

Journey To



# LIFE

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



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## Editorial Perspective

### Real Needs

The warm days of Spring provide us with the opportunity to leave behind the heavy sweaters and coats of Winter. We may even be deceived when the sun is shining by thinking it is time to head for the beach with our swim suit and jump into the water that is still rather chilly.

Our perception of reality is not always the way it really is. It appeared to be a warm, sunny, Summer day in Northern Vermont, when the camping family decided to let their children jump into the lake. Unfortunately, the water was almost as cold as the frosty early morning air and the children quickly came out of the water, shivering and cold. Reality doesn't always live up to expectations.

For the overeater, his or her perceived or felt need, might be apple pie and ice cream. Since a second or third slice and scoop is "needed" because they can't stop with one, they will invariably overeat. For the alcoholic, their felt need is usually another drink. For the workaholic, their felt need is often finishing one of the many projects they are currently involved in or adding a few new projects to their already overextended commitment of time and energy.

Rather than acting on their faulty thinking concerning their perceived or felt needs, the person who is challenged by a harmful, addictive substance or activity, who is practicing the principles of good recovery, will think before acting on impulse. Their real need or needs might be to go for a refreshing walk or go to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting or other 12-Step recovery meeting.

Our greatest *real need* is Jesus Christ. I am reminded of the chorus of the Kris Kristofferson' song, "Why Me Lord."

Lord help me Jesus,  
I've wasted it so help me Jesus,  
I know what I am,  
but now that I know,  
that *I needed you so help me Jesus,*  
my souls in your hand. (*emphasis supplied*)

God will richly bless us with recovery from any and all harmful behaviors, if and when we put Jesus first. ■

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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 1 —

“We admitted that we were powerless over our addictions, that our lives had become unmanageable.”

### Biblical Comparison

“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but cannot carry it out.” — Romans 7:18

### Steps to Christ Reading

“The Sinner’s Need for Christ”

## Upcoming Events

**ARMin Awareness Seminar** is planned for the New Port Richey Seventh-day Adventist Church, Florida, on Sabbath, **March 8, 2014**. Call Pastor Glen 727-848-4567 or Frank Sanchez 864-238-8602 for more information.

**Brain Awareness Week (March 10 – 16)** is an annual global public outreach partnership of several entities. The event was started by the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, a nonprofit organization of over 300 leading neuroscientists, as a campaign to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research.

**ARMin Awareness Sabbath** is planned by the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church, Indiana, on **March 29, 2014**. Call 765-643-5541 for more information. Address: 1122 West 8th Street Anderson, IN 46016.

**ARMin training – 2nd Global Conference on Health and Lifestyle.** ARMin training will be available during this conference to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, **July 7-12, 2014**. For more information and to register: [www.conference.healthministries.com](http://www.conference.healthministries.com).

**ARMin training – North Pacific Union (NPUC)** 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. Registration details will be available at our Adventist Recovery Ministries website under events [www.adventistrecovery.org](http://www.adventistrecovery.org) or email us at [AdventistRecovery@nad.adventist.org](mailto:AdventistRecovery@nad.adventist.org).



## 12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #1

An old, well-known method of catching monkeys is to place fruit in a jar with an opening just large enough for the monkey’s hand to fit through. When the monkey reaches into the jar to grab the fruit, their closed hand will not fit back through the jar’s opening. Panicking, the monkey tries over and over to get loose. The harder they try, the harder it is to get free.

Likewise, humans, as prisoners of harmful desires, are driven to insanity, trying to fix the problem in the same way. “over and over again, expecting a different result.”<sup>1</sup> The harder we try, the harder we are held.

Controlling is part of human nature. The illusory hope of compulsive behavior is that you can have control as many times as you want, before the next acting out. Moreover, the frustration, which come from attempting to control their inside leads them to keep trying to control their outside (people, facts, even God).

Then we start playing God, taking in our hands the responsibility for our sanctity, struggling with our salvation, ending up paying the high wages of our own transgressions.

Since Adam and Eve, humans have had a hard time denying their faults, blaming others, and playing innocent, which those “admitting powerlessness, and unmanageability over their lives” are spared of.

The “good news” is that we don’t have to play innocent, to fix ourselves, or deny our sickness. “You are never going to be saved, unless you find yourself lost.”<sup>2</sup> The tax collector only “went home justified” because he cried “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” (Luke 18:13).

