

## DESERT RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

### The Doctor's Opinion

My sponsor gave me an assignment to read and write about "The Doctor's Opinion" in the *Big Book*. The first thing that got my attention in this chapter is the very straightforward way that he tells us that alcoholics' bodies are not normal. He states, "...that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind" and "any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete." I absolutely believe this with all my being. I know for a fact that my brain does not react normally to food. I call it "getting my chemical hit." I swear I can feel the chemical reaction in my brain that certain food cause. There are times, when I am feeling bad, that I eat those foods precisely for that chemical reaction. I believe that this is exactly what a heroin addict is looking for when he injects heron.

The reaction isn't as extreme, but I believe the same neurochemical systems are involved. To me, there is no other explanation for why I continue to eat foods that are killing me no matter how desperately I want to stop. The concept of an allergy is introduced here. "These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all...." Few things in this world are as black and white as this simple fact. The allergy paradigm works very well with regard to overeating. If you stick pollen up my nose, I will have a most definite reaction that occurs in my body without fail. Same thing with food - if you stick a doughnut down my throat, I will have the same, negative reaction every single time. I will want more and more and more and I will eat more and more and more EVERY SINGLE TIME, WITHOUT FAIL.

Dr. Silkworth goes on to say how "...their alcoholic life seems the only normal one. They are restless, irritable, and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks - drinks they see others taking with impunity." He goes on to describe brilliantly and succinctly my whole experience with overeating:

"AFTER THEY HAVE SUCCUMBED TO THE DESIRE AGAIN, AS SO MANY DO, AND THE PHENOMENON OF CRAVING DEVELOPS, THEY PASS THROUGH THE WELL-KNOWN STAGES OF A SPREE, EMERGING REMORSEFUL, WITH A FIRM RESOLUTION NOT TO DRINK AGAIN. THIS IS REPEATED OVER AND OVER, AND UNLESS THIS PERSON CAN EXPERIENCE AND ENTIRE PSYCHIC CHANGE, THERE IS VERY LITTLE HOPE OF RECECOVERY.

**THAT IS BRILLIANT!** That is a perfect description of my life for the past 40 years, "...the phenomenon of craving at once became paramount to all other interests..." Once I take that bite, everything else goes out the window. All I can think of is what else I am going to eat and how I can do it without being seen.

The doctor then goes on to describe different kinds of alcoholics. I related to several kinds. Probably the most accurate description of myself (although I hate to admit it) is: the type who is over-remorseful and makes many resolutions, but never a decision. Ouch. I am always planning in my mind how I am not going to overeat again or binge on junk. I have thought (and sometimes actually tried) every twisted permutation possible to continue to overeat, but not have to endure the consequences. Dr. Silkworth goes on to say that the allergy is never permanently eradicated. The only relief he can suggest is "entire abstinence." I could not agree with him more. The moment I take that first bite, I am doomed. There is nothing that will stop the binge. He then goes on to explain that most doctors believe that the chronic alcoholic is doomed. I know that physicians believe that there is really no point in saying anything or trying anything with their obese patients. We are a hopeless a lot and they don't have anything to really offer us anyway.

Science is just starting to figure out what OA's have known for the past 50 years. There is some fascinating brain scan work with obese patients and formerly obese patients who have maintained a normal weight for 5 years. Obese patients' brains "light up" or react abnormally to food. Formerly obese patients react exactly the same way. It never goes away. It doesn't matter how long one has been at a normal weight, the body's reaction does not change. AA has always known that the disease never gets better - only worse - over time. This is, I believe, where God comes in. Only a spiritual solution can overcome this physical abnormality.

There is a section in this chapter that says, "...we work out solution on spiritual as well as an altruistic plan..." Funny, I never noticed the word "altruistic" in my prior readings of this chapter. I get it now. Working with other compulsive overeaters is absolutely paramount for my own recovery. God and working with others. Gee, I always stopped at God before - thinking that was enough. God comes first and then service - these two things go hand in hand. Later in the chapter, Dr. Silkworth called AA "an altruistic movement" going on to say, "The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive, and their community spirit, is indeed inspiring..." This is what I have been missing in my previous stints in OA: the service aspect and the importance of sponsoring and helping other fellow compulsive overeaters. My times in OA have always only been about me - and what I could get out of it. How much weight I can lose? How little can I get away with and still get the results I want? Now wonder I didn't really and I experienced very little recovery. I never really joined the fellowship - I was a solo practitioner.

-Submitted by Anonymous, Reprinted from *Serenity Press*

## 7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION

I think it must have been the April Intergroup meeting where one member asked someone to volunteer to write a story for the Desert Recovery on the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition. I volunteered with the caveat that I would not be bemoaning that there are insufficient contributions. To the contrary I have seen members give two and three dollars at almost every OA meeting I attend. Rah rah for southern Arizona OA'ers, stepping up and really supporting our fellowship. SEAZ Intergroup has sufficient prudent reserve and I observe a thriving healthy fellowship here in Tucson.

Thanks everyone for rising to the challenge. But I have to remember that money is only a requirement to the extent that it allows us to carry the message. Our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. I believe the best way we can do that is to recover and demonstrate our bright shining recovery in every area of life.

