

Effective Steps to Undoing Addiction's Life-Shattering Grip

Many lives are in constant bondage to addiction and compulsion. Finding freedom from such shackles seems as distant and improbable as anything for those suffering and those close to the suffering. The only way to “come back to life” is to be healed and set free.

For over 40 years, my good friend Mickey Evans has been teaching men who are bound in addictions to alcohol, drugs or sex how to give up running their own lives and establish a glorious oneness with God. He and his staff seek to introduce them to Jesus—the way, the truth and the life—and then show them how they can hear from God personally. At Dunklin Memorial Camp in Okeechobee, Florida, lives are daily being transformed. Hopes are restored. Dreams are redeemed. God is transforming broken men from the inside out.

Soon after a man arrives at this “city of refuge,” he discovers there is hope. The men are taught how to give their hearts to Jesus, to prayerfully read God’s Word and to listen to His Holy Spirit. It isn’t many days before they discover that God is personally interested in healing their brokenness, forgiving them for their failures and helping them to forgive those who have let them down. The Holy Spirit of God is the enabling power to help them to live a successful, satisfying, enjoyable life on their way to spend eternity.

The 12-step program has been helpful to many people to overcome addictions. To the individual and his or her family, a real change has seemed improbable. In God’s mercy, they have found that what seemed impossible became a reality and a testimony to God’s goodness and power.

Here is the way Mickey Evans states his 12-step program:

1. We admitted we were powerless over our separation from God, that our lives had become unmanageable. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing, for the will to do what is right is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find" (Rom. 7:18).

2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. "For God is the One working in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as He is revealed in the Bible. "I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of worship" (Rom. 12:1,).

4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. "Let us search and try our ways, and return to the Lord!" (Lam. 3:40).

5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. "Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

6. We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (James 4:10).

7. We humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" (Luke 6:31).

9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. "First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matt. 5:24b).

10. We continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong, we promptly admitted it. "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).

11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as He is revealed in the Bible, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16a).

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs. "Brothers, if a man is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, watching yourselves, lest you also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

It is a joy to hear of individuals set free and families reunited in the grace of God. Anyone who has struggled with an addiction and its shattering effects on a life knows that deliverance really does come by God's grace alone.

These principles are for all of us. We all need this healing that God sends to us through His Word. We are purposed by God to receive eternal life with Him. And, while we have controls and passions in life, the controls are automatically in place as we love Him (see Eph. 5:1-2).

Thus we have no place for a limited life. It is important to have a life of total abandonment to Christ. In abandonment we have our obedience, physically, mentally and spiritually. With Him, the improbable occurs and rewards are eternal. {eoa}

This is an excerpt from God's Prescription for Healing by

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