

Overcomers Outreach

“Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery and Churches”

June 2010 Newsletter

From the Director...

We welcome new members to our Board of Directors, Steve S. of Simi Valley, CA, and Bruce C. of South Lake Tahoe, CA. These members bring new energy, insight and will help to guide the ministry forward as we move through the challenging times at hand.



Welcome Steve (left) and Bruce

Leaving the Board after years of dedicated service are Jim B., of Tulsa, OK and Don B., of Sun City, AZ. Both members are leaving to exemplify rotation of leadership as suggested in our Group Traditions. Jim and Don continue to be active in recovery in their respective communities, and we thank them

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both for all of the time and help they have given so freely.

Overcomers Outreach is blessed with generous, giving people at every position, from the Board of Directors to the HIM panels and leaders, to group leaders and members. We glorify God when we love one another. Here's some of what we have been doing:

Celebrations...

In San Fernando, CA, the group had a “Taco Feed” with a speaker and group participation to celebrate OO's 25th anniversary of ministry. A donation was made to the Central Office and there was a good turnout.



25 yr. Cake at the bake sale

South Lake Tahoe, CA, held a bake sale which was a big success. Cookies, cakes and pies all sold to raise awareness of the help that Overcomers offers to all.



Bakers and helpers

Simi Valley groups got together on a sunny Saturday for a picnic at the park. Worship, fellowship, and a lot of fun on a beautiful day - does it get any better?



There was a lot of cake!

Welcome New Groups...

Indiana, Wisconsin, Georgia, Ohio, California, Virginia and Delaware have all recently listed meetings with our directory, and new group information has gone out to over 20 others as well. We have not had any groups in South Carolina for over 3 years and now we have 2, Ware Shoals and Fort Mills! Several other groups have been added to the directory that have been going for some time but had not been listed. Being on the directory allows visitors to find your group and also allows others to refer people to your group. Maintenance of up to date listings is a big job, and much thanks to those who have helped by “checking” up on other groups in their respective areas and passing the information on. Please feel free to check the directory for accuracy of your group information and let us know of any changes needed.

Upcoming Events...

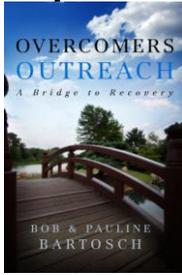
After some really successful events celebrating 25 yrs of OO all across the country, there's still a whole summer to have fun! Keep a close eye on our “Events” webpage for the latest happenings in your area. We post what we get, so send us information about your local event and we will make it available to all.

We will be camping August 27th-29th at Morro Bay State Park in Morro Bay, CA. this year. Last year was a blast and we “upgraded” the camp site this year, so it will be great. Space is limited so register soon.

The 7th Annual “Freedom Festival” in Long Beach is June 27th, which is a recovery music concert and speaker event. There will be other festivals posted soon as well, so watch for coming events.

The Central Office will be happy to help out with planning tips and publicity if you like.

Literature Update



Just in time to celebrate 25 years of Overcomers, the 3rd edition of our "Big Book" *A Bridge to Recovery* is here, updated with new stories of hope and faith. We are accepting orders on our website, or you may phone or write the office for your copy. The book is available now (after 2 years out of print) for \$20, and is also available online and in bookstores.

By taking our newest pamphlets (which group the 12 steps into 4 sets of three each), *Surrender, Cleaning House, Restoration, and Progress*, combining them with our *Group Traditions Guidebook* and adding some material on the 4 "Absolutes" from Oxford Group materials, we have developed our own version of a "12 and 12" for group and individual study. The book is spiral bound and is priced at \$6. The steps are seen with respect to the four "absolute" principles that were used to guide the Oxford Group in their program of evangelism, namely honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. When one's motives are checked against these "standards", correct actions can be better discerned.

In response to the increasing requests for help for addicts and their families, we have developed a guide booklet for meetings of FREED-SH (Sex Addicts - Healed God's Way), which serve as the bridge between churches and 12 step groups addressing the issues of sexual addictions. These groups are "closed" to ensure confidentiality and improve participation. The booklet provides a suggested format, group meeting guidelines, accountability questions and resources for additional help for the addict as well as their family members. This booklet replaces the supplemental

FREED SH booklet and is much more up to date and expanded to a complete guidebook for members.

Let it go ...by T. D. Jakes

There are people who can walk away from you - and hear me when I tell you this! - When people can walk away from you: let them walk.

