

DESERT RECOVERY

September October 2013

SOUTHERN ARIZONA INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Freedom from Food Obsession

I used the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous to get free from the fatal obsession of food. My mind was changed, called a psychic change, about two weeks following giving away my Step 4.

As I pondered Step 6 seriously at home right after Step 5, I asked myself if I was ready to have my Higher Power (not me) remove the things we had discussed that were objectionable (but still loved). One by one I went down the list. Some yes immediately ready, others not so ready. I asked for the willingness. It came. Then I also read Step 7 in the Big Book and asked myself if I was ready. I felt fear. Fear because I did not know what I was going to be after I did the Step 7 prayer. I had no clue what sane eating was like. I never had known sane eating personally nor from memory of how my family ate – not normal either. I knew from past experience my faults would be removed quickly, or slowly, they would dissolve over time.

I knew I had to eat, but how? I could no more eat sanely than my relatives. What was it going to be like to eat sanely? I hesitated. Then I remembered what it was going to be like again if I did not go forward, and so I chose to jump off the cliff and trust this process. Otherwise I'd be back to mild obesity at 182lbs and not able to stop eating, I'd be wasting time and money on excess food again and not be able to stop. I'd be compelled to go out to convenience stores in the middle of the night to buy food, switching them so the attendant would not suspect I had a problem, and the list goes on. I took the plunge got on my knees and read Step 7 Prayer, inserting the Step 5 items. Then I got up off my knees and went about my daily and weekly business.

About 2 weeks later I noticed one afternoon I was not thinking about food the same way I had before I did Steps 4 – 7. I had had a psychic change as they call it in the Big Book. My mind was restored to sanity and it has been since.

~ Jay P.



In 1987, some of the old-timers in OA were still consulting regularly with a few sympathetic AA's for suggestions on serious questions about meetings and personal issues. These AA's taught me so much about the concept of carrying the message. They saw it as a *life or death mission* and so did I. I was physically alive, but almost dead emotionally and spiritually.

~ Michele

SAVE THESE DATES!!!

DATE *****	ACTIVITY *****	WHERE *****
Oct. 4-6 2013	Silent Retreat	Northern New Mexico
Oct. 11-13 2013	Houston "Beyond Our Wildest Dreams" convention	Galveston, TX
Nov 1-3 2013	Annual Retreat*	St. David
04/06/14	Region 7 Recovery Cruise	Ocho Rios, Costa Maya, Cozumel, and Miami

*The Fall Retreat's registration form is available online, as well as in your meeting rooms. However, *the Retreat is NOT set up for online registration*. To register, please fill out your Registration and send it, along with your payment to:

SE AZ Intergroup of OA
Attn: Susan Crinage
PO Box 13391
Tucson AZ 85732



For additional information and details, go to <http://oasouthernaz.org>.



Remember how much those binges used to cost? How much money am I saving because I am eating less, not driving from store to store to store, etc...?

Next time the basket comes around in a meeting, GIVE LIKE YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

***"We are self-supporting through our own contributions."
(From OA Preamble)***



Our next issue will be focused on **GRATITUDE**. Please send your writing to newsletter@oasouthernaz.org (or give me your hard copy at a meeting) by Nov. 5 2013.

Original art and poetry is also welcomed! And, of course, OA related announcements.

Submissions can be printed with your first name only, or as "anonymous."

Articles may be edited for space reasons.

WISDOM FROM THE BIG BOOK STORIES

The stories in the AA Big Book show me the path that others have taken. In each story, I have found something to identify with that tells my story, shows me what to do, or gives me hope. Some of my favorites are:

- "Alcohol became my everyday companion. At first, I considered it a friend; later, it became a heavy load I couldn't get rid of" (p 194)
- "I never knew which came first, the thinking or the drinking. If only I could stop thinking, I wouldn't drink. If only I could stop drinking, maybe I wouldn't think" (p 297)
- "The two most important things in recovery are...willingness and action" (p 317)
- "When I am willing to do the right thing, I am rewarded with an inner peace...when I am unwilling to do the right thing, I become restless, irritable, and discontented" (p 317)
- "It is easier to act yourself into a new way of thinking than to think yourself into a new way of acting" (p 366)
- "And the best is yet to come. All this and more I owe to the Fellowship in the rooms and the program in the book" (p 406)
- "When I focus on what's good today, I have a good day, and when I focus on what's bad, I have a bad day. If I focus on a problem, the problem increases; if I focus on the answer, the answer increases" (p 419)
- "My serenity is inversely proportional to my expectations...I can watch my serenity level rise when I discard my expectations...asking myself, 'How important is it, really? How important is it compared to my serenity, my emotional sobriety?'" (p 420)

My "favorites" are the ones that I turn to *repeatedly* to help me put abstinence *first* in my life.

~Anonymous

All personal stories express the experience of the individual member and not of OA as a whole. Any other OA group is welcome to reprint an article without permission.



