

Desert Recovery

February 2000

P.O. Box 43221, Tucson, AZ 85733-3221

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.

Events/Announcements

WSO Convention

Dallas, TX, August 3-6

Sunlight of the Spirit

Region III

Convention/Assembly

Tucson, AZ

September 22-24

Speakers-Workshops

FunFunFun

**Sheraton Tucson Hotel
5151 East Grant Rd.**

**Pick Up a
Registration Form at
your meeting!
See Inside for more
information**

My name is Shireen. I am a compulsive over eater and bulimic. I binged and purged for 16 years. I took boxes of laxatives at a time, sometimes daily, and ran 10 miles a day. I lived in panic that I couldn't stop eating and I had to rid myself, and fear that someone would find out. I got sober in AA 4 years before I found OA. I was drowning in the food by that time. I couldn't stop eating, couldn't stop purging. I was on a train that took me around the same track over and over, and I couldn't get off.

One day I went to an AA meeting feeling hopeless and helpless. A woman at the meeting talked about being a compulsive overeater, and about abstinence. I heard her loud and clear. After the meeting she shared her abstinence with me. She was "301," which is 3 meals a day, nothing in between and no sugar. She said I can eat anything I want at my meals as long as I end them in an hour and have them at least 4 hours apart. She said "there is a beginning and an end." What a concept! I was so ready to hold on to something! I wanted off the train. 301 worked for me. I attended the 301 OA meetings that she took me to for 2 1/2 years before moving to Tucson. She has been my sponsor all through my abstinence, and still is.

I have been continuously abstinent 301 for almost 4 years now. It has been an exciting ride! There is nothing that has come up, nothing I have had to face that my structure has not held me through. My structure is my solid rock in the sea of life. I just don't let go. I never get lost. I may feel lost, but my structure holds me and moves me through things. I grow and change rather than go around in circles. I grew my legs in abstinence. What I have had to do to take care of myself with my food in order to "keep holding no matter what" has taught me how to hold my line with people, places and things. I have also learned to love myself, and hold on to myself. I am more solid all the time and I am still realizing more freedom every day. I think it works for me because it is so simple. I can do this day in, day out. Just hold. I found a weight that is comfortable for me to hold that I am happy with. I have not had to purge in my abstinence. My food was heavy in early abstinence, but changed along with me, and I now eat in a way that I could never force myself to do before.

Yet, I never have to be perfect. I never have to diet again. This is a freedom beyond my wildest dreams. I am an Artist again after being "on hold" for 18 years. It is very important to me that I keep going to meetings and that I keep sharing with others. The most important fact of my life today is GOD. Being a member of OA keeps me in touch with this fact.

From the Editor

Hello again from your editor! I appreciate the interest in the newsletter and hope more of you will consider making a contribution! I could especially use some art work to snazz this up! Once again, we'd love to hear your story: what were you like, what happened, and what are you like now, recovering in OA.

I love our fellowship and think it is wonderful and vital. Have you checked out the Far East meeting on Monday nights at 7:00pm? It's a great meeting with reading from the Abstinence book, good recovery and a great message. I hear what I need to hear there!

Please call me at [redacted] (before 9pm, please), e-mail me at Desert.Recovery@aol.com, or "snail mail" me at 7 [redacted] AZ [redacted]

Lastly, I must apologize for the errors in the We Care List....if you haven't checked your name and number, please do so! Hopefully I'm getting it straightened out.

Love and Service,
Karen S.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM
REPRESENTATIVE REPORT
REGION III ASSEMBLY
MARCH 2-4, 2000, TULSA, OK**

✓Please consider **running for the offices of Region chair and Region secretary**. Elections will be held at Tucson Assembly 2000 in Sept. Applications will be mailed out with minutes and Horizon newsletter. See duties and requirements/qualifications in Region bylaws. Chair person needs to take about 10 days off from work per year to accommodate commitments at assemblies. There are also 3 Region Chair Committee meetings/year. Deadline for applications Aug. 7.

✓Please support WSO by **buying raffle tickets** from your IRs for the quilt to be raffled off at the Dallas World Convention in August.

✓World Service Board of Trustees has adopted the following **Vision Statement** which will be printed on all OA materials: **"By year 2010 Overeaters Anonymous will be the number one recognized program for help with the problem of overeating."**

REPRESENTATIVE REPORT(continued)

✓There is still money available for **trustee service and tradition workshops and for one region service and tradition workshop**.

