

A Serving of Hope

Volume 6 Issue 3

Oregon Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

March 2017

No Ordinary Day

“Today may seem ordinary to you, but it actually is a very special day for you.

It is a day to celebrate all the ways you’ve changed and grown. It is a day to feel proud of all of the challenges you have met and conquered thus far.”

~From “Overheard in Meetings”

We are a quarter of the way through 2017, and we all have something to celebrate. Even if today seems frustrating, or disappointing, or boring, or silly, or even like nothing at all—it is not!

No matter who you are, you have something to celebrate and be proud of. Maybe you are celebrating a third month of abstinence—maybe a third day! Maybe you have just helped a newcomer. Maybe you just completed work on a step. Maybe you just read some literature. Maybe this is your first step toward addressing your compulsive eating behaviors—reading this newsletter. No matter what, be proud. All of these things make today something to celebrate.

Today I am proud to put together this newsletter. Today I am celebrating the fact that you will read these words. It is no ordinary day when I am abstinent, giving service, and feeling the comfort and togetherness and belonging that OA gives me. I hope you can feel that today, too!

~Ed.

The Power of Sharing

Over six months ago, my life partner and I were struggling. Recovery had made me a different person, and her return to college had changed her. I had little hope left for the relationship as I realized we each had needs that the other didn’t have the ability to meet, and I wasn’t willing to go back to the way I operated before recovery.

I shared my feelings with my sponsor. I shared about it at OA meetings. I spoke about it with a fellow who was going through the same thing. I wrote an article for *Lifeline*. I talked about it with my individual therapist, and I talked about it privately with our couple’s therapist.

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Upcoming Events

March 17 -19: Twin Rocks Serenity Retreat. Email serenityretreat@oregon-aa.org or call Loriann at 503-704-8571 or Marie 503-639-0149.

April 1: Monthly speakers meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Contact Mikki at 503-747-7769 or mikkimc@gmail.com.

April 12: Oregon Intergroup Meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

May 20: No Shame Workshop, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Salem Hospital, Creekside Room, Building D, \$5 suggested donation. Registration starts at 9:30 AM. Contact Christina at xabeth@comcast.net or Pat at 503-580-5738. Wear your favorite team jersey!

June 24: Off The Scale Recovery, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Registration is at 9:00 AM, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, 9205 SW Barnes Road, Stanley Family Room 20. Contact Kym at literature@oregon-aa.org or 503-544-5955.

Who's In Charge? Surrender

Just before I finished my third step, my sponsor had me read an article about the difference between submission, subjection, and surrender. The gist of it, as far as I could see, is that surrender is a total release of my will, not giving in, but giving it over—entrusting my will to another that I trust.

That meant two things, to me, involving trust. Can I trust—let go of my control of events? In my "prayers," can I resist giving this higher power instructions?

In looking at recent events in my life, how well did it work when I controlled or tried to control the events, especially my eating, as well as other unmanageable parts of my life? Could I trust this higher power to restore me to sanity around food, my resentments, and other character defects?

Young People's Phone List

Oregon Intergroup is assembling a contact list for young people in OA.

If you came into program at age 30 or younger and would like to offer your experience, strength, and hope to a young person in our program, please send your contact information to youngpeople@oregon-oa.org. Include your name, phone number, email address, and the age you were when you came into OA. WSO defines a young person as someone who is 30 years or younger.

If you came into program when you were older than 30 years old and would also like to be a resource to the younger members of our fellowship, you are also welcome to add your name to the young people's phone list.

I sometimes think, "Well, I lived by my wits this far, and I survived." Yet when I stop and think, I realize that, no, I got this far with lots of help from others and from God as I understand God.

It stands to reason that in this program, I would need help, too.

When I completed my third step, my sponsor had me pray the third step prayer with her. It was a powerful moment. Because of that, it is a custom I have carried over with those I sponsor. Why? To me, it is like setting up a landmark or milepost that I can refer to when I feel my program is getting sloppy.

It's all about willpower. The question always is: my unsteady willpower or God's will? Whose will am I living in—self will or that of my higher power? Am I having debates within myself about following a food plan, writing, feeling feelings, or going to meetings? Do I find myself wanting to isolate? Then it is time to check my connection with my higher power and to re-take step three.

~Rosanne K.

The views expressed in the newsletter are of the person who wrote them and do not represent OA as a whole. Take what you like and leave the rest.

Oregon Intergroup serves meetings from Longview to Tillamook, Salem to Portland, Silverton to Hood River, and includes Vancouver and the surrounding area. Find us online at oregon-oa.org or call 971-317-6343.

Made a Decision

Dear HP,

Well, it's me again. It's a new day and time to make today's decision. The choice is before me regarding this day. To whom shall I yield control of my life today? So many choices. Which shall I pick? Shall I yield my life to the food today? I'm an expert at this one. I've had 60 plus years of experience with this choice. Perhaps before I make this choice I should bow before the refrigerator and pray, "O refrigerator, you are the strength of my life. I love you. I yield to you today."

