

feature article

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**Language Barrier**

Recovery Ministries Search for the Words to Communicate Mission  
By Andy Williams

*The following is a brief excerpt from the concept paper, Language Barrier: Recovery Ministries Search for the Words to Communicate Mission. If you like what you read, you can download the full paper at the end of the excerpt.*

Joey Delgado isn't sure who has the most confusing language--community recovery programs of his past, or the church.

"Recovery has its own jargon, and the church has its own jargon," says Joey, of **Christ's Church of the Valley** (San Dimas, CA)--himself a recent crossover from secular recovery ministry to leadership in his church. "When the two try to talk to each other, it's like they're speaking Chinese."

Joey's assessment hits the nail on the head for many recovery. . .

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in brief



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**New Book Release: Second Half**

The Halftime organization recently added a new book, *Second Half* by Lloyd Reeb, to its series. This hard-cover coffee table book is packed with stories and pictures. . .

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## Organic Leadership Conference

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## Leisure Time Down

The median number of leisure hours available each week dropped 20% to an all-time low of 16 in 2008, from 20 hours in 2007. This continues a trend which has seen America's weekly leisure time shrink 10 hours from 26 in 1973, according to The Harris Poll.

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Here are a few topics of interest we covered recently:

[▶ The Third Culture: An Interview with Author Dave Gibbons](#)

[▶ What Makes a Church Sticky: Interview with Author Larry Osborne](#)

[▶ Reverse Mentoring: Learning from Unexpected Sources](#)

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"Recovery has its own jargon, and the church has its own jargon," says Joey, of [Christ's Church of the Valley](#) (San Dimas, CA)--himself a recent crossover from secular recovery ministry to



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leadership in his church. "When the two try to talk to each other, it's like they're speaking Chinese."

Joey's assessment hits the nail on the head for many recovery ministry leaders around the country: If they extensively use recovery

language for their church's ministries to wounded and broken people, those who have experienced healing outside the church will understand the lingo. But people inside the church may be turned off by it.

If they forge a new path with language, and try more "spiritual" or biblical language that church people will relate to, they risk alienating those in the community they desire to attract.

"When I talk to people in our church about recovery and what we do, oftentimes there is just a blank stare," says Richard Desjardins of **Seacoast Church**. "They have no idea what I'm saying. For them, 'recovery' equals 'addiction' and they think they have nothing in common with those people."

### Normalizing Recovery

Rather than focus on changing recovery language, many leaders are directing their energies to normalizing the process for helping the hurting, and giving it a more universally accepted face.

At **Watermark Community Church**, church leaders are open about their personal struggles from the platform and refer to help they have received at the church's Celebrate Recovery ministry. Every week's worship program features a story of life change--50 to 70% of those stories come out of Celebrate Recovery.

"There is a very strong message that it's OK to be broken," says Watermark's Nate Graybill. "We want people to understand this is a grace-filled community where we are all broken." . . .

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### Language Barrier

Recovery Ministries Search for the Words to Communicate Mission

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### New Book Release: *Second Half*

The Halftime organization recently added a new book, *Second Half* by Lloyd Reeb, to its series. This hard-cover coffee table book is packed with stories and pictures of people who are making a difference in the second half of their life.



The people featured in the book stand out because they discovered what God created them to do, listened carefully to their unique calling and then summoned the courage to live it out. *Second Half* not only inspires, it provides simple ideas to make the second half of life exciting and fulfilling.

"This new book in the *Halftime* series will make a great gift for your friends, donors or clients who are approaching Halftime," says *Halftime* author and organization founder Bob Buford. "You get 25 stories with captivating photos to make a second half of significance really come alive."

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### in brief

#### Sticky Church Conference

Attend a Sticky conference that is unlike any you've ever attended, and learn to close the back door and become the church no one wants to leave.

Interact with Sticky Church ministry leaders. Build relationships, ask questions, and explore why the Sticky Church concept helps transition attendees to members.



#### Special one day event:

Suncrest Christian Church, Chicago  
March 31, 2009

[▶ Information and Registration](#)

#### Organic Leadership Conference

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For those wanting to learn more about Organic Church, there will be a special track for the Organic Greenhouse Intensive that has been used to train thousands around the world in the basics of organic church.

[▶ Information and Registration](#)

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The median number of leisure hours available each week dropped 20% to an all-time low of 16 in 2008, from 20 hours in 2007. This continues a trend which has seen America's weekly leisure time shrink 10 hours from 26 in 1973, according to The Harris Poll.



### American's favorite leisure activities:

Reading	30% (up from 29% in 2007)
TV-watching	24%
Spending time with family and kids	17% (up from 14% in '07)
Exercise	8%
Computer activities and fishing	(7% each)

The median amount of time spent working, including housekeeping and studying, is now 46 hours per week vs. 45 in '07.

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