

OVERCOMERS OUTREACH CANADA INC.

JULY 2014 NEWSLETTER

ADDICTION: SIN or SICKNESS?

Is addiction a result of sin or a result of sickness? After considering this question over the years, I have concluded that addiction is BOTH, Sin and Sickness.

Addicts often become entangled as a result of sin typically manifested as a bad decision or a series of bad decisions. We addicts have all made willful decisions that are not consistent with God's plan. We are just like every other human being. We have committed the sin of Adam. We have taken and eaten fruit against the advice of God.

Once entangled, the addict finds himself in a net, powerless to escape through his own will. Now the sickness takes over. The alcoholic becomes abusive to those he loves. The porn addict fights depression. The drug addict turns to crime to feed his habit. This is sickness. In this sense we are no different than the cancer victim or the diabetic. We are sick.

God, our Higher Power, deals with Sin and Sickness with different cures. Sin requires a Saviour. 1John 1:9 states, "If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness". (NLT) Sickness requires Healing. James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (NLT).

Jesus is the answer to both sickness and sin. All we are required to do is to surrender to Him.

Chris B
President
Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.



TESTIMONY BY LAURIE M.

I was baptized and confirmed in the United Church of Canada where I learned that Jesus loved me, and I loved Him with all of my heart. I was very serious about this as a young girl so I prayed and read my Bible. I took it with me on family trips even though my father ridiculed me with, "there's always a Bible at the hotel". (However, I will give my father credit for the powerful image he gave me when once I saw him kneeling and praying at the side of his bed. Humbling himself before the Lord was a good lesson for me.) I struggled with anger and fear as a young girl. I found it impossible to be perfect and since I was adopted into the home I grew up in, I never felt secure.

At the age of twelve, I developed a drinking problem that I hid until I was fifteen, when I started to get into more trouble at home. By the time I was eighteen, I was a full-blown alcoholic. My tolerance level dropped and I was unable to drink without getting sick. I somehow made it to university, but then stopped attending classes.

In the winter of 1990, I found myself alone in my dorm room, without any booze left, lying on my floor and knowing I couldn't stay there in Antigonish, but that I couldn't go home to Cape Breton. I thought that, perhaps, I should head to the big city of Halifax in search of drugs. There was only one problem - I couldn't leave my room. I pulled myself over to my bed where I knelt and prayed all night, asking God for help - a prayer I still pray. Through my tears I said, "I don't know what to do. I need help." I felt warmth and a light in the room, a presence. I definitely wasn't alone and I can think of so many times God has met my need immediately following my prayer, either by granting me the strength I needed to carry on or by working in my life through others. Sometimes I don't even have to ask. Not long after, that I entered treatment in March, 1990, and I've been sober ever since. During the next couple of years I read some of Bill W.'s story and felt I'd been blessed to experience what he had.

In 1996, we had a health scare with my three year old son. He had been falling a lot and the specialists realized something was wrong with the whole left side of his body, so he was sent for a CT scan of his brain. I was at work when the doctor's office called with the results of the scan. My son's father and I were separated since he was one year old, but the secretary said he should also be there to hear the results. I hung up the phone and immediately went back to work, pretending that the phone call hadn't happened. I picked up a book (I work at a library) and a piece of paper, which I still have today, fell out. It said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (*John 14:27 NKJV*) So I called my son's father about the appointment and didn't worry about his health any more. I sometimes felt guilty, thinking I should be worried, but God totally removed that fear from me and I didn't even have to ask Him. He knew that burden was too big for me to bear. Today my son is okay.

In 1994, I met Ray, the love of my life. He was a Christian and helped bring me back to a deeper relationship with the Lord. We met when he came to Nova Scotia on a speaking commitment with another 12-Step fellowship. After that we visited each other and spent hours talking on the phone. I was unable to leave the province and move to New York to be with him since I shared joint custody of my son with his father. We went to court but lost our case because witnesses lied, including a man who was a friend of my son's father (he later made amends to me). He had lied in an affidavit, but I never resented this man and I understood why he did it at the time. His ex had moved away with his children and he didn't want the same thing to happen to his friend. Besides, we now believe it was all part of God's perfect plan. We were too immature in our own recoveries back then and had more to learn.

So I was alone but I attended church with my preschool son, who went to the nursery and then later started going to Sunday School. During this time, I even thought of becoming a minister. Then, almost two years later I met another man. We didn't share the same beliefs but he was attractive, had a good job and was comfortable with my son. I was tired and poor. After about a year we moved in with him and we lived unmarried for a few years, even though I wasn't so comfortable with it. (We were married later on.) During this time we quit going to church; I thought about it at one point, especially for my son, but didn't go.

I continued with my recovery in the 12-Step fellowship I was attending, where I was surrounded by people with eclectic views of their higher power and convenient beliefs that didn't require much accountability. I allowed this to influence my own beliefs and I talked mostly about my "higher power" in meetings. I only talked about "God" in private with those I was sponsoring. I allowed newcomers' discomfort with the word "God" to influence my sharing. Right and wrong became less clear, so much so that, when I discovered my teenage son had been viewing pornography on his computer, I wasn't adequately alarmed. His stepfather thought it was normal.

