

Healing Hearts

MINISTRIES

Newsletter

November 2005

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*“Because of the devastation of the afflicted,
because of the groaning of the needy, now I will arise,”
says the Lord; “I will set him in the safety for which he longs.” Psalm 12:5*

God’s “NOW” happened for me about 40 years after my church confirmation at age 14. These years comprised my own personal wilderness journey, full of self-will and self-destruction. During this time, my choices had included the abortions of three of my babies. Even with my inner “knower” telling me it was the wrong thing for me to do, I went ahead with each abortion as if I had no other choice. I judged each decision “understandable perhaps, but *never* forgivable”. I was used to carrying guilt and shame long before I could identify what that “icky” feeling in my soul was all about. It was so familiar to me that I believed I somehow deserved to own it. As early as age 12, I knew something was not right within my family and I wanted to find out what it was. I persevered, with all good intentions, toward my goal of finding a way towards love and wholeness. My attempts were dramatic, exhausting and unfulfilling. It was just too easy for me to get lost, scared and hurt in that wilderness.

I was born to poor, uneducated immigrants from Finland, who worked very hard at just surviving. I worked hard too, striving to please my dad since I was a little girl. I had some accomplishments that I hoped would prove I was OK. I performed a private piano recital at Carnegie Hall. I won a NY State scholarship to college and graduated on the Dean’s list, with honors. Yet during college, I used to sit and eat my lunch, alone, in the women’s restroom – too full of shame and too scared of people to even walk into the student’s cafeteria. As hard as I struggled to grasp onto the American life with all its rewards, I missed out. For most of my life I felt lonely, unsafe, confused or in pain. Deep inside, I was carrying many ugly scars left behind by a raging/alcoholic upbringing, abortion, divorce and my father’s suicide.



I knew who Jesus was and thought He was my Savior; but I did *not* know how to live a good and successful life. I didn’t know much about love either – and the good stuff that *was* in my head, never reached down far

enough into my heart. I just didn’t get it! By September of this past year, I finally decided that I could not go on being “Janet” this way. I no longer had the strength; my receiver was broken and my pilot light was out. I was sick of my life, my sins and my self. I didn’t want to be “me” any longer. I was filled with pain and desperate for any kind of relief. I came to the place where I didn’t even want to live anymore. I began to contemplate suicide. Mercifully, God rescued me from acting out my despair, and I was blessed with a dawning recognition that the life I wanted for myself was *never* going to happen with me in control.

A Stephen’s Minister saw me sobbing in church one Sunday and asked if she could give me a hug. I said yes. She did and then she led me to other women in the church. I found strength to cooperate with the little that remained of my desire to be well. I decided to risk being vulnerable and I threw myself on their pity. This “coming out of hiding” was new for me and the loving response I received was an overwhelming relief. Each woman, I am convinced, was given a divine appointment to walk beside and nurture me with the prayers, compassion and encouragement that I had

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Healing Hearts in Iraq

Suzy Liebman, a Healing Hearts Leader and medic in the Army, received orders in October to be deployed to Iraq for a year. Suzy went through “The Hem of His Garment” bible study in the spring of 2004 and completed the Healing Hearts training the following September to become a leader. During her time in Washington state she co-lead two

groups and was actively involved in developing data bases for the National Headquarters office. Suzy re-enlisted in May after feeling the Lord calling her to stay in the Army and transferred from Ft. Lewis in Washington to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. Suzy’s husband Todd who is also in the Army, will be staying behind to take care of their home. She doesn’t want to be away from her family and home but knows God has a plan for her while she is deployed. Suzy is looking forward to ministering to women in the military using the Healing Hearts study. **Please remember to keep her and her husband in your prayers.**

Women’s Prison Ministry

By Jenny Hall

As we have ministered in the women’s prison we have been stretched and blessed beyond measure! Our goal has been to go in and heal women and then train them to be group facilitators. With over 1,000 women incarcerated at Dwight Correctional Center there is a need for strong spiritual leaders within the system to minister to each other. We are very pleased to announce that our groups this fall will have two inmates co-leading with Healing Hearts leaders. The word is spreading about the healing that is coming from the bible study... we had 35 women on a waiting list for our fall groups. While this is very exciting it is also heart breaking because we do not have the leaders to lead groups for that many women. *“The fields are white unto harvest and the workers are few”*. We have been privileged to watch God heal and transform 27 lives over the last year and a half. Our prayer is that God will continue to heal and raise up inmates to become Healing Hearts leaders.

