholic in recovery and “daily on guard” for the rest of my life. It’s complicated and I long for the day to have a one-on-one with Jesus who I know will lovingly sort through much that’s baffled me here on earth.

I was in my 20’s when alcohol first crossed my lips. Not wanting anyone to feel uncomfortable by saying “no”, fitting in, doing what was expected, rationalizing it was the better of several awkward choices . . . some of the reasons for that first sip. As life progressed and the compromises increased, I learned that imbibing enough alcohol could give me relief, albeit temporary, from distress. Of course I knew God could too, and I recall crying out to Him several times with a wine glass in my hand. Wow, how baby step after baby step of compromise and rationalization can take us to shocking places . . .

I became the queen of compartmentalization – work friends, church friends, family, neighbors . . . a human chameleon who eventually lost sight of who I really was and what I truly believe. And the secrets involved in maintaining the multiple facades were exhausting!

So where and how does a Seventh-day Adventist go for help with a secret alcohol problem? My first attempts to reach out to church members did not go well. I was left feeling I simply did not love and trust the Lord enough because if I did my addiction would be permanently removed through sincere prayer and humbly responding to an alter call. When that didn’t happen (once I relapsed after 4 sober years), uncomfortable church members awkwardly said they’d pray for me, backed out of my life, and later I learned betrayed my confidence and shared my struggle with others. Painful.

But we are living in a sin-filled world and we unintentionally hurt others from time to time. In my sober walk I have learned it is my responsibility to “work the program” daily which MUST begin with daily turning my life over to Christ. I then need to engage with people and activities that support my commitment to sobriety. I am thankful to have found a Journey to Wholeness group in my area about a year ago. There is power in prayer, heartfelt sharing, listening and supporting one another in our unique walks and challenges. I am encouraged to see our church evolving and developing programs for the reality that serious sin and addiction issues exist in many of our pews. What a blessing to find sponsorship and group support within my church.

Angela K



Journey to Wholeness Benefits Men Behind Bars

At the Louisiana State Penitentiary you will find a group of men working toward bettering their lives. Jesus Christ is the ultimate fix for any of us and these men work toward that understanding. These men also work toward their goals by helping one another as they travel along the road to erase addiction and criminal addictive thinking from their mindsets. This is done in small groups using a program called Journey to Wholeness.

When most people think of persons or places of incarceration, they usually develop in their minds an immediate negative concept of those individuals housed there. It seems that many people forget that these are the same individuals that played stick-ball or four-squares in the streets of their neighborhoods. These are the same individuals that when they were younger, you would give them nickels and dimes and send them to the store. What happened to their innocence?

We are not born into a life of addiction nor are we born into a life of criminal and addictive thinking. In other words, addiction is not natural. The questions that should necessarily be asked are: “What happened?” “Why did this person choose this lifestyle?” Or even: “How did it get this far?” These are questions that we as a group strive to answer through our faith in God, prayer and the assistance of a program called Journey to Wholeness.

For those who do not know, Journey to Wholeness is a Christ-centered Twelve Step Recovery Program offered by the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s Health Ministries Department. As a way of ministering to the whole person, it was

imperative that we include some cognitive assistance. I have suffered from cognitive depravity and the assistance of cognitive behavioral therapy was a great asset in helping me open the door to Christ. I have completed and facilitated many group sessions: How to Change Your World, Power Groups, Hazelden (Relapse Prevention Programs), and walking the 12-Steps with Jesus Christ to name a few.

After a review of the Journey to Wholeness materials, praying and requesting God’s guidance, the materials were incorporated into our Spiritual Recovery Program.

Before preparing this short message, I spoke with some of the guys in the group. I asked the following question: “What do you like about the Journey to Wholeness materials we are using?” Answers varied. Notice a few comments.

