



Transitions

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

Sharing the Gift

Have you ever noticed how when you read ministry newsletters like this one they tend to focus on the victories and the successes and just quickly mention the setbacks and poor choices that we all know occur? Let me share a couple of those adventures with you:

Two young men from two different counties, both in their twenties, were recently referred to Grace House by their probation officers. Similar in their histories - drugs, alcohol, dysfunctional relationships, in and out of jail and prison, poor employment history (actually one of them had never been employed) - before they reluctantly came to Grace House in an effort to get their lives on track. They submitted to the initial two-week restriction and all the rules. They attended all the Grace House meetings as well as complying with court and probation requirements. They both sought and obtained employment. On the surface they appeared to be doing well.

They begin to fit in and realize that there is more to life that what they had been living. They settled in with their new "family" and talked of how they felt loved and were amazed as the fog in their lives begins to clear. They looked in the mirror each morning and wondered who the stranger was looking back at them. Friends, family,

Sharing the Gift Continued Page 4

From the Director's Desk

Richard Sempel, Executive Director

Doorman at the "Hall of Change"

Rain, wind, sleet, snow, stifling heat and humidity do not deter the trusty "doorman." He opens the door with a welcoming greeting, an invitation to enter in or to step out into what awaits you.

All day long people come and go, the doorman remains at his post doing what he has been called to do. For the doorman his efforts are received with mixed reactions. Some are obviously grateful for his assistance; most are caught up in their own thoughts and lives as they rush past the gentle servant who with a friendly smile holds the

portal open to ease their passing.

When the weather outside is warm and comfortable those coming in are a bit hesitant at leaving it all behind. The same weather makes the journey to the outside one of

...always willing to share his insights but is rarely asked.

stirring anticipation. But we all know that it is but for a season. The weather turns first wet and then chilly. Then the wet turns to ice and the chill to a bitter, clothes-piercing cold. People rush to get inside and are hesitant to exit. Many wisely return from a brief jaunt outside expressing their missed assessment of the conditions

that awaited them and their need for better preparation before facing the day.

The doorman, dressed for the day ahead remains calm as they pass. A living testimony of what awaits them. Yet few notice or consider the indicators of what lies ahead. The doorman is always willing to share his insights but is rarely asked. And then there are those who see the signs, recognize what lies ahead and properly prepare before leaving.

Occasionally there is a call to the front desk from someone getting ready to leave the comfort of their climate controlled environment asking to

Director's Desk Continued
Next Page

Inside this issue:

Sharing the Gift	1-4
From the Director's Desk	1-2
Grace House AA Meeting	3
Resident Close-Up	3
Resident Update	4

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.

speak with the doorman. "What's the weather like outside today, they ask?"

The doorman who is not consulted often is pleased to help them prepare for their journey to the outside. "It's a bit chilly, and that ol' wind is a blow'n. I would suggest that you bundle up before going out. How long before you plan to leave? I'll make sure that a warm cab is waiting for you."

The time comes, they step from the elevator buttoning the top button on their coat as they walk towards the exit where the doorman awaits with a smile, opens the door, and walks with them to the cozy taxi waiting at the curb. He is pleased to make their journey a bit more bearable, and they are pleased that someone was there to help.

Any parent, teacher, pastor or instructor can identify with the doorman. The technique is not new: instruct, be a living example and make yourself available in case there are questions that come up along the way. Answer the questions with truth not compromise, always aligning

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.

How about sponsoring a bed for a week, month or even a year.

(Call for details)

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

your answer with the instruction you have already given. This was the

" Any parent, teacher, pastor or instructor can identify with the doorman. "

technique used by many throughout history and is still used today. It may not always be used to its fullest, but is always available to the seeker.

I will confess that there are times when I am not a very good doorman. Sometimes I warn of what is lurking around the corner and my concern is met with an obligatory nod and then ignored. The next time I see the person they usually won't look me in the eye and do all they can to avoid what they fear will be that dreaded "I told you so." But it never comes. The well-fitting phrase is only an expectation of what they themselves already know. They returned to where they once felt safe and loved to a place where they, with all their baggage, were once accepted. They approach the door expecting to find it locked and the once friendly doorman scowling at them through the glass of the barred door.

Instead they are greeted by a doorman who, as he sees them approaching, is quick to open the door and welcome them in. The anticipated demeaning phrases are replaced with a "Welcome home. Good to see you." Their arrival is noticed by others, their fellow residents, their peers, the very people they most feared facing again who approach

"He is happy that his fears were unfounded."

them quickly expressing their joy of seeing them make it "home" and offering their help in recovering from their poor choices, knowing that it could well be them walking through that door.

Van-tastic

Opportunity Knocking...

One of the important services that is provided at Grace House is transportation for the residents to meetings, court, shopping, job search and work. Our van is approaching 235,000 miles and ready for retirement. Do you have a 7 passenger van that you are ready to pass on to a needy cause?

Remember Grace House is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization and your donations may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor.

