

# AFFAIR RECOVERY TIMES

Volume 2, Issue 1  
January, 2005

## THE FOUNDER'S CORNER

### HOPELESS?

The tangled wreckage left by betrayal frequently leaves those involved feeling hopeless and confused. The scripture reading, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free," seems at the very least to be misleading. For many, the discovery of what is true leads to many things, but freedom is not how you would typically describe the ensuing feelings. In fact, for many, living in the lie before the revelation of the betrayal seemed much more comfortable and liberating than having to live with the truth of what has happened. This holds true not only for the betrayed, but also for the betrayer. As couples begin to face the reality of their situation, and to face what is true, they often come to the conclusion that the situation is hopeless. However, *not everything that is true is the truth.*

When Terry first came to my office he believed he was finally facing the truth. He had been in a four-month affair with a woman with whom he said he had "fallen deeply in love." Terry's 21-year marriage had been a miserable failure, and he

claimed that they should have never gotten married. Right up front he informed me that he didn't want to give up his affair partner, that his marriage was hopeless, and that he was sure he didn't want me talking him out of what he was doing. I surprised him when I told him that his observations were true. I said to him, "It's true that the other woman makes you feel better about yourself than your wife, and it's true that she's younger and more attractive than your wife, and it's true that the sex is better with your affair partner than it is with your wife, and it's true that your marriage is hopeless." As I pointed out what was true I could see his countenance lift, but then I pointed out that not everything that seems true is the truth.

We tend to view circumstances from a godless perspective, forgetting that that the "truth" is a person. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life." If what I believe to be true ends up at hopelessness then it is not really the truth. Because truth is found in the Person through whom all things are possible. Things are never hopeless. The truth is, "God never fails."



Founder Rick Reynolds

When we see no way, the Lord says, "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." I told Terry that we weren't going to focus on what seemed true, but rather we were going to focus on the truth and get Jesus into the center of the situation. From that perspective, we began to find hope.

I want to encourage you during this new year to keep focused on the truth and not to become discouraged by what seems to be true. As you've already learned in this life, all is not what it appears to be.

Happy New Year!

Rick

### Inside this issue:

The Founder's Corner	1
Harboring Hope	2
The Parent's Place	3
From the Editor's Desk	4
The Bulletin Board	4

### Special points of interest:

- New Hope for a New Year!
- Bobbye's Story of Betrayal and Hope
- A New Year's Resolution Guaranteed to Change Your Life
- Happy 2005!

## HARBORING HOPE

*Each month, we feature the true story of a couple and their journey to recovery. In November and December, we introduced the narrative of Jeff and Bobbye. This month Bobbye begins telling of her experience.*

### **Bobbye's Story**

*Compiled by Leslie Hardie*

I once thought I would never be able to travel IH35 South again without reliving the pain of Jeff's confession. Though for many months Jeff had been becoming more transparent about his sexual addiction, on that December night, traveling home from a training meeting with a mission team that included my best friends, Jeff finally told me about the massages and the prostitute. My first thought was, "This would be a good time for the Lord to return." However, it was only four days later, in the chapel at the Christian school where I taught, that the realization of all that we had lost, and would continue to lose, really dawned on me. When I started crying that day I thought I would never stop.

But we travel that road several times a year and now, 7 years later, the memory has changed. Usually I don't even remember at all. But when I do, I can look at the heavens and smile. As a ladies' Bible class teacher, I have more than once been able to say, "I remember a terrible day when my circumstances led me to wish for Christ's return not out of joy at seeing Him, but because I feared the future. I am so glad today that I had the chance to see how it all worked out." Though Jeff continues to struggle with the sin that almost destroyed us, I have been amazed, blessed, and taught by the healing God has provided in

these intervening years.

When Jeff and I got married at 19 and 20, we were clueless about what it meant to love, honor, and cherish one another. We just wanted to keep having sex without the guilt. When we were 6 months into our marriage Jeff told me about his struggle with pornography; I had two thoughts: "I hope no one ever finds out!" and "I am so ugly!" Both were words of the Deceiver. And with those thoughts, I let the devil have control of the situation in my heart for the next 3 years. I told no one about Jeff's problem or my fears, and the despair about my own appearance led to cycles of bingeing



that I cringe to think about today. Ironically, though we got married so we could have sex, at our one-year anniversary, our marriage bed was a war zone (I wanted to have sex; he didn't ever want to have sex) that included physical fighting. And throughout this time we were increasingly in roles of spiritual leadership in our church, and increasingly growing in the spiritual disciplines. How ironic!

So, I have lots of questions about what was going on in the spiritual realm at that time. Jeff read books on protecting our marriage and listened to tapes about purity. He tried at some level to

be confessional with me during those years. I remember a time when I checked in with Jeff as he had asked me to do; he told me he had some magazines hidden in the house, but wouldn't show me where, or get rid of them, until I left the house. He couldn't let go of his hiding places—and he couldn't seem to stop.

We each come from families where hiding sin is the norm—our dads had both hidden their own use of pornography. Neither one of us had any idea that there was anywhere to go for help. But we prayed a lot—together and separately-- during those years. I honestly believe that God blessed the desires of our hearts by sending us on a summer mission trip that led us to a missions organization where we were required to have some incredible Christian counseling before we went to the mission field full time. Grace!!!

