



# TRANSFORMING FROM INSIDE OUT Love In the Name of Christ

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VOLUME 25 ISSUE II

Love INC links people in need to volunteers from a network of area churches. Our mission is to transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ.

## Love INC's New Initiative in Transformational Ministry

**L**ove INC is expanding our Transformational Ministry with a new initiative involving church volunteers, which focuses on three basic core principles: 1) forming **relationships** with people in need 2) requiring **mutual participation** with volunteers by people in need 3) helping all parties grow in their **God-given potential**.

Volunteers from Love INC partner churches work hand-in-hand with our neighbors to develop **supportive relationships** during and after the Community classes designed to support our struggling friends and neighbors as they work to set goals leading to **transformation** in their lives. Classes are offered free of charge and run a little over an hour, once a week for 12 weeks. The classes are designed, similar to small groups or life groups in churches, to develop a sense of community and to build trust in the mentors and teaching volunteers.

As an incentive, Love INC partner churches provide additional goods (paper goods, cleaning supplies, groceries, vouchers for gas, haircuts and oil changes, etc.) to those who participate in the classes. Participants qualify if they are on time and have done their homework assignments. This is money they don't have to spend and that they then can apply to their rent or utilities.

### Two Key Elements in Transformational Ministry

First, is Redemptive Compassion, the key training for the teachers, mentors and volunteers. Second, the "Affirming Your Potential" classes are designed to help those seeking to transform their lives to create a new image in themselves

## Redemptive Compassion

Lois M. Tupy has been the Executive Director of Love INC in Treasure Valley, Idaho, since 1999. She wrote a paper called "The Defining Difference" in Love INC, explaining that most agencies and many churches focus on the **need** requested when someone approaches for assistance, while Love INC does not. Love INC focuses on **the whole person**. From her paper and her years of experience helping people in need, came the book, "Redemptive Compassion" comprised of six training sessions, case studies of those in need. Training for teachers, mentors and volunteers is scheduled for 90 minutes, once a week over a six week period. The sessions are taught with a combination of workbook materials, short video presentations from Lois Tupy herself, along with trained facilitators making this experience both exciting and fulfilling. At the end of the sessions, volunteers understand the strategy and philosophy of Love INC. Redemptive Compassion helps wrestle with the biblical philosophy of truly helping others versus enabling others.

Over the years, Lois says, as she worked with more and more people in need, she began to see a reality that confused and saddened her, questioning:

*"How could such good intentions have become so ineffective and destructive? With so many entities, organizations and individuals attempting to help people in need, why did the commonly-used methods seem so ineffective in reducing or alleviating ongoing need for those served? Could this crippling lifestyle that thousands of individuals and families were trapped*

*in be all God had planned for them? Or had something sabotaged their future hopes, replacing them with indifference and complacency, which fostered a sense of entitlement and bleak acceptance of what appeared to be their destiny? Why have our good intentions produced such devastating results?"<sup>1</sup>*

In preparing to write Redemptive Compassion, she reread the complete Bible pulling out and categorizing every Scripture that referred to need, healing and wholeness in life. She says, "It is important to me that each concept be supported with Scripture so it can be prayerfully and earnestly studied, discerning what God says on the subject."

*"What could change in our nation and around the world if we changed how we address need so that it changed the lives and future of those we serve?"<sup>2</sup>*

Love INC believes that rather than sustaining people in need, we desire to help them reach their full potential in Christ. The danger of pure charity is we can meet a need but ignore the person. Is it enough to meet a specific need but leave the person living in a state of need?

Redemptive Compassion has six core principles:

- **See everyone's value.**
- **Invest relationally in others.**
- **Help everyone achieve their God-given potential.**
- **Require mutual contribution and participation.**
- **Respond with wisdom and discernment.**
- **Serve in ways that transform.**

The course opens with a study of poverty and it's causes. Discussion then moves to the familiar slogan, "A hand up or a hand out," followed by looking at charity versus Developmental Compassion. A key element to the success of Redemptive Compassion is that **RELATIONSHIPS** matter. Question: How do you transform a life without having a relationship with that person?

Strategies for churches to use in developing policies for how to respond to those in crisis are discussed. Following the Biblical focus, we look at seeing people through our Father's eyes to help them affirm their potential. We look at how to empower, not enable people in their choices.

<sup>1</sup> "Redemptive Compassion," Lois Tupy, Page 8

<sup>2</sup> "Redemptive Compassion," Lois Tupy, Page 10

## Fundraising Dinner Photos



# Affirming Your Potential

**T**he second key element to transformational ministry is affirming the potential of each participant seeking to bring about change to their lives through offering a series of Love INC classes. These classes are proving to be life changing in other Love INC's around the country for those who invest the time to take the classes. All it takes is for a person to be willing to:

- Commit to a life change
- Be a part of a community of learners
- Commit to 12 weeks of classes (including doing the homework)
- Learn what the Bible teaches about change
- Build a trusting relationship with a mentor

Interested “neighbors” will receive a letter of invitation. That is determined during the intake process of collecting the neighbors “story” to see what the issues and needs are in their lives.

Love INC, through local churches, seeks to transform the lives of neighbors in chronic need through caring, nurturing and empowering relationships and classes/training opportunities.

Through our “Transformational Ministry”

program, Love INC organizes and equips church members to lead courses and/or walk alongside (mentor) people in need for a set time period in order to help them acquire one or more skills and move along on the path toward self-sufficiency.

These courses can be accompanied by material support and special access to Gap Ministry resources (vouchers). In addition, these courses have goal setting and some level of accountability incorporated into them.



**Love INC's focus is on the person not the need.**

## What makes Love INC different?

**L**ove INC builds relationships with neighbors and treating them with dignity as creations of God, made in the image of God and having value and worth to God.

Our goal is not to just address a perceived need in a transactional fashion, but to take the time to enter into a relationship with those we serve in order to understand the real needs of the neighbor, build a trusting relationship with the neighbor, and allow the Holy Spirit to work through the church volunteers to initiate both physical and spiritual transformation.

This means we take the time to understand the neighbor's situation and needs, include them in the solution to their need and always treat them as image bearers of God, their creator.

Mentors and neighbors meet at a time and place convenient for both, keeping in mind that neighbors often hold jobs and may find evenings easier to attend. We recommend a

public place such as the library, Love INC office, restaurant or in a church. If the neighbor has children, it may work best to meet when the church holds its ministry events (such as a Wednesday night Bible study) and childcare is available.

Participants may need further guidance on other specific issues they are facing as they work toward making changes and improving their self-image. These issues can be addressed week-by-week along with the regular class work time as needed.

“Preparing for Change” lessons use scripture to prepare each individual's mind and heart for life-change and teaches skills to overcome the barriers to life-change.

The lessons begin by getting to know each other, filling out personal bio, class procedures, etc. Then using the Bible and specific scripture gives knowledge to help make changes. Next, discovering knowing who you are follows by turning negative thoughts into positive



goals. Then understanding your value and overcoming fear and perfectionism, setting goals and an action plan finally, realizing change comes through God's power. ■

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## Would You Consider Transformational Service?

### What is a Mentor?

**A** mentor is a guide and an encourager of the neighbor through an ongoing, one-to-one relationship. Mentors form a relationship that focuses on helping the neighbor develop a plan and set goals for self-sufficiency and life change. Mentors encourage mentees to stay motivated and on task as they work toward accomplishing their goals. Mentors also help hold neighbors accountable. Mentors spend time talking, listening and sharing their own experiences with their neighbor. They will brainstorm with their neighbor for possible solutions to problems / circumstances, **but they are NOT expected to solve the neighbors' problems for them or to give monetary assistance.**

### Seeking Mentors, teachers and volunteers

**W**e are seeking those who want to have an impact on struggling neighbors wanting to become self-sufficient. We begin by offering the Redemptive Compassion course to prepare for affirming the potential of those in need. Will you be a part of this incredible ministry? If so, Call 434-977-7777 or email: [Raymond@loveincville.org](mailto:Raymond@loveincville.org)



Love INC  
Love In the Name of Christ

## Update on the Love INC Fundraising Dinner

**C**ovenant Church of God graciously allowed Love INC to use their facilities for the May Love INC Fundraising Dinner. Many of our most loyal and faithful volunteers attended to hear about a program being administered by the Love INC in the Valley (Fishersville). Christian Bennett, a young man who graduated from that program, gave a moving testimony. He first described his former life, then how he went on to be a mentor and inspiration to other program attendees. He talked about his transformation from a withdrawn, unmotivated loner to a believing Christian with real hope in his life. Pastor Hankee and Sherry Bunyard described the program to us. Pastor Bare finished our time together by reminding everyone of the invaluable service that Love INC performs on behalf of our area churches and most especially on behalf of busy, over-worked pastors.

The Love INC staff has been carefully considering clients who might best benefit from a mentoring program such as we heard about at the dinner. We are looking for folks whose lack of motivation or purpose might get in the way of living a productive Christian life, not just those with financial needs. Those with substance abuse or serious mental health issues may be beyond our level of expertise, but we will consider referrals on a case-by-case basis. ■



# Susan's First Love INC Home Visit

I didn't know that places like this existed in Albemarle County—or even in Virginia! My first couple of years working at Love INC opened my eyes to how some of our Albemarle County friends and neighbors really live. You may recall a small trailer court on Berkmar Drive that was torn down a few years ago and displaced many families. Those trailers were dilapidated, to say the least, and they clearly presented area poverty, but the house I visited in 2006 was more like something out of a movie about a Depression-era coal mining community.

I recently got an email from one of our partner churches asking Love INC to verify for them a request for an electric bill. I knew that address instantly! I had delivered a holiday meal in 2006 to that house. On my notes at the time, I wrote, "THIS WAS A VERY SCARY PLACE TO VISIT. SUSAN. Located @ end of \_\_\_\_ Road. The road was dirt, little more than a cart track through overgrown weeds."

Yes, I remember driving down two wheel ruts for over a mile with weeds towering overhead while trying not to bottom out my car on the way to a house deep in the woods. The dark clouds scudding across the sky forebode bad weather. The woods were very dark indeed! I wondered if a shotgun might be waiting for me at the other end of the "driveway" and kept reassuring myself that the residents knew I was coming. I also wondered more than a few times if the trail led to anything at all. How would I ever turn around in all these woods if I needed to?

Finally, an unpainted clapboard house appeared on cinder blocks in a dirt yard clearing. Chickens and assorted animals ran in and out under the house. Remains of a large outdoor fire smoldered in front with a gigantic pot hanging over it. I later found out they had just finished butchering a hog. Three cinder block steps led up into the house. I saw an out-house (at least it looked like an out-house) and some tumbledown sheds. Pieces of unidentifiable machinery or equipment littered the yard. Someone had parked an ancient pick-up truck beside the home.



Several other vehicles sat in the weeds farther back from the house.

Once inside, I could see that the walls were the same exterior clapboard that the house was made of—no interior walls or insulation! In one corner of the large room was a big, over-efficient—and probably kerosene, from the odor—stove/heating unit. There was a gas cook-stove and an old cast iron sink with no faucet. There were two open doorways leading to small, dark backrooms.



Though the house looked like it might be two stories tall from the outside, it had just one, large high-ceilinged room.

I saw a large table near the door with a few chairs, which served as the home's only seating. The house was not dirty, just old, with rags stuffed in holes in the clapboard to keep out the impending cold wind. The floors were unfinished planks. A dim light came through a couple of rattling windows, and the solid wood door through which I had entered from the outside let in no light at all. A woman met me; there were two men in denim overalls, and a younger woman. I was unable to determine their ages except that the client was younger than the others.

The pictures are forever etched in my mind: the dark overcast sky, the cart track, the high weeds, and the old house in the clearing. It was as though I had travelled back in time. We helped the people then and thank the Lord that we are able to reach out to these folks 11 years later! Jesus tells us that the poor will always be with us: that must mean that we will always be serving Him by helping them. ■



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