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ISSUE 19

Shares & Cares

Greater Omaha Intergroup * Overeaters Anonymous

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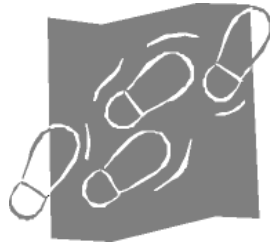
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Interested parties
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“Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely on it.”

-The Big Book p.87

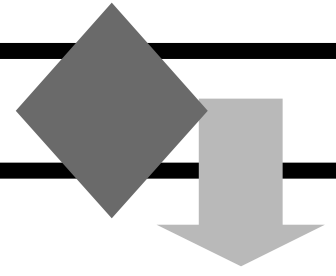
A Twenty-Year Abstinence Celebration

I have been abstinent and in OA for twenty years. When I was a beginner in this program all I wanted was freedom and I got it as soon as I became abstinent. Then as I worked the steps I found inner healing and the joy of my life came back to me. I thought the recovery was going to bring happiness into my life forever. Not that pie-eyed forever but there was a part of me that thought that with recovery I wouldn't have to really suffer. Today I know that isn't true. Recovery means I won't have to suffer *alone* unless I choose. This last year in recovery has been hard. For the first time since that January night in 1990 I didn't want to go to meetings and being

with OA's didn't appeal to me. I was going to meetings because that is what you do. My disease loved this and it convinced me that I didn't belong any more. But all those years of working the steps with my sponsor and sponsees were the insurance against these tough times. Tradition three is clear that I belong if I say I belong and knowing that saved me. I dealt with this by eating potato chips, which is not ideal, but not breaking my abstinence. I remember my old sponsor Anne used to say: "It takes what it takes." And it was like that with this too. I wanted to be OK fast. I wanted the feelings to be cried away in one

sob, but "it takes what it takes." It has taken a long time, certainly longer than I wanted but I feel at home in OA again. I didn't leave, I did the best I could and all the meetings, retreats, steps, traditions and connections I made paid off. I celebrated 20 years and I do have something to share, even if my disease says I don't. My house was full tonight, at times standing room only, with OA's there to celebrate my birthday. I felt the love that I had missed so much because for whatever reason I had to pull away. I am happy to be back and even happier that you were still there for my return. -Cecilia





Serenity Scarves

Due to the recent holiday season and the “winter to remember in Nebraska” I have kept myself busy doing several crocheting projects. I have found this to be a relaxing and fun hobby making some gifts for family and friends. As I am relaxing with my crocheting it seems to be a prime opportunity to meditate. Here are some of my reflections: To complete the projects I can only do one stitch at a time and that reminds me of the OA slogan “One day at a time.” Trying harder or working faster does create any advantages.

Also, progress not perfection comes to mind as I do make mistakes – if you look at my finished projects hard enough you would find many imperfections. And it’s okay, I do not have to be perfect. Occasionally I will make a big mistake or a real doozie. When this happens, if I do not recognize it and correct it the project will not turn out right – the pattern could be off or have crooked edges or just be a really funny looking item . I need to rip out my work – sometimes several rows of it and redo it correctly. This reminds me of steps 8 & 9: Making

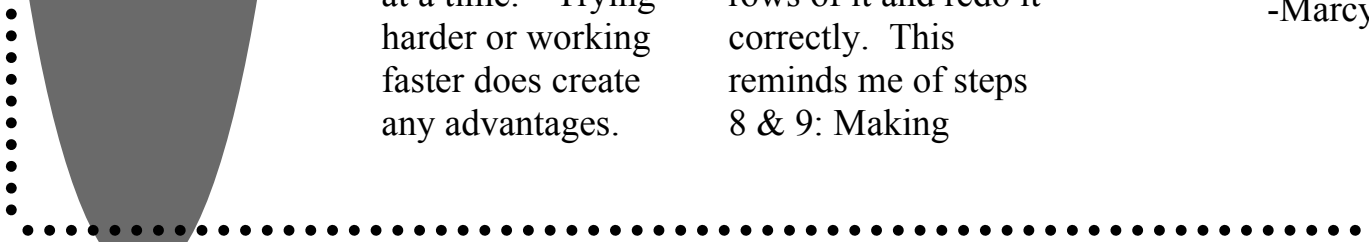
Amends. If I keep following my crochet pattern- like following the steps of the program - it works; plain and simple. Well this is just a short article about my wintertime hobby. I know everyone has different hobbies and favorite pastimes so we could all make up our own analogies about how practice of the OA principles apply in all areas of our lives. I am so glad that I have this wonderful program and wish everyone true happiness, joy and freedom in the new year.