- “As we assemble, we immediately recognize that this study is a guide for daily living.” Some of our group members have stated that –
- Journey to Wholeness has empowered them to live each day as a journey, and therefore, every night before they go to bed they make travel plans. One member has stated –
- “Journey to Wholeness helped me to build self-esteem because the program is formatted in units rather than steps. At the end of each unit, I saw it as a graduation and this encouraged me to continue forward. The more I traveled, the more I realize that I was not leading, but God.”

Another factor of success is that Journey to Wholeness shows a concern for the whole man, and is

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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

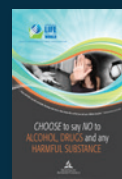
of breaking away from harmful practices and strengthening an intimate relationship with God in the Journey to an abundant life. Facilitator guides and participant guides can be purchased in our online store at www.AdventistRecovery.org

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

General Conference Session – San Antonio

Adventist Recovery Ministries and the *Journey to Wholeness* was introduced to hundreds of people at the General Conference and North American Division Health Ministries' exhibit booths during the 60th World Conference, July 2-11, 2015.



Southern Union

The Decatur, Georgia Seventh-day Adventist Church presented an Adventist Recovery Ministries Awareness Day, Sabbath, July 11, 2015. 25 people attended the afternoon seminar and plans are to begin a *Journey to Wholeness* group with LaVonne (in picture with Frank Sanchez, Southern Union ARMin Coordinator) and Stephanie on September 3.



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

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not afraid to identify our higher power as Christ. The reference scriptures actually coincide with the context of the material and are not just arbitrarily footnoted.

Now every session is not peaches and cream and actually most are intense, especially with Book One and Three. Book One immediately proves that the Journey to Wholeness is addict friendly. What I mean is that most 12-Step programs usually deal with drugs (different types) and alcohol, but Journey to Wholeness helps us to identify addictive behaviors (overeating, excessive shopping, adrenaline, watching television, and others) that have shadowed us for years developing fear and frustration in our lives.

My greatest moment while traveling through this program was facing my giants. Book Three opened me to a renewed prayer life. I had to acknowledge and remember my hurts and then forgive. I also had to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the hurt and harm that I caused and ask for forgiveness and then I had to forgive myself.

We have had some come to our sessions and discontinue whether after the first meeting and even after several meetings, but we continued on. Our prayer is that they find God and receive peace, but for those of us who have continued on the journey, we understand that we are traveling on the right road and in the right direction, and once we arrive at the end of Book Four Step 12, Book One Step 1 is waiting on us again.

[To read more of this writer's testimony, please see page 20 of the Southwestern Union Record, February 2013, Vol. 112, No. 2 <http://www.swurecord.org/issue/72/40/1582>]

Success would not be success, if it had not been for the insight and the forethought of the administration, who knows whether or not men would ever receive the spiritual and cognitive help that is necessary for them to excel and become productive citizens. So as the help and assistance started here, it is good to know that it does not end here. Many thanks are born because this chance has been so graciously provided.

*Demetrius Bradley, Head Elder
Louisiana State Penitentiary
Annexation of the Baton Rouge Seventh-day Adventist Church*

Director's Message



Mental illness is the number one cause of financial burden in most of the world, and despite the many efforts to reduce stigma, there is still much discrimination and misconceptions about it.

This year on World Mental Health Day, the World Health Organization is focusing on the theme of "Dignity" for those with mental illness. There is much we can do to accept, understand, respect and preserve the dignity of those with mental illness as much as those with a diagnosis such as diabetes or heart disease.

In order to assist on this effort and to educate, raise awareness and explore tangible plans to make a difference in bringing this issue to the forefront of the Seventh-day Adventist church as a way to prevent and assist those in the church and community, we are planning for a mental/emotional wellness summit on January 13-17, 2016 at Orlando, Florida.

Registration is open now and the early bird discount ends on November 30. To learn more or reserve the hotel go to: www.EmotionalWellnessSummit.com. The ARMin training will be offered there, along with many other interesting presentations that will help those leading ARMin programs assist more meaningfully to those with mental health needs. Come and join us. If you can't, pray that God will bless this unprecedented event which is sponsored by North America, Inter-America and South-American Divisions.

Katia Reinert

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