

The Happy Prisoner

The
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Prisoner

How Misfits Become Miracles

William Sultzer
with Jerry Seiden

THE HAPPY PRISONER—How Misfits Become Miracles
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Published by *Psalms 146:7 Prison Ministries, Inc.*

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Development Edit by Jerry Seiden
Copy Edit by John Helmore
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Printed in the United States of America

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The names of certain persons and related details described in this book have been changed to protect the confidentiality of those persons.

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Dedication

To Louise Sultzer—My Mother

I want to dedicate this book to the woman who loved and helped me more than any other person in my life. Her prayers ruined my cocaine smuggling career and put me into federal prison. She prayed that I might be blessed and find God's best for my life.

My mom believed in me. She showed me encouragement, love, wisdom, understanding, and great compassion. Without her I would have lived a hard life. She accepted me and gave me the greatest gift—to belong. In her heart, I always found home and family. I was her son, no matter what.

She had a real desire to help others, too. She reached out to the good men and women who were incarcerated. And she wrote to many of them over the years.

My mom helped me when I got out of prison. She helped the work of this prison ministry with faithful monthly donations. And she is still helping to get this book into the prisons with a small inheritance.

She went home to be with her God a few years ago.

But her influence in my life goes on. I thank Father God every day for Mom. I thank God for all the mothers (grandmothers included) who pray for their children. I thank God for those moms who see the good and the gifts within us and who seek God's best for us. I thank God for the faithful love of a mother who could move God's heart and bring me to salvation!

Acknowledgments

I thank my God for sending me a few good friends. I have the kind of face that people like to hit. So I know who my friends are. They see my face and restrain the urge to punch!

I want to thank the *Psalm 146:7, Prison Ministry* board of directors: Jack Golden, Phil Surico, William VanderPlas, John L. Culler, David Dixon, Timothy Adams, and Daniel Gray. I am grateful to God for them. They have been faithful in their service for 20 years. They have loved and protected me through all of my hard times and mortal moments.

I thank my friend *Jerry Seiden* for his help on this book. He rewrote what I put down on paper. He made it possible for you to know what I tried to say—what I wanted to say. Jerry is a proven author and gifted writer. Although he has a brain like mine, he makes progress with pen and paper.

Jerry has added greatly to my life and this book. He truly cares for all people. He has paid a high price to share his knowledge and insights. He offers his gifts even when those who need his help do not pay attention or recognize the gift he gives.

He is just like you and I. He has struggled in many of the ways that we have. Yet God called him at an early age. His heart for ministry kept him from some of our mistakes. Plus, God gave him a good wife. She has kept his feet on the ground and his heart at home.

Jerry is a man of God who feels the compassion that the Heavenly Father has for His children. He can teach the Bible and apply its truth for today's world.

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William and Mother
(Louise) after he got out of prison. (1985)
Thank God for Moms.



William and two of his three sisters. They said, "he looks like he should be normal." His sisters were straight A students.

Introduction Start Here

*May the God of hope fill you
with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 15:13

My name is William Sultzer.

To start, I want readers to know who I am and why I wrote *The Happy Prisoner*. In the past, I was a part of the problem. Today, I am a participant in the solution.

My past was difficult. I was headed to prison 25 years before I got there. I just got away with everything. I had a lot of unanswered questions about myself. But today, I understand who I am. I know why I did what I did. I know why I felt what I felt.

There was no book like this to help me in prison. This book, or one like it, would have changed my life. Things would be even better today—I would be better. The information in this book would have answered my questions and opened my mind. I would have read it and been relieved. I would have said, *So that's why I am as I am! That's why I think as I do! There really is a reason for the difference I feel in my heart!*

I wrote this book so that others will have the information that was not available to me. I wrote this book to educate and empower the many thousands of prisoners who are just like me. I wrote this book to give those others like me a new respect for themselves and for their families and loved ones. I wrote this book so that others might understand their parents and find insight about their

family problems. I wrote this book so that others might educate their immediate families. I wrote this book to help others prepare and protect their children. I wrote this book to spare children from the pain and problems that I and other prisoners like me have known.

This book does not have all the answers. It gives readers a good start in the right direction. It also provides information about other resources for more study and help. And it imparts the passion and burden I feel for the men and women I left behind when I got out of prison. I can't change my past life and my losses. But I hope to make a difference for others who still have a future. I want to make a difference for those who need hope today.

I am grateful for many things. I only served four years on a seven year sentence. It could have been forty-five years—the mandatory term enacted three months after my sentence. It was the penalty set by federal law for smuggling 12 million dollars in cocaine. I am also grateful to be alive. The Columbian drug cartel were just starting to take over when I was indicted and sent to prison. If I had not gone to prison, I would have had to kill all of them or be killed. *Guess who would have lost!*

My gratitude and joy grow with every prisoner I see helped and encouraged. My joy is multiplied when those prisoners reach out to help others—especially family. This book gives me the opportunity to reach the greatest number of prisoners. So I am indeed grateful and still *happy!*

—William Sultzer

Co-Author/Editor Introduction

My name is Jerry Seiden. William Sultzer is my friend and my brother in Christ. We joined forces to develop and produce this important book. William and his discoveries provided the focus for this project. His vision is to share this message with every prisoner in America.

William understands inmates and prisons. He was there—behind bars and prison walls. He knows the childhood events that set him up for failure. He knows what it is to be misunderstood and mistreated—beaten down and belittled. He knows how it feels to be a round peg forced into a square hole. William was pushed to fit—till he pushed back. But that made him the bad guy to others.

On the other hand, I understand books. I'm a writer. I also understand people—wounded hearts and souls. I'm a pastor and a counselor. I understand the wounded because I've been hurt and broken, too. But with God's help, I found the way back to better days. I'm no expert—I'm suspicious of experts. I'm just a fellow traveler.

I've never been arrested. But I've known confinement. I've struggled with substance abuse and addiction (prescription drugs and alcohol). Like William, I've made wrong choices and suffered for them. No prison time—but I've had other losses.

Anyway, we have learned a lot along the way. We pass on some of those lessons in this book. And I use my skill as a writer to convey William's story and message. He has had the life experiences. I've had the education and opportunities for research. So I help him express ideas, organize thoughts, fill in blanks, and provide needed facts. My part was safer—softer. William's was not. He walked a difficult road—one filled with ruts and ruin.

William made some wrong choices. He took control—he did things his own way. But his way led the wrong way—all the way down. Nothing went right until William got right—got right with God. He let go and let God. He let God have control. That's when William began to understand William.

God helped him understand and discover himself. God helped William see himself from heaven's point of view. The heavenly Father didn't see him as a misfit who made too many mistakes. The Lord saw him as a miracle

who had been misled—a beloved man who could be made new.

This book is about a man who did the crime and the time. William was released from prison and began to discover himself. God was his teacher. He showed William that his road to prison began in grade school. To find success after prison he had to understand his problems in his earliest years of school.

I agree 100% with William's focus in this book. I know that those of you in prison are special to God. Your gifts and spark of greatness made Satan mad. It made the enemy notice and want to knock you off course. He worked hard to bring you down. He didn't want you to discover your gifts or use them for good—for God.

Some years ago, I heard a manager from Bank of America speak on fraud. It was a Kiwanis club meeting. The audience was made up of business men and professionals. The speaker started the speech with a bold statement: ***“Be careful gentlemen because the criminals are smarter than we are!”*** She shared some stats and facts and referred to research studies. She noted that prison inmates have an intelligence that is at least 30 points higher than the average man on the street. She filled her speech with stories and information about the creative ways that criminals have used fraud, skill, and intelligence to take money from bank customers.

The bank manager knew what William and you, as inmates, have always known. Inmates who fill America's prisons are not dummies—far from it. You are special in many ways. There is great potential for your success—there is hope in your future!

This book combines our insights and experience to encourage you. Our goal is to offer you a real word of hope—God's hope.

We know that life and its hardships can steal hope. The loss of hope can be dangerous. We can't dream without hope. We can't see our future without hope. We can't find a reason to live without hope. That's why the loss of hope can lead to illness and even death. In the Bible, wise King Solomon said, *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick...and broken spirit drieth the bones* (Proverbs 13:12 & 17:22).

Hope is important.

Hope heals and gives life.

I have a friend who discovered the power of hope. Bob Blackford was infected with the HIV virus back in 1985 (the early days of the disease). Everyone in his circle of gay friends died quickly of AIDS. Most were gone within months—no one lived back then. AIDS was a death sentence. Yet Bob lived. He is alive and well today!

Why? How?

Bob says that he is alive today because of hope—God's hope. Many only hoped in medicine—they died. But Bob placed his life in the hand's of God. He told the Lord to take him or tell him what to do. And God told him to hang on to life and hope!

Bob's story and his testimony to hope is in his book, *Heaven's Back Row*. Here's a quote from his book—a word about hope:

Researchers at Cornell University have discovered the power of hope through an experiment with rats. They put some rats in a vat of water and left enough space for them to breath, but they put a lid over the vat. All the rats died and sank to the bottom within about six minutes. Then they put the same number of rats in an identical vat, but this time they left off the lid. And the rats swam and survived for an astounding thirty-six hours before the researchers pulled them all out alive. You have heard it said that where there is life, there is hope. But I'm here to tell you the opposite. *Where there is hope, there is life!* [Refer to end note #1.]

The rats survived because of one advantage—they had daylight. They had hope!

We have all seen the opposite. We have all seen many with life but no hope. They gave up and died. Darkness was all they could see. On the other hand, we have seen others with no worldly chance cling to hope. We have seen them survive, thrive, and grow strong. The difference was hope, a light from above.

Hope is what William and I offer. Hope is a spiritual thing—it comes with truth. We want to take off the lid and let in some light. We want to help you make friends with the truth. We want you to make the discoveries and gain the insights needed to value yourself and fulfill God's purpose.

We want you to hope. We want you to live. We want you to know the God of hope. And we want you to understand that all of God's promises and power are available to you.

So this book is for prisoners. It is for those who are still inmates. It is for those who are free from prison but still on parole. It is for those who are plagued by failure. It is for those who want to understand themselves. It is for those who want to help the children at home—the generations to come.

Both William and I share a common faith in Jesus Christ. We share Christ's compassion for those in prison. We share a deep concern from the families and children of prisoners. We share a sincere hope that this book will bring new power and lasting change for prisoners, as well as, for the ex-offenders who never made it to prison. And we hope that those, who are enlightened and transformed, will inspire the same change in their children and future generations.

—Jerry Seiden

Chapter 1

The Happy Prisoner

*Happy are the people
whose God is the LORD!*
Psalm 144:15

I entered prison with Christ in my heart and hope in my soul. I was right with God and honest with man. I was right where I belonged. I had broken the law, and I needed to accept the consequences. It was the only way for me to have peace. I had already tried the alternative.

At first, news of the federal indictments made me run. I played hide-and-seek for two miserable weeks. But I couldn't run from myself or God. They were the worst two weeks of my life. I learned how Jonah must have felt. It was no way to live.

I had to face the music. I owed a debt for wrongs done. So I turned myself in and pleaded guilty. The authorities were shocked. They didn't know what to do with someone like me. I ended up in prison, of course. But first, I spent five long months in the Carson City, Nevada county jail.

I made the most of my time there. I read my Bible, prayed, and shared Christ with the other prisoners. The Lord gave me a Bible passage to reflect on. It was Psalm 46:10, *Be still and know that I am God*. I realized that this was the first time I had ever been still. All those years of life in the fast lane had left me lean and empty. But now in a prison cell, I was full of joy. I had peace. And the presence of the Lord welled up inside of me.

I was genuinely happy. It wasn't phony—it wasn't

fake. The joy overflowed and others were touched. I led five men to the Lord in that county jail. They saw what I had, and they wanted it.

I was close to God in prison. Through all the changes, God was my constant—my steady foundation. He gave me daily bread. His manna came through direction and guidance, answers to prayer, and strength. He gave me everything I needed to face life.

In prison I learned the truth of Psalm 119:67 (NRSV)—*Before I was humbled I went astray, but now I keep your word.* That was true for me. Humility improved my hearing! All are humbled by going to prison. Yet I was humbled and still happy. That made some people mad.

One of the unhappy ones was Ernie Chandler at Boron Federal Prison. He was a bully with a badge. I was summoned to his office one day. I waited for several minutes before he picked up my file. He read it, turned the pages back and forth, grunted, and then stared at me. He worked his face into an ugly contortion—like a man in desperate need of more fiber. Finally he barked, “Your prison jacket from La Tuna, Texas says that you’re happy!”

I exploded in a spontaneous blast of laughter. That brought Ernie to his feet. “Shut up!” he bellowed. “What in the hell is so funny?”

“Well,” I shot back with a smile. “I’d rather be a happy prisoner, than a happy hooker in here!”*

His face was flat. He didn’t see my humor. Maybe I should have bit my tongue and swallowed my quip. But I knew that it would be hard to explain the joy that God had given me.

That joy and happiness was always mine—so long as I was near the Lord. My location was at Lompoc (level 4-5), Terminal Island (level 3-4), Latuna in Texas (level 2-3), and at last Boron prison camp. But my home was God’s presence. The Lord was my place of rest, my resource, and my refuge in time of trouble. Others struggled and

suffered, I soared. I had no trick—I had God.

God's grace kept me safe, sane, and supported in prison. And His Spirit led me to the truth I needed when I got out. My relationship with Christ was life itself. Still, there were discoveries that I needed to make—lessons I needed to learn.

I had felt like a misfit for most of my life. I had believed lies and lived in pain. But my Maker, the Creator of the universe, wanted to re-educate me about myself. I needed more than faith to succeed and stay free. I needed truth—God's Truth for me and God's Truth about me. I needed God to show me who I really was. It made all the difference.

**The Happy Hooker* was a best-selling book based on the life of a high class call girl.



*William at 14 years old.
They said, "he was a bad kid." So he became one.*



*William standing next to Mrs. Williams.
He just could not seem to learn to read.*

Chapter 2

My Prayer

*Then you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free.*

John 8:32

I was in prison when God called me to do prison ministry. He gave me a vision unlike any other ministry. The ideas and inspiration filled my mind. And in prison, I had time to ponder, plan, and pray. I just needed freedom. I had to get out of prison so I could go back in to minister.

In prison there was time to dream and plan. I thought about my release and my new life. I imaged all sorts of things. There were great and good things that I wanted to do. But things did not happen the way I expected.

I got out and hit the ground running. I had to follow the vision that God had given. It had been in my head and heart for so long. I wanted to close the revolving door back to prison. I believed that I could help and make a difference. But I had a lot to learn.

I saw person after person return to prison. The ones I helped needed more than I had. I led them to Christ. I saw them filled and baptized with the Holy Spirit. But many still failed and returned to old ways.

My dreams failed, and I got desperate. I needed truth—I needed God. So I prayed, pleaded, and poured out my heart. I told God that I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. All the hot air and advice from other people got me nowhere. I needed the Almighty. I needed power—so I did more than pray. I made a promise, too.

God answered. His answer was more than I dreamed and not just for me. The insight and tools that I needed would also help 70 percent of all prison inmates. This book is my way to share God's blessing. It is also a part of my promise to the Lord.

I prayed that desperate prayer at a conference. Prison ministries and outreaches had gathered from across the country. I heard leader after leader stand up and boast about the success of their programs. They each claimed to have the missing ingredient to stop the revolving prison door. Some claimed that their discipleship program was the secret. Others bragged about their great after-care efforts. One ministry worked with the families of prisoners. Another one had a thing for demons. Exorcism was their key ingredient. On and on they all crowed, clamored, and congratulated themselves.

I couldn't take much more. They were all sincere, but they sounded like candidates running for congress. I had to control myself. I was tempted to cuss at or cast out a few demons! I knew the truth. None of their methods worked for everyone. I just didn't know *why* they didn't work.

We all had the same results. We all knew how to make the numbers say what we wanted. We could stir the statistics and cook our claims. Most ministries select a handful of ex-prisoners for their programs. They screen, scrutinize, and survey every prospect to the program. Then they keep the participants hidden in a house or secure in a "staff" position. All so that their results and numbers show success! But what about when they leave? Those numbers disappear.

The overwhelming number of ex-prisoners have no house, help, or handy staff position. They just face life again. The same old discouragement and confusion find them. The pains and problems that put them in prison greet them again.

The conference was hard for me. I was frustrated and down. I was full of doubt. These guys all knew a part of the problem. Like me, they thought money would help. They wanted to expand their programs and do more. They all meant well. Still, they were just as wrong as I was. I knew these guys, and I knew truth—we all did. None of us had any magic formula. We all fell short.

Don't misunderstand me. Many prisoners—men and women alike—found Christ and salvation. That was and is the greatest victory. But our hope—the hope we all shared—was to see men and women leave prison and find abundant and productive lives. We hoped and prayed that crime and imprisonment would never again touch their lives. Yet the truth remained: eight out of every ten Christian prisoners, with whom we worked, went right back to prison. Countless children grew up without their fathers. Their mothers were prison widows—single parents dependent upon welfare, food stamps, housing projects, and begging.

Another leader moved to the lectern to read more testimonials. I closed my eyes and prayed,

God, I don't want to do this anymore. I can't do this anymore. I can't stand to see another man fail and return to prison. I can't stand to feel the failure when they go back. I need your help. If You show me why so many of these men fail, I promise You that I will shout it from the house top and dedicate myself to help as many as I can.

My prayer opened a little room for me and God. I was still at the conference center, but I was somehow separated and alone with God. I was bathed in his warmth and blanketed in his peace. I watched my hands extend upward in praise. I heard the quiet whisper of my prayer language. I tasted the salty tears that found my lips. And

I met God there. He spoke to my heart and made me to know that He would honor my cry and show me what I needed to know.

God also showed me myself. In an instant, I saw my own revolving door. I saw my own repeated failures. I saw my own recurrent pain. I saw myself just as needy as any inmate. But I felt no despair. I had faith that God was in charge. He gave me hope. I knew that He would do for me what I could not do for myself.

I said that God answered my prayer, and He did. I also said that God showed me myself. That was the beginning of the answer.

Up till then everyone seemed so conscious of what I did. I even focused on the deeds and doings of the others. I always heard or said, “Do this!” or “Don’t do that!” But God was and is different. He knows that what I do is a reflection of who I am. The fruit that you see comes from the tree that is me. So it wasn’t the deeds that needed change—it was the dude.

God showed me who I was. He did not show me a felon, a failure, a fake. He showed me that I was His creation. And He said that He didn’t make mistakes!

The problems happened when others choked on my deeds and couldn’t see me! But God knew me—He made me. He knew my purpose and place—He knew where I belonged. God saw my value when no one else cared.

Chapter 3

Two Kinds of Special

*The word of the LORD came to me, saying,
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I set you apart.*
Jeremiah 1:4-5

Back in the early 80's, I was incarcerated in federal prison. I met a lot of guys and heard a load of stories. I listened to strategies, systems, schemes, and scores. They all had something in common. They all shared a special quality.

One guy was a criminal pioneer—the first to break into bank computers. He transferred millions of dollars into his own account. Today he still makes millions of dollars. But now he does his magic legally—he works for the banks. He designs their security systems.

I met another pioneer in prison—he used fast boats to smuggle. He built the first cigarette boat to outrun the coast guard. He smuggled load after load of cocaine into Miami.

The smugglers had a special ingenuity. They used their creative capacities to conceal, camouflage, and carry all sorts of contraband. They smuggled everything from Thai-weed, hash—to cocaine, diamonds, and dirty dollars. They were the Eiensteins of encroachment—the scholars of sneak.

Of course, I did more than listen. I got the chance to tell my story—once or twice. I knew I was no genius. Still, I told these guys about our operation. We brought

in cocaine—millions of dollars worth. We waltzed right through customs. We used people with diplomatic immunity. The diplomats got \$100,000 to bring it in. Another person got \$100,000 to process the paste. But we got the profit—in the millions. The deal was simple but sweet—till we got too well known.

We had our own chemist in Peru. He made the finest, lightest, flakiest, purest cocaine in the world. And it was all for us. Until Richard Prior blew himself up smoking our cocaine. Then everyone in Hollywood wanted it.

That's when the DEA gave up hope that they could catch us red handed. After 4 years of failure, they had to settled for a federal grand jury indictment. They weren't happy about that.

The other guys always showed interest and reacted to my story. Their response shocked me every time. The real pros, the guys who had smuggled for years, gave me the praise. They figured that my idea was the top trick—the smartest scheme. I remember what I said to myself back then. Wow! I thought, Maybe I'm not so dumb after all!

I realized that all of the inmates seemed to have some special qualities in common. No matter what the crime, we were all creative. We had smarts, guts, and no fear. We had hunches, and we acted on them. We didn't just take risks—we enjoyed risks. We thought outside the box and used our imaginations. We observed the world and learned from it. And we devised quick solutions to complicated situations.

This is important! Guys in prison know it. We're not dummies. We may have been called stupid. We may have felt dumb at times. But we are smart! We have many special gifts and abilities. Others may not have noticed or appreciated us, but we knew the truth.

I knew I had gifts. I just didn't use them for good. Instead, I used my imagination, intuition, and intelligence to get what I wanted. I seemed to have everything except

the capacity to think about the consequences. My way was like this: “Ready! Fire! Aim!” It was my lack of judgment and gritty guts that got me into trouble.

I don’t know about all the other guys, but I always knew that I was special—in two ways. As a kid, I knew that I was a special kind of smart. I had a head for all the things that mattered to me. I could do anything that I really wanted to do! I could shine like the sun—if I wanted. I could put stuff off till the last minute—then zip through it. I could talk my way out of trouble. I could read people and sense things about them. I could get others, even adults, to do what I wanted. I somehow knew how to do what I needed to do. I knew how to get what I wanted to get.

Then there was the other kind of “special” that I knew about myself. I felt this second kind of special at home, but most of all in school. In class and in the whole school system, I felt like I was a special kind of stupid. There were lots of reasons. They all came down to this—I felt like I was a misfit. I felt like I didn’t belong. And everybody else could see that I was disinterested, distracted, and disconnected. But most of all—I was bored!

There was more, of course. I didn’t read well—I didn’t know why. I hated it when teachers called on me to read. They tried to teach me to read, but nothing worked. They said that I didn’t care. Hey, I didn’t even talk in complete sentences until I was 8 years old! It was hard for me to care about school—I didn’t fit. My brain moved too slow for them. I’d stop to think, and then I’d forget to get started again.

Then, those awful tests. You remember the torture: “Don’t mark in the booklets, use number two pencils, fill in the ovals—ready, begin!” Yuk! Even if I had read like a librarian, I would have never read all those questions! I just pretended to read. I filled in the ovals and kept the answers random—a, c, c, b, a, d, etc.

For me, school was a sick and sad struggle. I found it hard to belong there. It was hours and hours of “Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah!” Then homework that prolonged the pain. I didn’t get it—I didn’t think I could. It was important to me, but I just couldn’t do it. So I gave up.

They tried to make me listen, but they never tried to talk. They talked at me, not with me. They didn’t help me hear. They tried to make me read—they should have helped me care.

The bottom line was this: I didn’t fit—I didn’t know how. That made me a fool to them. I knew that I had gifts, but I was treated like a goof. They made me out to be the dumbest kid in the whole school—not just my class. The teachers humiliated me. Kids laughed at me. That’s when my self-esteem broke the leash and headed south. It took me 40 years to find it.

I don’t know what I thought in my head. In my heart I felt stupid—dumb. I felt like a beaver in a world of squirrels. And squirrel stuff stinks! I knew that I didn’t fit in their world. To them—that made me defiant and rebellious. The problem was that I didn’t know where I did belong. To myself—that made me hopeless.

The school and the system around me didn’t get it. They didn’t understand or appreciate me. They choked on what I did, but they never asked who I was. No one stopped to ask or consider why I was different. I didn’t fit in their squirrel world because I wasn’t a squirrel! They didn’t notice me—they judged me. Hey, it’s hard for a beaver to climb trees and collect nuts! Maybe I wanted to chomp trees down and build dams!

Chapter 4
It's Not All Our Fault

*But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name,
will teach you all things and will remind you
of everything I have said to you.*
John 14:26

I knew that my brain was different. *Different* is not bad—different is different. Yet in a cookie-cutter world, *one size fits all!* That means that different is irregular and *not normal*. And abnormal is bad.

The abnormal or different things in this world always get a label. The Ugly Duckling learned that. Jesus was labeled too—*the Friend of sinners, a religious misfit!* I had lots of labels as a kid. I was labeled: *Lazy! Daydreamer! Bad! Dangerous! Trouble!* Then after prison, I finally got labels for the difference in my brain.

I didn't like the labels. But they helped me make sense of my life. They answered a lot of questions. To the world, the labels meant not normal and different. To me, the labels meant discoveries and new hope.

Hope? Yeah, hope!

I was glad to find out why I was different. I mean, why the school and the system thought I was different. I discovered why it was so hard to fit in and to color within the line. I found out why I couldn't read well. Why I couldn't remember what I read. Why I read words that weren't even on the page. Why I read words backwards. I learned why I had to study five times harder than everyone else. Why

I was so slow on tests—even the ones I wanted to take.

The labels helped me discover why I couldn't focus or concentrate in school. Why I couldn't get motivated to study or work harder. Why I was always late to class. Why I couldn't sit still. Why I was distracted, impulsive, and disorganized. Why I got easily frustrated and overwhelmed. Why I was always so angry.

The labels helped me discover why somebody so smart could get so screwed up. I saw why I had to fake it to fit in. Why I had to cheat to control the outcome. Why I had to do bad in order to feel good. Why I had to strike back to get even.

With God's help, the labels helped me overcome. The labels freed me to be myself. The labels were not the truth, but they led me to truth. And the truth kept me from a return trip to prison. I didn't repeat my mistakes—not the worst ones anyway. I thank Jesus, that I had the power to chose a new direction.

My relationship with Christ was and is the most important thing in my life. Still, my faith in God was not enough to keep me out of prison—the first time. And I could have gone back—I almost did.

I wanted to start a prison ministry after I got out. But I needed a job to live. I was willing to work at anything. A large Christian ministry said they needed help in the warehouse. I knew it was a simple and humble job, but it was honest work. So I told the manager that I'd take the job.

He said, "All right," to me. But to his assistant he said, "Give him the test."

I turned white and felt faint. My hands got moist and my mouth got dry. My breathing was shallow and my head was light. "Test?" I asked the lady assistant. "What kind of test?"

"Oh, it's our standard aptitude test." She answered

and added, "Please follow me." We passed her desk, and she handed me a couple of number two pencils. She kept the test sheet, booklet, and a stop watch. Then she took me to a small enclosed room—no windows.

I wanted to bolt. I wanted to tear up the test and tell her where to stick it. But I needed the job. Anyway, I thought, how hard could a test for a warehouse job be?

The lady handed me the long list of test questions and clicked her stopwatch. I was in a fog. The room got smaller. My focus got fuzzy. I tried to read, but some questions made no sense. I'd read a paragraph and then forget what I just read. Certain questions got me distracted—my mind wandered off. I daydreamed about stupid stuff. My mind left the room without me.

The lady came back, and I wasn't even half done. "Time's up," she chirped. "How'd you do?"

I had a million things that I wanted to say at that moment. But instead, I asked, "What if I didn't finish?"

"Well, the unanswered ones are all wrong, of course." She snatched the materials and disappeared. I waited for the results.

The manager came back in with the score sheet. He looked at the grade and then looked at me. His face got contorted—like foul smell hit him. He squinted his eyes and wrinkled his nose. I kept my mouth shut and waited. Finally he said, "We can't have somebody like you in our warehouse! We need somebody with a brain—somebody smart."

It was a sucker punch. I felt it in my gut. I had to get out of there. *I had the brains to make millions of dollars, but I don't have the smarts to move boxes?* I thought. *This guy doesn't know me! I once had Goddard Lieberston, the chairman of Columbia Pictures, congratulate me. He was impressed by my black Rolls Royce, beautiful wife, and Mill Valley home with the tennis courts and swimming pool. Lieberston said, "You have built the most beautiful*

restaurant and nightclub I've ever seen in my life! It's an extension of your personality. You have every single thing a man would want out of life!"

I tried to rationalize the pain. I tried to comfort myself with memories of the all the business and financial success I'd had. I tried to blame this bozo so I could feel better. But the truth hurt. It took me back to school and childhood—to evil. I wanted to kill the pain and do whatever I had to do! I wanted to knock this guy into orbit! At that moment, I knew why most of us return to old behavior. I understood why we repeat our bad and broken ways.

God had another plan. The Lord works in mysterious way. I needed someone right then, and God sent Maxine. She was the head of the prison ministry there. She just happened to walk by at the right moment. She saw what I was about to do. She stepped in and took me aside. She listen to my story and had the hope and help I needed. She said, "Well then, we need to find you a job that is worthy of your gifts."

Then years later when I was married, another Christian offered some direction and help. She was my wife's friend. She noticed my speech and body movements. She saw how I tugged at my collar like comedian Rodney Dangerfield. She shared her thoughts with my wife Teri. She suggested that I see Dr. Bob Lee at the Cathedral counseling center. She suspected that I might have attention deficit disorder (ADD) and Tourette syndrome.

My wife told her friend that I was easily distracted, bored, and impulsive. She complained about my mood swings and inattentiveness. She described my many projects, procrastination, disorganization, and so on. Teri's description only confirmed what the lady suspected. So my wife came home to give me the news.

