

A Serving of Hope

Volume 5, Issue 2

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"If we can share what we have learned, if we can apply it to all areas of our lives, we will have indeed performed the task for which we have been placed on this earth."

Beyond Our Wildest Dreams, p. 122

This is the true essence of program: to continue sharing the OA message with all who share our compulsion. When we live the program and follow it in all our affairs, we set an example that shows others that OA works. It is more than talking about it, it is doing it.

The OA program has three A's: awareness, acceptance, and action. Our awareness begins at Step One and continues through the steps, especially in Steps Four and Ten. Accepting our awareness comes gradually as we work the Steps. Then comes the action we need to take. For that we look to find God's will for us. Step three is our starting point when we turn our lives and our will over to our Higher Power.

For Today, by sharing what we have found and taking action in our lives, may we continue to carry OA's message.

Voices of Recovery, page 101

Step Three

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the power of God as we understood Him"

THE QUALITY OF FAITH

"He's sure he believes in God, but suspects that God doesn't believe in him. The answer has to do with the quality of faith rather than its quantity.

We supposed we had humility when really we hadn't.

We had been asking something for nothing. We had really cleaned house so that the Grace of God could enter us and expel the obsession." (AA 12 & 12 pg. 32)

These are the phrases that speak to me this morning as I continue reading and studying Step Two, which leads me right into Step Three.

I came into OA with a strong belief in God, and practicing the ways of my religion of choice, but, if I am honest, I clearly see today, that I wasn't convinced that God believed in me. I wasn't sure I was worth His time, the way I had let Him down so many times and had given Him such false promises. They weren't intended to be false but totally impossible for me to carry out on my own. Even though I was told God loved me and I wanted to believe this, I think I was in some denial of this being true. He loved me, but more of a tolerable love than an intimate one.

I could talk the walk about God and faith but the quality of my inner faith was truly weak. I was always trying to be like others, pray the way they prayed, have the devotions they had, trust the way I saw them trust. Anything to have what I thought was "deep" faith. What I had forgotten is that we are each unique and I couldn't clone to their faith life, I was being called to my own. God was wanting me to come to Him, naked and unafraid, and I was at the other end of the spectrum, wrapped in layers and layers and layers and fearful to the point of almost complete isolation.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 5, Speakers Meeting, 7 pm to 8:30 pm
Girl Scouts Building, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland, OR

Wednesday, March 9, Intergroup Meeting, 7 pm to 8:30 pm
Girl Scouts Building, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland, OR

Friday, March 11-Sunday, March 13, Twin Rocks Serenity Retreat
Twin Rocks Conference Center
18705 Highway 101, North Rockaway Beach, Oregon
Registration/Payment in full due on March 2nd.

Thursday, March 17 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm, Guest Speaker @ the Downtown Portland Meeting, A Guy Who Has Dealt With His Addictions
St. Andre Bassette Catholic Church, 601 West Burnside, Portland

THE QUALITY OF FAITH*cont. from page 1*

Today I see where pride was the first layer around me. Fear was another, selfishness was a third, anger another and resentments were the straps that kept all the layers in place. No wonder I was full of fear and trying to run from myself. All my asking was for the wrong things, a skinny body, a huge weight loss, a wealthier income,, when what I really needed to be asking for was humility, a desire to do God's will with complete abandon to self, to have resentments removed so that I could love freely and be loved by others. My "inside house" was that of a hoarder. I had stuffed junk into every crevice within me. There was no room for more and yet I insisted there was. This "junk" was doing me no good, in fact its contaminating effects were killing me and I didn't know where to start to clean it out.

This is where OA entered into my life and since has been one day at a time in removing the junk and making room for life. There is a force (I choose to call God) that has given me the willingness to start in one corner, not look at the overwhelming amount that has to be done, but rather at just one spot, and clean it up and out. As I started, I had more and more energy and could throw more and more away. I began to see some new daylight. It felt so wonderful that I wanted to keep going and see what more I would discover. I am still cleaning and still discovering but what I have today is so much better than the clutter before. I have a life I am living freely today, discovering an intimate, best friend, type of God. I am finding others that understand me and that I love, and I know I am being loved back. I will keep on this journey as I know it is the way to being restored to sanity. I begin each day with "Thy will not mine be done, just for today". It works if we work it. PC