I don't want you to try to talk another person into staying with you, loving you, calling you, caring about you, coming to see you, staying attached to you - I mean hang up the phone.

When people can walk away from you let them walk. Your destiny is never tied to anybody that left.

The bible said:
They came out from us that it might be made manifest that they were not for us. For had they been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us. [1 John 2:19]

People leave you because they are not joined to you. And if they are not joined to you, you can't make them stay. Let them go.

And it doesn't mean that they are a bad person, it just means that their part in the story is over. And you've got to know when people's part in your story is over so that you don't keep trying to raise the dead.

You've got to know when it's dead. You've got to know when it's over. Let me tell you something. I've got the gift of good-bye. It's the tenth spiritual gift, I believe in good-bye.

It's not that I'm hateful, it's that I'm faithful, and I know whatever God means for me to have He'll give it to me. And if it takes too much sweat I don't need it. Stop begging people to stay. Let them go!

If you are holding on to something that doesn't belong to you and was never intended for your life then you need to...let it go!

If you are holding on to past hurts and pains ... let it go!

If someone can't treat you right, love you back, and see your worth... let it go!

If someone has angered you... let it go! If you are holding on to some thoughts of evil and revenge - let it go!

If you are involved in a wrong relationship or addiction... let it go!

If you are holding on to a job that no longer meets your needs or talents... let it go!

If you have a bad attitude... let it go!

If you keep judging others to make yourself feel better... let it go!

If you're stuck in the past and God is trying to take you to a new level in Him... let it go!

If you are struggling with the healing of a broken relationship... let it go!

If you keep trying to help someone who won't try to help themselves... let it go!

If you're feeling depressed and stressed.... let it go!

If there is a particular situation that you are so used to handling yourself and God is saying "take your hands off of it," then you need to... let it go!

Let the past be the past. Forget the former things. GOD is doing a new thing for you! Let it go!

Get right or get left. Think about it, and then ... let it go!

"The battle is the Lord's!"

The Mailbox ...

Pakistan Writes:

Greeting in the name of Lord Jesus Christ.

I have received your news letter. We have formed an OO Group here in Pakistan and we want to get it affiliated with your ministry. On the May 20th, 2010 we celebrated our 4th anniversary of fighting against porn. I believe our association can make a difference toward the purity in Pakistan. I am looking forward to hearing from you. Blessings,

Pastor Azher Kaleem

Illinois Writes:

Thank you for sending the E-News and for all your good work. Please accept the enclosed donation for the group we lead at the Salvation Army. The group has been meeting at 7pm every Monday night since 1994. All new guys entering the program attend the OO group. Many have not attended church or read the Bible. Others were raised in the church but

turned away when they started using. We are thankful for the many blessings from using OO materials and the weekly Meetings. God bless you. Anita B.

Nebraska Writes:

Hello out there in sunny California. What a blessing to know OO has been going for 25yrs. I just celebrated my 20 yrs. Clean and have had an OO meeting at our church for 15 years. God Bless
Chuck M.

Hawaii Writes:

Hi Jeff - I just got your e-mail. I sure enjoyed the oo newsletter I miss the meetings, but I am going to a 12 step meeting here in Hawaii. Keep doing the great job your doing back on the mainland. Thank you Frank A

Texas Writes:

Hi Jeff,
This is Annie H. from the Steps of Faith Overcomers Group at Cypress Bible Church in Cypress, TX. I'm so sorry it's taken me/us so long to respond to your letter of several months back. Our group is excited that it is the 25th anniversary of Overcomers Outreach! We hope that the celebrations in CA are especially meaningful this "Birthday Week". We will be lifting up special praise and thanks to God in our meeting this Thursday for God's grace and His mercy that have kept Overcomers Outreach alive and growing all these years.

We are putting a 7th tradition gift in the mail tomorrow. We plan to begin sending a 7th tradition gift monthly starting at the end of June, Lord willing.

Thank you, Jeff, from our TX group for all that you are doing, all the hours that you are working, often solo, to keep Overcomers alive and well! You are appreciated! We would like to thank Pauline, also, for all that she is doing.

Blessings to you both and to any and everyone else at the Overcomers headquarters there in Whittier!

