

Newsletter - March 2014

Where Two or Three Gather Together

Overcomers Outreach is, by its very nature, a small group ministry. Our largest group in Canada has meetings of 20-25 people. A majority of our meetings comprise of 6-15 people. However, some groups meet faithfully with only 2-3 in attendance. I applaud these groups.

In Matthew 18:20 Jesus states: *“For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them”*. God knows that power exists in small numbers of His faithful servants. The leader of one of the longest running groups in Canada tells of a time when their group size shrank to just herself and one other person. Then, the other person had to stop attending for health reasons. She wondered, “now what am I going to do?” The very next Sunday our Lord connected this leader to another person in need, who then brought 3 more people to subsequent meetings.

My home group began more than 5 years ago. There have been times when attendance dropped off, but a faithful few continued to attend. In every case, this faithfulness has been rewarded when someone new walked in the door, in need of healing, and healing took place!

Small meetings also permit the attendees to learn more about each other and to develop deeper relationships. However, I do encourage these small groups not to become so exclusive that they fail to embrace the new person that walks in the door. Always be ready to do a Step 1 study. Always be ready to conduct a full meeting.

I was recently reading the 1955 Edition of the Alcoholics Anonymous “Big Book.” I was heartened to discover that, in the 1940’s, a lot of meetings took place with only 2-3 people present. Those faithful few enabled the establishment of a vast worldwide organization of people helping people.

In Overcomers Outreach our higher power is Jesus Christ. With Jesus in attendance, there are never fewer than 2 at any of our meetings. I applaud the faithfulness of those who anchor small meetings. Stay faithful. Don’t give up. God has great plans.

Chris B
President
Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.



Report from Ken

Honesty

As I write this short message for our newsletter, I can't help but think about how much those of us, with addictive issues, struggle with honesty. First, we lie to ourselves saying, "I can quit anytime I want to; I am still in control", or, "I don't drink that much, use that often, watch that much porn or eat that much", and so on, as the list of addictions can be endless. Then we lie to God by not taking full responsibility for our actions and thoughts. We try to minimize our sins before the Holy One, instead of pouring out our grief about how we have let our Savior down. Also, we lie to our loved ones, using cover-up and deceit. In the end, we find that living a lie is a miserable way to live. We know, from personal experience, the heavy burden of trying to hide our secret life. If we are avoiding God and withdrawing from people because of our fear of being found out, we are living in needless pain. A lot of us use our addictive and compulsive lifestyles to keep us from dealing with the unresolved issues in our inner being. So, when someone asks us how we are doing, we automatically go to our lying mode and say; "Oh, I am doing great!" By lying, we choose to live in pain, and when the pain overwhelms us, we go back to our addictive agent of choice.

Bill W, one of the founders of AA, said that without vigorous honesty, the addictive person will never fully recover from the effects of their addictions. I believe that's why our loving God gave us the words in the Bible 1 John 1:8-10; "If we say that we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to Him, He can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. And it is perfectly proper for God to do this for us because Christ died to wash away our sins. If we claim we have not sinned, we are lying and calling God a liar, for he says we have sinned ." (TLB)

#1 Are you fooling yourself?

#2 Are you lying to God?

#3 Are you lying to other people? James 5:16 says, "Admit your faults to one another..." (TLB)

I pray we all will become vigorously honest and see victory over our sin.

In Christ

Ken S

Executive Coordinator

Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.

Step 1 of Alcoholics Anonymous

**"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol [or any other addiction]
– that our lives had become unmanageable."**

We felt we were doomed to die and saw how POWERLESS we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us..."

2 Corinthians 1:9 (TLB)

Testimony from David J

I grew up in a dysfunctional home where my dad was distant and emotions were not allowed, but the public image was very important in our family. In 1995, I received Christ into my life and started attending church.

I read the Bible, passed out Bibles and served God in many positions. Becoming a Christian resulted in a huge change in me, but some things lingered and I knew that something may need to be addressed in my life, but what could it be? I tried more Bible studies, evangelism, conferences, prayer and fasting but still I knew I needed to dig deeper, but how? One day I was invited to an Overcomers Outreach book study. I was willing to try this 12-week study. It was the most powerful study I ever did, and it was the first time I ever cried in front of other men. When the 12 weeks were over, they invited me to the regular meeting of OO. I thought the group was for people with real addiction issues, so I hesitated in going. However, in talking with the leaders, I knew that it was my only option. When I showed up and heard the people talking, I figured I did not fit in with them; they had real problems. Weeks passed by and I finally realized that it was possible that this program might help, as I was losing the progress I had made from the book study.

I took the step of going to the meetings for a few weeks to see if it would benefit me. Over time, and coupled with sponsorship, I knew I belonged. I saw how the 12 Steps could really apply to any character defect. Meeting with my sponsor every week and journaling daily, along with phone calls, really opened another dimension of the program. Doing Step 4 and going through the check list from AA, with my sponsor supporting me, helped me to dig up areas I could not have found on my own. My biggest problem was the resentment that I had towards my father. What a relief Step 5 was, as I confessed my wrongs to my sponsor and found out I was not the unlovable person I thought I was. I remember that when I did Step 8, it was the first time I took a picture with my dad. A few weeks later, my dad passed away before I made direct amends with him. It was the first time that I ever cried so much over my relationship with my dad.

A huge weight has been lifted from me, thanks to my sponsor and the OO honesty group. Having said that, completing the Steps was only the beginning of meditations about my life. I still need the group today, as I can fall back into my old ways.

The Overcomers Outreach FREED book has been written "to supply the church community with some guidelines in forming a Christian 12-Step support group." (pg.3) Scriptures, relating to many issues which addicts deal with, are provided for reading and studying.

Fear

": to be afraid of (something or someone)

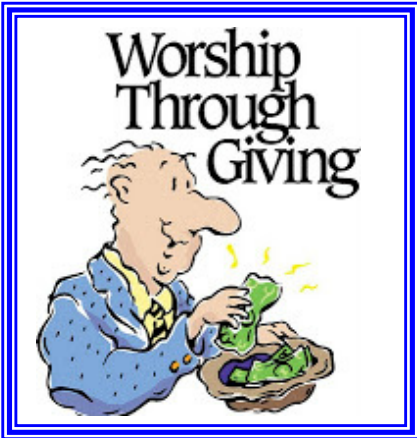
": to expect or worry about (something bad or unpleasant)" (Merriam-Webster) Fear can become all-encompassing, but God's love is **greater** than any fear.

The Bible says:

"The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear." (Psalm 118:6)

"I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears." (Psalm 34:4)

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)



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!

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

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