

THE ANSWER TO MY ADDICTION, MY SELF-DESTRUCTION

by Sherie Huffman

My life was full of excitement; travel, expensive cars and clothes, a successful career and a handsome husband. You might assume looking at my life that I was happy and had it all together. I was happy... wordly happy.

I was brought up in a Christian home, where there were no drugs or alcohol. Substance abuse was a foreign concept. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior at an early age. I was young, but I knew I was saved, and I loved Jesus. In my teen years I was involved in church and had a deeper relationship with Him.

In high school I experimented with alcohol a few times. In my early twenties **I drank socially and experimented with cocaine.** I was married at 27 and was on my way up in my career, with promotion after promotion. My daughter was born eight years later, which was a blessing, as we didn't think we could get pregnant. Being a mom was so rewarding, and the best thing in my life other than my salvation.

HOW DID I GET HERE? I DESPERATELY NEEDED HELP.

Over the next few years my marriage was failing, and though I was only socially drinking I was dabbling in cocaine and pills. I went to church minimally and put God on the back burner, but He never turned his back on me. About nine years after my daughter was born God led me to step down from my position at work, take my daughter and move across the country to Arizona where I had family. My husband was a severe alcoholic, I didn't feel safe and circumstances led me to proceed with divorce. In Arizona I joined an amazing church, Sovereign Grace, and

Sherie and
daughter, Taylor



began to get involved. I was surrounded with love and support from family and my church. By God's grace, He lifted my desire for drugs, almost overnight.

A few years later, I remarried a Christian man, thinking that would make for a happy marriage. We both loved the Lord and were involved in the church. Sadly, I soon realized the man I married was not who I thought. There were big struggles, deceit, abuse, financial ruin and my husband had an affair and left the marriage. I was devastated beyond words! **This time drinking wasn't just social, I was abusing alcohol to escape the realities of life.**

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved. Ephesians 2:4-5

In my pain, I put God on the back burner again. He never left me, I left Him. I turned to alcohol in a big way and I became an alcoholic. I fell away from my involvement in the church and my relationship with Christ. Redeemed2Repeat was just beginning at our church and I attended a couple meetings, but decided to keep on drinking. The people in Redeemed2Repeat reached out to me with love, but

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redeemed2repeat.org > PO Box 525 > Gilbert, Arizona 85299 > 480.782.0403



Sherie, far right with some of the ladies from Redeemed2Repeat at a weekend getaway

I wasn't ready. I was stubborn, sinning against God, and doing my own thing... which just brought more pain. It was a pity party of one. I was spinning out of control drinking. I kept on drinking and isolating myself.

My house was foreclosed on in August 2015, and when I didn't think things could get any worse...they did. In September 2015, I was hospitalized with E.coli, losing 35 pounds in three weeks, then developing Guillain-Barré Syndrome. Guillain-Barré attacks the nervous system, killing nerves. My body was ravaged by this rare disease. I underwent Plasmapheresis, where they take all the plasma from your body to cleanse it and return it to your body. Guillen Barre can permanently paralyze or kill you. I spent a month in hospitals and rehabilitation centers to learn to walk again and heal. I should have been grateful to God for saving me again... and I was, but not truly, humbly grateful. Why was I not seeking God

THE DRINKING AND MEDICATING TOOK A TOLL ON ME. I ENDED UP BACK IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM.

through all of this? I was physically healing and I had pain pills to help with the pain. I used the pills as prescribed but I went right back to drinking, even while taking prescription narcotics. I was still down 35 pounds and incredibly weak. The drinking and medicating took a toll on me. I ended up back in the emergency room.

At this point, my family stepped in forcefully, with love. I had broken all trust and was asked to leave the home I was renting. How did I get here? I desperately

needed help. By God's grace I entered a treatment center. The rehab program was a 12-step based program where they talked about a "higher power." The only real higher power is Jesus Christ. I knew HE was the answer to my addiction, my self-destruction.

Today, I have a new life, a growing relationship with Christ, my beautiful daughter, loving family and church friends. God has lifted any desire to drink. Treatment for alcoholism and the 12-step program helped, but God is the reason I am sober today. I have my amazing friends from Redeemed2Repeat that encourage me and keep me going. My Redeemed2Repeat family loves me, they don't judge, and always lead me back to the gospel. I am now nine months clean and am managing a sober living home. My life is full and rewarding, and I am being trained to care for and serve others within Redeemed2Repeat. It seems like a lifetime ago and "another person" that went through all of that mess. I am grateful for forgiveness and God's amazing grace that I do not deserve!

If you are reading this and you don't know Christ... you are missing out. He brought me back from the sin and disgust I was living in, He forgave me and made me a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).



