



Transitions

Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...
Romans 12:2

The Lights Are Still On

When people ask how Grace House is doing financially many times they hear, “the lights are still on.” Those of you who have followed the growth and struggles of Grace House over the past few years have witnessed a roller coaster of financial challenges. It is the timely gifts of many that have kept the lights on, so to speak.

Men are referred to Grace House from several different sources. Some come through local churches and organizations, Drug Court or Community Corrections, and some are encouraged by family and friends to see what Grace House has to offer. Many are sponsored by friends, family, organizations or groups for their initial two weeks or first month. It is then left up to the individual to hopefully find a job and be able to provide his own support. Sounds great in theory, but...

Many residents have the added expenses of legal financial obligations, child support, additional treatment fees, etc. Their resumes are a bit sketchy and they often, if they find employment at all, have to settle for part time positions at minimum wage. They learn to prioritize and budget to meet their needs. Notice that I have not mentioned monthly Grace House financial obligations or a small item like food.

Lights Still On Continued Page 4

From the Director's Desk

Richard Sempel, Executive Director

Wanting-vs.-Doing

We all seem to struggle with knowing what we should do, wanting to do it and not doing it. Then there is the other side of that coin where we know what we shouldn't do, desire not to do it and do it anyway. This struggle is not new. The Apostle Paul, a religious man who lived by the letter of the law, tells us that the things he wanted to do he didn't and the things he didn't want to do he did. He went on to say that he didn't see that there was any way he could change in his own strength. He refers to himself as a “wretched man”. You can read about his struggle in the 5th Chapter of Romans verses 14-25.

Now I am alright with this struggle as long as its Paul or someone else dealing with it. But the reality is that this struggle is not reserved for an unfortunate few, it is common to us all. So how can we deal with it?

It is impossible to stereotype addicts and alcoholics.

If you were to close your eyes and visualize “your” idea of what someone with a history of drug and/or alcohol addiction looks like, what would you see? Would it be a disheveled raggedy old man sleeping next to a dumpster in a dark alleyway? Or would it be a young man with spiked hair (maybe multi-colored), covered with tattoos who had recently got-

ten released from prison. How about a clean cut business professional in a Brooks Brothers suit driving a new BMW? Or would you see someone that you personally know who needs help in their struggle?

It is impossible to stereotype addicts and alcoholics. Watch the evening news and see the cross section of humanity that is accused of drug or alcohol related crimes or indiscretions. You will see everyone from the unemployed school drop out, to the politician and even the TV evangelist. They, though separated in so many ways, have a common ground. Addiction!

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WHERE YOU CAN HELP:

- Pray for the men and ministry of Grace House.
- Volunteer to become a positive influence in the lives of Grace House residents.
- Remember Grace House in your local mission's giving.
- Refer someone struggling with addictions to Grace House.

They all not only have a common bond in their addiction, but also in their need to acknowledge that negative behavior. Before we can change we first need to recognize a couple of things. First, that there is something that needs to be changed and secondly, that we are willing to do "whatever it takes" to bring about that change. Paul referred to this process of change as "dying to our old nature." But putting to death something that we have nurtured for so long a time is not an easy process. That is, however what we must do for that is the process of change.

For those coming to Grace House the next step is that of changing their living environment to one that is safe, clean and supportive to their efforts. Along with that comes changing the people they hang out with. Some ties are permanently cut, others just temporarily. As selfish as it may sound this is a time to spend looking in the mirror and focusing on getting themselves in order. How can someone care for others if they don't care about themselves? What kind of an example or role model do they represent to their loved ones?

"We all have issues with addictions"

We all have issues with addictions. Just try starting your day without that morning cup of coffee or cigarette, or try missing your favorite TV show. You will notice a feeling of emptiness and need. This is a sure sign of "dependency." A stronger word for this feeling is addiction. It is no different than what men seeking change at Grace House experience. The difference is that they have recognized the need, realized that they cannot conquer their dependency by themselves and have taken the next step towards overcoming it.

It is indeed a struggle to change. The old nature does not want to release its control on us. But by providing a place and an environment conducive to positive change Grace House is providing the tools to accomplish the task. We could not do it without your gifts and prayers, and of course the individuals willingness to realize his need for change and want that change strongly enough to be willing to "fight the good fight."

"Our choices, both good and bad have an impact on others"

The battles are real. As it is in war there are both casualties and survivors in every battle. Then there are the many levels of those who are "wounded" in the fray. We deal with all three conditions at Grace House. We have those who come to us as complete wrecks as well as those who are slightly bruised from the ordeals of their lives. But everyone has the same need, to be loved into a state of completeness. To replace whatever it was that they were attempting to fill the void in their life with an understanding of a greater calling on their lives. To help them to grasp that life is more than feelings, it is an opportunity to make right choices that influence the lives of others.

INVEST IN A LIFE

Do you know of an individual, group or organizations willing to financially sponsor men desiring to enter the Grace House program?

Prior to entry men are required to pay \$200 to cover their two weeks at GH. Many desire the change and cannot afford the initial payment.

Help us to keep the lights on and to allow an applicant to begin his journey to recovery.

I am reminded of a man named Jonah who was given an assignment to go to a certain place and deliver a message that would prevent a whole city from being destroyed. Problem was that he didn't particularly like the people living in that city, so he went down and booked passage on a ship going the opposite direction. You probably have heard this story, but did you ever notice how his disobedience brought turmoil and impending doom on the rest of the people on that ship. They had no part in his rebellion or his choices, yet they, because of Jonah, faced certain destruction as long as Jonah was in their midst. This was not Jonah's plan. He meant no harm to his fellow travelers, yet his actions impacted many.