But being a doorman isn't always easy. There is the sadness when poor choices are made despite the warnings. The ability to recognize signs of threats on the horizon can be both a blessing and a curse. The value of seeing the dangers that lie ahead is totally based on what someone does with the information. The watchman can cry out his warning, but if it falls on deaf ears it is no more than just mere background noise. And then there are the unnatural feelings that the doorman feels when he may misinterpret the signs and the disaster never comes. He is happy that his fears were unfounded.

The doorman recalls what he felt many years ago when he first asked to become a doorman. His mentor told him two things that keep him going: 1) Treat others as you would like to be treated; 2) Remember, you are here to love the heck (my paraphrase) out of them.

There are no special educational requirements for the position. You see we are all called to be doormen.....

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

Everyone comes with pre-conceived 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 Barry Johnson:

How did you first hear about Grace House?

“From my Probation Officer.”

When did you become a resident of Grace House?

“June 25, 2009.”

How many times have you enrolled at Grace House?

“Just once.”

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

“That is was something like a Half-Way House. “

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

“No! But I was happy that it was.”

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

“I did not know what to expect when I first got there, I was trying to be open minded.”

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

“Good.”

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

“Freedom.”

What most surprised you about Grace House?

“The openness and how everyone was cool and welcomed me in.”

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

“Opening up to people that I don’t know.”

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



“It is a place that I would tell anyone having a problem or want to get their life together to go to. They have shown me how to live. I can wake up in the morning and feel good about me. That by itself says a lot.

I would like to thank Richard and the rest of the house for taking me in when it was jail or Grace House.

Through all of this I have found “myself” and my dignity. Now I feel that I have the tools to make it...and I will.”

“Saving Grace” 12-Step Meeting
 Big Book Discussion ~ Open Meeting ~ Non-Smoking
 Hosted By: **Grace House for Recovery**
Every Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

“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.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.gracehouse-marion.org

Sharing the Gift Continued:

probation officers, judges, GH staff and fellow residents expressed their pleasure in the positive changes that were seen in them. Then it happened! Despite the positives there was still some baggage - "leftovers" from their old lives: bills, child support, pending court dates, and relationships that do not seem to fit anymore. Adding to that was the fear of this new life they were living and the wondering of "how long will it last."

They stood at the crossroads of decisions. They realized that "living right" was not easy. That accountability and responsibility is tough.

Which road should they take? The new one that felt so good but now was scattered with pot holes, or the old road from their past. They knew that in reality they were never safe or comfortable there, but a masking of the problem would certainly give them a moment of escape.

Sadly, both of these men chose to turn back into the fog they were just coming out of.

Many times we are asked, "How do you handle the failures, the heartbreaks and the disappointment of those who don't make it?"

Immediate Needs
Liquid Laundry Detergent , Bath & kitchen towels, wash cloths.
Coffee, Lawnmower.
HELP, HELP, HELP:
Our Food Pantry is extremely low on canned goods!

Here's the secret. In the midst of the disappointment and pain of loss is a comfort in knowing that they have tasted a better way. No matter how much alcohol or drugs they consume they cannot erase the truth they have experienced.

We believe that everyone that hears of, moves in to, or visits Grace House has not done so by accident. We believe we have a responsibility to share the gift in both word and deed that we have been entrusted with. All we can do is our part and pray that through our obedience others will be brought out of the fog in their lives, whatever that may be.

Does it hurt? You bet! But they have not lost the battle. They have only become one of the many walking wounded. We pray that they, like the prodigal son, will one day come walking back through our door.

Resident Update

Changes

It has been a busy three months since the last newsletter. As the seasons cool down the men at Grace House seem to hunker down for all the changes that come along with Fall and Winter.

One of our graduates who has had steady employment for awhile felt ready and able to get his own apartment and begin to use the tools he had gained while being a part of the Grace House Community.

He goes with our prayers and our desire to see him succeed because a little piece of each of us, staff and residents

Current Resident Status:

Capacity.....	10
Current Residents	7
Number in Phase 1....	1
Number in Phase 2.....	3
Number in Phase 3.....	1
Graduates	2
Residents Employed Upon Entry...	0
Residents Currently Employed.....	5
Men Served Since Last Newsletter..	10
Known Relapse Since Last Newsletter ..	2
Graduates Since Last Newsletter....	1
Former Residents Continuing to be Actively Involved ...	3

alike, goes with him. It is nice to see a positive return on our investment. We will miss him as a resident, friend, and fellow sojourner on this adventure we call change.

We have seen men find jobs, get laid off and get right back into searching for another.

We have seen men get frustrated with the process of change and either grow stronger, or return to old coping mechanisms of alcohol and drugs.

" Changing is a full time job! "

But above all we see men at all levels growing in self worth and understanding that their "walk" is not just about them. That their choices, whether good or bad, touch the lives of many. These are men learning to change their priorities and focus on what they need to do to experience that positive change they are seeking. Their realizing that changing is a full-time job!

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.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL SUPPORT

