

# HealthWorks

A bi-monthly newsletter published by the Health Ministries Department of the North American Division

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## HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE

**Y**ou're just like your mother" or "you're just like your father" coming from an angry spouse reminds us of our dysfunctional heritages. Since we didn't get to choose our parents, the temptation is to excuse our negative health behaviors, hereditary weaknesses and character flaws. Doesn't God's Word speak about sins passing on to the third and fourth generations?

In addition to parents who contributed to a home environment that was often short of ideal, the church, and the whole world around us is also filled with unhealthy, destructive patterns.

Does this mean you and I have no hope and no help available to change? A person can't change his or her heredity and is not able to do much about changing environment. However, we CAN find hope and help in developing attitudes toward both heredity and environment that will allow for positive healthy attitudes and choices to replace the negative thinking, poor choices, compulsive/obsessive behaviors, and addictions which keep us trapped.

Rather than using the disease(s) of co-dependency—alcoholism, drug addiction, sexaholism, foodaholism, workaholism—as excuses to stay in denial and continue to contribute to the downward spiral toward death, the person who wants to be free will admit their powerlessness to control negative addictive behaviors and go to any length to get help.

In a recent article "Killer Cocaine" (*Vibrant Life*, July/August, 2000) Gary Hopkins, M.D. Dr. PH., Director of the Institute for the Prevention of Addictions at Andrews University, mentioned that "the only power in this universe stronger than the power of cocaine is the power of Jesus Christ." This power available to the cocaine addict is also available to everyone desiring to change any and all negative habits and addictions. The process of change may be fast or slow (no two of us are the same). With Jesus Christ (God with us) in control, the changes will be miraculous. I know from my experience(s) of the past five years of 12-Step recovery.

Dr. Hopkins concluded his article with the following statement "It is through Christ-centered relationships that we become effective in helping people in our communities with drug problems." I am convinced that in addition to helping others with

their problems, participants in 12-Step recovery groups find help for themselves. This comes as they share their experience, strength, and hope.

Seventh-day Adventist Christians have *Regeneration* (a Christ-centered recovery program based on the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous) available to help themselves and others who desire to recover from addictions and other negative health behaviors that not only shorten life in this world and harm others, but unless eliminated or brought under the control of Jesus Christ as our Highest Power will continue to keep us from His abundant life now and for eternity.

At our annual board meeting we decided to provide a video and other materials to the 5,242 churches in the North American Division for "Health Emphasis Week," October 7-13, 2001.

Tradition 11 of 12-Step Groups contains the following: "Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion ... We feel it better to let our friends recommend us." Therefore, as the chairperson for the committee making plans for this upcoming "Health Emphasis Week" and in keeping with the principle of anonymity, I will simply let you know that if you are a friend of recovery and would like to share ideas for creating greater awareness for 12-Step Recovery through *Regeneration*, you may email me at [nelsray@juno.com](mailto:nelsray@juno.com) or call me (Ray) at 301-290-1634.

by Ray Nelson

# Building Resiliency In Young People



*Run the Race. Set the Pace.*

**JOHN'S** parents are active members of their church; yet he's a weekend binge drinker. He tried his first drink at home because his Dad and Mom decided it was ok to keep some "refreshments" around for special occasions.

**SARAH** has to leave the academy suddenly because she's pregnant.

**DAN** doesn't get to see his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday because he's gunned down after hanging out with some gang members downtown.

**BILL** wound up in public school his junior year and by the end of the year is doing crack every chance he gets.

**MANDY** is 15. She and her friends get kicked out of school for doing drugs in her dorm room.

**RACHEL** put an end to her pain by hanging herself. She was only 13.

## HOW CAN PACE HELP PREVENT THESE TRAGEDIES?

PACE is a prevention ministry of *Regeneration*. We know that in order to win the race of life, young people need to pace themselves. We are a research-based, biblically-supported ministry. We provide assistance to schools, churches and communities through awareness, education, leadership training, networking, and special programs. We help carry out prevention efforts that provide essential protective factors in the lives of young people.