From T.E. : Healing Hearts helped me to see how hearts can be so damaged to the point that we cannot or do not even know in what areas or depths we are wounded. Healing Hearts let me see how much I was actually broken and how I had been lying to myself for so long. Honestly, especially self-honesty was my mask – one of them – and I don’t have to wear that anymore. Hearing other women’s struggles and of their pain also helped me see and know that I am not alone. The fellowship was great and my group leaders are so precious. Thank you for this blessed gift – Healing Hearts! I am so much enriched by it.

From Tina: I’ve experienced so much healing of past pain. I’ve learned so much about forgiveness on my part as well. I look at life so much differently and I look forward to my future as before I really did not want to live anymore. Now, I want to live, I want to be a servant of God and I look forward to going wherever He takes me.

Mission to Former USSR Update

By Teresa Rinker, Foreign Missions Director

The foreign mission field is ripe for the harvest and God is healing many and raising up leaders. Slava Bogoo! (Praise God!) We are working with two Crisis Pregnancy Centers, the Baptist Union, Calvary Chapel Churches and our missionary Vanessa McElroy, God is bringing hope and healing to post-abortive women in Ukraine.

In 2005, we brought the ministry to three additional cities and firmed up ministry in two separate regions. So far we have trained 23 leaders and have distributed over 1,000 Bible studies over the past three years. Lord willing, we will return in Spring of 2006 and will offer two leadership trainings in the Lugansk and Kiev Regions.

We plan to do additional outreaches in the three cities where we are currently working to establish the ministry, as well as continue our work with two Crisis Pregnancy Centers. We are currently working to present the ministry to those in the USA who have a burden for Russian Speaking Countries in hopes of raising funds that will continue to support this mission. Please join with us as we support women like Valentina who wrote: “It is very important for me to know the destiny of my killed children. The Lord has accepted them, praise God. Also it is very important that God forgives, loves, and keeps those like myself. Through this ministry God has taught me to forgive.” If you would like more information on this mission please contact me at teresalr@healinghearts.org. If you would like to support this mission financially, please earmark your donations, “USSR Mission”.

Seattle Union Gospel Women’s Shelter

by Susan Owen

In March of 2005 Healing Hearts held their first post-abortion bible study group at the Seattle Union Gospel Mission women’s shelter. Susie Alicandro, Chay B. and Susan Owen were the leaders who blazed the trail for this new ministry opportunity. Susan Owen said “The beginning of this group was very rocky, but the Lord prevailed. Those women who put their heart and soul into their bible study and time with the Lord received more than they could ever imagine.

One of our clients rededicated her life to the Lord. It was so exciting to watch these women be transformed...especially ‘Ann’. We now call her our ‘preacher lady’. Ann became our spokes-person and openly shared her testimony at the Healing Hearts golf tournament.” Ann also accompanied Susan and Eileen L as they met with Jan Good, who is the director of the Everett Gospel Mission women’s shelter. Because of the work that God had done in Ann’s life, Jan caught the vision for Healing Hearts to also be present at the Everett Gospel Mission. Healing Hearts groups will be starting in November 2005 and January of 2006. Please pray for the leaders who will be participating in these groups.

Healing Hearts Ministries

(Cover Story Continued)

been starving for. I went through many more tears – first, as I was hospitalized with bipolar depression; secondly, as I submitted to a *scouring* of my heart during an intense Healing Hearts Bible study. A small but definite glimmer of hope began to break into my guarded, sad and fearful heart. I finally had a place to run to get the hugs I never remembered receiving as a child. I dared to trust enough to follow their lead into what would become my extraordinary healing process.

I worked as hard during that ten-week Healing Hearts bible study as anything I had ever done. It became my only work – letting the Holy Spirit and scripture search out and measure my true, wounded and hard-hearted human condition before God. I cried through my homework six days a week! (My husband was grateful for my one day off!) I cried hot tears of pain, anger, ignorance and rebellion; then, melting tears of loneliness, helplessness, sorrow and forgiveness. God was using the tears to wash the dirt, which had accumulated from my wilderness journey, off my wayward feet. I was finally willing to let Him.

I began to pay attention to God, and what *He* thought and how *He* felt about me. Although I was trembling at this prospect, not once did I have to face His holiness and truth without experiencing generous expressions of His love for me.

Throughout this healing process, God was doing more than I could think or imagine! He revealed two large stones in my heart that had weighed heavily on every aspect of my life. One was a vow of survival I had made as an eight-year-old child: I never wanted to be like my mother; I never wanted to be in a position of weakness where someone else could control and hurt me, the way I saw my dad treat my mom. The second issue had tortured me for the last fifteen years: I carried false guilt, buried anger and the unforgettable pain of cruel abandonment when my father committed suicide. In God's hand, His truth healed me all the way to forgiveness and compassion for my parents. I found that those two issues could now rest more peacefully in His light than they ever could when I hid them in the darkest corner of my heart.

