

DESERT RECOVERY

March – April 2010

<http://www.oasouthernaz.org>

Upcoming Events

LOCAL (See Page 4 for Details!)

March 20..... Over & Under Party/Anniversary
Jul 30- Aug 1Big Book Weekend
Aug 14, for 14 weeks.....B.B. Step Study
Oct 22-24.....St. David Retreat

OUT OF TOWN Information @
<http://www.oa.org/datebook.php>

Apr 17 Recovery in the Country, OK
Jul 16-17 State Convention, OK
Aug 13-15..... Region III Convention, AZ
Aug 26-29 OA 50TH Anniversary, CA

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Desert Recovery Newsletter

- 1) Deadline for next issue
May 1, 2010
- 2) Get your events listed or submit an article
- 3) Receive the newsletter by e-mail

Contact Beth M. at:

newsletter@oasouthernaz.org

Came to believe...

That a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

I always believed in a "power greater than myself." I believed, but it was just out of reach. I went to church sitting up straight in the hard wooden pews, I read the bible, I got on my knees to pray before going to bed, I took communion, and yet God was so separate from me and so far away.

Others seemed to have a relationship with God but not me. I took what I could from God's teaching and followed a "moral" path always attempting to tell the truth and admit my wrong doings. Being "moral" gave me power!

I felt desperate for God and turned others into my heroes - my God. I tried to emulate them, do everything for them, and I worshiped them. When the intimate relationships ended I was so lost and alone.

I felt a strong "spirit" when I exercised, moved, took on physically-demanding projects, hiked and ran outside. I was

connected to "spirit" doing these activities and it made me feel more powerful.

God was present and I felt supported in my self-sufficiency and moral standards. This feeling was especially heightened when I smoked pot! I longed for a deeper spiritual connection. I searched and searched making people, exercise, projects, pot, alcohol, and food my God. The "hangovers" proved that this research only separated me further from God.

I was empty, alone and afraid. I knew and know I have a spiritual disease. I knew it was not the food that was the problem. When I came into OA I felt willing to do anything to believe in God, trust God and be healed.

It is fascinating to me that to be empowered, I must give up my power to God. It's like when I am tired. If I expend energy physically I gain more energy. I must give to receive.

~Jody S.

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Abstaining vs. Dieting

I have sometimes had a problem with the notion of being on a diet. I sometimes feel that way still, but not so long ago I believe that God helped me with this. I realized that when I'm on a diet I am using my will. Sometimes I can go for a long time dieting on my self-will, although when I first came to OA four years ago I could not stay on a diet to save my life.

The difference for me is this:

Diet = my will
OA = trying to find God's will in my life

Diet = ends at some point
OA = plan of eating I can live with for the rest of my life

Diet = for myself, by myself, alone, isolated

OA = People who are just like me, friends, support, others who understand

Diet = selfish notion that if I lose weight I will be happy

OA = Find happiness with who I am imperfections and all

Diet = Everything is about me

OA = Principle of brotherly love

Diet = all about the food and deprivation

OA = all about recovery and learning to eat the way God might want me to.

Diet = me trying to control my life and others

OA = God does for me what I can't do for myself

Diet = fight, fight, fight the world

OA = surrender to win

These are just a few. I'll bet you could come up with some others.

(continued on page 4)

The Next Little Right Thing

INTRO: God has done for me what I could not do for myself.

When I originally wrote this article in April 2003, I was having trouble finding (and keeping) a job. I was truly scared; but I took my own advice and just did the next little right thing every day. In May 2003 I got a job through a friend of a friend, and I still have that job!! I do something that I never would have thought to look for; and actually enjoy it most days!! It is a job I can do until I retire; and I am AMAZED at how God has taken care of me!

Article Reprinted from 2003

When I read the promises of the program on pages 83-84 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, I feel happy and grateful that most of these promises have come true in my life with one exception, "the fear of economic insecurity will leave us". I try to tell myself...that's not so

bad... after all, that's only one half of one promise out of twelve that has not come true. Not so bad?? It drives me CRAZY!!

Some days I wake up in

terror and it takes an hour of reading God books to calm

me down and get my head on straight. I wish that I had more faith. I wish that I could automatically believe what the books tell me – that God is in charge of my life, everything is in Divine order and God is providing for my every need. Sometimes I don't have that faith and all I can do is pray for it.

Prayer and meditation is the first thing that I do every day.

If I am still feeling afraid and insecure after praying and meditating, all I can do is get up and do the next little right thing. The next little right thing is usually fixing breakfast. Sometimes I have to break that down into small steps like getting out the oatmeal and measuring the water. But do you know what? When I am concentrating on measuring the water or the oatmeal, I am not obsessing on next week and how I'm going to pay the rent. If the next little right thing is watering the roses, I am concentrating on the sunshine and the sound of the birds in the yard and not on the utility bills. My mind can only think about one thing at a time. So if I spend my day just doing the next little right thing, it forces me to stay in the here and now where God is.



~Meg R.



'Today I am Grateful'

(cont. - from Jan-Feb newsletter)

Today I am eternally grateful for the 12 step program as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Quoting page 45 of the Big Book, "Lack of Power was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a power Greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this power? Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a power greater than yourself which will solve your problem."

Today I am so very grateful that I have found an incomparably beautiful, perfectly loving,

awesome, gracious, wonderful higher power whom I call God, who has solved my problem of power.

Today I am grateful to know that I am powerless over food and people and places and things in my life, BUT - there is one who has all power and that one is God. And today I know that God is working out all things in my life for my benefit.