NO! I can't do that. I won't do that.

Another choice comes to mind. I could yield my life to the diet doctor of the day. With all those initials after their name, they must know more than I do! Mustn't they?

What's that? Think again!

I know. I will yield my life to Facebook. If anyone knows what I should do today, it's Facebook. I'll tell you what: the first weight loss scheme that shows on my feed today will be IT! Will it be Weight Watchers, Paleo, Nutrisystem, Jenny Craig? Who will get control of my life today? That sounds kind of whiskey. What is the first item on my feed is "90 days of H2O only"! Nope, not going there.

Oh, maybe this is it: I can yield control of my life today to me. It can be a ME day. Anything I want. Whatever I want to do. Whatever I want to eat. How glorious does that sound? I thought about that for a minute. I'm rather learned in practicing this one. "Incomprehensible demoralization," as one big book describes it.

That will not do, either.

OK, HP, let's think about the choice I made yesterday. I decided to turn over my will and my life to the care of God as I understood God. It was a good day. I was absolute despite the anxiety of the morning and the pain in the afternoon. I would call it a sane day. Yes... That's what I want for today, as well. A sane day. I choose to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God. How do I understand you today?

LOVE, KINDNESS, MERCY, TRUTH, GRACE

YES. THIS is what I want to commit this day to. Thank you, HP, for your good care if my life!

~Jan E.

Region 1 Needs Virtual Sponsors!

The Virtual Sponsorship Committee is in urgent need of more sponsors. Virtual sponsorship is a great way to get your foot in the door if your sponsor says that you're ready to start sponsoring yourself, but you are a little unsure.

This is a great way to meet people from across the region! Many people still live in areas where OA is new and not well established, so being able to bring your recovery to someone who is struggling is an amazing gift! It will enhance your recovery and strengthen the program as a whole.

Your anonymity will be respected at all times. Please consider virtual sponsorship today! To apply, go to <http://www.oaregion1.org/sponsor-application.html>.

The joy we receive as we try to carry the message is a positive force in our lives today, sustaining us through good times and hard times, transforming us and our companions in recovery.

~The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 102

A Simple Question for Step Three

Three frogs are sitting on a log. One decides to jump off. How many frogs are sitting on the log?

The answer is...three. The one frog only decided to jump off—he hasn't jumped yet.

This, of course, is a perfect allegory for Step Three. In Step Three, we are only asked to make a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of a Higher Power, not to actually do it. Simple enough, but far from easy.

It's easy enough to say the words and to some extent even mean them, but to let go of control and turn it over to a Higher Power is another story altogether for a perfectionist like me. I'm like a two-year-old who needs to be redirected every now and again to do the next right thing. It seems like my Higher Power is constantly waiting on me to make the decision that Step Three requires of me. As long as I am willing to be willing, the ability always seems to follow.

I have found over my years in program that Step Three needs to be one of the steps that I commit to every day. "I can't, God can, I think I'll let God" (Steps 1, 2 and 3) is a phrase I say daily to myself and to my Higher Power to remind both of us who is in charge. I commit over and over again to the decision in Step Three to turn my will and my life over to the care of my Higher Power and in doing so, set myself up to do the actions called for in the rest of the steps.

The principle of Step Three is faith. It is faith that Step Three asks of me—faith in a Higher Power and in the 12 Steps. When I choose to have faith, Step Three is easy; when I lack faith is when Step Three becomes difficult to do.

Today, I choose faith and commit to the decision I make each and every day to live in recovery through the 12 Steps. I might not have jumped off, but am willing to swim if my Higher Power asks.

~ Christina

("The Power of Sharing," continued from Page 1)

Recently, the *Lifeline* article came up during one of our joint therapy sessions. Even though I no longer felt that hopeless because there have been a lot of improvements in our relationship, I was still very scared to share it. The therapist challenged me into it, and I read the article to her and my partner. Both reacted in positive ways, and my fears were quickly replaced with a sense of relief.

My lesson that day was that while sharing issues and feelings can be hard and helpful to share with others, we really don't get the full benefit of sharing if we're not sharing with the people who need to hear us. Healing conversations happen when we can be our authentic self and speak our truth. Up until that moment, my conversations with my partner weren't healing because I was holding on to those hopeless feelings. This time, I had the gift of less fear because of time and changes in the relationship, but I believe it is my HP's will that I bring my whole self to my relationships. Secrets pollute a relationship, and it's my job to dig up the courage, say a prayer, and speak my truth, with love, in the appropriate moment.

~Kym, Beaverton

How has OA saved your life? Share your story of recovery. Email your submission to newsletter@oregon-oa.com