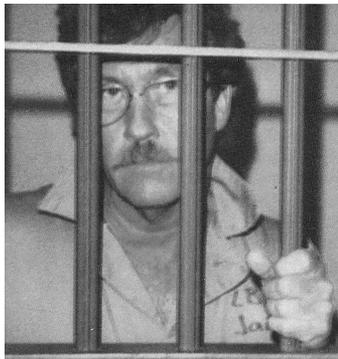
I didn't appreciate the suggestions. I was upset. All my life people have made me feel defective—less than others. So to me, this sounded like just another put down or dis. But there was a difference. God—God was the difference. I knew in my heart that God was behind it—I couldn't escape. There was something for me to learn, and God was the teacher. God was answering my prayer.



William's Restaurant/Night Club in San Francisco 1971 to 1976. Big named bands played there. Jerry Garcia, Santana and Van Morrison. Made lots of money and it was legal.



The fruits of the legal business!



Smuggled cocaine for 4 years out of Lima Peru out of our own kitchen. Prison is what you get for illegal business.

Chapter 5
Hunter-Pioneers
or Farmer-Nit-Pickers?

*Yet, O LORD, you are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.*

Isaiah 64:8

You could say I was a round peg and life was a square hole. I didn't seem to fit. Bob Lee, the counselor at the Crystal Cathedral, helped me understand why.

Studies show that about 10% of the population is different. It's a special difference that affects many areas of a person's life. I know—I'm a part of that "different" group. That's okay with me—now. I just wished I'd known earlier.

Here's a question for you. How would you like to do a factory job on an assembly line? You would have to put some *doo-hickey* on a *whatcha-ma-call-it* all day long. You would do that same boring job day after day, week after week, year after year for 40 years! Well? Want the job?

Believe it or not—the other 90% of the population can work that assembly line job for a life-time. They can retire after 40 years of boredom and be happy! Ouch! No thanks—not me!

The 10% of the population, who are different, stick out. We are obvious. The teachers know who we are. Like Walt Disney—he couldn't sit still in class. They put him in the back corner with a "dunce" cap on his head. Dunce is

an old-time word for dim-wit or idiot. A little later in life, Walt Disney was fired from a newspaper job. His editor said that he lacked ideas!

Thomas Edison was different too. His teacher said that he was retarded—too stupid to learn anything. So his mother home-schooled him. Sir Isaac Newton (the gravity guy) was a part of this 10%—like me. He did very poorly in grade school. He got lost in his thoughts. He had a problem with his temper. And throughout his life, others considered him to be an oddball.

Sir Winston Churchill was different. He failed sixth grade and was always in trouble. He loved to argue. And he didn't know how to give up. He lived by the motto—*If anything is worth doing, it's worth doing badly until you get it right!* He grew up to be England's Prime Minister during World War II. He was the perfect man for the job.

Football legend Coach Vince Lombardi was different too. A coach once told him: "You don't know anything about football, and you lack motivation!" Today the Super Bowl trophy is named in his honor.

Albert Einstein was also different. He didn't fit with the boring 90%. He didn't speak until he was four. He didn't read until he was seven. His teachers said he was "mentally slow, unsociable, and adrift forever in his foolish dreams." He was expelled from school. He was unemployed for 2 years after college. Friends called him a "loser." And Zurich's Polytechnic (where he later taught) refused to admit him as a student when he first applied.

What's the difference between the 90% and those of us who are the 10%-ers?

In the old days, the 90% were called *farmer-gatherers*. They could pick berries all day. They could plow, prepare, and plant row after row in the cornfield. They were good, dependable, and consistent workers. And they were brilliant bean counters—steady and sure.

The 10% were different in the old days too. They were the *hunter-pioneers*. They were curious and hyper-sensitive. They were risk-takers and explorers. They were the holy men and heros. They couldn't plow a straight row, but they could pioneer a path. They didn't like to fetch buckets, but they could find fresh water. They couldn't stand to pick berries all day, but they could track a bear and kill it! For more, see Thom Hartman's book *Hunters in a Farmers' World*. [Refer to end note #2.]

This different 10% of the population did just great in the old days. We set the pace and pioneered the path. Trouble cropped up with the "age of enlightenment"—the rise of reason. The 90% took over and pushed us out. Logic became lord and master. Spiritual insights were discarded as superstitious insanity. Science was superior. Life became systematic. School became secular, and kids sat in seats. Rows and rules filled the classrooms.

The hunter-pioneer type kids weren't designed to plant rows of corn. But now they had to plant their butts in rows of seats. They were curious—not made for a cage. They had energy—designed to explore. They couldn't sit still or settled in a rut. So teachers shut them up and shamed them. They were hyper-sensitive and quick to notice things. So the teachers punished them and put them in corners.

I was that hunter-pioneer kid. I was sensitive. I was curious. I needed to explore. I liked to take risks. But the dull day-after-day stuff bored me to tears—it led me to trouble.

No one noticed my difference. They called it defiance. Who I was did not fit their mold. The teachers called me faulty. I was treated like a bad kid. So I fulfilled their prophecy. I became a bad kid.

I was more than bad. Their treatment made me *mean*. I smacked the kids who laughed at me. I felt like I had to pay back all those teachers for the humiliation. So in junior

high, I stuck ice picks in their car tires. I put sugar in their gas tanks. In high school, I burned up one of their cars.

I was a cut up and comedian in class. School was boring. I had to stir the soup! But the teachers called me rebellious and unruly. They embarrassed me every chance they had. They made me appear stupid in front of others. I hated the teachers. I had to pay them back.

I was always in trouble. My middle name was “tardy.” I tried to watch the clock and show up on time. But no matter how hard I tried, I was late. It was like that all through high school. I did get a high school diploma. My last report card had 4 D’s and 2 C’s.

I passed, but the teacher stole my pleasure. Hundreds of kids graduated that year, but I was the only student not allowed in the ceremony. All the others could parade across the stage to pick up their diploma. But I was not allowed. It was their final revenge.

Graduation was on the football field in front of the old wooden bleachers. I made a decision the night before graduation. Since I could not graduate off that stage, then no one would. I decided to burn the stadium down! I got caught in the act.

Now I’m older, wiser, and truly Christian—but I still sorta wish that it would have worked. In other words, their rejection still hurts. They say that *time heals all wounds*. But that’s not all true. I remember how Mom used to say, “Don’t pick at that scab—it won’t ever heal!” She was right. Time can’t heal the wounds that I pick at over and over. My wounded heart gets re-injured and some wounds may never stop bleeding.

My old wounds can stunt my growth and send me backward. It’s my choice. The world around me is full of sharp edges and smart asses. The jerks will jab, joke, and jest. But I am the one who re-injures my wound. I am the only one who can make me happy or make me sad. I don’t give others the keys or controls of my life.

Not anymore.

Remember that test for the warehouse job? It jabbed at an old wound of mine. It took me back to my school days. That manager told me I was too stupid to move boxes. His words picked at my old pain. My wife suggested that I see the counselor. That felt like a dig. But why? Why did all those pokes feel like punches? They reminded me of the old lies and bad labels.

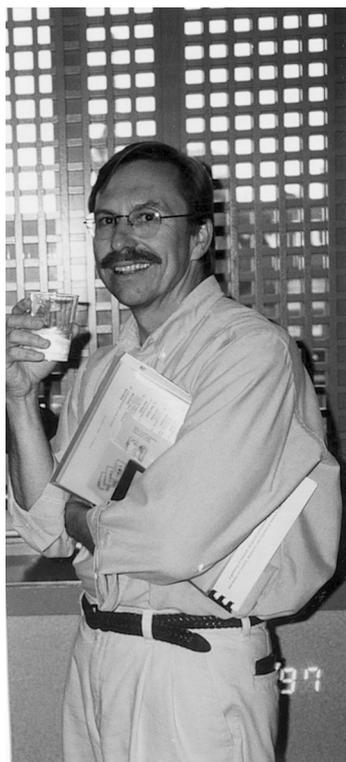
So what's the answer?

Truth.

Remember what Jesus said? *Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!* I am not a loser, a fake, or a failure. I am not an idiot, a dummy, or a defect. Sure, I made mistakes, but...***I am not a mistake!***

This book gives you the power of the truth. Through my life and story, you will understand the labels. You will learn the lessons that the labels teach. You will discover why those labels apply to 70% of all prison inmates. And you will realize that the labels are not the truth, but they can lead you to the truth and *real* freedom.

I was *The Happy Prisoner*. I'm still happy. It's my choice. I will not live by the lies that others feed me. I know who I am today. God is my Maker and my Father. He made me with His design and difference. I march to His drum—no one else's. I choose to be happy—I choose to be His.



Jerry Seiden

www.spiritofhopepublishing.com
Their new book with Debbie Haag
"When Night Begins to Fall" about
depression and what to do about it. (2007)

Chapter 6

The ADD Label

*The LORD said,
“Surely I will deliver you for a good purpose;
surely I will make your enemies plead with you
in times of disaster and times of distress.
Jeremiah 15:11*

Think about a child with poor eyesight in school. Without glasses, he would have problems. The blackboard or class posters would be fuzzy. He couldn't focus on the lessons or see the teacher's face. He would miss a lot.

What if the teacher didn't know that he had bad eyes? They might think that he's dumb or defiant. They might demean, demand, and discipline him all day. But their punishment would never improve his eyesight! His grades will fail and his self esteem will fall.

A kid with bad eyesight does have hope and can get help. Hope happens when other people look past the behavior and see the boy. They can see him squint and notice his need. He has a disability that can be corrected. Fix his focus, and he will fit.

What about me? My eyesight was okay, but I still couldn't focus. I was distracted. Hey, I was a creative, hunter-pioneer type. I didn't fit with the boring farmer-gather types. I was a Corvette in a room of economy cars. They were happy with a Sunday drive to church or turn around the block. I wanted the open road and full throttle! I was a sports car in a world of 4 door sedans.

I discovered that the label for me is attention deficit disorder—ADD or ADHD (same difference). I use the label, but I have a new understanding of ADD. The meaning has changed. To me it's *A Divine Difference!* Still, the symptoms that crop up are real. They are the signs of my stress and struggle. They are the fruit of frustration—my failure to fit.

Below are the symptoms that others see in me and label as ADD. But I'm not alone. According to the experts, the ADD label also fits 70% of all prison inmates. I'm no doctor, but I do know about ADD. I've lived it all my life. So I write about my life and my experience. Together with Jerry's help, we share information, personal insights, and a few ideas that help us deal with our ADD. Check out the following symptoms and see how many fit:

- easily distracted
- impulsive
- restless
- disorganized
- easily overwhelmed
- hyperactive or hypoactive
- daydreamer
- procrastinator
- easily bored
- impatient
- many projects at once
- trouble following through
- tendency to say what comes to mind
- tendency toward addictive behavior
- mood swings with anxiety or depression
- sense of doom
- sense of failure and underachievement
- difficulty in relationships
- difficulty in the workplace or career
- low self-esteem
- sudden outbursts of anger

Those who relate to half or more of the symptoms probably fit the ADD label—like me. Understanding ADD brought the pieces of my life’s puzzle together. Things made sense. I thought, *So that’s why I am the way I am!* I found a book about ADD titled: *You Mean I’m Not Lazy, Stupid, & Crazy?!* I could relate—I was relieved.

My life makes sense with the ADD label. It’s why I was so bored at school. It’s why I hated every school day and almost every teacher. It’s why I had brain freeze under pressure. Teachers called on me and my mind went blank! Even if I knew the answer, I was blocked and couldn’t reach it. The other kids thought it was funny. They laughed and made matters worse. Worse for me—I got mad and mean.

In 2nd grade, the teacher had me come up to the blackboard. She told me to do addition and start with 2 plus 2. It was easy enough at any other time. But up in front meant pressure! And pressure meant mental paralysis. I froze—I forgot. I was like a deer in the headlights—a blank stare.

The teacher said, “Well, if you don’t know that, what’s 2 times 2 or 2 minus 2?” Same difference to me. I was lost. My brain had wandered off. I was left to stand alone. The teacher barked the instructions. The kids howled with laughter. And I lost it—I peed in my pants.

I ran out. Their voices diminished with distance. But the laughter was still in my head. I remember my thoughts. *Anybody who laughs at me, I vowed, will get smacked. They’ll shut up, or I’ll bust their face till they do.* Still, I had to go back day after day and face that humiliation. I came to dread school. Every day I tried to escape the teacher’s notice. I hoped that she would call on someone else to read or answer a question.

The truth is *I was the one who was most frustrated in school.* I wanted to listen—I wanted to learn. My mind

changed channels. I didn't even notice till it was too late. I'm still that way. I turn the car radio to the news station for a traffic report. But I miss the information about my freeway. I get lost in thought over something else they said.

In school I didn't finish assignments, projects, or even sentences. I'd get distracted or bored. I'd spend all my time on the art and design of my report. But then I'd never write the report. Great cover, but blank pages inside! I still get excited about a new idea for business or ministry. I work hard a few days—then I lose interest.

In school, other kids had perfect attendance and proper assignments. My stuff was sloppy, scrambled, and slow. I used to feel stupid—like a failure or a loser. Now I know the truth. I was...and I...am different. And that's okay. I've learned how to be myself. I don't have the patience to wait around and watch the corn grow. I want to do something! I want to hunt or explore. Like an old hound, I want to chase the rabbit that no one else can see.

My ADD means that I hate small talk. Sometimes I don't say "Hello" or "Good-bye." The widget watchers think that's rude! Hey, I just get to the meat of it. I see the big picture—I get the point. So why discuss it all day? Why repeat the same thing over and over? Class discussions put me to sleep or made me silly. That's why I used to be the class cut-up, clown, or comedian. I knew how to stir a stagnant class. Or disrupt a dull day.

My ADD means that I tend to put things off till the last minute. I procrastinate projects and rush reports. I was never on time to class—no matter how hard I tried. Schedules, time-tables, and clock-watchers give me the hives. I can get up early and still be late.

My ADD means that I don't organize very well. In school, my papers and assignments were never in order. My desk, locker, and life was a mess. But it was my mess, and I understood it. My lack of organization still hurts me.

I have good ideas, but I can't make a plan and keep to it. I need help to keep things organized and on track. I can be the chairman of the board. But I become the crazy-man who is bored if I've got to handle the details.

My ADD meant that I didn't take directions very well. And I'm still allergic to written and spoken instructions. I don't want to hear how to do something. I'd rather just do it. I want to figure it out as I go. I don't want to be bossed around. I like to work for myself. Then I can do it my way and in my time. No wonder guys like me don't fit with the 90%—right?

My ADD means that I can talk too much and listen too little. I may not notice the signal others show. I may not seem courteous—I don't catch all the cues. I get bored and butt in—or I forget that they were talking. I exaggerate and expand my stories to make others listen. I share my ideas and plans. I figure that the other people understand and agree with me. Instead, they get confused and lost in all my scattered speech. I think we have a plan—they think I'm a pain!

I used to get mad at myself for all this. Now I know the truth. I'm different, and I'm glad. The farmer-gatherers (the 90%) are linear in their thoughts and brain. Linear means straight, uninterrupted, no variation—no bumps or detours. Yuk! The 10% like me are more random and irregular. We don't like the routines and rituals. We like the bumps, the detours, the surprises. That means that we can be more creative. We can solve problems and create new solutions to old puzzles.

It also means that we don't like the established patterns. We skip steps. We pole-vault over procedures. We reject the rules. We laugh at the laws of nature and man. This characteristic has made some of us great like Einstein or Edison—mad and marvelous scientists. But it made me a criminal. I didn't think the rules applied to me! Oops!

No mad scientist—I was a menace to society.

The part of me that is creative and comfortable with chaos can cause other trouble too. It makes my conversation choppy or confused. It causes me to lose my thought—mid-sentence. It means that I can go into a room—then forget why I’m there. But it also keeps me fresh, curious, and creative. I see the big picture and get the point. I spot the threat, solve the problem, and catch the rabbit.

The more I learn about ADD, the more I thank God. I see a wonderful difference—not a woeful disorder. I’m so glad that I’m not one of the left-brained, linear types. I wouldn’t want that life. They can stand all day and sort mail. That would turn me to mischief or murder! Boredom and repetitious routine always seems to get guys like me into trouble. It makes us frustrated, frenzied, or furious. It does that to us behind bars too—I know. Only the joy and Spirit of the Lord can bring relief and break the cycle.

It may be late in the game for me, but it’s not too late. I discovered all this good stuff in middle age. But what a difference! I wish I’d learned about this in childhood. I don’t know how I found the strength and sanity to stay in school. I know many guys like me who didn’t stay. Many of us just skipped out or some flat quit. And without good supervision at home, nobody noticed—till it was too late.

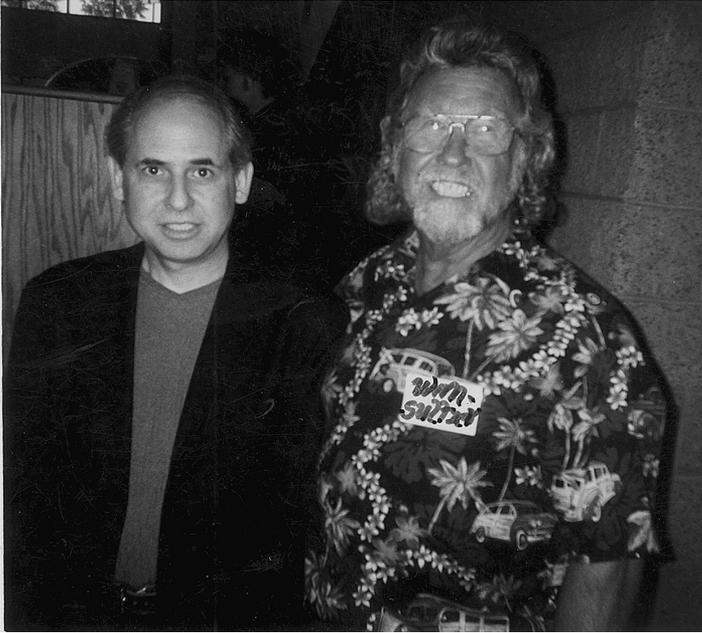
The more I learned about the ADD label, the more it helped me. I dug deeper and discovered more about myself. I got help. But millions of us don’t know about our difference—our place in the unique and gifted 10%. Many of us don’t see our gifts—we only see our goofs. We feel lazy, crazy, or stupid. Many of us have believed the lies.

Those of us who don’t know the truth are the lost ones. We feel like misfits. Low self-esteem and repeated

failures have filled us with pain. To kill the pain some of us have turned to drugs and alcohol. Others of us have turned to crime but weren't caught—yet. We may have escaped jail, but we still play games to survive. Some of us are homeless...and hopeless. We may push shopping carts in alleys. Or we may prefer a house of cardboard and freedom—rather than a home with critics and control freaks.

So many of us are gifted, yet we've gone astray. We love the arts—but we live with addictions. We are creative and smart—but we cook up schemes to get even. We can act or do drama—but we drink alcohol and do drugs. We can sing, play, or write hit music—but we sit, complain, and kill the pain. We can create comedy and make people laugh. But life is not funny.

There are so many of us who don't know who we are. The only label we know is "loser." But that's a lie! Most of us in the 10% don't understand our difference. We don't know God's design. But we do hate the others—the 90%. And we don't even know why!



*William and Dr. Daniel G. Amen, Researcher and Brain Imaging on A.D.D. and author of many books. (2003)
www.amenclinics.com
for A.D.D. online testing link testing.*



*William and his primary A.D.D. doctor:
Dr. Alonzo Flores from Orange, CA. (2005)*

Chapter 7

The Dyslexia Label

*For you this whole vision is nothing
but words sealed in a scroll.
And if you give the scroll to someone
who can read, and say to him,
“Read this, please,” he will answer,
“I can’t; it is sealed.”*

Isaiah 29:11

Use your imagination—go back in time to your 1st grade class. Now imagine a new kid in class. He’s from a foreign country and can’t speak or read English very well. Everyone else speaks English, but no one speaks his language.

Think of what it’s like for this kid from another country. The teacher gives him no break—no grace. She asks him to read like everybody else. He tries, but he can’t. The words don’t make sense. He does his best, but he can’t keep up. The other kids laugh. Some call him stupid or dumb. The teacher tells him to try harder.

No matter how hard he tries, he won’t improve. Why? Is he stupid? Is he rebellious? Is he lazy? Of course not! He just doesn’t speak our language yet. He needs special help to learn how to speak and write and read English.

I was like that kid from another country. English was my native language, but it felt like a foreign tongue. A lot of the folks who fit the ADD label also fit the *dyslexia* label too. I did. But I don’t see it as a “learning disability.” I see it as a *learning difference*. And lots of experts agree with me.

Those who fit the dyslexia label have a brain difference. Everyone's brain has 2 sides—a left and a right hemisphere. The farmer-gatherer types have a difference in size between the 2 hemispheres of their brains. The right side (hemisphere) is 10% smaller than the left. By the way—all the linear, straight-line, keep-in-order, bean-counter stuff is from the left side of the brain.

But what about people like me? What about those who fit the dyslexia label? Well, our left hemisphere is the normal size—like the left-brained, linear nit-pickers. But our right hemisphere is not smaller like the vast majority of people (farmer-gatherer types). Both hemispheres of our brains are equal in size. That means the right side of our brains is 10% larger than most people—those without dyslexia. And our brains have a more random wiring.

So the kids and adults who fit the dyslexia label have more “right-brained-power!” That means we may have more creative capacity, artistic ability, or inventive intelligence. We think in different ways. But that difference can seem odd to the “normal” folks.

I didn't speak in complete sentences until I was 7 or 8 years-old. That is often a sign of dyslexia. Albert Einstein barely spoke *at all* until he was 4 years-old. His parents were worried that he was retarded. Really!

Sir Isaac Newton spoke in a hurried gibberish until he was 6 or 7. He didn't know his father—his dad died young. And his mother was embarrassed by his speech and behavior. She left Isaac in the care of his strict grandmother. Then his mom married a rich man and raised his family.

I did speak—I wasn't mute. But I mangled and mauled the English language. I mixed up the sounds in words. I said *aminal* instead of animal. I said *peecuz* instead of because. I said *buh-sketti* instead of spaghetti. I said *apost-too* instead of supposed to. I said *hangabur* instead of hamburger.

These funny phrases or scrambled sounds are cute

to adults. We chuckle at tongue-tied little tots. But these syllable snafoos can signal trouble ahead. They can be a sign of the serious stress and struggle to come.

Why trouble?

Is the kid defective, disabled, or disordered? No! Were Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Sir Isaac Newton, and Alexander Graham Bell disordered? Were Winston Churchill, Benjamin Franklin, Walt Disney, Beethoven, Mozart, John Lennon, and Henry Ford disabled? Are Henry Winkler (The Fonz), Tom Cruise, Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, Steven Spielberg, Dustin Hoffman, Suzanne Somers, Sylvester Stallone, Robin Williams, and Sir Anthony Hopkins defective? No! But they were or are different. They fit the dyslexia label (and the ADD one too).

So why the trouble? Why be concerned about a kid with silly screw ups in his speech?

Like me—he is *different*. Remember, “normal people” put everything in proper order and rows. They like linear—they can plow a straight line. To them—my scattered and scrambled speech meant that I was different. And to them—different means *not normal*. My teachers resented a kid who was different. My difference meant more work for them. So they didn’t honor my needs—they humiliated me.

The other kids noticed my difference. Like chickens in the barnyard they picked on and pecked at my weakness and wounds. They laughed at my school work.

The teacher didn’t like how I wrote the alphabet. I scribbled. So they put me in a lettering class for 2 years. Oh how I hated it!

They even complained about how I colored with crayons. Give me a blank page, and I did fine—I could create. But I couldn’t stay inside the lines of a coloring book page. I still have horrible handwriting. I can draw a picture, but it’s hard work to write a letter.

Every handwritten assignment came back blood red. The teacher's red pen felt like a dagger. She picked at all my spelling mistakes. She didn't seem to care about the story or the subject of my report. But a misplaced "e" or an out of place "o" was a capital crime!

I didn't (and still don't) like to read out loud or write by hand. I read aloud and others laughed. I stumbled over words, and they snickered. I mispronounced words, and they mocked. I froze, and they made fun. I read words that weren't on the page, and they roared.

I wished I'd known back then about my difference. I wished I'd known that the farmer-gatherers are daffy for details. They love the lines. I wish I'd known back then that I'm not a farmer-gatherer (part of the 90%). I wish I'd known that I was different. I wish I'd known that my difference was okay—special in a good way.

There is a lot more to be said about the dyslexia label. We put an appendix in the back with more information. But for now, we want to share another side of dyslexia. The experts will hiss and howl at our list. We don't care. Those with a fetish for facts and fixed figures belong with the farmers. This is not about facts. This is about the *feel* of dyslexia.

Just so you know.... Not everyone who fits the ADD label will relate to dyslexia. But all those with dyslexia feel at home with ADD (*A Divine Difference!*).

Those who fit the dyslexia label can relate to our descriptions below. But both of us (William and Jerry) *feel* that the following statements express our dyslexia experience in life:

- We know we are smart, but we feel dumb.
- We have felt like failures and misfits—ugly ducklings.

- We have felt klutzy, clumsy, and uncoordinated.
- We are allergic to criticism and correction.
- We hate critics and control freaks.
- We have felt like rebels, mavericks, and outsiders.
- We have felt misunderstood and unappreciated.
- We feel the need to pretend and playact—we fake it to fit in.
- We isolate and withdraw rather than risk shame.
- We know that we don't live up to our potential.
- We despise those who tell us to "try harder."
- We feel a need to prove that we are *not* stupid.
- We are motivated by that need to prove our selves.
- We have felt hopeless and helpless many times.
- We feel the need to dull our discomfort—kill our pain.
- And we have been tempted to kill those who caused our pain.

The dyslexia experience is painful. We are not allowed to be different. We are made to feel defective. Beyond all the learning and letters—the *feel* of dyslexia forms our attitudes and fuels our agony. We do foolish things for revenge or retaliation. We achieve success to prove ourselves. We want to prove that our critics were wrong.

I proved my success to some college classmates. I attended the Hotel, Restaurant, and Club Management College in San Francisco. My class voted me "the *least* likely to succeed." Ouch! Later they all had jobs in restaurants and hotels—they worked for other people. On the other hand, I had built my own million dollar restaurant. I was a success in business.

I had to rub some noses in the carpet. I invited all my old classmates to a special occasion at my restaurant. I sent my *Rolls Royce* limo to get each one. I show-cased

my collection of classic cars out in front of the place. And once they were all impressed and full of envy, I said to myself, *I got 'em!*

The pain of the dyslexia label starts early. It starts in school. In school they keep score. They grade, they rate, they pass, and they fail. They decide who is normal and who is not. They decide who is stupid and who is smart. They diagnosis and define us, but that is not their job.

My 1st grade teacher, Mrs. Williams, came over to our house—a lot. She and Mom talked for hours about me. I hid and listened. They tried to figure out what was wrong with me. The teacher said, “He looks normal. I don’t see anything wrong with him. But the boy can’t talk, and he can’t seem to learn like the others.”

They suggested all sorts of reasons for my ruin and ruckus. But the remedy was always the same. Mrs. Williams pronounced her judgement: “Well, he’s just got to try harder.”

“I know,” my mom added. “He’s got to stop his day-dreams and distractions.”

Mrs. Williams got louder and said, “And he’s got to stop hitting the other kids in my class! He struts around like a Banti rooster. He wants to fight all the time.”

Hey, I only hit the jerks who laughed at me.

My dyslexia label meant that I could not remember anything that I read. It meant that I read words that weren’t even on the page. I read words backwards or out of order. Or I just stuttered and stammer or stopped when I had to read out loud.

I was mocked and made fun of. They magnified my mistakes. It made me strike back. I put gum on the chalk eraser. I put it in the crack so the teacher couldn’t see it. Then *I laughed* when she wiped the black board. The gum worked its way out and smeared all over the board.

I put gum on her chair. I covered it with paper that

didn't touch the gum. The paper got her attention and distracted her. She picked up the paper, but sat on the gum! Then *I howled and hooted!* The other kids did too. That's the only way I got any respect.

Once I caught a ton of grasshoppers and put them in my lunch sack. I emptied the whole bunch in her middle desk drawer. She opened the drawer and the grasshoppers flew out like a plague. She screamed and fell backward off her chair. The bugs got in her hair, her mouth, and down her blouse. She scream and ran out of the room. The class turned to chaos. The kids cheered and clapped, and I felt better. But I never felt like I got even.

At lunch one hot day, I found a stray dog. He just did his business, and it was big. I picked the dog up and put him through the classroom window. Then I picked up his pile of poop and tossed it in too. Of course, I closed all the windows and doors. The dog went nuts. He ran back and forth like a bug in a bottle. He smeared that poop over everything. And the heat of the day made the room ripe. It was like a week old diaper pail in August.

I got caught for that one. Someone snitched. The class moved to a nice shade tree outside. I had to find a mop and bucket. I cleaned up the mess. It was hard to handle but worth it. The other kids thanked me. I was a hero. But I had no real honor—I just felt hate and anger.

Jerry has struggled with the dyslexia difference too. He always says, "I can write books—I just can't read them!" Like me, school was hard. But he had a different school strategy. I busted heads—he kissed butts. He got the teachers to like him and feel sorry for him. They cut him slack and let him slip through the cracks.

Jerry learned to fake it and pass for normal. But things caught up to him on the job as a minister. He was the senior pastor of a well established church in L.A. County. The elder board cornered him one day. They wanted to discuss

his “administrative and time management skills.” His calendar was in chaos. His schedule was schizophrenic. His office overflowed with piles, stacks, and loose papers. He was a messy minister (*he still is*). And he never returned phone calls.

