

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

More or Less

The expression “more or less” is sometimes used when a person is either unsure or intentionally trying to hide, and/or justify inappropriate behavior or an addiction (such as the number of pills they’ve taken that day). It is important to remember that for an addict – “one is too many and too many is never enough”

Often such imprecision is simply a means of covering up the extent of and seriousness of a person’s addiction. It is also true that “more or less” may be the appropriate response to a questioner if a person is someone who is overly focused on details to the point of obsession. God’s voice, along with the feedback of friends and family can help the addict know when they are denying the extent of their addictive behaviors.

While it is definitely true that the addict needs “a power greater” than themselves to restore sanity, with God that “power” may be less than originally thought.

In recovery the exact amount of power needed to overcome is again and again misunderstood. God is able with seemingly

little power to accomplish much. For the people of Israel who crossed the Jordan River to occupy the “promised land,” God said He would send hornets to drive out the Hivites, Caananites and Hittites (see Exodus 23:28). Hornets are definitely less powerful when compared to more powerful fighting man, but with God’s usage, they accomplished much more than would generally be expected. In Joshua 24:11 and 12, we notice that not only did He run these people out of their towns, He also did the same to the Amorites, Perizzites, Girgashites and Jebusites.

God through prayer, even seemingly small, weak prayer, when in the hand of faith is able to lead to just the right people to provide the power necessary to find freedom from obsessive thinking and compulsive behaviors.

Thanks be to God who knows exactly what is needed to help the addict and all others who find their lives out of harmony with His.

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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 the12
STEPS

Step 7—

“Humbly asked God to remove
our shortcomings.”

Biblical Comparison

“Create in me a clean heart, O God.”

— Psalms 51:10 (KJV)

Upcoming Events

National Problem Gambling Awareness Month
(March)

For more information: www.npgaw.org

Alcohol Awareness Month (April - US)

For more information: www.ncadd.org

National Child Abuse Prevention Month (April - US)

For more information:
www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/

Sexual Assault Awareness | Prevention Month
(April - US)

For more information: www.rainn.org;
www.nsvrc.org

Mental Health Month (May - US)

ARMin training Schedule: SAVE THE DATE

- Atlantic Union (AUC), New York, NY
(June 19-20, 2015)
- Trans-European Division (TED), Newbold, UK
(July 31-Aug 2, 2015)
- Southwestern Union (SWUC), Dallas, TX
(October 9-11, 2015)

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

Summer Institute of Recovery Studies (July 20-24,
2015)

Sponsored by the National Association of
Christian Recovery (NACR)
Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California
For more information and to register:
<http://www.nacr.org/5224-2>



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #7

We have admitted we were powerless and that we need to rely on a power greater than ourselves. We have made a decision to turn our lives over to God and we have made a fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Admitting to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs was not easy, but we have accomplished the task. We have become entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character and now we will humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings.

Every step up to this point has built us up so that we have the strength, hope, and confidence to take part in step 7. To be humble is to be aware of who we have become and what we are willing to become. Humbly asking God to remove our shortcomings means to ask him while admitting everything in the previous steps and while keeping our end goal in mind, but being wary of the dangers of pride. “When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.” — Proverbs 11:2 NIV “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” — James 4:10 NIV

Without God, removing our shortcomings is seemingly impossible. God gives us love, strength, hope, and recovery. In this step we have taken all of the necessary preparations for God to remove our shortcomings and we are ready. “Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven.” Psalms 107:28-30

We are strong, worthy, and we deserve to overcome each of our battles. We have come so far and we are not alone in this journey to wholeness. Finally, let us not be afraid or prideful in step 7, but instead let us to be humble. Let us gain wisdom from learning to be humble with our addictions, obsessions, and compulsions. Let us use all of the strength, hope, and confidence we have learned to ask God to remove our shortcomings.

Taylor Brady

Testimony

My name is Eddy and my Higher Power is Jesus Christ. I am a Recovering Alcoholic who struggles with Food Addiction. I have no early memory of my father but I was told he was abusing my mother and was dangerous when he was drunk, which was most of the time. So my mother separated from my father in 1972 and we moved to Claremont, New Hampshire. We attended Mass at the Catholic Church every Sunday and I was an Altar Boy for five years.

