

A Bridge between 12 Step groups and the Church

November, 2008

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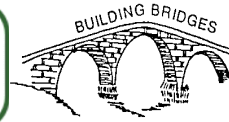
I want to thank you for this opportunity to be of service to the fellowship of Overcomers Outreach. In looking ahead, I cannot help but feel excited for all that is, potentially, yet to come. The vision God first gave our founders is one of His power and healing. The way I see it, in order for us to answer His call, we must reach out to the suffering and minister to individuals while also equipping new and existing groups with all resources available.

Overcomers Outreach is comprised of individuals who meet regularly to help one another and learn of the healing power of Jesus Christ. Many believe that is all Overcomers is – single groups scattered all over the world. The love and healing expressed at group level is amazing at times. Just imagine that power amplified through unifying those groups. To do this, the identity of Overcomers needs to be one of the entire fellowship helping one another. Just as the Church is made up of many parts, so Overcomers should be. Groups should feel a “part of” a bigger organization, namely Overcomers Outreach as a whole. Interaction between groups should be encouraged and the Group Coordinators Network is a key resource for this.

I ask each of you to pray for guidance and the strength to help, encourage, and love the groups you may currently attend. I also prayerfully ask for His discernment through you, that you may feel free to come to me with any suggestions, plans, or comments. I love you all. I learned how to love by reading His word and sharing with you and others. I continue to look forward to expressing the love that God has shown us through His Son, Jesus Christ. We will continue to overcome the chains of this world. Be faithful, be prayerful, and be thankful for God using you to love others.

Jeff MacLeod
Executive Director

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Where to get more members ... and help others

A good resource for potential members is the “other” 12 step programs. “Attendance at additional 12 step groups is encouraged” so GO. Let your light shine! Invite others you meet before or after the meeting to your OO meeting. It is NOT appropriate to announce meeting times or locations during the meetings. This usually generates a lot of negativity and should be avoided. Many newer people are seeking a “Higher Power” and may be open to us. Also, many Believers find these rooms and would find our meetings helpful. Refer to tradition 10.

Reaching out to church members can be a bit more complicated, but equally important. Be ever mindful of the shame and guilt others may be suffering from. Remember when you didn't want anyone to know or thought they didn't know? An announcement in the church bulletin is a good move. As we fellowship with our brothers and sisters we may become aware of some of their pain and delicately suggest they join us at the next meeting. Perhaps they are at wit's end with a loved one. Assure them that they are welcome with or without the afflicted individual. There is hope for them as well. Assure them of confidentiality and ask to pray with them. How we both present and represent the group is critical.

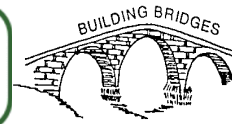
Need a Drink?

“But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” **John 4:14**

Wow! 12 Step recovery and the Bible!

As a new believer and very early in recovery, I made this statement. Recently, I have been reminded of just how powerful this revelation can be. So many people with years of recovery are just starting to find us, as well as newcomers. Too many churchgoers are turned off by the “Higher Power” references in other 12 step groups and consequently miss out on the “practical application of these life changing principles”, that is, the 12 step program of recovery. On the other hand, many “12 steppers” are seeking to improve their conscious contact with God yet feel intimidated or restricted from sharing about Christ at those meetings. The discovery of Overcomers meetings has been a blessing to these people and many others. Each group serves as a bridge between traditional 12 step groups and the church. “We carry the message of Christ's delivering power to individuals and family members both within and without the church who still suffer”. We must be available to attendees at both church and 12 step groups. “*One plants, another waters, but God gives the increase*”. Praise Him!

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How You Can Help

"I can't get up in front of strangers .. I'm a lousy public speaker".

"No one wants to hear my story .. It's not that exciting"

"Now these are commonplace observations ... Back of them is a world of ignorance and misunderstanding" - Alcoholics Anonymous, p20

Overcomers Outreach needs your help. You can help the most by being a part of the fellowship. Financial support is welcome and needed, but that is not as important as your participation. Talk to other groups. Go to other OO meetings if you can. Carry the message of deliverance through Christ's healing power to those suffering at home, work, or school —anywhere you go. Do this through actions—walking the walk. Send in an article for the next newsletter. Pass this copy on. Share at meetings. Look for the opportunity to help someone. You know that God will give you the power to do exactly what He wants

of you. Support one another and grow in recovery and His Love. By example, we can bring hope to many who suffer.

A key element in recovery is to feel "a part of" – that is, to belong somewhere. The best way I know to "be a part of" something is to be of service. Service is an act of love, plain and simple. In order to carry the message of Jesus Christ's healing power we must reach out wherever possible. As we grow in recovery we are blessed with the opportunity to serve others. Groups should serve the church. Serve the community. Serve the neighborhood. We can serve by helping at church events or cleaning up after. We can serve anonymously, but we must serve – we are FREE.