Imagine in every school resilient young people who feel safe from harm. Imagine young people becoming excited about a healthy relationship with Christ, their families, their church, school and their community. Imagine your church and school the leader in your community for prevention.

Imagine Adventists looked to as a church that really cares about people. Now, let's not just imagine it, let's do it!

## A STORY FROM NEWEST PACE LOCAL CHURCH LEADER

One year ago, I had been reading about Eli instructing Samuel to listen to God's voice and to respond to it. As a public school special education teacher, clear instructions are crucial to my line of work. This passage really hit me. I realized that, as adults, we need to be giving our youth direct instruction to listen to God. This means that we have to listen ourselves and be recognized by our youth as genuine Christians. My wife and I prayed for help with developing a program for youth at our church.

Six months after reading about Eli and Samuel, I ran into Chris Donovan, the director of the PACE organization at camp meeting. It was a perfect match. We asked God for a program and He provided. Within six months, Chris was at our church providing Christ-centered instruction. PACE is very well organized with a strong emphasis on recognizing and understanding our youth. We learned how to recognize some of the early onset characteristics of at-risk youth while learning how to develop programs to address these youth.

This is not your typical "teach the youth how to be Christian" program. It is teaching kids how to be real by example while accessing the professional resources PACE provides. If you haven't had the opportunity to invite this organization to your church, I encourage you to. Don't be intimidated by lack of interest in your church. Our first night we had ten people, most of whom were there to help us set up! However, the next day, just after Chris' Sabbath's sermon, we had 25 interested people show for the training program.

James Walsh, Bellingham SDA Church

## PACE MINISTRIES

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# Practice these principles

by Darcel Harris

Isaiah the prophet spoke of foundations and generations in need of repair and restoration. *“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.”* Isaiah 58:13

We are the repairers of the breach. God commands us to seal the cracks, [the breach that is within] before we completely collapse. Many of us are marred by life’s experiences and are ready to collapse. Many cracks have been covered with a protective shell of traditions, good works, right schools, right families, keeping the commandments, studying, paying tithes, and works after works after works. Yet, the necessary repairs have never been done to bring us to our original luster. The protective shell has worked so well many of us have forgotten what truly lies beneath.

To save us God requires that all areas around the breach must be dug up, recovered, repaired, and restored. There are certain principles that if practiced will bring about restoration.

We must have certain tools to start the job of recovery. They are **Honesty**, **Open-mindedness**, and **Willingness (HOW)**. These three tools are necessary to start the good work. Along with these tools, there must be the understanding that this work is not to be done alone. It is a “we” thing.

God uses the words “us,” “our,” and “we” to help us see that we are powerless without Him and others. It is with honesty, open-mindedness, willingness and support that the recovery process begins. Let’s put on our hard hats and get to work, together.

God said that we are the “restorers of the *Paths to dwell in*”. These paths are the very principles that we must follow in all our affairs to recover. Admission of our needs, plus admitting we don’t have everything under control, is the first breach that is required to be repaired. Let’s call this **Path 1**.

**Path 1**, the hardest lesson of them all, takes us into unknown territory. It removes us from our comfort zone, traditions, right church, right families, right schools, etc. When we have our routines together, and then some person, situation, or thing tilts the scales, our lives become unmanageable and we react.

Second, we will have to look at who we think we are, opposed to who we really are. Who are we? Saints, of course. Yet, there is much more to us than that. We are sinners as well. Yes, we are still sinners whether the blood has washed us or not. How? Sin lives within. We were born with it. We grew with it. We will die with it. (Romans 7:15, 17)

John the Baptist understood this principle when he asked the Pharisees, who by the way represent good church folk to, *“Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, we have [been Adventists all our lives] Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”* Luke 3:8

At this junction, don’t turn around as Lot’s wife; go forward recognizing we need help in some area if not all areas of our lives. Don’t forget that gossip, credit card misuse, over eating, rage, over working, etc. is sin. For you to know to do well and not do it is sin to Him. It is not easy to be broken [face the truth about yourself]. It is not easy to accept the truth that we need help.

It’s not good to be alone after finding out and accepting the truth about ourselves. A safe, small support group is needed to keep you strong through this time of grief as you see the old man pass away. It is a period of mourning which should not be a time of isolation.