Sherie's sister, Kelli (above with Sherie) is one of our Redeemed2Repeat discipleship leaders. Kelli's husband Jay, is the Vice President of the Redeemed2Repeat Board and they have recently taken over leadership for the Gilbert My Hope for Addiction meeting (along with another couple, Randy and CeCe Bell). We are incredibly grateful for God's provision and their heart to care for and serve people!

CONNECT WITH US!



TRAINING



In July, we had the privilege to host Teen Challenge of Arizona staff from across the state for a Biblical Counseling training. **With fifty-five Teen Challenge and Redeemed2Repeat leaders in attendance, this two-day training presented practical, gospel tools for caring for people.** Trey Richardson, one of the pastors at Sovereign Grace Church has prepared this training and has taught across the United States and other countries. This training has helped countless people be more equipped for their own souls as they minister for others. We are already planning another training for Teen Challenge staff for early next year.

Part of the mission of Redeemed2Repeat is serving Teen Challenge graduates as they transition out of the 15-month program. During this training, we broken into small groups and allowed Teen Challenge staff to experience a Redeemed2Repeat My Hope for Addiction meeting. The response was very encouraging and it helped the staff to understand more about what Redeemed2Repeat has available for their graduates. It is a privilege to partner with Teen Challenge and share the outstanding training we have.



COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM ATTENDEES

Absolutely Awesome and encouraging material.

Loved the small groups - I was blessed!

This was great! Helped me determine where I am in my coaching/mentoring. Making sure it's about God and His love, not me.

Loved how it is all brought back to relationship with Christ (heart issue not physical).

Enjoyed how much love was emphasized and how much it is necessary when counseling.

Realizing the need to put the focus on the Gospel for all counsel and help.

Session on confession and repentance was so helpful!

Enjoyed breaking into Redeemed2Repeat groups and seeing how they work.

Big thanks to Redeemed2Repeat and Sovereign Grace for an amazing two days. Everything was great and received by Teen Challenge as a true gift! You guys are awesome!



Worship and prayer during our evening session



There were five leaders from Redeemed2Repeat (including Michelle and Tracy, right) who are now "repeating" what Christ has done for them and serving others.

It is hard to believe that we are heading into September. There has been much growth over the past six months! The Metro Phoenix group continues to thrive and Patrick and Candice, who lead that group, have made contact with the Phoenix Rescue Mission who is very interested in including our program as an option for their residents desiring a "faith-based" option. We will be pursuing this partnership over the next few months and will keep you updated.

The Gilbert meeting continues to grow with an average of 20 attending weekly. New people attend each week and word is getting out about this gospel-focused approach to addictions. After over a year of praying for male leadership in the Gilbert group, God has abundantly answered (See info on page 2)! Having these two couples in place to lead has allowed for more time for me to focus my attention toward training, expansion, community efforts and donor relations.

Our involvement in the Chandler Gilbert Substance Use Task Force continues to present opportunities to build

relationships within the "recovery" community. Being the only "faith-based" voice on this task force is giving us exposure and we were recently interviewed for an article on the task force that appeared in several publications including the East Valley Tribune. What Redeemed2Repeat is doing is unique and is gaining interest in the community.

As part of our mission, we desire to provide ongoing training so that our leaders will be more equipped to care for those in need. The next level of training is being written now and will be presented on November 5th for current and potential leaders in Redeemed2Repeat. We are also talking with three churches about the possibility of beginning a program in their churches. This is a huge commitment for a congregation and we want to be sure they are prepared before they move forward. We have developed an application process that is quite extensive.

Please continue to pray for wisdom as we enter this next season of growth. We are grateful for all the ways you stand with us!

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT REDEEMED2REPEAT!



1) PRAY

Make Redeemed2Repeat a part of your regular prayer time. Pray for our leadership and those coming for help. You can join our prayer list and receive weekly prayer needs. You can choose this option on the enclosed reply card.

2) RE-ENROLL or ENROLL YOUR FRY'S CARD

Last year we received over \$ 800 from Fry's! It is an easy way to support Redeemed2Repeat through your regular shipping. If you have already enrolled, you must re-enroll for the coming year. Simply go to your online account and select Redeemed2Repeat (#21193) under Community Rewards. To enroll for the first time, simply create an online account or log in and select Redeemed2Repeat under Community Rewards. See enclosed card for details.

Will you invite three friends to do the same?

3) GIVE

In just 2 short years we grew from nothing to a budget of \$75,000 for 2016. We are currently receiving 2/3 of our budget each month. Will you consider helping each month?

\$214 provides one day of ministry

\$25 sponsors discipleship curriculum for one person

\$50 provides one My Hope for Addiction Meeting

\$75 provides training for one leader

\$1,000 starts a church program

4) VOLUNTEER/SERVE

Connect with us and we will utilize your skills and train you! You can make a difference in the life of another.

5) TELL

Will you share what God is doing? Will you tell one person who needs help that there is hope? Will you tell one person who might want to financially support Redeemed2Repeat?