Annie for Frank and Annie H

Florida Writes:

Hi Jeff,

Excellent, I see [our group] listed; that was fast! I should have requested it be listed a lot sooner (my bad!). I forwarded your email to my husband so he can share your enthusiasm!

Last night I sent a flyer to a treatment center I visited the other day while looking for employment. Our church has a permanent sign out front by a busy road advertising the meeting. We are a very small group of 12 at the most but praise the Lord a gal got saved there one night after the meeting. Another gal just got a huge blessing after a few meetings because she shared she was offered suggestions; she tried one and it worked! PTL again!

I have almost 20 years of sobriety and my husband almost 29 but we have only been saved 6 years. The Overcomers Outreach program is a great ministry for us. Thanks again!
Wendy G.

Typical HIM "Thread"...

We thought we would share a recent email "dialogue" as an example of Overcomers helping each other in community outreach. The request came from Wisconsin. The start up information came from Southern California and the support came from Northern California. We never know who God will use, or where, or how – we just know He does!

Hello, I am Jerilyn J. and I see a need for this type of meeting in our community. I have attended GA for many years with success. From there I used God instead of higher power because of my faith. I now teach a Bible study at the county jail for women every week. I also follow up with those that need help getting back into the world after recovery. This is volunteer work that I do as well as being a wife, grandmother and a full time job. I have talked about having a 12 step meeting with God as the center and not a higher power to the women inmates. This has been well received and there is a sparkling of joy in their faces when

I bring it up. I would like more information about your meetings and how to get started. I am familiar with the 12 step format but need to know more about the Christ centered meeting.

Thank You, Jerilyn

Thank you for your interest. I will forward your email to some friends of mine that take a meeting into 2 county jails weekly, so you might hear from them as well. I will send you a "guidebook", pamphlets and a cd to share with the jail chaplain and inmate services officer.

Jeff

Thank you very much for the information! This will make a big difference. I will now start viewing the DVD's and get going on the first meeting when I feel ready to lead. It would be a meeting for those who get out of jail and need a place to go instead of partying. Over the years the women that reach out soon after getting out of jail are the women who are the most successful at staying out. We just go shopping, or out for coffee. They all say the first Friday night is the hardest and their old so called "friends" are right there to start trouble. These women get to know me on Monday night Bible study and would come willingly to the OO meetings, after getting out of jail. I plan to just bring it up when I'm ready and see who is willing, because they are the one's that are sincerely trying to change. It should be interesting to see where God takes this.

For it is by "grace" we are saved through Faith.....

Jerilyn

Hi there Jeff...It's Susie L. Big Dan forwarded me an email regarding a lady named Jerilyn interested in starting a jail meeting in her area. I just wanted you to know that I emailed her and told her to call me when she received the literature that you are sending her and we will go over it!

Susie

Have not heard the results yet, so I ask for prayers for those who would be helped and to praise God for providing the helpers.

Jeff

OO's 25 year Anniversary Party ...

Held at Whittier Hills Baptist Church

Saturday, May 22nd, 2010. Brunch,

speakers, raffle and music!



We had a blast! Thank you all.

Please feel free to make copies of this Newsletter and Pass them out

News from the Office ...

As you can see by the smiling faces, our 25 year "Birthday Brunch" was a lot of fun. We also raised some much-needed funds to pay for some operations and literature costs. Our volunteer staff is growing, and we have been blessed with people willing to help on a regular basis. We welcome some new network partners: Pure Desire Ministry and the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence, two additional resources for help and referrals. Links to these resources are available on our website, on the "Other Help" page.

The website has had a minor facelift. All features are the same, just a little "cleaner" appearance. We have re-designed the "OO Media" site to streamline and add features, especially "Talking Brochures". These are sample readings of some of our newer pamphlets that can be listened to via podcast. Pick a title and listen to a reading of the pamphlet.

To commemorate 25 years of OO, we decided to have some special tee shirts made with a special logo and "25 Years" on the shirt. Once they are sold out we probably won't carry tee shirts. We hope to use the funds to produce a brass or pewter finish "challenge coin" for celebrating birthdays and milestones in abstinence and participation in the group. This is in response to the many requests for medallions or coins with the Overcomers logo.

Purchasing tee shirts and books from our online shop helps support the Central Office financially. We feature the Life Recovery Bible, "Letting God" daily meditation book, "A Bridge to Recovery", and the booklets and proprietary literature for meetings. All are available from our online shop or by calling the Central Office. Your support is needed and deeply appreciated. We will continue to make every effort to reach out to others and advance God's Kingdom by providing HIM materials to facilities at the least possible cost. Contact the office for details.