A NEWCOMERS PERSPECTIVE

"I **HATE** MEETINGS!", I exclaimed when it was my turn to share! "But I know that I need to be held accountable and I think that OA is where I should be." I was disgusted with myself for the umpteenth time in my life. I'd slowly gained back 36 pounds of the 82.5 pounds that I'd worked so hard to lose 9 1/2 years ago. I'd kept most of it off for 6 years and I didn't have to be heavy again. This time it would be different. I had a food plan that I believed in and I stuck with it. It was after the death of my former husband and the subsequent joy in finding the man of my

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

***"Always to extend
the hand and
heart of OA.
For this, I am
responsible.***

NEWCOMERS MEETING

Spread the word! Newcomers are welcome at all OA meetings, and do not have to register in advance to attend. This newcomer orientation meeting is every Sunday from 1:30pm-1:55pm at the Alano Club (Clockroom), 909 NW 24th Ave @ Kearney, Portland, 97210. You are also welcome to stay for the 2pm speaker meeting, which is right after the newcomer orientation meeting.

dreams and marrying him that I started to relax in my firm resolve to never gain back the weight. After all, I wanted to please this new man in my life. I wanted to shower him with my culinary delights and "mama loves me" home baked goodies. At first I ate just a little, then an occasional extra dessert and after cruises to Alaska, the Mediterranean, Russia, Europe and Great Britain/Ireland; I knew that I'd lost the battle of eating like a normal person. After all, I was entitled to all those culinary masterpieces from around the world - I paid for them!

Per OIG Bylaws, the following amendment is included in our newsletter to give due notice of the proposed change.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS OF OREGON INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

PRESENTED April 13, 2016 FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE OIG GROUPS, TO BE BROUGHT TO VOTE ON May 11, 2016

Motion: Move to amend the Bylaws of Oregon Intergroup Article IV – The Intergroup Board, Section 5 – Term of Office, by inserting and deleting as follows:

CURRENT WORDING:

Section 5 - Term of Office

- A. Board members shall be elected to serve for a period of 2 years, except if filling an unexpired term.
 - 1) On even-numbered years, chair, treasurer, newsletter editor and group coordinator shall be elected. On odd-numbered years, co-chair, secretary, member-at-large and events coordinator shall be elected.
 - 2) Newly elected officers shall begin service at the Intergroup meeting following their election.
- B. Board members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.
- C. After an interval of one (1) year, a member may again be eligible for election to their prior office.
- D. Upon election to the board, members shall cease to be a representative of their group and that group shall elect a new Intergroup Representative.

PROPOSED WORDING:

Section 5 - Terms of Office

- A. Board members shall be elected to serve for a ~~period of 2~~ two (2) years, except when filling an unexpired term.
 - 1. In even-numbered years, co-chair, treasurer, newsletter editor and group coordinator shall be elected. In odd-numbered years, ~~co~~-chair, secretary, member-at-large and events coordinator shall be elected.
 - 2. Newly elected officers shall begin service at the ~~Intergroup meeting following their election~~ end of the Intergroup meeting of their election.
- B. Board members shall serve no more than two (2) full consecutive terms in the same office.
- C. After an interval of one (1) year, a member may again be eligible for election to a previously-held office.
- D. Upon election to the board, members shall cease to represent their respective groups ~~and that group shall elect a new Intergroup Representative.~~

Submitted by: Penelope S. Bylaws Committee member, OIG Phone: 503-64-7671 Email: pasinor@frontier.com

Intent of Motion: Currently, both the chair and the treasurer are elected in the same year. As they are the only signers on the IG bank accounts, this change would improve continuity by having only one of them replaced in a given year.

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PERSPECTIVE

Before going to my first OA meeting, I attended many AA meetings in support of my new husband. Slowly, I began to see how this program related to my food compulsions. I contemplated going to a meeting. A MEETING. Aargh. I'd rather spend my time and energy in my sewing room. Not only a meeting but they'd expect me to actually WORK THE STEPS! And SERVICE, oh hell no. Nobody is going to tell me that I HAVE to go to a meeting AND volunteer my time to boot. Oh and there's the whole ABSTINANCE factor too. Was I really that desperate?

So how then, with all my negativity, did I decide to enter the door of my first OA meeting? The God of my understanding worked on me slowly and patiently, inserting little pearls of wisdom in my head with each AA meeting I attended. I watched with delight as people accepted coins to celebrate their days/months/years of sobriety and I knew that something was missing in my life. I wanted a coin too!

I went to my first OA meeting and participated in the readings. I felt the love and acceptance from a few of the people in the meeting. They invited me to come back. They sold me some literature and I went home feeling odd. A transformation was starting to take place. I was curious. I started purchasing/downloading every OA book I could get my hands on. I started listening to Podcasts. I went to meetings, a marathon and an intergroup meeting. And the miracles began to change my life.