God has prepared a group within our very church to provide this type of support. This group works under the North American Division Health Ministries Department. It is called *Regeneration* (see Titus 3:5).

*Regeneration* is a safe, small, recovery, repair, and restoration group. Its aim is to support those of us who are ready to be “*Repairers of the breach*”. It is for you when you cry out as the publican, *“Lord have mercy on me for I am a sinner.”* Luke 18:10

*Regeneration* groups are located in various areas of the United States. For more information, contact Ray Nelson at nelsonray@juno.com or 301-290-1634.

## 2001 Schedule

Regeneration Seminars	March 2-3	Regeneration Seminar, Open Door Fellowship Lyndon, Washington (Everson)
	March 9-10	Regeneration Seminar Onalaska SDA Church
	March 23-24	Regeneration Seminar Wenatchee, Washington
	March 30-31	Regeneration Men’s Retreat North Carolina
	April 6-8	Youth, Regeneration, Prophecy Seminar West Seattle Church
	April 29	Federation Meeting, Regeneration Awareness Day Arizona Conference
	June 1-2	Regeneration Seminar Monroe, Washington
	June 8-9	Regeneration Washington, DC
	June 18-22	Regeneration Seminar Washington Conference Campmeeting
	July 27-29	Regeneration Phase I Alabama
	September 14-16	Regeneration Phase II Alabama
	October 12-14	Celebration Recovery Retreat Ft. Flagler State Park, Washington

To schedule a *Regeneration Seminar* for your church, call the Conference Health Department at 425-481-7171.

# God Help Me!

**Ellen White** had her first vision on temperance in 1848. Temperance was one of her favorite sermon topics. She wrote, "Temperance alone is the foundation of all the graces that come from God, the foundation of all victories to be gained." For contrast she wrote, "Intemperance lies at the foundation of all the evil in our world." (*Temperance* pages 201, 165)

Our society and our church are becoming more and more intemperate. Many kinds of addictions trap and enslave both young and adults. Hal Gates, former lawyer and now pastor, had to hit bottom before he cried out in despair, "God, help me!" Realizing that there were many addicts in our church who were struggling alone, he formed a recovery program for addicts called *Regeneration*.

I have asked Hal to coordinate this ministry in North America. He is serving as the Health Ministries director for the Washington Conference, but has agreed to reach out beyond his conference and help organize these groups throughout the Division. I thank him and his team for writing the articles in this issue. We would like to see a *Regeneration* group in every city where there is an Adventist Church!

We want to prepare a special video for all of our churches so that they can become acquainted with the resources that are available to them through this organization. We have stepped out in faith. We don't have the money or the resources to prepare this video but we know God will provide. If God gives you a burden for this ministry, read Chapter 11 in our manual, *Ministry of Health and Healing*. The manual may be ordered from the Health Connection [800-548-8700] or AdventSource [800-328-0525] And if you can do so, please send a large donation to help us with the production of this video and to spread *Regeneration*. We need your help!



*Dr. DeWitt S. Williams  
Health Ministries Director  
North American Division*

## A Special Invitation

The decision to take advantage of "Health Emphasis Week" (October 7-13, 2001) to create an awareness for the potential of 12-Step, Christ-centered recovery within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a costly one.

Thousands of volunteer hours need to be matched with financial contributions for production costs of video and printed material with additional expenses for mailing.

In addition to the 12-Steps which lead to recovery and the practicing of Christ-centered principles for living, *Regeneration* and other 12-Step recovery groups have 12-Traditions (Guidelines).

Tradition 7 is concerned with our being self-supporting and responsible for meeting our own financial needs. Therefore, we invite you and other friends of *Regeneration/Recovery* to help us cover the expenses incurred by this recovery awareness program. Please send your gift to help spread the word about *Regeneration/Recovery*.

Make your check payable to:  
General Conference of SDA

Mail to: Dr. DeWitt Williams, Director  
NAD Health Ministries Department  
General Conference of SDA  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600

Please indicate in the memo section  
that your gift is for *Regeneration*.

Thank you for your financial participation and your continued prayers.

## HealthWorks

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