



# THE FAMILY: PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017

## FEATURE STORY

### *My* TESTIMONY



My name is William Lunn. I was born in 1963 and I grew up in what I thought at the time was a normal family home. My father was very critical of me and though I longed for his affection, nothing I ever did seemed good enough. Though he smoked, drank and used profanity in the home, if he caught me doing any of these, he'd beat me and tell me I'd never amount to anything in life. I lived in fear of him as I watched him also hit my mother and call her names. I lived in fear of him so much that even though my brother and I were sexually molested by outside adults, we said nothing and I felt ashamed because I heard the other boys teasing. I learned to hide and cover my feelings and sought only to prove my manhood by fighting and bullying other

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## MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

### *Facing Trauma at The Cross*



Having just come through Easter, the cross is fresh in our minds. Pope Francis warned in his recent trip to Egypt, "Do not forget the cross! Because if you forget the cross, you miss the victory of the resurrection." In other words, the cross is a symbol of the suffering of life, but in a deep way, it is also the meaning and hope of the triumph of life. Over the past ten years, as I have sat in Family Groups in various parts of our country, I have been challenged and sometimes overwhelmed by the sorrow and despair of those who have lost relatives to murder and violent crime. Once you realize that each Bahamian has an intimate connection to at least 100 people, you can see that our country is seriously traumatized.

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kids and "scoring as many girls" as I possibly could. By the time I was in high school, I had a reputation, so no matter how I felt, I had to live up to it. I was the life of parties, but I was empty inside and always felt I had something to prove.

In 1981, shortly after dropping out of school, someone introduced me to crack cocaine. I had snorted cocaine before, but crack was unlike any drug I had tried before. For a few minutes I felt on top of the world, like I could do anything. I soon started using every week and then every day and soon as often as I could. I started stealing on my job, and stealing from family and friends until I had burnt all my bridges with them. I reached a point where I had no place to stay so I lived in abandoned houses, derelict buildings and anyplace I could find to get high or to crash when I had no more. I became known as "hot boy" and "bushman" because my favorite place of residence became the swamps and bushes. I burglarized homes and stole from shops to fuel my ever increasing appetite to get high. I was in and out of prison and rehab and many times I tried to quit but could not. Nothing seemed to work. I tried religion and going to church and yet I could find no peace. I became withdrawn and depressed. I felt hopeless and worthless, that my life was condemned only to end in misery and eventually death, so I started stealing from drug dealers and others who I knew would kill me if they caught me. Many, many times I was attacked, shot at, beaten to a pulp and left for dead in a pool of my own blood. Many times I woke up in the hospital not knowing how I got there. Yet somehow I did not die and every so often an elder from the Adventist church would bring me food. He would tell me I have great work to do and that I would one day overcome. This kept a glimmer of hope alive within me and so I began searching for the truth of my life. I stole books and read until I fell asleep or had no more drugs.

But it was not until I had a confrontation with two men I traded goods to, who laughed at me. They asked me what my son would say if he had to write something about his father. I was stunned and tears came to my eyes as I

remembered all the bad memories I had of my father as a child and that I had vowed never to become like him. In that moment I realized I had become a worse father to kids than he ever was to me. I ran to my spot in the swamp and cried out with all my heart, "Lord, if you are real, reveal yourself to me and cause me to know who I am and why I am here". I cried until I had no more tears and then I felt a peace and a calm come upon me such as I have never felt before. It was as if time stopped and