✓Send in your fork to the World Service Office where it will be entered into the Fork Hall of Fame, or bring it with you to Dallas where forks will be displayed at the World Convention. Please include a donation of \$10. After the convention the forks will be returned to World Service Office for display.

✓Out of 10 regions, **Region III is 5th in contributions to WSO**.

✓**Region income is down** from last year, expenses have increased \$519.00.

✓**Income for calendar year 1999** \$13,213.50, expenses \$11,946.43.

✓**Profit from Waco Assembly, Fall '99**, was \$1340.76.

✓There are lots of **opportunities for service at 40th Annual World Convention in Dallas, Aug. 3-6**. There is a need for 250 service positions, including 76 speakers, 104 people for hospitality. There is a registration form on line (website address: overeatr@technet.nm.org) Estimated attendance for convention is 1000-1200.

✓**Trustee Dodie Hawkins** has resumed duties of conference literature chair following the sudden death of trustee Vivian Mayer. Dodie is also 2nd vice chair of the Board of Trustees.

✓**Members, take the Lifeline Challenge 2000**, and at your group level donate 2 Lifeline subscriptions to the facility of your choice and renew annually for the life of the group. There are 8,500-10,000 OA groups. If each group donated 2 subscriptions there would be up to 20,000 Lifelines in the public eye to spread the message.

✓Our Region III **website address** is www.oaregion3.org. Respectfully submitted,
Leigh Macdonald, Representative

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*This disease pursues me aggressively and relentlessly and lies to me, telling me that food will help me get through! God allows ME to choose to surrender and walk the path of recovery. Unlike the disease, God won't grab me by the throat and drag me onto the road of recovery. God, recovery, and abstinence are what will really get me through!*

*Love and peace, Cyndi*

## DON'T GIVE UP BEFORE THE MIRACLES UNFOLD!

It has taken several years to have arrived at this place of peace with my food. Patience is a virtue, just not one of mine! When I pray for patience, my HP gives me something to be patient about. I'm smart and a recovering know-it-all. How humbling to acknowledge that it took nearly two years in OA to start to become teachable!

How has humbly surrendering my compulsive overeating been empowering? I have no idea! What a relief not to be in charge! A weight has been lifted as my physical body weight lifts. I have come to trust that I am loved and cared for by my creator. This has trickled down to a trust and caring *of me by me*. Now I have something genuine to share with newcomers, as was shared with me. I have experienced tremendous emotional recovery in OA, with some therapy on the side. I no longer have to accept unacceptable behavior. I can say "no" to things I don't want to do. I've released unhealthy relationships that compromise my serenity. In learning to take of myself, I can afford to be generous with others. If I'm not deprived, there is no need to hoard. I am worthy of nurturance - I am a Precious child of the Universe.

For me, physical recovery came after the spiritual and emotional shifts. Abstinence was a diet when I began the program because I was still trying to control my food. Although my food was clean, I was still totally obsessed. What could I eat? What couldn't I eat? When could I eat? What did everyone else's abstinence look like? Did mine measure up? Today I have a plan of eating that is simple and fits my lifestyle. It is supervised by a certified nutritionist. I am releasing weight at a rate that is healthy and safe for me, both physically and emotionally.

There are, and always will be potholes on my road to recovery. Food will continue to beckon when I'm vulnerable, need comfort, feel sorry for myself, feel afraid, and even when I feel happy, joyous and free! A can patch these rough spots with my tools - prayer, meditation, phone calls, writing, and meetings. By working the steps, I need not take a detour (slip) or come to a dead-end (relapse) both of which result in shame for me. Nothing erodes my road to recovery faster than shame. When I sabotage myself with shame I abandon my connection with my soul. This is the dreadful emptiness that I tried to fill with food.

What has been the hardest thing in OA? ASKING FOR HELP! We cannot do this alone. It is weakness, not strength, that binds us to each other. When I've asked, I've received: a gentle loving sponsor, a qualified caring therapist and support from my loved ones. I am so grateful!

Love, grace, and prayers, Fish Fry

## WE ARE LIST

| Name | Number | Best time | Early/Late | E-Mail Address | Sponsor/<br>Speaker | Drive to<br>Meeting? |
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