-Anonymous

## NEWLY APPROVED LITERATURE AVAILABLE

Delegates at the 2012 World Service Business Conference approved the following new or revised publications. All items are now in stock. Place your order online at [bookstore.oa.org](http://bookstore.oa.org); by phone [1-505-891-2664](tel:1-505-891-2664); or by fax [1-505-891-4320](tel:1-505-891-4320).

### REVISED

- *To the Newcomer* #270
- *Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite, Remember . . .* #150
- *Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps* (Changes will be made when current inventory is sold.)
- Pamphlets Updated With New 15 Questions:
  - #130 *A Program of Recovery*
  - #750 *Is Food A Problem for You?*
  - #753 *Introducing OA to Health Care Professionals*
  - #755 *Fifteen Questions*
  - #780 *Introducing OA to the Clergy*

### NEW

- *Voices of Recovery e-Workbook*: Downloadable PDF for PC or Mac computers, features thought-provoking questions for each of the daily readings in *Voices of Recovery*. The e-workbook provides unlimited space to type answers to the questions; file can be saved and reopened to make additions or changes. Although the file cannot be printed, if you wish to print a hard copy of your answers, you can copy-and-paste your text into a word-processing program. #996V/\$5.00 Download at [bookstore.oa.org](http://bookstore.oa.org) under "Digital Products."
- Spanish Pamphlets Coming in Early July:
  - #150S *Antes de Tomar Ese Primer Bocado Compulsivo, Recuerda*
  - #270S *Al Recién Llegado*
  - #755S *Quince Preguntas (Fifteen Questions)*

## OA "CLASSIFIEDS"

### DIDO GYM INITIATIVE

#### HELP OA STRETCH ITS MEMBERSHIP!

If you are a gym member, attend fitness classes, have a personal trainer, or know people who are coaches, pass along information about the fellowship!

Talk with your meeting literature person about taking pamphlets or contact Rae at 239-784-9626 or [rstrozzo@gmail.com](mailto:rstrozzo@gmail.com)!

### OA Tucson Facebook Group

Everyone's anonymity is protected. To join, you need to search Wendy Ascher on Facebook and friend her. She can invite you to the OA Tucson Facebook Page.

Newsletter Changes: Thank you all for the positive feedback about the new format. Unfortunately, we have been asked to change the format so it is not as costly to print at home.

**Be on the lookout for the PIPD outreach database form to circulate by Joe N. You can enter the names and addresses of health care providers to add to our list. Contact him at [joenutini@aol.com](mailto:joenutini@aol.com) and put "for OA Database" in the subject line.**

**Needed:** Articles for the newsletter! It's a simple way to give service. If you have an article or would like an idea for a topic to write about, contact Michelle at [newsletter@oasouthernaz.org](mailto:newsletter@oasouthernaz.org)! Next deadline is August 10<sup>th</sup>!

## MEDITATION

Heard at a Meeting:

“Want to hear God laugh? Tell him your plans.”

“When I turned myself over to God, I took my life out of the hands of an idiot.”

“The difference between me and God is that God doesn’t want to be me.”

“Having resentments is like drinking poison and expecting someone else to die.”

“If God is your co-pilot, switch seats.”

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.”

“Don’t sweat the small stuff, and remember, it’s all small stuff.”

“What other people think of you is none of your business.”

Read in a newsletter: “I don’t need you help today... Love, God.”

“What I read in books others can read. How I respond to the world is mine alone. This is not a program of searching after facts, but of looking within, attending to my spiritual needs. It is my spirituality which nurtures all that is uniquely me. The twelve steps open my heart, free my mind, and release my (HP)-given potential for the peaceful enjoyment of just being. After ignoring the spiritual part of me for so long, it is an adventure to discover that it exists and to spend part of my day exploring its reaches.” (*For Today* pg. 159)

I came to program two and a half years ago seeking in so many ways to be anything other than me. I’ve done that my entire life – look for the thing that would make me “better” and other than I actually am. Until program, I looked in a lot of the wrong places and asked questions and help from the wrong people. I cannot find the right people or questions unless the food is out of my way, I am working the 12 Steps to the best of my ability, and seeking my hp in a diligent and open way. Today I spend time actually seeking and accepting both my hp and the real me.

Working my program has led me to do things and have things in my life that I’ve never even thought about. I am currently taking meditation classes at the Tucson Meditation Center. I was forced there by my anxiety and my doctor. But program got me to go to the doctor and has given me the courage to do what I have often claimed would “set my hair on fire.” And guess what? No fire extinguishers were needed.

I am learning to get out of my own way. I am learning to be awake to my experiences, body, and emotions in ways that I never wanted to be. All of these things I ate over because I thought that they would kill me, and they terrified me. Now I go to classes on Tuesday nights and sit through the frustration, the restlessness, the thrashing around, the sleepiness, the unwillingness and the judgment (all of which is in my own mind of course). I also sit through the quiet, the sounds of birds, the coolness of the air-conditioning on my skin, the cool of the tiles and earth firmly supporting the bottoms of my feet, and the transient nature of my feelings and thoughts. I sit with and carry with me more often the building appreciation of sitting through and with not getting by and over with.

