

Shares & Cares

GREATER OMAHA INTERGROUP • OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

March 2009 • Issue 16

~ Attitude of Gratitude ~

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In April, 2008, at a Super Saturday held in Bellevue, Nebraska, a group of compulsive overeaters decided to do an on line email gratitude list. All who wanted to participate added their names and email addresses to the list. Since that time, a group of people have consistently written a gratitude list each (or almost each) day. Many times this list has helped me go towards the light and to get out of a difficult place. I have also heard from many members that although they might not write a gratitude list, they enjoy and benefit from reading the gratitude lists sent each day. Below and throughout this newsletter are a few small samples of gratitude from the list for all to enjoy. If you're interested in joining the gratitude list, see me about it and we can add you to the list. Love to all, Fletch

Hi everyone, I'm feeling really grateful this morning and thought I'd start out the list. Today I'm grateful for:

1. Having a computer that works most of the time and this list
2. My HP who shows me the way even when I think I'm really lost
3. The great Super Sat and all of the lovely people who came and participated! It was awesome!!
4. A food plan to follow, it's very helpful to have the habit of eating in a sane and healthy way so when I want to reach for the food to comfort myself, I notice the difference
5. All of the tools of the program that when used, do work
6. My morning coffee
7. A great new desk to sit at as I write my emails
8. The life that OA has given me
9. The knowledge that even in hard times my HP is there
10. My sponsor and my sponsees who make me feel ensconced in recovery
11. For so many times hearing just what I needed to hear or having the interaction that I needed to have to help get my out of RID

Well, that's it for today. I hope everyone will have a day of serenity and peace!

Good morning, all! Today, I am grateful:

1. that I am awake as early as I need to be, although it is actually way too early
2. that I got to take a nap yesterday, and my legs hurting didn't keep me from sleeping
3. that I was feeling my feelings last night, instead of eating to numb them
4. that tears can be so productive
5. that there are two OA events today
6. that my life is unfolding as it should
7. for my mother
8. for my mother's healing after surgeries
9. for my father's kindness
10. for my sister's understanding
11. for my ex, and what the years with her taught me
12. for clothes that fit, and some that are getting too big
13. for things like the world's largest ball of twine
14. for laughter
15. for the love of my friends

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God, grant me the serenity ...

I have been noticing lately the changes I have undergone since starting OA five years ago.

There have been the physical changes. I've maintained a ten pound loss that occurred in my first year and have lost an additional ten pounds over the last several months. I can walk into a store and wear the "cute" clothes on the rack. My clothes are no longer so tight that I'm afraid they'll burst open if I bend over or take a large breath.

There have been the emotional changes. I no longer blame others for my frustrations or anger. I have become more accepting of others realizing that if others need to change that God will handle it, that is not my job. My thoughts are no longer overwhelmed by thoughts of food: *What am I going to eat next? When am I going to eat? Where? I'll feel so much better if I eat something!!!*

Finally, there have been the spiritual changes. I now speak and/or pray to God several times a day. I not only let God know about my frustrations, I ask for help, and let Him know when I am grateful. Leaving issues and decisions to God has become easier because I know that He will take

care of me and give me what I need when I need it. I can "feel" God's presence at times and know that He is always with me.

My life has become easier and freer. I feel peace and at times true happiness, the kind that doesn't depend on who you are with (if anyone) or what you are doing. My life is not perfect, I still feel stress and frustrations at times, but I recover from those times more easily and quickly.

These changes did not happen at a magical moment for me. They happened gradually, bit by bit, over the last five years. They happened because I kept coming back, I kept working the steps, and I kept using the tools.

I see now how truly miraculous the changes in my life, the way I live life, have been. Five years ago I knew that something was wrong. That my attitude toward food was "wrong", that my life was "wrong". I felt trapped with no end in sight. Not only do I see an end, I see a light, I see how miraculous living, life, can be and is. Thank you God for this program.

~Suzanne

STOP, DROP AND ROLL

I have been struggling lately. I wanted to binge today, but I took some action. Today, I read the past OA newsletters on the website, and they helped me stay out of the food. This was just the thing I needed today, as I was at work and couldn't make phone calls easily. I have found that there are some Emergency Measures that I need to take in order to stay OUT of the food and stay abstinent. Just like "Stop, Drop and Roll", which is the slogan for what to do in a fire, these Emergency Measures can help me to stay abstinent.

