

A Couple's Testimony of God's Healing

This husband and wife have experienced long term healing and growth as a result of their participation in the Living Waters program. Through the separate men's and women's small groups, the Lord was able to touch each of their hearts in their specific area of need. If you know an engaged couple, or a husband and wife who would benefit from the Living Waters program, please have them call 586.739.5114. A new group will be starting in September.



(Wife) Though my husband and I have both had sexual brokenness in our lives, all things considered, we have had a very good marriage. This is because of our strong love for God and each other. All of our Christian lives we have both looked to the Lord to meet our deepest needs, because we knew that we couldn't find it in each other. God kept us in His hands because of this, always forgiving our sins and struggles. But, He couldn't *heal* us this way. We had to face the pain and bring our sinful struggles into the light and work through them before healing and freedom would come.

My husband hinted at his sexual ambiguity before we were married. It scared me about what I might be getting myself into, but by then I was in-love with him and believed that God had led us together and somehow would make it work. I had had homosexual struggles myself as a teenager and since then had walled myself off from intimate relationships with women. Emotional dependency on another woman was too risky and I felt very vulnerable to it. As long as I maintained the wall of self protection, I was OK. Now finally God had blessed me with a man to love. I was sexually attracted to him and was ready for marriage.

My husband told me out-right, after 4 years of marriage, that he struggled with homosexual pornography. He was very broken up about it and repentant. I forgave him and confessed my teenage sexual involvement with another girl. No more was ever said about it for many years.

(Husband) I have worked in Christian work since I was 25 years old and have always felt I had to hide from this shame of habitually needing to view porn because "nobody would understand". I struggled and hated myself all those years. As you can imagine, I was very self focused for many years. My brokenness was causing casualties in my relationship with my wife and kids. I couldn't focus on trying to meet my wife's needs, and I was not honest or open with her about my problems.



Finally, in my quiet time with God I said that I wanted Him to free me from this emotional prison I was in. The next week God would not let me rest until I told my wife what was going on. It was hard to do that and it pulled at everything in me to run from the reality. But, I somehow inside knew that I needed to do this. I told her about the details of my addiction to porn. Of course it seriously affected her, as now she was not the “only” one that I desired. I felt terrible that the woman I have always loved above all else in this world now felt that I had not truly cared for her.



(Wife) Though he told me often that he was sexually attracted to me, I couldn't trust him. In my own brokenness as a child I had learned to shut down my heart and feelings when things were too painful to handle. So I would deny myself the right to be hurt - even if he was just *pretending* to be attracted to me.

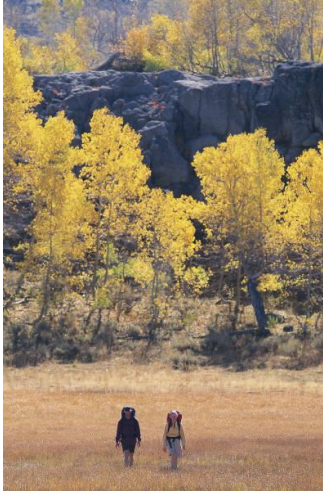
So, for many years we both lived in a state of denial about our true feelings while trying to please the other one. God couldn't heal us from our brokenness, though, because we were too ashamed to go to anyone about our pain. The Church didn't feel like a safe place to go for help.

The turning point for us came when, after years of emotional isolation in terms of women friends, I became emotionally starved - to the breaking point. I desperately needed to find someone who would take away the terrible longing for intimacy and feminine love. I craved the close love of a mother, and found a friend whom I tried to get it from. But after she moved away, I became so desperate that it became homosexual in nature. It was at the peak of obsessive sinful thinking that God sent me to a Christian friend who was “Jesus in the flesh” to me. She walked the journey of recovery with me and got me to Living Waters. During this point, I confessed my struggles to my husband, and he went through Living Waters, too.

(Husband) As my wife admitted her emotional struggles with her friend, we started to talk honestly about my sexual problem, too. It was then that I started my journey to sobriety from porn. I now had faced my worst fear (being honest about my addiction) and had made it through. Now I needed to keep facing it. However, I was more inclined to hide from it again and to believe that I was now free and, didn't have to deal with that anymore. I felt better, even lighter, than ever before. And, God started dealing with me on a regular basis.



I was asked to go on a spiritual renewal weekend entitled The Walk to Emmaus. On the Walk God specifically called me to confess this deep, dark secret to a spiritual leader, who was a pastor. Was I ever sweating! But, this confession brought even more awareness that “the monster” was not so big, and I had to deal with it. What an anxious time!



A number of months after the Walk, my wife informed me that she was going to attend Living Waters, a sexual and relational healing ministry. I thought that was great for her, but I was not sure if I wanted to “sweat” any more honest disclosures. But, I saw how God seemed to be speaking to her and setting her free from her brokenness. Then she asked me if I wanted to be part of the next session. Then the world wind from Satan hit again. “I can’t share with a whole group of people.” Well, you can imagine that God was drawing me to Living Waters, too.

(Wife) Our sexual identity problems are our individual problems, and don’t basically have anything to do with the other person. Therefore, God had to work on us individually first. Our broken identities stem from painful childhood experiences and how we interpreted them. We are learning to recognize the lies we’ve believed from our wounds, and to allow the Lord to replace them with His truth.

Through Living Waters, I’ve seen my husband grow a lot in his self acceptance and feeling good about who he is as a man. Knowing that he is off of pornography and working on his healing is very encouraging to me.

(Husband) It was a slow process. I was stubbornly not letting the group into my private world. However, I had a commitment that this was going to be the “last thing I tried to get free”. If this didn’t work, I felt nothing would work. The group of guys I was in seemed to have the same approach. We called it “do or die”. You know, God honored the commitment. As we journeyed through the chapters and sessions together, as we laughed, cried, prayed and encouraged each other, we saw that God was setting us free. I started to notice that the addictive desires



were starting to subside and that God was becoming more dynamic in my life. That experience is now a few years ago. Now, I think both my wife and I can testify that God is freeing our marriage and brokenness of the past.

(Wife) Over time in Living Waters all of my obsessive sinful thinking peeled away completely, as I surrendered and confessed and learned to trust the Lord to meet the needs Himself. As a Christian, captured in the enemy’s camp, I found the hope of God’s merciful love for me expressed at Living Waters. To have a body of believers willing to be involved with me in my most humiliating state, was a tremendous healing balm.

My husband and I still have a way to go in our trust of each other. But, now we can be honest with each other. It's sometimes scary and painful, but we are able to talk and have the direction and insight from Living Waters to help steer us in our journey. We are accepting the fact that we are a "work in process", that it's OK, that our Father hasn't cast us off, that in fact, He is wooing us to Himself. We have also seen God open up doors of ministry for us in deeper ways than ever before. We are seeing that God does use "Being Healed Ones".



Meet Jesus Christ at the foot of the cross where His grace can set you free from long-term sexual and relational struggles.

***Living Waters* is a Christ-centered discipleship/ministry program for people seeking healing in areas of sexual and relational brokenness including pornography addiction, promiscuity, homosexuality, sexual ambivalence, childhood sexual abuse, transgender issues, and difficulty in establishing and sustaining intimacy in relationships.**

The program runs for twenty-four weeks, and includes worship, a large group teaching time, and small group ministry with an emphasis on healing prayer.

*For registration information call **586.739.5114**.*

If you would like more information about Reconciliation Ministries of Michigan, or any of the ministries we offer, visit us on the internet at www.recmin.org, or call (586) 739-5114. You may also e-mail us at info@recmin.org. All correspondence will be kept strictly confidential.

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