Once we realize that our choices, both good and bad have an impact on others we have to grasp the reality that there is more to my life than just me. Then we have to be willing to do whatever it takes to get on track.

Do you know someone who is casting a shadow of doom on those around them and may not even be aware of it? Let him know, not by just telling them, but by showing that there is more to life than what they have been experiencing. Lead them to a place of freedom and positive change. Maybe you have tried, exhausted every resource and don't know where to turn. Please remember that Grace House is here to help both you and them on that long journey. Don't give up, let us help to point them in the right direction, to give them the tools to change not only their lives but the lives of all those around them.

“Giving Back” is an important part of the recovery process. It is with this important step in mind that the Grace House Board of Directors, staff and residents have opened the doors of our beautiful home to those in the recovery community.

If you, or someone you know is seeking positive change in their life feel free to attend.

“Saving Grace” 12-Step Meeting

Big Book Discussion ~ Open Meeting ~ Non-Smoking

Hosted By: **Grace House for Recovery**

Every Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE

www.gracehouse-marion.org

Close-up

Program Resident Robert

This area of the newsletter is reserved for testimonies of individuals who desire to share their Grace House experiences.

Everyone comes with preconceived ideas of what to expect at Grace House. They all leave having been both blessed and being a blessing to others.

The following is taken from a recent interview conducted with Grace House Resident Robert Conde:

How did you first hear about Grace House?

I was told about Grace House by Gary Dalton at the Probation Department.

When did you become a resident of Grace House?

June 8, 2009

How many times have you enrolled at Grace House?

This was my first time.

What had you heard about Grace House prior to your first visit?

That it was a good program and a real nice place to live.

Were you aware of Grace House being “faith-based” and how did that affect your decision to seek residency?

I didn’t know it was faith based until I spoke with the Director, Richard.

What did you expect to find when visiting Grace House for the first time?

Some guys just sitting around working on their recovery.

How would you describe your state of mental, physical and spiritual condition when you first arrived at Grace House?

I was in the mode to where I really didn’t care what happened to me. Physically, I felt good and I didn’t really think about how I was doing spiritually.

What were you searching for in your life that brought you to Grace House?

To get focused and sober and to have a positive attitude.



What most surprised you about Grace House?

How everyone makes you feel welcomed.

Other than abstaining from drugs and alcohol use what was the hardest requirement for you upon entering Grace House?

Trying to adjust to the rules and scheduled meetings.

Please share what you found Grace House to be and how your time there has impacted your life.

Grace House to me is a great place for someone in need of help. It has helped me to have a positive attitude and to get my life on track.

Lights Still on Continued:

This is where YOU come in. It is the faithful gifts that “keep the lights on”. It is your faithful giving that has contributed to the success of better than 50% of the men passing through Grace House. It is through your prayers and giving that we are able to do what we are called to do. Together we are able to bridge the gap from despair to success, to see lives transformed and men becoming positive contributors to both their families and our community.

Rest assured that every cent that is given to Grace House is appreciated and considered an investment in lives. Thanks to each and every one of you for your prayers and obedient giving. It is because of you we can say, “The lights are still on”.

Resident Update

Thrills & Spills

Since our last newsletter in May we have seen our resident population go from four to nine and at the time of this writing we are at 8 residents, which leaves us with two rooms available for new intakes.

As with everyday life our world is full of “peaks” and “valleys”. We have a three phase program that requires men to remain in each phase for a minimum of thirty days. At the end of that time staff members each submit a form evaluating that individuals progress in areas such as personal recovery, program participation, cooperation, courtesy, concern for others recovery, attitude, sincerity and commitment. This evaluation is more subjective than objective.

These observations are then compared and any areas of lacking are discussed with the resident. A decision is than made by staff as to the next steps to be taken. These steps include, advancement to the next phase or possibly a delay in that advancement pending a residents demonstration of both understanding and correcting indicated deficiencies.

Recently we have had three men accomplish phase advancement and one man complete all three phases and graduate. With each of these accomplishments come a certificate and recognition of their peers. These might seem like small accomplishments to most people but to a man who may have never completed anything before in his life they are monumental.

Of course we also deal with the ongoing

Immediate Needs
Liquid Laundry Detergent , Bath & kitchen towels, wash cloths.
HELP: Our Food Pantry is extremely low on canned goods!
Would you or your group like to organize a canned food drive?

drama that comes with any group. There are personal struggles, family struggles and spiritual battles, all of which make for some very eventful days.

Then there is the occasional relapse when a man is feeling overwhelmed to the point where he returns to old patterns of coping and surrenders to his old destructive habits.

The joy of seeing men get their lives and families on track outweigh the sadness we feel when someone stumbles in their recovery.

We realize that everyone that comes through our door is in need of a life changing experience and our role is to guide them along the way.

Some take what they learn and put it into use immediately, some just file the information away and use it at a later date, and sadly there will always be those who think they can make it work on their own and end up going deeper into their self-destructive lifestyles.

Welcome to the world of recovery.

Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime...

Current Resident Status:

Capacity.....10
Current Residents 8
Number in Phase 1.... 3
Number in Phase 2..... 2
Number in Phase 3..... 1
Graduates 2
Residents Employed Upon Entry... 0
Residents Currently Employed..... 4
Men Served Since Last Newsletter.. 11
Known Relapse Since Last Newsletter .. 2
Graduates Since Last Newsletter.... 1
Former Residents Continuing to be Actively Involved ... 2

Please remember Grace House in your thoughts and prayers. Victories do not come without a battle. It is through your faithful gifts and prayers that lives are truly being “transformed by the renewing of their minds.” If you would like to have the ministry efforts of Grace House presented to your group or organization please contact us.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL SUPPORT

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