

Desert Recovery

May 2002

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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.

RELAPSE RECOVERY

I had all but given up on ever finding sanity again. But with the memory of having found it once, a part of me could never fully give up.

Nine years ago I was fortunate enough to walk into an OA meeting that immediately affected me so much that I kept coming back. In short order I found myself a sponsor and began faithfully working the program. I was able to stay abstinent and eventually became a sponsor to others. I had never known such peace, happiness and serenity in my life. All of the promises I had read and heard from others were coming true for me. For the first time in my life I was not alone in my disease. I had found the fellowship and I had found my Higher Power.

For two years I followed the program and kept my food clean. When a new marriage caused me to move away from town and my home group, I was sad but not worried. Surely with all that I had learned and how amazingly happy I was, I could stay abstinent anywhere, with or without OA.

My relapse came about so gradually that it took me years to suspect and even more to totally admit. Here I was once again alone in my disease. I made numerous attempts to control my eating and even work the program on my own to no avail. I was so angry with myself and full of shame for having relapsed that it was nearly impossible to start over. I had tried a few meetings in the hopes that it would all come back to me and I could just pick up where I left off years ago. This was not to be.

I believe the one thing that kept me from giving up completely was that memory in the back of my mind of what total abstinence and the fellowship brought to my life. Some part of me was not only unwilling to throw in the towel completely but also refused to settle for less than I had before.

So now after 7 years of relapse I have found my way back into the rooms of OA and into the program. My 3 months of abstinence mean the world to me. This time I do not have that "pink cloud" feeling and am willing to do the work to get and keep the gifts that I can only find in recovery. The nagging thought that stayed with me throughout my years of relapse was that one day my Higher Power would give me the strength to start again on the path toward recovery. It is only by the grace of G-d that I have been given this second chance to find all that the world has to offer and to become all that I can be without allowing this disease to run/ruin my life. For this I am eternally grateful. Anonymous

A Phone Call

Ah, the fears of a 12 step call,
will we open a door, or just hit a hard wall?
Will we help a nice person who feels all alone,
or will they avoid us and hang up the phone?

Can we all admit the resentment it brings
when we need a call and the phone does not ring?
We wonder just where are the folks in "we care"
if they don't even notice when we are not there?

I must remember, get down on my knees,
that we all have this same darn disease,
That relationship problems in us do abound,
whether we're newbies or long time around.

OA is just "US" we're no worse or no better,
some can remember and some are forgetters.
But there's one thing I've learned when I'm feeling real blue,
if I say a prayer, God tells me what to do.

When something is missing, when something feels strange,
the message from God is it's time for some change!
No bondage of self can change this situation,
it takes reaching out without much trepidation.

God says to take action, give love, that's a fact,
and don't be concerned with the gifts that come back.
Just for today, your phone might not ring,
but if you call three people, the phone lines will sing.

If each of those people would call up three more,
now lets do the math for this little phone call chore.
Today that is 3 calls, tomorrow a dozen,
not counting the phone call you made to your cousin.

Now excuse if my math is not right at this time,
But I think on day three it's phone call 39.
It's over a hundred by day number 4,
with OA's each calling a simple 3 more.

Sometimes we're imperfect, we're lazy with fear,
but STILL in this program, I'm glad we are here!
The point of the steps is with God we can grow,
And fix things that hurt just as soon as we know.

Call a newbie, a lost one, or one who just shared,
just pick up the phone and let them know you care.
We can put down our egos, let our defenses fall,
And pick up the phone for a 2 minute call.

Leave the rest up to God, the results do not matter,
nor does the topic or length of the chatter.
Advice is not good, but if I may be bold,
my program works best when I do what I'm told!

I'll go make my calls, and I pray you will too,
it sure is a wonder what one call can do!!

When I entered the OA program, the Step One admission that my life had become unmanageable seemed glaringly obvious. I most certainly was out of control. Powerless, however, was another matter, as I often believed I was responsible for everything under the sun. Just where and when should I "let go and let god?" Through trial and error I have learned to recognize some of the signs of unmanageability in my life today:

- When I feel I must step in and take control, my life has become unmanageable
- When my way is the only way, my life has become unmanageable
- When I want to call someone on the carpet and tell them what is wrong with them and with our relationship, my life has become unmanageable
- When I feel frustrated because I'm not asserting myself, when I am chafing under the control of others, my life has become unmanageable
- When I overstep my role as a trusted listener and allow the concerns and problems of others to overwhelm me and ruin my day, my life has become unmanageable

Unmanageability means I'm shutting God out of my life and my decisions. No one left me in charge of the world. No one insists that I wallow in victimization. No one forces me to adopt their problems. The solution is to keep in mind that God is in charge. This is God's world, not mine. Today when life spins out of control, I know to ask for God's help. I ask for God's leadership and promise I will try to follow. Usually, just remembering God's role and right-sizing myself is enough to begin the restoration of sanity. Now I know that powerlessness is not synonymous with weakness; it is only by seeing myself in relationship to the universe, neither less nor more than others and an equally-loved child of god. A.B.

From the Editors

As always, your Desert Recovery newsletter is looking for submissions! I accidentally deleted a phone message from someone this month without writing down the name or phone number! I'm so sorry, if it was you, please call me back!

Articles, poems, drawings, etc., can be e-mailed to me at DesertRecovery2@aol.com, mailed to me

15, or if you call me at

I'd be glad to meet you at a meeting.

The Desert Recovery has a new co-chair, Janis R.). Thank you Janis!

Thank you for allowing us to be of service! Love, Karen S.

OA Audiotape Library

Do you sometimes wish you were able to get to a meeting but you can't? Do you sometimes drive long (or even short) distances and get tired of listening to the same old stuff on the radio? Do you need some reinforcements in your battles with your food obsession and compulsion? Do you miss the voices of your OA friends when they are not around? If you answered YES to any of these questions, then there is help as close as your OA meeting Intergroup Rep (IR). Your IR can order OA audiotapes for you on a loaner basis. There are over 100 audiotapes in the library and topics range from **Addiction and Recovery** to **Willingness**. In this issue of the Desert Recovery we are highlighting a few of the tapes:

Tape No.	Title	Content
155	Do Not Cut Corners	OA members talk about working the fourth step without any shortcuts.
181	Tools: Writing Instead	OA members talk about how journaling has helped them.
156	Traveling Light	OA members talk about how getting rid of the mental baggage leads to lighter actual luggage.
704	The Scale Is Not A Higher Power	OA members talk about the scale ruling their lives.
161	Getting Along (Relationships)	OA members compare relationships in and out of recovery.
730	4 th Step Workshop	OA members provide guidance on doing the fourth step.

Your IR has a complete list of audiotapes so you can look it over and see the titles available.

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