

Journey To

LIFE

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

ADVENTIST
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NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

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Editor's View

The Value of Training

I love good training events. To see participants engaged in the conversation (not necessarily agreeing about everything), asking penetrating questions, processing the information presented for themselves, and leaving better equipped for ministry, that is what good training is all about. As Christians, however, there is an even larger objective for training, and that is, to facilitate a personal encounter with God. Many training events are left-brain only. They give great information that can be extremely helpful. But an encounter with God, that is right-brain, experiential, healing and transformational.

Those of us who participated in the Adventist Recovery Ministries training for members of the Columbia Union in October were very blessed by the presence of God. We discussed some very real and challenging issues, and did so with respect and loving care. We looked honestly at ourselves and our history, and made decisions to move forward into the future.

Staff of the General Conference (Dr. Peter Landless), the North American Division (Katia Reinert and Deloris Bailey), and the Columbia Union (Leah Scott) planned an exquisite event with the support of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. But it wasn't only the wonderful planning, speakers, meals, and so forth that made this event so special.

We saw the living out of Ephesians 4:1-4: "Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace. We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future."

It is nothing short of a miracle that a group of people recovering from multiple addictions can come together with the humility and gentleness that was manifested in our recent meeting. This is the strongest testimony to the value and transformational power of a Christ-centered recovery program. We don't put on airs of greatness because we are all on this journey of recovery together. We've learned to listen respectfully to other points of view. We allow for mistakes. We are bound together by the work of the Holy Spirit deep within our hearts. If you haven't begun your journey to wholeness yet, I would invite you to join us. You'll be glad you did. ■

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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 11 —

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

Biblical Comparison

“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’”

— John 4:13-14 (NKJV)

Upcoming Events

NAD Wide ARMin Training: It is not too early to plan for next year’s NAD Health Summit where the official ARMin Training will be held. The Health Summit will take place in Orlando, from **Jan 31-Feb 2, 2014**. Registration for the ARMin Journey to Wholeness is already open. Early bird discount is good through December 31, 2014 at www.NADHealthSummit.com.



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #11

Step 11 is a “one day at a time” step. It is all about daily spiritual maintenance. At first, we recovering people use our support groups and recovery literature as the catalysts for our spiritual and emotional growth. But as recovery develops, we experience a deeper hunger for a living connection with the Highest Power, Who is the actual source of all the good things happening in our lives.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God tells us “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (NIV). But just like the manna that was given to the Israelites in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day’s need. We must gather what we need for the day’s recovery journey morning by morning.

Steps to Jesus, page 69, explains this so beautifully: “Give yourself fully to God every morning. Make this your very first work. Let this be your prayer: ‘take me, O Lord, as wholly Yours. I lay all my plans at Your feet. Use me today in Your service. Live with me, and let all my work be done to honor You.’”

“Every morning give yourself to God for that day. Put all your plans before Him, then carry out these plans or give them up as He guides. In this way you may give your life day by day into the hands of God. Your life will be made more and more like the life of Christ.

“A life in Christ is a restful life. There may be no feeling of great excitement [like might have come when we were in our addiction], but there should be a steady, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself. It is in Christ. Your weakness is joined to His strength. ■

*White, Ellen G. (1981).
Steps to Jesus. Hagerstown, MD:
Review and Herald*

Testimony

The last time I was in Seattle, I was so drunk I couldn’t deliver my shipment of household goods at the appointed time. I called the shipper to say I was stuck in traffic. Meanwhile I was drinking bottles of Gatorade and jogging around my truck trying to clear my system. I finally arrived at the house at 10 am with at least

half a tub of peanut butter in my gut and six bottles of Gatorade to boot

It was soon after this trip that I was in our moving warehouse. I had a yellow moving strap wrapped around my neck and was ready to leap from the storage balcony. I breathed in relief with the thought of death; just hanging there with all the fear and turmoil of my life gone. Gone and done, in the instant of a jump.

I scrolled thru my iPhone looking for someone to leave a video message to. I saw the name of a friend who had gone thru a treatment center. I wondered if a treatment center would help me. I gave it long thought; and then for the first time in my life I made a phone call for some real help.