As I work on my meditation practice, I learn. I become more teachable. I become more open to program and to life in general. There is a reason why the 11<sup>th</sup> step is so important. It is a growing step. I don’t want to stop growing because I think if I stop growing, then that will be the end. Eating compulsively is about stopping growth and about sitting in fear and self-loathing, and falling face first into defeat and uselessness. Program has become a real and true path for living. The Big Book talks about recovery being a broad highway. As I gain more tools, try more things that I have never done before, and take one day at a time, I get to see the broadening of my experiences and my highway. It is like no one else’s. It is my adventure, and at long last, I don’t want to miss it.

I dedicate my practice today to all of us in program together. May we be happy. May we be healthy. May we be safe. May we be serene.

### Service Opportunities:

1. Read Between the Bars: The PIPO Committee is asking individuals and groups to donate soft bound copies of the Big Book and OA’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Give your contribution to your IR or contact Rae at 239-784-9626.
2. Help Youth Recover: The PIPO Committee will be donating books to Middle School, Jr. High School, and High School libraries. They are asking for copies of *For Today*. Give your contribution to your IR or contact Rae at 239-784-9626.

## 90 BENEFITS OF MEDITATION (PART 1)

Meditation is completely free! It requires no special equipment and is easy to learn. It can be practiced anywhere and anytime alone or with others. It is not time consuming (15-20 min. per day is good). Meditation has NO negative side effects. There is nothing but positive to be gained from it! With such a huge list of benefits, the question you may want to ask yourself is, "Why am I not meditating yet?"

There are numerous physiological, psychological and spiritual benefits of practicing meditation. See the list of 90 below.

### **Physiological benefits:**

- 1- It lowers oxygen consumption.
- 2- It decreases respiratory rate.
- 3- It increases blood flow and slows the heart rate.
- 4- Increases exercise tolerance.
- 5- Leads to a deeper level of physical relaxation.
- 6- Good for people with high blood pressure.
- 7- Reduces anxiety attacks by lowering the levels of blood lactate.
- 8- Decreases muscle tension.
- 9- Helps in chronic diseases like allergies; arthritis etc.
- 10- Enhances the immune system.
- 11- Reduces activity of viruses and emotional distress.
- 12- Enhances energy, strength and vigor.
- 13- Helps with weight loss.
- 14- Drop in cholesterol levels, lowers risk of cardiovascular disease.
- 15- Improved flow of air to the lungs resulting in easier breathing.
- 16- Decreases the aging process.
- 17- Prevented, slowed or controlled pain of chronic diseases.
- 18- Makes you sweat less.
- 19- Cure headaches & migraines,
- 20- Greater orderliness of brain functioning.
- 21- Reduced need for medical care.
- 22- Less energy wasted.
- 23- Significant relief from asthma.
- 24- Harmonizes our endocrine system.
- 25- Relaxes our nervous system.

### **Spiritual benefits:**

- 70- Helps keep things in perspective.
- 71- Provides peace of mind, happiness.
- 72- Helps you discover your purpose.
- 73- Increased self-actualization.
- 74- Increased compassion.
- 75- Growing wisdom.
- 76- Deeper understanding of yourself and others.
- 77- Brings body, mind, spirit in harmony.
- 78- Deeper level of spiritual relaxation.
- 79- Increased acceptance of oneself.
- 80- Helps learn forgiveness.
- 81- Changes attitude toward life.
- 82- Creates a deeper relationship with your God.
- 83- Attain enlightenment.
- 84- Greater inner-directedness.
- 85- Helps living in the present moment.
- 86- Creates a widening, deepening capacity for love.
- 87- Discovery of the power and consciousness beyond the ego.
- 88- Experience an inner sense of "Assurance or Knowingness."
- 89- Experience a sense of "Oneness."
- 90- Increases the synchronicity in your life,

### **Psychological benefits:**

- 26- Builds self-confidence.
- 27- Increases serotonin level, influences mood and behavior.
- 28- Resolve phobias & fears.
- 29- Helps control own thoughts.
- 30- Helps with focus & concentration.
- 31- Increase creativity.
- 32- Increased brain wave coherence.
- 33- Improved learning ability and memory.
- 34- Increased feelings of vitality and rejuvenation.
- 35- Increased emotional stability.
- 36- Improved relationships.
- 37- Mind ages at slower rate.
- 38- Easier to remove bad habits.
- 39- Develops intuition.
- 40- Increased productivity.
- 41- Improved relations at home & at work.
- 42- Able to see the larger picture in a given situation.
- 43- Helps ignore petty issues.
- 44- Increased ability to solve complex problems.
- 45- Purifies your character.
- 46- Develop will power.
- 47- Greater communication between the two brain hemispheres.
- 48- React more quickly and more effectively to a stressful event.
- 49- Increases one's perceptual ability and motor performance.
- 50- Higher intelligence growth rate.
- 51- Increased job satisfaction.
- 52- Increase in the capacity for intimate contact with loved ones.
- 53- Decrease in potential mental illness.
- 54- Better, more sociable behavior.
- 55- Less aggressiveness.
- 56- Helps in quitting smoking, alcohol addiction.
- 57- Reduces need and dependency on drugs, pills & pharmaceuticals.
- 58- Need less sleep to recover from sleep deprivation.
- 59- Require less time to fall asleep, helps cure insomnia.
- 60- Increases sense of responsibility.
- 61- Reduces road rage.
- 62- Decrease in restless thinking.
- 63- Decreased tendency to worry.
- 64- Increases listening skills and empathy.
- 65- Helps make more accurate judgments.
- 66- Greater tolerance.
- 67- Gives composure to act in considered & constructive ways.
- 68- Grows a stable, more balanced personality.
- 69- Develops emotional maturity.