-Marcy

Journaling Topics

What qualifications does my Higher Power need to possess?

What criteria are not important in a higher power?



Serenity Even in Sorrow

Right now is a sorrowful time for me. I'm sad to report that the word "serenity" is not synonymous with "happy". Life in recovery still has its ups and downs. Because I'm a compulsive overeater, my natural inclination is to numb out my feelings with excess food. So far, I'm resisting that tactic.

How? Well, first and foremost, I'm unable to commit to even a full 24 hours of abstinence. I'm down to much smaller blocks. I'm benchmarking my days by certain activities and therefore abstinence is more manageable. Right now, I'm only committed to staying abstinent through the drive home. Once there, I will commit to remaining abstinent through bedtime.

Secondly, I'm doing my best to manage my food obsession. I'm praying for my HP's help to "please help me to stop obsessing over food." I'm also doing my best to avoid any temptation. I'm not carrying cash (vending machines). I avoided doing unnecessary grocery shopping. When I finally did go, I prayed for help in the parking lot to avoid the foods that would not serve me. Sometimes when I feel my willingness to be abstinent is slipping I simply pray "Please let me be willing to be abstinent."

Last, I'm trying to work every tool I've got. Most of this routine was established during easier times and now it is just habit. However, that routine is helping me stay abstinent. So, I

go to my meetings. I read my literature daily. I keep up my daily journaling (food journal and gratitude list). I call my sponsor. I call my sponsees. I'm eating the food that I planned, or at the very least, eating food that will sustain me as opposed to eating foods that I "want."

It sounds like a lot. In written form, it almost sounds like bragging. Essentially, I'm just stringing together moments of abstinence.

-Anonymous

Submit your experience, strength and hope to this newsletter at oanewsletter@cox.net. Our next deadline is April 8th 2010.

Do It Now

I don't know if it's because I'm getting older or if I'm learning to hear my Higher Power's direction in my life better these days, but I find myself noticing all of you more and appreciating how much you do for OA, and therefore for me. I used to feel it wasn't a big deal if I occasionally missed a meeting, but I have changed my mind. Part of the reason is purely selfish, of course, because I don't want to miss anything. However, I find myself wondering about you if you're not here. Are you OK? Do you need anything? Will I see you again? Have I told you what you mean to me?

When I was 21, I moved to Colorado and lived there for nine years. Even though I didn't know my Higher Power personally at that time, I felt moved to write to my Grandparents and tell them how much I loved them and appreciated them. In my family, we didn't do much "mushy" stuff. We'd say, "I love you," when we left, but it seemed more automatic to me than real. I felt pretty stupid writing the letter to my grandparents, but I also felt compelled, so I did it. I don't remember either of my grandparents saying much about it to me, but my mother said that they went on and on about it to her and that it meant a lot to them. I did see them from time to time after that, but not to spend very much time with them before they passed away.

Because I'd written that letter, however, I never had regrets when they died.

Then my Pastor used this partial quote last Sunday from William Penn, "I shall not pass this way again." Once more I am compelled to say to each of you, until I see you in person, I love and appreciate you and I'm so glad you are my partners in this recovery journey! I miss you when you're gone. You make a difference in my life. Please don't fall for the disease telling you that it doesn't matter if you miss a meeting; that nobody cares. We do care, and I'm sorry we don't say it often enough. I just might desperately need to hear what your Higher Power wanted you to share the day you're thinking of not coming.

