

Lessons Learned Thru' Being Deprogrammed!

From Merisha, Australia:
WHILE I WAS IN S.E. ASIA MY PARENTS CONTACTED ME, saying that my mother had cancer & that they would like me to be there for the operation. Well, I wasn't very happy in the particular Home I was living in so I felt like this was my way of escape.

THEY SENT ME A ROUND-TRIP TICKET. Upon my arrival home they told me my mother didn't need the operation after all. My mother asked me if I was planning on returning to "the group" & I said yes.

THE VERY NEXT MORNING I WAS BESIEGED BY 3 DEPROGRAMMERS. I must have had it in my heart to go back, or else I wouldn't have allowed myself to get into this situation. I was awakened by these 3 deprogrammers early in the morning. I knew who they were right away from their spirits. In fact, the night before I had felt frightened & had a hard time getting to sleep.

I CAME ON VERY LIGHTLY to them & told them that I got the Letters because I felt they were interesting & even amusing. I felt it best not to rant & rave & carry on but to go along with them, so it would all get over a lot sooner & they'd feel their mission was accomplished.

ONE OF THEM TOLD ME HE HAD A CONTACT FOR THE LETTERS in California, & it shook him up when I pointed out to him that he was helping to support the work himself (He shall cause the wrath of men to praise Him—Ps. 78:10). This particular guy had been witnessed to in California in the early '70s & he really knew the Bible (but churchy).

I DIDN'T ARGUE DOCTRINE with him as there was no point because they had a job to do, getting \$100 a day each, plus food, accommodations & traveling expenses. It's quite a lucrative business!

THEN ANOTHER GUY CAME IN & GOT REALLY HEAVY with me, sharing from a book on how the Chinese brainwashed their prisoners during wartime & how all the cults use the same methods of indoctrination ("Thought Reform & the Psychology of Totalism" by R. Lifton). He was a COG backslider & had the spirit of a self-righteous southern leader.

AFTER 2 DAYS OF NOT BEING ALLOWED TO LEAVE MY ROOM WITHOUT A BODYGUARD, I was sent to a rehabilitation ranch they had set up in Arizona. They had taken away all my clothes & my sons & all our Word (even my Bible) so we'd "forget about our past".

THIS REHABILITATION RANCH WAS RUN BY A COUPLE & THEIR PARENTS. (The father was an ex-pastor.) There was an ex-Hare Krishna, an ex-Love Family & 2 ex-Moonies there. It was very much like a camp with horseback riding, skating, going to movies & supposedly learning what reality is all about.

THEY REALLY HAD PEOPLE STEREOTYPED as to what they go thru' in "cults" & when they come out of them. They themselves are a group geared to totally destroy people's faith in whatever it is they believe that isn't accepted by the vast majority or has any tones of fanaticism.

I WAS ABLE TO GET QUITE

A LIST OF PEOPLE who are affiliated with deprogramming, as well as their material if it should come in handy. At this time my mother was totally freaked out & didn't mail the 2 letters I gave her to mail when I arrived in New York, & Abarim & Les (my Fish) were very concerned. My mother wouldn't talk to Abarim on the phone.

SO ABARIM DECIDED TO COME TO RESCUE ME. I blew it again by not trusting my emotions & the trust I had in Abarim in the past, but just casting it aside & listening to the lies of the Devil. I lied to Abarim on the phone, which caused him to return to Australia after much hassle on his part to try to get me & my parents to court in N.Y. & my trying to get Zephy, our son, from him.

THE DEPROGRAMMERS FED MY DOUBTS ABOUT HIS TRUE MOTIVES & reasons for being there. I also felt guilty that my parents spent over \$15,000 on my deprogramming, & I felt they really loved me. But I was torn about my feelings toward the Family as I had felt very rejected in Australia & alone in S.E. Asia.

SO HERE I WAS IN THE MIDST OF MY ENEMIES, looking for understanding! It's so ridiculous that I can hardly believe it all actually happened! Thru' the whole thing, tho', I never fed their accusations with ammunition & always spoke up about things I knew to be outright lies.