The official board were all fatherly types. They suggested (strongly advised) that he attend a high-priced time-management conference in Chicago. They had already paid for the workshop and booked the plane tickets and hotel. They said that the seminar teachers were the best—professional coaches and executive consultants. The conference would teach their method and mindset. It would be linear, logical, and the last thing Jerry needed. Here’s how he described the first morning at the conference:

I was excited to be in Chicago near my home in Illinois. A whole week away from California, calls, and commitments! Then Monday morning at 8 o’clock sharp, the first session began. About 300 professional men and women filled the conference room. Suits and ties, sharpened pencils, nifty notebooks, mounds of materials—eyes bright and ears perked.

Then the first speaker stood, tested the microphone, turned on the overhead, and started to drone. I know that he spoke English, but what he said was gibberish to me. I felt like Charlie Brown in school. The teacher was a muted trumpet to me. Everyone else understood him. Three-ring-notebooks popped, pages flew, notes were made, inserts were added, blah was blee blah blah bo bo....

I began to sweat and shake. I struggled to stay awake. I gobbled a few mints and gulped some of the bottled water. I spied on my neighbors and struggled to follow the flow. Finally, I was ut-

terly exhausted and knew that I needed a break. I lifted my head and looked at the clock. It was 8:05 a.m.!

Confession is good for the soul—so here goes.... I collected my materials and excused myself. I rented a car and headed for town. Wrigley Field, the Loop, Lake Michigan, the Navy Pier, hot dogs with ‘kraut, the Sears building, the stockyards, the Museum of Science and Industry, and lots of cousins. Oh, I still went to the conference and got the materials every morning. I attended everyday (for about 5 minutes).

Insult to Injury

Some of us, who fit the ADD and dyslexia labels, did not finish school. Why? Just read the list again—that’s why!

Some of us quit school. That made life even harder. It supported the lies and bad labels. It eroded our education. It soured our success. It splintered our self-esteem. It added a new injury to the insult we felt. But the injury was a self-inflicted wound. We shot ourselves in the foot to get out of the battle. Instead, we just added to the war—we made things worse.

There is hope—there is help. Remember, the labels are not the truth. The labels only lead us to the truth. The truth is that we are different. Our difference is not a defect. Our difference is a distinct design. And the Designer is our Hope—He is our Help. We draw near to God, and He shows us ourselves. In His presence, we discover His divine purpose for our lives.



*William and Dr. David E. Comings (1997).
Research at City of Hope Hospital in
Duarte, Ca. on Tourette Syndrome.
www.hopepress.com
Dr. Comings is the author of many books
on A.D.D. and Tourette Syndrome.*



*William in one of his oppositional defiance times.
(Mid 1990's). His Tourette's was acting up.*

Chapter 8

The Tourette Label

*Even though my illness was a trial to you,
you did not treat me with contempt or scorn.*

Galatians 4:14

We video-taped a lot our prison ministry services. I love to watch and show others some of the great testimonies. Christ has transformed a lot of ex-offenders. A favorite of mine is the story shared by Conrad Donald Garcia. He was one of the godfathers of the Mexican Mafia. But today he is a new man—alive, free, forgiven, and in ministry.

There is one thing about the videos that I don't like. I don't like to watch myself.

Why?

Well, I don't like to see the funny jerks and gestures that I make. I twist my head and neck around. I pull on my collar like comedian Rodney Dangerfield. I make faces and expressions. I blink my eyes too much. Or clear my throat and sniff a lot. I don't realize it at the time. The tics just happen. I see the tics on the video. And of course, others notice and point them out. I don't like that either.

They have a name for this problem. It's called ***Tourette Syndrome*** (TS). The experts who study TS call it "ADD with tics." About 30% of those who fit the ADD label have TS too. It's the third and last label that helped me discover the truth about myself. It was the key I needed to unlock the anger and ***rage*** issues in my life. [*Refer to Appendix "B" for more on TS.*]

Do any of the following sound familiar?

- Rapid or repeated eye blinking, or eye rolling.
- Facial grimaces or gestures.
- Head jerking, shoulder shrugs, or neck contortions.
- Yawning motion.
- Lick, bite, touch lips.
- Bed wetting beyond the age of five.
- Touch self (crouch, nose, smooth mustache, eyebrows, etc.).
- Touch others (hand on another's arm, arm around someone's shoulder, poke at, playful slaps, etc.).
- Clear throat, cough, sniff, or other repeated nasal or throat sounds.
- Vocal noises or outburst (profanity, a repeated word or phrase, odd sounds, animal sounds, bark, meow, etc.).
- Repeats, mimics, or mocks others.
- Repeats self or thinks out loud.
- Stutters.
- Easily distracted and hyperactive.
- Obsessive-compulsive behaviors (from worry or repeated hand washing to rituals or superstitious behaviors).
- Short temper, anger, or rage.
- Oppositional behavior (argue, confront, and oppose parents or those in authority).
- Anti-social behavior (throws tantrums, hits, kicks, bites, and makes threats).
- Unable to take "no" for an answer and demands his own way.
- Does not respond to punishment, discipline, or the threat of penalty.
- Phobias and unreasonable fears.
- Panic attacks, mood swings, anxiety, and depression.

- Inappropriate sexual behavior.
- Tattoos, body piercing, self mutilation (cuts self, pulls hair, etc.).
- Addictive behaviors.

These signs or symptoms of TS (ADD with tics) vary from person to person. They can and do change over the years. They also increase and decrease with stress. At the City of Hope Hospital in Duarte, California, Dr. David E. Comings, M.D., studied TS and homework. The boys with TS were given more homework, and their tics increased. They were given less homework, and their tics decreased.

[Refer to end note #3.]

I've seen a lot of guys in prison with TS like me. I've seen all sorts of tics: facial jerks, eye blinks, voice noises, profanity, and rage. We usually cuss because of the anger element. In fact, many of us went to prison because of our anger—because of our TS.

For me TS meant an anger problem, a quick temper, and explosive RAGE! All in a split second of time. I never had time to think. I acted before I thought. Then later, I was sorry.

I was always in trouble for one thing or another. But the TS and my anger got me hurt. In rage and on impulse, I smacked the big guys. Then one of the goliaths would strike back. I'd get beat up and knocked down—hard. I'd lay there on the floor and wonder, *Why, oh why, did I do that?*

Anyone with TS has known a lot of pain, shame, and judgement from others. We beat ourselves up too. We cuss at ourselves and tell ourselves to try harder. But that doesn't work. In fact, all the anger management classes in the world won't help. It's not a psychological problem. But, like dyslexia, it affects us psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Both Jerry and I have known lots of guys who are afraid of their own anger. Some don't trust themselves around their family. A baby cries, a kid is cranky, a wife complains, and the old man flies into a blind rage. Babies have been shaken and have suffered brain damage. Kids have been beaten and abused. Spouses have been harmed—marriages destroyed.

The rage that comes with TS (ADD with tics) can affect anyone with the TS label. It can happen regardless of our place or position in life. It doesn't matter how much money, education, religion, will power, or self control we have. TS happens and rage can sneak in with it.

There is no need to despair. There is hope and help. But the answer is not in ourselves.

I have tried a jillion times to get control over myself. Still, I'd blow up in public. And all those fights! I just figured that I had a face that others wanted to punch. But it was more than that. I had an attitude that turned into anger. I felt like the Incredible Hulk—green and ugly. People looked at me like I was the plague.

My anger used to be near the surface. I'd get irritated at the smallest stuff. I was always anxious and on edge. Like many with TS, I used alcohol or smoked pot to calm down and mellow out. But that just added to the trouble. I already had no control. I worried that, when I got loaded, I might kill somebody or myself.

The whole TS thing is more than the rage, tics, and jitters. It is a serious problem with *impulse control*. All my life I have said and done things that I later regretted. I should have thought about my words and actions. But that's the problem with ADD and TS.

Like dyslexia—there is a feel to TS. After blow ups and melt downs, I felt so worthless, sinful, and guilty. I felt like I had a monster inside of me. Some people (ignorant ones) blamed it on demons. Imagine how that made me feel? Others (self-righteous Christians) said I lacked

character, discipline, or faith. I already wondered why God didn't heal and help. I felt like I wasn't worthy—like I wasn't a good Christian. I felt like I didn't deserve to have my prayers answered.

Those were all lies. I just didn't understand my difference. I didn't understand how to fit or where I belonged. I was just an angry beaver stuck in world of squirrels. I didn't fit—so I had a fit!

I'm not alone in this. For many years, Jerry suffered with these problems. He didn't know what was wrong either. In one of his *Spirit of Hope* newsletters on ADD, he wrote:

For most of my life I didn't understand why I had neck contortions like the comedian Rodney Dangerfield. I didn't know why I cleared my throat even when I had no allergy or cold. I didn't know why I tugged on my shirt, near the left shoulder, whenever I had too much coffee or was stressed.

In childhood, some of these symptoms were painful—embarrassing mysteries. I didn't know why I blinked and rolled my eyes so much. I didn't know why I licked my lips till they were chapped and cracked. I didn't know why I wet the bed beyond the normal age. I didn't know why I was moved to make vocal sounds that were nonsense. I was addicted to cigarettes in the 8th grade! I wondered if I was crazy or “demon possessed.”

I was an embarrassment to my father who yelled at me to stop. Most of the time he just said, “What's the matter with you?” I didn't know anymore than he did. And his disappointment in me was nothing compared to my despair.

As a freelance writer, I was hired by a publisher to write two books on ADD. It was during the research that I discovered my own ADD. I learned that Tourette Syndrome and ADD were closely connected. I also found that TS is not as

weird as the television talkshows want folks to believe.

I studied more about TS. I found that most people with the disorder are as uninformed as I was. Many children and adults with TS (ADD with tics) don't know why they behave as they do. They live in the same silent agony that I did. For me, it was a wonderful relief to know what was going on. I gave myself more grace.

I also learned about treatments. No medication (for TS) helped me with the tics. Still, medical treatments do help others. The best thing that I could do was to be myself. The more I trusted God and found His peace, the fewer my tics and troubles. I had to stop the fear and adrenaline that I used to focus my brain. And I could no longer force myself to fit the expectations of others.

For the better part of our lives, Jerry and I didn't know about our ADD or TS. Our parents and teachers didn't know either. The harsh treatment at home and school just added to our stress. We already struggled with embarrassment and shame. We carried unnecessary labels and lies throughout our lives. We were crippled by the pain of low self-esteem. We wanted to feel better, but we didn't know how.

Many of us with TS (ADD with tics) have used alcohol to calm down and kill the pain. Or we have used marijuana to "mellow out." Those of us who fit the ADD label know that *addiction* is our middle name. But that is not a part of God's design. It is a result of our bad fit.

Those of us with TS have many wonderful, creative, and humorous gifts that the world needs. These characteristics can be punished and squelched, or praised and supported. We pray that God will help us all see the good and *forgive the rest*.

Chapter 9
Misfits Misfire!

*But a second time the voice answered
from heaven, "What God has made clean,
you must not call profane."*

Acts 11:9

What is ADD? Is it a symptom or a cause? Is it a condition or a sign of something else?

All the experts admit that no one really knows the cause of ADD. I won't bore you with the theories. For now, the hunters versus the farmers idea works for me.

On the other hand, doctors do know a lot about how ADD affects our brains and behaviors. They know that it impedes certain brain functions. ADD causes the prefrontal cortex, the front part of our brains, to slow to a crawl. ADD causes our brains to *tilt* like a pinball machine.

God designed our bodies to compensate for problems. We adapt. Our brains have the power to offset the bumps and imbalances. But our corrections can create new problems. Those over-corrections can be seen in living color on brain scans.

Daniel Amen, M.D. is the expert on ADD and brain scans. He's a board certified psychiatrist and a scientist licensed in nuclear brain imaging. He's also the author of the best-selling book *Healing ADD*. Dr. Amen's brain scans can show a picture of the brain's dysfunction or difference. He can show the parts of the brain that cause ADD symptoms and behaviors. [Refer to end note #4.]

The part of the brain that dims to a flicker is in the frontal lobes—the prefrontal cortex. The medical world knows a lot about the brain's frontal lobes today. Thanks to a patient named Phineas Gage the doctors learned what the frontal lobes do. Back in the mid 1800's, old Phineas was a foreman on a railroad construction gang. But everything changed for him on September 13th, 1848.

He was about to set off an explosion to blast more rock. He drilled a hole, then pushed sticks of dynamite in it. He tamped the explosives deep and hard with an iron rod. But he struck a spark and set off the sticks. His head went back with the blast. The iron rod went through his left eye. It came out the top right side for his forehead. He gave himself a frontal lobotomy! He lived, but lost his left eye and his brain's frontal lobes. Apart from all that, Phineas fully recovered—well, almost.

Phineas Gage healed for 3 months and went back to work. He seemed okay. He had his memory, his smarts, his strength, and his senses. On the surface, he was the same. So the boss was glad to see him. Phineas had been a great foreman and their star employee. He had been smart, shrewd, and stable. But after a few weeks, he was fired.

Phineas had changed. Now he was easy to anger, irreverent, profane, and inconsiderate of his fellow workers. He was impatient and bull-headed. He was erratic, moody, and rash. He cursed and caused trouble. He got mad and made messes. He couldn't make decisions. He couldn't settle on any of his plans. The people who knew and cared for him said, "He's no longer Phineas Gage."

Phineas never worked at the level of a foreman again. He worked as a coach driver and stable hand—sometimes as a messenger. He liked to care for horses, but he found it hard to work a full day. He lived his last few years with his mother. She reported that Phineas was quick to exaggerate. He made up tall tales about himself to entertain his nieces and nephews.

Dr. Harlow, Phineas' physician, followed his progress until Gage died in 1860. The doctor donated his records, Gage's skull, and the tamping iron to the Medical School of Harvard University. The exhibit is still on display today at Harvard's Warren Museum.

Gage's behavior and ADD have similarities. ADD type symptoms can result from brain injury. But ADD is genetic (it runs in families) and is not a result of brain damage.

Plus, those with ADD have a number of positive characteristics and creative gifts. Those who have ADD-like-symptoms due to brain injury do not possess the positive traits found in those of us with ADD. The good gifts God gave us can and do shine through. Sometimes the positive traits are overwhelmed and overshadowed by our problem behaviors. But the good things spring up when ADD is understood and life changes are made.

Both Phineas Gage and those who fit the ADD label have a problem with the brain's prefrontal cortex. For Phineas—the frontal lobes were gone! For ADD folks—the frontal lobes turn off under pressure. Remember me and the problem at the blackboard? Or during the test? In the boring lecture? Etc. etc. etc.

Force us to fit, and we lose function in our frontal lobes. We turn into Phineas Gage! Dr. Amen calls it the “concentration study” in his brain scans. Here are a few quotes from *Healing ADD* by Dr. Amen. I put the important stuff in bold.

We have found that ADD is not a disorder of a resting brain—people with ADD can rest just fine—but problems show up during a concentration task.... **At rest, Joey's SPECT study showed good, full, symmetrical activity throughout his brain....** When he tried to concentrate, his prefrontal cortex shut down.... (Page 79)

Research has shown that **the more ADD people try to concentrate, the worse it gets for them.** As we've seen from SPECT images, the brain regions responsible for concentrated thinking turn off, not on. **As the pressure to perform increases, they often fall off in their work.** When this decreased performance is interpreted as willful misconduct, serious problems arise.

I once treated a man with ADD who was employed as a ship welder. He told me that whenever his boss put pressure on him to do a better job, his work got worse—even though he really tried to do better. When the boss told him that he liked his work, he became more productive. In supervising someone with ADD, it is much more effective to use praise and encouragement than pressure. (From page 201—*The Harder They Try, the Worse It Get*).

In other words, ADD only happens when we are pressured—forced to fit. So ***misfits misfire*** in the brain. Our brains won't allow us to be or to do something that we are not! That's *not* the case for the other 90% of the population. They can work mindless, routine, and boring jobs—like it or not. We cannot!

So today—we creative, sensitive, and curious hunter-pioneer types may always feel like misfits. That is if we don't discover the truth about ourselves and live it.

Without the label, the help, the treatment, or the life changes, we live life like old Phineas Gage. We experience the problems related to frontal lobe dysfunction.

What does that mean exactly?

Two very important brain systems come from frontal lobes. Without these 2 systems, our brains have ***no brakes*** and ***no boss!***

No Brakes and No Boss!

*He that hath no rule over his own spirit
is like a city that is broken down,
and without walls.*

Proverbs 25:28

When the brain's pre-frontal cortex doesn't turn on and work, we lose our brain's **brakes** (the behavioral inhibition system) and our brain's **boss** (the executive functions of the brain).

These 2 systems enable us to process and respond to all sorts of information received by the brain. They help us to wait, prioritize, concentrate, focus, slow down, link information, compare input with experience, and envision our behavior before we do it. These areas also give us self-control, self-motivation, self-direction, self-correction, and self-determination. In simple terms, the prefrontal cortex of the human brain provides our brakes...to inhibit impulses and our boss...to command and control.

Many scholars and researchers have studied and written about the brain and ADD. I rely on their good work and written materials. I have learned a lot about this part of the brain from Dr. Russell Barkley. He is the author of the book *ADHD and the Nature of Self-Control*. [Refer to end note #5.]

Human beings were created by God with the ability to wait—to restrain urges. Animals in the wild can't afford this luxury. To live in the wild means survival around

the clock. The animals' basic urges are what keeps them alive, protected, and fed. But we humans were given a superior brain. Our brain power has provided shelter, security, and safety. We don't have to be on constant alert and in a survival mode. So our brains can put a brake on our wild urges.

Most people only have trouble with these uncontrolled urges and behaviors when they are under stress. Stress pushes us to survive. The wild urges are needed in survival and stress, but they interfere with normal life. Normally, the frontal lobes of the brain keep these urges in check. But those of us who fit the ADD label have a problem in the front part of the brain. So the urges and behaviors often go unrestrained.

No Brakes!

Survival urges are restrained by our brain's brake—*The Behavioral Inhibition System*. But when the brake is off, the urges rule our lives. Here are the 4 wild urges:

1) The Urge to Grab the Good.

This is the drive to get the immediate reward from our environment. It is not a reflex. It is a prepotent or spring-loaded urge. For example, if I run from a dog, he will chase me. If I dangle a string before a cat, he will pounce and play. If I put a cookie in front of Billy, he will grab it without a thought! That is if he has ADD.

In a survival situation, this urge moves us to get the available good stuff while it's within reach. In the wild or on the run this behavior serves an important need. However, individuals with ADD are without a brake pedal for this urge—most of the time. They want what they want, and they want it NOW! And they take no thought for the consequences of their behavior.

2) The Urge to Escape the Bad.

The second untamed urge is a prepotent drive to get away from the unpleasant and uncomfortable things in our environment. Again, it is important to survival and life in the wild, but troublesome in the classroom or office.

If the behavioral inhibition system is turned on, we can endure the unpleasant situation. The restraint keeps us in place and patient. Yet for the ADD person the brake is unreliable. So the urge could cause a person to walk out of a dry sermon or check out of a boring conversation. It can cause someone to skip school or ditch a class. It may bring an abrupt end to a job or a relationship. The escape doesn't have to be physical—it can be mental. Our eyes can read a difficult page, but our minds sneak out on a daydream. Our eyes finish the page, but we have no idea what we just read. We want to feel better now! So we escape regardless of the consequences.

3) The Urge to Keep-At-It.

The third untamed urge is a drive to continue on with a behavior or course of action. It sustains a behavior in spite of errors, warnings, or other cues to the contrary. The function of the behavioral inhibition system that restrains this urge is known as “sensitivity to error.” But this function is crippled in those with ADD. That's why they don't seem to “get” the signals that others do.

In a survival mode, it is important to run and not look back. But at work, it can turn a ten minute break into an afternoon lost. So individuals with ADD are not “clueless,” but they are “cueless.” The signals and warnings that call for caution or change are ignored—unseen and unheeded. They keep-at-it until they hit the wall. They talk too much, stay too long, work too late, and push too hard. And they wonder why others are worn out or angry at their behavior.

4) The Urge to Scan It All.

The fourth untamed urge is a drive to scan our environment continually. The restraint system of the brain keeps this urge in a cage. With the urge curbed, we are free to concentrate and ponder our situation. But when the frontal lobes are not working properly, we are on constant alert to the world around us. We risk concentration to stay hypersensitive to a possible threat.

For an animal in the wild, survival is more important than an opportunity to pause and reflect—to concentrate. Danger may come at anytime from any direction. In survival, instinct is better than insight. Those with ADD know how troublesome this urge can be. It is hard to think when we hear every sound, see every sight, smell every odor, feel every sensation, and think every thought. Every sense is keen and on alert. But this is exhausting. Constant vigilance can mean constant overwhelm.

In a kill-or-be-killed survival mode, these urges serve us well. They keep us fed, safe, alert, and a step ahead of the bear or lion. But for those with ADD, it is not just a brief period of survival stress that releases the urges. It is an everyday fact of life. Those with ADD lack the brake pedal to control these urges. So we seem selfish, immature, thoughtless, and scattered. The prolonged exposure to survival stress does far more than influence our behavior. It will compromise our health, weaken our immune system, and put us at risk for a variety of serious illnesses.

It boils down to this—our brains have no brakes. We can't restrain the urges. We disappoint ourselves and others. For adults and children with ADD, this is not a temporary trial—it is an everyday battle. And without the proper knowledge, treatment, and help to manage ADD, we face further setback. These untamed urges can nail our foot to the floor and cause us to walk in circles. We repeat mistakes and revisit pain—over and over. We follow the urge and fall into the trap—again and again.

Ready, Fire, Aim!

*I hate a man's covering himself with violence as
...with his garment," says the LORD Almighty.
So guard yourself in your spirit,
and do not break faith.
Malachi 2:16*

Remember, misfits misfire! When we feel like beavers in a world of squirrels, watch out. Our brains lose power, our brakes fail, and our boss is on vacation. Then everyone around us steps in to be our substitute boss. I wish I had a nickel for every time somebody asked me, "What were you thinking?"

No Boss!

The brain's boss is called the *Executive Function of the Brain*. Without brakes, our brain cannot establish a boss. The behavioral inhibition system is a necessary requirement for the executive functions to work. With urges restrained, the brain can move to a higher administrative level. But those with ADD and ineffective frontal lobe function lack the restraint. So the negative effect builds. Now the untamed urges lack internal adult supervision.

When the brain's frontal lobes (prefrontal cortex) function well, the executive functions are at work. They provide administrative control that produces responsibility, vision, presence of mind, emotional control, motivation, direction, and the ability to learn from our mistakes.

For those with ADD, the loss of this oversight is a way of life. It is a constant challenge to compensate.

Here's what we lose when our brains misfire:

1) NonVerbal Working Memory or Private Memory (Vision).

This function is like RAM memory (random access memory) in a computer. It's a sort of short-term visual memory of where we were, where we are, and where we are headed next. It gives us a sense of time and our place in it.

When our brains misfire, we lose this nonverbal working memory. So a number of things go amiss. We end up in a room and forget why we're there. We need to rely on Post-It-Notes or reminders written on our hands. Five minutes seem like an hour, and an hour can seem like five minutes. We live in the "now" and are led by the crisis of the moment. We have trouble with the order and sequence of things. Fine motor skills and coordination can also suffer. Our vision seems shortsighted—our plans disjointed.

2) Internalized Verbalization or Private Speech (Thought).

This executive function provides our self-talk—inside our heads. This function develops over time as our brain grows. A young child says what he thinks out loud. Little kids tell everybody what they're doing or where they're going. But as the brain develops with age, we keep our mouths shut. Adults keep their thoughts private—in their heads. Adults keep their plans to themselves. They're internally directed.

Those of us with ADD lose this function when our frontal lobes turn off. So we tend to think out loud. We think on the fly. We say things that have never been considered by our inner adult. Like kids, we say things as they come to us. We hope for the grace to correct ourselves

and rethink, but.... Once words are spoken they assume a life of their own.

The ADD form of communication is like a mixed up marksman who says, “Ready! Fire! Aim!” Those with ADD shoot before the target is clear. And others are quick to note the error and inaccuracy. Those of us with ADD resent this, of course. We feel like we’re surrounded by umpires who call balls and strikes on everything we do and say.

3) Internalized Emotion or Private Feelings (Motivation).

This executive function provides us with private feelings. These are the emotions we keep to ourselves. They become the internalized emotions we use to motivate ourselves. Like internalized verbalization, this function grows over time with brain development.

A young child expresses everything he feels. Little kids are ruled by their emotions. Adults are able to keep emotions private. Grown-ups can wear a poker face and hide their feelings. Adults can internalize, temper, and change emotions into motivation. *Emotion* means “to move.” So internalized emotion is how we move (motivate) ourselves from the inside out.

Those of us with ADD will lack the ability to internalize emotion when our brains turn off. That means that we will wear our feelings on our sleeves. We may laugh, cry, blowup, rage, pout, or express whatever emotion is on the surface. Our lives can feel like an emotional rollercoaster. We take everyone along for the ride—and we all get dizzy.

Also, without internalized emotion, we are unable to motivate ourselves. It may be hard to care about the job, the class, the relationship, or the task at hand. Without good motivation, we may not be able to find a reason to get out of bed or off the couch. Others think that we just don’t care. Or they give us the “lazy” label.

4) Internalized Supervision or Private Command (Direction).

This executive function enables us to draw upon all of our past learning and experience and apply it to a new goal. Internalized supervision gives us the ability to chart a new and safer course and create a better result or outcome. It is our ability to learn from our mistakes or successes. It is like a wise general who prepares for battle. He studies his intelligence reports, strategic plan, troop strength, and logistical support. He considers his past experience—then decides what to do.

This last executive function is a benefit of later brain development. Just as bodies grow taller with age, brains also develop over time. The body reaches its height by the late teens. But the brain grows until we are about 30 years old. This internalized supervision is the last growth spurt that the brain has.

This is why Old Testament priests had to be 30 before they began temple service. It's why the U.S. president has to be at least 35. U.S. Senators must be 30, and members of the House of Representative must be 25 years old. Wisdom is not always a benefit of age, but this executive function is.

But what about those of us who misfire in the brain because of ADD?

It's the same story. This executive function will suffer. We will not be able to apply past lessons to present problems. We will not be able to connect experience and education to a new goal. We will not be able to make the necessary changes to improve our lives. We will take another deadend job, enter another painful relationship, or return to crime.

It's frustrating! We can tell others how to live better lives. We can tell others how to avoid our mistakes. We just can't do it for ourselves!

Let's Review

Under pressure, in stress, and with a bad fit the prefrontal cortex of our brain turns off (or dims and flickers). We lose our brakes first and then the boss. Without the boss, we lack vision, thought, motivation, and direction...the four administrative functions.

We know this already. All our lives people have ridiculed, ragged on, and rebuked us. We still hear the scorn in our minds and feel the shame in our hearts. We still hear the words: *Where's your brain? Dummy! You don't listen! The lights are on, but nobody's home! Daydreamer! Space Cadet! Your life is going nowhere! Loser! You don't care! You're lazy! You're lost! Think before you act! Just try harder!*

It is easy to become discouraged and depressed about the realities of ADD. But the bad stuff is only half the story.

As Christians we call the Creator of the Universe our Father. He knows and loves us. He designed each one of us and made us special. He can transform our present weakness into His strength. He can encourage, empower, enable, and equip us to be victorious. He can turn our darkness into His light. He can set us free. All that God requires is the honesty and humility to admit our need and seek His help.

With God's help we can move beyond any labels (ADD, dyslexia, TS, bi-polar, or whatever). We know that our past behaviors or problems do define us! In our hearts, we have always known the truth. We have many wonderful gifts. We have positive qualities and creative intelligence. Hardship and hard times forced us to survive and made us fit in. The good stuff got masked and covered up. But it is still there!

It's time for us to explore and celebrate our positive qualities and special gifts. It's time for us to apply our differences for our own advantage. The abilities that have

been suppressed can surface now and serve a good and godly purpose. God's love and healing power will peel back the masks and remove armor that we have hidden behind. No more "Ready, Fire, Aim!"

With time and God's help, we will be able to relate to more and more of the positive qualities below:

- We are intelligent, and highly motivated by intellectual challenges.
- We are creative and highly imaginative, and can express ourselves in unique ways.
- We have high energy and meet challenges with enthusiasm.
- We are intuitive and can easily sense the needs and feelings of others.
- We are resourceful, and can devise ways and means to accomplish things.
- We are warmhearted and enjoy doing things for others.
- We are humorous and have an ability to make others laugh.
- We are hardworking, and have a never-say-die approach to life.
- We are willing to take risks, and see risk-taking as a form of excitement.
- We are loyal, honest, and trustworthy.
- We are flexible, and adapt easily to change.
- We are change-agents, and like the intrigue involved in change.
- We are good observers of the world around us and are able to find quick solutions to complicated situations.
- We are productive and effective if we like what we are doing.
- We are forgiving, and rarely hold grudges.

Taken from *The Twelves Steps—A Key to Living with ADD*,
RPI Publishing, Inc. [Refer to end note #6.]

Reality check!

Remember, the positive and good changes begin with honesty. Jesus said that the truth shall set you free! The truth is those of us with ADD have felt like misfits in the world. We have suffered. The pain has caused us to struggle and survive. We have lacked the truth that would help us to trust God. So instead, we relied on ourselves and tried to fit in.

Everyone of us who fit the ADD label have *self-medicated*—in one way or another.

What is self-medicating?

That's what the next chapter is about.



