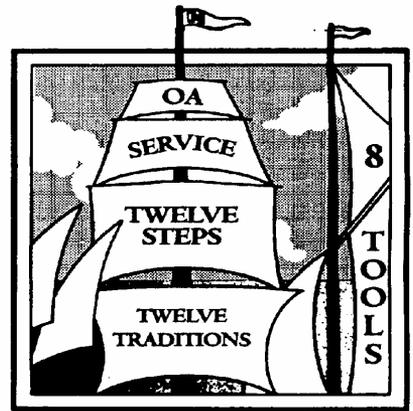


DISCOVER OA

WEST JERSEY INTERGROUP OF
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
Vol. 15, No. 2 Spring, 2008

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."



A SUITCASE FULL OF STUFF

The last eleven years of my life have been the best. That's when a friend dragged me to my first OA meeting. I brought along a huge suitcase filled to bursting with junk.

In my suitcase I had packed 237 pounds of *hopelessness*: I knew I would never get my compulsive binge eating under control. I knew I was doomed to gain and lose and regain huge amounts of weight. I didn't think I would live to see my kids grow up.

I included my sense of *isolation* too. My need for secrecy had forced me underground. My eating behaviors were abnormal. No one could possibly do what I did. I binged until I felt sick and then started all over again the next day.

I had remembered to pack my low *self esteem* and *self disgust*. I waddled when I walked and I knew people were repelled when they looked at me. I had packed my dismal dieting report card, which proved that I was incapable of learning from my past mistakes. Over and over again I had tried to control my destructive eating habits. What was wrong with me?

Eleven years later I have a new suitcase and the contents are vastly different. Wrapped in glimmering, sturdy fabric is my *abstinence* and my *gratitude*. Packed alongside them is my *sponsor's* phone number, my *sponsees'*

names, my *OA meeting lists*, and my *OA literature*.

I rejected my body scale in order to make room for my *plan of eating*, my lovely digital *food scale*, my new attitude, and my size 4 jeans.

All of these precious objects forced me to dispose of my loneliness and self loathing and replace them with *friendship*, *self-confidence*, and *serenity*.

Of course before I packed anything I had to remember to pray to my *new Higher Power*. I prayed that I had packed the right tools and taken the necessary steps: The ones that would allow me to remain abstinent. I believe that I have packed well and I trust that my journey will go in the direction it's supposed to: *One day at a time*.

Barbara, West Orange

NORMAL

New
Opportunities
Reminding
Me
About
Life



I eat seven days a week ~
I call my sponsor seven days a week!

A MAN AND A BUTTERFLY

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no further. So to help the butterfly, he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that at any moment the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man, in his kindness and haste, did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. If God allowed us to go through our lives without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly!

How often does a sponsor feel the need to encourage the newcomer that they are sponsoring to "do it right", and to explain every single pitfall along the way as well as single out all the rewards with endless verbiage – until the newcomer becomes so overwhelmed that they don't come back to meetings! Just like the caterpillar in this story, it is important to overcome the odds and in that way make it to his or her destiny. This is that same sense of discovery in a newcomer that leads to their ultimate goal of abstinence. This newfound awareness brought about by day-to-day working the tools will soon help them to discover any pitfalls that may threaten their abstinence. Working their own program will also bring new and exciting discoveries of their strength and willingness

to reap the rewards of abstinence. Sometimes just "being there" as a loving sponsor is enough.



Please contact Brenda D. to update the WJIOA meeting list. THANK YOU!! 

STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY

"In acceptance lies peace." To accept, as God's gift to me, my powerlessness in overcoming my addictions is a break-through in the world of unreality I'd embraced.

As I'm now in the 8th decade of life, I stand as a testimony to the faithfulness of God in leading me to the OA "life-recovery". God has held me steady for six grateful years. Very hard at times, but He hasn't brought me this far to drop me now!

Reality is what people do who can't handle drugs! My major drug of choice was over amounts of food. Equal to a healthier physical being, the quality of my life-style is amazingly satisfying beyond what it was. To respond to adverse events and not react negatively is a pleasant surprise to me and those I reconnected with. Doing the steps as a companion to food abstinence is key to my successful venue!

I thank God and OA in that order for the 24/7 gift of "new life" even in my 8th decade of it. So enjoy "pressing in and pressing on" in this exciting and challenging OA journey.

Janet P.

WJIOA INTERGROUP MEETING

1st Saturday of every month - 12:30 pm

Parsippany Library
Halsey Street & Route 202
(behind the Gulf Station)

EVERYONE WELCOME!



PRUDENCE

Prudence is a workable middle ground, a channel of clear sailing between the obstacles of fear on the one side and of recklessness on the other. Prudence in practice creates a definite climate, the only climate in which harmony, effectiveness, and consistent spiritual progress can be achieved.

As Bill Sees It ~ page 91

FAITH RENEWED

HMMMPH!!! Turn *my* will and *my* life over? Who are they kidding? There's no way I am turning all my decisions over to that meanie: *God*. I can manage just fine all on my own. "Just for today", they said. "One day at a time", others echoed. How were these trite sayings intended to impact my life? Curiosity was the catalyst for weeks. Then the strangest thing happened. After only a few days of abstinence, the sugar fog cleared. Even the air I breathed smelled different. Over the first few weeks, the clarity was deafening. I immediately realized God was doing for me what I could not do for myself. Before long, I found myself letting my defenses down. And within three short months, I was again trying to establish a conscious contact with my Higher Power. What a joy it's been getting reacquainted.

