



Growth CHANGE



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Embracing Growth And Change

By Mark Bonham, OHM Executive Director

I was asked to write this article before I knew how much growth and change we would be facing in the days that would follow. Many of you know I proposed changes that the OHM board of directors accepted which would require a different skill set for the Executive Director role. Our growth as an organization requires change and I desire to facilitate continued growth. For me, that means turning the reins over to someone with greater skill and passion for strengthening operations, administration and fundraising. And it means pursuing what I have a growing passion for: more direct hands on ministry with people using my leading and shepherding gifts. I am very committed to leader development, small groups and living missionally. I will now have opportunity to move in this direction.

The morning after the board approved giving me up to one year to make this transition, my wife and I were sitting in front of her doctor, listening to her describe what they believed they had found during Mary's examination – an ovarian tumor. In June, Mary underwent surgery that removed this mass and examined it along with lymph nodes. The bad news was that the mass was cancerous. The good news was that it was caught very early – stage one. There was no indication that it had spread

beyond what was removed. Still, Mary was advised to have six rounds of chemo, which she has begun, just to cover all the bases.

Two major changes – job change and health concerns. Embrace them? Actually there was no choice – we were already committed to walk this out. In the midst of this I was reading Donald Miller's latest book, "A Million Miles in a Thousand Years – What I Learned While Editing My Life". In it he examines key aspects of a good story while taking a deeper look at his own life. He says, "If the point of life is the same as the point of a story, the point of life is character transformation...if the character doesn't change, the story hasn't happened yet...life itself may be designed to change us, so that we evolve from one kind of person to another." He relates a conversation with Marcos, a student working on his senior thesis, who was trying to figure out if physical change said something about our purpose and our journey through life.

Marcos explained that our bodies were designed to change and it wasn't possible to be stagnant. He said, "The human body essentially recreates itself very six months. Nearly every cell of hair and skin and bone dies and another is directed to its former place. You are not who you were in February." Donald Miller says he thought about Marco's conclusions and wondered how much his

education cost his parents. But he also wondered if “we were designed to live through something rather than to (simply) attain something, and the thing we were meant to live through was designed to change us. The point of the story is the character arc, the change.” (p. 68-70)

The character arc is not a straight line moving ever upward on a graph. I’ve been reading the life of Moses, and if ever there were a more round about journey to transformation, I am not aware of it. Paul uses the example of Moses to point out that “we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes



from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Cor. 3:18) The good news is that growth and change come as the veil is taken away, revealing just what is in our hearts. Facing our stories and where we honestly are in life does this, especially if we are determined to allow God’s Spirit to use what we face. The result is transformation – inch by inch, into Christ-likeness.

Mary and I have decided not to settle for what is, but to keep moving toward what we were designed for. We can’t stop change, but we can lean into it and trust

God to use it to re-create in us something more glorious. Pray for us, and stay on the journey of growth and change with us. It might just make an epic story.

A Message from the OHM Board of Directors

We are very grateful for Mark’s leadership over the last ten years, as we have seen the work of Open Hearts blossom and grow into a significant ministry of national and international impact.

Mark began as our first Executive Director and our first full time staff person. Today, the ministry has helped and trained people from all 50 states and over 30 countries.

Grace Groups are offered in over 140 locations in North America as well as in Europe and Latin America. Our budget is 12 times larger than when we began and has been well funded each year. We are currently in a solid financial position.

Mark has developed a quality staff, helped OHM achieve the best practices of much larger organizations, encouraged a strategy of regional leadership and networking and pushed OHM to have a vision for the world. His leadership has been compassionate and evident of Godly wisdom.

Please join us in expressing thanks to Mark for his valuable and dedicated service.



When Does "It Was Not Your Fault" Become Your Fault?