William's self-medicating with his 2004 Harley. At least it had brakes and at this age he has respect for the Boss.



*William with Merlin Carothers. (1989)
He is the author of "Prison to Praise," that meant so much to me when I was in prison.*

Chapter 12
Self-Medication

Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
Psalm 37:8b

Those of us who fit the ADD or TS label have used a lot of *stuff* to feel better or fit in. Chances are good that we were arrested in an attempt to self-medicate ourselves in one way or another.

Know it or not—we began to abuse our first chemical substance as little kids. It was and still is the most dangerous chemical we ever abused. And it is a chemical that we make ourselves.

Ever notice a kid who needs glasses? What does he do?

He squints.

Of course, the squinting and strain gives him a headache. But he doesn't know any better.

Those of us who fit the ADD label squint too. It's a different kind of squinting, but we still get the strain.

As little kids, we found a way to fix our lack of focus, concentration, or motivation. We learned that fear produces adrenaline—the brain's own *speed*. And we learned that adrenaline jump starts our brains. It helps us focus, think, fit in, feel better, slow down, and wake up.

Doctors have been using neuro or psychostimulants (amphetamines—speed) to treat ADD since 1902. The stimulants turn on our brain's prefrontal cortex. We get back what Phineas Gage lost forever. It allows us to focus, fit in, and feel better—for a time. But it's a phony fix.

We still are beavers in a world of squirrels. We just get along better with the squirrels. So long as the medication lasts!

We have been self-medicating with our own brain speed since childhood. We really didn't learn this all by ourselves. We had others who helped us.

Know it or not—others used fear and adrenaline to move and motivate us. Our parents yelled at us to get up or get going. They threatened us with punishment or painful consequences. To force us to fit their world, they induced fear. That fear produced adrenaline. We got the jump start and rush of our own speed. We did the chores or complied to keep them happy.

Teachers, coaches, principals, and preachers all did the same thing. We didn't fit in their world. So they used fear to get focus. Fear produced the adrenaline so we could pay attention. They all thought they were helping us. But we began to develop a dangerous habit.

Years ago medical studies were done on ADD children. They compared hyperactive boys with “normal” boys (the farmer-gather types). They tested the difference in their urine sample and found a surprising result. The urine of the ADD boys had a high level of adrenaline.

It is no surprise to us, of course. But the researchers were shocked to see such high levels of adrenaline at a young age. The truth is that we who fit the ADD label *learn* to produce and rely on adrenaline. We become dependent on adrenaline and seek ways to keep it coming.

Now as adults we use the fear on ourselves. We wake up and get the *worry-of-the-day* each morning. We use anxiety to get our own attention. Then we trade one worry for another all day long. A cloud of doom follows us wherever we go.

We develop an unconscious addiction to adrenaline. This leads us to a need for crisis. It's more than mere procrastination of normal deadlines. A dependency upon

crisis can lead us to daredevil acts, asinine arguments, and ridiculous risks. Most of the prison inmates I've known were like this—like me. We create chaos, seek crisis, cause conflict, pick fights, etc. No wonder we get in trouble or turn to illegal drugs! No wonder we get out and repeat old mistakes!

The craziness and conflict pump our own adrenaline. We fix our own fit—for a while. The adrenaline helps other brain chemicals work better too. Our neuro-transmissions improve—that means the spark plugs fire better. Other self-produced neuro-transmitters...brain chemicals...like dopamine, serotonin, and our own norepinephrine are all more effective. So our mood mellows, our focus gets fixed, and our brain works better. But it is a temporary fix. To keep it up, we've got to live in constant crisis, chaos, craziness, or conflict.

In the long run, the effects of this stress and adrenaline dependence will destroy our health. Our energy and strength should be used to fight illness, metabolize food, restore cells, etc.. Instead, we use our energy to stay on constant alert. So we get sick, tired, and depressed! We get panic attacks. Then we drop into dark pits to regain strength and sanity. And there's always some doc who says, "Oh, you're bi-polar!"

A life in constant crisis and chaos is sure to destroy relationships. It disrupts our families and causes us to create unneeded pressure and stress for others. We use fear and threats to motivate our kids and spouses. We repeat the mistakes of our own parents.

This is serious stuff. It does not have to happen. We can keep it from future generations. But we must face the truth about our lives—both the good and the bad.

It is wrong and dangerous to use fear to focus. The most important problem with this form of "self-medication" is spiritual. The Bible specifically warns against it. In Psalm 37:8, the Lord warns us, *Do not fret—it leads only*

to evil! The Hebrew word for *fret* means “to tie in knots” or “twist.” And the word for *evil* is *rah* which means “evil personified.” In other words, *Don’t get tied up in knots of worry—it only leads to the devil’s door.*

Remember the story of *Chicken Little*? An acorn hit her on the head. Her crazy fear caused her to think that the sky was falling! The fox used her fear against her. Her fear led her to the fox’s den. She would have been the fox’s dinner, but the king arrived just in time.

Those of us who fit the ADD label live with anxiety and overwhelm. We feel like we are always under attack. We feel like lonely survivors in a war-torn country. Life is a combat zone, and we’ve lost a lot. Hope can dry up and blow away. Losses and failures can pile up. We hunger for peace, and we hate the pain.

Other Forms of Self-Medication

Those of us who fit the ADD label know about the effects of neuro-stimulants. How? Through self-medication. We learned by trial and error. We learned that certain stimulants help us think better.

Caffeine: Lots of us choose coffee as our drug of choice. Caffeine is an effective stimulant. Cola—especially diet cola—is loaded with caffeine. Many ADD-ers start the day with cola rather than coffee. In the early days, *Coke*® had cocaine—hence the name *Coca-Cola*®. I’m sure it was a favorite among those with ADD! But the effects of the cocaine did more than wake-up their brains and limbic systems. Cocaine’s harmful effects damaged lives—it still does today. Anyway, the replacement for cocaine in cola was caffeine. Many soft drink companies increase the amount of caffeine in diet cola to boost and improve our moods.

Let’s not forget chocolate! It is another natural source of caffeine. The Spanish explorer Cortez learned about it

from the Aztecs. We've been addicted ever since. Americans consume many tons of chocolate every year. The caffeine and sugar in chocolate boosts the reward pathways in the limbic system.

Nicotine: Tobacco products contain nicotine—another neurostimulant. Plus nicotine also has an effect on the pleasure center of the brain. That's why it's so addictive. The danger is easy to see—cigarettes increase our focus and improve our feelings. I'll stick to chocolate!

Street Drugs: We all self-medicated. We just didn't know why. But now we know—we always had a hunch. *It caused us to think better.* A little bit of meth (methamphetamine) or cocaine or even alcohol bumped up the dopamine in our brains. So we thought better and felt good—immediately.

A little bit of drugs or booze can bring us out of depression and confusion. The trouble is this—there is no such thing as “a little bit.” It makes us feel good—or at least better. So we don't want to quit. And then later, we can't quit. It's called addiction.

Home, school, and life set us up for addictions. Many of us did not find our real fit in life. We were forced fit the plan at school and parents at home. Those responsible for us did not see our difference. We had no help—so we got hurt. We became misfits and ugly ducklings. And remember, misfit misfire!

To fit in and feel better, we tried drugs. We did whatever we got our hands on. We discovered that meth, cocaine, and other forms of speed helped us think. It worked like the medicine that doctors give ADD patients. It gave us focus, and we felt better—for a while.

A pastor friend of mine did not want to give ADD medication to his teenage daughter. But he was shocked when the police called him. She was arrested for posses-

sion and use of methamphetamines. Later she said, “But Dad, I could think and do my homework when I used it.” The pastor said to me, “From the day of her arrest, life was never the same. She had to change schools and her career options were forever limited. And her young heart was wounded by a trauma that was not necessary. I feel responsible.”

Alcohol: They say that those of us with the ADD label are *genetic alcoholics!* But alcohol is not a stimulant, right? Alcohol is a depressant. Yet it helps us think and feel better. Why? How?

First, the depressant part relaxes us. It takes the edge off life. We feel less stress and pressure—so our brains turn back on! Remember, when we fit and do what we love, there is no brain freeze or loss. Martin Luther, the German pastor and famous reformer, had a brain like mine. He said that a little beer helped him write better sermons.

But there’s another way alcohol medicates. The reward pathways in our brain’s limbic system dim and fade under pressure too. So we get depressed when we don’t fit. *Duh!* But it’s a special kind of *blues*. They call it *dysthymia*. Anyway, alcohol can increase the dopamine (WD-40 of the brain) in the limbic system’s pleasure center (mesocorticolimbic pathway). Nicotine and cocaine do that too.

Don’t be deceived—*alcohol is dangerous for us*. A bad fit affects our focus, our feelings, and our fun. But a little booze breaks the ice and our brains work better. We can focus and feel good—*feel normal*. That’s why it’s so hard to stop after 2 drinks. If 2 drinks are good—then 22 oughta be great! Oops! Alcohol is no cure, and too much alcohol is a curse.

Sex: We self-medicate with sex. It’s a source of high stimulation. We become addicted to the adrenaline of the hunt and the score. We dominate, defeat, and disappear.

I found that girls didn't care how well I did in school. I had a lot of girl friends—the prettiest girls in school. Yeah, I had a nice car. But I didn't care what the reason was. I just wanted the sex. And I got it right there in the front seat of my car.

I became obsessed—addicted. I was never happy with just one girl. I wanted all I could get. My friend and I would cruise from drive-in to drive-in. Some nights we made it with 2 different sets of girls—girls we just met! On a visit to Catalina, I had sex with 3 different girls in one day!

They say that sexual addiction springs from a hunger for intimacy. That's why some of us chose sex instead of sky diving. But it's the adrenaline and changes in brain chemistry that keep us coming back for more. We may seek and score lots of sex, but we never find the intimacy we need.

Self-medication is not the answer. The addictions that result will destroy us or have already destroyed us. We have addictive personalities. We can't play with fire—we get hooked. So fear, adrenaline, drugs, alcohol, and sex are dangerous dead ends. Even prescription drugs for ADD are not the final answer. ***ADD medicine can help us focus, but it doesn't tell us what to focus on!***

Medication can and does help at first. The right medication can correct the imbalances in our brains. But we want more than to focus our brains—we need to fix our lives. God can help us do that. He can tell us who we are and where we fit. He designed us, and He knows our place and purpose in life.



*William and his 16 year old girlfriend in 1957.
Easter week (spring break) at Balboa in Newport
Beach, California. She didn't even care if he could
read or write very well.*



*1947 Triumph Chopper in 1957. It was painted the
same color as the Olds. All the girls really liked
to ride on that bike.*

Columbine and Cat Poop!

Jesus entered Jericho and...a man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector.... He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

Luke 19:1-7 (selected)

Self-medication is dangerous. Low self-esteem is deadly.

Why?

Self-esteem affects every area of our lives for good or for evil. We understand the power of self-esteem. We don't question the motives involved in the Columbine High School killings. The press, the politicians, and the public ask the question, *Could it have been prevented?* We can't help but laugh at their stupidity. To us it's as obvious as an elephant in the living room. Yet they don't see it! Just like they didn't see us.

Many of us prisoners (past and present) were forgotten when the self-esteem got passed around at home. We didn't get it. We didn't even see it. If it was on the menu, it never made it to the table. Yet we needed it. Self-esteem is the foundation for our fit in this world. Self-esteem tells us that we matter and that we can make it.

Without adequate self-esteem we don't know who we are or what we do. Without it we spend most of our lives trying to "pass for normal." We fake it until we make it. Most of the time, we don't even know why we don't fit. We just know that life is a struggle and a stress. We want to get ahead and succeed, but we don't have a clue about our gifts or our goals. So many of us over-react and build a bigger-than-life false image.

We use denial and pretend that nothing's wrong. Denial protects us from the pain, but it also distorts reality. We spin lies and stretch the truth about ourselves. We develop a self-importance and project a false confidence. We get cocky and crass. But then we pay the price. We have to withdraw and keep others at a distance—keep others from the truth. Nobody wants intimacy with our illusions and false image. And our grandiosity keeps us from growing up. Lies and legends don't mature—they're not real.

Our low self-esteem, or lack of it, can bring shame. That shame causes us to be silent rather than to be honest. But most often, our low or lost self-esteem brings anger and resentment. The rejection and ridicule we feel gives birth to rebellion and rage. And we strike out.

What is Self-Esteem?

Dr. Stanley Coopersmith wrote the book on self-esteem. He taught that self-esteem is built upon 5 important elements. These 5 parts weave together in a child's life. They form the materials that make values. They determine how a child values himself and others. [*Refer to end note #7 & 8.*]

Acceptance—*I belong!*
Significance—*I am somebody!*
Competence—*I can do something!*
Power—*I can make it happen!*
Virtue—*I can do right!*

Wait a minute. Don't rush on. Stop and think about these 5 elements of self-esteem. They are important—vital.

We first discover ourselves in our families. Our families tell us who we are, what we do, and where we belong. Our families define our place and potential in the world. Our families provide us with our self-image. We see ourselves in their mirror. Our parents and families give us everything we need to grow into mature and responsible adults.

And, of course, all of us prisoners (past and present) had perfect families. Right?

Ouch!

Anyway.... Healthy self-esteem is the product of healthy families. It empowers us to venture into the world with confidence. Without good self-esteem, we struggle in the outside world. Failure and self-doubt bite at our heels. And we seek self-esteem in other places—like school. Right?

Oops!

Not many of us found self-esteem in school. Some of us did well in sports. Gymnastics was my sport. I was good at it. In my junior year, I won the CIF. That means I was the best in California on the parallel bars. Our school won the over all CIF because of my win. But it ended there. I was ineligible for my senior year—too many demerits. They put me in basketball. The tall b-ball players made me look like a dwarf. And they made me feel and play like a spazz.

School was not a source of self-esteem for most of us. So now what? Without self-esteem from home or school, what happens?

Our self-esteem tank is empty—sometimes bone dry. We may see ourselves as *unacceptable, insignificant, incompetent, powerless, and without virtue*. What then? The loss of self-esteem becomes a poison and a pain. It can seep into our hearts and harm us. The distorted view of ourselves distorts our view of the world and our place in it.

Acceptance was denied: *I don't belong!*

Childhood was tough for us. We didn't fit in as others expected. That made us feel unwanted. We created difficulties for parents, caretakers, or teachers. We didn't think, act, behave, or obey as others wanted. We embarrassed them or made demands on their time and resources. So we felt like we were a bother and a burden.

Significance was denied: *I'm not important!*

We were made to feel insignificant during childhood. Those who were important to us were absent, busy, or overwhelmed. They found it easier to ignore us. At best, they tolerated us or told us to get lost. We were safe when we were “invisible.” But as adults we still feel like ghosts—unnoticed and unwanted.

Competence was denied: *I can't do anything!*

We were made to feel incompetent. We couldn't measure up to the expectations of parents or teachers. We couldn't sit still. We didn't listen well. We struggled to read and comprehend. We had sloppy handwriting. We made messes and couldn't organize or clean our rooms.

Power was denied: *I can't make it happen!*

In childhood, we were overpowered by others.

We felt helpless. Those with power and control had their way. We had no choices. Parents punished, teachers tormented, and bullies beat us. Some of us faced abuse, ridicule, threats, anger, rage, confinement, cruelty, hunger, and poverty. Our sense of power had no chance to grow. And repeated failures in school and at home made us feel like hopeless losers. *So why try? Why play their game?*

Virtue was denied: *I can't do right!*

As kids, we were treated like moral misfits. It was just our ADD—we were distracted and impulsive. We didn't share or say, "Thank you!" We cut in front of others. We wanted to get our way. We got angry, and we struck back. We said the wrong things. We stretched the truth and told some tall tales. So it was hard to feel any virtue. We were called disobedient, rebellious, deceptive, irreverent, manipulative, etc.

Self-esteem is a deep need in our hearts. Like air, food, and water—we need it. We didn't get self-esteem in all the right ways. But that didn't stop us. We went looking for it.

Jerry tells the following story about our need for self-esteem. This comes from his book *What I Learned from Lucy, Ethel, and Chicken Little*. This is a portion of the chapter titled: *Cat Poop Fix!* [Refer to end note #8.]

One day, I saw my own craziness in someone else. She was a patient of my friend Doc. B., the local chiropractor (when I lived in Ventura county). I saw the doc every Monday morning. I came early before regular hours. He adjusted my crooked spine. I nurtured his wounded soul. He taught me

nutrition and health. I took his confessions and complaints. We both had our share of complaints. We groused about God, the church, and our fellow hypocrites.

A local business woman liked to interrupt our private sessions. She was a keg of gunpowder looking for a spark. She'd pound on the front door. Doc would ignore her and say, "It must be a full moon."

Then the back door would be battered. Her rage and ravings were louder there—she knew that. "I know you're in there, you old quack!" She howled one day. "Open this door, or I'll make up lies about you!"

"She once threatened to call my wife," Doc said. "She was gonna tell my wife that I seduced her and took advantage of her right here in the office." Doc paused and turned on a heat lamp. "Of course, my wife knows her well because of school politics. She hunts down teachers—it's a sport to her. She lectures every one she can corner. And she threatens the ones who sneak away. My wife is just glad that she doesn't sit on the school board. She's lost every election she's entered. Hmmm, it's little wonder."

"Why?" I asked Doc. "Why the growl? Why so gruff?"

"Ever notice that she always wears pants?" Doc asked. "Ever notice the crooked walk and limp?"

"Yeah," I replied. "Those pants and suits make her look like a man. I figured she got the limp from a bar fight."

"No," Doc answered. "She was born close to here. Her parents were from Mexico. They picked lemons, strawberries, avocados. Their home was

a camp. She was born on a blanket spread over dirt. Her drunk dad looked down and saw a girl. He wanted—needed—a boy. So he picked her up and threw her into the camp fire. The women rescued her, but not before the damage was done to her leg. Those pants cover a plastic and metal replacement.

“They fixed her leg, but not her heart. That leg and every step is a reminder. She was not wanted. She was not valued. She was trash—a disappointment and a burden.”

Then doc stepped away and said, “Now excuse me. I need to go let her in.”

Doc came back, and we changed topics (Ms. Doorbanger was in the next room). We talked about our dogs and the daily walks. I complained to him that my dog ate cat poop. He said his dog used to eat it too. “Why do you figure they do that?” I asked.

“I know why,” Doc answered. “The vet said it’s for magnesium. Cat poop is rich in magnesium. Dogs eat it ’cause they need it.”

“What can be done?” I asked.

“The vet said to feed Snowflake a dog food with enough magnesium. So I did. No cat poop since!”

Later, I thought about Ms. Doorbanger. I figured she needed a little magnesium in her diet—maybe a lot. She needed it in the form of love, acceptance, and all the vitamins that make self-esteem. None of it was there—not when it mattered. So now she’s in the dirt looking for what she missed.

It’s the same way for most of us. We put our noses in the dirt to search for our lost self-esteem. We look for...

Acceptance—We want to belong!

Significance—We want to be somebody!

Competence—We want to be good at something!

Power—We want to make things happen!

Virtue—We want to be and do right!

But our needs weren't met in appropriate ways. We didn't get self-esteem at the table—so we dug in the trash. There was no significance at dinner—so we searched in the dirt. It's the same for kids and adults. ***We understand it well—we lived it.*** The politicians, preachers, parents, and the press all scratch their heads and wonder about Columbine High School. And they will still be in a stupor at the next massacre.

The “Beltway or D.C. Sniper” leaves them bewildered too. Sure, his acts were senseless and stupid. But we know the pain that pushed him. His family was taken. His fatherhood was stripped. His self-esteem was shattered and smashed. And it was all done legally in the courts. To the court and his ex-wife, this man was unaccepted, insignificant, incompetent, powerless, and without virtue. But that self-esteem void must be filled.

So John Allen Muhammad searched in the dirt and found his cat poop fix. He also found another needy soul (Lee Boyd Malvo). And he found that the police, politicians, news media, and nation were willing to feed his nauseous need. He gained power, significance, competence, acceptance, and his own kind of virtue. He declared himself to be god. And for a while, he was in control.

But the politicians, preachers, parents, and the press still wonder in amazement. We (the clients of confinement) know something that they don't. We know that...

...a kid, who feels *unaccepted* at home, can belong in a gang.

...a girl, who is *insignificant* to her dad, can be

special to the guys—if she gives them what they want.

...a man, who was called *incompetent* as a kid, can get rich—if he breaks some rules.

...a kid, who was *powerless* as a boy, can get respect with a gun.

...a kid, who never measured up in his parent's religion, can be an expert in evil. He has *no virtue* in his family's world or church—so he “switches sides.” His interests are dark and devilish. His hair is spiked and colored black like his fingernails. His sign is a skull—the symbol of himself. His music is morbid—his clothing macabre. He is a soul in rebellion—a son in search of self-esteem.

Cat poop fixes? Yep!

We know the truth. Those of us who have done the crime and the time—we know. We have worn the labels and faced the losses. We dug in the dirt and discovered the cat poop. We chewed it and swallowed it. But there was no self-esteem—just sickness and sorrow. We got worms and lots of woes.

What's the answer?

Duh!

The answer is proper nutrition: ***acceptance, significance, competence, power, and virtue***—all given with love.

Right now—at this moment—another bad thing is in the works. The perpetrators have a need. They are hungry and hurting. Others have failed them—so they seek their own fix. But they look in the wrong place. They dig in the dirt. They search for what they were not given. They are deprived sons transformed into rebellious souls.

At the massacre in Columbine High School—the troubled boys had high intelligence but low self-esteem. One had Ritalin but no real focus. To meet their needs,

they took control and destroyed many lives. They found **acceptance** in *The Trench Coat Mafia*. That was the name of their gifted gang. They gained brief **significance** from their sinister stunt. They felt **competence** in the craftsmanship of the bomb and booby traps they made and laid. They grasped **power** by the use of guns that took lives. And to consecrate their own corrupt **virtue**, their first kill was a confessed Christian.

None of this is theory to me. It's my story. I searched in the dirt too.

My own mother was a school teacher. So I knew that not all school teachers were bad. Still, I had to pay back the ones who belittled me—like my second 3rd grade teacher. I failed 3rd grade the first time—so the next teacher rubbed my nose in it. She told all the kids, “William should have learned all this material last year. And he still doesn't know it!” The kids all laughed, but I lost another pint of self-esteem.

My 5th grade teacher was Mrs. Chandler. She had a doctorate in disrespect. She insulted me every chance she had. My self-esteem hemorrhaged that year.

By 7th grade I started to light trash cans on fire. I put the smoldering can in front of the intake fan. I wanted the whole school to appreciate my scheme and smell my smoke. I wanted to hear the alarm and see everyone leave. I wanted to shut down school and make them the fools. I got my cat poop fix each time. I felt powerful, significant, accepted, competent, and virtuous in my own way. But it never nourished me.

I struck back at teachers in other ways. I used an ice pick to flatten their tires—all 4 at once, of course. Sometimes, I put nails under their tires—in front and back, of course. In 9th grade and on, I had a different teacher for each class. So I had a lot more to get even with! I was busy, and I never got caught.

By high school, all my self-esteem had dried up and drained away. I was addicted to cat poop. I hated school. But my mother wouldn't let me quit.

I collected demerits like a dog gets fleas. They were just attracted to me. I got busted because I couldn't stand in lines. I cut in line at the cafeteria. Or I caused trouble when I got bored. I got busted every time I was late to class. I got busted for talking back. My demerits grew like a tumor.

The high school teachers made life hard for me. So I returned the favor. I put sugar in their gas tanks. So they took their cars to the auto shop. But I was in the auto shop! So I put nuts and bolts down their cylinders while I changed their spark plugs. I heard one teacher say that his pistons shattered and the rods went through the block. That cat poop tasted good—for a while.

I shot the grease gun under their seat covers. I left surprises in their head liner. Once, in the parking lot, I threw some gas on the front seat of a car. Then I set it on fire. It burned until the tires melted and the gas tank blew up. I don't remember why I did that, but I do remember that I got caught. The police came and arrested me out of a class. They sat me down and asked over and over, "Why? Why would you do this? What would make you do this? We don't understand!"

In the end, I had to get rid of the burned car. I sold it to a junk yard for \$70, and they even picked it up! I felt superior, but I did not feel self-esteem. All those behaviors were my attempts to get what I did not have. But none of it gave me the self-esteem I needed.

I see it all around me. I see youth and adults dig in the dirt to search for their form of cat poop. Their search is only a symptom of their need. So I don't point, blame, shame, or belittle. I just go to God's store and get them the resources they need. I look for the proper nutrition—love, acceptance, significance, competence, power,

and virtue.

That's what Jesus did—always. The Gospels show that Jesus always met a person's need for self-esteem first. Before He healed or helped physical needs, Jesus recognized each person as valued and important to Himself and to His Father.

Read the whole story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19. To the Jewish folks, Zacchaeus was the bully and bad guy. He was the *chief* tax collector for the Romans. He was a legal crook. Yet when Jesus came to town, He wanted to have lunch with Zacchaeus. That meant Jesus accepted the man just as he was. [*Refer to end note #8.*]

This book is titled *The Happy Prisoner*. I am happy. No real or lasting joy or satisfaction came from my revenge or pay-backs. Those things added to my sin and left me sick, sorrowful, and sad. I am happy today because of Jesus Christ. He is my source of self-esteem today. I no longer look in the dirt. I only look to Him.

See the exercise on self-esteem at the end of Step Two in the workbook *The Twelves Steps—A Key to Living with ADD* by RPI Publishing, Inc. (pages 51-53). [*Refer to end note #6.*]

Chapter 14
Kid Stuff

*When I was a child, I talked like a child,
I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.
When I became a man,
I put childish ways behind me.*
1 Corinthians 13:11

40 *years old but still living life like a 4-year-old!*
Sound familiar?

The problems we faced in childhood were complex. For many of us, home was neither safe nor sane. Our families struggled to survive. Those who were responsible for us could not be responsible for themselves. And school was a strain too. Learning disabilities, behavioral disorders, and the many forms of discipline stripped any joy. All sorts of childhood hardships stunted our growth. The stress and troubles of childhood stopped our normal development. We became survivors—frozen in time. We got lost on the way to adulthood.

Kid Stuff is a chapter in Jerry's book *Wounded Hearts Walk In Circles*. He adapted some of that material for this chapter. This is important stuff. Without real growth in these problem areas, we have little chance for change or success. It's vital that we understand the things that cause us to repeat mistakes over and over. [Refer to end note #8.]

We learned to *fake it* and to *pass for normal* in childhood. We developed survival skills and coping mechanisms to survive. But our ways to live life were based on

child logic. Kids figure that they can hide under the covers for safety, lie to get out of trouble, or pout to get their way. Those old childish habits became patterns. We relied on them to help us survive. They popped up whenever we felt hurt or threatened. But one day, we're 40 years old, and still living life like a 4-year-old! Oops!

These old childish habits are easy to see in other people. But we can't see them in ourselves. Remember that thing called denial?

Don't

Even

kNow

I'm

A

Liar!

How does this happen?

Well, first of all, think back to the old story of *Chicken Little*. Remember? In the nursery tale, Chicken Little wandered off from the barnyard. She ended up in the forest—a bad place for a little chick.

The trouble started with a bump on the head. An acorn fell from a tree. Chicken Little had no idea what hit her. She'd never seen an acorn. She was hurt, startled, and afraid. The fear gripped her. In her panic she decided that the sky must be falling! The truth got twisted into a catastrophe: *the acorn turned into an asteroid!* Chicken Little was in an emotional crisis. Her reality was distorted. She even spread her falsehood and fear to others (Henny Penny, Cocky Locky, and Goosey Poosey).

Next, the real enemy came—the Fox! It was an easy con for sly old Foxy Woxy. He offered to help and said that he knew a short cut. It led to his den, of course! He soon had her and the others following him. Chicken Little just wanted an innocent trip to the woods. But she ended

up in bondage and in blind obedience to the enemy of her soul.

The same thing can and does happen to us. That's why wise King Solomon said, *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life* (Proverbs 4:23). Here's how the enemy gets us in trouble:

1st — **The Acorn:** Something bad, wrong, or painful hits us (rejection, loss, injustice, failure).

2nd — **The Hurt:** We have feelings about the event (anger, fear, panic, grief).

3rd — **The Distortion:** Our emotions twist the truth and distort reality (shame, abandonment, hopelessness, failure, worthlessness).

4th — **The Fix:** We react to the hurt and loss, and we take control (payback, manipulate, isolate, withdraw, compensate).

From childhood this has happened to us. Our hearts got wounded and our ways got warped. We tried to fix things on our own. We developed lots of survival skills and coping mechanisms—fixes. Then every time an acorn hit us, we jumped into a survival mode. We turned to our old way. We worked our fix or did our tricks.

Others grew up and matured in life—we survived. We took control in order to protect ourselves. Others let life push them around a little—to grow and gain experience. They learned from hardships and grew through trials. But not us.

We didn't take life as it came. We didn't learn from it. We cheated it. We controlled and manipulated life. We had to be in charge. We had to protect ourselves. So we avoided the bumps. We snuck out the back door. We became survival experts—escape artists. But now we suffer.

We never got the lessons, the character, or the maturity that others got. We stunted our own growth. We still live

by the same old survival skills and coping mechanisms. We still do our childish tricks and fixes. All that stuff made sense to us as kids. But we hung on to it all—we brought it with us into adult life. Oh, the form changes—a little. But it's the same little kid relying on old, childish ways. We have adult bodies and responsibilities, but inside, we feel like little kids. Why? It's because we are.

