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2007 April-Newsletter

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Life Renewal Institute Newsletter

Vol. 5

251 Stenton Ave., Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

April 2007

"Resentment is letting someone you despise live rent-free in your head"

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Editor's Corner:

At first when a tragedy like the VA Tech shootings happens, we are shocked and surprised and wonder how anyone could do such a thing. And then the pieces of the story began to come together. Anger, rage, and hostility are extremely powerful emotions that can be very destructive if not dealt with. Look at the two plays that Cho Seung-Hui wrote. They portray deep hurt, extreme anger, and a fantasy of revenge.

The results of a personality test I took in high school showed me to be a hostile person. I couldn't understand it, since I tried my best to please everyone and be anything anyone else wanted me to be. I would go out of my way to avoid conflict. My high school counselor told me I needed to work on my hostility, but unfortunately didn't give me any tools to do so. Twenty-three years later, I finally got the tools when I joined a group facilitated by someone else working on her recovery. I was able to discover and understand my hostilities came from my insecurities and feelings of rejection and what to do about it. I will be eternally grateful to Linda for choosing to facilitate a renewal group and being willing to be open and vulnerable with group participants. Because of the difference it has made for me, I have chosen to continue my recovery by facilitating groups myself. It has been exciting to see the dramatic changes in group members as well as the continued progress in my own personal recovery.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will read about new resources and tools for facilitating groups using *The Journey* program from LRI. You too can continue your

recovery while at the same time helping others find the path to healing, by facilitating groups. It is an exciting and fulfilling experience. I would love to hear back from you with questions, comments, or testimonies of your experience. Email me at: audrey@yourLRI.com

A Note From Ron and Nancy



*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

These are the words inscribed on a plaque at the base of the Statue of Liberty. They depict the outstretched arms of America, welcoming to our shores those who are living under difficult circumstances in other countries.

Now, let's transpose those words just a bit.

Tired – those who labor in vain to enjoy their relationships and life in general.

Poor – those who are without the resources or know-how to change their own thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

Huddled Masses yearning to breathe free – those who, by the experiences of life, are in a self-imposed prison in their minds.

Wretched refuse – those whose sense of self, worth and value is at garbage, throw away level.

Homeless – Those with no place to go, no comforting presence for solace.

Tempest-tossed - Those who are constantly re-infected by the earlier wounds they received and attacked or battered while living under an oppressive black cloud of continued abuse and discouragement.

Some of us, having been where they are, can understand their pain. Perhaps we have come through and are on the other side of the battle zone, attacked occasionally but not discouraged. We have been blessed with the tools to overcome the imprisonment of our minds and to stand tall against the attacks coming our way.

Because we have been so blessed, we have a responsibility to reach out to those who do not have the armor needed to withstand the onslaught of evil against them. We have a “cause” to champion and victories to celebrate, and we can do it best by offering to the tired, poor, homeless, tempest-tossed and imprisoned a way out from under the imprisoning cloud.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will read about facilitating a small group for recovery – one of the very best ways we know of to celebrate your victories. You don’t have to be a professor, a psychologist or counselor, a pastor or some other professional to do this work of love. What you do need to be is a recovering prisoner who feels that you are being called to serve those who are where you once were.

Facilitators are important because they offer hope by their presence and through their personal story. They have a pull and a tug at their heartstrings that leads them to want others to be free as well. That pull and tug makes them passionate about the way to freedom and the desire to offer it through small, gender-specific groups.

The country’s most recent tragedy at Virginia Tech certainly demonstrates a tremendous need in many people – a need to tell their story – a need to be heard. There a desperate, angry, rejected young man planned and executed the country’s most horrific school massacre and as a result 26,000 students, their families and friends, and sympathetic thousands suffer untold trauma and grief. Many wonder when such an occurrence might reach their own doors, and pray for those most closely connected to the tragedy. And what about the parents and family of the shooter? Can you comprehend the devastation they must be feeling as their son’s picture, his history, his violent acts and notes left behind are pasted on every TV channel? Even the South Korean government is concerned about the fallout that might land upon South Koreans in America.