Remember, "don't quit before the miracle happens," And KEEP COMING BACK!

- Karen

Want to help keep
OA strong?

Attend Intergroup

The second Monday
of each month
at 6:15 PM
at Unity Church
3424 90th Street
Omaha, NE

2010 Service
Positions Available:
❖ 12 Step Within
❖ Ways and Means



today I am grateful for

a nice window so I can look outside...
...from my nice warm house...
...and my nice warm comfy chair...
...with my nice warm booties on...
...and my favorite snuggly nightgown...
...while my neighbor plows the driveway...
...and my husband shovels the leftovers...
...all for the price of a cup of coffee & two cookies...
...while the dishwasher cleans the china...
...and the clothes washer cleans the underpants...
...and the sun reflects off of the snow and into the house...
...and my child happily plays in the front room, warm and safe...
...while I look outside from my nice warm seat in my nice warm bedroom through my window.

I have a lot to be grateful for and it could all be lost in a minute of misfortune. So I'd better not forget it and appreciate it all right now.

I choose to live today, rather than obsessing and wasting time.

I will allow God to change my thinking and actions to live a healthier life.

February 2009

A CHECKLIST FOR LETTING GO

- To "let go" does not mean to stop caring, but that I can't do it for someone else.
- To "let go" is not to cut myself off, but to realize that I can't control another person.
- To "let go" is not to enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences.
- To "let go" is to admit powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in my hands.
- To "let go" is not to try to change or blame another, but to make the most of myself.
- To "let go" is not to care for, but to care about.
- To "let go" is not to fix, but to be supportive.
- To "let go" is not to judge, but to allow another person to be a human being.
- To "let go" is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes, but to allow others to affect their destinies.
- To "let go" is not to be protective, but to permit another person to face reality.
- To "let go" is not to deny, but to accept.
- To "let go" is not to nag, scold or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.
- To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it.
- To "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody, but to try to become what I dream I can be.
- To "let go" is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.
- To "let go" is to fear less, and love more.

- Sandra LeSourd

It's a cloudy Sunday afternoon. The toughest kind of day for me emotionally, so I thought the best thing I could do for myself is to write an article for our OA Newsletter.

I've been in OA for a long time and in therapy for even longer. OA teaches us to rely on a power greater than ourselves, and therapy work on helping people to be more independent and learn to love themselves. Well, I've been struggling with loving myself for a long time, and also I have been struggling with relying on a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity. I finally decided to take my sponsor's advice and "act as if" a power greater than myself existed. So I started by thanking Him for the beautiful Christmas lights I would see left over from Christmas 2008. I still really struggled with a Higher Power being there for ME, because I was "unique," different from everyone else in OA and in the world. But I kept on thanking my HP for various things over the past year. I keep a Daily Food Diary, and write down each day one dialogue between my Disease and my HP. I read this to my sponsor once a week.

In the meantime, I was hospitalized for mental issues: depression, etc. in July of 2009. The new medication the psychiatrist put me on, and daily visits from my sponsor and my husband helped me tremendously. I've turned over a new leaf, since my hospitalization, and I'm finally feeling the Presence of a Higher Power in my life. Before my "Spiritual Awakening," I would do what my therapist told me to do, which was to look into the bathroom mirror and tell myself: "I love you. I approve of you. You're intelligent and capable, and have a good sense of humor." I had those phrases memorized, but I still didn't feel like I belonged, or that I loved myself. The phrases were true, but they just weren't hitting the mark for me. Then I started telling myself in the mirror that "I am a loving child of a loving Father," which really hit home with me!

I now feel my Higher Power's presence most of the time, and I also keep thanking Him for the blessings in my life. As my sponsor says: the feeling of having a Higher Power is "warm and cozy." I don't feel alone when I'm doing His Will, and I remind myself that I am a "loving child of a loving Father".

-Terrie M.

