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From: MTM Foundation [charleschandler@mtmfoundation.ccsend.com] on behalf of MTM Foundation [mtmfoundation@verizon.net]
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Ministering to Ministers Foundation, Inc., Newsletter

January 26, 2012

"For God so Loved Our Inner World, Too"

I attended a "Centering Prayer Group" at a spiritual retreat center (www.RichmondHillVA.org). This updated version of the ancient Christian practice of Contemplative Prayer involves 20 minutes of silence, to focus on God, whether to pray or to listen - preferably both. To discourage the imagination from wandering too much, they suggested selecting a "sacred word" to help you stay focused. The one that came to me was the word "healed." I live with Attention Deficit Disorder, so I wasn't surprised to see my imagination running like satellite TV with someone else holding the remote. But I tried to work with it: each time I'd see an image of someone, I'd prayerfully consider, "What would it look like for [that person] to be 'healed'?" I came to realize, true healing goes way beyond just the removal of physical aches and emotional pains. In each of our hearts, we all carry people - from the past, present, and even from the future (especially if we need to relocate or are otherwise

Future Wellness Retreats

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in transition). Some of the people who came to my mind are no longer living, but they remain very much alive in my heart. Former church members who hurt us deeply can remain very much alive in our hearts, our thoughts, even our dreams. For us to be totally and completely healed, we would want to be either reconciled or reunited (possibly both) with each one in our hearts. By the end of the exercise, I came to realize just how far-reaching are the implications of our Lord's death - and resurrection. Frederick Beuchner said, "You can kiss your family and friends goodbye and put miles between you; but at the same time, you carry them with you in your heart, your mind, your stomach - because you do not just live in a world, but a world lives in you." I found myself marveling at a new way to understand John 3:16: "For God so loved the world - including the world that lives within us - that He gave His only Son." This year, may our Lord bring about an abundance of healing and hope for each of us!

Craig Buxton

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