Facilitators are those who through their constant devotion and steadfast belief in the power of the human heart and mind to recover from devastating events, pass

on their enthusiasm and comfort to those in their class. Facilitators are students who continue to learn from and through their class members. They are concerned, consistent and caring.

Facilitating a class for recovery – *The Journey*, – provides hope and healing for both the members and the facilitator. The work is not hard – it just requires a commitment to the well being of those who become your fellow travelers on The Journey.

We invite you to check out the Facilitator information by [clicking here](#). And when you decide that you are ready to facilitate a class, contact [Life Renewal Institute](#) for materials and support to get you and your group on *The Journey*, of a lifetime! *Ron and Nancy*

Introducing...

We are thrilled to announce the debut of our new facilitator pages. If you are currently a facilitator or have never facilitated before, you will find a variety of useful tools, resources, tips, FAQ’s, etc. on these pages. [Click here](#) to become a registered facilitator of LRI. Your screen name, city, and state will be listed on the web for those seeking a facilitator in their area. Your personal information will not be given out to anyone.

Once registered, you will be able to access the following features:

Facilitator FAQs - Answers questions like: Why should I be a facilitator? What jobs/ task will I do as a facilitator? What do I do if someone exhibits bizarre behavior? How can I talk with other facilitators? If you don’t find an answer to a question you have, email me at audrey@yourLRI.com

Facilitator Test - In order to get a facilitator number; you will need to take a brief 22 question test. This will validate for you that you understand the concepts and process of facilitating a group. You will have access to aides, supplements, and opportunities to connect with other facilitators, facilitator conference calls, class member registration, and other features.

Upon completion of the test, you will be asked for a phone number and address. Your first and last name, phone number, and address will be used internally only. New features still being developed include rebates to you for products ordered under your facilitator number.

Facilitator Forum - Here you will be able to connect with other facilitators, share tips, post questions, answer someone else's questions, etc. In short, support one another in the facilitation process. A feature still under development will make it possible for you to participate in conference calls with an experienced facilitator periodically.

Your Groups – You will be able to post new groups getting ready to start. Once your group has started, you will be able to register your group participant's email address here with their permission. They will get an email of welcome when beginning a group and a congratulatory email upon completion. They will also be added to our contact list to get the monthly newsletter, notices of upcoming seminars, and any other communications we send out.

Facilitator Resources- Resources such as downloadable certificates for group participants upon completion of each segment of *The Journey* can be found here. Other resources include:

- **In Touch With You** – questions to help with check in time, plus a “feelings” page
- **Closing Prayer** – for those coming from a Christian perspective
- **Should We Recover** – help in answering pastors, counselors and others on why the recovery process is necessary.
- **Videos** for download:
 - **Facilitator Training introduction** - Discusses the fundamentals of the group process.
 - **Facilitator Training** - The “nitty-gritty” of the group process.
 - **Demonstration of a Small Group** – Watch a real group in action.
 - **What I've learned as a Facilitator** – a personal experience, includes useful techniques.

Additional resources are currently being developed and will be available soon.

Register today as a facilitator, browse the pages, take the test to get a number, and give us feedback. Send any comments, questions, or suggestions to audrey@yourLRI.com I look forward to hearing from you.

Tired of Violence?

By: Nancy Rockey

Are you concerned or even frightened by the escalating violence in the world? Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Israel, North Korea and the United States, are all embattled by greed for power and control, which threatens the peace and safety of us all. Increasing numbers of gangs clash because they want to be in charge of some neighborhood, territory or drug cartel. News commentators and television hosts argue for the world to see – and it all comes down to making the opponents wrong. Husbands and wives fight over everything from the direction the toilet paper hangs to the discipline of the children. Religious denominations argue about whose church is more Bible-centered and whose doctrine is correct, and children fight on the playgrounds because they've heard wrangling at home, played in it on their video games and watched it on TV. All you have to do is to tune in to the evening news on any channel to hear and see violence reported from the homes of your local cities, neighborhood school grounds, back alleys and from the current war in Iraq.

However, when senseless carnage takes place, such as happened in the Virginia Tech massacre, we are confronted with the enormity of the issues that we face and the unrest in the minds and hearts of so many individuals. In this article, we will take a look at some of the causes of violence, rage and criminal behavior in individuals.

For decades, psychologists, psychiatrists and many concerned others....

have sought to find the cause of criminal behavior. “Is it nature or nurture?” the professionals wonder. There are two sides of the fence in this question. As it turns out, there are three options: nature, nurture and a combination of the two. In this article we will site some important research findings on the causes of aggressive and/or criminal behavior.

Paying attention to this research has played a major role in our creation of *The Journey*, our newest recovery program. The intent is that those who process through this recovery can positively impact the character (thoughts, feelings and behaviors) of the generations before and after them.

We have seen this occur repeatedly as individuals determine to recover from the painful experiences of

their lives and as a result their observable behaviors are transformed. Personal transformation changes the atmosphere of the person, the home, the workplace, the church and the community, and as a result others seek after personal healing and change.

Caitlin M. Jones from the Rochester Institute of Technology writes in an article entitled: "*Genetic and Environmental Influences on Criminal Behavior*":

"Research has been conducted regarding this debate which has resulted in a conclusion that both genes and environment do play a role in the criminality of an individual." Reading further, "..., the research has stated that it is more often an interaction between genes and the environment that predicts criminal behavior. Having a genetic predisposition for criminal behavior does not determine the actions of an individual, but if they are exposed to the right environment, their chances are greater for engaging in criminal or antisocial behavior."

Ms. Jones refers to an article by Jay Joseph (2001) who studied all of the minor and major adoption studies, "*the majority of researchers have found and agreed upon the non-significance of genes in violent crimes. This reestablishes the findings from the studies mentioned already in that there may be a genetic component to antisocial behavior or that genes influence criminal behavior, but specifically for property offenses.*" In other words, the genetic component to antisocial behaviors influences criminal behavior to property, not violence toward others.

Another ingredient to be considered is the brain's neuro-chemicals. We know that serotonin plays an important role in depression, anxiety, brain development and bipolar disorder, and an imbalance in this could lead to increased aggressiveness. Low levels of serotonin are associated with impulsivity and emotional aggression. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure, is also associated with aggression. Studies by Morley & Hall in 2003 discovered that "genes in the dopaminergic pathway have been found to be involved with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" and that a "relationship was found between the genes in the dopaminergic pathway, impulsivity, ADHD, and violent offenders." According to Morley and Hall (2003) "two of the most cited personality traits that can be shown to have an association with antisocial or criminal behavior are impulsivity and aggression".

Daniel Amen, M.D. of the [Amen Clinic](#) reports that the **SPECT imaging of the brain reveals** important factors that can contribute to aggressiveness and

violent/criminal behavior. The images reveal which components of the brain are functioning normally and which are not. Of course the question continues – is it the experiences of life that cause the brain to change or the brain malfunctioning that causes the criminal/aggressive behaviors. We believe that the answer to both questions is yes.

According to a 2003 article by M.F. Schmitz entitled, *Influences of Race and Family Environment on Child Hyperactivity and Antisocial Behavior in the Journal of Marriage and the Family*, the family risk factors are identified as: "*poverty, education, parenting practices and family structure. Prior research on the relationship between family environment and child behavior characterizes a child's well being with a positive and caring parent-child relationship, a stimulating home environment and consistent disciplinary techniques.*" This is what a child needs for healthy development, and providing this for a child requires emotionally healthy parents who have processed through their personal pain and grief and who parent from wholeness rather from pain and emptiness.

"Families with poor communication and weak family bonds have been shown to have a correlation with children's development of aggressive/criminal behavior." (Garnefsi & Okma, 1996)

"Another indicator of future antisocial or criminal behavior is that of abuse or neglect in childhood. A statistic shows that children are at a fifty percent greater risk of engaging in criminal acts, if they were neglected or abused." (Holmes et al., 2001)

Caitlin M. Jones, in her already cited article, reaches the conclusion that "an individual's antisocial or criminal behavior can be the result of both their genetic background and the environment in which they were raised."

Dr. Ronald Rohner, director of the Center for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection in the School of Family Studies at the University of Connecticut has studied Parental Acceptance and Rejection for 46 years in over 200 cultures. His studies have shown the unique importance of the fathers in the home.

