



## My Journey Back to Life

An Update from Sandy Burdick,  
OHM Founder and Area Coordinator

The story of Nehemiah has been one of my favorites in our Journey Guide for Grace Groups. I have needed this model for more than recovery from childhood wounds.

When our home burned down, I used the principles for rebuilding as we walked through the rubble and ashes. Last May when my doctor said, "You have cancer", I heard it but felt numb. That would be "normal" for me.

The principles listed from the book of Nehemiah in our Journey Guide are: Face it, Feel it, Talk about it, Ask for Help, Look at the Damage, Unite with Others, Expect Opposition, Expect Disruption and Renew Relationships. This outlines what happened for me on this new journey.

I am grateful that I belong to a family, community and a church where it is acceptable to tell the truth. A few people expected me to be a "spiritual giant" and have much to say about how my faith sustained me, etc. I was disappointed in myself, but know the truth will set us free. I had to report that I was feeling fear, panic, anxiety, uncertainty, doubt, discouragement, depressed, distanced from God and spiritually dry. Three counselors and three pastors (all friends) let me feel and talk about it. I was anointed with olive oil and prayed over, not preached at.

I wanted to experience God. I wanted Him to touch me, quicken my spirit and let me know His presence. It seemed to me He was silent.

Then I became aware that He was showing Himself through the body of Christ. Why should that surprise me?

As I look back over the past nine months, I remember at least one greeting card each day. Bill would say, "Here it is." I would read it as a message from God. Thank you to all who were a part of that.

I experienced God through meals brought in, visits, phone calls, emails, flowers, gifts, car rides, lunches, women who sat with me all day when Bill was at work.

I experienced God through my husband, Bill, whom I said was "driving Miss Daisy." He was walking me through the grocery store for exercise, being my advocate at all doctor appointments. We played ping-pong, gin rummy and Scrabble. He never believed I wouldn't be healed. Mostly he hung around as I spent hours like a zombie, trying to remember what "I used to do". Would I every regain my passion? That was the worst.

In January, I began to be amazed that I felt alive again. I wanted to serve again. I am involved in ministry in my

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## 2008 Year End Report

Thanks to an unprecedented response from our supporters in December, the OHM budget stayed in the black by \$12,062. This has enabled us to move forward with plans for 2009 with the encouragement that God and those who believe in this ministry highly value the vision, mission and work we are doing. We greatly appreciate the sacrifice that this entailed for so many, knowing that you were giving out of a much lower net worth. You were like "Macedonians," those Paul commended in II Corinthians 8, whose "poverty welled up in rich generosity...pleading for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints."

As we move into 2009 we find ourselves again challenged to meet the monthly budget. Giving has been down significantly in the first two months, perhaps reflecting donor fatigue at year end. We know these are turbulent times and we are discovering that the wounds people carry show up most in times of high stress. The need to be strongly present with the grace of Christ has never been greater, whether in the U.S. or other places we minister around the world. We find ourselves limited not by need or opportunity, but by capacity. Would you commit to keeping us in your prayers, that as we focus on being good stewards, God would meet our needs spiritually, emotionally, and financially? We need His enabling to walk wisely in these times. Thanks for your heart for Open Hearts!

filled in their relationship with God AND their marital emptiness filled within their marriage relationship. We long to model healthy relational intimacy in our groups because we have first entered the battlefield and been willing to fight for our marriage. I believe we will become better leaders who have even more to offer others as we reach beyond ourselves and into our marriages.

(If you and your spouse have experienced SALTS or a Grace Group and made good progress in your personal growth, the next step may well be to come together and experience deeper healing in your marriage in a Couple's Group at SALTS. Apply at [www.ohmin.org](http://www.ohmin.org) under "Apply for SALTS".)

## OHM 2009 Calendar

April 3-11  
Grace Groups in Santo Domingo,  
Dominican Republic

April 20-25  
SALTS at Maranatha

July 18-24  
OHM at Maranatha Family  
Conference

July 26-31  
SALTS in Germany

Aug. 28-Sept. 7  
Grace Groups in Rwanda

October 12-17  
SALTS at Maranatha

Oct. 28-Nov. 5  
Beauty For Ashes in Alaska