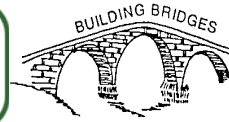
"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love" *Gal5:13*

Group Coordinator Network

Big News! We have a GCN website working!

Go to www.oogcn.com for information and resources for your group, such as templates to make your own meeting schedules, court signature sheets, meeting information cards, etc., as well as upcoming events and committee activities. There are some suggestions on setting up Public Information committees and speaker panels. We also need your input as to how we can better help your group. E-mail information about upcoming group events and they will be posted to the web in a timely manner.

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Hospitals, Institutions, Missions .. Can we talk?

The second part of our name is “*Outreach*” - that is, we reach out to others. How can we reach others? Where do we find them? Visiting the hospitals, treatment centers, rescue missions, shelters, and jails or prisons to share our faith and method of recovery is one of the most rewarding experiences you could ever have and, more importantly, it is *what we are here to do!* A proven way to reach those otherwise unable to attend meetings is by setting up a committee to contact facilities and establish regular visits by volunteers. The GCN website has some suggested guidelines and ideas on getting started. The Central Service Center will be happy to help as well. The “H.I.M.” handbook is available, as well as other literature. Never been in jail or treatment? It doesn’t matter! Any Overcomer is well equipped through Jesus Christ! The love expressed by “ordinary” people taking time to visit and talk has tremendous impact on inmates and patients alike, whether by panels or individuals. Depending on participation, commitments can be as little as once a year, though most individuals soon want to do much more. Ever hear the song “*Onward Christian Soldiers*”? Need we say more?

PUBLIC RELATIONS .. TALK TO THE PASTOR!

“How can they believe in Him unless they hear about Him? How can they hear about Him unless someone preaches to them? And how can anyone preach without being sent?”

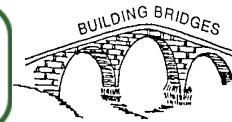
Romans 10:14-15

Support of the pastoral staff is very helpful. A “Church Info.” packet is now available , which includes a reprint of Ch. 7 -”From the Pastor” in “A Bridge To Recovery” and a few of our pamphlets (contact the Central Service Center for details). Make a copy of the “FREED” book available to pastors or elders and invite them to attend a meeting. They might be able to refer church members to us. We can be a valuable resource to these busy people, and that might bring some support from the pulpit. “If the pastor thinks it will help...” can be all the motivation necessary for a churchgoer to come to a meeting. Making OO literature (information pamphlets) available in the church office or lobby might be worthwhile as well, but only with staff permission.

Most of all, we “carry the message” by example, as Jesus did for us. It is both our joy and responsibility to share what it means to have Christ in our lives.

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors as though God were making His appeal through us...” *2Cor5:20*

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Questions and Answers

In future newsletters, this feature will be an open forum for your questions and comments. Please consider submitting questions and / or responses to www.info@overcomersoutreach.org

WHAT IS OVERCOMERS OUTREACH, Inc.?

*Overcomers Outreach started in 1977 as a ministry for church members. As the ministry grew, the need for a support system for groups became apparent. A large part of this growth was due to interaction with 12 Step groups outside the church and the need to reach out to these groups was also apparent. In 1985, Overcomers Outreach, Inc. was founded to meet these needs. The corporation exists to **provide** the "bridge" by creating, printing, and distributing literature and other resources, and to provide a central communication center for both groups and individuals. This requires the operation of a Central Service Center, that is, a business office. The corporation is funded by 7th Tradition donations from participating OO Groups, donations from individuals and organizations, and revenue from literature sales. These funds are used to maintain and staff the Central Service Center. This office exists to serve the groups and individuals by taking calls, answering e-mails, maintaining a website and meeting directory, processing literature orders, and providing information about Overcomers Outreach through newsletters, conference planning, literature development, and events and is overseen by the Board of Directors. The Board is made up of volunteer leaders from different parts of the country who meet regularly to help guide the fellowship.*

TIRED? *"Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary"* **Isaiah 40:31**

Overcomers Outreach is a 501c3 non profit corporation. All gifts are tax deductible.

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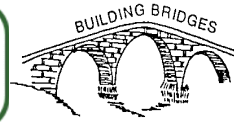
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OVERCOMERS
OUTREACH



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A PRAYER FOR US ALL ...

Why do we pray? It won't change God's mind, so what's the use? Very simply, if we ask, He will change our minds and hearts through our prayers! Isn't that amazing? Well, not really. After all, we are talking about God. Now, let's talk to Him:

Loving Father, we thank you for the bounty of your blessings. Sometimes we forget, or get too busy, or just turn away. Sometimes we get angry at you and sometimes we don't do what you want us to do. Sometimes we do what we want and act as if it is what you want. And you still love us so, not sometimes but ALWAYS!

Please, Lord, show us how to love each other as you love us. We ask to be able to recognize and seize upon every opportunity to glorify You, and we ask this in Jesus' name. All Glory, Praise, and Honor are yours, Almighty God. Amen

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