

## **HOPE, HEALING, AND HEALTH READING CIRCLE**

A Ministry of the United Methodist Special Program on  
Substance Abuse and Related Violence  
Administered by the General Board of Global Ministries

### **Addiction and Grace: Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions.**

Gerald G. May, M.D.

Gerald May, author, psychiatrist, and teacher, wrote a brilliant work in *Addiction and Grace*. There are many books written on addiction, but few use this language of the grace of God as May does to describe ultimate healing and the spiritual journey. Awe-inspiring read.

### **Addiction: Why Can't They Just Stop? New Knowledge, New Treatments, New Hope** *HBO Series*

This book based on the HBO special comes in a DVD set. It informs the reader in medical and psychological terms that are understandable, creating a wealth of knowledge about addiction.

### **Alcoholics and Their Families: A Guide for Clergy & Congregations**

John Keller

A must for all clergy and other church professional or any lay person who has a passion for learning, teaching, and helping those who are addicted, as well as the family who is affected.

### **Belonging: Bonds of Healing and Recovery**

Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn

This book "integrates the 12 Steps and Christianity" as Dr. Morton Kelsey states, "in a profound way that is practical, readable, and will help many people." It gives new meaning to the practice of the 12 steps with a goal toward living whole, peaceful, sane lives. The authors share how they allowed the process to reveal their unrecognized addictive behaviors. This inspiring information helps any one of us in a deep search to recognize and fill gaps in the soul. It will lead you on a spiritual journey for a lifetime.

### **Big Book, Third Edition, Alcoholics Anonymous**

AA World Services, Inc.

This book needs to be read by all clergy and others who want to understand addiction and the history of the recovery movement. Reading this book will give you the knowledge you need to be of service. If it's not already there, please add it to your bookshelf. The following is a quote from the book:

"The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellow and toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves."

### **Broken: My Story of Addiction and Redemption**

William Cope Moyers, Jr.

This is an alarmingly true and intimate story about how far addiction will take a person, and the redemptive personal struggle to return to the land of the living. Mr. Moyer's book is a page turner not to be forgotten. He describes himself as "an advocate who is dedicating my life to unmasking the dark stigma of addiction by speaking out about the promise and possibility of long-term recovery." You will be moved from disbelief to tears and back again. A true story of redemption and an incredible journey toward the solution.

### **Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin**

Anne Katherine

A simple factual book on learning how to set boundaries and listen to the inner voice that says, "This doesn't feel right." It is never too late to build boundaries for yourself. As the author states, "No matter what kind of mess your life is in, healthy boundaries will improve it."

### **Co-Dependent No More**

Melody Beattie

Practically everyone I know has read this informative inspiring book more than once. The word co-dependent has been around a long time. Knowing what the word means is one thing... knowing how it feels is another. This book continues to change my world for the better. Both dog-eared and highlighted, it continues to encourage self-reflection.

### **The Crucible: When Recovery and Religion Merge**

Constance Bovier

*"The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart."* Proverbs 17:3

This Bible verse, chosen by Bovier, begins this book filled with 20 intimate portraits. She asks each person: *What was it like? What happened? What it is like now?* Each story shows how God moves in a 12-step group and how the meeting is an encounter with God. The book is a challenging read, motivating the reader to learn more about the 12-step recovery movement and how Scripture builds the foundation for the Christian in recovery.

### **Dying For a Drink: What You and Your Family Should Know about Alcoholism**

Anderson Spickard Jr., MD, and Barbara R. Thompson

*"Dying for a Drink* is a compelling and important book for anyone in search of answers concerning alcohol abuse, its symptoms, the effect on family dynamics, and most importantly, the hope that treatment provides." – *Tipper Gore*

I agree with Mrs. Gore's description of this fascinating book. As a Licensed Clinical Addiction Specialist, I see that Dr. Spickard clearly addresses all pertinent facts and aspects of the disease of alcoholism, including sidebar stories and testimonies.

