



# A Journey of Grace & Healing

December 2014

## A Whole New Journey By Anonymous

**How the death of one man's dream caused him grief that impacted his life and marriage for the better.**

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### Upcoming Events

#### Giving Hearts Day February 12, 2015

Last year Giving Hearts Day raised \$5.7 million for charities in ND and western MN.

Join us for the biggest charity day of the year! It is a 24 hour online give-a-thon. We look forward to making an impact with you!

My wife and I started our faith journey over ten years ago. Back then we thought we had life figured out. We had just become members of a church and were excited. We weren't going to church consistently, but we were trying to make an effort. Basically we were going when it was convenient. I can say that even though we thought we had everything, we really had nothing.

Then, after a three year career in professional hockey I had to retire because of injuries. The grief of losing my dream profession led me to a severe

**By the time we ended our counseling sessions I had a whole new outlook and lease on life.** I began to see my wife as my best friend. We now have four children and we are very involved in the life of the church.

Our Lord and Savior knew all along that our lives belonged together and brought our hearts back together. He did this so we could help other marriages and point them to the One who loves us unconditionally. No matter how far down you go, God can lift you up!

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depression. My wife was gone with work a lot and our marriage began to fall apart.

**During this time our life together was upside down.** I didn't care. I felt like I had nowhere to go. My life had been ruined, so why care? One night my wife and I talked and decided to go and talk to the minister of our church. Our pastor gave us Godly encouragement, prayed with us, and referred us to Valley Christian Counseling Center.

In the weeks and months that followed our pastor, our church, and our marriage counseling led us both to receive Jesus into our lives and begin a whole new journey as a couple and as new creations in Christ.

Our counselor at Valley saved our marriage and enhanced our lives. When we recently expressed that feeling to our counselor, the reply we received was "No, God did that! He just let me participate in what He was doing." Thank you Valley, for participating in God's plan.

We help many people who share similar hurts, but there are even more who are struggling through life without help. Your support is what allows us to reach out and bring healing to even more of our hurting neighbors.

## The Lie of the 50 Percent Statistic

There is hope for new marriages and rocky relationships.

Marriages end in divorce 50 percent of the time. This statistic haunts the thoughts of a couple who have hit a rough patch. What if they are just one of the marriages that is doomed to fail?

An engaged couple plans their wedding. They edit their vows leaving out "till death do us part" as this statistic looms in the back of the mind. What real chance do they have if half of all marriages fail?

Fortunately, the 50 percent statistic is not true. So where did it come from?

number of marriages and divorces within a single year. For example, in 1981 there were 2.4 million marriages and 1.2 million divorces. In their fear, they forgot about the 54 million marriages that already existed.

Another mistake was made when assumptions lead to exaggerated guesses. News stations ran with the shocking 50 percent story as it made for great headlines.

Most marriages do make it. Some studies suggest that close to 75 percent of marriages do last.

**An engaged couple plans their wedding. They edit their vows leaving out "till death do us part" . . .**

Researchers became interested in divorce rates during the 1970s. They tried to forecast the future for marriages as divorce peaked in 1979.

They made mistakes. One of the mistakes was comparing the

There is hope for a struggling marriage. There is a life-long relationship waiting for the newlywed couple. There will be hard times and arguments, but there will also be growth, laughter, and love. Spread the word and help spread the hope.

## Celebrating You

One day of singing blesses hundreds because of you.

**"We may run, walk, stumble, drive, or fly, but let us never lose sight of the reason for the journey, or miss a chance to see a rainbow on the way."**

- Gloria Gaither

**Life can give us moments of stumbling, but it can also give us reasons to celebrate.** You gave us a big reason to celebrate as you gathered together with us at our third annual *Celebration of Music*. You worshiped with us and supported us in our time of need.

In 2013 we provided grace and healing through more than 6,000 counseling sessions. It is our desire to help everyone who comes through our doors; this includes helping through financial assistance. Many factors, including our client assistance fund, results in every hour session costing us \$10. This year our services are in a higher demand than ever. There have been times when we were wondering how we will be able to do it all.

**During those times of wondering you answered.** In 2014 your support has been greater than

ever before. This year at the *Celebration of Music* we raised \$4,010. **Your support at this event will help us cover the cost of 401 counseling sessions.**

On Sunday, October 19 we enjoyed the music stylings of Radio Stars Duo, One Fine Day, and Pete Erickson. They provided us with amazing voices and musical talent. We sang with you through old favorites and new choruses. Now we will continue to celebrate the mission that you have continued to support.



One Fine Day, Featuring Taunya Todd, sang a variety of old favorites and original music for us at the *Celebration of Music*.

## Black Friday, Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday

You are probably aware that the days following Thanksgiving, a.k.a. Black Friday and Cyber Monday, are great days to do some thrifty Christmas shopping, but did you know Tuesday is also a day to start celebrating this season of giving?

**On Tuesday, December 2, you can join a worldwide movement** that promotes some of the best Christmas gifts. It is called Giving Tuesday, and it is a day to support the nonprofits that you are passionate about.