My ex left us in August, 2009. After about a year of soul searching, I contacted Ray once again. It was like fifteen years ago was just yesterday, and he reminded me of who I was and who God intended me to be. Over a year later, (two years ago now) Ray moved here. Then in November of 2012, he and a friend started an Overcomers Outreach group in Halifax, so I told the women I sponsored about it. I had recently completed the 11th step and I was now very serious about living a Christian way of life. Two women left me immediately but the sponsee who stayed was a Christian. All through the years that I had been talking to them about the "Steps" and "God", I had Jesus in my mind, but they didn't know that about me. Also, one day my own son said something negative or

unbelieving about Jesus and I looked at him and said, "I love Jesus, Eric. You should be careful what you're saying." That was a wakeup call for me. If my own son didn't know this about me, then I was doing something wrong. We are to have a personal relationship with Jesus, but not a private one. That was my mistake.

My sponsor at the time had different beliefs than me; she believed in works, idolatry and superstition. (She isn't my sponsor anymore.) I was surrounded by self-seeking people; people that would rather be God than believe in Him. I felt like Satan's special project. Today I have believers around me and I don't have to live in emptiness anymore. My last wakeup call was when a young woman struggling with addiction reached out to me on the phone and I really sensed her desperation. I tried to encourage her the best I could but when I got off the phone, I thought of myself and what had worked for me more than anything else in my life - I thought "God". I knew that the next time I talked to Sarah I would have to ask her if she believed in God. Well there was no next time; she died, and I am unwilling to make that mistake again. My first thought has to be, "Do you believe in God, because He saved me and I will tell you all about it."

I moved a couple of times since Ray and I first met in the 90's and, at one point, I wondered where my favourite picture of Jesus was, but I didn't find it until our last move. I found a small box with Jesus' picture in it and a plaque, that Ray had given me, which had my name on it along with this quote, "...all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose." (*based on Romans 8:28*) I had put my heart in that box in 1995 in more ways than one - I essentially buried my love for Ray and Jesus in it. Sweet Jesus, may I never do that again.

I am now sponsoring Ray to become a permanent resident in Canada.

GRATITUDE

PSALM 92:4-5 YOU HAVE DONE SO MUCH FOR ME, O LORD NO WONDER I AM GLAD ! I SING FOR JOY O LORD WHAT MIRACLES YOU DO. (NLT)

To all our Newsletter Friends.

I want tell you how thankful I am for all our group leaders, financial support people, those who pray for our ministry, all our attending members and our Board Members who donate so much time to the ministry. Also, thanks to God for all the miracles we have seen happen this year; indeed Jesus is a miracle worker. Just this month alone I have been to 4 celebrations for sobriety from alcohol, drug and sexual addictions; 1 for 36 years, 2 for 7 years and 1 for 9 years. Praise God.

So out of gratitude, let us keep on reaching out to the lost and hurting people, so we can see God do more miracles.

**In Christ,
Ken S.
Executive Coordinator**

To see a price list of the Overcomers Outreach resources, please go to "Resources" on our Canadian website or email resources@overcomersoutreach.ca.

To read this newsletter online, go to "News" on our website

Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.
844-J McLeod Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2G 2T7

Phone: 1.866.881.2480

Email: info@overcomersoutreach.ca
Canadian Website: www.overcomersoutreach.ca
US Website: www.overcomersoutreach.org

Supporting Overcomers Outreach Canada Financially

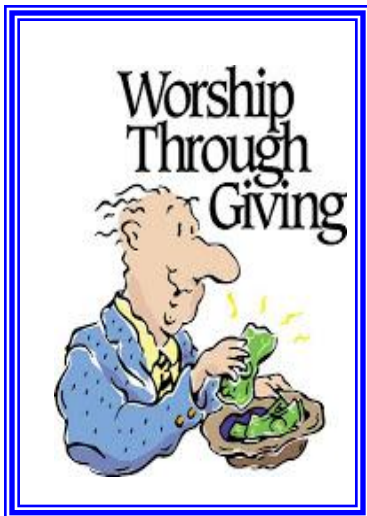
Overcomers Outreach is a faith ministry – we depend on the Lord and His people for the ongoing financial support needed to operate and expand this ministry.

Financial support can be designated to a specific ministry area:

- 1) Executive Coordinator's support
(Ken Sundelin's salary and expense)
- 2) Travel and Conference expense
(cross-Canada expansion)
- 3) General operating expenses
(telephone, website, office expenses, etc.)
- 4) Or simply designated as "wherever needed".

Donations may be made by cheque or online through [Paypal](#) - just click on the Donate link on our website. Please add a note to designate the area of ministry you wish to support, and provide us with your mailing address; a receipt will then be sent out early in the new year for donations made in this year.

Thank you for your support of this unique and important ministry!



I/we would be pleased to be a part of the Overcomers Outreach support team through prayer and with the following financial support:

A one-time gift of \$ _____ or regular monthly support of \$ _____

Please use my/our gifts for _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov _____ P. Code _____