

MAY 2010

ISSUE 20

Shares & Cares

Greater Omaha Intergroup * Overeaters Anonymous

For Better or For Worse

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Sometimes I feel really sorry for my husband.

It's not that I'm a bad wife, bad person, bad anything. I'm just as okay as the next person, I think.

It's that he often finds himself in a role that he can never live up to -- that of my Higher Power. He is doomed to fail, every time. And, you know, he didn't ask for that. As for me, well, my program is headed for relapse every time I do this.

As for his role and why he can just never win -- well, he's only human. So he cannot be totally unconditionally accepting. He cannot be eternally patient. He cannot be my 'all'. He can't always forgive. He can't keep talking and talking just to meet my needs all the time. And he definitely doesn't have the great manners that my HP has. He's just human.

Sometimes he has to go potty, after all, and sometimes he must chew his food. Also, he seems to wish to sleep for hours each night. Sometimes when I want him to rescue me, he is at school or perhaps taking a nap, and therefore not available.

My higher power, however, the real one - not the human or inanimate ones that I occasionally appoint, is always available, eternally patient, unconditionally accepting, full of great advice, brimming over with just-in-time tips. My fave is this one, "CAN OF WORMS ALERT! Don't say that!" Humans just cannot crawl into my head and whisper that stuff like my real Higher Power can.

I realized today that one purpose of attending regular meetings, reading literature, talking to other addicts, and working with a sponsor, is to avoid worship of false higher powers. At meetings, I hear about *real* HPs and moments of naked honesty. The things I hear often remind me of what I'm missing. Sometimes I feel my HP during the meeting, and come away inspired and filled with hope. Other times, I just feel relieved that I have this place to come to...a place of acceptance. Like what I get with my HP.

During phone calls, my HP sometimes will help me help someone else. Sometimes I will hear my real HP through whomever I am speaking with. Sometimes just making phone calls reminds me that there is hope, and reminds of who my real HP is.

And when I talk to my sponsor, of course, I am reminded of how I can get closer to my HP, and that's by doing what she says. What she says is that I ought to plan my food the day before, work the steps, and be of service to others. I love it when things come in threes.

I hear my HP through her. It's not that I should appoint her as my HP - she is human, just like me. The things she advises me to do are things that are on her heart...not just made up. She is being nudged to tell me this. And of course, she knows me, and she can be honest with me so that I can learn to be more honest with myself.

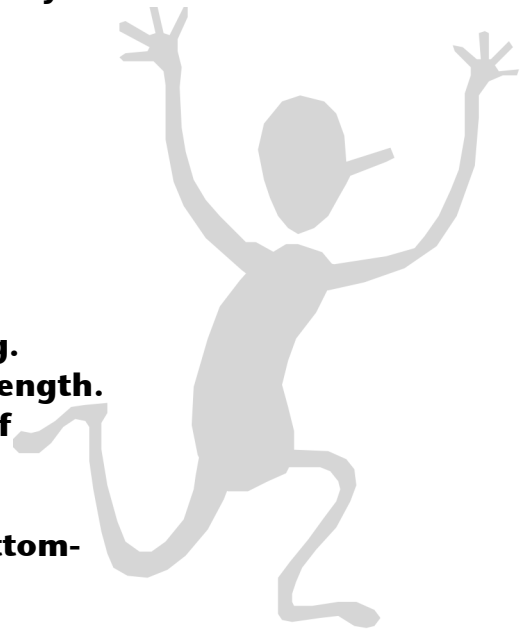
I can find my real HP, or at least open up to it, if I can just get to a meeting, call my sponsor, or even call someone else and connect. This would explain why attending more meetings and connecting with others can help one get out of a slump, if one is willing to get out of the slump. Sometimes we are miserable but not ready to leave that state and head for Vegas. Hahaha. But that's a topic for another article. :)

This poem was written by my sister several years ago, as a way of helping HER process a rough time in her life. Later that same year, she mailed it to me, as I was about to spiral downward toward my "rock bottom". I framed it and have kept it ever since. This poem has been read several times to (hopefully) help many people. I hope it will give you the same comfort it has given me. – Marla

**Hang on sister, the dream I'm dreaming for you is almost finished.
I know it feels endless
But if I were to show it to you now,
You'd surely self-combust just from its
Pure Abundance.
Be Patient.
I'm not going anywhere.
In the meantime, grab on tight to today.
That's where your magic is.
Honor the lessons that come from waiting.
In their subtleties comes your deepest strength.
If you can take care of the day-to-day stuff
I'll take care of the big stuff
and pretty soon we'll be there and
I'll open this dream up for you Top-to-Bottom-
then it's yours to fall into
-complete-
Protected by the delicate wisdom
you found on your journey here.
And when that day arrives
you'll breathe calm,
and then you will know
WHY.**

Love, God

By Lisa Jenkins



Submit your experience, strength and hope to this newsletter at oanewsletter@cox.net. Our next deadline is August 1st 2010.