## 90 BENEFITS OF MEDITATION (PART 2)

Meditation is indispensable in achieving spiritual bliss. There are many practices to choose. I have listed six types of meditation I regularly practice. Whichever one(s) you choose, it is necessary to put it into a regular part of your daily routine. As with anything new, it takes practice, patience, and perseverance.

With each meditation you want to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Let your mind focus on your breathing, then move to the particular meditation you want to practice. In the beginning, your mind will be trying to attach itself to any thought it can. Your mind may be frantic. Acknowledge the thoughts and let them pass. Start with 10-15 minutes and gradually increase the time.

### Walking/Running/Biking/Swimming/ Meditation

You are involved in focusing on your body's fluidity in motion.

### Mindfulness Meditation

You practice being aware about the things that you do and the things that happen around you at the very moment. I practice this type of meditation when driving or listening to others share in a meeting, for example.

### Vibrational Meditation

You repeat a particular word or a sound that becomes the focal point of the meditation. The vibrations that are produced from the word or sound pass through your body. You concentrate on nothing else, but to chant that word or produce the sound again and again.

### Body Scan Meditation

You lie down and focus on your body parts from your toe to your hair. You repeat "My toes (for example) are calm and relaxed and I am at peace."

### Belly Breathing

You sit in a relaxed posture and concentrate on your breath as it fills your belly and pushes it out. You inhale through the nose and exhale through your mouth slowly.

### Shaking

You put on some instrumental music with the drums as the lead instrument. You close your eyes and you begin to move shaking out your limbs one by one and your hips, waist, upper body, and neck. Begin slowly and speed up, slowing again before ending.

I believe that meditation is a way to begin our individual spiritual journeys. Meditation nurtures and continues to support our spiritual growth. Remember the words of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*: "Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. What used to be the hunch or occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind." Make a commitment to deepen your spirituality today!

-Jody S.

**Refresh your recovery.** *Recharge your spirit.* Discover new paths.

Nourish your program. **Transformation through the 12 Steps of OA.**

**Save the Date: October 19-21, 2012**

**For: Retreat at St. David**

**Theme: Transformation through the 12 Steps of OA**

**Contact: Mary M. 520-437-4376**

By Joy  
(Joy)

They called me a fat, happy baby, but if the truth were known, there is little to be happy about when one weighs more than one should. Each year I would gain ten pounds, and by the time I was nearly 15, the scale was tipping 148. That is when I decided that I needed to do something about my weight. After years of trying the latest diet featured in this magazine or that, I realized that diets were not the answer. I had to do something else.

### Finding the Cause

My parents were showcase people – mother was a beauty queen in college, and my father had always turned heads by being tall, dark, and handsome. I felt it was more important to develop my mind, my personality, my spirituality. Even so, I roller-coasted through my teen years, getting down to my ideal weight several times, only to gain all those pounds back plus some. My parents would share their critical thinking skills with me, explaining that all one needed to do was to eat less than what one needed and exercise more. That sounded rather simple. I used my creative thinking skills to imagine how I could lose the weight without giving up my favorite foods. To me, a life of lettuce and no sugar seemed dismal indeed. My parents watched, horrified, over the years, as I became more and more of myself. When my first daughter was born, I weighed 248, twice what a woman my height should weigh. Several years ago with no pregnancy to blame, I topped at 228. I had tried every diet there was, and despite wrapping both my critical and my creative thinking around my weight problem, it seemed as though no diet worked.

That actually led me to a solution. After trying diets that ranged from eating only what I could with chopsticks (I became proficient in eating even ice cream with those) or fasting for days on end (I broke one 36-day fast with a bowl of buttered popcorn), I realized that diets did not work. In desperation, I went to a 12-step meeting for those who are compulsive overeaters. It was there that I discovered that others were like me: we all needed help beyond our own efforts. Dieting just made things worse.

### Next Steps

Initially, my creative mind fantasized about how perhaps I could just go to the meetings and lose the weight that way. By the time I decided to embrace the 12-step program, the scale told me I weighed 212. Some at the meetings looked to be of normal size, and they would raise their hands when asked who had been abstinent for more than a year. I read the literature and discovered that *abstinence* meant eating only three meals a day, nothing in-between, and avoiding foods that may trigger compulsive food behaviors. For several months, I went to the meetings but resisted. My creative mind thought that perhaps I could lose this weight without having to take all of those steps mentioned at the meetings; my critical mind reminded me that I had not been successful losing weight and keeping it off before. A diet coach I had who would call me once a month told me to embrace the program, to find a sponsor, and to give it a chance. Some will tell you that they had to hit bottom, so to speak, before they could embrace this program; I grappled with the details using my critical thinking skills. Nothing else had worked.