### **Messy Spirituality; God's Annoying Love for Imperfect People**

Michael Yaconelli

*"Dear God, I'm doing the best I can. Frank"* – *Children's Letters to God.*

Yaconelli reveals a character of Jesus and spirituality most of us wish for. This book is so real and delightful and will lead us to more authentic living. The author describes spiritual growth as "a wild search for God in the tangled jungle of our souls, a search which involves a volatile mix of messy reality, wild freedom, frustrating stuckness, increasing slowness, and a healthy dose of gratitude."

## **More God**

Constance Bovier

In this book, the author offers a real intimate encounter of her journey toward God and the struggles along the way.

"*More God* traces Constance Bovier's journey from wary agnosticism into a non-judgmental, all-encompassing Twelve Step spirituality and, finally, into vibrant Christianity." – *The back cover*

## **One Day at a Time**

Trevor Hudson

As in his book *The Serenity Prayer*, Hudson has a distinctively reflective voice writing about living in the present, *one day at a time*. For those who are sick and sick of being sick and tired, this read offers fresh breath and perspective into those "moments" we might otherwise miss.

## **Parenting for Prevention: How to Raise a Child to Say No to Alcohol/Drugs**

David Wilmes

The title alone gets your attention. This book is not just for parents but anyone charged with raising children or caretaking. Some of the themes discussed are: parents as enablers, a job description for parents, communication skills, and decision-making skills.

## **Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith**

Anne Lamott

A creative and blatantly honest story that will make you laugh, cry, and wish there were more honest people in the world. Anne Lamott takes you to some unlikely places where God meets her and changes her forever. "...I had the feeling that a little cat was following me, wanting me to reach down and pick it up, wanting me to open the door and let it in. But I knew what would happen: you let a cat in one time, give it a little milk, and then it stays forever."

## **The Serenity Prayer**

Trevor Hudson

As stated in the introduction, this Methodist Pastor "invites us to find deeper peace." Each chapter of this book takes a sentence from the Serenity Prayer and teases it apart in a spiritual, self-reflective, profound way. A must for anyone who desires to know self and God more deeply. This book helps us to consider slowing down and reflecting on important things in life.

## **The Spirituality of Imperfection: Story Telling and the Search for Meaning**

Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham

I love these stories. How creative and relational they are! Many a spiritual conversation can be built around the stories in this book as it combines Biblical stories and the wisdom of the 12 Steps into an exciting new vision for life. Listen to this quote: "One of the disconcerting--and delightful--teachings of the master was: God is closer to sinners than to saints." This is how he explained it: "God in heaven holds each person by a string. When you sin, you cut the string. Then God ties it up again, making a knot--and thereby bringing you a little closer to him. Again and again your sins cut the string--and with each further knot God keeps drawing you closer and closer."

"Addiction is one of the wounds that lets God in." --Anonymous

## **Thirst: God and the Alcoholic Experience**

James Nelson

Nelson weaves his personal experience with addiction, the theology around this, and asks the question, "Where is God?" in the entire journey. A real page-turner and a blessing of hope and recovery from one who knows the head and heart experience.

## **Victim and Sinners: Spiritual Roots of Addiction and Recovery**

Linda A. Mercadante

Mercadante is a professor of theology at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Though I have not read this book, I have heard that it is one of the best in terms of explaining the relationship of God, man, and addiction.

## **The Wounded Healer**

Henry J.M. Nouwen

In this book, Henry Nouwen invites us to travel the painful road toward healing. Only in this way can we, like Jesus, be the "wounded healer." Nouwen explains that when we are courageous enough to do the things needed, painful as they are, we can use our experience of this healing to help others.

Anyone who wants a model for the journey of healing and helping will want to read this inspiring and reflective book. Nouwen, one of the world's greatest writers on spirituality, invites us to reflect on the ultimate "wounded healer," Jesus Christ. This book will quickly become one of your favorites.

*Prepared by the Rev. Cynthia Sloan, Program Associate, United Methodist Special Program on Substance Abuse and Related Violence.*