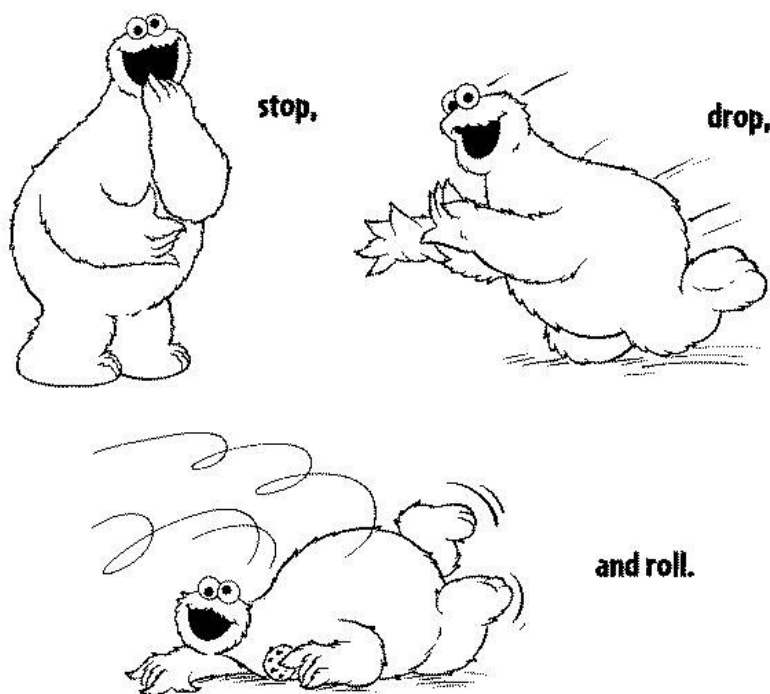
The first thing I can do is STOP. Using a medallion is a way to STOP and think. I have a couple of medallions that were given me for periods of abstinence. It may sound weird, but if I keep a medallion in my pocket and hold it when I want to binge, it becomes a simple symbol of recovery. I use it to focus on abstinence and recovery. It gives me a chance to pause and take a breath before getting into the food. It is a simple step, but a powerful one indeed.

The second thing I can do is to DROP. Getting on my knees and praying is the lifeline to God that I need when I want to binge. Even just saying the Serenity Prayer repeatedly will help me. There are many OA prayers to say, such as the third, sixth and seventh step prayers, and a daily prayer for abstinence. Praying these daily keeps my mind in the right place. If my mind is abstinent, then my actions will be abstinent as well. When I plug into God's power through prayer, I can stay away from the food.

The third thing I can do is ROLL. To move out of myself and contact another OA member is one of the best things to do when I want to binge. Phone calls, text messages, and emails are all helpful ways of contacting other OA members to help me stay abstinent. More importantly, I can be of service and listen to another member and be there for them. If I do service, I can stay abstinent.

These are some Emergency Measures that I use in my program. I hope you find them useful as well. Have a serene day!

~Sarah P.



... to accept the things I cannot change ...

REFLECTIONS FROM PROGRAM

After 24 months in the OA program I am deeply grateful. I think I have become aware of many things. Here are a few things I have learned and observations I have made that have had a strong impact on me during this wonderful time of my life.

1. There is a way. There is always a way. Sometimes “no way” is the way.
2. No expectations. Expectations lead to anxiety. Anxiety accumulates through time and builds up in my mind. High levels of anxiety make me forget about working the program. Instead of thinking about recovery, I think in crazy stuff, embedded in happy anxiety.
3. I can see clearer. Lower levels of anxiety lead to higher levels of serenity. Living in serenity allows me to see problems and challenges in life in different ways and leads my mind to choose the best available option to deal with those problems and challenges in that very moment. Serenity allows me to distinguish between problems that I can solve now, problems that I cannot do anything about and, most important of all, problems that have nothing to do with me.
4. Whatever I do, I can enjoy. “Now” is the moment to enjoy life. Life, consciousness and my Higher Power converge simultaneously in the “now.” Not yesterday, nor tomorrow. Only for today, always in the now.
5. I can work steps 1-2-3 whenever I want. No need to be done with steps 4-12 to work 1-2-3 again. Working steps 1-2-3 every time I can keeps my spirit and mind healthy. The serenity prayer is a wonderful introduction to working steps 1-2-3. I cannot, God can, let it go, let it God.
6. Quietening my mind is a wonderful experience during meditation. I had never experienced meditation before. There are different levels of meditation and I enjoy the continuous discovery of the experience.
7. Giving advice. In a professional setting, giving advice is a necessary action in order to be successful. In the dynamics of recovery, taking or giving advice could become a harmful action. Sharing experience, strength and hope is the best way to go. Easy does it.
8. I always have choices. Even when I think I have no choice, I will always have options within that “non-choice” scenario. I am diabetic, I have no choice in this matter. But I have the option of taking care of myself now. Taking care of the levels of sugar in my blood is the first and most important of my options today.
9. Food was not the problem, it was my solution. I have no choice in whether to eat—if I do not eat, I die; therefore, I eat. But I eat three times per day with nothing in between and I rely on my Higher Power as the solution to my problems.
10. It is not about me. Today I keep my problems in context, regardless if I am in the middle of a mess. It is not about me, but rather more about what actions I can take, within the specific context of the problem, to address the problem and to make contributions to solve the problem. It is about the flow—I am part of the flow, and problems come and go within the flow. Problems are certainly not attached to me and I always have the option to let go and let God.
11. Try not to think in “I” mode. Today when I have to deal with a problem, any problem, I try not to spend too much time in the “I” mode—What am I going to do? Why me? I should do this or that ... First, I pray the serenity prayer, then I become aware that any problem that has to do with me needs my actions as part of the solution, but not my self as part of the problem. Finally, after weighing the available options, I act. I rest assured that I have done my homework; the rest is up to my Higher Power.
12. Work my own program. Whenever I think that I want to help a family member or a lovely friend with their addictions I have realized that the best thing I can do is to work my own program (working the steps, doing service, going to meetings, doing my readings, getting a sponsor, becoming a sponsor, etc.). Sharing my experience, strength and hope is the best way for me to “help” my family members, for me and for them. Without working the program, there is no experience, strength or hope worth sharing.
13. It's never is too late to be kind to myself. Working the program is the best thing I have ever done to be kind to myself.