Jerry's story below is a reminder. Our grown-up problems began with childhood pain.

When I was a kid, we played a lot of violent yet innocent games—cowboys and Indians, cops and robbers, and war. We fired toy or imaginary guns and screamed “pow! pow! pow!” or “bang! bang! bang!” That was before technology had improved the sound of toy weapons.

Anyway, after we felt we had really killed the other guys, we would yell “You're dead!” But the others would always disagree, “No! You never got me, but I got you! You're dead!” And so the battle of “who got who” would rage on with more energy than the actual game. At last, someone would surrender and say, “Okay, I'm dead. Let's start over.” But there were some kids who would never give up. Steve was like that.

Steve was bigger and older than the rest of us. For some reason he hung around us instead of kids his own age. He wasn't the sort of guy anybody liked to be around. But if we didn't play with him, he'd beat us up. So he got his way—if he could find us.

Anyway, no matter how many times you shot Steve, he would never die. Once, we played war, and my brother dropped an atomic bomb on him. But he didn't die! He wouldn't die. Now how's that possible? Steve didn't just hate to lose. He

couldn't lose. He couldn't allow it—ever.

I'm sure you know guys like Steve. To make sure that he didn't lose, he made up new rules all the time. If his ball went out of bounds, he picked new boundary lines. If he didn't like a kid on his team, he'd demand that we pick new teams. And if we didn't pick new teams, he'd hurt the unwanted kid to run him off. If he wasn't the team leader or commander, he didn't want to play. And if he or his team was losing, he'd claim to be bored. Then he'd make us start a new game. You can understand why we were always glad when Steve *didn't* show up.

Once Steve came over with a handful of envelopes. He said they were invitations to his birthday party. He passed them out with this stern warning: "Whoever doesn't show up at my party, with a present, will be declaring war on me. And I never forget an enemy. If it's the last things on earth that I ever do, I'll search down each enemy, shave off his hair and cut off his ears!"

We believed him. So the following Saturday, we all went to his party with presents in hand. Only us younger kids were there. No guys Steve's age came.

The party was lame—anything but fun. His mom had some sissy games—kids' stuff. It sucked! She had us pin tales on a paper donkey, fill up cups with teaspoons of water—dopey stuff. I almost snuck out once, but Steve gave me one of his ugly looks. At least the cake was good.

Steve's mom said he could open his presents at the very end of the party. That's when she called for Steve's dad to come in. We all heard his dad in the other room. He had the television really loud. Steve's mom kept calling, "Honey, come in here.

Steve is fixin' to open his presents. Please, Gus, come in." But he just grunted.

Steve's mom had to go into the other room to get him. That's when they started to argue and yell. The mom said, "Damn it, Gus, it's his birthday. Can't you stop drinking long enough to see him open presents." Steve's dad said some pretty bad and loud words. We all got scared.

I hoped that Steve's dad wouldn't get up and come in. But he did. He swayed and stumbled as he entered. I didn't think it was late enough in the day to be drunk, but he was. He came straight to Steve and said, "Now what's so damned important."

Steve looked up at his dad. His squinted his eyes, lifted an arm for protection, and winced like he was already hurt. His eyes had tears and terror. He spoke like a little kid. "It's my birthday, Daddy."

"Well, you still act like f—ing baby if you ask me. Hurry up and open this crap so I can get back to my business." Steve got to work and began to open up the gifts we had brought. With every present, Steve's dad mocked. He said the toy I brought was a piece of trash. But none of us dared to open our mouth. We were all pretty scared of him. And we all kept one eye on him—just like Steve did.

The presents were all opened, and I could feel that something bad was about to break. Now, we all had both eyes on Steve's dad. He stood up, stumbled, and steadied himself. Then he focused on Steve and howled, "One swat for every year old!"

Steve exploded like fireworks. He cried and screamed for his mom. But the more he bawled, the angrier his dad got and the harder he chased him. "Come here you sissy!" he screamed. Tables,

chairs, and tv trays got knocked over. Paper plates with cake and ice cream littered the floor. Then it was over. Steve's neck was locked in a grip. His face was wet and red—his eyes bulged. Steve wanted to cry, but only gulps and gasps came out.

Steve's dad threw him over his knee. He lifted his hand and called out, "How old is he?" But Steve's mom was in the corner with her knuckles in her mouth. Steve got hit for a couple extra years that he didn't deserve—then "one for good measure." Each blow took Steve's breath. His mom felt it too.

When Steve's dad was done—all the anger spent, he stood. Steve slid off his lap like a blanket. He cried in short burst and gasps. For some reason he looked at me. I'd never seen eyes like that before or since. I felt sorry for Steve.

Then Steve's dad said, "You're a damn baby. You're not my son." Next he reached for his wallet and fished around inside it. He pulled out a five dollar bill and said, "Here!" Steve took the money and watched his dad stumble back to the television and bottle. We boys never said anything about that day to Steve. We figured his life was hard enough as it was.

Surviving is hard work. We are always on alert—always tense. Others look for the rewards in life. We watch for threats. Life feels gloomy, empty, and dark. Survival strips the good stuff from life. Our ways catch up to us. We are tired, worn, and weary. We feel like jugglers or plate spinners. We're exhausted, but we're also afraid. We're afraid to let down our guard, stop the act, or trust somebody else. All we know to do are the tricks and fixes.

In time we hit all sorts of walls—poverty, divorce,

fatigue, illness, addictive behavior, criminal conduct, arrest, and prison. *We are forced to stop and examine our lives.* We see that the survival skills and coping mechanisms have become our identity. The tricks and fixes have become a part of who we are and how we function. They claimed us and named us. People call us the names. They know us as drunks, addicts, liars, failures, cheats, criminal, bullies, and bad guys. These things are not character defects. They are symptoms of our deeper need—reflections of the woundedness within.

I've listed some of these deeper needs or common traits below. They all won't apply to everyone. The list is a guide to identify the traits that have seeped into our daily existence:

- We have feelings of low self-esteem that cause us to judge ourselves without mercy.
- We are fearful, anxious, and insecure in many areas of our lives.
- We seem unable to experience the happiness, peace, or serenity that others feel.
- We have a profound sadness and a sense that we missed our childhood.
- We feel overwhelmed like we are drowning in a sea of commitments, responsibilities, and demands upon our time and attention.
- We feel resentful, bitter, and angry toward others—even those closest to us.
- We have mood swings with periods of anxiety, depression, or loneliness.
- We worry excessively, and often have a sense of impending doom.
- We are rarely in touch with our feelings or the present moment—we obsess on the past or worry about the future.

- We may have frozen emotions and find it hard to express our feelings.
- We do not give proper attention to our physical wellbeing.
- We have a strong sense of under achievement, and always feel that we fail to live up to our potential.
- We have a strong desire to escape from our life and current condition.

So how do we heal our wounded hearts? How do we change?

To heal the wounded ADD heart and soul, we don't go on safari to the past. We take responsibility in the present. We don't turn to the world for counsel and advice. We look to God's Word for correction, admonition, and healing. We don't blame bad parenting. We seek re-parenting. We don't isolate and lick our wounds. We seek out a community of others who have the maturity to model the love, character, and mercy of Christ. And we rediscover the joy in giving of ourselves to others. [*Refer to end note #9.*]

We can't grow up or mature in isolation. We need to belong to a spiritual family, a community of faith—a home. This home for the heart is a spiritual place—established in a strong relationship to the truth. It is a place where there is full disclosure of emotions, affections, and reality—truth. It is the place where we can be ourselves—no fig leaves, no hiding, no pretending. It is a place where we are free to express our feelings, reveal our values, and speak our truth. It is a place of honesty, acceptance, and safety.

It is much easier to change when we feel safe and secure. Fear puts us in a survival mode. And that means reliance on sick behaviors and traits from our old flesh and fallen nature. In a survival mode it's reflex—knee jerk reactions. We don't think—we act. Fear takes control and clouds our thought processes. That's why fear is so

dangerous. It took Chicken Little from an innocent acorn drop to a cosmic disaster and danger at the fox den.

Fear must be defeated. Only love, perfect love, can remove our fear. And there is only one source for that perfect love.

The Real You

He [Jesus] was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him [Jesus], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:10-13

Where do we go from here?

We know that we are gifted, intelligent, intuitive, and creative. We are special in good ways. We also know that we are special in other ways. Force us to be and do things against our nature, and we struggle. Misfits misfire! We become impulsive, easily distracted, and hyperactive. Or we become unfocused, inattentive, bored, and stripped of all motivation.

Like beavers stuck in a world of squirrels—we don't fit. We strain to do squirrel stuff. We choke on squirrel chores. We don't want to climb trees—we want to chomp them down and build dams! Yet no one recognizes who we are. Instead, they judge us for who we are not. We are forced to fit—then punished when we can't.

In a bad fit, our brains lose the brakes and the boss. Without that control, caution, and careful consideration, we become the bad guys. We act on impulse. We don't think about our behavior. We react. We strike back. But we just make matters worse.

We self-medicate with adrenaline, but that just adds to the imbalance in our brains. It adds new labels and more loses. We self-medicate in other ways. We want to calm down, get up, or check out. We want to focus or feel better. But instead, we face more pain and punishment.

Growing up, our self-esteem was not strengthened—it was stripped. At home and in school we felt unacceptable, insignificant, incompetent, powerless, and void of virtue. So we searched for self-esteem on our own. But we searched in all the wrong places—in all the wrong ways. We added insult to our injuries. And we brought more pain upon ourselves.

We need help to esteem ourselves—to understand ourselves. We want to fit—we want the right fit. But who are we? Where do we belong?

The Hope and Healing—Spirituality

I know that the only real hope and help comes from above. The best answers are the spiritual ones. Religious answers won't help. We need spirituality.

What is spirituality? Spirituality is *being in proper relationship to the truth*.

I know, I know— Some knucklehead is gonna ask, *What's the truth?* He's right to ask. You can't measure a foot without a ruler. Right? Every measurement needs a standard. It's the same with truth.

There is no truth without that ruler—that standard. So for me, my search for a relationship with the truth begins not with *what* but *Who*. As a Christian, I know truth in the Person of Jesus Christ. He said, *I am the way and the truth and the life* (John 14:6). And to Pilate, the Roman governor, Jesus said, *I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me* (John 18:37). So my relationship with the truth begins in my relationship with Christ. But there's more.

I also have truth in God's Word—the Bible. In prayer

to His Father, Jesus said, *Sanctify them [the disciples] by the truth; your word is truth* (John 17:17). Jesus said that God's Word is truth. So the Bible is my standard to measure and know the truth about my life.

The Real Me—the Truth

Our fathers were supposed to tell us who we are, what we do, and where we fit in life. That's a problem for most of us. Dad wasn't there for many of us. Or he was not a good and godly example. He may have added to our pain and failure.

The truth is—we need a new father. We need a father who will give us the direction we need. We need a father who will tell us who we are, what we do, and where we belong in life. We need a father who will build us up and not tear us down. We need a father who is good and who seeks our best—always. We need a father who is perfect in love and full of forgiveness. We need a father who provides for our needs and nourishes our souls.

There is only one Father Who can fit that description and fulfill our needs. We need the Heavenly Father—the One Who created us. He knows us the best, and He loves us the most. And we discover our true Father and our real selves in God's Word—the Bible.

The Bible teaches that the real me is spiritual. I'm a spirit man. Think of a computer. The real me (my spirit) is like software. My body is just the hardware. Without the software, my computer doesn't know what to do. In the same way, my spirit controls my body and behavior. *But who controls, informs, and affects my spirit?*

It's funny—just like computer software, you can't see or measure my spirit, the real me. The hard drive in my computer weighed 14.29000 ounces when it was brand new and blank. But then I loaded hundreds of dollars worth of my favorite software. I weighed the hard drive again. It still weighed 14.2900 ounces. I can't measure or

see the mysterious energy of software, yet it controls my computer's every action. It's the same with my spirit. It can't be seen or measured, but it has a powerful influence over my life.

For most of my life, I was blind to spiritual things. Like an animal, I was controlled by selfish appetites. My spirit was dark and dead. I was separated from God and enslaved by sin. Like a beast, I only cared about me, myself, and I. I was driven by lust, desire, and flesh. I wanted whatever tasted or felt good. And I used people to meet my needs.

Remember Jesus' story of the prodigal son? I was like the younger son—the prodigal. Jesus said:

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "Father, give me my share of the estate." So he divided his property between them.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. Luke 15:11-16

I relate to the young rebel. I didn't want my father—I didn't want God. I wanted what the world had to offer. I took control of my own life. I demanded my inheritance and headed for the *far country*.

But the prodigal son and I had a lot to learn. Citizens of the world—the *far country*—are selfish, demanding, and lustful. They are just like I was! In the world of man, I was

happy if I had things. Life was good with wine, women, and wild times. I got my value from friends, finances, and fun. I felt good with people, praise, and popularity.

I bought into the world's ways—the vices and the values. But the far country's values are dark and deadly. In the world of fallen man, I was only valued 1) *by what I had*, 2) *by what I did*, or 3) *by what others said about me*. I was measured by my possessions, profession, and reputation. That's all that mattered in the world where I lived. It's how I was judged. It determined my joy or my sorrow.

Why are values important?

Values are like the wind in our sails. Invisible yet powerful forces that move us upon the waters of life. They are mysteries to us. Few of us understand values. Most think that values are about morality and religion. Not so. Our values are a silent and unseen force within our hearts. Values form the system whereby we prize one person or thing above another.

Values determine our priorities, focus, motivation, conduct, and moods. Values have the power to make us happy and content, or sorrowful and vexed. Remember what Jesus said about values? *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Matthew 6:21).

Jerry teaches on values in *Wounded Hearts Walk In Circles*, and he gives the following illustration:

I heard the story of an Indian chief who visited Manhattan several years ago. His guide was a business man. While on the sidewalk along Fifth Avenue, the chief stopped and listened. "I hear a cricket," the chief said.

"You're crazy, Chief," answered the business man. "With all this traffic and city noise, it's impossible to hear a cricket."

"I hear a cricket," the chief insisted.

“Alright, Chief, show me,” the business man challenged.

The chief followed his ear across the dangerous and busy avenue. Horns honked and drivers barked, but the chief continued through the traffic and to the other side. He stepped up to a planter near a hotel door and doorman. He lifted a large leaf and there he found the cricket.

“That’s amazing!” the business man declared. “How on earth could you hear a cricket in the midst of all this clamor and commotion?”

The Indian chief approached the business man with his hand out. He said, “Give me what’s in your pockets.” The business man emptied his pockets, but the chief took only his change. Then he stepped out to the sidewalk and tossed the change in air. In a second, nickels, quarters, and dimes tinkled all around. Pedestrians froze in place. The coins called them to attention.

Then the Indian chief stepped back to the business man and said, “*We pay attention to what we value.* And I value the cricket.”

We pay attention to what we value. Our thoughts, our feelings, and our focus are determined—not by the conduct of others—but by the values in our heart. If the Indian chief is right, then we can know what we value by what we pay attention to. And it breaks our hearts to see the truth. We do not value ourselves. We value what we have, what we do, and what others think of us. And so we are doomed to pay attention to them, to cater to them, to please them, and to give them our best. The wound in our hearts can make us worthless to ourselves.

I know all this from experience. I speak often to groups. It’s not uncommon for me to speak to a hundred people. Then afterward, 99 might come up to shake my

hand, pat my back, and compliment my speech. But one person might come up to set me straight, rebuke me, or criticize my talk. At night, when I try to sleep, who will I think about? The 99 full of praise? Or the one full of rejection and criticism? I used to think about the one. I spent my life passing for normal and seeking value from others. In the rush to be something or somebody, I forget what mattered most. I lost myself.

But that was the enemy's plan—I mean the enemy of my soul. Remember Chicken Little? The prince and god of this world, Satan, wanted me to live by the world's values. In that way, he could control me through what I had, what I did, and what others said. He wanted to manipulate me like a puppet on strings. He pulled the possessions string—my mood sank to the bottom. He pulled the money string—my motivation lost all steam. He pulled the rejection strings—my meaning in life evaporated. My misplaced values made it easy for Satan to cause me stress. And stress switched my brain to “off” and made me easy prey.

The devil doesn't tell the whole story. The deal that his world offers has lots of fine print. His way is not living—it is surviving. But no one can survive because the world has limits. It does not last.

The prodigal son found himself in the middle of a famine. His money was spent. His friends were gone. His playboy days had played out. He was tossed like trash. To the world—he was without value. His joy was stripped, and his stomach was empty.

We prisoners (past and present) can relate to all this. Everything was taken from us. What we did was despised. No one thought well of us. No one said good things about us. But that was not (or is not) the truth.

The prodigal son and I both discovered the truth. We both found ourselves with the pigs. Hmmm. But in that low place we remembered. Jesus said:

When he [the prodigal son] came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.”

So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate. Luke 15:17-24

The prodigal son remembered that even the servants were valued in his father’s house. He remembered that his father was a compassionate and kind man. So he returned home. The son was willing to be a servant. He felt that he could find value by what he did—work and service. But no. The father did not value him by what he could do. The father valued him for who he was!

Regardless of his sin and failures, the boy was restored to the family. He was not a servant—he was a son. The father didn’t dish out punishment—he started a party! There was no correction—there was celebration!

I am happy today because I returned home. Through Jesus Christ I returned to my Father and my Maker. I asked God to forgive my sin. I did not deserve forgiveness, but

I was given mercy because of Christ. He paid my debt. He took my punishment.

I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and life. I asked Him to remake my spirit and bring me into His family. And He did. My spirit came to life. I walked into the light—His light. It's just like the Apostle Paul said, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!* 2 Corinthians 5:17

Now God Himself gives me value—in His kingdom. It doesn't matter what I have, what I do, or what others say. The world's values don't control me anymore. I may be poor, unpopular, or even in prison—but I will always have value to the Lord. I may face cruel teachers and fail crooked tests, but that is not my standard. Here is His reminder to me:

*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes **not** from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.* 1 John 2:15-17

One day my computer will die—my hard drive will fail. My body will drop dead and decay. But I will still be alive and well! I will still have value and meaning. I will be with my real family and with my real Father.

The hope and healing we all need is in Christ. The healing begins when we reject the world and its values. Then we have the sanity and sight to see our value as God does. We see that hope has always existed. It was in God's love for us.

Still, there are some of us who cling to the world. Those poor souls need more pain and punishment. But

most of us are ready for new values. Most of us are hungry for God. We long for a perfect Father. We want the Creator to claim us—to adopt us as His own.

God is ready to receive us into this special relationship. But He waits for us to ask. Talk with God now. Pray this prayer, make it personal, and mean it with all your heart:

Heavenly Father, I give up, I tried to live my way, now I want it your way. I ask you, Jesus, to come into my heart. I know you made it possible that I can come to the Father personally, and ask him for forgiveness. I do need, and I do ask, and I also forgive everyone else who has hurt and wronged me in the past.

I also renounce any involvement in whichcraft in my life now and also in the past. I know that rebellion and pharmacopeia (drugs) are a form of it and I ask for forgiveness.

Now I am begotton from above (born again) adopted into the family of God. A citizen in the Kingdom of God, part of the Body of Christ, and a Son or Daughter of Gods.

Now I ask for the power as in acts 1:8 so I can resist this evil that was upon me. I ask you, Jesus, to Baptize me with the Holy Spirit and Fire, I want my life to be a witness for you, Jesus,

Holy Spirit, you are welcome in my life. You are the helper and I need your help. Here is the last unruly member of my body, my tongue. I ask that you use it to pray through me when I know not what to pray. I ask for my own prayer language. Amen.

Your Power Source

Paul and Silas...were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.

Acts 16:1-26 (selected)

We want help for the learning disabilities and disorders that led us to prison. Right?

Current inmates *can* get help. But don't expect the Bureau of Prisons to provide testing or treatment for ADD, dyslexia, TS, bi-polar, etc.. They know that 70% of inmates fit the labels. They also know that proper treatment and support will change your life. You may never come back, and they like your business!

The Power of Prayer

Inmates don't have free and constant access to phones. That limits certain treatment options. But it does not limit contact with the most important support available to us.

Those of us who know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord have a 24-hour-a-day hotline available to us. We can

pick up the phone (prayer) and talk to the Creator of the universe anytime. The One who made space, light, life, time, matter, and the very fabric of reality wants us to call. We are family to Him. And He is willing to help.

Our heavenly Father is the One Who made man's mind. He is the best one to bring healing. We first approach treatment for ADD (or whatever) with prayer. We ask God to lead us to the materials, professionals, support, and help we need. Also—in prayer God can adjust our attitudes and give us hope. Without prayer and fellowship with God, we can be tempted to use ADD as an excuse for all our problems and behaviors. Or we may be tempted to blame others.

In prayer we ask God for His wise perspective. He can help us see ADD as He does. In God there are no problems—only possibilities. Remember what the angel said to the Virgin Mary? She asked how she, a virgin, could have a child. The angel answered, *For nothing is impossible with God* (Luke 1:37).

God has a purpose for our lives—each one of us. That purpose includes our ADD. We are gifts not goofs! We are leaders not losers! We Christians are instructed to worry about nothing, but pray about everything! (See Philippians 4:6). So we are confident that God is at work in every detail of our lives. Our job is to stay in contact through prayer. In that way we can discern His purposes and cooperate with His plan.

Remember, we don't go by feelings. We live by faith. We go by the eternal Word of God. The Bible is our manual for life. It was written for us. And the promises in God's Word will never change. Others have lied to us or changed their minds. God will never do that!

The Power of the Holy Spirit

We received the Holy Spirit when we asked Jesus to be our Savior and Lord. Still, all the power and fullness of

the Holy Spirit may not be seen. Why? We have the Spirit, but He may not have all of us.

God's Spirit is a Gentleman (so to speak). He will not enter in to places where He is not invited. The Holy Spirit wants to have complete control of our lives. But we must ask Him and allow Him to have that control.

The fullness and filling of the Holy Spirit is called *the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*. Like a pickle in pickle juice, Jesus wants us to be soaked in and saturated by His Holy Spirit. He will do it for us. But we must ask with humble and willing hearts.

Remember this is about *control*. God's Spirit wants to use us for His purpose—not ours. He wants to bring our minds and wills into conformity to His perfect will and divine purpose. The Apostle Paul said:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:1-2).

God, the Father, wants to be connected with our spirits. He wants His love and power released in us. He wants to build His kingdom through us. To do God's work, the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts. We may not feel worthy to receive His gifts. But the work and sacrifice of Christ makes us worthy.

Both Jerry and I found new joy, spiritual self-esteem, and power for ministry in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues—our prayer language—was (and still is) a powerful blessing. Each time we pray in that heavenly language, we feel the Holy Spirit pray for us and through

us. The Holy Spirit reminds us of God's presence and keeps us focused on His will. The Apostle Paul said:

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will (Romans 8:26-27).

The Power of Vision

The Bible says it this way: *Where there is no vision, the people perish!* (Proverbs 29:18a).

To direct our work and ministry the Holy Spirit gives every one a dream or a vision. It is vital to our lives. God said, *And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions* (Joel 2:28).

God gives us dreams and visions to include us in His plans. He wants us to partner with Him in ministry. But God will not force us into a work that we are not ready for. His visions are given to get us used to the idea—to prepare us. I was in La Tuna, Texas prison when I had a vision about the prison ministry. The Holy Spirit even told me the name of it: *Psalms 146:7 Prison Ministries*.

God gave Noah the vision about a great flood and a huge ark. Then Noah had 120 years to get used to the idea. God gave Joseph dreams that he would be a great leader. But many years and lots of hardship prepared him for the job. Moses had a vision. He knew that he would deliver his brothers—the Hebrew slaves in Egypt. But he had forty years alone with sheep in the desert to learn God's way. David was given the vision that he would rule Israel. He was anointed by Samuel as a boy. But David

was instructed by God as a man—a fugitive from cruel King Saul.

All the great people of faith were given visions by God. They all had periods of waiting and preparation. Those who tried to fulfill the vision on their own had to wait longer. They had to remember that God's plans are not accomplished with man's power. God keeps His promises and completes His plans. His people only had to choose to trust—every day.

A vision from God gives us many things. It gives us hope—we have a glimpse of the future. It gives us direction—we have a dream to guide us. It gives us a purpose—we have a plan to develop. And it gives us strength—we have the promise of success.

During World War II the famous psychiatrist Viktor Frankel was imprisoned in a concentration camp. He was kept with many other Jewish professionals. These well educated and highly skilled men were kept in a sort of limbo—their fate was a prolonged mystery and misery. The Nazis felt that the professionals might serve a purpose, but no certainty or hope was ever given to the men.

Frankel watched his friends and fellow prisoners shrivel and suffer. He witnessed suicide after suicide—he felt powerless to help. Then one cruel day, he had a moment of clarity. He realized that he had struggled and suffered all day just to get a piece of baling wire to repair his shoe. He saw that his life had become a vain exercise in futility. And he knew that his life needed a vision.

That day he searched his heart and made a plan. Three specific goals motivated him. 1) He would survive. 2) He would do the most good that he could as a physician and as a man. And 3) He would learn everything he could about the psychology of the concentration camp. Then he would form a plan to share that knowledge and experience with the world. He envisioned himself giving lectures in

the posh, oak and leather appointed lecture halls of New England's finest ivy-league universities.

Frankel's vision-driven plan motivated and strengthened his survival. But more, it gave him the tools he needed to help his fellow prisoners. He helped them find reasons to live and survive. And after his liberation he wrote his great work *Man's Search for Meaning*. [Refer to end note #10.]

The suffering of an unknown fate like Frankel's is similar to our time in prison. Or it is like an unfocused, ADD life on the outside. This problem (the lack of a plan) causes some of the greatest pain and disappointment that adults with ADD face. We know (*really know*) that we have potential and power. We are gifted indeed. We are filled with brilliant ideas. We can move people with our music, art, writings, humor, insights, or intelligence. But without the strategic plan, we end up penniless, poor, depressed, and downcast.

Remember—Mark Twain is beloved and famous today, but he made others wealthy not himself. His last years were darkened by terrible debt. The McDonald brothers invented the idea of fast food, but Ray Crock got rich. The brothers only had one store, and they even had to change the name.

To know that we have potential and power to create and do wonderful things is not enough. When nothing comes from our lives and gifts, we are miserable. When others prosper from our potential and leave us forgotten and poor, we are broken and bitter. When we run the race with confidence yet face injustice and defeat, we are hopeless and without comfort. This kind of sorrow is not God's plan for us. God has a good plan.

Remember God's Word through Jeremiah? *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a*

future. This very passage and part of Jeremiah's prophecy (chapter 29:10-11) gave Daniel hope that Israel's captivity in Babylon would soon end. He read God's Word in verse 10 and saw that 70 years was God's limit and length for the exile. And Daniel knew that the 70 years were almost over. So he prayed for more of God's plan, and God gave it in detail. Read Ezra and Nehemiah for the rest of the story and strategy!

Once we have God's vision, we need to seek God's plan. But be careful! ADD makes us more sensitive to and distracted by the wrong guidance. We must be extra sure of *the source* of our plans. The plans that we follow and our guidance must come from our relationship with *Our Father, Who art in heaven*—the One with a true and higher perspective.

Remember the story of Joseph in the Old Testament? The Pharaoh had a dream that no one could interpret. He had heard that Joseph could interpret dreams. But when the Pharaoh asked Joseph to interpret his dream, Joseph said, *I cannot do it...but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires* (Genesis 41:16). And remember Daniel? Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, asked Daniel to interpret his dream. Daniel said, *No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries* (Daniel 2:27-28).

The God who gave us the dreams and visions is the only One to reveal and fulfill them. So we want to hear from God ourselves, and we can. We want a first hand relationship with our God. We don't have to hear from God through anyone else. Sure, God uses pastors, priests, chaplains, and Christian brothers and sisters. But God the Father wants to speak directly to us. And when He does, we won't forget it!

We ask God to speak to our hearts. We ask God to give

us the visions of His plans for us. We ask God to reveal Himself through the Bible. We ask God for ourselves. Then when He answers, we will know without a doubt that God can speak to us and use us.

I love to hear guys share their excitement with me. They say, “Wow! God spoke to me! It was just like you said. I don’t know if it was a voice I heard or message inside my spirit, heart, or head. But I know it was God!”

We want to be directed by the will of God, the wisdom of His Word, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise we are doomed to fail. The Bible says, *Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain* (Psalm 127:1). *In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps* (Proverbs 16:9).

The plans that come from self-will, shame, or people pleasing are wasted effort. We will be weary and worn with little or nothing to show for our toil, trouble, and travel. There are lots of stops, detours, and destinations on life’s train. We want to be sure that we pay attention to the ticket (the vision) God gives us. We want to get off at His station not ours.

Albert Einstein knew that God provided the guidance and order in the universe. And he was ADD enough to know that he needed the tangible reminders of that direction.

Albert Einstein was a resident of Princeton, New Jersey. He was their most celebrated citizen until his death on April 18, 1955.

Local stories about the scientist have endured. The townspeople, who had seen him walk the streets (sometimes in house slippers, oblivious to his surroundings), cherish their memories of Einstein. One such resident was a train conductor on the shuttle that ran from town to the Princeton

Junction railroad station. He had a favorite story about Einstein.

He said, “The famous man often traveled by train to meetings in New York, Washington, and points in between. It was the points in between that always tested his memory.

“On one trip, I came by to collect tickets. Einstein reached into all his pocket, padded himself up and down, then said, ‘I have it somewhere.’

“I told him, ‘That’s all right, Dr. Einstein. I know you’ve got a ticket.’