### The Creative Dimension of Critical Thought

In order to raise my thinking about my compulsions to a higher level, I tasked every element of thought implicit in analytic thought. Initially, my *purpose* was to stop overeating, even though I hoped to lose some weight along the way. The *problem* with my previous treatment of my overeating compulsion was that the solutions were temporary; the diets were not anything that could be life-long. I read through all of the *information* available at the Overeaters Anonymous meetings, learning more about how a belief in a Higher Power and an adherence to 12 steps could indeed keep me from overeating. My *interpretations and inference* helped me to realize that others like me had been able to work through those steps and somehow avoid compulsive overeating. Various *concepts* about this disease were discussed at meetings, and I asked a seasoned meeting-goer if she would serve as my sponsor. She worked with me through each step, helping me to see the self-defeating *assumptions* about eating and will-power that I had made along the way. Nothing happened instantly, but by working through the steps and resolving to take just one day at a time, one bite at a time, the *consequences* were successful. After over two years of abstinence, I have lost nearly 100 pounds and can wear clothes the same size as my shoes. My whole *perspective* has changed. I barely recognize myself in the mirror. When I try to pick up a bag of dog food that weighs a mere 50 pounds, I realize that my body had been struggling with two such bags of extra weight.

### One Day at a Time

Any compulsion can be combatted only if both creative and critical thinking processes are in gear. The elements of thinking – clarity, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance, and fairness – needed to be in place so that I could release old habits and thoughts about eating. My appetite has waned, although I am quite conscious of how easily I could slip into overeating again. I listed foods that triggered compulsive behaviors and avoid those at all costs, even when a smiling hostess asks a second time if I would like some dessert. My list is not the same as others in the program; I can eat things they cannot, they can eat things that I cannot. I had to work my way through to a discipline that allowed me to eat but helped me to resist overeating. The literature, the meetings, the phone calls, and my sponsor all helped me to create and construct a use of previous knowledge and to critically assess my interpretation of eating on a daily basis. Sending out a message every day – Today's Gem\* – keeps me thinking about the literature, pondering what it means to be a compulsive overeater. Through this experience of battling a life-long condition and disease successfully, I have found that both my critical and my creative thinking skills have helped me to take one day at a time. I used my best thinking to battle a compulsion that was rapidly becoming all-consuming and that would have led to serious health conditions. Had I allowed my old habits to do my thinking for me, I would have kept my thoughts at a much lower level, akin to routine and rigmarole, and never discovered what life can be like when one takes it one bite at a time.

\*Note: If you would like to receive Today's Gem, just send a request to this email address: [joys.gems.for.you@gmail.com](mailto:joys.gems.for.you@gmail.com).

## HOW WONDERFUL THINGS "LED ME" INTO RELAPSE

I am an addict. For me, that means I have used food, alcohol/drugs, intrigue/sex, work, and codependency to avoid being uncomfortable/experiencing my feelings. My disease tells me they are the easier, softer way.

That's not so hard to remember when life is stressful, scary, or painful. Meetings, friends, and literature remind me I'm likely to be tempted to use, and I know I need to be vigilant.

But my first relapse started when my life was terrific! I was seeing a really nice guy, and I was in training to start the job of my dreams. I was happier than I had ever been. My compulsive eating and my obsession with food had been lifted. So how did it happen that in a matter of months, every workday started with a trip to the bakery, *\*while\** I was reciting my morning prayers and thanking my higher power for my abstinence? [I was buying things I would never have considered eating when I was sane.] How did I get so deep in denial? And more useful, what has it taught me to do differently?

Unfortunately, I didn't know how to have a great life and work my program at the same time. Maybe people had talked about it in meetings, but I wasn't listening. I hope that sharing a bit of my experience here may help someone else.

1. I wasn't being honest with anyone about my food. For me it has taken many years of being in and out of relapse before I accepted that I need to be accountable to other people about my food, or I start to lie to myself again and do slippery things. **Today**, even after many years of abstinence, most days I call a food sponsor and tell her what I plan to eat. If for some reason I eat something else instead, I report that the next day. When I am traveling or can't anticipate what I will eat, I report it that night or the next morning by email or by phone. If I can't communicate, I write it down and give it to her after I get home. Telling someone else what I eat works for me because I still lie to myself sometimes, but I know I am in really dangerous territory when I want to lie to other people. If I start to feel tempted or I do slippery things, telling her is an "early warning system" so I can take the actions needed to get back on track. I don't have to wait until food takes over my life again.

2. I allowed myself to get isolated from the program. I rationalized that I was calling and writing OA friends, but I kept our contacts superficial, about the events in our lives, not how I was feeling about my life or my food or myself. I talked to my sponsor less often, wasn't doing any step work, and missed a lot of my regular meetings. Not going to meetings helped me ignore the warning signs that I was heading for relapse. (In fact, I didn't admit I was in relapse until two years later.) During my relapse, I went on diets to lose weight, but didn't admit to myself that the fact I had gained weight was probably because I had been overeating.

The fact that my new job required moving far away made it even easier to find excuses to isolate--I let other things be more urgent than getting to meetings and getting a new sponsor. After I moved, I waited five weeks before I went to OA. When I finally did go to a meeting, I didn't talk about the dangerous things I was doing with food or my other warning signs. I just told the story of "my recovery"--not what I had been doing in the last few months. I didn't want to "look bad" to these new people. Not being willing to be honest about what was going on made it pretty hard for me to get any help.

Something I have done differently in the times I have moved in recovery is to make contact with people in my new OA community *\*before\** I move, whether by phone or by email. It has really helped to know people were "waiting for me" to show up at meetings in the new city.

