

We Walk Our Talk

Unconditional Love

Respect and Dignity for All

Courage

Commitment

STORY

The Reverend Cecil Williams is pastor of Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco and a pioneer in fighting the war on addiction. He reaches out to pushers, pimps and drug users with unconditional love and a non-violent battle cry "it's recovery time!" Alex, one of the toughest drug dealers in the infamous housing projects near the church, says "... at Glide there were all these hands, reaching down to help me. All I had to do was hang on and keep climbing until I got to the top... this is recovery."

ACTIONS

- Create a reading list of books about recovery including Rev. Williams' *No Hiding Place*.
- Invite someone from Alateen to speak to students about their recovery and programs.
- Develop a list of recovery programs for young people in your community.
- Investigate what kinds of community service programs are available at local churches.
- Have students act this story out as a play. Facilitate a dialogue before and after the play.

Language Arts

Reflection Questions

1. What does unconditional love mean to you? Who in your life has taught you about it?
2. If you were Alex, how would you react if Rev. Williams came to your neighborhood?
3. Do you know of anyone with a drug or alcohol problem? Have you reached out to them?
4. What are some of the reasons a person would turn to drugs?
5. How can you help to fight the war on addiction in your community or our country?

Lessons You Can Learn

1. If you take the time to reach out to others, it may help to turn their lives around.
2. Miracles can happen when people reach out to those less fortunate in their community.
3. There are different ways to recovery. African-Americans prefer a communal approach.
4. When we bring the church to the people, we can reconnect them with goodness.

Community Service

- Volunteer at a local church soup kitchen. Collect canned goods for food pantries.
 - Create a list of organizations in your community that need volunteers. Visit one/ month.
 - When you visit San Francisco, join the Sunday celebrations at Glide Memorial Church.
 - Contact Glide Memorial Church to learn how you can support them or set up programs in your church.
- www.glide.org

School-wide Project

- Develop a school-wide project to help those less fortunate in your community. Invite other grades to join you. Make posters to hang in the hallways to advertise your project and organize weekly afterschool meetings. Elect officers and develop work group committees.
- This story is featured on the *Stone Soup for the World* audio tape.