“But he answered, ‘No, it’s not all right. Without that ticket, I don’t know where I’m going!’”

That’s true for us too. Without our connection to God and the vision He gives, we don’t know where we’re going!



William's vision: Prison Ministry, Praisuary and the Reunion. The Reunion is a Sunday afternoon meeting for men and women coming out of prison. We video their testimonies and send them into prisons that ask for them. We also come personally to minister and pass out more of these books, so write to us.



*William and his (then) wife, Terilea,
with Donald Garcia. (Big D)*

Donald was a speaker at the reunion in 1993. He is on the front and back cover of this book. He also has a new book, "Big D" just printed, 2007. You can send for one by writing him at:

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Chapter 17
The 3 R's

Now the Bereans were of more noble character...for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.
Acts 17:11

Those in prison can make progress. There is important work to begin now. Incarceration doesn't stop us. They can confine our bodies, but they can't control our thoughts. ***We can free our minds!*** We do it through education and discovery. ***We can also focus our minds!*** We do that through structure. Now is the perfect time to prepare—to learn about ourselves and build the structure we need. The choice is ours, and the time is now.

Education

We have a lot to learn about ADD, related learning disabilities, and other labels that may fit us. The more we learn, the better prepared we will be upon release. Education will help us develop strategies for successful living. We will understand how the rest of the world sees us. We will learn why we don't fit. We will gain tolerance and grace for ourselves. We will put our behaviors and difficulties into a new perspective. Education also helps us discover the things we do well and the things that are better left to others.

We must understand who we are and how we are different. That difference must be defined and developed

into a new strategy for life. Remember, a beaver would be depressed and discouraged with a squirrel job. He would struggle to climb trees and strain to collect nuts. In the end, he'd be criticized, corrected, condemned, and canned—or even jailed! He'd feel like a loser.

It's the same with us. We are different from most of the world. We can't do boring work all day. We weren't made for repetitive routines and dull details. We are intelligent, intuitive, big-picture types. We were made to solve problems not satisfy procedures. We are curious and creative. We welcome a challenge. We like excitement and enjoy a good distraction.

All our divine differences make us unfit for squirrel duty. The regular and routine world see us as flaky and fickle—failed and faulty. We are allergic to all the rules and routines. We get crazy and claustrophobic with contracts and commitments. We have new suggestions, but they want normal standards.

The law makes provision for those with ADD and learning disabilities. Research those laws now. They can help us succeed in school for the first time. Or our knowledge can help our children or loved ones on the outside. Learn about the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) section 504 and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA).

How do we get more education about ADD?

Study each appendix in the back of the book. Request some of the books in the *End Notes*. Write publishers and experts—ask for help and resources. And above all pray. God is able to give us information and to lead us to new discoveries about ourselves.

Structure

Remember Jerry's story of the seminar in Chicago? We were not designed to be bean counters. So all the plans and organizational systems created by nitpickers don't fit

us. And misfit misfire! Force us to fit and we become even more disorganized and distracted. For all these reasons, we need exterior structures that fit us. In his book *Spirituality a Healing Resource for ADD*, Jerry shares a lot of “our kind of structures.”

Structure is not a bad word. Structure makes sense. It helps us direct our thoughts and focus our minds. Here’s an example of how it helps. Read this sentence: *For gave the loved only world God Son, so begotten that his he.* Does it make sense? Nope. In fact, we get a bit frustrated when we read it! Now read this: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Much better! Why? Structure. The order in which the words are placed brings order—so it makes sense.

Structure brings arrangement or order to things—to life. The arrangement of words on a page help us get the author’s meaning. Without order, words on a page are chaotic and meaningless. Without order to our days, we lack direction and get nothing done. Without order to our financial records, we have a rat’s nest of receipts.

The same is true for our spiritual lives—our relationship with the Truth. We need structure to recognize the truth about our lives. We need structure to put the truth in perspective. We need structure to process the truth and to learn from it. And we need structure to remember the lessons that we learned.

The 3 R’s are a spiritual structure. They combine our discoveries (education) with order (structure).

The 3 R’s

In school most of us did not like the 3 R’s. But there are another 3 R’s that can help us stay out of prison. They help us prepare for real change and success. They help us keep track of the lessons. And they can be worked right now.

This is taken from Sari Solden’s book *Women with ADD*. Sari’s book is great for men, women, and kids.

[Refer to end note #11.]

For Example

God can help us 1) *redefine* ourselves, 2) *restructure* our lives, and 3) *renegotiate* our relationships. These 3 R's can work for any type of difference or disability. **For example**, I know a guy who suffered a spinal cord injury in a Navy plane crash. He was the only one who survived. He lost use of his legs and needed a wheel chair. But he did not want to feel like gimp nor be treated like a cripple. So he worked the 3 R's.

He was a paraplegic but still a complete person—just like before the accident. He had to **redefine** himself. He considered the fact that he was the same guy in heart and mind and spirit. He was still humorous, intelligent, warm-hearted, creative, and able. He was still capable of work, life, and love. The only difference was wheels not legs!

Next, he **restructured** his environment. The world around him had to change. He did not want others to pull him up the stairs, open the doors, and help him in the bathroom. He did not want to strain, stretch, and struggle for the sink, phone, kitchen appliances, or other necessities. Yet without changes to his environment, he would continue to feel “disabled.” So he had to change things—he restructured. He put in a ramp—no more stairs. He fixed the door handles. He lowered the sink, kitchen counters, phone, and other appliances. He enlarged the bathroom and got an easy to use bath tub and shower. He got a new car with hand controls. And so on. His disability went away—almost.

Last, he **renegotiated** his relationships. Some people could only see him as a cripple. They felt sorry for him and made him feel damaged and disabled. He asked them to adjust their attitudes or leave him alone. Others really wanted to help. He asked them to treat him with respect and help only if he asked. And then there were new people who needed to be in his life. He found help and support to handle some special needs. For example, he needed team

members to handle housekeeping, physical therapy, vocational rehabilitation, driving lessons, medical care, etc.. He also found a support group with others who had similar injuries. His renegotiation of relationships meant that he built a new team of support. He even got married!

He worked the 3 R's for his new disability and the problems began to disappear. His life became normal again. It's just a *new* normal.

So what about us?

Right now—while we're still in—we can work the 3 R's for two important differences in our lives. **First**, we focus on our ADD. We can begin by a name change. Let's lose the ADD that means *attention deficit disorder*. We can choose to call ADD what it really is ***A Divine Difference!*** Remember, we must keep a positive and right attitude. We don't fit in the world of farmer-nit-pickers. We are hunter-pioneers! **Secondly**, we work the 3 R's for our new freedom. Some folks have broken backs—we have broken pasts. But our pasts do not define our futures. The 3 R's will help us find our new normal and form our better future.

The 3 R's for ADD

It is important to keep a personal record of our growth and discoveries. Some may have never used a journal or a devotional diary. Now is a great time to begin. A journal helps us keep track of our insights with the 3 R's. Plus, a journal is great devotional tool. It is a record of our relationship with God and His Word. Remember, those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

1) Redefine Ourselves

We have felt different our whole life. We have allowed that difference to shame us. We have believed the lies and labels that others have put on us. We accepted their

charges, criticisms, and condemnation. That was wrong.

Our families, schools, employers, and the authorities didn't know the truth. They couldn't define us. They just labeled us as different or defective. Even our spouses and intimate friends pigeonholed us with labels. We felt like we were surrounded by umpires. Everybody called balls and strikes on everything we did or tried to do.

It's time we lose the old labels and lies. It's time to redefine ourselves in light of our divine difference. That's why education is so important. Pay special attention to Appendix "A" on ADD—it notes our intelligence strengths. And read other books from *Spirit of Hope Publishing*—especially uplifting and helpful books like *Spirituality: A Healing Resource for ADD, Born Losers or Leaders?*, and *Jabez, the Story*.

2) Restructure Our Environment

In the past, we have failed at structure, organization, planning, etc.. Why? We've failed because we structured our world and lives (time, space, matter, etc.)—according to the plans and reasonings of “normal” people. Bad idea! Now we structure our environment according to our needs, gifts, tendencies, and differences.

For example, others think we organize in piles and stacks because we're messy and disorganized. But the truth is—we use piles because we're visual. We need *to see* the important things. To file them away is to forget them. We need the visual reminders. So we restructure in visual ways now.

We also are easily distracted. So we need to restructure our environment to shield us from noises and unnecessary interruptions. For example, it would be hard to concentrate on work near an open window with street noise. We wouldn't want our office desk or work space to be near the hall where people walk and talk.

Also, we can restructure our lives by the job we chose.

Most of the world can stand there and sort mail all day long. But we would go crazy! We cannot take boredom and repetitive, mindless work. We need jobs that challenge us and allow us to be creative. And the best thing is to begin our own business with God's help and with the support of others who love and understand us.

3) Renegotiate Our Relationships

Most of our relationships were built on a misunderstanding of who we are. We felt like fakes—round pegs in square holes. We didn't know how or why we were different. So we accepted the role of misfits. Or we played the role of victims or controllers—so we could survive. Now, we understand our difference. We can express our needs and adjust our relationships.

For example: some friends or family members may have written-us-off as hopeless. They figure that we'll never keep a job or amount to much. We can share what we've learned and ask for their understanding and patience. But we will never again accept their shame or judgments. We will chart our course according to God's will and our truth.

It is important to know that there are toxic people in our lives. Some of them can harm us. We are better off without them. There are also passive-aggressive people. They are like big Saint-Bernard dogs—they put their paws on our shoulders and lick our faces. But at the same time, they pee on our shoes! These people say they want to help us, but they continue to criticize and condemn us. To them—we speak the truth in love. Some will respect our boundaries—so good! Others will continue to criticize and control—so good-bye!

The 3 R's for New Life Outside

All the same things apply for our new freedom. The 3 R's can prepare us now for the freedom ahead.

1) Redefine Ourselves

Our past survival skills and coping mechanisms have named and claimed us. But that is over and done with. We are new creatures in Christ. We will not answer to the old names. We will not return to the old ways. Now, we know who we are, we know what we do, and we know where we belong. Thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word, we are citizens of a new kingdom—God’s Kingdom. We have a new spiritual family on the outside. And we have a new future ahead!

2) Restructure Our Environment

In the past, we placed ourselves in the way of temptation and trouble. So we repeated mistakes—trapped in failure. But not in the future. With God’s help, we will restructure our lives for success. We will plan for fellowship, support, and spiritual covering. We will avoid old places, people, and pitfalls. We will seek God’s vision for our lives. We will bring structure and order to that vision. We will make mission statements, develop career strategies, and set goals. We will discover our gifts and express them according to God will.

3) Renegotiate Our Relationships

Most of our relationships were built on a misunderstanding of who we were. Many will only see us as losers, addicts, alcoholics, criminals, or failures. Remember, toxic people can hurt us. We are better off without them. And passive-aggressive people can deceive us. They appear helpful but cause harm in the end. Those who will not see us in a new Christ-centered way are dangerous. We will need to build a new team.

We can renegotiate relationships and build a team while we are still in. We can write or call those people who are important to us. We can share what we have learned. We can ask them to read this book. And we can ask them

to honor our faith in Christ, accept our self-discoveries, and respect our boundaries. God will help us discern whether or not they will be safe members of our team by the way they respond.

We can reach out to new team members in the same way. Right now, in advance of release, we can reach out to the family of God. We can write or call folks we don't know—they are believers who love us in Christ. We can contact those who understand ADD, learning disabilities, and our recovery needs. The Lord will open the doors. He will provide the team we need.

For now, we trust, pray, learn, structure, and work the 3 R's.



William, when he became president of the original Breakfast Chapter of Full Gospel Business Men in 1988. Can you believe it! God got an ex-con elected to be president of this very prestigious chapter of business men. Look them up when you get out. God will use them to help you.



William and founding board member and lawyer, Jack Golden. (2006)

The Sanity Test

*There is a way that seems right to a man
but in the end it leads to death.*

Proverbs 14:12

Here is our definition for insanity: *Insanity is doing the same thing over and over, and expecting a different result.*

We need to do things differently! Our new success depends on a new way of life. But we won't get a handle on things and create some order and focus without a structure. That's what the *Sanity Test* is for. It helps us structure our relationship with the truth. And it can help us see the mistakes we have repeated in the past.

We will face more problems and greater pain without the truth, God's help, and structures—like the *Sanity Test*. With help we can face past pain and overcome problems. We can break patterns that made us victims in life. We can learn to guard our hearts and surrender our will to God alone. We can find safety, sanity, and steady progress in life. God wants us to be more than survivors in life. The Apostle Paul said, *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us [Christ]* (Romans 8:37).

The Sanity Test

The *Sanity Test* is the brain child of our friend, Jan Perzanowski—a school teacher in Indiana. Jan shared this story to illustrate the test.

I had recess duty on the playground, and I spotted a fight. I broke through the crowd and found Billy in the middle. That was no surprise. He had Joey, a popular kid, in a headlock. He was doing dental work with his fist.

I already knew the story. Billy only knows one song, and he sings it over and over. Still, I couldn't treat him the way other teachers do.

Joey went to the nurse. The crowd evaporated. And I stood alone with Billy. At this point, most teachers yell at him. They lecture, shame, bark, and bite. That's what Billy expects. It's all he hears—at home too. But I wanted to help—not holler.

"May I ask you a question, Billy," I asked.

"Go ahead. You're gonna anyway." He answered and made a quarter turn away from me. "And I already know what you're gonna say. You're gonna ask what's wrong with me."

"No," I answered, "that's not my question." Billy turned back to get a look at my face.

I continued, "I really have three questions. First, what do you want?"

Silence. He squinted and studied my face. He was used to rhetorical questions.

"Well.... I guess.... I sorta want Joey to uh... well...you know, to be my friend." He spoke just above a whisper, and he talked into his collar.

"Thanks. Now here's my second question. What are you doing to get what you want? To get Joey's friendship?"

He looked down, scratched his head, and pawed the dirt with his toe. "Well.... uh...I guess... uh.... I'm beatin' him up!"

"Okay, thanks, Billy. Now here's my last question. Is it working?"

"Is what working?"

“Does Joey want to be your friend after you beat him up?”

“Duh! Why don’t you ask him?” Billy rested his chin on his chest and put both hands in his pockets.

I reached down, cupped his face in my hands, and lifted his eyes to mine. “Because he’s not the one in trouble, hon’—you are.”

The structure of the sanity test helped Jan and Billy see more than a bully. It revealed a lonely kid with needs. It helps us too. It helps us face the frustration of familiar failure. It helps us see the reasons behind our repeated mistakes.

Jan’s test is simple. We can use it all the time. We chose a situation or a problem area of our lives (job, love, friendship, money, marriage, moods, etc.). Then we ask ourselves...

- 1) What do we want?
- 2) What are we doing to get it?
- 3) Is it working?

For example: A man named Rick worked the *Sanity Test* for problems in finances and career life. He was ashamed to tell how many jobs he’d had over the years. He couldn’t keep a job for more than a few months. The bosses fired him or he’d quit. He wasn’t happy with his income or the dead-end jobs. But he didn’t know how to change. Here’s what he wrote:

What do I want?

I want to be prosperous. I want to have enough money to take care of my wife and family. I want to work for myself. I want to have my own business. I want to do something I enjoy—legally. I

want to help other people too. I want to teach skills to younger guys. I want to support the church and pay tithe. I want to be able to bless people with my business and money.

What am I doing to get it?

Like before, I need money to survive so I get a job. But the jobs are dead-ends. The jobs are all low income. The jobs bore me or break my back. The managers are stupid—really! Idiots who can't take my suggestions and ideas. They treat me like I'm a kid or a klutz.

Is it working?

No—it's not working! I quit half the jobs. I hate to be treated with disrespect. The other half I get fired. I usually piss-off the boss or I make him look stupid. I take some initiative and use my head. They call it a break of procedure. I even saved one guy lots of money. He said I was a “lose cannon.” Anyway, I never stay long enough to save the money I need for my own business.

The *Sanity Test* will show us what we're doing wrong. But it is God Who will show us what to do right. The Lord will lead us in a plan and strategy that is based on His wisdom—not my own. Remember two key scriptures, but one key principle: ***My life and spiritual success is dependent upon my reliance on God's will—not my wit.*** The Bible says:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this (Psalm 37:4-5).

The Mother of All Lies

If the truth sets us free, then the untruths keep us in bondage. The enemy of our soul is a liar. Jesus called him the father of lies. He has lied to us since the Garden of Eden. And he has one lie that he tells over and over. It's the mother of all lies—the first and greatest lie.

The father of lies spoke this fictitious fable to Eve in a garden. It slid from his split, serpent tongue as apparent wisdom. On the surface it seemed to make sense—it seemed to be helpful. Most lies do. Remember, rat poison is 99% wheat. It's the 1% death that does the job.

Here's the 1% poison—the lie that damned, and continues to damn, humanity. Here's what the devil whispers in our ears. Here's what our moral umpires used to scold us with. Here's what faithless fathers and toxic teachers use to lecture us. Here's the sly sermon that the fallen spirit of Satan speaks. It comes to us from the lowest and darkest pit of hell. It is vile, vulgar, and venomous beyond imagination. It is still spoken to us today. But this cruel and corrupt lie was first spoken to our mother in Eden. The sinister serpent said to Eve, ***“God helps those who help themselves!”***

Satan claims that God helps those who take control. He says that God helps those who take charge. He whispers that God helps those who take the apple. Because he knows that when we take control, we can be god-like. But that *game* puts us at odds with the one true God.

We must be warned. The lie must be exposed. **We cannot be like God. We can only *play* god.** Still, that is a very attractive lie. The apple looked good to Eve—and Adam too. The promise of godhood is hard to resist. We

like to take control and manipulate the world around us. We like to play god with the people and things in our lives. But our assertion of self-will (our flesh) does not draw us closer to God and others. In fact, it pushes us away.

The truth is this: We (humankind) were made to live in a garden—God’s garden. We were made to be dependent upon God and submissive to His divine will. We were made to be His beloved children. We were made to live in harmony with God and to receive every good thing from His hand. He wanted to be our provision, protection, power, and peace.

The lie destroyed that. The garden was placed “off limits.” Adam and Eve were given what they wanted. They were allowed to help themselves and play god. But they had to do it on their own—away from God’s presence. On that day man had only his own effort to rely on. On that day we were separated from God. And all of humankind and nature face death.

All that changed in Christ. We regain that place of peace with God through Jesus. But we must join our Lord in another garden—Gethsemane. We must reject the devil’s lie and pray the prayer that Jesus prayed to His Father. Christ prayed, *Not my will, but Yours be done*. We must embrace and carry His cross daily. We must deny ourselves and crucify our willful flesh which seeks to play god, exalt self, and control others.

So our first step toward truth and sanity is always this simple admission: ***God is God, and I am not!*** It needs to be said out loud and often. It doesn’t hurt to say it. The hurt will come when we live it—when we let go of control and trust Him. When we crucify the flesh and trust.

All (not some)—all of our troubles have come from our own self-will. We’ve made many bad decisions over many years. God can forgive and heal, but change is a choice—our choice. We mature and develop character as we chose God’s will over our own every day—many

times a day.

Those of us who are honest with the *Sanity Test* know that we need help. We can't change on our own. We need God. And to succeed we also need structure and support. Many of us have found that structure in the 12 Steps. It is a step by step program that is based upon scripture and built upon Christian principles. [*Refer to Appendix "D".*]

The 12 step program is not the final answer or a complete solution. Our real healing is not in a program—it is in a Person, Jesus Christ. The 12 Steps is one way that many of us have found the structure we needed. It is a tool that leads to surrender and God's will. It is a path that leads to new life in Christ.



*William's first car at 16 years old.
A Cherry 1941 Chev. With his newly completed,
custom 1950 Olds Holiday in background.*



*William's 1950 Olds Holiday just completed and paid
for by his midnight auto parts stealing business.
All before he was 18 years old. Yes, like he said,
"he was headed towards prison 25 years before
he finally got there."*

The 12 Steps

*My steps have held to your paths;
my feet have not slipped.*

Psalm 17:5

Many of us have grown to appreciate the 12 step process. And many of us have also heard the 12 steps belittled by preachers. Jerry confesses today that he used to slam the steps. He is sorry today, but back then he spoke from ignorance and insolence. This is what he recently wrote in *Spirituality a Healing Resource for ADD*:

I used to say, “You don’t need 12 steps—you need 1 step: Jesus!” Well, I still believe that Jesus is the answer—of course. But today I realize that not everyone has the same access to the truth that I had. I had the benefit of Christian home. The name of Christ and the Word of God was honored in my family. But many American (and most of the world) are born into families without faith or scripture.

Most people need some structure in their search for God. God provided a familiar process and steps for the Magi to find Christ. The wise men from the East were star worshipers and astrologists. They followed a star to find a king. The star took them to Jerusalem and King Herod’s court. Herod sent them to the Bible scholars. The scholars opened the Word of God and showed

the Magi Micah 5:2. *But you, Bethlehem...out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.* Then the Word of God sent the wise men to Bethlehem, where they found Christ.

Spiritual nutrition has a process like physical feeding. Adults have teeth to chew complex foods. Babies start with milk and formula. Then they move on to processed foods that are simple, strained, and mushed. Chunks and Cherrios come with the first teeth. It the same with walking. The babies need steps.

It's a process. Babies learn to lift their heads and strengthen key muscles. Then they roll over and push up with two little arms. Then on all fours, the adventures begin with crawling. Next, they pull themselves up with stationary objects (chairs, table legs, or the sofa). Then it's on to two feet, a little balance, and baby steps begins!

I know hundreds of people who have come to Christ because of the 12 steps. The Biblical principle changed their lives, but process lead them to the Highest Power.

The 12 steps give spiritual babies a structure and plan for recovery. I needed the help. Years of church, a Christian college, graduate school, seminary, and years of pastoral experience didn't give me the relationship with truth that I needed. My head was so full, but my heart so empty! I had become a moral umpire to the world, till I got thrown out of the game. Pride turned into panic attacks, and my fixes ended in failures. Like Saul of Tarsus blinded on his way to Damascus, I got the gift I needed: humility born in brokenness.

The 12 Steps (for Christians)

12 step programs offer excellent spiritual support. The steps provide a structured way to grow beyond the harmful affects of ADD, broken pasts, and self-will. The 12 step program is not sponsored by any religious group, but it was born and based upon Biblical principles. [*Refer to end note #6.*]

The 12 step program is a structured way for us to maintain reliance upon God and submission to His will. The program emphasizes our need for God's grace and guidance in our daily lives. It underscores our need for rigorous honesty. It highlights our need for repentance, confession, forgiveness, and reparation for wrongs done to others. It brings us into continual fellowship with God and obedience to His will. In short, the 12 steps outline a life of spiritual surrender and trust. It is Christ-centered and Bible-based. Yet few modern Christians experience the great blessing it brings. Few have the courage to trust—to *let go and let God*.

The 12 Steps for Christians are listed below. This version of the steps is taken from the book *The Twelve Steps for Christians* and the workbook *The Twelve Steps—A Spiritual Journey* (both published by RPI Publishing, Inc.). Note how the word “alcohol” is replaced with “separation from God.” RPI Publishing, Inc. also produced two books for adults with attention deficit disorder: the book *The Twelve Steps—a Guide for Adults with ADD* and the workbook *The Twelve Steps—a Key to Living with ADD*. In these materials the word “alcohol” is replaced with “ADD.” [*Refer to end note #6.*]

Step #1: We admitted we were powerless over the effects of our separation from God—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step #2: Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Step #3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Step #4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step #5: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step #6: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Step #7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Step #8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step #9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step #10: Continued to take personal inventory and, when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Step #11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step #12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

We know from years of experience that any honest person who works the steps can find spiritual, emotional, and even physical healing. It is *not* the program, but the Person of Jesus Christ, who does the healing work. God uses these biblical principles to build godly nature and Christian maturity. He uses the rigorous honesty of the steps to uncover childish conduct and transform it into Christ-like character. Life gets better when the steps are

worked in the power of Christ.

In *The Big Book of A.A.* a number of “promises” are listed for those who work the steps with honesty and courage. Our lives are testimonies to the truth of these God given blessings—rewards. Here’s what *The Big Book* says:

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them. [*Refer to end note #12.*]

To work the steps, we need the safe support of others. We may be afraid. We have all been hurt in the past. We’ve faced rejection and humiliation. But it’s wrong to let that stop us. We need others. We need to hear other adults share common struggles and offer their own experience, strength, and hope.

There are resources and people who are willing to

help. There are groups that provide safe, non-judgmental encouragement and support. Christian organizations like *Overcomers Outreach*, NACR, and *Spirit of Hope* (in Southern California) have a goal to create a safe place for mutual support in Christian recovery for youth and adults. I encourage those who hunger for this support to contact these outreaches to find a group near themselves. Or contact them to receive the help and materials necessary to start a support group.

*[Refer to **Support Groups & Recovery Resources** in the back of this book—pages 160-162.]*

Chapter 20

God Has a Plan for You

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11

Here is God's Word for you: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!* (2 Corinthians 5:17). You are a new person. You were not "reformed" by man or his plans. You were remade by God. You are a new creation!

Tell everyone that you are going to make it on the outside. Tell friends on the inside now. And write parents, wives, children, parole officers, and everyone who will listen.

Decide and declare right now that you will seek to follow God's plan for your life. You will work with God to establish His kingdom and do His will on earth as it is in Heaven. You will give up your way and your will. You will follow the manual for life—the Bible.

Like all of us—you tried to do it your way. But your way did not work. Now is the time to give up, let go, and let God. You tried to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps—we all did. In pride, we pushed and punished ourselves. God didn't judge us—our heavenly Father was patient. He waited for us to give up and ask for help.

Now, with God's help, you are going to make it! God has a good plan for your life. He made you different and distinct for a purpose. He will give you the faith and focus

to find and fulfil that purpose. And as you trust in Him, He will keep you in peace and fill you with joy.

You used to demand respect—we all did. Now, the respect of others will find you. Others will seek you out because the goodness and glory of God will be evident in your life. You will be respected because God's favor will rest upon you. The character of your heavenly Father will shine through you. And the love of Jesus Christ will be seen in you.

Your self-esteem will grow—not because of what you do, but because of who you are. You will realize that you are a favored son of THE Father. The Creator, the One Who made it all (the universe, the heavens, the earth, light, life, time, space, and fabric of reality), is the Father Who loves you and calls you by name. He accepts you and values you just as you are—right now.

You are an important soldier in God's army. You know that the army of God is all volunteers—no half-hearted draftees. His troops hear and obey His commands. No army that disobeys the General can succeed—no disobedient soldier can survive. God's kingdom and His people will be victorious—*more than conquerors!* God will establish His kingdom on earth. And He will do it in and through the life of every committed Christian.

God uses people like you and me. He uses spiritual people—not religious ones. What's the difference? *Religious* people try to live good lives so they don't go to hell. *Spiritual* people seek new life in God because they have already been there! We have scratched and climbed our way to the mountain tops. And we have slip and fallen into the deepest valleys. We have been there. We understand. And now, we serve our Lord and Father with gratitude and honor.

We understand that this is serious business. We know the score—no more games. We faced our stuff—we faced ourselves. We got away with things in the past. Now, we

can get past those things. We used to hide and live with secrets. Now, we seek truth and live in the light. We had the time to think. Now, we have the time to discover and learn about God from the Bible. And God's Word, which is living and powerful, renews our minds and changes our hearts.

We fill our minds with Scripture—we write the Word on our hearts. Then God is able to recall His Truth to our thoughts when it's needed. We can also call it up and quote it to defeat the lies of our enemy—Satan. In the past, he has ensnared us and stolen from us, but no more. Now it's not about the time we did—it's about the time we have. It's not about what we lost—it's about what lays ahead.

Those of us who ended up in prison are the fortunate ones. We are not dead—we have another chance. We have life, and now we have God's Truth. And Jesus said that *the Truth shall set us free!*

The Bible says that God saves us from ourselves. We know that is true. We are living proof. He made new creations from our chaos. And now He fills our hearts with hope for today and every tomorrow. Thank God someone was praying for us!

END NOTES:

#1 — *Heaven's Back Row: A Journey of Hope—from Sexual Brokenness & HIV to a New Beginning* by Bob Blackford. Spirit of Hope Publishing, 2003.

#2 — See the following books by Thom Hartmann:

—*Hunters in a Farmers' World: ADD—A Different Perspective*.

—*Focus Your Energy: Succeeding in Business with Attention Deficit Disorder*. Underwood Books, 1995.

—*Think Fast! The ADD Experience*. Underwood Books, 1996.

#3 — See the following books and materials by David E. Comings, M.D. and Published by Hope Press:

BOOKS:

—*Tourette Syndrome and Human Behavior*

—*The Gene Bomb*

PAPERS:

Papers by David E. Comings, M.D. (et al) available at the Hope Press website: www.hopepress.com. These papers are research studies related to Tourette syndrome, ADHD, genetics of behavior and related disorders.

#4 — See the following books by Daniel G. Amen, M.D.:

—*Healing ADD—The Breakthrough Program That Allows You to See and Heal the 6 Types of ADD*. Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2001.

—*Change Your Brain, Change Your Life*. Times Books, 1999.

—*Windows Into the ADD Mind: Understanding and Treating Attention Deficit Disorders, Childhood Through Adulthood*. MindWorks, 1995.

#5 — See the following resources by Russell Barkley, Ph.D.:

BOOKS:

—*ADHD and the Nature of Self-Control* published by Guilford Press, 1997.