When we moved to a new city for Jeff's seminary training, we began counseling for marital problems caused by my appearance and/or food addiction. During that time Jeff told me almost daily that he was not and never had been attracted to me. Our fighting grew worse, and though I knew Jeff struggled daily with wanting to use pornography, I had no idea how it had taken hold of him. I honestly believed that his use of pornography was some separate thing- unrelated to our sex life, unrelated to anything- and that all of our problems were my fault. Our task during that time was to convince our counselor that we were healthy enough to be missionaries. Our counseling time ended and we were given a tentative okay to go.

If I ever doubt that God is powerfully at work among His people, I go back to this day: My first

## THE PARENT'S PLACE

### Those #@&% Resolutions

By Dr. John Mark Haney

Hope springs eternal, I guess, and perhaps that is why I always seem to be one of those people who on December 31 dutifully prepares a list of positive resolutions I am going to adopt for the New Year. Generally, my list includes such things as exercising every day, eating less junk food, and being the model husband and parent. Then, of course, by January 3rd or so, I can't seem to bring myself to so much as take a lap around the house, have unjustly grumbled at my wife, and have done so with a Twinkie in my hand.

Perhaps the lesson for me is that I don't have the kind of power and control that I like to think I do. I am not alone. This country is built upon the ethos of self reliance to the point that many people believe that the maxim "God helps those who help themselves" is from Scripture. It is not (go ahead

and try to find it in the Bible if you don't believe me). Indeed, such thinking is antithetical to Scripture. In reality, God helps those who realize that alone they are *incapable* of helping themselves.

In our counseling, we encour-



ter scores of sexual addicts who for years have deluded themselves with the idea that they can turn from their addiction through the power of their will, or the newest self-help book on the shelves. Invariably, they hit the brick wall

and fall right back into old, sinful patterns of behavior. Only when we recognize our need for a Savior and turn ourselves to a higher power can we truly change. That is not to say that will power and self-discipline do not have a rightful place in our lives— they do. We just cannot live by them alone.

As parents, we want to raise healthy and independent children. I for one would like my kids to be able to change a flat tire, to find the discipline to study for a test, and to make sound decisions about all aspects of their lives. However, teaching them to trust too much in their own abilities can only handicap them in the end. Instead, I suggest teaching them to live a disciplined and principled life based on surrendering to God, not to self. Why not make a real New Year's resolution this time, and teach yourself and your kids to tap into the only power that can really transform our lives. May you have a blessed New Year!

## HARBORING HOPE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

year teaching at a Christian school had just ended and we had made plans to go on the survey trip that would seal our commitment to foreign missions. And Jeff had just emotionally beaten me almost to death—the rejection that had abated during our weekly counseling was back and Jeff had become more brutal in his insistence that our problems were my fault. I was lying on the floor, crying and begging God to rescue us when the phone rang. It was our counselor telling me that—though he had finished our release to work in missions—he needed to have one last session with us. It sounded to me like the voice of God promising

that He would not abandon us. When Jeff got home that day I told

*I remember a terrible day  
when my circumstances led  
me to wish for Christ's return  
not out of joy at seeing Him*

him about our appointment and begged him to tell our counselor about his struggle with pornography—this was our last chance! And to my astonishment he agreed.

I was even more astonished at

the questions our counselor asked when Jeff confessed. He wasn't surprised, and wasn't taken aback. I was sure that he would turn to me and say, "Look what you have done to this man." Instead, he said, "You know, Bobbye, this has nothing to do with you." Then he used question after question to unfold the details of Jeff's addiction to pornography. He gave us a whole new vocabulary. I hated these vocabulary lessons! But it was the beginning of knowing who we really were, the beginning of transparency.

*(To be Concluded in February)*

## AFFAIR RECOVERY CENTER

4131 Spicewood Springs Rd.  
Building Q-1  
Austin, Texas 78759

Phone: 512-346-9299  
Fax: 512-345-3139  
E-mail: [believenow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:believenow@sbcglobal.net)

*A Community of Hope and Healing*

We're On the Web!  
[www.affairrecovery.com](http://www.affairrecovery.com)



*Affair Recovery Center is a community of counseling professionals and couples. Our professional counselors are dedicated to the restoration of marriages crippled by infidelity. Our organization includes numerous couples who have experienced the abundant blessings of reconciliation and renewal.*

*Our mission is to offer hope, support, and recovery for couples and individuals who have suffered the pain resulting from infidelity, betrayal, or sexual addiction.*

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I would like to extend my warmest wishes for a Happy New Year for you and your family. We are excited about our growing community of readers and members, and look forward to serving you throughout 2005.

One of the things that makes

this project so exciting is to hear the actual stories from couples and individuals who have, with God's help, worked through the pain and slavery of addiction and compulsive sexual behavior, and have found an unexpected freedom and



Dr. John Mark Haney

new life in their personal lives and marriages.

If you have a story you would like to share, we would love to hear from you, and as always, we welcome any feedback you have for us.

## THE BULLETIN BOARD



The Affair Recovery Center wants to announce our next EMS (Emergency Marital Services) weekend. It is an intensive couple's seminar that has helped countless marriages. It is scheduled for Feb. 5-6. Call us or log on for more information, to register, or to request a brochure. Weekend lodging information is available.

THE PROFESSIONALS AT THE AFFAIR RECOVERY CENTER OFFER NUMEROUS SEMINARS FOR GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS. CALL US OR VISIT US ONLINE FOR A LIST OF TOPICS. WE CAN ALSO TAILOR A SEMINAR OR RETREAT TO YOUR NEEDS.