By Amy Anderson, OHM Leader Training Director and
Sandy Burdick, Ministry Founder

In our ministry there has been some confusion as to when this statement is true: "It was not your fault." In the right context this is a very important truth to hear about abuse that has happened to children and even adults. The abandonment, neglect, sexual abuse, spousal abuse, emotional and physical abuse caused pain, confusion, loss of innocence and affected the victim in life changing ways. This abuse was not their fault.

Children think like children; they don't know where to place the blame so they tend to carry it themselves. The result is shame based thinking, relational and identity struggles. When a child becomes a man or a woman (1 Corinthians 13:11) they are to put away childish speaking, thinking and reasoning. We can't love well when we are stuck in a child-like or victim mindset. The good news is that there is hope for change as we begin to look at the ways we act out faulty thinking that was planted in the abuse.

At some point of our growth (and who knows when: is it 13, 21, 30, or 70?) we hopefully recognize our childish thinking as just plain sin. Responding to life by acting out of our victimization is sin and what

results from this is our fault. Regardless of how bad our past is, as adults we are responsible for the decision to change. The good news is that we can repent and receive forgiveness that produces joy in heaven...and on earth.

When we take responsibility for the ways that we have been more committed to self protection than we have been to loving well, we begin to experience freedom from the past. There are massive amounts of shame connected with abuse. Was the abuse really my fault? No, absolutely not! But what is yours to own are the places where you remain silent, remain the victim, and are unwilling to take risks to grow.

In a small group ministry; saying "it is not your fault" to a person who has made choices that are damaging to themselves and others is not helpful. It is a way of soothing shame instead of entering and naming the damage. This helps the person remain a shame based victim. As we engage people from the understanding that wounded people do wound others, and see this as sin that is capable of being forgiven, we find hope in Christ. This can produce a recovery marked by honesty, repentance, and loving well.

The Spirit wants to make clear what is not our fault so that we can take responsibility for what is.





Whenever a person hurts himself or herself or others out of their own woundedness, we can weep with them. But we will also invite them to begin living life from their new identity in Christ. We are not ultimately victims. We are those who are redeemed and who use our story, our sin, and our shame to invite others to redemption. We believe that Christ in us is

the hope of glory.

Thought to ponder: Why is it such a surprise that we are sinned against and then we, in turn, sin as well? It is the human journey. As a ministry, how far are we willing to go as we invite group members to name the damage done to themselves and others? In the past year we have seen an increase in the number of sexually abused now naming scenes of abusing others. This is a huge challenge. Are we willing to walk into this messy opportunity for redemption? Have we counted the cost, and are we willing to pay the price to become bet-

OHM Announcements

Open Hearts Ministry has begun the “Executive Director” search. The position will be posted on www.christianjobs.com and we invite you to review the job description and the requirements of this position. The email address for resume submittal is executivedirector@ohmin.org. Open Hearts will welcome referrals of individuals who meet the requirements.

SALTS offerings for Oct. 11-16, 2010:

My Journey Continues
 Alumni Leadership Training
 Regular SALTS Training
 Grace Groups @ SALTS
 (12 week program in 5 days)

SALTS offerings for May 2-7, 2011:

Couples Group
 Alumni Leadership Training
 Regular SALTS Training
 Grace Groups @ SALTS
 (12 week program in 5 days)

Pastors and Alumni Discount: Save \$100!

Early registration deadline: September 6, 2010 (save an additional \$100!)

Register at: <https://www.ohmin.org/forms/registration/2010october/>

Journey Guide Revision Update:

We need to revise the release dates for the new Journey Guides. Revised Journey Guide One will be used at SALTS in May 2011 and will be available for sale after that. Revised “My Journey Continues” will be used at SALTS in October, 2011 and will be available for sale after that. Current Journey Guides will continue to be used until that time.

Go Green!