Some time later, while in the Navy, I was sexually assaulted by a superior officer. Naturally the trauma from these assaults made me angry and shameful. I escaped the pain with more and more booze. The Submarine Squadron Psychiatrists diagnosed me with anxiety disorder and disqualified me from submarine duty. I committed a crime while I was drunk and was sentenced to the Brig for one month. I was sent away to a six-week drug and alcohol treatment center. It was then I was exposed to my first 12-step group of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Shortly after, I was sent home with an Honorable Discharge to Claremont, New Hampshire. I started seeing a Psychiatrist at the V.A. Hospital in White River Jct., Vermont about the assault that happened to me in the Navy. They diagnosed me with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) resulting from MST (Military Sexual Trauma).

After many years in and out of addiction recovery, then relapses due to my work as a chef with ready access to all the alcohol I desired, by God’s power through another AA meeting and a new job in an alcohol free environment as Chef in the Dietary Department of a hospital in Springfield, New Hampshire, I finally found freedom from the powerful attachment to alcohol.

Early in my recovery when I was sober 3 years in AA, I was diagnosed “morbidly obese.” I was given a food plan and a support group in Overeater’s Anonymous that nurtured me back to a healthy weight. I lost over 100 pounds and thanks to my higher power-Jesus Christ, I’ve been able to maintain the weight loss.

Today, I help educate and encourage others through the sharing of my testimony and support in Celebrate Recovery and secular 12 Step meetings. My goal is to host a flourishing Jesus Christ-12 Step centered *Journey to Wholeness* recovery group for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Concord, New Hampshire.



H.O.W. to Find Freedom From All Addictions

Addiction is an average word, but a big problem. The definition of addiction is “a compulsive engagement in rewarding stimuli, despite adverse consequences, also thought of as a (dis – ease), a particular abnormal, pathological condition that affects part or all of an organism (people, places, things, idea, situations, and society).”

When you hear the word addiction, the first two things that may come to mind are drugs and/or alcohol. However, the word “addiction” means more than the use of a drug or a drink. It reaches everyone that has a compulsive habit that has caused him or her to lose sight of the welfare of others, including themselves. Let’s use work for example,. What can be wrong with work? Didn’t God say “a workman (laborer) is worthy of their hire” (Luke 10:7)? Of course, work is fine when practiced in moderation.

Conversely, those who work 80 plus hours a week with no time for rest, family or God and/or make excuses, are usually in the greatest denial (Don’t Even know I am Lying) about their addiction. Too much work can separate you from family as quick as a drug or drinking. Too much work can result in poor health, just as sure as drinking or drugging. A work addiction can mean that you miss or are late for many of life’s most important events. Missing family, friends, and life as a whole, brings us to the pain associated with an addiction, which travels in a cycle that seems to never end.

An addiction starts off good, fun, exciting, much like things did for Eve in the garden with the snake. “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for

food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat, good to the taste, good to look upon.” (Gen3:6) The very thing that was to be a blessing and a comfort becomes a distraction. At first, addictions causes small losses, as in Eve’s case in the garden, but then lead to extensive losses, then death. Losses, in turn, lead us to guilt and shame.

When God called for Adam and Eve they hid themselves. The two ugly twins (guilt and shame) lead to pain, and we, like Adam and Eve, find the only relief is to pick up the very thing that brought us to agony, the thing we lust after day in and day out. Think about it. What is your distraction? What causes you to lose? Do you want out? What’s the remedy for an addiction?

First and foremost, you have to acknowledge that you have a problem. Whether the addiction is overeating, not eating, gambling, perfectionism, legalism, rage (fire within, which can bring about depression or destructive outward behavior), materialism (overspending, hoarding) , people pleasing (you cannot say “NO”), codependency (two or more sick people getting sicker) and/or anything you continue to do that has adverse consequences. You have to accept the truth about yourself and your condition. Acknowledge that you have an addiction. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 john 1:9). “ How can one deal with this dis-ease, the answer is with Honesty, Open-mindedness, and Willingness (H.O.W.).

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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

Lake Union

West Indianapolis SDA Church

Twenty community leaders (police, mental health, pastors and others) gathered Thursday Noon, February 26 to consider the challenge presented by the misuse and abuse of drugs in Southwest Indianapolis. This was their third monthly meeting organized by Nelson Silva, pastor for the West Indianapolis Seventh-day Adventist Church Plant in that community and held at the Mary Riggs Neighborhood Center. Ray Nelson, Adventist Recovery Ministries coordinator for the Lake Union was invited to present The Journey to Wholeness program as a faith-based Christ-centered 12-Step program to address the problems associated with addictions and help the addicted break free from those addictions.

