

Southeastern Arizona Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

DESERT RECOVERY

March 2004

PO Box 43221, Tucson, AZ 85733-3221

UP COMING OA EVENTS

March 12 - 14, 2004

"Spring Region 3 Convention and Assembly"

Salt Lake City, UT

Allen 801.520.4736/ al-

lenc@bb417.org or

Teri 801.296.2734/ teri.

tlc@ispwest.com or

www.oautah.org

Meetings all over AZ!!

Try ONE

August 27—29, 2004

"Region III Assembly and Convention"

Tempe, AZ

*Get your events listed in the
Desert Recovery!!!*

GOD,
GRANT ME THE SERENITY,
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I
CANNOT CHANGE,
THE COURAGE TO CHANGE
THE THINGS I CAN,
AND THE WISDOM TO
KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

desertrecovery@theriver.com

Better is Enough

I'll always bless that unknown member who shared those three little words long ago that changed my life. If there is one character defect above all that has hindered my recovery, it is perfectionism...the kind that demands everything be done immediately and just right on the first attempt...the kind that speaks in the voice of S.H.A.M.E. (Should Have Already Mastered Everything)...the kind that must always look good.

Perfectionism caused me to lie to myself about how much I ate, refusing to look at mirrors or step on scales. It forced me to hide when I became fat; it never allowed me to buy my obese self nice clothes; and it caused me to throw away a year of abstinence for one slip. I called myself sloppy, undisciplined, weak-willed, fat slob and worse.

Perfectionism was a cold, cruel, unforgiving taskmaster that allowed for no plateaus, no lapses, no mistakes or failures without severe consequences.

When I first came to OA 22 years ago, I found I was not alone. Many members talked of "squeaky clean, not an extra string bean, back to back perfect abstinence." OA's relapsed and fell from grace where often shunned as though they were lepers. Despite talk of acceptance, underneath the warmth and hugs, came voices of internalized critical parents. So, "better is enough" was like a gentle voice giving me permission to be human. I didn't have to do my 4th step in one day. I didn't have to read the "Big Book" overnight. I didn't have to understand everything in the "Twelve and Twelve." I didn't have to find the perfect sponsor or be the perfect speaker. And I didn't have to know my future food plan, or even God's will for me. All I had to do was what was in front of me to be done and leave the results to God.

I didn't get the entire message through those three words...I didn't unlearn perfectionism perfectly overnight. But "Better is Enough" was the initial wedge in opening my mind to a new attitude, knocking this enormous, crippling monkey off my back. As the years past, I heard more wisdom: "If you are failing, you must be doing something right." It took me quite awhile to understand that the speaker wasn't advocating failure, but accepting it as part of growth. That's the message I got when I heard: "Our perfection consists of making mistakes." Or "Failure is success on the installment plan, if we learn from it."

I finally realized that recovery is not a goal but an on going process of increasing acceptance of all aspects of myself, the obese, the clumsy, the fearful, the tactless, the raging and yes, be perfectionist. I can not change my disowned aspects, only God can. But, paradoxically, by accepting what I could not change, I changed. The slips happen less often, my weight stabilized, people told me I was gentler, softer, calmer. During that time, OA itself changed. Literature on the Twelfth Step Within appeared. The word "relapse" was no longer a mark of shame. And three other little words, "progress, not perfection," became an often heard slogan.

The process continues...as I become aware of the shadowy, orphaned aspects of myself, I admit them into the circle of acceptance. The more of myself I accept, the better I communicate because I have more empathy. Perfectionism has been a mental and emotional cancer for me. Thanks to my Higher Power I am now in remission. I will celebrate my 19th abstinent birthday in two months, and though I may not be perfect, I am progressing because better is really enough.

Anonymous

Heart of Texas Intergroup Newsletter

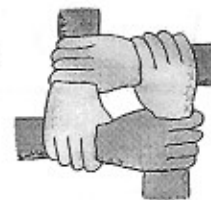
STEP THREE

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

The OA Preamble: Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine, we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

Intergroup in Action

➔ We're on the air! This winter, Tucson community radio station KXCI has occasionally aired free public service announcements about OA with our local phone number. We'd like to get the word out there in TV, press, and other radio stations, too. If you have any media contacts to share, please call Public Information chair Beth M. at 621-8012 (days) or 577-8745 (home). Thank you, Gaynelle, for making this happen.



➔ Green Valley OAs hosted a very busy booth at the GV health fair February 24. Through the combined efforts of both the Weds/Sat groups, it was a very successful event, with lots of positive feedback from participants.

➔ Quick-n-Easy service opportunity: Volunteer an hour or so at this year's Pima County Health Fair, Wednesday, April 7, from 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. handing out literature and meeting lists. It's at Presidio Park, near City Hall. Call Gaynelle at 623-1441 with which time(s) would fit your schedule.

➔ Next Intergroup meeting is **April 17**. We'll be taking our annual intergroup inventory (reviewing what progress we made on our intergroup's goals for 2003-2004 and setting new ones for the coming year). We'd love to hear **your** vision for OA in southeastern Arizona and how you can help make it happen.

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The loss of an OA pillar, one that has been with us over 25 years, the loss of Minnie K...

Minnie was an OA sister to one and all. On January 27, 2004, God took this wonderful, gentle soul. Minnie was a lady who always had a smile and an encouraging word. She always used the tools of OA; her favorite tool was the telephone, something that is very hard for a lot of us. Minnie brought serenity to everyone she touched. She will be missed and will leave a large, empty space in the hearts of all who knew her. Minnie's favorite phrases will endure, though. Every time I think I might lose my abstinence, I hear her voice say, "Nothing tastes as good as abstinence feels," and I'm back on track. Minnie started the Tuesday 10:45 Tender Solutions OA meeting with two other people. As long as this meeting continues, so will her memory. May God keep her safe and may we always feel her in our hearts. *Gloria*

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ACCEPTANCE

"And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation—some fact of my life—unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my compulsive eating, I could not stay abstinent; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I can not be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes."

Big Book