BUT I ALLOWED MYSELF TO GO BACK TO THE SYSTEM because I was curious (as in "The Dark Kingdom") as to what things were like out there after 7 years with the Family. Well, it didn't take me too long to remember that I didn't fit in! I started part-time work (secretarial & photography) to get funds together to return to Aus-

tralia.
BUT IN THE PROCESS MY HEART BECAME COLDER & harder as I didn't spend any time in the Word or prayer, compromising too for my Jewish parents. My parents knew I wasn't happy, & after living for one year with them they decided to pay my fare back, with the assumption that I was going back to get my other son.
I SPENT MANY SLEEPLESS NIGHTS awake, thinking of being back with my loved ones, but still uncertain as to what steps I was to take once I returned. I guess I really blew it by taking myself out of God's will. I went thru' a lot of unnecessary trials & tribulations that might not have happened if my link with the Lord had been a lot stronger.

IT'S BEEN 4 MONTHS NOW THAT I'VE BEEN BACK & all I can do every day is ask the Lord to forgive me for being so foolish & disobedient & to help me get back on where I got

off. I've been spending most of my time catching up on all the Letters I've missed & reading, reading the Word!
I REALLY THANK GOD for this Family, & tho' things are still gray to me at times, I know the road back is a hard one & I just need to take one step at a time as I start climbing out of the Flatlands into the mountains again.
SOME LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME have been "The Prodigal Son", "Lashes of Love" & "One Wife" (on forsaking my son Zephy to his father & their music ministry). When I see the boys separated I really regret how I took Ezra back with me. As you said, "One never backslides alone". I know he's gone thru' a lot of changes too.

BUT I KNOW THAT BY SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF GOD FIRST, all my other needs will be added unto me, TYJ! I also got Psalm 45:10, 11: "Hearken, O daughter, & consider &

incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, & thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; & worship thou him."
DAD, I COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU & YOUR LOVE & CONCERN & words of light & wisdom to guide me in His path. I hope you'll forgive me for turning my back, & anyone else I might have stumbled thru' my actions to forgive me too. I love you both dearly & pray for you. We need you sooo much! Long live the King! Long live the Queen!—Much love always, Merisha.

P.S. IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS concerning my deprogramming etc., I'd be more than happy to answer them. Enclosed is some of the material they sent me along with my notes on articles written on cults & freedom of religion & people affiliated with the deprogrammers.

As A Brand From The Burning!

The system will burn all the life, spirit, faith & hope out of you if you compromise!

From Oshes, now widely willing W.S. full-time worker:

Dear Peter,
HERE'S A LITTLE TESTIMONY I DID FOR THE FOLKS. Hope it's an encouragement! It was really hard to write & get done, & I almost didn't do it! But I figured that if I was having so much trouble doing it that it must be the Enemy fighting it, so it must be worth something after all! ILYI—Oshes.

Dearest Dad & Maria, GBYI THE LATEST LETTERS HAVE BEEN SUCH A BLESSING. We're practicing "Sunday Fellowship" today & it's so inspiring—the best of fast day & free day! PTL!

IT'S REALLY REFRESHING SPENDING TIME TOGETHER IN THE WORD & fellowship as a family! From my own experiences in Costa Rica, I know how badly we needed fellowship at times & how dry we got without it. (The nearest Home was an hour away by bus & we just nev-

er seemed to make it there.) It's like any other thing you need to do—you have to make a specific time for it or it doesn't get done! The Letter was so needed.—I think it will really inspire & renew the unity of many on the field!

SOMETIMES WHILE READING THE REPORTS that come in here, it breaks my heart to see many brethren in the same predicament that I was in. Altho' Liz & I had a good income, were tithing faithfully of all we received & witnessing to those around us, we'd begun to cool off a little bit in our fire for the Lord because we were so involved in the things & cares of this life.

WHEN I FIRST GOT MY JOB IT WAS AN ANSWER TO PRAYER. We'd been working for the KQS in Peru & Venezuela & when we moved to Costa Rica we continued to work in the office on the stats & finances. But when Shaul & Abiah began doing the stats themselves, we didn't

know what we were going to do. COSTA RICA IS A FAIRLY EXPENSIVE PLACE TO LIVE (the most expensive in Central America), & with 2 children we didn't think we could support ourselves thru' tithing. Our visas were up as well & it looked like we'd have to leave soon, so we were in desperate prayer!

ABOUT THIS TIME I GOT A CALL FROM AN AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN whom I'd done some tax returns for. He'd heard that Liz & I might be leaving (I mentioned it to his secretary) so he called me up to offer me a job as his accountant.

IT WAS PART-TIME AT FIRST, & he usually didn't have enough work to keep me busy part-time.—And hardly had enough money to pay me for it! He told me months later that his hiring me was "by faith" that he'd need my help sooner or later. He was a Christian & seemed to like us & wanted to help us. SO I STARTED WORKING

AS AN ACCOUNTANT—which was truly by faith since I'd never had any system training at it or any experience at it outside of the Family. It was a big change for us but a blessing too, since it gave us a chance to witness to many of the wealthy & influential of Costa Rica as well as to those we worked the closest with.

AT FIRST WE HAD A BIG IMPACT. The Lord gave us some real sheep to minister to & feed—people who'd never been reached by the Family before. We often had 3-4 visitors a day, sometimes at the same time, & there was rarely an empty moment. There were students, businessmen, retirees, a wine importer & even one of the city fathers, a very important man who was being FF'd by one of the sisters who lived with us. Liz's folks came to visit too, so we were pouring out almost continually, Hallelujah!

AS TIME WENT ON I BEGAN TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN BUSINESS. My job went from part-time to full-time & then over-time! My boss got extremely wealthy from his company's investments, & we went from a two-man office, myself & a secretary, to dozens of employees on three floors of the office building we were in, as well as ownership of an exclusive private club overlooking San Jose, & management of the largest investment company in Central America.

BUT AS WE GOT MORE INVOLVED IN THE SYSTEM & BEGAN PUTTING LESS EMPHASIS ON THE LORD'S WORK & witnessing, He began drying up the blessings. Altho' we had a fairly good income we began getting into some debts & it seemed ever harder to make ends meet! We had conflicts with some of the people living with us & they moved out, leaving us on our own for a while.

"PROBLEMS JUST TUMBLED ABOUT US & heavier came each task." And I think one of the biggest problems was that

we didn't seek the Lord as much as we should've because we were afraid of what He'd say.—In our hearts we knew we hadn't been obeying as we should. And as you said,

"IF YOU'RE NOT FULLY OBEYING THE LORD, THEN YOU CAN'T HAVE FAITH FOR GOD TO BLESS YOU when you know you're not obeying Him. How can God bless disobedience? He cannot protect, prosper or bless you when you are out of His will & running around outside of the secret place & from under His shadow.—His wings—and His fortress of perfect fellowship with Him." (731:61.)

SO, ALTHO' THE LORD STILL USED US, we just weren't the testimony we should have been. "If the Devil can't keep you from being a Christian, he'll try to keep you from being a revolutionary Christian. He'll try to make a dead one out of you instead of a real live one! The biggest thing the Devil will try to do is defeat you from being a good sample to win others, because he knows now he's going to lose others from his clutch as because of you!" (731:66,68.) It's hard to be an effective witness when you know you aren't obeying the Lord 100% & giving Him your all.

AFTER LIZ & I BROKE UP, I was really broken up too! I wanted a change so badly & I sought the Lord in desperation. I told Him I'd obey Him no matter what & keep on going, no matter what the cost. And the Lord sure put me to the test on it! He certainly takes you at your word!

WHEN I GOT THE CALL FROM PETER, it was like the Lord asking me if I was willing to forsake all again, then at that instant, & put Him first again! The choice was hard to make for a minute but I'm sure glad I made the right one!

THERE'S NO STANDING STILL IN THE LORD'S WORK. You're either going forward &

making progress, or sliding backwards. (Maria put it perfectly when she said I was like "a brand snatched from the burning"—Amos 4:11. The system will slowly burn all the life, spirit, faith, hope & joy out of you if you begin to compromise with it.)

I COULDN'T GO BACK TO SLEEP THAT NIGHT, & when I opened Book 3 to "Forsaking All", I knew the following verses were just for me: "Once you have chosen God & His way, He refuses to take second place to anything or anybody & will not let you put any other gods before Him—not your old job nor your old boss or even your old family & friends!"

"FOR BUSINESSES & BOSSES CAN GO TO HELL as far as God's concerned & where His work of saving souls is concerned if businesses & bosses stand in the way! Nothing is more important than God & His work of love to save the youth of today, & all the ungodly businesses & bosses can go to Hell, where some are probably going anyway, rather than stand in the way of the salvation of just one poor young lost soul—maybe even yours!" (314A:4,8.)

SO I'M REALLY THANKFUL & HAPPY TO BE SERVING THE LORD FULL-TIME AGAIN! And it breaks my heart when I hear of many (esp. in the States) getting into full-time jobs that hinder their testimony.—I know what they're going thru'! There's a time & place for everything, even a job, but it seems like some are getting involved needlessly when they should be trusting the Lord more!

YOU SURE APPRECIATE THE LORD'S LIGHT & LOVE A LOT MORE when you've had a little taste of the pi's darkness. I'm really thankful the Lord can still use me in some way—and am really excited about the new prospects! God bless you, Dad! You're the best father a family ever had! We love you! With much love.—Oshes. (PG! TG He rescued you for His work—Love—D.)

Getting Back On The Track!

The dark road of doubts & disobedience—& God's loving chastisement & mercy!

From Liz Scribe:

Dear Dad & Maria, GBAKY SAFELY IN HIS CARE, we need you & your precious sample so much, maybe I never realized how much before. It's taken a long time to try & write this letter, but I feel like if I take a step of faith, even such a small one as writing to you, the Lord will begin to show me more truth & a plain path.

I GUESS I SHOULD START BACK A FEW MONTHS AGO or maybe even a few years ago to try & tell you what has happened to bring me to the place I am now.

FOR SO MANY YEARS THERE HAS BEEN SOMETHING WRONG, some nagging little doubt or something not right that hindered my effectiveness for the Lord & made my service something less than wholehearted. But in the last year or two it seemed to become more & more obvious & more & more of a problem or hindrance.

I NEVER COULD QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT, but there was always something wrong, & in the past six months it seemed more & more like everything we did was becoming fruitless—our witness (what there was of it) was ineffective & we were becoming drier & drier, & it seemed like we were hurting more people than we helped.

WE WERE UNHAPPY, DIS-

& it just seemed like we didn't know where or how we had gone wrong.

THEN TO TOP EVERYTHING OFF, ABDON SHOWED UP from the States. He seemed to me as crazy as ever & we treated him very badly, & I refused to have anything to do with him sexually. We convinced him to go back to the States, feeling that he could never make it in Latin America.

I DECIDED TO TAKE THE 2 CHILDREN & GO WITH HIM & some other friends that were going that way. I felt at the time if I could just get away for a while maybe I could figure out what was wrong, & we were also considering buying a trailer & driving it back down to Costa Rica. Along the way we had a terrible fight & I left him on very bad terms, & the children & I flew from Guatemala City.

WE ARRIVED AT MY MOTHER'S HOUSE on June 21st & almost immediately I began working at her restaurant. The cook there seemed like a very nice, sheepy person (actually a wolf & a perfect picture of a neutral). I was completely deceived & opened my mouth like the earth & swallowed all his lies & deceptions. We began spending a lot of time together.

WHENEVER I WAS WITH HIM IT SEEMED I COULD FORGET ALL THE PROBLEMS & trials of the past months (in other words, the Lord's conviction & His trying to work in my life). Before long I found myself saying,

"WHY CAN'T WE JUST RELAX & ENJOY LIFE? Why do we always have to be so serious & suffering & worrying about our responsibilities & what we've done wrong etc.? Why not just forget it all & enjoy life?"

OF COURSE HE WAS ALSO VERY HEAVILY FEEDING ME THIS LINE.—"Why don't you marry me & we'll be happy together & just enjoy life." Well, one thing led to another & it wasn't long before I wrote Oshes & told him I wasn't coming back, that I had decided to stay here & marry this guy! My parents were horrified—even they knew better.

BUT I WAS DETERMINED TO REBEL & DO IT MY WAY (which spirit you know well, Dad, from some of my past escapades). Poor Oshes flew up here to see the children, & I hardly even gave him the time of day, as by this time I was so totally wrapped up in doing my own thing. Oshes stayed only a couple of days & left.

OF COURSE, AFTER THE DEVIL'S GOT YOU, then he begins showing you the true picture of what he really has in mind. Lonnie began drinking heavily, & when he did an evil spirit would come to the surface, which was what actually controlled him.

AT FIRST I REFUSED TO BELIEVE IT & tried to say it was just a one-time thing & that he'd never do it again. But before long it got to the point he began telling me his past history (7½ years in the Indiana State Penitentiary for manslaughter), his spiritual experiences with demons etc.

IT GOT TO THE POINT WHERE HE EVEN THREATENED TO KILL ME, & he did almost really harm me once by snapping my neck backwards. Thank God for His mercy, that for some reason & it must have only been His hand, none of this ever came out in front of the children & he never got off into these things around them.