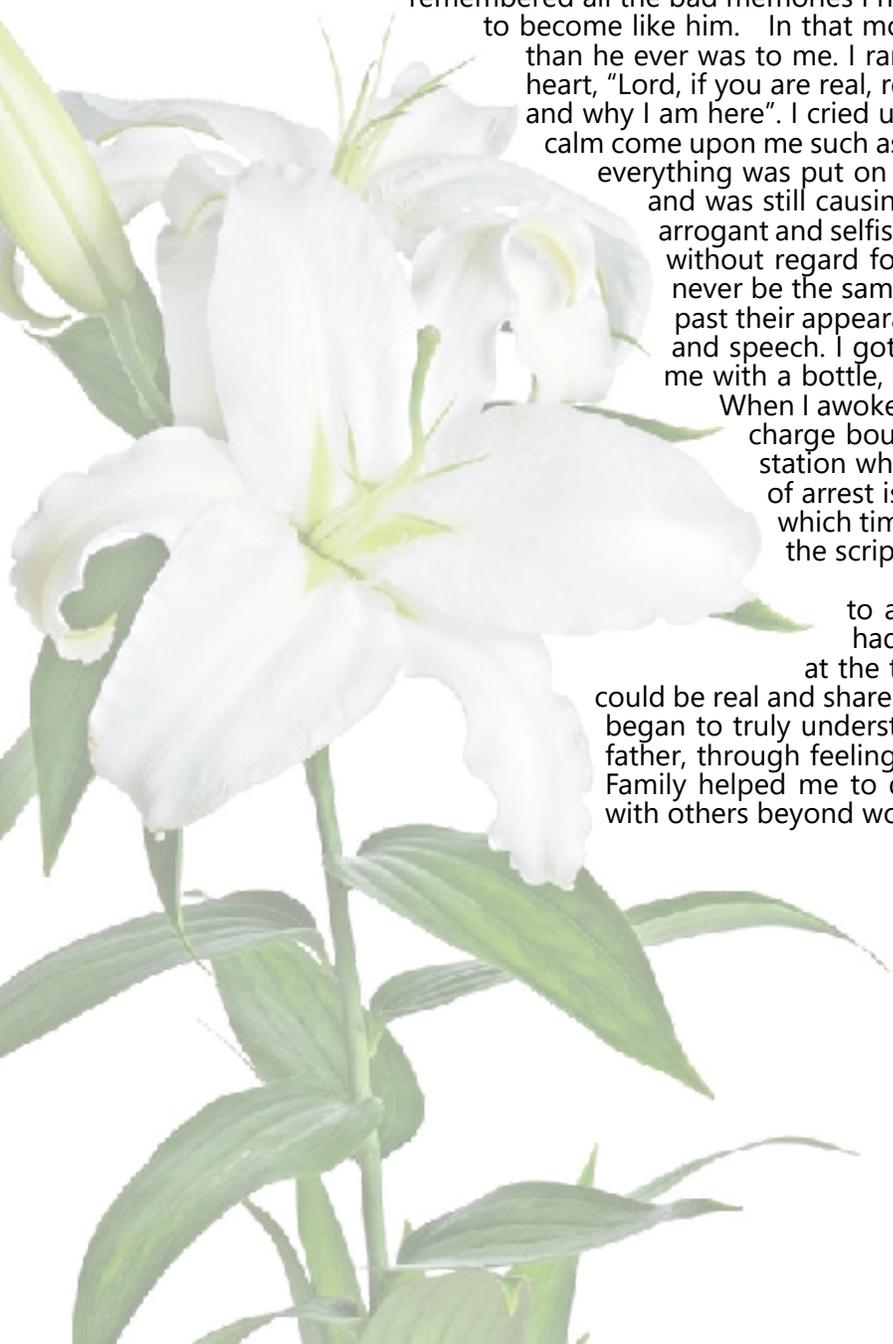
everything was put on hold. I then began to feel the pain and sorrow I had and was still causing others. I also became aware and conscious of how arrogant and selfish I was, only thinking about gratifying my base desires without regard for who got hurt. And in that moment I knew I would never be the same again. My eyes were opened and I could see things past their appearance and my ears were opened to hear beyond words and speech. I got up and went by my home, but my brother attacked me with a bottle, breaking it in my head. I ran until I fell unconscious.

When I awoke a group of people were praying over me. The man in charge bought me something to eat and took me to the police station where I turned myself in to face the numerous warrants of arrest issued against me. I spent six months in prison during which time I led a small group of young men to pray and study the scriptures.

When I was released in 2013, my mother took me to a "Family" meeting where I saw Dr. Allen, a man she had taken me to years earlier for help which I rejected at the time. This time I became a part of the Family where I could be real and share my hurts and pain in a nonjudgmental atmosphere. I began to truly understand myself and to deal with my feelings against my father, through feeling the pain of others as they shared their stories. This Family helped me to develop deep, meaningful and intimate connections with others beyond words and reaches the very core of who I am.

**THIS MONTH'S QUOTE**

"God whispers to us in our pleasures,  
speaks in our conscience,  
but SHOUTS in our pain:  
It is His megaphone  
to rouse a deaf world."  
~ C.S. Lewis ~



## *Facing Trauma at The Cross* cont'd

When people are traumatized, they are afraid, anxious, angry, impulsive, and confused. This has a direct impact on the quality of our lives, the health of our families and even our productivity on the job.

While serving as Head of the Parole Committee, Retired Police Commissioner, Paul Farquharson attended several Family Group Therapy meetings in Kemp Road and East Street. He stated that our Family meetings were the reservoir for the grief and pain of the many people who have been deeply hurt by the epidemic of violent crime in our country. While attending the meetings, he heard their expression of pain and sometimes the desire for revenge in light of the tragedies in their families.

