

A Serving of Hope

Volume 5 Issue 8

Oregon Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

August 2016

PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

"The maxim, 'Nothing avails but perfection,' may be spelled 'Paralysis.'"

Sir Winston Churchill

How long will the wallpaper in the bedroom hang down like lopping tongues? Why don't I fix it--or have it fixed?

Because I want to do the job perfectly, I want the best, the prettiest, the most elegant wallpaper in the world. But where am I going to find it? Just thinking about looking through the stacks and stacks of patterns for the *perfect* one stops me in my tracks. Which is why the wallpaper says as it is, and I keep the bedroom door closed.

Where does the need to be perfect come from? It's true that if I don't do anything, no one can criticize my lack of taste or whatever it is I think I ought to have. But the harshest and most unrelenting critic of all is me; I see that wallpaper every day, and I hate the slob who forces me to live that way.

For today: Perfectionism is another obsession, and I pray to be relieved of it. I do the necessary footwork by taking one small step toward a project or activity I have been putting off.

~For Today, page 53.

SERENITY RETREAT INSPIRATION

One of the fabulous sessions of the July retreat at Alton Collins consisted of a writing exercise. We were to take two out of six potential questions to answer on the first step. It was suggested I share my responses to the following questions:

1. How do I know that I am powerless over food? In what ways am I different from normal eaters?

I had never been able to let go of the food. I read about it, I watched TV shows about how to cook it, I watched HSN to order gadgets for food, I craved it, I used it to solve all of my problems. I dieted because of it. Food was my HP, my friend.

I couldn't "Just say NO!"

There wasn't enough willpower to take the obsession away.

Normal eaters may do some of these things, but not to the extent we compulsive overeaters do! "Normies" are able to take a few bites, set their fork down, and get on with life. Not me. I would obsess until it was all gone...then I would seek out more. It was as Karin explained at the retreat--"compulsive eating is a disease of MORE."

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Upcoming Events

August 19-21: The Best Is Yet To Be Retreat, Pilgrim Firs Conference Center, Port Orchard, WA, Pierce County IG, contact Laurie 541-359-8133.

September 6: Monthly speakers meeting, 7:00PM-8:30PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland; contact Ilene 503 268-3064.

September 14: Oregon Intergroup Meeting, 7-8:30pm, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

September 16-18: Region 1 Convention, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. See www.oaregion1.org.

October 16: Workshop on Gratitude, Vancouver. More details to come.

OPEN CALL FOR OREGON INTERGROUP CO-CHAIR CANDIDATES

Have you been thinking about doing service above the group level? Perhaps your sponsor has asked you to grow your program by becoming more involved in OA? May I remind you that this is a program of action?

Our Intergroup is looking for a new Co-Chair. According to our Bylaws, the qualifications are:

- Working the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous.
- Familiarity with the Twelve Traditions.
- Nine (9) months of current abstinence and have worked steps at least through step 7.
- Regular attendee of an active group for a period of two (2) years.

Co-Chair responsibilities are:

1. Serve in the absence of the chair.
2. Perform all other duties as prescribed in the Intergroup policy for job descriptions.

Get Involved!

You not only can help strengthen your region, you can strengthen your recovery!

From the Policies:

- Presides at OIG meetings in absence of the Chair.
- In the event the Chair is unable to fulfill his/her duties, is available to assume these duties temporarily.
- Is familiar with and available to all meetings in OIG.
- Is encouraged to attend several meetings regularly.
- Answers correspondence as directed by the Chair and assists in any way requested.
- Maintains and reviews record of attendance of group representatives and endeavors to contact non-participating groups.
- Maintains the Intergroup audio library, making the recordings available to groups (we have a volunteer for this responsibility).
- Maintains and updates the Co-Chair's notebook.

Please consider applying for this position! If you do not yet meet the qualifications, but know someone who does, please encourage him/her to apply! You can find the application at

<http://oregon-oa.org/documents/JobAppOIGBoard.jpg>.

Please contact Martha at johansenmarthar@gmail.com or call her at 503 244-5080 for additional information and encouragement!

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.

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>.

SERENITY RETREAT INSPIRATION

(Continued from front page)

2 How does compulsive overeating make my life unmanageable spiritually, emotionally, physically, financially, socially?

It made me a prisoner with no hope of parole or escape. I heard the click of the doors that reminded me I was in for life--or so I thought.

Spiritually: Food was my HP. I could not surrender. I wanted what I wanted when I wanted it.

