

Southeastern Arizona Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

DESERT RECOVERY

December 2006/January 2007

PO Box 43221, Tucson, AZ 85733-3221

Upcoming OA Events

Aug. 30 – Sept. 2, 2007
World Service Convention
Philadelphia, PA

SEAZ Intergroup is hosting the **Region III Convention and Assembly in Tucson in Fall 2008**. Call either Marilyn B. at 520-417-1645 or Karen S. at 520-298-1975 to volunteer for a committee or to get information.

Get your events listed in Desert Recovery!
Email Shannon at:
desertrecovery@cs.com or
call 722-9779

Danger

Some people claim that the holidays are the most dangerous times for a compulsive eater. I look at it a bit differently. I feel the most dangerous times for me are the three times per day that I set down to a meal, and the three times per day in between those meals! My experience reminds me that when I act daily to work and live the steps, it matters not if it is a Monday, Thursday, Saturday, even-numbered day, first day of the month, last day of the year, or holiday. That being said, Happy New Year! OK, so it's only December, but rather than talk about the other upcoming holidays, I want to talk about a holiday tradition of mine that I've come to treasure. Each year as I pull out my holiday decorations, I discover a note from someone that anyone with an eating disorder can relate to as being very important to me...ME! Actually, the letter is from the "me" of December 31st of the previous year. It reminds me of all the things that seemed so urgent and important a year ago (I will have forgotten most of them in the 11 months between us). It talks of my upcoming goals and hopes (rather than "resolutions" and "shoulds") and encourages me to make it through another holiday season preserving the most precious gift I've ever been given, the gift of abstinence.

So after the holidays have passed, and I find myself waking up on the last day of the year, rather than look forward to getting drunk that night to forget the previous year, I anticipate remembering, honoring and preserving it for my friends...the "me's" of the future. Give it a try, you might just like it!

Reprinted from The Reach Out - San Diego County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Dec. 2004, Issue 12.

Remembering the Miracles

I was in a terrible place emotionally and spiritually on Friday and early Saturday morning before my OA meeting. On Friday I had decided not to call anyone. I was depressed, obsessing about my lack of money and having an emotional relapse. Saturday morning I was reading *Lifeline* while eating breakfast - not because I wanted to, but because it is what I do when I eat breakfast. One writer said that if we are abstinent, everything else will fall into place. I thought to myself, "What hogwash. It's one of the lies of the program" How sick is that? Normally, I would've thought, "that's so true. It's one of the promises of the program."

My disease was telling me that I'll never get ahead financially, that having a job and working each day is useless and won't make any difference. I've worked my whole life, and what good does it do? Why bother? One of the promises of this program is that "feelings of uselessness and self pity will slip away." I now have a new awareness of that promise. I am familiar with self-pity, but not with feeling useless. I called an OA friend and reached her answering machine. Almost in tears, I left a message that I wasn't doing well emotionally. I felt better because I had admitted it to someone, but I couldn't shake the feelings. While dressing for the meeting, I thought that at least I wasn't obsessing about food. I was abstinent, my clothes fit and I was happy with the way I looked. That was the only thing I could feel grateful about, but it didn't pull me back from the abyss I was sinking into. I can't remember the last time I was so low.

Just going to the meeting room and setting out literature and chairs helped me feel more calm. I shared in the meeting that I was having a hard time. I realized that I had lost hope and faith. By the end of the meeting, I felt much better. I'm back to normal now, and I have my hope and faith back. Nothing has changed in my life except my attitude.

Someone shared a nice thought with me after the meeting. She suggested that instead of making a gratitude list, I make an "experience" list of the miracles that have happened in my life when I have "let go and let God." This is another reason why meetings and using the telephone are so important to my recovery. When I forget some of the miracles HP has performed in my life, others can remind me. As I read in a recent issue of *Lifeline*, "I have learned in program that I'm not so much a slow learner as a fast forgetter." I am grateful that I only had to wallow in self-pity and despair for a day and a half rather than day after day.

Reprinted from Heart of Texas Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Nov. 2004, Vol. 25, Issue 11

Intergroup in Action

As I write this, the holidays are in full swing and all around me are opportunities for craziness. It's more important than ever for me to live in the present moment and live one day at a time. Oh, how easy it would be to get into the faux spirit of the season—constant eating, drinking, shopping, etc. That's the way I used to exist through the holidays. I surrounded myself with food. My focus was on eating what I could now and promising myself that I would get my food in control tomorrow. By focusing on the food in the present and living/planning my life in the future, I was depriving myself of healthy relationships with family and friends. My connection with my Higher Power was clogged with my obsession with food and my cravings. As I celebrate this season, I rejoice in the OA program and my abstinence. My abstinence, which includes following my food plan and working the 12 steps, is the greatest gift I could have in my life. I wish you the same for this holiday and the New Year.

2007 will be an exciting year for all of us. Our first event will be Unity Day in Green Valley on Saturday, February 24th. I hope you'll join us there. Remember, "together we can do what we could never do alone."

Janis, SEAZ Intergroup Chair

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

"Behind all of these self-sacrificing attitudes is a single spiritual foundation, so important to our Fellowship it is part of our name: anonymity. Without a foundation, no house can stand. It is essential that all of us understand and respect anonymity if OA is to survive and we are to find recovery here...To be anonymous in OA means to be one among many, to accept ourselves as no better or worse than our fellows. This acceptance places us in a state of humility. It makes us teachable. We find ourselves listening intently to people whose last names we don't know. They may be younger than we are, or less successful by material standards. They may come from entirely different backgrounds. We learned that they just may say something that will be key to our recovery."

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.

"In OA we learn that a lack of willpower isn't what makes us compulsive overeaters. In fact, compulsive overeaters often exhibit an exceptional amount of willpower. But compulsive eating is an illness that cannot be controlled by willpower. None of us decided to have this disorder, any more than we would have decided to have any other disease. We can now cease blaming ourselves or others for our compulsive eating...Once we have become teachable, we can give up old thought and behavior patterns which have failed us in the past, beginning with our attempts to control our eating and our weight. Honest appraisal of our experience has convinced us that we can't handle life through self-will alone. First we grasp this knowledge intellectually, and then finally we come to believe it in our hearts. When this happens, we have taken the first step and are ready to move ahead in our program of recovery."

Excerpted from Tradition 12 (pages 199 and 201) and Step 1 (pages 1, 6, and 7) of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*.

Desert Recovery is now available via email! If you would like to receive the newsletter and updated meeting list in your in-box every other month, drop an email to desertrecovery@cs.com! It's convenient for you and saves your Intergroup money!

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.

OA Responsibility Pledge

Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion, for this I am responsible.