Today I am grateful to have tools and solutions to address every situation in my life. I have tools to deal with resentments and fears, I have a solution for dealing with relationships, and for dealing with insane thoughts and desires. I don't

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always use all of the tools, I am pretty poor in using some of them, but I have them. And they work when I work them.

Today I am grateful for the gift, privilege, and responsibility of being a sponsor. The fact that God entrusts me with such a precious role takes my breath away.

I am grateful that God has worked through this program to give me abstinence and a way of living that really works. Today I absolutely insist on enjoying life; and I can only do that by maintaining my abstinence and by daily turning my will and my life over to the care of my loving God.

~Rachel S.

Greetings fellow travelers...

The "road of happy destiny" is not always a smooth one. I have been homebound these past few days with a virus that I would not wish on anyone. I have been using the telephone a bit more than usual and listening to CDs of speakers with long term recovery to help me stay connected with the fellowship and to fend off the voice of my disease. It's always waiting there – cunning, baffling, and powerful – to try to convince me that a little more food will make me feel better. My HP has put some messengers in my path to help me stay focused on my recovery.

Recent reflections on the OA fellowship in southeastern Arizona have led me to an amazing awareness. SEAZ Intergroup is quite a busy place to be. We have a strong fellowship of people willing to carry the message of OA recovery both within and outside of the fellowship as though our lives depended upon it – which, in fact, they do. It makes me so grateful to be a part of this fellowship. Over the next couple of months we will be doing our annual Intergroup Inventory. You will have an opportunity to review it in your meetings soon and give us feedback on areas where you feel we are doing well and suggestions in areas where you think we could improve. We also welcome you to volunteer to help carry the message by getting involved on one of our fine Intergroup committees.

We will also be reviewing our Visions and Goals at our Intergroup meeting over the next couple of months. You may remember that we set up a five year plan last year to help us stay focused on our primary purpose.

Also, the SEAZ Board is creating an ad hoc committee to review bylaws, policies, standing rules and job descriptions to ensure that they are up to date and consistent with each other. A part of this process will be the creation of a job description for a SEAZ Historian/Archivist. We hope to write a history of our Intergroup up to this point and then make sure that we keep important records safe so that future trusted servants will have access to what has worked and what has not worked in the past. There is a lot of excitement about this project.

Finally, you will have noticed by now that both our PIPO and our Twelfth Step Within Committees have been busy carrying the message to those suffering inside and outside of the rooms of OA. We have some exciting workshops coming up in the weeks and months ahead. I thank my Higher Power every day for the willingness of so many of our fellowship to do this work with such energy, commitment, and creativity. It is awesome to behold and inspiring to be a part of. Come join us. It's a broad highway...

Neva S. OA S.E. AZ. IG Chair

‘YES’ and ‘NO’

In my current favorite book, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer, there is a character who loses his power of speech because of grief. To compensate for his loss, he carries daybooks that he writes in to manage talking to people. He also has the word YES tattooed on his left hand and the word NO tattooed on his right. He talks about his experiences with the world and his compensations in this way: “. . . when I rub my hand against each other in the middle of winter I am warming myself with the friction of YES and NO, when I clap my hands I am showing my appreciation through the uniting and parting of YES and NO, I signify “book” by peeling open my clapped hands, every book, for me, is the balance of YES and NO. . .”

This is my second time in OA and day 66 of my abstinence, the longest period of time that I’ve had without bingeing in 6 years and the first time that I’ve been mentally clear about food in my life. Every day I discover ways that this time is different from my former failed attempts at sobriety around food. When I started going to

OA the last time (4 years ago), I went to meetings thinking that I would hear the one right thing that would snap me into abstinence--someone surely had the key, I would hear it, and it would click. I didn’t understand surrender last time, and quite honestly, I wasn’t desperate enough yet.

I came to OA low, humbled, and willing not only to ‘make’ change but just to be WILLING to change. And to listen and really hear what was being said not only about the issues with food, but the benefits of working the program in a real and present way. Surrender is the first step, but also the one, for me, that must be done every day to keep my abstinence.

Every day I make a thousand decisions that are about saying YES or NO to my program, to my health, to really living. Sometimes it is friction. I must fight against what my disease wants. My disease wants me to be unable to assert myself and say NO to things I shouldn’t eat. It wants me to say YES to being alone, to hiding, to avoiding feelings. It wants me to say NO to being honest with myself and to

giving the best part of me to the people that I love and to my career. It wants me to say NO to needing help to make it through every day. It wants me to say NO to everything except those fleeting moments of numbing

gratification that come from bingeing.

Program is about saying NO to the foods and behaviors that plague me, but even more it is about saying YES to

fellowship, to caring, to service. It is striking a balance between YES and NO that keeps me healthy and sane. Foer’s character says that his way of moving through the world doesn’t make his life wonderful but makes it possible. I’m learning all the time that program isn’t just a tool that makes my life possible, but also really does make it more and more wonderful as well. So for today, I clap my hands for all of us in and out of OA in appreciation and in wanting to unite and part the YES and the NO.



~Rae S

Abstaining vs. Dieting (cont from Page 2)

It all boils down to this, I have a hard time working these spiritual principles IN the program, I certainly can’t or won’t be able to work them by myself. In no time at all I revert back to my old behaviors and I start to believe the behaviors and I start to believe the lies my disease tells me.

I have those thoughts sometimes still; my disease is cunning and powerful and it will do anything, say anything to make me feel that I don’t need OA. I have to monitor my thoughts and take them to God. I am very grateful for Program and hope I never leave.

~Sally H.