Emotionally: I ate to avoid any semblance of feeling whatsoever. Every situation of life was an invitation to eat, to celebrate life's highs (yes, even Groundhog's Day made the list) or the lows of the daily drudgery of life.

Physically: I ate myself into a state of Type II Diabetes, to facing the possibility of a leg amputation due to diabetes, to obesity.

Financially: Oh, yes. There were shameful financial implications!

Socially: What social life?! My food and I shared a home with the cat *du jour*. I never had time for PEOPLE. They had the power to hurt me. They required conversation, and I never knew what to say!
So I isolated and ate.

All of this before finding the magnificence of recovery through the steps and tools of OA that were so carefully presented at July's Serenity Retreat!

~Jan

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

The views expressed 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.

**Clear away the wreckage of your past.
Give freely of what you find and join us.**

**It is very simple--though not always easy.
But it can be done.**

~Alcoholics Anonymous, page 199.

Progress, Not Perfection!

I chose the reading from *For Today* on the front page because Sir Winston Churchill's words describe my inability to make necessary changes in my life before I came into OA. I didn't feel like I could work on my issues, and I often stalled in any pursuit. I felt like I needed to master my overeating 100 percent immediately...or why bother?

I would often think about how out of control things had gotten, realize that I would never be a perfect person with a perfect past, feel like I had already ruined everything, and give up before I even started working on myself. I could not understand that I needed to "clear away the wreckage" of my past. I could not grasp that progress is progress, no matter how slow. Perfection is not realistic.

I am so grateful for the first time I heard the phrase "progress, not perfection" in an OA meeting. It was like a door was opened in my mind. My sponsor said it to me often, and I think she knew how much I needed to hear it.

Putting the past in the past and beginning to move to a better place *is* a very simple concept. But, like the quote says, it is not easy. Even so, now I have the tools to make sure I continue on my journey, leaving the wreckage behind, and striving one day at a time.

~Ed.

Send a Rep to Intergroup!

Do you want to help strengthen OA in your area and throughout Oregon? Make sure your voice is heard by sending an Intergroup Rep to your monthly Oregon Intergroup meeting. Give your members an opportunity to serve and help all of us benefit from a strong and diverse OA organization. OIG meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Girls Scouts building, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland, OR 97219.

SEEKING CLARITY IN OUR LITERATURE

Have you ever read something in our OA literature that you either didn't understand, or thought you disagreed with, or didn't match your experience? Or even worse felt all of these feelings at once? Perhaps it was something that was read at every meeting?

So how did you handle this? Did a feeling of resentment rise up? Or a feeling of confusion? Or maybe you just spaced out in that part of the meeting? Or was your response perhaps that you mentally put it on the back burner and determined to "let time take time" in this area of your life as well?

I had just such an experience for months, and I must admit I reacted in each one of the above ways. I resented this statement. I spaced out as it was read. And I did put it on the back burner of my mind.

One day the answer came. It was so logical. So sensible. So in line with my experience. And so like my Higher Power.

I heard Step 11 read at least 52 times a year at my home meeting, and each time I had a mental hiccup. I would hear "praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out."

My thoughts ran like this: I want God's will. I certainly want and NEED God's power to carry it out. But I don't ONLY pray for knowledge of God's will. I try to pray spontaneously all day long...after all, isn't our objective constant contact with Higher Power? I thank God for the weather (sometimes it's harder when it is hot...). I pray about the struggles others and I are going through. I pray about my food, my spending, and my life. Where was the balance? Where did that step and my experience coincide?

I pondered over this for a long time. One day on a walk (where I get many of my insights), an answer came to me. **THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE IN PRAYING FOR SOMETHING AND PRAYING ABOUT SOMETHING.** Absolutely, I want God's will to be done in each situation I pray about. But I also so value the privilege I have to bring anything and everything to my Higher Power and really know that I can neither burden nor weary God.

I found peace and congruency in that answer for clarity in our literature!

~Warmly, Jan

Win Something Wonderful Through the Region One Annual Quilt Raffle!

Have a look at the Oregon OA Yahoo group to see pictures of the beautiful quilt being auctioned off at the Region One convention. Cut out the form below to send in your raffle ticket or contact the Region One treasurer at the email address below!

Region One Annual Quilt Raffle (Drawing at Region One Convention)

\$1.00 per ticket; six (6) tickets for \$5.00 - BUY A BUNCH! Need not be present to win!

Mail and make check payable to: Region One, PO Box 23235, Tigard, OR 97281

Mail tickets & checks by September 1 or bring them to convention. Email Contact: regiononetreasurer@yahoo.com

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email: