

DESERT RECOVERY

December 2009

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

OA BULLETIN BOARD

For more information on current and future OA events go to our website
oasouthernaz.org.

12th Step Within Workshop Recovery from Relapse

St. James United Methodist Church
3255 N. Campbell, Tucson
Saturday, **January 9, 2010** from 1-5PM
Saturday, **January 23, 2010** from 1-5 PM
Plan to attend both days!
Have questions? Call Michelle S. at
520-604-6811 or email her at
sebertteachers@peoplepc.com
(Bring the OA Brown Book, OA 12&12, and
the OA Abstinence book if you have them!
Also bring your journal and a pen!)

The Los Angeles Intergroup presents 50th OA Birthday Party Half a Century: One Day at a Time

Friday, **January 15, 5:00 pm** to
Sunday, **January 17, 2010, 12 noon**
LAX Marriott Hotel
5855 West Century Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90045
For further information visit: www.oa50th.org
or contact: John K. 310-559-6159
registration@oalaig.org

ASDI Annual Winter Retreat

JANUARY 22, 23 & 24, 2010
Mount Claret Center in Phoenix
Jackie W @ 602-438-0223
& Judy W@ 602-843-1007
oaphoenix.org

Unity Day February 27th

Hosted by Green Valley
oasouthernaz.org

Celebrate OA's 50th Anniversary August, 2010

World Service Convention
Los Angeles, CA
oa.org

Words From The Past...Still Relevant For Me Today

Originally written March 1996 resubmitted by Elisa R

Surrender or control? This is the question I was faced with recently by my new sponsor. In relating my eating plan, eating patterns and abstinence I brought her up-to-date on myself and my working of the program. I told her that I had been in the hospital for major surgery and had felt so totally helpless with hardly any choice about what, where, when or how things happened to me. I felt very grateful for my program which, of course, greatly helped me to deal with much of this and especially for having afforded me the joy of selecting good and healthy foods. I welcomed the opportunity to have any area which I thought of as being in my hands. Here I practiced choice. I felt good about that. I also felt very healthy in spite of my pains and miseries. I had my meals in the rehab unit dining room and saw what other people chose to eat. I didn't realize it at the time, but faced with my opening question, I soon came to know that I had some smugness about maintaining my abstinence during my hospital and postoperative miseries. Was I managing my food intake — as I preferred to call it — or was I controlling it?

It was in relation to this, and other program issues my sponsor and I discussed, that the question of surrender or control came out. It vexed me and stayed with me in a very disquieting way.

Through my prayer, meditation, some limited writing and much sharing with my sponsor in relation to this disturbing question, it was revealed to me that I had lost the spirituality aspect of my abstinence. I came to the realization that without spirituality, abstinence for me becomes a matter of control. I wasn't really surrendering my food at all — I was working at controlling it, not consciously relying on God or asking God's help.

Fortunately, my reliance, surrender and asking for help was operating in other aspects of my life. It was a very lonely, painful and difficult time for me. I needed a great deal of help from God and from others. I am so grateful to my sponsor for posing this question because I could have easily stayed on the track of leaving God out of my eating, as I had done all of my life prior to OA. It scares me a little to think about that and I really hadn't allowed myself to do so until I began preparing to share with you via the newsletter.

I've come to appreciate this question so much and to use it a great deal in many of my actions and encounters with myself, God and others. Is it surrender or control? I've had surprising answers!

**When I first came into this program people told me "it" gets better."
What they didn't tell me was that I was "it."**

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step 11 and Step 3 are merged in my mind because they are the God steps. Many, many times a day I "choose to believe" there is a God and then choose to believe "either He is everything or He is nothing". If that is true (and I constantly choose to believe it is), then that makes all the difference. Because my mind gets overwhelmed so easily I can not do too much formal prayer. So I repeat a simple prayer and then ask God to please draw near me. My prayers always have the same two parts. 1) Please disclose more to me. I promise that I will face whatever You disclose and do the "rightest" thing I can. 2) Please give me the strength and comfort to do that right thing. I have not struggled too much with Gods will for me because I realize that I just do the next right thing. If that does not hold, then that was not God's will so I do the next right thing. "That is the proper use of the will". I say over and over and over "Thy will be done". And I mean it.

Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

I embraced Step 12 very early on because I totally believed every word in the first 164 pages of the Big Book. And so believed that 12 Step work would help me stay continuously abstinent, and it certainly has. Sponsoring seemed overwhelming at first because my life was so complicated. But I did not turn down the first person who asked me to sponsor them. I have not turned down anyone I thought I could help since, if they were willing to go to any length. My sponsor explained to me early on that I did not get anyone abstinent and I did not keep anyone abstinent. God did that. All I was called upon to do was share what lengths I was willing to go to and had to go to, and guide them through the 12 Steps to the best of my ability. God and the sponsee do the rest. Although there are many forms of 12 Step service in OA, I have always concentrated almost all my energy and actions on sponsoring because it appears to me that that is what is needed most. I live in complete gratitude that there is a solution to the food affliction in the 12 Steps and I am entirely surrendered to the 12 Step way of life.

-Submitted by Michele T

"Twelve and Twelve" quote: Why It Has Meaning for Me

My favorite line of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous is found on page 93: "...there is no one right way to do Step Eleven. 'Keep it simple' is a good slogan to apply here. Remembering that our goal is to develop a closer conscious contact with God, prayer is simply what we do when we talk with our Higher Power."

This really resonates with me because I was able to not only create my own conception of my Higher Power, I could talk with Him in a way that really felt as if there was a clear channel between us. I feel close to Him throughout my day and talk to Him about anything and everything, but I am careful to never ask for anything other than to know His will for me.

Upon awakening, I simply say good morning to my Higher Power while I am still cozily snuggled in my bed. I thank Him for all of the blessings in my life and tell Him my plans for the day (meditating means to consciously think about something). I ask that my thinking be divorced from self-pity, dishonesty, and self-seeking motives.

Then, throughout my day, I have conversations with my Higher Power, some longer than others depending on what is going on. A prayer could simply be, "Thank you for this wonderful gift of an abstinent meal" before I eat or it could be a discussion of a troublesome situation at work. I might tell my Higher Power what I am concerned about, how I reacted, what my part in things was, and pray that I know His will for me in this situation.

Before I go to sleep, again snuggled in my bed, I thank my Higher Power for the blessings of my day and talk to Him about how the day went. I then answer the following questions: Did I pray throughout my day today? Was I abstinent today? Was I as honest as I possibly could be today? Was I kind, gentle, and loving toward all today? Am I harboring any resentment? Do I owe an apology or need to make an amends? What fears did I experience today and how did I react to them? What did I do right today?

When I talk, my Higher Power listens. When I tell him about my problems, He takes care of them for me, in His time, in His way. When I ask Him to show me His will for me, He always does and my life is so much richer, fuller, and more joyous. Thank you, Higher Power!

-Submitted by Michelle S.

Don't Just Sit There – Do the Next Right Thing

H – Hungry / Hurt

Hungry – have I eaten the right amount of healthy foods for my body in a timely manner today?

Hurt – have I taken something personally without checking it out with a sponsor or OA friend?

A – Angry / Anxious

Angry – have I written about my resentment and shared it with a sponsor or trusted friend?

Anxious – what am I afraid of and where is my Higher Power in this?

L - Lonely/ Lethargic

Lonely – have I picked up the phone or gotten to a meeting lately?

Lethargic – what action can I take for my recovery?

T – Tired /Tempted

Tired – have I gotten enough of the right kind of rest?

Tempted – have I been “romancing” that first compulsive bite?

Cherlindria's Wand

When my oldest son was a little boy, his favorite movie was Willow. The movie was full of magic and swords. I watched it many times with him—so much so that we wore out the tape and it broke. In later years, I bought it on DVD. In truth, I loved the movie also. The main character, Willow was a dwarf thrown into a normal size world and given the daunting task of returning the future queen to her rightful spot; only the future queen was a helpless baby. Willow faced many challenges and longed for the security of family and home but knew he must persevere.

Lines from the movie would replay in my mind during different times of my life. One line that I would often say to myself was, “Courage Willow”. This was the line the main character said to himself before the big battle scene. The drums were beating and the sound of impending battle could be heard. Fear was ripe in the air. The old sorceress could sense his fear and said, “Patience Willow” as if to say the battle would soon be here. Willow replied to himself, “Courage Willow”.

So often in my life, I thought I needed courage. I had so much fear. But I relied on my own self. I was taught at a young age to be self reliant, don't depend on anyone, know more than anyone else, work harder, and try to be perfect. There was no time to think of what I needed as I was not allowed—that was for weaker beings. “Courage Willow” was my mantra. Telling myself to persevere, be strong, you can do it, self direction. I

did not know I should ask God for his will for me. I did not know to ask myself what I needed—emotionally, spiritually, or physical in order to be happy or well. All I knew was to push through, no matter how tired I was, how sad I was, or how confused. Life became a drag—almost not worth living.

Then I walked into OA. No one said, “Courage Willow”. They said, “We like you the way you are now”. They said yes, life is hard and bad times will come but that I was not alone. They said, we are a fellowship and together we can do what we could never do alone. They said you don't have to rely on your own unsteady willpower. They said, you have a higher power that will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. OA members did say, “Patience” as you work through the steps.

This brings me back to the movie, “Willow” and Cherlindria's Wand. Years before meeting Willow, the old sorceress had been turned into a rodent and only Cherlindria's wand could turn her back into the beautiful young woman she once was. Willow possessed the wand now and with great effort he turned the sorceress into a woman again. As she stood before Willow, she said in shock—“I'm an old woman [now]”. She had waited so long to be made whole again that she had no idea that years had passed and her youth was gone. She did not continue wailing about her lost youth, the old sorceress prepared for battle and did the next right thing for the good of the world.

Through OA I have many moments of startled awakening. I had such a moment of startling clarity last night. I had spent the day cleaning and organizing. I had the TV on so I could listen to my favorite reality shows that contained American views of beauty and fashion. In the evening, sitting next to my beloved husband, I suddenly realized my youth was gone along with smooth skin, tight muscle tone, shiny hair, and a slim figure. Almost as if Cherlindria's Wand had been used on me, I awoke and realized I am an old woman (ok--older woman). I had been waiting for a magic wand to cure me. Deep down I had a childish belief I would awake and I would be beautiful and young along with my recovery. I started to cry when I realized that the young firm beautiful woman was gone. I was now older, heavier, with saggy breast, graying hair, wrinkles and soft muscle tone. What had happened?

Today is better. When I was younger, I probably needed that slimmer body, nice skin, strong muscle tone and perky breasts to hold up the universe in my mind. Today I have my higher power to turn my will and life over to. I don't have to control the universe. I don't have to rely on my own unsteady willpower. I can be grateful for today and the blessings I have right now. I don't know what tomorrow brings and I don't have to know. I will be fine. My higher power is with me and if I need a friend right now I have many in the fellowship that I can call. All I know is that I just have to do the next right thing. I am so grateful.

-Submitted by Sue R.

Geese

Next fall when you see geese heading south for the winter... flying along in V formation...you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way:

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range, than if each bird flew on its own. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone... and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are.

When the head goose gets tired it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs...with people or with geese flying south.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What do we say when we honk from behind?

Finally...and this is important...when a goose gets sick or is wounded by gunshots, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.

(Shared at the 2007 SEAZ Retreat) Author Unknown

The Rewards of Service

It has been a pleasure serving as the Newsletter chairman for Intergroup this past year. There are a few people I particularly want to acknowledge. I was touched and humbled by the way Michele T., as a form of service to OA, agreed to write about her experience with the 12 Steps for this entire year. She always lived up to that commitment no matter what was going on in her life. Sue R. proofread all the issues, was very good at editing and also wrote some beautiful pieces. I frequently called on Michelle S. and she always said yes to either writing about her program or a how-to piece. I am so grateful to all of our OA friends who wrote to share their experience, strength and hope. I was inspired by all the articles that were submitted and hope that you were too.

As for myself, I developed new skills and learned some important lessons. I learned that I don't have to know everything before I start something new; people will help me. I don't have to worry about failure or success when my ego isn't involved. I just need to be willing, perform the footwork and trust God. I will miss this job but because of doing it I am willing to stick my neck out a little farther and do the next thing that I have been asked to do. Service is its own reward. It is helping me to grow spiritually and emotionally. I hope you will be as generous with our new Desert Recovery chairman, Beth, as you have been with me. Continue to write your stories of recovery. We have so much of value to share with one another.

Gratefully Joanne B.

Overheard At Meetings

"My food is a spiritual issue."

"You can't do it for me, but I can't do it without you."

"We have a common problem – and a common solution."

"REAL hunger is satiable."

"Together we live – alone I will die."

"Nothing tastes as good as abstinence feels."

RECOVERY ACRONYMS

N.U.T.S.	Not Using the Steps
K.I.S.S.	Keep It Simple Sweetie
H.O.P.E.	Happy Our Program Exists
B.I.G.B.O.O.K	Believing In God Beats Our Old Knowledge
F.E.A.R.	False Evidence Appearing Real
D.E.N.I.A.L.	Don't Even Notice I Am Lying
A.C.T.I.O.N.	Any Change To Improve Our Nature
E.G.O.	Edging God Out
F.A.I.T.H.	Facing An Inner Truth Heals
B.L.O.A.T.E.D	Bored, Lonely, Overwhelmed, Angry, Tired, Excited, Depressed
F.I.N.E.	(I'm) Frustrated Insecure Neurotic Emotional
S.P.O.N.S.O.R	Sober Person Offering Newcomers Suggestions on Recovery
P.R.O.G.R.A.M	People Relying on God Relaying a Message
B.I.N.G.E.	Because I am Not Good Enough

Letter from Our Intergroup Chair

We are all responsible. No one individual, group, trusted servant, or service body is the sole defender of the OA Traditions. There are no "Traditions Police" in OA.

The Intergroup Board is not the final authority on who is "violating" Traditions and what "we should do about them". Some of us do have more OA experience and can share what we know regarding OA Traditions, but the Traditions themselves are, by their very nature, suggestions for how we operate as OA groups and service bodies. They are not laws that can be upheld, broken, violated, overturned or changed. They are there to guide us. Our literature suggests that groups who do not follow the Traditions "are soon struggling". What we can do in the face of appeals by members that "the Intergroup Board ought to do something about..." is to suggest some or all of the following:

When you see something in an OA meeting that you believe to be a Tradition "violation", you have an opportunity. You may:

A. Refer to *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*. Educate yourself about what you witnessed and how it might affect OA unity and purpose (you may call your sponsor or an experienced OA member for guidance on which Traditions you might find most useful),

B. Gently and lovingly take the person or group who made the misstep aside and educate them about what the Traditions suggest in this situation,

C. Bring the issue up for discussion at the regular meeting and ask the group to read and discuss the chapter(s) on the Tradition(s) in question,

D. Take the issue to the group's business/group conscience meeting for possible changes in meeting format or suggestions to leaders on how to handle these situations,

E. Write an article for the Intergroup newsletter and/or Lifeline discussing Traditions and how groups can use them to solve problems and better carry the message of OA recovery,

F. Study and "work" the Traditions in your life and with your sponsees (if you have never worked them yourself, ask your sponsor for guidance),

G. Read other OA and AA literature to learn more about the Traditions, how they developed and why they are important to the integrity of our fellowship,

H. Start a Traditions meeting.

The Traditions help us to focus our efforts on carrying the message of OA recovery through the Twelve Steps. They guide our groups to assure that OA is always there to extend its "hand and heart" to all those who still suffer. We are all responsible.

In love and service, Neva

OA Clothes Closet

Meg and I have had such fun over the last few years hosting the clothing sales at various events. Our Intergroup has been helped by the generous cash and clothing donations and hopefully, many of you have benefited from some chic, new fashion items. As a service to our OA members I have set up an OA closet in my home. As you change sizes and want to refresh your wardrobe, please give me a call (795-0826) and make an appointment to check out the closet. Whatever you want to donate for our Southeastern Arizona Intergroup is fine and if funds are tight, then you can give next time. If you want to donate clothing for the closet, give me a call and I can negotiate pick-up of the items. May this New Year and your health be the best yet. Bring it on 2010!

-Submitted by Janis R

SEAZ

**Southeastern Arizona Overeaters
Anonymous Intergroup #09078
P.O. Box 43221 Tucson, AZ 85733
(520) 733-0880**

OASOUTHERNAZ.ORG

SEAZ Intergroup meets the third Saturday
of the month at 10:45AM

**St. James Methodist Church
3255 N. Campbell**

SE Arizona Intergroup Board

Officers

Chair	Neva S.	877-8420
Vice Chair	Adair L.	299-9694
Secretary	Claudia P.	829-6968
Treasurer	Rhonda S.	370-5100
Delegate (1)	Janis R	325-4441
Delegate (2)	Joanne B.	762-9576

Committee Chairs

12th Step Within	Michelle S.	520-604-6811
Meeting List	Nan B.	825-3867
Newsletter	Beth M.	577-8745
Special Events	Marj M.	520-248-9043
Library & Lifeline	Emily R.	490-1409
IR Trainer	Chris N.	721-1085
Telephone	Lauren M.	241-3616
PIPO Chair	Janet G.	795-7492
Website	Roger S.	877-8420

Websites

WWW.OA.ORG
WWW.REGION3.ORG
WWW.OASOUTHERNAZ.ORG

Desert Recovery Newsletter

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

Contact Beth M. 577-8745
marlatt@email.arizona.edu

Submitted articles may be edited as needed. Permission to reprint original material found in this newsletter is granted to all Twelve Step groups and their publications provided that SEAZ is credited. All opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the Editor, SEAZ, or OA as a whole.

TUCSON OA MEETINGS

www.oasouthernaz.org

MEETINGS APPEARING ON THIS LIST ARE REGISTERED WITH THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE (WSO)

SUNDAY

11:00-12:00 PM	MIRACLES HAPPEN	(look for OA sign)	4180 W. Sweetwater	Sally H.	429-5318	WC
5:30-6:30 PM	SEEKING THE POWER STEP 11	UMC (room E/F @ s. end of cafeteria)	1501 N. Campbell	Janet G.	795-7492	WC
5:30-6:30 PM	SUNDAY VARIED	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church - fellowship hall- 5360 Pima		Susan C.	747-5018	WC

MONDAY

5:30-6:30PM	GOING SANE Big Book Study	First United Methodist Church	915 E. 4 th St.	Felice G.	891-8900	WC
7:00-8:00 PM	FAR EAST ABSTINENCE	Abounding Grace Church	2450 S Kolb Rd	Michelle T.	784-3597	WC

TUESDAY

10:30-11:30 AM	RECOVERY	Posada Del Sol (parking at Safeway)	2250 N. Craycroft	Judith H.	323-9845	++WC
10:45-12 Noon	NW TENDER SOLUTIONS	Dove of Peace Lutheran Church	665 W. Roller Coaster Rd.	Neva S.	877-8420	WC
5:30 -6:30 PM	HAPPY, JOYOUS, AND FREE	(look for OA sign)	4180 W. Sweetwater	Roni B.,	269-1025	WC
6:00-7:00 PM	KEEP IT SIMPLE STEP STUDY	Mountain View Retirement Village	7900 N. La Canada	Becki	908-6495	WC
5:30-6:30 PM	TUCSON MEN'S SANITY		931 N. Fifth Avenue	Jim D.	250-0509	

WEDNESDAY

7:30-8:30 AM	GOING TO ANY LENGTHS	St. Frances Cabrini Church	320I E. Presidio	Wendy A.	955-0710	
10:00-11:00 AM	UNDERSTANDING HEARTS	Christ the King Episcopal Church	2800 W. Ina Road	Betty D.	690-1441	
11:30-12:30PM	WELCOME HOME	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church - fellowship hall- 5360 Pima		Sue L.	885-2861	##
5:30-6:30PM	VOICES OF RECOVERY	St. Thomas More Newman Center Library	1615 E. 2 nd St.	Andrea M.	977-9980	WC

THURSDAY

10:30-11:45AM	SEEKING THE SPIRITUAL PATH	Oro Valley Urgent Care	13101 N. Oracle Rd	Pam	297-4704	
5:30-6:30 PM	OVER AND UNDER MEETING	St. Frances Cabrini Church,	320I E. Presidio	Beth. 577-8745 or 349-0810		WC
7:00-8:00PM	BIG BOOK STUDY	Abounding Grace Church	2450 S Kolb Rd	Meg R.	546-1168	WC

FRIDAY

7:30-8:30AM	FRESH START	St. Frances Cabrini Church,	320I E. Presidio	Janet G.	795-7492	
10:30-11:30AM	LIVING in the SOLUTION	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church - fellowship hall- 5360 Pima		Elisa R.	881-1670	++
6:00-7:00PM	BIG BOOK STUDY-NW Side	Mountain View Retirement Village	7900 N. La Canada	Becki	908-6495	WC

SATURDAY

9:00-10:00AM	FAR EAST SATURDAY GROUP	Eastside Evangelical Covenant Church	551 N Camino Seco	Meg R.	546-1168	WC
9:00-10:15 AM	SAT. MORNING STUDY GROUP	UMC (room C/D @ s. end of cafeteria)	1501 N. Campbell	Chris B.	887-7188	+++

OUT OF TOWN OA MEETINGS

GREEN VALLEY		ST. FRANCIS OF THE VALLEY CHURCH		600 S. La Canada Dr.		
TUESDAY	7:45-8:45 AM	Discussion	Library	Mary Anne	393-0169	WC
WEDNESDAY	7:00-8:00PM	Literature Study	Library	Mary Anne	393-0169	WC
SATURDAY	9:11-10:15AM	Step and Tradition Study	Library	Mary Anne	393-0169	WC
SIERRA VISTA		CHURCH OF CHRIST		815 El Camino Real		
MONDAY	7:00-8:00PM	Monday Night Miracles	Classroom 3	Leslie	520-378-4238	WC
THURSDAY	6:30-7:30PM	Newcomers	Classroom 3	Marilyn	520-417-1645	WC
SATURDAY	11:00Am-12:00 PM new time 12/1	Discussion	Classroom 3	Jan F.	520-452-0093	WC
BENSON		SOBRIETY HOUSE		225 E. 6 th Street		
TUESDAY	4:00-5:00PM	Rotating Format		Peggy	520-456-1676	WC
YUMA						
MONDAY	October thru April Only 1-2pm	Gloria DeCristo Church	11273 E. 40th St.	Connie	928-305-0682	XX
TUESDAY	6:30-7:30 PM	Central Church of Christ	651 West 28th St.	Lorraine	928-782-1305	WC
THURSDAY	12:00-1:00 PM	Central Church of Christ	651 West 28th St.	Lorraine	928-782-1305	WC
PATAGONIA		UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST		387 McKeown Street		
TUESDAY	6:30-7:30 PM	Varied Format		Roz V.	520-668-5950	

WC Wheel Chair Accessible +++No parking fees at UMC on Saturdays ## Beverages only **CC meeting changes**
 ++In consideration of members who suffer from allergies, refrain from wearing cologne or perfume. **XX** no summer meetings

MEETING LIST CHANGES: Changes/corrections to meeting information: Please email Nan at: nbadgett@earthlink.net or send changes to: Nan Badgett, P.O. Box 8666., Tucson, Az. 85738