As well as for monkeys, letting go is the key, which sets us free from the shame of our souls, guilt of our conscience, and fear of our heart. “This is where the healing begins, this is where the healing starts, when you come to where you’re broken within, the light meets the dark.”<sup>3</sup> ■

*Pr. Edmilson S. Villalba, MDiv student  
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<sup>1</sup> Albert Einstein

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrasing Billy Graham on the movie “The early years of Billy Graham.”

<sup>3</sup> Healing Begins, Song by Tenth Avenue North

## Testimony

Shame it is part of the human experience. It was experienced by Adam and Eve after they sinned. Abuse experienced in childhood can also lead to feelings of shame. Feeling dirty. We try and fix it. I read fairy tales with the wonderful story line of a prince coming to my rescue and removing my shame. I turned to fantasizes and a dream that someday I would be rescued. I made an idol out of human love and romantic relationships.

“(She) went after her lovers, but me she forgot,” declares the Lord. “Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her.” (Hosea 2:13b-14, NIV). Oh how tender and loving his words to me have been. He broke my unhealthy attractions by drawing me to Himself. “And I, as I am lifted up from the earth (on the cross), will attract everyone to Me” (John 12:32, The Message). God spent everything He had on me.

Jesus is the best lover I could ever have. He never tires of listening to me (He shall hear my voice, Psalm 55:17). Any experience I have, He understands because He has experienced the same feelings (He is acquainted with our grief’s, Isaiah 53:3). He provides for me. “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19, NKJV). He anticipates my needs. “I say this because I know what I am planning for you,” says the Lord. “I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future” (Jeremiah 29:11, New Century Version).

He is everything a woman needs in a husband. I will never have a man who loves me more. I have hope and my shame is gone. ■

*Lynn Ashton*



### Addressing Addiction Myths (Part 3 of 6)

#### *Myth #8: “I can’t stand to suffer”*

Many people think that they cannot give up the things they are addicted to because withdrawal involves suffering. Most people don’t like to suffer! This is where a spiritual perspective on both CBT and addictions can be extremely helpful. Indeed, it can be the pivotal point that helps otherwise hopeless addicts “over the top”.

Consider the death of Christ on the cross for a few moments, if you will. If He did indeed have to pay the penalty for sin, and that penalty was death, why could He not have died by lethal injection? It would have been a lot less painful, and it could have been done in heaven.

Even if He had to come to this world to die, why did He suffer so? The sacrificial lambs in Jerusalem, which symbolized Christ, died quickly and easily. Why could it not have been so with Him?

Why did He suffer not just rejection, but layers of rejection? He begged His three best earthly friends to stay up and pray with Him for just one hour, and they couldn’t even do that. Why did that have to happen?

Some of us know what it is like to be betrayed by a spouse, child, or business partner who walks off with our assets or even part of our heart.

But one of Jesus’ twelve best friends essentially “walked off” with His life, betraying Him to be killed. Why did that have to happen?

Then there was the physical abuse He suffered, which was totally eclipsed by the mental abuse of an entire crowd chanting that He should die, for literally hours. Add a heaping helping of spiritual abuse and you are starting to get the picture. The priests who were supposed to offer spiritual leadership and

nourishment abandoned their trust and railed on him—why did this have to happen? He was falsely accused, falsely tried, flogged twice, and sentenced to the most gruesome, torturous death that humans could invent. He felt totally abandoned by God. He knows what it is like to be shamed: He was stripped naked and viewed for hours. He knows what it is like to feel trapped. How much more trapped can you be than being nailed to a tree?

The movie “The Passion of Christ” was an attempt to depict the physical agony of Christ, and even exaggerate it. But even with over-the-top distortions, this movie could not come close to depicting Christ’s real pain. The mental, emotional, and spiritual pain, which the movie could not depict, was so much greater than the physical!

Yet in spite of the pain, when given an opportunity to numb the torture, He refused to take that opportunity. In His extreme hour of agony, He was offered a mixture of alcohol and vinegar. But when He realized what it was, He refused to voluntarily make His mind less effective. He spit it out and refused to numb His pain!

Why did Christ go through this incredible round of agony, and in the very end—at the cross—give an example of self-restraint never before seen on earth? It was so every addict, in the light of the cross, could gain the courage to refuse to numb their pain. When the body is crying out for an addictive substance or behavior that we know in our hearts is not good, we can, like Christ, simply say “No and endure the pain.”