In treatment, I learned to face my fears. I discovered that I feared so much. I cried every day for the first two weeks of treatment as I processed my fears. I was afraid at an early life of the sky falling on me, I feared God, I was very much afraid of my parents and some of my siblings. I learned thru my fears to protect myself thru dishonesty. A second Daniel was born to protect himself. That Daniel was safe and secret. No one could hurt him and he could do anything he wanted to. I would lie, cheat or steal to protect him.

When the shadowy honest Daniel could no longer stand the second clear dishonest Daniel the only choice available was the two to become one or death. Some might think the opposite is true, but the fact is, that the person we hide in ourselves is actually the honest one we never let out to be seen by most.

As I stood before my treatment center group of 10 guys, tears ran freely down my face as I honestly shared my fears of life and how it led to drinking. Most of those hardened alcoholics and drug addicts wept openly as I shared my story of fears. Fear had taken us all to places unthinkable. When I was done sharing the ‘two Daniels’ had become one tentatively and all those guys hugged me one at a time some crying very hard as they all shared my grief of fear and joy of life. ■

Daniel



Addressing Addiction Myths (Part 1 of 3)

For the last 10 years, I have supervised a 10 to 19 day residential program for Depression and/or Anxiety Recovery. Up to half of those who enroll in the program have significant ongoing addictions that they use to “self-medicate” during symptom severity. The bad news is that I have seen virtually every form of addiction come through the Depression Recovery Program. The forms that I most commonly see are in two categories: 1. Substance Addictions (Nicotine, Alcohol, Amphetamines, Cocaine, Marijuana, Benzodiazepines - Xanax, Ativan, Valium, Klonopin-, Narcotics -Lortab, Norco, Morphine, Dilaudid, Oxycontin, Oxycodone-, Caffeine, Sugar, and Chocolate) and 2. Other behavior addictions (Self-mutilation or cutting, Movies, Entertainment Television, Gambling, Gaming, Internet Technology -Texting, or social media-, Watching or Keeping Up with Professional Sports and/or News -Fear of missing out, abbreviated FOMO-, Pornography, Masturbation, Deviant Sexual Practices, Homosexuality)

The good news is most not only leave the program free from major depression and anxiety, but also learn to overcome the compulsion of their addictive behavior. Each person with an ongoing addiction at the start of our program has misbeliefs and usually holds onto one or more of the common myths (falsehoods) that inhibits their ability to overcome.

Myth #1: We can practice our addictions in moderation, because it's healthy to have "moderation in all things."

Over the years I've heard people, even professionals, state that they “believe in moderation in all things.” We do have to be careful in some of the words we use.

There is no such thing as moderation for a recovering smoker, gambler, or alcoholic. They have to stop completely. People with compulsive relationships to addictive behaviors and/or substances are in the same boat, so to speak. They are about as likely to engage in moderation as an alcoholic is to return to moderate drinking.

If you are a die-hard internet addict, this means you may have to stay totally away from the web. Don't have it in the house, even for business-related reasons. One click, one site, and you may be pulled in again. So don't use the Internet at all. Did you know it actually is possible to live a healthy life without the Internet? A lot of Internet users don't realize that this can be done, but life can be truly enjoyable without the Internet, even for former internet addicts.

After a period of time, internet addicts may be able to use the Internet again in specific and monitored ways. It may take 3-5 years for this to occur, however.

Recovering alcoholics who attend a lot of social functions know very well that they can't have even one glass of wine at any of those events. Why? Because the minute they drink one glass, they set themselves up to eventually get several more and drink them in quick succession. A lot of people fool themselves into thinking that just this once will be O.K.—that they will be able to control it. In dealing with an addictive habit, however, total abstinence for life really is necessary.

Overcoming addictions requires an understanding of temperance. A good definition of temperance would be “moderation in the use of healthy substances, and abstinence in the use of the unhealthy.”

continued on page 4

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

COLUMBIA UNION



The Columbia Union Conference conducted the official NAD ARMin training on October 4-6, 2013 at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital for individuals involved in or interested in developing an Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) Journey to Wholeness program in their local church. Leah Scott, Director of Health Ministries and Adventist Recovery Ministries for the Columbia Union reported that thirty-three participants were trained. Among the participants were 5 chaplains from Washington Adventist and Shady Grove Adventist Hospitals. The trained was co-sponsored by Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and the North American Division Health Ministries department.