SELF CARE

I woke up thinking about self-care, what is it? I went to the Region 3 conference in Tucson, AZ yesterday. The thought of self-care is a huge breakthrough for me. I realize that one of the ways I abuse myself and continue the practice of abusing myself is to *not* care for myself. When did I decide that I was not worthy of being cared for, that I was unimportant, that I did not deserve the time and consideration? I do not know.

As I am willing to look back at the moments of life that have passed and analyze my thoughts and feelings, I am able to see that it was very early in my life when I started using food as a crutch, as a silent friend, a comforting presence, a reward for the bad things that were happening.

I see that I told myself that I deserved a treat; that I had a right to eat what I wanted, that I was caring for myself when no one else did. But that was a lie. The negative self, the self-destructive self, the disease was trying to isolate me from other people, to keep me from learning the truth.


God loves me and He made me to need other people to survive and to thrive. He made me to love others as I love myself; the problem was I did not love myself. I thought I was loving myself when I gave myself extra food; I needed it, I deserved it, I had a right to it. Now I see that the lies I told myself were lies that could kill me.

So, how do we stop this vicious cycle? I think that each of us who are in a recovery program are awakening to the realization that if we do not stop what we are doing we will, indeed, kill ourselves, our way of life, and everything that makes us who we are.

But once we stop the addiction behavior we have to learn a new way of doing things, a new way of living. That is where the promises come in, encouraging us on this new path. It is hard to realize that all that I ever thought and believed needed to be analyzed, examined and discarded.

Self-care is everything I do to care for myself and everything I do not do to care for myself. God loves me and wants me to prosper. God has given me OA, the tools of recovery (meetings, writing, literature, a plan of eating, sponsorship, anonymity, telephone, action plan and service), and a way to live life with the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.

-Darlyn



**Having
A
Purpose
Past
Yesterday**

**Just
Owning
Your
Opulent
Unimagined
Spirituality**

**Finding
Recovery
Everlasting
Eternal**

~Neva

The Big Book's Valuable Role

When I heard that the newsletter was looking for articles about the influence of the AA Big Book on our program within OA, I was immediately drawn to submit something. On the other hand, to pin point one area or line from the Big Book seemed impossible. There have been so many instances throughout my recovery that the words and actions in this book have guided me through whatever it was I was going through.

I want to begin by saying I am also a member of AA, and when I joined OA reading the Big Book with my OA sponsor made it come to life in a way that had never happened before. Taking the steps as outlined in this book in regards to my compulsive eating opened up areas of my life that had never been exposed before. I was made aware of many more defects and areas I eventually became willing to work through to hopefully become the woman I believe my higher power wants me to be.

That being said, the seventh step is definitely the most influential portion of the Big Book in my life today. The seventh step prayer reads, "My creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here to do your bidding." I have used this prayer every time I have completed an inventory and read it to my sponsor. I say it every morning when I wake up, along with many other prayers. I also recite it at an 11 step meeting I attend. The wording allows me to continue to accept myself for my attributes and areas of improvement. Reminding me that I don't control when or what defect will be removed. When it no longer becomes useful to my higher power or others isn't in my power to know. This step not only allows me to continue to give my defects away but it increases my dependence on something greater than me. It allows me to believe that I will be given the strength to grow towards the best version of myself. It doesn't make me a failure because I am not progressing as fast as I might want, it makes me human. Thank you all for being a part of my recovery and the opportunity to share my experience with you.

-Gina

Crack open that AA Big Book and find the words that go in the blanks!! (list below) The same words can also be found in the word search!

“Because this book has become the basic _____ for our Society....” (p xi)

“It is important that we remain _____” (p xiii)

“But after I started, the disease of alcoholism hit me with a _____...” (p 319)

“...the necessity of belief in and _____ upon God.” (p xvi)

“..._____ begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic...” (p xxii)

“He had _____ our way of life....” (p 79)

“Doctors have been notoriously _____ in helping alcoholics.” (p 308)

“Now I can truly say that I am a _____ alcoholic.” (p 543)

“The _____ has been replaced by abundant hope and sincere faith.” (p 475)

“...the plan of recovery _____ in this book” (p xxv)

Q A O V Y R E V O C E R G Q
E D E G R A T E F U L O C H
U N S U C C E S S F U L O G
E S Q X X V L H J C J P E V
Y U O C Q V Y D D N E C E A
T O V F U Z B A C L N N O R
X M G A F T S E E E G J J P
E Y D Y S K D S D E D Z I I
T N J T Q E S N A B M P X K
R O P S X N E N C J I B O A
I N Y C E P C B X I Y C L L
A A O S E E K E F R Y B C Y
U A S D D E B I R C S E D L
Q Y C O M M E N C E D K L J

commenced
recovery
hopelessness
grateful
text
vengeance
unsuccessful
dependence
described
anonymous