Hard work continued and I can best explain the extent of God's forgiveness and restoring power by describing an ornamental plate I had purchased for myself one Mother's Day. I was drawn to this particular plate because it said "Happy Mother's Day" (in Swedish) and it was dated 1972, my daughter Lara's birth year. It was a blue and off-white, modern, Scandinavian creation that portrayed a woman in a long dress holding her arms straight out from her sides. On the top of each arm sat two children – four children in all. I secretly looked at that plate for many years, remembering, that I had been the mother – and the *potential* mother – of four babies. On the day that God opened the eyes of my heart to see Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice on the Cross, He also opened my eyes to look at that plate more closely. What I had either not noticed or paid much attention to before, was now visible! Another child was holding onto the skirt-waist of this woman. The Holy Spirit

completed my utter joy and amazement when He impressed upon me John 7:38, "He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures said, 'From his innermost being (out of his belly) shall flow rivers of living water.'" Out of my belly of death through the abortions, Jesus was able to bring new spiritual life. In His redemptive love, I was not too lost and it was not too late for me to bear fruit, in an otherwise sparsely filled life thus far!

One day, I felt directed to worship and praise God. I obeyed and began with singing. I was – in my mind's eye – at the foot of Jesus' cross. Songs turned into sobs and I cried out loud to God, saying, "I surrender; I will forgive anyone, anything! Just, please help me!

At that moment, I began to experience an increasing awareness of God's presence. He showed me a different view of the Savior. I was behind Him, looking over His shoulder.

His eyes were open while He was hanging there, nailed to that cross. Jesus, The Alpha & Omega – The One, who had created time and could see from the beginning to the end! I realized that He could have gotten down off that cross anytime, if He wanted to. But He didn't! I saw Him stay there while He was watching my life. He took my sins, one by one, into His heart, all through my life until I was completely His and safely home. Then He said, "It is finished" – for me!

I realized that He saw my whole life – each thing that happened to me and each sin I committed and will commit. He had fought for me and had even rescued me from some disastrous consequences along the way.

I thanked God for leading me to the cross and for opening my eyes. I thanked Him for loving me so much and for being so merciful and forgiving. **Right then, on Dec. 7, 2004, I rushed to give my heart to Jesus as Lord.** I felt so much love for Him. I also noticed that the awful, uneasy feeling I carried inside of me – which I could never shake since I was a little girl – was gone! I was healed! I felt safe and no longer alone for the first time in my life. Jesus filled my heart with His presence that day, and I continue to praise Him for it! I praise and thank Him, too, for my family of Christian prayer warriors, counselors and new friends.

I also owe a debt of love to the two Healing Hearts Bible study leaders who freely gave me God's perfect gifts of wisdom and counsel, exhortation and encouragement, comfort, hope and faith, when I was fragile. They walked me to the Cross. I was strengthened and liberated due to their passionate labor to see the re-birth of a clean and tender heart towards the Lord. Thank you, Colleen and Jodi; I love you. I believe that I will never be the same – and I give all glory to God, my Healer, in Jesus' name.

***"I shall lift up the cup of salvation,
and call upon the name of the Lord"***
Psalm 116:13

Healing Hearts

MINISTRIES



P. O. Box 7890
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*“Binding Up
The Brokenhearted”
Isaiah 61:1-4*

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In This Issue....Devastation of the afflicted...Prison Min. Update....H H in Iraq...HH Ukraine...Seattle Gospel Mission...Ways to help.....

Here are ways that you can help:

- ☞ **Become a financial partner** with a monthly or one time gift. Ministry funds are extremely low at this time. Any size gift would be much appreciated.
- ☞ **Have someone from Healing Hearts speak at your church or next women’s retreat or luncheon.** For more information Email Sue Liljenberg at SueL@healinghearts.org
- ☞ **Are you a prayer warrior?** Sign up to be placed on our monthly prayer letter mailing list by calling (360) 897-2711 or E-mail: Info@healinghearts.org .
- ☞ **Do you golf? Would you like to donate an item as a prize?** Ask how you can participate in our annual golf benefit by calling Bob Davisson at (206) 898-7433 or E-mail him at: HHGolf@healinghearts.org
- ☞ **Do you like to walk?** Would you like to participate in one of our walk-a-thons that we will be having nationwide in 2006? Visit our web site for more information.
- ☞ **Do you belong to United Way? Or does your company offer Matched Giving?**
Microsoft employee..Your company may match your donation \$ for \$. Make sure you send us your matched giving form. Boeing employees can designate Healing Hearts Ministries to receive money from Emp. Comm. Fund #10440 United Way...Healing Hearts Ministries can be designated for your United Way giving. Make sure you designate your giving to us by using our full name which is “Healing Hearts Ministries.” Many companies have a matched giving program. Check to see if yours does.

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