Also, the next time I moved, before I left my hometown, I asked someone who had a really strong program to sponsor me "long distance." Sure, I would rather be able to see my sponsor at meetings and get together in person, but it worked. We worked together for two years, because no one at my local meetings had sustained abstinence. She wrote me faithfully twice a week, gave me writing and reading assignments, and I wrote her back with my step work and my feelings about what was going on, so she could suggest other step work. Sometimes I couldn't get her input on challenges that were going on in my life, but that pushed me to use the other OA tools of recovery and to practice prayer and meditation. (Some Tucson OAs are using Skype to stay connected with members/sponsors when they move, which is fantastic!)

3. I wasn't taking the actions necessary to maintain my emotional sobriety. Without it, I am sure to pick up food sooner or later. Like the Big Book says, I have a disease of the mind. That means I don't always recognize that my own thinking is slipping, and pretty soon my mind tells me that using my drug of choice is the way to feel better.

Getting my dream job was exciting, and exciting meant full of unknowns. What if I couldn't handle it? What if I didn't even LIKE it? What if my boyfriend and my relationship couldn't survive long distance? (It didn't.) Before I moved, I didn't want to think or talk about these things, because I wanted to look like I had it all together. Most of all, I didn't want to face how powerless I was. I didn't even talk about it with my sponsor. After I moved, by the time I went to meetings, I had been stuffing my feelings for so long I didn't know what they were anymore.

One of the things I currently find helpful for maintaining emotional sobriety is to do a nightly 10th step. It's even more helpful when I share it with another OA member committed to abstinence. An OA friend and I did this weekly for a while, and it really boosted my program to hear someone else being honest and humble, plus reminding me of where I need to ask my higher power for help.

Going to meetings that focus on abstinence and the steps remind me when I'm slacking on my own step work or being sloppy in whatever part of my program.

And for me, making time daily for meditation is essential--that's how I get the guidance I need and the power to carry it out.

You saw the common thread here--I was trying to handle food (and the rest of my program) alone. For me, that's a sure path to relapse.

Thank you for being an active part of our OA community. I need you, even if you are struggling with abstinence. I can't do this alone!

-Andrea M.

## LITERATURE UPDATE

### Motion B Passed... so what AA literature CAN we use in our OA meetings now?

Well, guess what? The Group Conscience works. But, sometimes it needs clarification. There was much discussion in our meetings this past spring regarding Motion B on the Agenda Questionnaire we all voted on for this year's WSBC. At Conference that discussion was passed on and the controversial motion was AMENDED and passed.

The motion as it passed was to reword WSBC Policy 2010a as follows: "In accordance with our Traditions, we suggest that OA groups maintain unity and honor our Traditions by using, selling and displaying only approved books and pamphlets at their meetings. This includes OA Conference- and board-approved literature; AA Conference-approved **books and booklets with original edition copyright 2010 or earlier, and all future editions thereof**; and locally produced OA literature. Locally produced literature must be developed according to OA Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature, and should be used with the greatest discretion. Local literature should be considered temporary and discontinued when OA literature approved for general use is available to cover the topic." (The **bold italics** portion is the new wording.)

A search on the [OA.org](http://OA.org) website under "conference approved literature", then "Documents", then "OA guidelines" should lead to the complete list, but here I will list only those AA books and booklets that are included:

*AA Comes of Age*  
*Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book)*  
*As Bill Sees It*  
*Came to Believe*  
*Daily Reflections*  
*Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*  
*Living Sober*  
*Pass It On*  
*The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts of World Service*  
*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

I am hopeful that this clarifies the issue and allays members' fears. Please note that **AA pamphlets are not included in this list and are not approved for use at OA meetings**. Individuals are always free to use whatever resources help them in their own personal recovery.

Please feel free to contact your World Service Delegates Beth M. or Neva S. if you have further questions about this motion.

In love and service,  
Neva

### Quotable Quotations:

"But we saw that it really worked in others, and we had come to believe the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it."  
*The Big Book of Alcoholics*

## FEAR

Fear. That little word penetrated into every corner of my life.

I was afraid of food, afraid of losing my abstinence, afraid of being fat, afraid of being too thin, afraid of not being able to have children, afraid of not ever knowing who I was, afraid of not having friends, afraid of always being stuck in the cycle of self. The list went on and it paralyzed me.

So what is the truth behind my fears? Well, they are always in the future! My sponsor told me that resentments are in the past and fears are in the future. Doesn't it make sense to stay in the now? The Big Book gives me a wonderful prayer for times when I'm afraid on page 68:

"We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be."

For example, *I'm afraid that my husband will die in his line of work*. "God, remove my fear and direct my attention to what You would have me be."

What would God have me be **today**? He would have me love my husband unconditionally and be the wife He created me to be.

**Today**, I choose to rest in God's Truth. I believe the Big Book when it says, "We were reborn." I truly believe that I have new life in recovery, by the Grace of God. I'm free to be at peace with myself (steps 4 & 5), with God (steps 6 & 7), and with others (steps 8 & 9). This, in turn puts food in its place. Remember, we "were" powerless over food. Yes, past tense. God's Power is alive and well in my life **today**. I have no reason to fear food or anything else for that matter. ☺

-Judi

### WANTED:

Your gently-used or new clothing for recirculation!