Southern Union

ARMin Training*Attendees at SUC ARMin training*

On February 6-8, 2015 pastors, health professionals, church leaders and lay members came together in Atlanta, GA, to be equipped on assisting people with addictions find recovery. The ARMin training is the official NAD curriculum that equips those interested in starting a 12-step Christ-centered Recovery group in their congregation and community. Over 60 people attended the training and motivated to love and walk beside people struggling with unhealthy behaviors and addictions. Southern Union Health Ministries director, Lynell LaMountain, stated "my plan is to see this ministry expanded throughout the Southern Union."

Pacific Union

ARMin Training*Attendees at SUC ARMin training*

On February 27-March 1, over 50 people came together at the Glendale Adventist Medical Center, California, across the Pacific Union (PUC) to become equipped to facilitate in the ARMin Christ-centered approach to Recovery. Co-sponsored by NAD, NPUC and Adventist Health, the training successfully equipped men and women to start and lead ARMin support groups in churches and communities around the region. Dr. Lorayne Barton, PUC Health director and her team expressed their enthusiasm: "Many churches have been asking for this training and we want to see more churches in PUC offer this service and ministry for the community."

SEND US YOUR NEWS

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Honesty requires you to get real with yourself and see the harm, which this behavior contributes to your life and those around you. For instance, are your credit cards maxed out and you find yourself unable to pay your rent or mortgage? The healing process calls for rigorous honesty, the kind that Jesus asked the rich young ruler to have when Jesus asked him to give up his materialism. "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? ... Jesus said ... Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother.

And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich" (18:18-34 KJV). He wanted to keep his addiction. As you can see, being honest is not enough; we also have to be Open-minded and Willing to make the change.

An Open-mind is the next step in changing whatever your addiction is. Without open-mindedness that accepts the truth, recovery is a far off. When we are not open-minded for the truth to come and make us free (John 8:32), we rationalize ourselves right back into to the bondage, the addiction. Let this mind be in you that is in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5) and say "yes" to God. This requires Willingness.

Willingness is the final step in finding freedom from the power of our addiction. One must be willing to accept the truth about one's addiction. If not, we will be sorrowful as it was with the young ruler. We must be willing to do as Jesus did – when he went to the cross. He surrendered all. In the Garden of Gethsemane, though He did not want to go to the cross, was without the support and prayers of his friends – the sleeping disciples, and that he had to die to self, yet he willingly surrendered to God's will, not his own. This is a daily task for us who have addictions. We have to die daily.

Now some of you are still not convinced you have an addiction, well the ultimate addiction is sin. For sin, taking occasion...deceived me, and by it slew meFor the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man or woman that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? The answer is Jesus Christ. Roman 7.

*Darcel Harris, PhD – ARMin Director at
 Westminster SDA Church in Maryland*

Director's Message

**Alcohol Awareness Month:
Prevention is Key**

In April, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD), observes Alcohol Awareness Month to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma and encourage local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. In April, NCADD is highlighting the important public health issue of underage drinking, a problem with devastating individual, family and community consequences.

As a part of this campaign Local NCADD Affiliates as well as schools, colleges, churches, and countless other community organizations will sponsor a host of activities that create awareness and encourage individuals and families to get help for alcohol-related problems. (check out their resources). Alcohol use by young people is directly associated with traffic fatalities, violence, suicide, educational failure, alcohol overdose, unsafe sex and other problem behaviors, even for those who may never develop a dependence or addiction.

Adolescence is a time of heightened risk taking and young people may not be fully prepared to anticipate all the consequences of drinking alcohol, such as swigging drinks to "celebrate" a special occasion, or being in a car with a driver who has been drinking. Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America's youth, and is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined. Among Adventist youth the numbers may be reduced, but the issue is still of concern.

The good news is that there are protective factors among that can reduce youth at risk behaviors, such as use of alcohol. Some documented by Dr. Duane McBride and colleagues are: understanding that their body is God's temple and that they should take care for it; family meals; connection to role models; and also volunteer service.

While ARMin is involved in recovery we must not forget that prevention and enforcing protective factors for resilience as important as recovery.

Katia Reinert

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