Friends – Have one, Be one

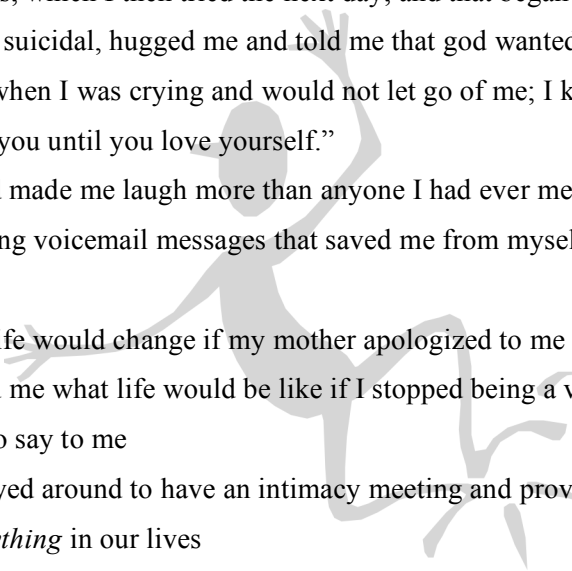
What would you think if I sang out of tune, Would you stand up and walk out on me. Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song, And I'll try not to sing out of key. Oh I get by with a little help from my friends . . . Do you need anybody? I need somebody to love. Could it be anybody? I want somebody to love. “With A Little Help from My Friends” by Joe Cocker

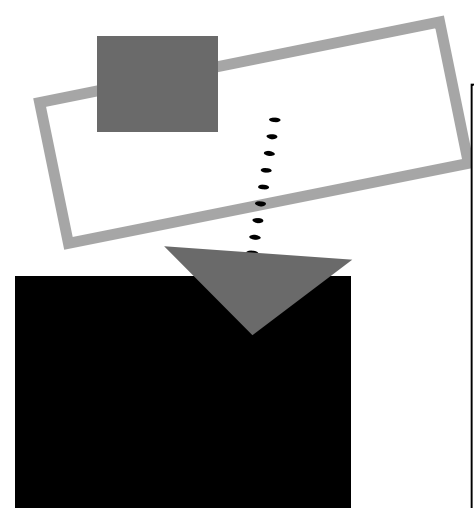
What would we do without our friends? Before OA, I had codependent, dysfunctional, unhealthy friends who were mostly addicts and almost all overeaters. It was unclear whether I was the bad influence upon them, or they upon me, and I actually liked that about the situation! My disease is cunning, baffling, and powerful.

I put a bit of the song lyrics up there because I think it's quite clear that we all need somebody to love, and that we need to receive love so we can grow and change and face ourselves. The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that, “Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.” I don't know about you, but I need the strength I get from others in the rooms, and now I'm learning about the courage, learning to trust enough to love people back.

As I come to my eighteen months of abstinence date, I am in awe of how a meeting never fails to be a display of inspiration and brutal honesty and hope in recovery. We hold each other up. And so I want to share a list I made about my experience; it is about some of the pivotal moments I have had along my path with OA, and the people who helped to save my life. I hope you can relate, and maybe you can write your own list.

Today, and always, I am grateful:

1. for my fellow OA who came to meetings with me every day for our first couple months
 2. for my fellow OA who got to meetings early with me and brought me coffee
 3. for my fellow OA who shared an initial abstinence date with me, and gave me a lifelong twin
 4. for my fellow OA who came to every meeting bursting with enthusiasm, and gave me hope
 5. for my fellow OA who suggested I build a concept of a higher power that would serve me, rather than struggling with accepting someone else's idea of god
 6. for my fellow OA who told me about writing god letters, which I then tried the next day, and that began my abstinence
 7. for my fellow OA who, on the day I came to a meeting suicidal, hugged me and told me that god wanted me around
 8. for my fellow OA who gave me a hug after a meeting when I was crying and would not let go of me; I kept trying to pull away, and this person said, “We will love you until you love yourself.”
 9. for my fellow OA who always invited me to coffee and made me laugh more than anyone I had ever met
 10. for my fellow OA who called my phone and left singing voicemail messages that saved me from myself many days—laughter should be one of the tools, I think
 11. for my fellow OA who, long ago, asked me how my life would change if my mother apologized to me for making me fat and ruining my life—in essence, she asked me what life would be like if I stopped being a victim: powerful words I needed someone to be willing to say to me
 12. for my fellow OAs at the fall retreat last year who stayed around to have an intimacy meeting and proved to me that we really can be open and honest about *everything* in our lives
 13. for my fellow OA who challenged me with a certain type of strong personality; I have learned so much from my own intolerance, and grown as a result
 14. for my fellow OA from whom I first heard this analogy: “Imagine you are standing before an ocean, looking down, only the ocean is made of your favorite binge food. Still you know that, no matter how much you have, you will never be satisfied.”
 15. for every one of my fellow OAs and your acts of kindness toward me, which are too numerous to list; you all kept me coming back long enough to find my joy and serenity. Thank you, Emily
- 