He states: "*Fathers are cited more than mothers in issues such as psychological maladjustment, substance abuse, depression and conduct problems. On the positive side, a father's love provides a buffer against the development of these difficulties and can contribute to a child's good physical health.*" Many youth in urban communities in the United States are exposed to aggression as part of their everyday life experience. In a

study completed by NYU Child Study Center investigators, **84%** of elementary school-age inner-city boys had heard guns being shot, **87%** had seen someone arrested, and **25%** had seen someone get killed.

In an article on Aggression by Robin F. Goodman, Ph.D and Anita Gurian, Ph.D, the following warning signs of aggressive behavior are listed:

"In the preschooler:

- Many tantrums in a single day, and often cannot be calmed
- Has aggressive outbursts for no apparent reason
- Is excessively active, impulsive and fearless
- Poor adherence to rules, low frustration tolerance at home and school
- Fighting with peers and hitting adults
- Does not seem attached to parents
- Engages in play with violent themes

In the school-aged child:

- Has difficulty paying attention and concentrating; is often disruptive in class
- Often gets into fights
- Is quick to anger, blame and seek revenge
- Is preoccupied with aggression in games and television
- Is cruel or violent with pets
- Is often rejected by peers and seeks out aggressive children

In teenagers:

- Resists authority
- Is not respectful of the feelings or rights of others
- Relies on power and aggression to solve problems
- Does not do well academically; cuts classes, gets suspended or drops out
- Becomes involved with gangs; possible involvement with stealing or acts of vandalism
- Uses alcohol and/or other addictive substances

In childhood onset aggression, these behaviors often result in rejection and the development of other antisocial behaviors such as lying, stealing and substance abuse. In adolescence these children seem to fit in with peers who develop late-onset antisocial behaviors. However, the late-onset teens usually engage in delinquent behaviors for a shorter period of time. They

usually move out of this phase and become socially appropriate or find themselves involved in the legal or social service system due to drug use or teen pregnancy. However, those who began showing violent, antisocial behaviors earlier in childhood are most likely to commit more serious crimes such as assault and robbery, thus ending up in prisons or other specialized treatment programs. Although males are far more likely than females to display childhood-onset aggression, girls do engage in as much theft, vandalism, truancy and substance abuse as boys. Girls who enter puberty early, or are involved with antisocial boys, may also engage in antisocial behavior.”

There are other factors, which influence youth to commit violent acts....

They include temperament (we prefer to refer to brain lead), cognitive ability or IQ, impulsivity, family life, and exposure to aggression, gangs, weapons and copycat behaviors. We believe that lack of spirituality is also a contributing factor.

No doubt, much more could be said here, but what should we as parents, grandparents, friends and good citizens be doing to aid society to become less aggressive and more peaceful? First we should look in the mirror. Who do we see staring back at us? Do we see any of the characteristics of the aggressive traits that we possess?

Then, if we do, we must be willing to process through our histories to discover the origin of our feelings

- We must do the work of acknowledging the wound
- Define its results in our lives
- Remove the negative emotional charge from the memories of pains we have endured
- Discover our inherent goodness and the positive traits we possess
- Then we must capitalize on them

We do have help in this process. **God is ALWAYS the power for recovery!** Even if we do not acknowledge His existence, He will still empower us to become the person He created us to be. *The Journey*, is a healing/recovery process, and we recommend it to you and to those you know who need healing. As you and your friends or family work this process together, you will be amazed at what you will learn about yourself and the choices you have made in life. You will be given the tools to turn from a Self-defeating road to one of personal victory.

Years ago, the title of a pamphlet that Ron saw in a public restroom was “A Better World Begins With Me.” How true it is. **Our personal changes will impact at least nine other people**, and as they choose recovery, eighty-one others will be impacted. That group of eighty-one will impact 729, and then 6561 will be blessed. Before long a whole neighborhood, community, city, state and nation could be helped.