—*Taking Charge of ADHD: The Complete Authoritative Guide for Parents*. Guilford Press, 1995.

ARTICLES/PAPERS/LECTURE NOTES:

—*Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder—Lecture Notes* by Russell A. Barkley, Ph. D. Lecture notes available in PDF form from the *SchwabLearning.org* website: Helping Kids with Learning Disabilities (www.schwablearning.org).

—*ADD/ADHD Seminar Notes* by Dr. Barkley available on the *Pendulum* website. Notes compiled and edited by Dan Diaz © 2001 Pendulum Resources and by the authors. Web: www.pendulum.org

—Various Articles by Dr. Barkley on the *Scientific American Magazine* website.

AUDIO CASSETTES:

—*An Evening with Russell A. Barkley, Ph.D.—A New Theory of ADHD*. Publisher: Parents Resource Network; 1/90 min. edition (November 1996).

—*ADHD Workshop*, Guest Lectures at Whittier College, Whittier, California (1999).

#6 — The following books by RPI Publishing are excellent 12 step tools for spiritual and emotional stability and recovery (to order call 800-873-8384):

—*The Twelve Steps—A Key To Living with ADD (workbook)*

—*The Twelve Steps—A Guide for Adults with ADD*

—*The Twelve Steps—A Spiritual Journey (workbook)*

—*The Twelve Steps for Christians*

—*Meditations for the Twelve Steps— A Spiritual Journey*

—*Prayers for the Twelve Steps— A Spiritual Journey*

#7 — *The Antecedents of Self-Esteem* by Dr. Stanley Coopersmith. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1967.

#8 — See the following resources by Jerry Seiden, M.A.:

—*Zacchaeus: A Wee Wicked Man*, a *haggada* by Jerry Seiden for insight into the compassion of Jesus toward sinners.

—*Wounded Hearts Walk In Circles*, a healing guide by Jerry Seiden for those who seek to end repeated mistakes and find new direction in life.

—*What I Learned from Lucy, Ethel, & Chicken Little: The Reality Checkbook*, a practical tool by Jerry Seiden for emotional sobriety, spiritual awareness, and impulse control.

—*Divine or Distorted? God As We Understand God*, a collection of 15 true short stories that illustrate the love and goodness of God. This uplifting book warms the heart and rekindles hope in the God of the Bible.

For more information about *Spirit of Hope* or Jerry Seiden go to www.SpiritofHopePublishing.com or email seiden1@cox.net.

#9 — See *The Life Model: Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You* by Dr. James Wilder, et al.. For information about this and other books by Dr. Wilder contact the Christian Pastoral Counseling Center, 1539 E. Howard St., Pasadena, CA 91104. Phone (626) 296-1259.

Also see other books by Dr. Wilder:

—*The Stages of a Man's Life*, Springfield, MO: Quiet Waters, 1999.

—*The Red Dragon Cast Down*, Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books.

#10 — *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankel.

Also see these resources (video presentations) related to vision by Joel Barker—produced by *Chart House*:

—*The Power of Vision* by Chart House, 1997.

—*The Power of Paradigms* by Chart House.

—*The Problem with Paradigms* by Chart House.

#11 — See *Women with Attention Deficit Disorder* by Sari Solden, chapter 3, pages 50-51.

#12 — *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Third Edition, 1976. Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. New York.

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

Overload! ADD & the Addictive Brain by Dr. Ken Blum and David Miller. Also see the article *Reward Deficiency Syndrome* by Dr. Blum and Dr. Comings published in *American Scientist Magazine*. (The article may be accessed on the American Scientist Magazine website or go to [and go to "Papers"](#) by Dr. David E. Comings, M.D. at www.HopePress.com).

The Link Between ADD & Addiction by Wendy Richardson, MA, LMFT — published by Pinon Press. Wendy is a certified addiction specialist in private practice. She is also a consultant, trainer, and speaker at national AD/HD and learning disability conferences. She may be contacted by email: addrich@pacbell.net — phone: 831/479-4742 — or on the web: www.addandaddiction.com.

ADD and Romance by Jonathan Scott Halverstadt, published by Taylor Books, 1999. Also see his latest book: ***ADD, Christianity, & the Church***. Jonathan can be contacted at (707) 421-9360 or on the web at www.addjohn.com.

Dr. Howard Gardner of Harvard University is the nation's leading expert on human intelligence. His books include the following:

—*Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence*, 1983.

—*To Open Minds: Chinese Clues to the Dilemma of Contemporary Education*, 1989.

—*The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think*, 1991.

—*Multiple Intelligence: The Theory in Practice*, 1993

—*The Disciplined Mind: What All Students Should Understand*, 1999.

—*Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligence*, 1999.

The Good Book & the Big Book by Dick B. is an excellent resource for information about the Christian biblical roots of the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Also note the material in Appendix “D” taken in part from *The 12-Steps for Christians*—published by RPI Publishing, Inc..

See the article “**Can God Save Us From Substance Abuse?**” in *Research News & Opportunities in Science & Theology*: January 2002, Vol. 2, No. 5. This is a review of a research study by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. The 52 page, two year study was titled *So Help Me God: Substance Abuse, Religion and Spirituality*.

THE 8% SOLUTION: Preventing Serious, Repeat Juvenile Crime by Gwen Kurz and Michael Schumacher. Sage Publication, Inc. 2000.

See the following books by **Dr. Earl R. Henslin**:

—*MAN TO MAN: Helping Fathers Relate to Sons and Sons Relate to Fathers.*

—*YOU ARE YOUR FATHER’S DAUGHTER: The Nurture Every Daughter Needs—the Longing When It’s Lost.*

Reading by the Colors by Helen Irlen. Overcoming dyslexia and other reading disabilities through the Irlen method by Helen Irlen. Since 1980, educational psychologist Helen Irlen has been researching and developing her method for helping children and adults with perceptual reading and learning problems. RBC explains in easy-to-understand language what is a perceptual problem, the method of identification, and treatment. The book is filled with wonderful descriptions of the wide variety of ways that this problem affects an individual and explains carefully the changes that can take place with the appropriate use of color. This book offers the first glimpse for a permanent solution. For more information go to www.irlen.com.

SUPPORT GROUPS & RECOVERY RESOURCES

The following are recovery oriented organizations and ministries. Contact them for information about support groups or materials.

CHRISTIAN 12 STEP ORGANIZATIONS

Alcoholics for Christ

Web: www.alcoholicsforchrist.com

National Association for Christian Recovery (NACR)

PO Box 215, Brea, CA 92822-0215

Voicemail: 714/529-6227 — Fax: 714/529-1120

Email: hopehappens@earthlink.net

Web: www.christianrecovery.com

Overcomers Outreach

Contact: Judy Turnbull, Director

PO Box 2208, Oakhurst CA 93644

Office: 800/310-3001 — Fax: 559/692-2632

Email: info@overcomersoutreach.org

Web: www.overcomersoutreach.org

Spirit of Hope Christian Fellowship

Contact: Jerry Seiden, M.A. (ADD/ADHD Support)

PO Box 53642, Irvine, CA 92619-3642

Fax: 949/733-1486 — Email: seiden1@cox.net

12 STEP ORGANIZATIONS

& SUPPORT GROUPS

ADD Anonymous

Web: www.members.aol.com/addanon/

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10015

Phone: 212/870-3400 — Web: www.alcoholicsanonymous.org

Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA or AcoA)

PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA 90510

Phone: 310/534-1815 — Email: info@adultchildren.org

Web: www.adultchildren.org

AlAnon/Alateen Family Groups

1600 Corporate Landing Parkway

Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

Phone: 757/563-1600 — 888/4Alanon (888/425-2666)

Email: wso@alanon.org

Web: www.alanon.alateen.org & www.OrangeCountyAlAnon.org

Clutterers Anonymous (CLA)

PO Box 25884, Santa Ana, CA 92799-5884

Web: www.clutterersanonymous.org/

CoDependents Anonymous (CoDA)

105 E. Grant Road, Tucson, AZ 85705

Phone: 520/882-5705 — Web: www.codatvcc.org/index.html

CoAnon Family Groups

PO Box 12124, Tucson, AZ 85732-2124

Orange County, CA: 714/647-6698

Los Angeles, CA: 818/377-4317

Tucson, AZ: 520/513-5028

Web: www.coanon.org

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

3740 Overland Ave., #C, Los Angeles, CA 90034

Phone: 310/559-5833 — Referral Line: 800/347-8998

Email: cawso@ca.org — Web: www.ca.org

Debtors Anonymous (DA)

PO Box 920888, Needham, MA 02492-0009

Phone: 781/453-2743 — Web: www.debtorsanonymous.org

Emotions Anonymous (EA)

PO Box 4245, St. Paul MN 55104-0245

Phone: 651/647-9712

Email: info@emotionsanonymous.org

Web: www.emotionsanonymous.org

Families Anonymous

WSO & Info. Services, 800/736-9805

Gamblers Anonymous (GA)

PO Box 17173, Los Angeles, CA 90017

Phone: 213/386-8789, 310/47-8212

Web: www.gamblersanonymous.org

Marijuana Anonymous (MA)

PO Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404

Phone: 800/766-6779 — Email: maws98@aol.com

Web: marijuanaanonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409

19737 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Phone: 818/773-9999

Email: info@na.org — Web: www.wsoinc.com

Nicotine Anonymous (NicA)

PO Box 591777, San Francisco, CA 94159-1777

Phone: 415/750-0328 — Web: www.nicotineanonymous.org/**Overeaters Anonymous (OA)**

PO Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 871744020

6075 Zenith Ct. NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124

Phone: 505/891-2664 — Web: www.overeatersanonymous.org**Phobics Anonymous**

World Service Office

P.O. Box 1180, Palm Springs, CA 92263

Phone: 760/322-COPE — 760/327-2184, 619/322-2673

Pills Anonymous

Phone: 714/978-9685

Recoveries Anonymous

PO Box 1212, East Northport, NY 11731

Phone: 516/261-1212 — Web: www.ra.org**SAnon Family Groups (SA)**

PO Box 111242, Nashville, TN 37222-1242

Phone: 615/833-3152, 800/339-0222

Web: www.sanon.org**Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA)**Web: www.sexaa.org**Sex&Love Addicts Anonymous**

PO Box 338, Norwood, MA 02062-0338

Phone: 781/255-8825

Web: www.slaafws.org**Sexaholics Anonymous (SA)**

PO Box 111910, Nashville, TN 37222

Phone: 615/331-6230

Email: ca@sa.org or saico@sa.org — Web: www.slaaws.org**Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA)**

PO Box 1585, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011

Int'l Info: 212/606-3778 — Phone: 800/977-4325, 212/439-1123

Email: info@sca-recovery.org — Web: www.scarecovery.org**Twelve Step Home Page**

(resources for the online community)

Web: www.twelvestep.com

APPENDIX “A” *More About ADD*

What is attention deficit disorder?

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD or ADHD) is a genetic, neurobiological condition. It is present in individuals from birth. It cannot be acquired as one grows older. And it does not “go away” with age. ADD evolves over time. Many adults develop compensating skills to minimize the bothersome effects.

ADD affects adults as well as young children—girls and women as well as boys and men. It affects them where they live—it touches every area of life. At home. At school. At work. In their emotions. In their thought life. In their health. In their relationships with other people. And it definitely affects their relationship with God.

Experts estimate that ADD affects from 5% to 10% of the general population. Yet it affects as high as 50% of addicts and alcoholics. And it is present in 70% or more of addict/alcoholics—those with multiple addictions.

ADD is caused by the inability of certain brain cells to effectively use dopamine—sometimes called the WD40 of the brain. The result of the ineffective neuro-transmissions in the brain is that the frontal lobes of the brain (pre-frontal cortex) do not function as they should. That means the loss of the brain’s *brakes* and *boss*.

The pre-frontal cortex provide humans with the *behavioral inhibition* system of the brain—the brakes. This system gives humans the ability to wait and inhibit impulsive behavior. The normal function of the brain’s pre-frontal cortex will delay response to the environment, prevent the urge to escape, curb unproductive or dangerous behavior, and protect concentration for mental focus.

The pre-frontal cortex also provide the *executive functions* of the brain—the boss. This system provides humans with working memory, a sense of time, planning, self-control, self-evaluation, verbal thought, motivation, some fine motor skills, and the ability to learn from our mistakes, etc..

The hallmark symptoms of ADD are related to the inability to inhibit. So ADD is becoming more and more known as a problem primarily of “disinhibition” rather than attention.

The resulting classic ADD’s symptoms include impulsivity, distractibility, hyperactivity (or hypoactivity and inattentiveness—more common in girls and women), and disorganization. ADDers are hyper-sensitive because of the inability to protect concentration and to filter or prioritize inputs and stimuli. This hyper-sensitivity combined with

the inability to organize leads to the common feeling of overwhelm. ADDers may feel like they're drowning or living in a fog.

Is ADD a “new” disorder?

The condition we call ADD has been around for a long time. The name “Attention Deficit Disorder” or “Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder” is a recent label. In the early 1900’s it was called “Organic Drivenness.” In 1937, Dr. Charles Bradley called the problem “wild kids” syndrome. That gave rise to accusations of bad parenting. Later it was called “Minimal Brain Dysfunction” and “Hyperkinetic.” Then in 1970, Dr. Virginia Douglas discovered that children with this condition were unable to pay attention. So she labeled it as “Attention Deficit Disorder.”

The truth is that all these names—including attention deficit disorder—are only descriptions of behaviors. The real reason for the behaviors is not described. The earlier experts only saw and labeled the symptoms or behaviors.

Is ADD caused by low intelligence?

No! It is not a matter of IQ. Most of us with ADD have high IQ’s. In studies done among the prison population, the IQ of those with ADD was significantly higher than average. This study was noted in the media. The headline read “Criminals Smarter than General Public.”

Another ADD anomaly with intelligence is in the types of intelligence. Of the basic seven major kinds of intelligence, **those with ADD do not operate well in the first two. However, they excel in the bottom five.** This is according to the world renowned expert in intelligence—Dr. Howard Gardner of Harvard University, a developmental psychologist. Dr. Gardner defines intelligence in the following way: *The ability to solve a problem or fashion a product that is valued in one or more cultural settings.* The seven kinds of intelligence according to Dr. Gardner are the following: [See End Note #16].

ADDers do not test well in these first 2:

- 1) **Logical/Mathematical** (linear sequential and numerical analysis: detailed and drawn out—not random)
- 2) **Verbal/Linguistic** (complex linear language production: syntax, grammar, etc.)

ADDers excel in these last 5:

- 3) **Visual/Spatial** (visualize in thought with spatial orientation: *Let me see it in my mind—then I can understand it!*)
- 4) **Body/Kinesthetic** (hands on learner: *Don’t tell me how, don’t give me the directions—let me try and figure it out!*)

5) **Musical/Rhythmic** (learns through music and rhyme, hears the rhythm of life e.g. like cadence: *The "ABC's" song helps me remember the alphabet!*)

6) **InterPersonal** (learns best in interaction with others—the group dynamic, thinks out loud: *It all makes sense when I can talk about or brainstorm with others!*)

7) **IntraPersonal** (*metacognition*—thinks along the way/ while doing it/sees the big picture from a few pieces of the puzzle; plus *intuition*—knows the right answer or has "hunches" without the empirical data: *Ray Crock combined a little intuition and a few pieces of information and envisioned the McDonald's Hamburger empire.*)

What's the difference between ADD and ADHD?

ADHD is just 1 of 6 types of ADD. It is characterized by hyperactivity and is the most common subtype.

What are the subtypes of ADD?

ADD has a number of subtypes or variations. The core symptoms of the disorder are related to the brain's prefrontal cortex, but the individual differences vary. The subtypes of ADD involve other parts of the brain, and they tend to manifest predictable behaviors and problems.

Why?

Because of our need for balance. Remember, misfits misfire.

Our bodies are master pieces of design. King David was right when he said, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made!* (See Psalm 139:14). A part of this wonderful design is the function of the body to restore all sorts of balance. If we are bumped or pushed by another person, we stabilize to keep from falling over. Thousands of things occur in our bodies from the moment of the shove. Most all of the brain-to-body processes are beyond our notice.

The same drive for balance (*homeostasis*) occurs in our brains and blood chemistry. If the body senses an imbalance, it creates more of the needed chemical or hormone. And the body is a virtual chemistry set. It makes all of its own most important hormones and medicines from adrenaline to insulin, neurotransmitters to neuropeptides, and more.

ADD and its subtypes have a lot to do with the bump that knocks our brains off balance.

The work and research of Daniel G. Amen, M.D., author of *Healing ADD*, shows this balance problem in living color. Dr. Amen is a clinical neuroscientist licensed in nuclear brain imaging and a

board certified psychiatrist. He has pioneered the use of brain imaging in clinical psychiatric practice. His clinics have the world's largest database of functional brain scans for neuropsychiatry. Dr. Amen's excellent work has made him a nationally recognized expert in the fields of the brain, behavior, and ADD.

Through the use of nuclear medicine and brain imaging known SPECT scans (single photon emission computed tomography), Dr. Amen has been able to study the ADD brain. Full color images of the brain show the activity or inactivity of the various regions of the brain. From his study, six major types of ADD have become apparent. The most common and basic ADD problems are related to the inactivity of the brain's prefrontal cortex. This can actually be seen in the scans. When the person with ADD is forced to *concentrate*, the affected parts of the frontal lobes turn off—decrease in activity. But at rest, the ADD person's brain is normal. In other words, the bump (the concentration) creates the problem.

Thanks to the work of many other researchers (especially David E. Comings, M.D.) we also know that those of us who have ADD do not effectively use dopamine. Other neurotransmitters and chemical components are also ineffective—such as norepinephrine, serotonin, and GABA. We have enough of the needed substances. We just don't properly use what we have. The research points to problems with our brain's dopamine receptors. So our brains think that more dopamine is needed. And since the brain makes its own stuff, more dopamine is made and delivered!

Oops!

That would be great news to someone with Parkinson's disease, but not someone with ADD. Too much dopamine in our brains can cause the various systems of the brain to tilt even more. The bump leads to a greater biochemical imbalance. The effort to adjust only brings more problems. We pump the accelerator to get the engine to focus, but it won't even start. So the extra gas floods the carburetor and makes matters worse. In the engine called our brain, two areas are most effected by all that extra gas (dopamine): control of physical movement and emotionbased behaviors.

Some years ago actors Robin Williams and Robert De Niro made a movie called *Awakenings*. It was based on the true life experience of Dr. Oliver Sacks. He worked with adults patients who were statue-like in a semi-comatose state—unable to walk, talk, or move voluntary muscles. A virus in the 1920's had destroyed their ability to make dopamine. To treat them, Dr. Sacks gave them L-dopa, a synthetic form of dopamine.

The movie shows the power of dopamine, and what too much of it can do. An excess of L-dopa caused all sorts of mental glitches, motor tics, and physical and emotional behaviors. For this reason, the movie is a great example of ADD subtypes. Why? Because those of us with ADD call for more dopamine than we need. That means WATCH OUT! The excess or ineffective use of dopamine effects our brains in different ways.

The brain is not a simple organ. It works in systems—much like the many systems in a car engine. Each system has a number of components that interact with itself and the other systems of the car. The failure of the alternator in the electrical system would cause the battery to fail and prevent engine ignition. In the same way, a problem with one area of the brain can impact many other systems.

For example, our vision is a real masterpiece of God's system design. Our eyes can look into the distance and recognize over 100,000 objects at the same instant. The calculations that just the retina and brain does in one second would take a *Cray* super-computer 200 hours to complete. For vision our eyes capture an image at the precise exposure level. They focus the image through a lens that projects upon the photo-sensitive retina. Then photons are converted to electrical impulses that are carried through the optic nerve to the geniculate body of the brain. Visual information is gathered and distributed to other systems for emergency reflex preparation, priority coding, image development, pattern recognition, linking to deep memory for past experience and emotional files, and distribution to various areas for action. Wow!

My point is simple and important. It is quite naive to presume that a problem in one isolated area of the brain is alone responsible for particular problems or behaviors. The brain and its systems are far more complex than that. The brain is still a vast frontier for science and a wonderful marvel of our Creator.

For example, the medical school at Johns Hopkins University was recently humbled by the resilience of the human brain. They had to rethink all existing ideas about the differences between the right and left sides of the brain. A little girl needed surgery to remove the entire right side of her brain. Despite all the dark predictions of what would happen with half-a-brain, the girl was normal in *every* respect.

So please take what the "experts" say (including me) with a grain of salt. Our ideas about ADD and its causes and effects are theories and "best guesses." What matters is that progress is being made. Help is available. Treatments for ADD do work and can restore hope. I see lives change for the better every day.

The ADD types below follow the work and research of Dr. Amen. Please reference Dr. Amen's book *Healing ADD—See and Heal the 6 Types of ADD* for the whole story. The first two of Dr. Amen's types, *Classic* and *Inattentive*, are related to the problems of the brain's prefrontal cortex. Like old Phineas Gage, with the frontal lobes lost or ineffective, we lose our brakes and our boss.

Classic ADD—the Prefrontal Cortex

The problems that follow are symptoms related to Classic ADD (Dr. Amen's Type 1). The sufferer...

- ...is easily distracted and has difficulty sustaining attention span for most tasks in play, school, or work
- ...has trouble listening when others are talking
- ...has difficulty following through (procrastination) on tasks or instructions
- ...has difficulty keeping an organized area (room, desk, book bag, filing cabinet, locker, etc.)
- ...has trouble with time, e.g., is frequently late or hurried, tasks take longer than expected, projects for homework are "last-minute" or turned in late
- ...has a tendency to lose things
- ...makes careless mistakes, poor attention to detail
- ...is forgetful
- ...is restless or hyperactive
- ...has trouble sitting still
- ...is fidgety, in constant motion (hands, feet, body)
- ...is noisy, has a hard time being quiet
- ...acts as if driven by a motor
- ...talks excessively
- ...is impulsive (doesn't think through comments or actions before they are said or done)
- ...has difficulty waiting his or her turn
- ...interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).

Inattentive ADD—the Prefrontal Cortex

The big difference between *Classic ADD* and *Inattentive ADD* is what the person does with their distraction. The Classic ADDers are moved to physical motion and hyperactivity. The Inattentive ADDers are moved in thought—daydreams, fantasies, internal distractions, etc..

The problems that follow are symptoms related to Inattentive ADD (Dr. Amen's Type 2). The sufferer...

- ...is easily distracted
- ...has difficulty sustaining his or her attention span for most tasks in play, school, or work
- ...has trouble listening when others are talking
- ...has difficulty following through—procrastination on projects or tasks
- ...has difficulty keeping an organized area (room, desk, book bag, filing cabinet, locker, etc.)
- ...has trouble with time—frequently late or hurried, tasks take longer than expected, projects or homework are last minute or turned in late
- ...has a tendency to lose things
- ...makes careless mistakes, with poor attention to detail
- ...is forgetful daydreams excessively
- ...complains of being bored
- ...appears apathetic or unmotivated
- ...is tired, sluggish, or slowmoving
- ...is spacey or seems preoccupied.

Overfocused Subtype of ADD—the Cingulate

Overfocused ADDers don't fit. We know that. So we force the fit—in our brains. That usually means *adrenaline*. Many of us stimulate our brains by the conflict caused in an argument. The *fight* gives us the neurostimulant we need to turn on our brains. Yet it creates more trouble in our lives and relationships. But the Overfocused subtype is more than just the adrenaline addiction.

Overfocused ADDers create a chemical imbalance that over stimulates the wrong areas. So we might worry about everything. We try, but can't turn things over to the Lord—*let go and let God*. We pick up the same worries again and again. Then we worry about worrying.

So some of us can argue with people, and others of us argue with ourselves through worry. The worry can bring on physical illness. We have problems with everything from our stomachs to our sleep. Worry robs our rest. And stress strips our ability to relax.

Overfocused ADDers have all the classic symptoms of ADD. They also have symptoms of the *Overfocused subtype*. These additional symptoms are caused by a part of the brain called the *Cingulate Gyrus*. The cingulate helps us stay on task or switch from one subject to another.

Some of us with ADD send that extra dopamine to the cingulate. It then becomes overactive and causes us to get stuck on a task—unable to switch. So we worry all the time. Or we can't get off our soapbox—we debate until the opposition is angry or asleep! This

cingulate intensity is why the subtype is called “overfocused.”

Of course there are other common problems. Most are related to the combination of the loss in the prefrontal cortex (no brakes and no boss) and the overactive cingulate (overfocused type). The worry and the debate go on and on. There’s no brake to stop the trouble and no supervisor to step in with wise counsel.

People with an overactive cingulate can be oppositional or argumentative. They get stuck in their thinking and can’t see other options. It is difficult for them to forgive, and they may carry grudges. Often they have an attitude that says, “My way or the highway!” They have compulsive behaviors and can repeat things over and over again. Otherwise, they tend to feel very anxious.

It’s hard for them to throw things away. They may hoard all kinds of stuff—things that they will probably never use. They may have addictive behaviors and abuse drugs or alcohol. They may have eating disorders—compulsive overeating, bulimia, or anorexia. They can become addicted to gambling, workaholism, or house cleaning. You name it! Anything can become an addictive behavior.

All of these are symptoms of an overactive cingulate. Bottom line? Their brains get stuck. They think too much. Worry too much. Argue too much. And just plain get stuck!

There is good news. This subtype of ADD can be treated with remarkable effectiveness. And once a person understands the problem, it is easy to find the hope and support necessary to find a better life.

The problems that follow are symptoms related to Overfocused ADD (Dr. Amen’s Type 3). The sufferer has ADD core symptoms, plus he or she...

- ...worries excessively or senselessly
- ...is oppositional and argumentative
- ...has a strong tendency to get locked into negative thoughts, having the same thought over and over
- ...has a tendency toward compulsive behaviors
- ...has a tendency to hold grudges
- ...has trouble shifting attention from subject to subject
- ...has difficulties seeing options in situations
- ...has a tendency to hold on to his or her own opinion and not listen to others
- ...has a tendency to get locked into a course of action, whether or not it is good for him or her
- ...needs to have things done a certain way or becomes very upset
- ...is criticized by others for worrying too much.

The Explosive Subtype of ADD—the Temporal Lobes

The Explosive ADDers struggle with a combination of classic ADD plus rage. As in most ADD, the Explosive ADDers' prefrontal cortex does not work as it should. That means—there are no brakes and no boss to control our impulses to vent anger and rage. No amount of self-will, good intentions, discipline, shame, or sorrow can stop us.

Like the Overfocused ADDers, we Explosive ADDers tend to get stuck in our thinking. That is a part of our rage. We may brood and over-focus on how things were supposed to be. We may ruminate on our lost dreams or missed opportunities. We may camp on our disappointments. We may agonize over losses due to our impatience or impulsiveness.

The Explosive subtype of ADD involves the temporal lobes of the brain. These lobes are under the temples on each side of our brains. A specific pattern of brain activity in these lobes is common with people who have ADD and rage. A nuclear brain image shows increased activity in one part of their temporal lobe and decreased activity in another part of their temporal lobe. The term "hot head" has a literal meaning with this subtype.

Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT) scans of the brain (a form of nuclear medicine) show this problem in living color. People who have anger and rage have "hot brains." SPECT imaging produces pictures of blood flow in the brain—metabolic uptake. The Explosive ADDers have a hot cingulate gyrus. It shows up bright red in the brain scan image. The cingulate is not supposed to look like that. But we also have even more "hot spots." Both the cingulate and part of the temporal lobes are lit. Plus, there is decreased activity in other areas of the temporal lobes. And, of course, decreased activity of the prefrontal cortex. None of this is the way it is supposed to be.

There's more. Years of inappropriate behavior (imbalance) can affect the limbic system. Over-activity there has added profound depression and a loss of connection with those we love the most.

It is important to note something here—a reminder. The problems that Explosive ADDers experience are not about character. Like the nearsighted person who needs glasses, this is a physical problem—not a spiritual one. Hardware not software. At heart and in spirit, we can be Christian folks full of compassion and concern for others.

The problem of Explosive ADD is in our brains—the temporal lobes to be exact. Like all ADDers, the Explosive types have a bad fit in life. This causes the brain to compensate, but a chemical imbalance occurs. The excess amounts of dopamine causes seizures in the temporal lobes of the brain. This is not epilepsy, but it is similar.

We know that those with epileptic seizures have clear physical symptoms. Epileptics may fall to the floor and convulse violently. Their legs and arms may flail out of control. Anyone too close to a person in a seizure episode would be kicked or hit. Those who try to help may even get injured. Still, they would not get offended or label the person as “bad.” They would recognize the illness, offer help, or seek medical intervention.

For Explosive ADDers the seizure is just as real, but the manifestation is not in our arms and legs. It is in our anger and rage. Hateful and angry words fly out unrestrained. Physical energy blows like steam from a train whistle. The behaviors emanate from a seizure in the brain. It’s like an earthquake from a deep and hidden movement in the earth.

We explosive ADDers do not need or deserve the criticism and condemnation of others. We are not bad. We have a medical problem—seizures in their temporal lobes. We need medical help—not moral judgment. Most important, we need compassion. Today, thanks to the advances in medicine, this problem is labeled as “rage seizures.” And it is also treatable with anti-seizure medications.

The problems that follow are symptoms related to Temporal Lobe ADD (Dr. Amen’s Type 4). The sufferer has ADD core symptoms, plus he or she...