Now is a great time to clean out your closets for our seventh annual **OA Closet Recycle Adventure**. Donate your clean, gently-used or new clothing for the clothing sale at the Retreat in St. David Oct. 19-Oct. 21, 2012. Clothing will not be priced; instead, good conscience donations will be accepted at the Retreat. Contact your Intergroup Rep for your clothing donation. If there is no IR for your OA meeting, call Janis R (325-4441) or Jill S (320-7534) and a clothing pick-up will be arranged. This is a fund-raiser for our SEAZ Intergroup and it helps us to continue to be self-supporting. We ask that your donated clothing be clean, folded, and boxed, please. Clothing leftover from the sale is donated to the Benedict's Closet Thrift Store at the monastery and they are incredibly grateful for our donation.

## OA MEETING LIST – July/August 2012

[www.oasouthernaz.org](http://www.oasouthernaz.org)

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>SUNDAY</b> 11:00-12 Noon	MIRACLES HAPPEN #23957 Literature Varied Format	<b>4180 W. Sweetwater Dr.</b> (WEST) Look for OA signs	Junardi 306-8225 IR: Barbara A. 548-0904	WC
<b>SUNDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	HOPE, LOVE & ACCEPTANCE Varied Format, Tradition/Step & 1-1/2 hr Big Book Study #45337	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church Classroom A in Fellowship Hall <b>5360 E. Pima</b> (CENTRAL)	Elisa M. 299-3200 IR: Susan C. 747-5018	WC
<b>SUNDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	SEEKING THE POWER 11 <sup>th</sup> STEP MEETING #49744	University Medical Center (CENTRAL) <b>1501 N. Campbell</b> Rm. E/F (S end of Café)	Janet G. 795-7492 Jill S. 320-7534	Fragrance-free* WC **Parking
<b>MONDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	GOING SANE #39507 Big Book Study Speaker 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	First United Methodist Church, Carillon Room (4 <sup>th</sup> & Park) <b>915 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St.</b> (CENTRAL) Park behind church, enter lot from 4 <sup>th</sup> Street	Felice G. 891-8900 IR: Jonathan K. 609-0939	WC
<b>MONDAY</b> 7:00-8:00 PM	FAR EAST ABSTINENCE/STEP STUDY #40522	Abounding Grace Church (FAR EAST) <b>2450 S. Kolb</b> (N. of Golf Links on W. side)	Debbie F. 312-7597 IR: Barbara B. 751-7801	WC
<b>TUESDAY</b> 10:30-11:30 AM	RECOVERY #30601	Foothills Rehabilitation Center (NORTHEAST) <b>2250 N. Craycroft</b> (Park at Safeway)	Judith H. 323-9845 IR: Lauren M. 241-3616	Fragrance-free*, WC
<b>TUESDAY</b> 10:30-10:45 AM 10:45 – 12 Noon	NW TENDER SOLUTIONS Newcomers Meeting OA 12&12/Sharing #40963	Dove of Peace Lutheran Church <b>665 W. Roller Coaster Rd.</b> (NORTHWEST) West of Oracle Rd.	Neva S. 877-8420 IR: Barb 299-6178	WC
<b>TUESDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	TUCSON MEN'S SANITY #49144	<b>931 N. Fifth Avenue</b> (CENTRAL) 1-1/2 blocks south of Speedway	Jim D. 250-0509 IR:	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 11:30-12:30 PM	WELCOME HOME #04330 Sharing	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church Ginsler Hall, S. side of Church <b>5360 E. Pima</b> (EAST)	Sue R. 358-7358 IR: Barbara M. 327-2709	<b>Beverage Only</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	VOICES OF RECOVERY #49188 Leader's Choice Literature	St. Thomas More Newman Center Library <b>1615 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.</b> (CENTRAL) Cherry & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Park & enter from rear	Andrea M. 977-9980 IR: <b>CALL FOR JULY LOCATION CHANGES</b>	
<b>THURSDAY</b> 10:45-11:45 AM	SEEKING THE SPIRITUAL PATH Book Study #00439	Oro Valley Urgent Care, Comm. Ed. Room <b>13101 N. Oracle Rd.</b> (Oro Valley FAR NW)	Diane 638-5583 IR: Marie R. 270-9568	
<b>THURSDAY</b> 5:30-6:30 PM	OVER AND UNDER MEETING Lifeline/Discussion #50226	St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ed. Bldg., Rm. 5 (E. of church) <b>3201 E. Presidio</b> (CENTRAL)	Beth M. 577-8745/349-0810 IR:	WC
<b>THURSDAY</b> 7:00-8:00 PM	BIG BOOK STUDY #47942	Abounding Grace Church (FAR EAST) <b>2450 S. Kolb</b> (N. of Golf Links on W. side)	IR:	WC
<b>FRIDAY</b> 7:30-8:30 AM	FRESH START #49600	St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ed. Bldg., Rm. 5 (E. of church) <b>3201 E. Presidio</b> (CENTRAL)	Jim D. 250-0509 IR: Kara S. 971-9730	Fragrance-free* Service dogs only
<b>FRIDAY</b> 10:30-11:30 AM	LIVING IN THE SOLUTION Sharing #14251	Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church Classroom A in Fellowship Hall <b>5360 E. Pima</b> (EAST)	Don B. 325-7053 IR: Bev C. 628-8580	Fragrance-free*
<b>SATURDAY</b> 9:00-10:00 AM	FAR EAST SATURDAY GROUP Varied Format #45696	Eastside Evangelical Covenant Church <b>551 N. Camino Seco</b> (FAR EAST) (North of Broadway)	Sue L. 885-2861 IR: Cheryl L. 747-2387	WC
<b>SATURDAY</b> 9:00-10:00 AM	SATURDAY MORNING #12117 Study Group	St. James Methodist Church (CENTRAL) <b>3255 N. Campbell</b> (N. of Forth Lowell; W side of Campbell)	Chris B. 887-7188 IR: Deb E. 444-9960	WC
<b>SATURDAY</b> 4:00-5:00 PM	LBGTQ Meeting	Brewd Coffee Shop (CENTRAL) Meeting Room <b>39 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave</b>	Joe N. 551-2039 IR: Joe N. 551-2039	