If you have been through a recovery process, then looking out at others, you clearly see the results of wounds in their lives. This is where you can join those of us who are endeavoring to make a difference in the lives of others. You can become the facilitator of a recovery group for your family, friends, church or community. All you have to do is to testify to others of the pain you endured and the positive changes that have come to you. This makes recovery enticing and attractive to the wounded.

Offer to facilitate *The Journey*, and gather together a small, gender-specific group of 4-6 participants who are desirous of personal change. As you process through the videos, chapters and workbook questions, you will begin to see the lights of hope in the eyes of your group members. You’ll be continuing your own recovery too, getting healthier with each passing day. We will see parenting styles improving and the characters of our children being positively developed, as we are willing to be of service!

Facilitator's Corner

Here is an excerpt from Carolyn who has facilitated groups along with her husband for several years.

*“As facilitators we have been thrilled to see HUGE life changes in those willing to look at their past. One couple told us, “We gave our 17 year marriage 22 weeks (the length of one *Binding the Wounds* group) and if that didn't work we were calling it quits.” They've now been through several classes and are seeing huge positive results in their marriage and in their relationship with their kids. We have had the opportunity to watch five marriages that were totally at an end rebuild and blossom. One pastor who does marriage counseling told us he had never seen marriages so broken actually come back together till he met with people who were doing *Binding the Wounds* and *The Journey*. He now often sends couples to *The Journey*, first before meeting with them on other issues of communication, budget, etc. Some counselors in our area now refer clients to group*

after having seen positive results in clients who were already attending.

We have seen self-confidence grow and boundaries sprout naturally without discussion. Life-long depression, anger, and sexual abuse issues have gradually melted away. Group participants with Bi-Polar have been able to reduce their medication.

*Our experience has been, *The Journey*, moves deeper and quicker than *Binding the Wounds*, yet without trauma. I am continually amazed to watch the clouds lift in people's lives and things that were huge issues dissolve rapidly. It is such fun to watch.*

*I'm so grateful we came across the *Rockeys* and *Binding the Wounds*, and *The Journey*. --what a difference it's made for our group participants and us.”*

If you have an experience from facilitating that you would be willing to share, please email me at Audrey@yourLRI.com I look forward to hearing from you.

Your Turn

Several of you have contacted us over the last month. Thank you. We are always happy to hear what you are doing, what this program has done for you personally, how you got started in recovery, what groups you are doing, etc. We have added new testimonies and would love to add more. We look forward to hearing from more of you with comments, suggestions, tips for facilitating or planning events, testimonies, new groups starting, thoughts about the new facilitator pages, etc. Please send them to me at: audrey@yourLRI.com

Coming Soon

- More personal testimonies
- Tips from other facilitators
- Posters and Flyers for download to advertise groups starting in your area.
- Event planning tips and materials
- Group discussion aides
- *The Route* Workbook - May 2007
- On the web - how to contact a facilitator in your area

Announcements

Are you getting ready to start or looking for a group in your area? [Click here](#) to get your information listed or find a group to join.

Check out our new [blog](#) postings.

Read new personal [testimonies](#) just posted.

Ron and Nancy will be speaking at the Jacksonville Mandarin Seventh-day Adventist Church, Jacksonville, Florida, Saturday, June 9, 2007 for the 11 O'clock service.

LRI Connect

I have been enjoying the discussions this past month on [LRI Connect](#); a discussion forum where you can voice concerns about life issues, and receive advice and feedback from other LRI participants. There have been some very good questions and answers. If you haven't joined us there yet, please do so. There are 4 forums with multiple topics under each:

	Forum	Topics
	Relationships	5
	Rejection	4
	Abuses	2
	Recovery Programs	3
	Blog Responses	0

If you don't see the topic you are interested in, please post a new topic in one of these categories. You will need to register the first time. For privacy of all LRI

members, please sign up with a username other than your real name.

Upcoming Events

Date	Place	Seminar
June 9, 2007	Jacksonville Mandarin Church	11 O'clock service
Oct. 12-14	Jacksonville, FL	Attachment

[Click here](#) for more details or to register.

**** Want to put a link for LRI on your My Space Page? Copy this code and paste into your profile where you want the link to appear.

Life Renewal Institute
Where knowledge merges with understanding, creating hope and change.

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