- ...has periods of quick temper or rage with little provocation
- ...misinterprets comments as negative when they are not
- ...has a tendency to become increasingly irritable, then explode, then recede, and is often tired after a rage
- ...has periods of spaciness or confusion
- ...has periods of panic and/or fear for no specific reason
- ...imagines visual changes, such as seeing shadows or objects changing shape
- ...frequent periods of déjà vu (feelings of being somewhere before even though he or she has never been there)
- ...is sensitive or mildly paranoid
- ...experiences headaches or abdominal pain of uncertain origin
- ...has history of a head injury or family history of violence or explosiveness
- ...has dark thoughts, may involve suicidal or homicidal ideas
- ...has periods of forgetfulness or memory problems
- ...has a short fuse or periods of extreme irritability.

The Depressive Subtype of ADD—the *Limbic System*

Depressive ADDers feel like big failures, losers, and misfits. Their past may be littered with broken relationships, failed careers, and lost opportunities. Others talk behind his backs. People criticize them for their messed up lives and many losses.

Depressive ADDers often isolate from others. They already feel and face the shame of their failed dreams and the lost hope. They can't tolerate the condemnation and criticism of others. They prefer to disappear from view. They are silent, sad, and unable to share their struggle with anyone. And they often wonder if God cares. Their many failures have weakened their faith.

Depressive ADDers have classic ADD. They are impulsive and inattentive. They miss social cues and get bored easily. They get fired or quit jobs because of impulsive behavior or boredom. Life can feel like one train wreck after another. But there is more.

Depression is a big part of life for these ADDers. It saps strength and motivation. Everyday is a battle to get out of bed and go to work. They wonder how long this current job will last. They get depressed with just the thought of another job search. They want to seek God's help, but a weak prayer and pleading is all they can utter. They try to hang on to God—He is their only hope.

The depressive subtype is more than a reaction to loss and a loathsome life. It's truth that anyone would be depressed in their shoes. But Depressive ADDers have always been blue—it is a characteristic as far as they can remember. Nothing excites them. Even the good stuff in life doesn't pump them up.

The depressive subtype of ADD is a problem in the brain's *limbic system*. The limbic system is located in the center of our brains. It is a group of brain structures that play a role in emotion, memory, and motivation. It can influence everything from affection, aggression, and appetite to thirst, terror, and body temperature. It plays a role in our sexual drive, sense of taste and smell, our ability to bond with others.

The limbic system is best known as the brain's pleasure or pain center—reward central. It is the area that registers a sense of wellbeing and satisfaction. Or it may lead us to feel anxious, angry, unsatisfied, and wanting.

This is a problem area for those of us with ADD. A great deal of excellent research has been done to understand how the limbic system relates to ADD. Medical scientists like Dr. Ken Blum and Dr. David E. Comings show this to be the reason why we have “the blues”—a little unhappy, unsatisfied, or down. Common ADD dysthymia and other problems with our limbic system occur because of ineffective

neuro-transmissions. It is why we tend to self-medicate and struggle with addictive behaviors.

But the Depressive ADDers have an overactive limbic system. That causes far more serious effects. The depression is not mild—it is major. And the inability to connect with others brings great sorrow in their solitude and loneliness. They become a lone wolves unable to join a pack—without any idea why.

There is hope and help for Depressive ADDers. From diagnosis and education comes treatment and the tools to manage their lives. The support of others is especially healing. Understanding of their subtype allows these ADDers to accept themselves and connect with others.

The problems that follow are symptoms related to Limbic ADD (Dr. Amen's Type 5). The sufferer has ADD core symptoms, plus he or she has...

- ...moodiness
- ...negativity
- ...low energy
- ...frequent irritability
- ...a tendency to be socially isolated
- ...frequent feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, or excessive guilt
- ...lowered interest in things that are usually considered fun
- ...sleep changes (too much or too little)
- ...chronic low self-esteem.

Disinhibited and Hyperactive Brain ADD—the Ring of Fire

Dr. Amen and his clinical staff have brought this type of ADD to light and have pioneered treatment for this difficult problem. For more information and greater detail it is vital that Dr. Amen's book be consulted directly (*Healing ADD—The Breakthrough Program That Allows You to See and Heal the 6 Types of ADD*). On page 141 of his book, Dr. Amen describes the “Ring of Fire” ADD in the following way:

The “Ring of Fire” ADD gets its name from the physiology underlying the disease as seen on SPECT scans. Rather than having the typical underactive prefrontal cortex activity that is seen in Type 1 and Type 2 ADD, these patients have brains that are on balance hyperactive and disinhibited. People with “Ring of Fire” ADD have too much brain activity across the whole cerebral cortex, especially in the cingulate gyrus,

parietal lobes, temporal lobes, and prefrontal cortex. In a brain scan it looks like a ring of hyperactivity around the brain. At *The Amen Clinic* we look at the 3D active scans in blue (average activity) and red (the most active). In this type of ADD the ring of red reminded me of a band of fire surrounding the brain—fire that burns the person within and anyone with whom he comes into contact.

It is important to distinguish between the “Ring of Fire” ADD and bi-polar condition. The two disorders can be very similar to one another in their brain patterns and symptoms—such as inflated self-esteem, hyperactive behavior, fleeting attention span, extreme impulsivity (such as in sexual matters or by foolish spending), increased energy, decreased need for sleep, and bizarre thinking. According to Dr. Amen, the conditions differ in a number of ways (see pages 149-151 of *Healing ADD*). He says...

...patients with bi-polar disorder do not have the underlying core symptoms of ADD. In addition, their symptoms appear and disappear in a cyclic fashion. If the core ADD symptoms are present over a prolonged period of time, “Ring of Fire” ADD must be suspected. Frequently we see both patterns. The ADD core symptoms are present over time, but the mood problems occur in a cycle. Some doctors would argue that there are really two separate conditions at work: both ADD and bipolar disorder. We see the “Ring of Fire” pattern so commonly in our ADD patients that we feel it is a distinct ADD type and are comfortable describing it as a discrete disorder.

In children bipolar disorder resembles severe ADD. Bipolar children tend to be cyclic in their mood and behavior problems. They have times when they are awful, irritable, and aggressive, and they have times when things are relatively normal. “Ring of Fire” ADD kids tend to have problems on a more consistent basis. Adults with bipolar disorder have manic episodes, while people with “Ring of Fire” ADD do not. Their behavior tends to be consistent over long periods of time.

The problems that follow are symptoms related to the “Ring of Fire” ADD (Dr. Amen’s Type 6). The sufferer has ADD core symptoms, plus he or she...

...is angry or aggressive

- ...is sensitive to noise, light, clothes, or touch
- ...has frequent or cyclic mood changes (highs and lows)
- ...is inflexible, or rigid in thinking
- ...insists on having his or her own way, even when told no multiple times
- ...has periods of mean, nasty, or insensitive behavior
- ...has periods of excessive talkativeness
- ...has periods of excessive impulsivity
- ...exhibits unpredictable behavior
- ...displays grandiose or “larger than life” thinking
- ...talks fast
- ...has the sensation that thoughts go fast
- ...appears anxious or fearful.

For much more information see Dr. Amen’s book about the types of ADD: *Healing ADD—The Breakthrough Program That Allows You to See and Heal the 6 Types of ADD*.

www.amenclinics.com

APPENDIX "B"

More About Tourette Syndrome (TS)

What is Tourette Syndrome?

Tourette syndrome is "ADD with tics." That definition comes from Dr. David E. Comings, M.D.—the nation's leading expert on TS.

What Are Tics?

In the quote below, Dr. Comings defines "tics." He describes how motor and vocal tics appear:

Motor tics are involuntary movements of any muscle, ranging from sudden, rapid, jerking motions, to slower stretching movements. Examples include rapid eye blinking, mouth opening, facial grimacing, horizontal head movements (hair out of eyes tic), shoulder shrugging, crotch touching, rapid extension of the arms or legs. They include other behaviors such as tugging at clothing, licking lips, sticking the tongue out, eyes glancing up, widening eyes, and stretching movements. They often tend to be repetitious and ritualistic.

Vocal tics include throat clearing, grunting, snorting, squeaking, sniffing, coughing, humming, barking, spitting and virtually any repetitious vocal noise that is not a recognizable word. Repeat or mimic what others (or themselves) say. They are also repetitious in nature and vary in intensity, sometimes being said just under the breath, other times loud and explosive in nature.

(Taken from Dr. Comings's Q & A webpage for TS at www.HopePress.com. The website contains the research conducted by the *City of Hope* Tourette Syndrome/ADHD Clinic).

Up to 30% of those with ADD experience some type of vocal and/or motor tics. Among those with TS, the occurrence and severity of tics vary greatly. Some are profound and others are mild and rarely seen.

Tics can be brought on or worsened by a number of things. Certain medications, caffeine, and stress can cause TS problems to increase. In studies at the City of Hope, they found that tics among school age boys increased in proportion to their homework. More homework—more tics. Less homework—fewer tics.

Tourette Syndrome (vocal/motor tics)—Dis-inhibition of the Limbic System

TS occurs because of dopamine related problems in the limbic and

motor systems of the brain. In addition to motor and vocal tics, TS can be associated with a wide range of behavioral problems including hyperactivity, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, learning disabilities, conduct disorder, and inappropriate sexual behaviors. Also problems such as excessive touching, bed-wetting, short temper, oppositional and confrontational conduct, and a wide range of addictive behaviors.

Knowledge about TS can bring great relief and insight to the parents, spouses, and family members of those with ADD and tics. Home life can be chaos—constant confrontations, temper tantrums, lying, and failure to take responsibility. This can lead to anger, turmoil, frustrations, resentment, and cross recrimination in the household.

Those with TS experience far more than just tics and the classic symptoms of ADD. Individuals with TS may also have significant behavioral and conduct problems. Obsessive-compulsive behaviors are also common. Mild symptoms might be like “even-ing up” (scratch left elbow, then scratch right) or like the inability to use public restrooms. Fears and phobias may also play some part and cause inconvenience for other family members (e.g. the fear of freeway driving, fear of germs, or even phones).

Dr. Comings has found that therapy for the entire family is helpful. TS children or adults affect everyone around them. They are often unable to see how their behavior affects others. They have troubles on the playground or in social interactions. And because their TS symptoms can worsen with stress, social troubles can increase their motor and vocal tics.

Dr. Comings warns that tics and compulsive behaviors are often involuntary actions. So punishment and discipline for them are not appropriate. Also, because of the neurological problems in the limbic system, the normal reward-punishment model that works for others, does not work for TS. For other disruptive, antisocial, aggressive, or destructive behaviors, he suggests that an immediate, short, neutral consequence be used—such as time out in a room or corner or some form of physical activity. And immediate praise and encouragement for cooperation and good conduct is vital. No deferred rewards—like when the jar is full of “good marbles” or when the chart or calendar has enough “good stickers” or stars.

Hard and good research continues to show that faith matters. Families that have faith, values, and Christ-like love for one another have far fewer struggles with discipline and behavioral problems related ADD and TS. Life is already tough for a kid with TS or hyperactive ADD. But life can be even tougher when parents or family members don’t understand.

APPENDIX "C"

More About Dyslexia

What are some common signs that point to dyslexia?

Pre-School Children and Dyslexia:

- May talk later than most children.
- May have trouble saying long words (mix up the sounds and syllables).
- May mispronounce word (e.g. say *aminal* for “animal,” *buh-sketti* for “spaghetti,” *apost-too* for “supposed to,” *peecuz* for “because,” *hang-ga-bur* for “hamburger,” etc.).
- May freeze or not respond when asked a question.
- May be slow to add new vocabulary words.
- May be unable to recall the right word.
- May have difficulty with rhyming.
- May have trouble learning the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, colors, or shapes.
- May be unable to follow directions, instructions, or routines.
- May have trouble telling and/or retelling a story in the correct sequence.
- May be unable to tie his shoes.
- May be unable to skip or stay in step.
- May not remember “left” from “right.”
- May lack coordination (appear clumsy).
- May confuse words that describe position (e.g. over, under, before, after, above, below, on, in, etc.).
- May confuse words that describe direction (e.g. toward, from, away, up, etc.).
- May not show a dominant hand, or may switch from right to left hand between or during tasks.

Kindergarten through 4th Grade and Dyslexia:

- May be slow to spell and write his name.
- May be slow to learn the sounds of the alphabet letters.
- May have trouble with phonetics and spelling.
- May make the same reading and spelling errors over and over.
- May reverse letters like “d” for “b” as in “dog” for “bog.”
- May reverse words like “tip” for “pit.”
- May invert letters like “m” for “w” or “u” for “n.”
- May transpose letters like “felt” for “left.”
- May substitute words like “house” for “home.”
- May confuse small words like “at,” “to,” “for,” or “in.”

- May have trouble learning new vocabulary words.
- May transpose number sequences and confuse math signs (+x/=).
- May have trouble remembering facts.
- May guess a lot or “fake it.”
- May be slow to learn new skills.
- May have to memorize things without understanding.
- May be slow to plan, organize, and manage his time, materials, and tasks.
- May have an awkward pencil grip (fist, thumb hooked over fingers, etc.).
- May get writer’s cramp because of his tight grip.
- May have sloppy handwriting.

5th through 8th Grade and Dyslexia:

- May be slow to discern and to learn prefixes, suffixes, root words, and language rules.
- May have difficulty spelling; spells same word differently on the same page.
- May avoid reading aloud.
- May have trouble with word problems in math.
- May have trouble remembering the multiplication tables.
- May write with difficulty with illegible handwriting; pencil grip is awkward, fist like or tight.
- May avoid writing.
- May have difficulty with written composition.
- May have slow or poor recall of facts.
- May have difficulty with comprehension.
- May have trouble with nonliteral language (idioms, jokes, proverbs, slang).
- May have difficulty with planning, organizing and managing time, materials and tasks.

High School and College Students and Dyslexia:

- May read very slowly with many inaccuracies.
- Continues to spell incorrectly, frequently spells the same word differently in a single piece of writing.
- May avoid reading and writing tasks.
- May have trouble summarizing and outlining.
- May have trouble answering open-ended questions on tests.
- May have difficulty learning a foreign language.
- May have poor memory skills.
- May work slowly.
- May pay too little attention to details or focus too much on them.
- May misread information.

- May have an inadequate vocabulary.
- May have an inadequate store of knowledge from previous reading.
- May have difficulty with planning, organizing and managing time, materials and tasks.

Adults and Dyslexia:

- May hide reading problems.
- May spell poorly; relies on others to correct spelling.
- Avoids writing; may not be able to write.
- Often very competent in oral language.
- Relies on memory; may have an excellent memory.
- Often has good "people" skills.
- Often is spatially talented; professions include, but are not limited, to engineers, architects, designers, artists and craftspeople, mathematicians, physicists, physicians (esp. surgeons and orthopedists), and dentists.
- May be very good at "reading" people (intuitive).
- In jobs is often working well below their intellectual capacity.
- May have difficulty with planning, organization and management of time, materials and tasks.

What are some other common problems or characteristics?

Reading:

Reading may be slow, labored, and inaccurate. Reading aloud may be slow, choppy, and without punctuation. Reading is a tiresome task—their fatigue is obvious even after a short time. Reading comprehension may be low. Their energy is spent trying to read and recognize the words. Listening comprehension is significantly higher than reading comprehension.

Handwriting / Written Work:

Dysgraphia is a visual-motor integration problem. People with dyslexia often have poor handwriting. Signs of dysgraphia include:

- Unusual pencil grip, often with the thumb on top of the fingers (a "fist grip"). May hold onto the pencil lower than normal or higher than normal. The pencil is gripped so tightly that the child's hand cramps. The child will frequently put the pencil down and shake out his/her hand.
- Writing letters is a slow, labored, nonfluent chore. Child writes letters with unusual starting and ending points. Child has great difficulty getting letters to "sit" on the horizontal lines.
- Unusual spatial organization of the page. Words may be widely

spaced or tightly pushed together. Margins are often ignored. They use space poorly on the page with odd spacing between words. Sentences may be tightly packed into one section of the page instead of being evenly spread out.

—Child has an unusually difficult time learning cursive writing, and shows chronic confusion about similarly formed cursive letters such as “P” and “b”, “m” and “n”, “w” and “u”. They will also difficulty remembering how to form capital cursive letters.

—People with dyslexia usually have an “impoverished written product.” That means that their intelligence and abilities are not apparent when looking at something they wrote. Their intelligence is obvious when you speak to them, but it is not obvious when they write.

—They write extremely short sentences.

—They take an unusually long time to write.

—They display very poor mastery of punctuation as well as grammar, syntax, and suffixes.

—They misspell many words and miss many errors in written work even when proofreading has been attempted.

Directionality:

Most dyslexic children and adults have chronic difficulty with many aspects of directionality. They may show confusion about north, south, east, and west. They may have difficulty reading or following maps. They chronically get lost when going to new places (and sometimes even to familiar places). They have trouble with directional words like left/right, over/under, up/down, before/after, ahead/behind, forward/backward, east/west. The left/right confusion shows up in handwriting and in math.

Sequencing Steps in a Task:

Learning any task that has a series of steps which must be completed in a specific order can be difficult. These tasks are usually challenging for people with dyslexia:

—Tying shoelaces or neckties: this task not only has a series of steps, but many steps have directionality as part of them. Many children do not master this task until they’re teenagers.

—Writing capital cursive letters: most uppercase cursive letters require many steps, and most of the steps have directionality as part of them.

—Doing long division: to successfully complete a long division problem, you must do a series of five steps, in exactly the right order, over and over again.

—Touch typing: learning to touch type is an essential skill for people with dysgraphia. But it is usually more difficult (and requires much

more effort) for a dyslexic child to learn to type. Many continue to "hunt and peck" with their index fingers.

Rote Memory of Non-Meaningful Facts:

Memorizing non-meaningful facts (facts that are not personally interesting and personally relevant) is extremely difficult for most dyslexic children and adults. In school, this leads to difficulty learning:

—Multiplication tables.

—Science facts: water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit, the speed of light is 186,000 miles per second, etc..

—History facts: dates, names, and places. Dyslexic students do well in history classes that emphasize why some event happened, and the consequences of that event, rather than rote memorization of dates and names.

Time Concepts and Time Management:

People with dyslexia often have difficulty with time management and time concepts. They often have difficulty:

—Telling time using an analog clock (a clock with hands).

—Knowing the months of the year in sequence. If you haven't mastered this, then you may misinterpret a due date written as 11/5/05.

—Estimating the time a task requires. People with dyslexia are often chronically late to appointments and late turning in homework because they don't accurately estimate the time required to drive to a destination or to complete an assignment.

—Remembering the starting times and the sequence of classes in high school, both on regular school days and days with shortened schedules due to rallies or inservice days.

—Using appointment calendars. People with dyslexia will often show up for appointments on the wrong day or the wrong week.

Spatial Organization:

People with dyslexia have an extremely difficult time organizing physical space. They tend to prefer to pile things rather than to organize them and put them away. It is almost as though if they can't see item (if it is behind a door or in a drawer), they won't know where it is. This disorganization invades all of their personal space: their rooms, their lockers, their backpacks, their offices, and their cars. They often have extreme difficulty organizing their offices or their study space. Also, perhaps due to their disorganization, they tend to lose many, many personal items: clothing, watches, pagers, books, lunches, and shoes. They also have trouble bringing all necessary items to a meeting or to their house to do homework.

Math Difficulties:

People with dyslexia are often gifted in math. Their three dimensional visualization skills help them “see” math concepts more quickly and clearly than non-dyslexic people. Unfortunately, difficulties in directionality, rote memorization, and sequencing can make the following math tasks so difficult that their math gifts are never discovered:

- Memorizing addition and subtraction facts.
- Memorizing multiplication tables.
- Performing long division.
- Understanding fractions.

Light Sensitivity (Scotopic Sensitivity):

A small percentage (8%) of people with dyslexia also have light sensitivity (sometimes called scotopic sensitivity). These people have a hard time seeing small black print on white paper. The print seems to shimmer or move; some see the rivers of white more strongly than the black words. These people tend to dislike florescent lighting, and often “shade” the page with their hand or head when they read. Colored plastic overlays and/or colored lenses can eliminate the harsh black print against white paper contrast, and may make letters stand still for the first time in someone’s life. However, the plastic overlays or colored lenses will not “cure” dyslexia, nor will they teach a dyslexic person how to read.

Significant Strengths of People with Dyslexia:

Although their unique brain architecture and “unusual wiring” make reading, writing, and spelling more difficult, most people with dyslexia have gifts in areas controlled by the right hemisphere of the brain. The right side controls:

- artistic skill
- musical ability
- 3D visual-spatial skills
- mechanical ability
- vivid imagination
- athletic ability
- math conceptualization skills
- creativity
- global or big picture thinking
- curiosity and tenacity
- intuition

Good Careers for People with Dyslexia:

People with dyslexia are in every field. However, many excel in the following fields:

- architecture
- interior or exterior design
- ministry
- counseling
- teaching
- marketing and sales
- culinary arts
- woodworking
- carpentry
- performing arts
- athletics
- music
- scientific research
- engineering
- computers
- electronics
- mechanics
- graphic arts
- photography

The information above was adapted from the *Bright Solutions for Dyslexia* website and the following sources. For more information contact Susan Barton at ***Bright Solutions for Dyslexia***, 2059 Camden Ave., Suite 186, San Jose, CA 95124. Phone: 408/559-3652 — Fax: 408/377-0503 — Email: info@BrightSolutions.US

Also see the following resources:

Basic Facts about Dyslexia: What Every Layperson Ought to Know published by **The International Dyslexia Association**, Baltimore, MD. — copyright 1993, 2nd ed. 1998.

Learning Disabilities: Information, Strategies, Resources published by **Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities** (a collaboration of leading U.S. nonprofit learning disabilities organizations) — copyright 2000.

APPENDIX “D”

The Twelve Steps and Christianity

The Christian Roots of the Twelve Steps

Alcoholics Anonymous began on June 10, 1935, co-founded by William Griffith Wilson (Bill W.) and Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith (Dr. Bob). Wilson conceived the idea of Alcoholics Anonymous while he was hospitalized for excessive drinking in December of 1934. During his hospital stay, Wilson had a spiritual experience that removed his desire to drink. In the following months, he tried to persuade other alcoholics to stop drinking just as he had. Wilson found his first “convert” in Smith, who was willing to follow Wilson’s method to find freedom from alcoholism. Four years later, Wilson and Smith published the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, which contains the Twelve Steps and a spiritually based program of recovery for alcoholism.

The Oxford Group

Various sources influenced the formulation of AA’s program, as developed and recorded by Wilson. Of these, the British born Oxford Group movement and its American leader, Episcopal clergyman, Samuel Moor Shoemaker, Jr., contributed most significantly to the Christian basis of Alcoholics Anonymous. Both Wilson and Smith attended the Oxford Group meetings and based much of the AA program on this framework.

In the 1920’s and 1930’s, the Oxford Group movement became a revolutionary answer to anti-religious reaction following World War I. Aiming to rekindle living faith in a church gone stale with institutionalism, the Oxford Group declared itself an “organism” rather than an “organization.” Group members met in homes and hotels, mingling religion with meals. Despite its freedom from institutional ties, the movement was distinctly ecclesiastical and looked to the church as its authority.

Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, a Lutheran pastor, is most often cited as leader of the Oxford movement. Yet, if one were to ask an Oxford Group follower, “Who is your leader?” the reply might be, “The Holy Spirit.” So confidently did the group believe in the guidance of the Spirit that it had no organized board of officers, but relied instead on “God control” through men and women who had fully “surrendered” to God’s will. Buchman emphasized the need to surrender to God for forgiveness and guidance and to confess one’s sins to God and others. Oxford Group followers learned also to make restitution for wrongs done and to witness about their changed lives in order to help change others.

The Oxford Group’s teachings rested on the following six basic assumptions:

1. Human beings are sinners.
2. Human beings can be changed.
3. Confession is a prerequisite to change.
4. The changed soul has direct access to God.
5. The age of miracles has returned.
6. Those who have been changed are to change others.

In addition, Wilson incorporated into AA’s philosophy the Oxford Group’s five procedures, which were:

1. Giving to God.
2. Listening to God’s direction.
3. Checking guidance.
4. Restitution.
5. Sharing, both confession and witness.

Evolution of the Twelve Steps

While trying to attract more followers to sobriety from 1935 to 1937, Smith and Wilson attended Oxford Group meetings in New York led by Samuel Moor Shoemaker, Jr. “It was from Sam Shoemaker that we absorbed most of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, steps that express the heart of A.A.’s way of life,” Wilson later recalled. “The early A.A. got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Group and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else.”

(The above material is taken from *The 12-Steps for Christians*—published by RPI Publishing, Inc.)

12 Steps or 1 Step? **by Jerry Seiden**

I have grown to appreciate the twelve step process. However, early in my ministry (back when I knew everything) I belittled the twelve steps from the pulpit. I used to say, “You don’t need 12 steps—you need 1 step: Jesus!” Well, I still believe that Jesus is the answer—of course. But today I realize that not everyone has the same access to the truth that I had. I had the benefit of a Christian home. The name of Christ and the Word of God was honored in my family. But many are born into families without faith or scripture.

Most people need some structure in their search for God. God provided a familiar process and steps for the Magi to find Christ. The wise men from the East were star worshipers and astrologists. They followed a star to find a king. The star took them to Jerusalem

and King Herod's court. Herod sent them to the Bible scholars. The scholars opened the Word of God and showed the Magi Micah 5:2. *But you, Bethlehem...out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.* Then the Word of God sent the wise men to Bethlehem, where they found Christ.

Spiritual nutrition has a process like physical feeding. Adults have teeth to chew complex foods. Babies start with milk and formula. Then they move on to processed foods that are simple, strained, and mashed. Chunks and Cherrios come with the first teeth. It is the same with walking. The babies need small steps.

It's a process. Babies learn to lift their heads and strengthen key muscles. Then they roll over and push up with two little arms. Then on all fours, the adventures begin with crawling. Next, they pull themselves up with stationary objects (chairs, table legs, or the sofa). Then it's on to two feet, a little balance, and baby steps begin!

I know hundreds of people who have come to Christ because of the 12 steps. The Biblical principles changed their lives, but process led them to the Highest Power.

The 12 steps give spiritual babies a structure and plan for recovery. I needed the help. Years of church, a Christian college, graduate school, seminary, and years of pastoral experience didn't give me the relationship with truth that I needed. My head was so full, but my heart so empty! I had become a moral umpire to the world, till I got thrown out of the game. Pride turned into panic attacks, and my fixes ended in failures. Like Saul of Tarsus blinded on his way to Damascus, I got the gift I needed: humility born in brokenness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Sultzer is the founder and director of *Psalm 146:7 Prison Ministries*—a nonprofit Christian outreach. He was called to ministry at 40 years of age while in prison. He had been convicted of conspiracy to smuggle drugs, and he was sentenced to seven years in a federal penitentiary.

Restaurateur and nightclub owner William Sultzer was a real player in the entertainment world. He catered to the rich, famous, and powerful. Famous rock stars came to his clubs and called him their friend. He owned homes and property in several areas of California. Anything he wanted was at his fingertips, but he was never satisfied. He wanted more. So he smuggled cocaine. Lots of it. It brought him millions of dollars and even more luxurious living. But his deepest needs were never met.

Then William got caught. He lost everything after he was indicted on a drug smuggling conspiracy charge. He ended up in prison. But William believes God had a hand in it. It's where he learned what truly mattered in life.

The vision for his ministry came when the Lord Jesus showed him the scripture found in Psalm 146:7. It says, *The Lord looseth the prisoners*. It was then that William knew that God had a plan for him.

Since his release, William has brought hope and salvation to inmates. He has been in the forefront of bringing Christian music into prison. The power and joy of music opens up the hearts and minds of inmates who would otherwise be closed to the Gospel. In 2004, the ministry celebrated it's 20 year anniversary!

Today William Sultzer lives on a boat in Orange county California. And he continues to do ministry and share the wisdom and hope that he has found in Christ.

To contact William Sultzer:

Psalm 146:7 Prison Ministry

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Jerry Seiden, M.A., pastors *Spirit of Hope Christian Fellowship*, a special ministry for those who struggle to fit into a traditional congregation because of problems with addictive behaviors, ADD/ADHD, Tourette syndrome, bi-polar disorder, learning disabilities, wounded emotions, or other related needs.

DIVINE or DISTORTED? God As We Understand God was Jerry Seiden's first published book. In December of 1999, he published *MICHAEL'S STABLE: The Best Gift Is to Belong* (an inspirational giftbook). His most recent book is *JABEZ THE STORY: Why God's Heart Was Moved*. Although he has written and developed more than 50 published titles related to recovery and spirituality, most of his work has been behind the scenes as a contract writer (ghostwriter).

Jerry is most frequently asked to speak on spirituality as a healing resource. He teaches an easy-to-use method for mood management that he uses to stay "emotionally sober" and "spiritually connected" in the midst of life's craziness.

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SOON TO BE RELEASED BOOKS:

The Knuckleheads Series by William Sultzer

Knuckleheads Stories by William Sultzer

Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Hebrews 13:3

A FEW SPECIAL REQUESTS *from the Author*

Please pass this book on to others who are incarcerated. Leave it in prison to help as many others as possible. Also, share information about the book with family and friends on the outside. Write down the address before you pass the book on. Then encourage those at home to send for a copy of their own.

WE WANT YOUR STORIES!

If this book has been of help, or you prayed the prayer on page 118, or if you have a story to share, please write us at *Psalm 146:7 Prison Ministries*. We'd love to include your story in an upcoming book—The Happy Prisoner's *Knuckleheads Stories*. Also send us your booking picture and a "happy picture" for the cover if you can. Anyway, please write us.

Send correspondence to:

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