IR: Intergroup Representative

WC= Wheel Chair Accessible

\*\*No parking fees at UMC on Sundays

\*In consideration of members who suffer from allergies, please refrain from wearing cologne or perfume. XX=no summer meetings

**OUT OF TOWN OA MEETINGS – July/August 2012**

**GREEN VALLEY**

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>TUESDAY</b> 7:45-8:45 AM	Discussion #49982	St. Francis of the Valley Church <b>600 S. La Canada Dr.</b> Library	Marj M. 248-9043 IR: Wanda 520-237-3088	WC
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 7:00-8:00 PM	Literature Study #37169	St. Francis of the Valley Church <b>600 S. La Canada Dr.</b> Library	Marj M. 248-9043 IR:	WC
<b>SATURDAY</b> 9:00-10:15 AM	Step and Tradition Study #34898	St. Francis of the Valley Church <b>600 S. La Canada Dr.</b> Library	Marj M. 248-9043 IR: Wanda 520-237-3088	WC

**SIERRA VISTA**

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>MONDAY</b> 7:00-8:00 PM	Monday Night Miracles #17537 Literature Study	Church of Christ <b>815 El Camino Real</b> Room 3	Jan F. 678-0369 IR: Jan F. 678-0369	WC
<b>THURSDAY</b> 6:30-7:30 PM	Newcomers #39367	Church of Christ <b>815 El Camino Real</b> Room 3	Marilyn 417-1645 IR: Marilyn 417-1645	WC
<b>SATURDAY</b> 11:00-12 Noon	Varied format #40592	Church of Christ <b>815 El Camino Real</b> Room 3	Jan F. 678-0369 IR: Nancy R. 227-3817	WC

**PATAGONIA**

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>TUESDAY</b> 6:30-7:30 PM	Patagonia Tues. OA #50474 Varied Format	United Methodist Church <b>387 McKeown Ave.</b>	Michelle S. 520-604-6811 IR: Leanne 774-521-8932	
<b>THURSDAY</b> 6:30-7:30 PM	Patagonia Thurs. OA #51744 Big Book Study	United Methodist Church <b>387 McKeown Ave.</b>	Adrienne 520-404-3490 IR:	

**BENSON**

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>TUESDAY</b> 4:00-5:00 PM	Rotating Format #47074	Sobriety House <b>225 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street</b>	Peggy 520-456-1676 IR: Nora G. 520-255-0784	WC

**YUMA**

DAY & TIME	GROUP NAME & NUMBER	LOCATION	CONTACT & IR	NOTES
<b>MONDAY</b> 1:00-2:00 PM	October through April Only #47822	Gloria DeCristo Church <b>11273 E. 40<sup>th</sup> Street</b>	Connie O. 928-305-0682 IR: Connie O.	XX
<b>TUESDAY</b> 6:30-7:30 PM	Just for Today #45337	Central Church of Christ <b>651 West 28<sup>th</sup> Street</b>	Lorraine 928-782-1305 IR:	WC
<b>THURSDAY</b> 12:00-1:00 PM	#00520	Central Church of Christ <b>651 West 28<sup>th</sup> Street</b>	IR:	

IR: Intergroup Representative

WC= Wheel Chair Accessible

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**MEETING LIST CHANGES: Please send corrections or changes to**

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA INTERGROUP #09078**

P.O. Box 43221 Tucson, AZ 85733-3221 (520) 733-0880

*SE AZ Intergroup meets the third Saturday of the month at 10:45 AM, St. James United Methodist Church, 3255 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson*

**SE Arizona Intergroup Board**

- Chair: Emily RS 490-1409
- Vice Chair: Wendy A. 955-0710
- Secretary: Chris N. 721-1085/661-1991
- Treasurer: Pam T. 331-2107
- Delegate (1): Neva S. 404-7649
- Delegate (2): Beth M. 577-8745 or 349-0810
- PIPO: Rae S. 239-784-9626
- Meeting List Contact:
- Newsletter: Michelle S. 520-604-6811
- Special Events: Open
- Tape Library/Lifeline: Rebecca T. 603-547-5570
- IR Trainer: Janis R. 325-4441
- Telephone: Susan C. 747-5018
- 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within: Jocelyne W. 982-0556
- Website: Nan B. 825-2892

WEBSITES: OA World Service: [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)

OA Region 3: [www.oaregion3.org](http://www.oaregion3.org)

OA Southern AZ: [www.oasoutheraz.org](http://www.oasoutheraz.org)