ATLANTIC UNION

Several people attended the Adventist Recovery On Sabbath October 5th, the Official Kick-Off at the Antioch Church in Williamson, NY was held. The members of the J2W team that meet at



Mt. Carmel in Syracuse, and at Antioch, provided testimonies in a program entitled "Faces in Recovery".

Elder Darryl provided the Sermon for Divine Worship and the members then shared their testimonies of What it was like, what happened, and What it is like now that they are J2W members learning how to incorporate the 12 Steps in their lives! There were approximately 50 attendees, many coming from the Syracuse area, as well as from the local community.

A follow-up meeting was held at the New England SDA Church on 10/5/013. Steve B., the Health Leader from the Spartanburg, SC SDA church, taught the Sabbath School lesson as related to ARM biblical principles of recovery. Frank Sanchez chaired the afternoon ARM meeting and it was a great learning experience with the Holy Spirit leading out.

Featured Article *continued from page 3*

Myth #2: It is better to break addictions one at a time

Some people are willing to give up one of their addictions, but not another. Or they feel that withdrawal will be easier if they give up one habit at a time. However, a study at the Lifestyle Center of America found that individuals who give up caffeine and tobacco at the same time have a much higher long-term success rate in giving up tobacco than those who don't.³¹ Individuals who stopped using caffeine had a higher long-term success rate in not returning to smoking.

Tobacco and caffeine seem to go hand-in-hand. One is a stimulant, the other has a more calming effect. This is a very simple concept, yet scores of people fail because they don't understand how addictions work together.

Many of the addiction treatment centers here in the United States are beginning to implement this strategy. When they take a patient off heroin, they take them off tobacco and alcohol as well. Why? Because they realize that the patient is much less likely to relapse in their heroin addiction if they don't have another addiction on board.

Myth #3: Addicts must hit "rock bottom" before they can be helped

Mental health professionals used to believe that an individual had to hit "rock bottom" before he or she could be helped with an addiction.

They reasoned that the addict would be in denial in the early and middle stages of the addiction, and that since they wouldn't even admit the problem, they couldn't be helped. There is much to be gained, however, from dealing with addictions as early as possible. The longer an addiction is in place, the harder it is to break. Also, one addiction often leads to co-occurring addictions, not to mention other life challenges such as job loss, marital breakup, financial woes, jail time, or more.

How much better it would be to tackle the problem early on, before things spiral out of control!

Another advantage of overcoming addictions early on is that "early stage" addicts rarely have to come to a residential or live in program to overcome their addictions. They will hear a presentation from me, or read this book, implement the strategies and overcome "on their own."

By Neil Nedley M.D.

Director's Message



Each of us may struggle with addictive unhealthy compulsive behaviors. The path to Recovery is for each and every one of us. Maybe it is alcohol, drugs, or some other harmful substance or maybe we struggle with a process addiction. We must realize that any substance or behavior we may be using to alleviate our pain—whether it is a substance, food, pornography, gambling or even social media—it may be causing us to distance ourselves from our loved ones, it may be disrupting our ability to work or think accurately, or it may be obstructing our relationships with God.

Contrary to what your body may be suggesting, you don't need those things to survive or to be happy. In fact, we will never get enough of the things we crave but don't need because no amount of stuff that we don't need will ever satisfy us. Only Christ can fill the void you feel and help you to be fully satisfied and fulfilled.

Let us not postpone till tomorrow the decision to break free from the unhealthy behaviors that we crave today. As we approach the Thanksgiving season and the end of another year, we have a wonderful opportunity to do an inventory of our life. What are the choices you can make to set yourself in the path to recovery? Perhaps you have been blessed by being in this path and God is calling you to start an ARMin 12-step recovery groups in your church so others can benefit from it too. Perhaps you or a loved one would benefit from the healing embrace of an ARMin group closed by. Either way, the choice is yours. God has shown to us the path of life (Ps. 16:11). Whether or not we walk on it is up to us. What will you choose?

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