Anonymous

PROGRAM ISN'T WORKING?

If your program doesn't seem to be working, it's time to take action now!

- ** Attend more meetings.
- ** Read your literature.
- ** Call your sponsor.
- ** Call other members.
- ** Share experience, strength and hope.
- ** Give service.
- ** Become a sponsor.
- ** Complete working your steps.



The compulsive overeater has no effective mental defense against the first compulsive bite. Except in a few rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power.

Big Book ~ page 43

UPCOMING HAPPENINGS

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

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

- May 16th - 18th - Retreat
- September - Luncheon/Silent Auction

ABSTINENCE

Abstinence is the most important thing in my life without exception. Why? My recovery began when, upon coming to OA, I admitted I was powerless over food coupled with being abstinent one day at a time. As my days of abstinence grew, gradually my life began to change because I began to grow and change from the inside out as I slowly but surely made my journey along the road of recovery. The promises continue to come true as I continue my journey in recovery. Life with its ups and downs is good now, not always easy but better than it has ever been. I think the Big Book (The Missing Link) says it best: "Life is exponentially better than it ever was before. I'm living out the life I used to fantasize about, and I have a whole lot of work still in front of me. I have hope to share and love to give, and I just keep going one day at a time, living this adventure called life."

My sponsor is fond of saying, "Just be abstinent and the rest will follow." I have learned this is true. So, it is abstinence that is the foundation upon which my program is built. I focus on staying abstinent so the foundation does not crumble. That is why abstinence is the most important thing in my life without exception. Thank you OA!

Alice

Don't compare...

Don't keep score...

Don't project...

Don't build a case against yourself!



UNITY DAY

WJIOA joined the other NJ intergroups in a world-wide celebration of OA called Unity Day. The workshops had an abundance of topics that were well attended. To add fun to the day, there was a drawing on all the decorated baskets donated by the participating intergroups. Everyone came home having made new friends and with a warm sense of belonging to a wonderful fellowship.

PROGRAM IN A SECOND

As compulsive people, we frequently share and laugh about our desire for instant *everything*. Under most circumstances this is not a possibility, but there is one exception: the slogans! We have at our beck and call, program in an instant for the times that life blindsides us, and leaves us wondering, "What just happened here?"

When a commercial for our favorite fast food restaurant comes on TV and it looks too good to resist, we can whip out *just for today* I won't eat that...when a wonderful specimen of humanity cuts us off on Rte 80 at 75 miles per hour we can ask ourselves *how important is it? or hurt people hurt [other] people...*when we are tempted to involve ourselves in something that really isn't our business we can remember *if I don't get into it I won't have to get out of it...*

We can all look back at our entrance into program, when we may not have understood or agreed with everything we heard, and had someone tell us to *act "as if."* Often that didn't make sense to us either, but amazingly—it worked! We *acted "as if"* we believed, and did what we were encouraged to do, finding all of a sudden that we did understand and program did make sense to us.



The Big Book tells us, "Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more [compulsive overeaters] than anything else. From it stem[s] all forms of spiritual disease" (p. 64). We have slogans that address this deadly spiritual malady as well: *resentment is like drinking poison trying to kill someone else...resentment corrodes the vessel that carries it...don't rent out space in my head...it's none of my business what other people think of me...*

The slogans are not meaningless clichés that have no real use or substance, but lively and powerful bits of instant wisdom, that when used appropriately, can stem the tide of insanity that this disease can bring us to. Where a lecture or a paragraph might not affect us, these compact little phrases truly are "program in a second."

We would like to know how the slogans have

impacted the lives of our readers; if you have a story you would like to share (for publication) about how the slogans have helped you, please e-mail it to: wjioadiscover@aim.com

In Love and Service,
Your WJIOA Trusted Servants

Spring is the season of new growth.

IF ONLY...



The torment of overeating, indulgence and lies, lies and more lies. "If only it wasn't on the table." "If only I didn't go there." "If only my food plan was more flexible." "If only my sponsor said ____." "If only, if only ____." As a matter of fact it's called getting the 'if only's' and the 'coulda', 'woulda', 'shouldas' right along with it! This is a simple, simple program of *acceptance*.

Your Trusted Servants.....

Archives – Terry S.
Chairperson – Barbara A.
Corresponding Secretary – Cyndy C.
Editor – Alice B.
Hotline – Dolores M.
Meeting List – Brenda D.
Outreach Committee – Elly B.
Public Information – Eleanor D.
Recording Secretary – Luanne S.
Special Activities – Dolores M.
Treasurer – Jack H.
Trusted Servant Article – Laurie R.
Vice Chairperson – Donna R.
Youth - Open

Discover OA Submissions:

Alice B.
Cyndy C.
Eleanor D.

Or by email: wjioadiscover@aim.com



SERVICE AND WRITING

Don't delay, use the tools of service and writing today! Take a few minutes to make a submission to the Discover OA Newsletter - positive sharing on a topic of your choice.

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.