Want to help keep
OA strong?

*Attend
Intergroup*

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

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

I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to everyone for their visits, phone calls, flowers, thoughts, prayers, well wishes, caring and support during this sorrowful and sad time of my life. The loss of my beloved Joe was made lighter through all of you and this twelve-step program. I know that I will have many difficult days ahead, but acceptance is the answer and my Higher Power will be keep me grounded in sanity and serenity. He is at peace and I am very blessed!

Sincerely grateful,

Marcy S.



PI Corner

The goal of OA Public Information is to carry our message of recovery to the compulsive overeater who still suffers. Mindful that OA is a program of attraction, not promotion, we can attract newcomers to OA when we:

- 1 - inform the general public about our program
- 2 - tell professionals and other who work with compulsive overeaters about OA
- 3 - keep communication within the Fellowship open so members and groups can carry the message more effectively

The Next PI Committee Meeting:

May 20th
6:00 pm
Crane Coffee on 76th and Cass

Journaling Page: A Nightly Inventory

Steps 10 and 11 call on us to “Continue to take personal inventory and when we are wrong promptly admit it” and to “seek through prayer and mediation to improve our conscious contact with God.” How exactly are we to do that? Well, the Big Book gives us specific instructions in the chapter “Into Action.” If you’ve never done a nightly inventory, consider using the following template and sharing with your sponsor.

“When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we:
RESENTFUL:

SELFISH:

DISHONEST:

AFRAID:

Do we owe an apology?

Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once?

Were we kind and loving toward all?

What could we have done better?

Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could for others, what we could pack into the stream of life?

But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection for that would diminish our usefulness to others. AFTER MAKING OUR REVIEW WE ASK GOD’S FORGIVENESS AND INQUIRE WHAT CORRECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN.”

Watch Out for UFO's!

I have been struggling with UFO's lately. I have seen so many of them, especially during the recent holiday months. I'm sure you've seen them too. They can be annoying. They can be challenging. They will always be a part of our lives.

What are UFO's you ask? UFO's are Unexpected Food Opportunities – those unforeseen situations where food is available, like the unannounced arrival of bagels at work, the unexpected edible gift from a friend, or the unpredicted appearance of treats in your home.

Most of the time, by the grace of God, I do not have to worry about surprise food. When my program is strong and I am staying connected to my Higher Power, those UFO's just pass on by. But when I am struggling, when I am trying to control the events, people, and situations in my life, when I am not using the tools of the program, and due to my lack of action, I am not experiencing the peace and serenity that can be a part of my recovery, that's when the UFO's loom large.

Before coming to OA, UFO's were not a problem for me. As a matter of fact, I welcomed them! Treats in the teacher's lounge? I'm there! A large box of chocolates from a friend on Valentine's Day? Let's dig in! A family member brought home some snacks for the game on T.V, tonight? You bet! But that all changed when I found Overeaters Anonymous.

After joining OA, it seemed like there were more UFO's around than ever. It was as if everyone in the world was out to get me. I went through a period of time where I thought everyone else should change their behavior to accommodate me. I believed that the people in my life should limit their eating in my presence, should not offer me foods they know I can't eat, or simply refrain from bringing my trigger foods anywhere near me.

Program has taught me a lot. I no longer believe the world should revolve around me. I now understand that *I* am the one with the problem, not everyone else. It's *my* behavior that needs to change, not theirs. If I am doing the work, my struggles with UFO's are greatly reduced and can even be eliminated. My Higher Power will help me through those difficult times when the disease takes hold, if I let Him. If I am doing my part, God will relieve the compulsion to overeat.

I have heard so many times during my 4 years in recovery that this is a simple program, although it's not easy. When the UFO's appear and it becomes difficult to deal with them, I try to remember that. How I need to handle UFO's is not complicated. I simply need to turn to my Higher Power and ask for help. I ask Him to tell me what actions I need to take in order to help myself get back on track. As long as I am willing to listen, the answer always comes. Always. - Sherry W.