- Gus

Gratitude Lists continued from page 1

Today I am grateful for:

- ~ My hubby has been home all week.
- ~ My hubby and son cooking dinner last night.
- ~ My three unique and wonderful grandchildren and getting to watch them grow and develop personalities.
- ~ Getting to see an ultrasound of #4 grandchild—not much to see, but “proof” that he/she exists!
- ~ Living close to our grandchildren and having good relationships with their parents.
- ~ Sunshine the past couple of days—I LOVE sunshine!!!
- ~ Feeling somewhat better about my relationship with my Mom.
- ~ The abundance of blessings in my life today.

Today I am really grateful for:

- ~ babysitters
- ~ all different kinds of people in recovery
- ~ lunch after Saturday meeting
- ~ my awesome sponsor—there is just something about her that I've never seen in anyone else in my life
- ~ Sundays, when my daughter takes naps in the pool of sunlight in the dining room—I get her a blankie and pillow
- ~ Sundays, when hubby naps too. so cute
- ~ Sundays period, even if they are the precursor to Monday
- ~ fake jewelry—so fun!
- ~ living in Omaha

... the courage to change the things I can ...

Dear Scalz,



I am not an angry woman, but when you have me in your hands, my teeth are sharper, my shoulders ache with holding all the weight of my dizzy head. The never-empty bowl of sun, moon is insignificant in the light of my vanity--

I run from the truth at the request of my ego, that stifling little man that makes me hold my breath when I stand up to you-- I do not want to measure the weight of my conscience.

I ask you today to release me from your spell, to grant me reprieve from your clutches, so that I may see what size my heart is, and let my body follow. Please be reasonable with me, for I do not have the strength

to walk away alone. Give me partners to rely on, in all my peers, so that I may walk away to a time where I am larger in spirit.

This balancing act--well, I am not a tightrope walker, and I do not know how to fall lightly, so that I do not break bones or promises. I must say goodbye, and go down to the river of sanity to live in the calm waters. For with the currents I can move mountains, but on my own,

I will drown in self-will. Finally, please remind me to look up

to the eyes of my god, rather than staring at the number on your face. You do not contain me, you do not restrain me-- no longer will I bow to you, no longer will I dream of you.

In the story of my life, you will be the hero no longer, but a small fish in the ocean of my bright experience.

- Emily



Attention OA Men ...

A new telephone-based Men's OA meeting!

Wednesday nights, at 7:30pm Central Time

Call (712) 432-0600

Host Access Code: 267533#

It is like a conference call with an access code—there is a moderator that guides the meeting, and members are encouraged to mute and un-mute their phones on cue when participating to reduce noise and distractions.

If you have any questions, please call

Jayson at (214) 683-4492 or

Cliff at (214) 549-9299

Notes from our Region IV Trustee:

- Our latest podcast is up on iTunes and on the world service website. Please have a listen—it's wonderful!
http://www.oa.org/get_podcast.htm
- Visit the Region IV website for the most recent Region IV meeting minutes and newsletter: www.oaregion4.org
- Some fun OA facts from WSO:

Based on all of the longitude and latitude figures OA now has (only missing one active meeting's data), the northernmost OA meeting is the Saturday morning meeting in Siglufjordur, Iceland (northern coast—above the Arctic Circle; the southernmost OA meeting is the Saturday afternoon meeting in Dunedin, New Zealand (south island); the eastern-most OA meeting (off the prime meridian of Greenwich, England) is the Monday evening meeting in Rotorua, New Zealand; and the western-most OA meeting (off the prime meridian of Greenwich, England) is the Friday afternoon meeting in Mililani, Oahu, Hawaii. The Wednesday evening Oxted, England meeting sits 1,000 feet off of the Greenwich meridian itself, making it the most "centrally located" OA meeting. But of course, your home meeting is the one nearest your heart!

Mark Your Calendar ...

Upcoming Intergroup Meetings

- Monday, April 13, 2009
- Monday, May 11, 2009
- Monday, June 8, 2009

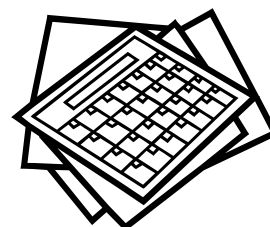
Come Join Us for the Business Side of OA - Volunteer to do service on a broader level, join a committee or just come and listen.

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

6:15 p.m.

**Unity Church
3424 North 90th St.**

**BABYSITTING
AVAILABLE!**



... and the wisdom to know the difference.