This situation was very evident to me while sitting with our East Street Family a few weeks ago. I was struck by the pathos, chaos, and pain in the hearts of our people. Present at the meeting were the relatives of two teenage boys found murdered side by side in Yellow Elder. Near them sat a distraught mother who lost her whole house during Hurricane Matthew as her four children huddled around her. The day after the storm, her 16-year-old son was found murdered in an empty house nearby. A third Family member described how both her boyfriend as well as her brother were found murdered. Another sophisticated lady shared the horror and traumatic memories of being held up at her home by a man with a jack knife, who threatened to stab her. Now one year later, she says she still cannot sleep, has tremors, and is terrified to go home.

As the darkness of the pain descended upon the group, I called for a moment of silence, because I have found that the stillness of silence absorbs the pain of the heart more than any words can express. Why is this? The answer is found in Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God." In these moments, human words and activity are inadequate to soothe the hurting heart. To stop at the still point where chronological pain is intersected by the presence by God, provides hope, courage and renewed strength. The Cross represents mercy for the traumatized heart, a divine, unending space to surrender our pain, shame, terror and fear in exchange for the Presence and Peace of Christ.

As the creative silence continued, some people were in shock, some cried and others prayed. The meeting ended with the group singing the well-known hymn, "It's All Right Now." Somehow as the group of fifty sang that beautiful hymn, the Spirit of God came among us and we heard afresh the words of our Lord, speaking to the waves and wind, "Peace, be still."

As I sat while people quietly left the room, the image of the Cross appeared. I realized that Easter had come, and recalled Pope Francis' charge to not forget the cross, for if we do, we lose the hope and victory of the resurrection.

As we go forward, we'd like to invite you to join us at one of our open Family meetings to discover the meaning of hope in the midst of despair.

Peace,

*Dr. David Allen*

### **ABOUT THE FAMILY: PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE**

THE FAMILY: PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE is a program of free, community based therapy groups for adults and adolescents throughout New Providence, using qualified therapists. We are building The Bahamas and reaching out to the world.

Our Vision: Helping Our People Everywhere

Our Mission: People Helping People

If you want to help or share in this great work,

■ Attend a FAMILY group    ■ Join our training program to become a Group Facilitator

■ Make a donation via Scotiabank: 70375-3001-602 (Donations are under the direction of a distinguished accounting firm.)

If you want to:

■ Join a Family Group / Become a Group Facilitator:    Contact the Family Office at 698-0155

■ Start a Family Group/Request Dr. Allen's Material:    Contact Dr. Allen (Renascence) at 327-8918/9

■ Book Dr. Allen:    Email <dfallen43@gmail.com>

**SIGN UP FOR OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER AT [WWW.FAMILYHELPINGPEOPLE.COM](http://WWW.FAMILYHELPINGPEOPLE.COM)**

## THE FAMILY: PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE MEETING TIMES & PLACES

FAMILY	LOCATION	DAY	TIME
WillaMae Pratt Ctr.	Fox Hill	Monday	3:30 – 5:00pm
Simpson Penn Ctr.	Fox Hill	Monday	3:30 – 5:00pm
The Crisis Centre	East St.	Monday	4:00 – 5:30pm
Collins Ave. Teens	7 <sup>th</sup> Terr. Collins Ave.	Monday & Thursday	4:00 – 5:30pm
Glad Tidings	Kemp Rd.	Monday	6:00 - 8:00pm
Warfare Group	Collins Ave.	Monday	6:00 – 7:30pm
Carmichael Rd.	Law Offices Opp. St. Gregory's Church	Monday	6:00 – 7:30pm
Great Commission	Wulff Rd.	Tuesday	11:00 – 12:30pm
East St. Gospel Chapel	East St.	Wednesday	4:00 – 6:00pm
Her Majesty's Prison	Fox Hill	Wednesday	9:00 – 10:30am
NPCC	Blake Rd.	Wednesday	6:30 – 8:00pm
Guidance Counselors	Mable Walker Professional Ctr.	Thursday	8:45 – 11:00am
Evangelistic Temple	Collins Ave.	Thursday	4:00 – 5:30pm
NPCC	Blake Rd.	Thursday	6:15 – 7:45pm
Elizabeth Estates Children's Home	Elizabeth Estates	Thursday	6:00 – 7:30pm
NPCC – Facilitator Training	Blake Rd.	Saturday	9:00 – 12:00pm

**\*Private Groups\***

**\*Adult & Adolescent Groups\***

**\*Adult Groups\***

## VISION – H.O.P.E. (HELPING OUR PEOPLE EVERYWHERE) MISSION – PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE



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9am - 4pm Wed

Visit us on the web at  
[www.familyhelpingpeople.com](http://www.familyhelpingpeople.com)

### PARTNERS

Templeton World Charity Foundation  
Renescence Institute International

If you'd like to support **THE FAMILY** and share in this transformational work, we'd be happy to receive your donations via Scotiabank 70375-3001-602 for more information, contact us at 327-8718/9 or [dfallen43@gmail.com](mailto:dfallen43@gmail.com)