FREED SH ...

Sex Addicts... Healed God's way is our newest project revision. Sex addicts live with condemnation and shame. Many are practicing Christians who attend church regularly. They are addicted in the same way as an alcoholic or cocaine addict. They cannot stop the lust driven behaviors on their own. To be freed from the addiction to lust is truly a "pearl of great value." The ability to achieve this is available through a simple 12 Step program and the power of Jesus Christ and His Word. By admitting personal powerlessness and unmanageability, a doorway opens to a new way of life founded on a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to revising and expanding the FREED SH booklet, we have designed and launched a site on our main website, called "FREED SH", which provides guidelines and formats for meetings, some general information on various forms of sex addiction, along with self tests, links to support groups, and referrals to sources of professional help. We also hope to build a national directory of support groups for the individuals and their families.

The purpose of a FREED SH group is to provide a "bridge" between sexual addiction recovery groups and the church in the same way that regular OO groups provide bridges between other traditional 12 step groups and the church. We give God the glory, praying that sex addicts may be freed from their addictions. We find joyful victory and healing by use of the 12 Step program, along with the Scriptures and the power available through a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Of paramount importance is the ability to offer a secure, confidential and safe environment for members. The SH group will therefore tend to work best as a small "closed" group, which means it is only attended by individuals who consider themselves to be addicts.

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17

One method of maintaining sexual sobriety which has proven to be most effective over time is being "accountable" to another individual and/or group. The individual may be an accountability partner or a 12 step "sponsor", while the group may be a small group of friends or a recovery group, such as a FREED SH group. Being accountable to one or more individuals breaks down walls of secrecy and isolation, which in turn fosters openness, honesty, and security.

Overcomers support groups have been formed in churches of all denominations. Here people are discovering hope and help for chemical dependency and other compulsive disorders, and family members are getting freed from their obsession with their addicted or compulsive loved ones, including those suffering from lust addictions.

There are several 12 step support fellowships addressing sex and lust addictions, and a few Christian based networks as well. The model we seek to offer is a FREED SH group (or other 12 step support group) for the addict and a regular Overcomers meeting for the family as well as the addict, where trust and understanding can grow and heal the wounds of all involved. Family members should also seek appropriate 12 step support for families of sex addicts.

The office gets calls daily (and nightly) from individuals seeking help with lust and harmful behaviors that come with it. Although sex addiction is not currently recognized as a separate "disorder" by the DSM IV, anyone answering these calls for help will immediately see and feel the genuine pain, suffering, and shame the caller is going through. One cannot help but admire the courage of those who seek help and wonder how many others have given up in frustration. We pray that this project may restore hope to those who so desperately need it. *He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind ...* Isaiah 61:1

There is a Season ...

Recently, I got word from some friends that were closing a meeting. They were sad about it, and more than a little discouraged. I was, too. So we look to God's word for strength and guidance. He never lets us down. *He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.* Ecclesiastes 3:11-12. When I think in "seasons", I begin to see the wisdom. Take the fruit tree. In Spring, it has beautiful blossoms. Summer brings lush leaves, and Autumn yields the harvest, then colorful foliage. What of winter? Have you ever seen the sun sparkle on the frost, or even snow or icicles? Each season is a time of beauty in a different sense. I see many more meetings opening and even re-opening than I do closing. And it is the same lesson in our walk with Christ. We blossom, grow and prosper, bear fruit, and endure, all the while in the beauty of Christ our Savior. Wow! Everything is beautiful, so be happy, and do good. Let's thank God!

Heavenly Father, we come to you in awe, unable to fathom your eternal works and overwhelmed by your beauty. As we pass from season to season may we see your beauty in everything and everyone you have placed before us. Open our eyes and our hearts that we may see and share your kingdom with others through the glorious beauty of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

If you would like to make a donation to Overcomers Outreach, Inc. to help defray the cost of this newsletter as well as other operating expenses, please visit our website or mail to the return address below. All donations are tax deductible.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or removed from it, please so indicate, along with your donation, or call us at (800)310-3001, or email us at info@overcomersoutreach.org and we will be happy to accommodate your request. We also welcome any news articles or testimonies you would care to submit for future newsletters.

God Bless

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