Many details of Christ’s suffering, right down to the offered alcohol, were predicted centuries before his death in Psalm 69. That passage shows that it was

## 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)

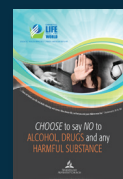
### Journey to Life Newsletter:



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)

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NEWS

**NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION**

On January 31-February 2, 2014 the North American Division Health Ministries Summit provided the *Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin)* training for an enthusiastic group in Orlando, FL. Attendees left motivated to start an ARMin group in their local church or community.



Attendees at the ARMin Training – Health Summit, Orlando, Florida

**NEW ADDICTION ORGANIZATION**

A new US organization, Shatterproof, is developing into a national movement to raise awareness and resources to treat addiction. To learn more, read Gary Enos’ editorial in the January 20, 2014 issue of *Addiction Professional* ([addictionpro.com/article/latest-national-movement-addiction-will-be-nocopycat?](http://addictionpro.com/article/latest-national-movement-addiction-will-be-nocopycat/)) and/or Shatterproof’s website: <http://www.shatterproof.org/>

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God’s plan that Christ not only be our substitute in suffering the penalty of death for sin, but our example in how He died while refusing to numb the pain. That example is for us, to give us strength to say no to habits that hurt, even though saying no may bring us pain for awhile. *Myth #9: If we pray, God will take our cravings and addictions away.*

It is true that, after heartfelt prayer, the addictive desires of a number of individuals have miraculously vanished. Such individuals lose their cravings, and don’t even go through withdrawal. They have made a heartfelt commitment to God, and He has honored the Bible promise that He will “not allow us to be

tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13-KJV). Perhaps God sees that the individual in withdrawal, and removes that burden from them. I’ve worked with people who actually have had that happen. But God doesn’t usually do for us what we can do for ourselves. Most people are able, so for the vast majority of individuals struggling with addiction, God doesn’t just “take it away”. That should actually be an encouragement to anyone who suffering with continued desires, because they are actually at a higher level. They are able!

God gives us the power to intelligently go against our own distorted desires. The Bible does not promise people that God will perform psychological surgery so that they’ll never have the desire for evil. Unfortunately, many people don’t understand this. One smoker told me “I haven’t given up cigarettes because the Lord hasn’t taken away the desire. If I were to give them up and I still had the desire, I’d be a hypocrite and a legalist.” This is rather strange reasoning.

*Myth #10: God is Very Restrictive*

God is all about freedom—in fact, freedom of choice is one of the foundational principles of His government. If God didn’t value liberty, He would never have allowed man to choose to sin in the first place. In addition to giving us the freedom to choose, God also wants us to be free of addictions. No doubt this is why none of the good things God originally packaged for us are addictive by nature.

I have seen a lot of addictions in my work, but in my entire medical career, I have yet to see one person addicted to mangoes or broccoli! If I were to tell a patient that they should never eat cheese or chocolate again, or should give up ice cream, coffee, or beer, they are likely to break right into a sweat.

“How am I supposed to do that?” they ask incredulously. But when a person is allergic to broccoli and I have to inform them that they should not eat it anymore, there isn’t much of a reaction. They may be sorry that they will never have broccoli quiche again, but they won’t have to go through withdrawal. The same thing is true for all of God’s natural food creations. If we are a slave to our cravings, we cannot enjoy the freedom and victory we could experience in life. ■

**Director’s Message**



**Negative Effects of Screen Time in Children**

While ARMin is focused in supporting people in the process of recovery from compulsive unhealthy habits, it also aims at engaging people of every age in prevention strategies. While it is critical to walk the 12 steps in the recovery process we must not neglect to help parents, young adults, and youth in addiction prevention.

Parents play a critical role in helping prevent addictive behaviors in their kids. One example is in the area of technology. Our world is now structured around technology and kids are often left to their video games, computers, and cell phones, often without any limits on time and content.

Based on current research regarding the negative effects of exposure to technology among young kids, the American Pediatric Association developed recommendations for parents to ban any exposure for kids below 2 years old. Kids 3-5 years old should be limited to 1 hr a day and kids 6-18 only 2 hrs a day. Why? Some of the negative effects technology has are: development of attention deficit disorder, cognitive delays, impaired learning, tantrums, increased impulsivity. Besides that impact in the brain, other related problems are obesity, sleep deprivation, aggression, digital dementia and addictions.

God has called us to choose wisely what to see, hear and listen to, and for how long. Parent’s have a responsibility to guide their children in this area. Encourage them to spend time reading printed books and above all the Bible. This will go a long way to help our kids experience less addictive behaviors related to technology. ■

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