**Your support of our mission can help a child** receive the Christmas gift of seeing their parents fill a house with love, instead of harsh words. It can help a young man receive the gift of getting through a school semester with limited anxiety. It is a gift that can help a woman experience a winter without feeling crushed by her depression.

**Join the movement by supporting your nonprofits on December 2.** You can give to Valley online at [www.ImpactGiveBack.org](http://www.ImpactGiveBack.org) or send a check to our address with "Giving Tuesday" in the memo. Learn more about *Giving Tuesday* on our Facebook page.

## 6 Ways To Beat The Winter Blues

**The colder months can negatively affect your mood. Follow these tips to keep your winter feeling merry and bright.**

Winter is a time of peppermints, Christmas, and snow. It can also be a time of a lack of energy and seasonal depression.

There is something about the darker, colder days of winter that can have many people feeling down. Stay on top of your mental and emotional health this winter by trying out these five tips.

**Be healthy.** It can be hard to get outside and exercise during the cold months, but this is when it will be the most important for you. Being active and eating healthy will help you relieve stress and raise your energy levels.

**Get some sun.** This one will be hard during those snowy short days, but it can be done. You can open up the shades in your house and sit by windows at restaurants or during classes.

**Act on your resolutions.** If you made a new year's resolution, make sure you are working on achieving it. You could also make shorter lists for things to do that day or that week. A sense of accomplishment and a healthy lifestyle will help improve your mood.

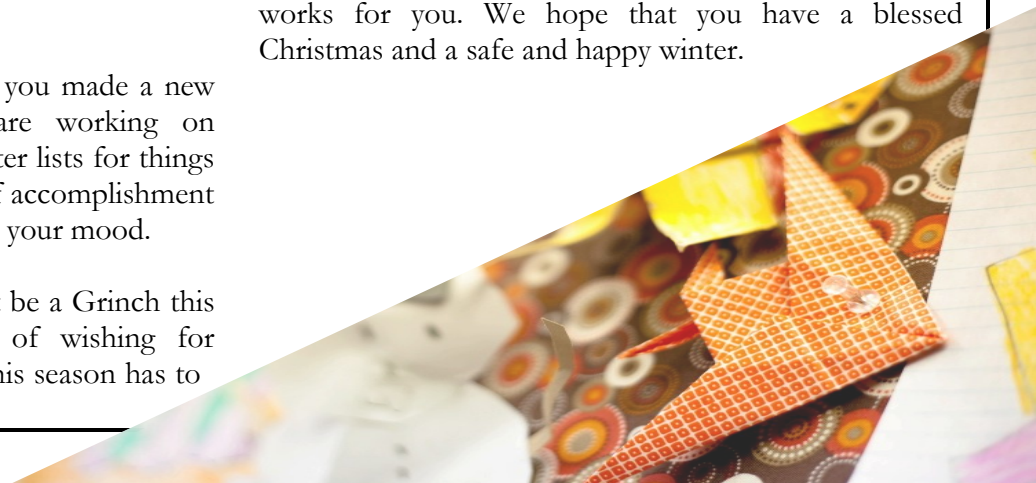
**Embrace the season.** Do not be a Grinch this Christmas (or this winter)! Instead of wishing for warmer days, take advantage of what this season has to

offer. You can take up a winter sport, go ice skating, take your kids (or someone else's kids) sledding, or create winter themed crafts in the warmth of your own home.

**Be social.** Taking time to visit with friends and socializing with others is a great way to brighten your mood. Grabbing a coffee or hot chocolate with a friend is a great way to just relax and enjoy some social time.

**Relax.** Christmas and the new year can be a very busy season. While it is good to be active, being overactive is a sure fire way to wear yourself down. Make sure you are taking a day to rest and relax.

There are many other tips and tricks for staying upbeat during the winter. Take the time to find out what works for you. We hope that you have a blessed Christmas and a safe and happy winter.





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## The Difference \$10 Makes

**Your gift of \$10 or more made a difference for our mission.**

Rachel clicks the button on her headset as the phone rings. “Thank you for calling Valley Christian Counseling. This is Rachel.” The lady on the other line begins to talk and after only two sentences **Rachel can hear the pain and worry in her tone.** Her voice wavers as she describes her challenges and asks for help.

“What does . . . counseling cost?” Her question comes out heavy and hesitant.

**You are the reason why we can provide help and healing to those in need.** Our mission is to provide grace and healing to all who are seeking it. Like the woman in the story above there are many who must decide if the cost of healing is worth it.

Everyday we hear pain in the voices of those looking for support. Your support allows us to give comfort and strength to many who would otherwise struggle alone.

**In our October newsletter Taunya Todd shared with us her story.** She shared that life can easily become a heavy burden. Finding the energy to be a good

mom, a wonderful wife, and a helpful church member can be difficult. Life can become draining and painful.

**Through counseling Taunya found peace.** She realized that “God works wonders in and through brokenness. And the glorious part is that He never stops.”

**Your response to our October newsletter will provide strength through 47 counseling sessions.** That may be 47 people who will experience God’s wondrous healing as Taunya did.



On behalf of all of those who cannot thank you personally, thank you for helping to provide many with a **Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.**