When I was growing up my parents were very devout about their religion and spent a lot of time

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studying their religious books, going to meetings and lectures and volunteering their time. As I child I felt very resentful. Not only were they spending too much time away, they were forcing me to be involved as well. When I finally realized where my resistance and negativity was coming from, I prayed and cried and gave it to God. Boom, boom, boom. Three miracles right in a row. I started with two meetings a week and lots of reading and listening to podcasts. Within a couple of weeks, I found a sponsor and listened to an audio book version of AA's Big Book. I asked questions of my recovered alcoholic husband and my sponsor. I bought a workbook and began a very thorough working of the steps. I decided to take an "OA SPA DAY" as I called it and visited 3 meetings in one day. I live in the country and there are no close meetings for me. It was a sunny day and I got in the car and programmed in the address and just went. How fun is that! Each meeting had a different approach in talking about the OA program. One of them was an OA HOW meeting. I went home and researched the differences in the programs.

And then it happened. Miracle number FOUR. The cravings and compulsions I felt for excess food just left me. I'm slowly, steadily losing weight. Could it really be this easy? How many podcasts had I heard that said this was a simple program? Wow. I took my 30 day coin. I took my 60 day coin. In a little over 2 weeks, I look forward to taking my 90 day coin. I'm happy, joyous and free. It CAN happen for you. It's happening to me...

OUT OF THE FOOD AND INTO THE DAY

During a recent phone call with a person I sponsor, after she committed her food plan to me, she said "I have everything planned and prepared; it is so freeing to be out of the food and into my day."

I heartily agreed. My mind went back to the days I buried myself in the clutches of my disease. In my mind they are the "Lost Years." I did not live life; I endured it. Each day became a time of surviving the pain of poor choices and a boring life, having neither purpose nor hope it would improve.

Those days as soon as my child was off to school and my husband left for work, I got into the food and out of the day. Days of watching mindless, inane television reruns, and devouring packages and bags of food. Nothing brought me any pleasure, just numbness. As much as possible I hid my eating from my husband, but I couldn't hide the weight I gained

or the housework undone.

As circumstances changed, I had to go to work outside my home. For awhile I freelanced, going from client to client stopping at fast food places between appointments.

Later I got a fulltime position with a major corporation and began to work my way through the ranks trying to break through the glass ceilings that met me every step of the way. With two breaks and a lunch period, along with snacks hidden at my desk, food still was my constant companion and consolation -- that and resentment. I resented that promotions came more readily to women who were slimmer.

Then came desperate attempts to lose weight, but nothing worked. I just wanted to be thin, but not give up the food. I tried the fat-free stuff, sugar-free stuff,

OUT OF THE FOOD*cont. from pg.*

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but eating full cartons of six servings at once didn't help much. An article I read said I was nearing the point of being morbidly obese. That frightened me.

Somehow in the midst of all my turmoil I learned of Overeaters Anonymous and called. I attended meetings and found a great sponsor, whom I called on my breaks and at lunch.

The fellowship and help in those days encouraged me in more than just the food, because I had felt all alone. Here were folks that understood my struggle. After I shed about 66 pounds, my company promoted to a position I really wanted. I thought I had it made and quit going to OA.

Years later, I came back. I had re-gained back 46 of those pounds. This time OA immediately helped me look to a higher power and I soon found more serenity in my life and stopped bingeing. Later I found a sponsor and began working the steps, and calling in my food. These actions helped me let go of my will and surrender to my higher power.

During my first year of abstinence, I shed about fifty pounds. The ninth step promises began to come true in my life. I *am* finding more peace and more happiness. The understanding I have found in OA is so valuable. I don't feel like a misfit any more. Most of all, I have a life. When I'm out of the food, I truly am into life.

Rosanne Kern, February 2016

VIRTUAL SPEAKERS & PODCASTS

Recordings from O.A. events, in which members of our program share their inspiring stories of recovery from compulsive eating, are available at the Oregon Intergroup website. You may hear exactly what you need to help you abstain from compulsive eating today!

In O.A., we have no "stars" or "V.I.P's." These speakers are sharing their own experience working the O.A. program; their opinions may not represent those of O.A. as a whole.

Podcasts can be found on the web at <http://oregon-oa.org/virtual-speakers/>.

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over food, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we *understood Him*.
4. Made searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we *understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and practice these principles in all our affairs.

The views expressed in this 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.