

DISCOVER OA

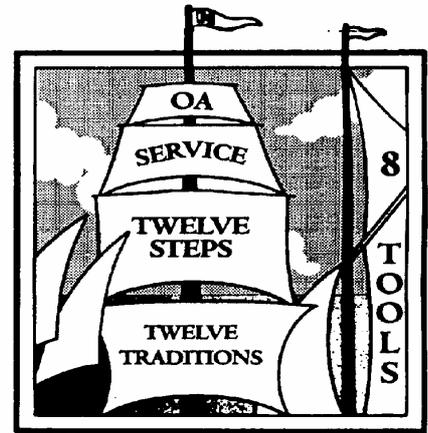
WEST JERSEY INTERGROUP OF
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Vol. 1, No. 24

Spring, 2006

Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

HOTLINE (973) 335-1717



"I came for my body,
I stayed for my head,
I found my heart."

STEP ONE - - I AM A COMPULSIVE OVEREATER



A warm, sunny Wednesday morning invited me to the 10 am OA meeting at the new Parsippany library. Off I went...and found a group already sharing. Soon I identified, and in keeping with the guidelines, I raised my hand to share. And then I worked the first step.

No day in recovery since my first abstinent day, March 8, 1987, has begun except for my working the first step...in my bed and before I do or even THINK anything else. I take the first step, saying "Morning, God, it's me, Elly, and I am a compulsive overeater, and by myself I cannot manage my life". I only get up after completing my "morning prayer", which is the first 3 steps, for then I know I am safe and secure. As long as I do my part, it WILL be one more abstinent day.

Back to the Wednesday meeting. The leader called on me and I said, "My name is Elly and I am a grateful, recovering compulsive overeater." For me that is a powerful way of working the first step...to make the admission to a room full of people. My understanding of the real meaning of our introductions came in my first few months of abstinence, when it seemed to me more like a crap shoot whether or not I would make it to bed abstinent ...so strong were the recurring compulsions. In the midst of one of them and working the program not to take that "first compulsive bite", I worked the tool of phone calls. The person I called asked, "Are you working the steps?" At that point in my recovery, I honestly didn't know what working the steps meant, but

Higher Power on the job, at a subsequent meeting one of the long-time abstinent people introduced herself as a compulsive overeater and then said, "I love that ...Every time I introduce myself that way at a meeting, I know I'm working the first step".

There is a primary purpose to OA...it's for me personally and it is the reason for every OA meeting that exists: "Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer." I don't come to an OA meeting and identify myself to myself and everyone there as an addict or anything other than a compulsive overeater. I don't want this cunning, baffling, powerful disease to find any loopholes or create any distance or deny what my primary problem is...fuzzing up my first step. My recovery is predicated one day at a time on remembering that I AM (not I was) a **COMPULSIVE OVEREATER**...and as always I can truthfully say, my worst day IN recovery is still far better than my best day overeating.

Elly B.

KEEP MOVING



Put one foot in front of the other and when you hit a brick wall, make a left turn!

Today the food I eat is to nourish my body instead of my heart and soul.

OA SAVED MY LIFE



I love OA - it saved my life. No matter how strongly I wanted to be thin, I could not stop eating and I had no idea why. I thought my problem was that I ate too much. If my problem was that simple, an appetite suppressant would have worked for me. It didn't because for me loving food too much was not my problem, my reaction to it and my belief in what it can do for me is. I am a compulsive overeater and as such have an allergic reaction to certain foods when I eat them. They cause me to physically crave them, obsess about getting more and more and to ignore everything of importance in my life. Thank God I found OA. I got a sponsor, a food plan I could live with, and used the other six tools daily. As a result, I was able to (and continue to) abstain from the foods that make me crazy. Once I was able to think straight I was able to do my steps which then gave me the ability to not continuously think about these foods and to say no when I did. I "have ceased fighting anything or anyone - even food." I have been given the gifts of the promises and will continue to have this wonderful life as long as I continue to stay abstinent and live by the principles of the steps.

Barbara A.



Courage is simply the willingness to be afraid and to act anyway.

WHY IS OA SO ADDICTIVE?

Why is OA so addictive? Because I came in and the first few weeks it was: Rah! Rah! Do it the OA way! Then before I could get tired of it, I became a sponsor, and it was: Rah! Rah! Do it the OA way! Then I started to learn the steps, and it was: Rah! Rah! Learn the steps! Each day in OA, I learn new ways of living that excite me and fill me with joy. Who could ask for anything else?

Anonymous

Please contact Barbara A. to update the WJIOA meeting list.

THANK YOU!!



CARRY THE MESSAGE

In April, WJIOA participated in the Morris County Community College Health Fair. The event was well attended and many terrific people stopped by WJIOA's table. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to *carry the message of recovery to compulsive overeaters who still suffer.*

If you know of an upcoming health fair, please let us know. And, come join in and share your experience, strength and hope.

Eleanor D. and Alice B.

IT WORKS IF I WORK IT...

Sometimes the idea of abstinence sounds really daunting, especially to a newcomer. I've heard people protest that they can't possibly remain abstinent through certain circumstances, like holidays and special occasions. But I've learned that the only way for me to recover on a daily basis is to view abstinence as a NON-NEGOTIABLE part of my life. Sometimes that requires "going to any lengths". It often involves NOT taking the easiest path, NOT doing what comes naturally and NOT going with the flow of what everyone else is doing. Sometimes it's uncomfortable. But it's never impossible.

Keeping my abstinence requires that I be intentional about my food. I personally don't view abstinence as a "gift". To me, it is a choice that I have to make three times a day. The gifts are what come as a result of making the right choice. I've learned, for example, that no one will hate me because I say "no thanks" to their offers to try something that's not on my food plan. I've also learned that it's perfectly fine to ask for food to be prepared the way I want it in restaurants. A polite request, a good attitude and a decent tip go a long way!

Most importantly, I've learned that waiting will not kill me. I used to be an all-day grazer. But abstinence gave me an understanding of what is "enough" and it taught me that I won't die in-between meals. When the last bite is finished, it's time to have "life in-between". Fortunately, I always have another meal coming and it's always worth the wait!

Karen C.

SERVICE IS ~

- Setting up chairs at a meeting.
- Being tolerant and accepting of others.
- Preparing the flyer for an event.

KEEP COMING BACK

Life before OA was full of fear and despair. You had to only look at me to see all the pain that was inside. I tried very hard to cover it up, usually with food - but it was always there. I felt alone and afraid most of the time. At almost 400 lbs I was the person others stared and laughed at. I felt like a failure, and I was ashamed of this. I asked myself over and over again, "Why couldn't I control my eating like other people" and "What was wrong with me?"

Then came OA, and with OA some answers and hope. I arrived at these doors desperate and in a fog. I was told to "keep coming back", given hugs, encouragement and hope. I didn't understand much of anything, but by the grace of God I got a sponsor. We started working the Steps. I said I wasn't sure if I believed, she said I didn't have to believe, just be willing to believe. OK, I could do that. So we worked, and worked and worked. Sometimes I worked enthusiastically and sometimes begrudgingly. But I always had the support of my sponsor.

And just as the big book promises, miracles started to happen. I learned I had the disease of compulsive overeating. That I was not a bad or weak person, just someone, like others with a disease. I also learned I did not have to do it alone, that my Higher Power was there for me all the time. He would speak to me through my sponsor, through other compulsive overeaters and speak to me in my heart. The fear and loneliness that had been my constant companion began to fade. I knew I was no longer alone.

Working the Steps is not always easy. And sometimes I take these steps like they are a smooth and easy stride, and some days I take these steps like baby steps, wobbly and less sure. I found if I just keep steppin' I will be all right. The program gives me a fellowship, tools and some simple directions for living. I now have a way to live in the world without eating compulsively.

Linda



CALL FOR ARTICLES

Discover OA is your newsletter. Please take a few minutes to write an article - positive sharing on a topic of your choice. Some potential topics are: gratitude, serenity, service, turning it over, abstinence, meetings, the joy of living, honesty, etc....



DISCOVER OA

Submissions:

Contact:

Cyndy C.
Eleanor D.
Alice B.

Or by email:

wjoadiscover@aim.com

*Don't delay ~
Submit your
article today!*



SELFISH PROGRAM ~ UNSELFISH PERSON

When I came to OA, I was miserable and wanted to lose weight. Today, I stay because I want to continue the journey on the path I have chosen - recovering physically, emotionally and spiritually. My job, as I now see it, is to focus on me, living my program, today. It is all about me. So, this is truly a selfish program. However, the Big Book says, the result is I will become a selfless person; i.e., an unselfish person. What a gratifying and productive way to live - focusing outward on my fellows instead of as I have focused, inward on myself.

Anonymous

UPCOMING HAPPENINGS...

Do you have upcoming events and you need to get the word out?

Call Barbara A. at for any changes or additions to this list, or to get more information on any of the events below.

- May 17 - NJIOA Dinner/Dance
- May 19-21 - WJIOA Retreat
- October - Silent Auction Luncheon
- November - Day of Recovery

IS SERENITY 'FREEDOM FROM THE STORM'?

No, serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace within it. This is a workshop topic that will be held on WJIOA's 'Day of Recovery' in the fall. As a newcomer, I might ask myself "isn't this what abstinence is all about - everything around me will change and be wonderful?"

If only that were true. If only the other person would change. If only the other person would listen. If only they wouldn't be angry. If only they didn't drink too much, if only, if only... Unfortunately, life is full of surprises and sometimes they are not happy ones. This doesn't mean I have to eat over them today.

Abstinence has given me a clear mind. The tools teach me how to make choices. The steps and traditions show me how to make good choices, to learn how to act when a situation arises and not to react, using old behaviors. It all begins with me and recognizing the joy of abstinence... "Did I actually avoid saying those fighting words?" "Was that me who did not feed on a resentment?" "Did I actually initiate kind behavior and calm solutions in a hostile environment?" "Have crying jags stopped?" "Are the "poor lil ol' me's disappearing?"

Today I know I am no longer alone. Thank you, Higher Power - and to think I only have to do this **ONE DAY AT A TIME!**



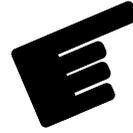
**In Love and Service,
Your WJIOA Trusted Servants**

WORDS OF WISDOM...

- Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.
- FEAR - Face Everything And Recover
- How important is it?
- Don't let people rent space in your head.
- GOD - Good Orderly Direction
- We're sick people getting well ~ NOT ~ bad people getting good.
- Pray for help ~ not the results.
- If you don't want to get hit by the train ~ stay off the tracks.
- Get active.
- Acceptance is the key to recovery.
- Take the best and leave the rest.

WJIOA INTERGROUP MEETING

1st Saturday of every month - 12:30 pm
Parsippany Library (**new location!**)



Halsey Street & Route 202
(behind Gulf Station)

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Your Trusted Servants.....

Chairperson - Eleanor D.
Vice Chairperson - Donna R.
Recording Secretary - Barbara A.
Corresponding Secretary - Ellen E.
Hotline - Cyndy C.
Treasurer - Jackie D.
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HIPM
Meeting List - Barbara A.
Youth

Discover OA Submissions:

Cyndy C.
Eleanor D.
Alice B.

A LITTLE STORY



This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!!

Anonymous

EDITORIAL POLICY

The opinions expressed in the Discover OA reflect those of the writers and not the West Jersey Intergroup or OA as a whole, nor does the publication of any article imply endorsement. The editor gladly welcomes contributions and reserves the right to edit articles with the intent of preserving the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.