Sign up for our e-newsletter and/or receive all communications by email by visiting: <https://www.ohmin.org/subscribe>





What to do if You Want Further Training Beyond Your Initial SALTS Experience

By Mary Jane Hamilton, Leader Training Assistant

Open Hearts Ministry has expanded its training seminar to give opportunity for additional training and personal growth after your first SALTS experience. We offer three different options: 1. My Journey Continues (Book 2) 2. Alumni Leadership Training (ALTS) 3. Couple's Groups. All three provide something unique and different as you continue your journey for wholeness. Following is a description of what each of these has to offer:



My Journey Continues (Book 2)

1. Provides an opportunity to dig deeper into your story as you are surrounded with others who have already begun working on their stories and are ready to dig in with you.
2. Provokes curiosity over aspects of your story that often remain untouched and unexplored through the use of the body outline.
3. Trains you more extensively on the issues of powerlessness, betrayal and ambivalence that will develop your leadership skills.
4. Invites you to engage with God about His presence in your story. Your leaders are trained to help

you explore where you have made agreements with evil, how those agreements are affecting your life, and how those agreements can be broken.

Alumni Leadership Training (ALTS)

1. Provides opportunity to co-lead 3 groups and experience co-ed leadership if desired.
2. Trains how to process the "here and now" and how to use "time-outs" effectively.
3. Utilizes "teaching moments" that address resistance, ambivalence, shame and questions concerning the group process.
4. Reviews your leadership style for further development.

Couple's Group

1. Gives you and your spouse an opportunity to see how your personal dynamics are affecting your marriage and family.
2. Highlights how the themes of your story are being played out in your relationships.
3. Illustrates how conflict can be worked through in a safe and healthy manner.
4. Teaches how to use the Couple's Dialogue, Digging Deeper Exercise, and the Forgiveness Exercise for your marriage.

If your desire is for further training as a grace group leader and/or continued personal growth, please consider signing up for one of these groups. OHM is discovering that there is always more to be learned from entering into the process through teaching, training, and group work. We are committed to developing leadership on all these levels. We are learning more of what it means to both give and receive love and

experience ever deepening tastes of how the body of Christ was meant to be.

For those who find themselves frequently in leadership positions, consider coming back to SALTS to one of these groups as an opportunity to be cared for. There is a time to give and a time to receive. We consider it a privilege to offer several venues for leadership to go off duty and receive care.

SALTS Scholarships Impact Growth & Change

In every SALTS session we train leaders who could not be there without scholarship assistance provided by generous donors. Here are messages from a few recipients:

"I came to SALTS at the request of my wife. She has seen the need of groups to address men's issues and was looking for men to join in the work. It looks like we will be starting a group for men this fall. The SALTS week was a powerful one. I find myself more alive to life and to people now. It is as though my capacity to feel has been broadened – both in terms of embracing sorrow (I haven't been known as the most compassionate man) and in terms of sheer joy. Thank you for giving to the scholarship fund."

- From CA

"Thank you, caring people, for your contribution to Open Hearts! I was sexually, verbally and physically abused as a child. Because I have begun to experience some freedom from the pain and heartache of that abuse, I wanted to be well equipped to help others through their healing process. Your gift made my dream to attend SALTS come true. Thanks to your open hearts your gifts will touch the lives and family members of each of the nine people waiting for the Grace Group in September. May God bless each of you!"

-From MS

"I want to thank you for the opportunity you gave me to attend SALTS. I greatly benefited from the supportive relationships where I could find a safe place to share my story of abuse and receive help in processing the shame and guilt that have been a part of my life and relationships. Being with eight people who love and speak truth in their responses was awesome to me. Now I feel more able to relate better to my co-workers and friends. I have come to a new place in life and hope to help others better and love the people I am close to with greater capacity."

-From MI

Your gift is needed now to help people attend the October SALTS. Typically we will assist 12-15 people with an average need of \$400. People from all over the U.S. are assisted by the "OHM Scholarship Fund", and people from outside the U.S. are assisted by the "Healing the Nations Fund". Designate which fund you would like to give to and help these leaders pass on the gift of healing with every group they lead.



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