

THE SPECTRUM

"WISHING YOU"

SERENITY, ABSTENENCE AND LOVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Greater Dayton Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous
P.O. Box 1919, Dayton OH 45401-1919

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Well it is time to put the Jack-o Lanterns back and ye ol' Bird out on the dinning room table. And let's not forget old Saint Nick filling our stockings with Nair. It always amazes me how time flies. It seems like a day or two since I wrote about the fall and winter holidays. My life stays busy just as all of yours undoubtedly does too. By the time you get this paper you'll have passed by the candy dish of Halloween with great success and be marking time to celebrate Thanksgiving and the Holidays. I am just sitting here this evening thinking that I should go to bed. I have to be in the office in the morning and I'm not used to the car commute. I only go in once per month. That is something to be thankful for in itself. I finally have a boss I can get along with. Me. ☺ In the words of my little one Cubbie "Why I say that?" And I always say, "I don't know Cubbie I'm still trying to figure that out." My sponoree says that I am tangential. Is that a good quality?

Clearly I am thankful for the program of OA and AA. They have saved my life. I am thankful for my sponsor who has been there for me when I needed a hand up. I've needed plenty of them.

I am thankful for Judy. She has been a good friend to me too. She has been a real God-send as I have faced some of the most difficult problems in my OA career. She sometimes tries to fix me. It's okay though. I need the work and she's trying to quit so I see it as a good exercise in terror. Kinda like a quick ride on the Luge.

I am thankful to my sponsorees for allowing me the pleasure of working with them. They are great teachers.

All in all I have a great family wonderful friends and I got this dog that I am trying to figure out what his name is. The rescue lady says it is Bingo, but I didn't think he liked it. He is not Catholic. I started calling him Digby, but when he went to camp he didn't want to come home unless I bought him something. So I got him a squeaking rat with red eyes and a long tail. He liked that!!! I am thankful he came home and I aint out \$150.00 on him. He thinks Digby is to British. I called him Roscoe and he cocked his head like he heard a high pitched squeel. I think he is thankful to get a name that suits bim. Of course I was swirling a pork chop round and round to get the antimation on his head.

So, what's the point. Be grateful grateful grateful, you could be a dog who's name is changing daily and have to catch your pork chop on a whipping rope.

God Bless you and Happy Holiday's my friends you are loved dearly.

Claudia

NEWSPAPER POSITION

So far nobody has called and asked to take over the paper. I can't understand it. I have a ball writing silly stuff like the editor page. I can talk crazy as a bed bug and get away with it.

So, because I haven't had a response and I love the opportunity so much I am going keep going next year. However, don't let that stop you . If you've been waiting til the last minute to volunteer I will step aside so that you can have some fun.

Send the articles in please. I need them.

STRUGGLING

A word I hear often in meetings is "struggling." As in struggling with serenity, food, life on life's terms, relationships, etc. It's a word that makes me uncomfortable. Webster defines struggle as "a forceful or violent effort to get free of restraint....a determined effort under difficulties."

To me it describes what I did BEFORE I found the rooms of recovery, always twisting and writhing trying to get free of the chains of addictive behavior and enslavement to food. Doing it myself. By my own efforts. Being too prideful to ask for help. And failing miserably time after time after time. This is not to say that my years in OA have been smooth and easy, but this program has taught me how to win the prizes of happiness, joy, and freedom by.....surrendering. No more struggle.

The 12 simple steps of OA have shown me the grace of my Higher Power. Grace by Webster is "simple elegance or refinement of movement; the free and unmerited favor of God." When I compare my life before recovery to my life since I found OA I can clearly see the difference between struggling and surrendering to the healing grace of my Higher Power.

Voila! Acceptance, Courage, Wisdom, Peace, Sanity, Serenity, Joy in any and all circumstances.

If you are uncomfortable with these concepts, think of life not as a "struggle", but as a "wiggle." (You can look that one up.)

Diana E.

How The Lords Prayer Came to Meetings

I ran across this letter from Bill Wilson one of the founders of AA. This is what he had to say in regards to both prayers.

April 14, 1959

Dear Russ,

Am right sorry for my delay in answering. Lois and I were a long time out of the country and this was followed by an attack of the marathon type of flu that has been around here in New York. We are okay now, however, but I did want to explain my delay.

Now about the business of adding the Lord's Prayer to each A A meeting.

This practice probably came from the Oxford Groups who were influential in the early days of A.A. You have probably noted in AA. Comes of Age what the connection of these people in A.A. really was. I think saying the Lord's Prayer was a custom of theirs following the close of each meeting. Therefore it quite easily got shifted into a general custom among us.

Of course there will always be those who seem to be offended by the introduction of any prayer whatever into an ordinary A.A. gathering. Also, it is sometimes complained that the Lord's Prayer is a Christian document. Nevertheless this Prayer is of such widespread use and recognition that the arguments of its Christian origin seems to be a little farfetched. It is also true that most AA's believe in some kind of God and that communication and strength is obtainable through His grace. Since this is the general consensus it seems only right that at least the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer be used in connection with our meetings. It does not seem necessary to defer to the feelings of our

agnostic and atheist newcomers to the extent of completely hiding our light under a bushel.

However, around here, the leader of the meeting usually asks those to join him in the Lord's Prayer who feel that they would care to do so. The worst that happens to the objectors is that they have to listen to it This is doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at their stage of progress.

So that's the sum of the Lord's Prayer business as I recall it. Your letter made me wonder in just what connection you raise the question.

Meanwhile, please know just how much Lois and I treasure the friendship of you both. May Providence let our paths presently cross one of these days.

Devotedly yours,

Bill Wilson

WGW/ni

In the 5 years that I have been privileged to belong to OA I have heard many things about the Lord's Prayer. The main things that I have heard are that it is not allowed to be said in OA. That particular statement kind of perplexes me for a couple of reasons. One there are no rules in OA and two each meeting is autonomous in nature. Therefore the group would need to have a group conscience to disallow the Lord's Prayer from being said in that meeting only. Another thing that I have heard and is addressed here is that it is a Christian prayer. I liked what Bill said in that the worst that happens ... is that they have to listen to it This is doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at their stage of progress.

That gave me some food for thought for certain about how it was for me when I came into the program. I didn't understand a lot of what went on and thought I could do it better. I then came to realize that I couldn't always do it better and that folks might be doing it that way for a reason like they like it that way. So, I had to start learning tolerance. I am still in the learning phase of this thing and I am sure the hits will keep on coming. What I am beginning to see is that if I learn to tolerate myself for who and

what I am today, I will doubtlessly be able to tolerate others a little better. I had about zero tolerance when I got here. Anyway, so much for my two cents worth.

RECOVERY AND ABSTINENCE

I will remember that my recovery today *is only as good as my abstinence*. In order to make any progress in recovery I have to put down the food. I want recovery. I'm tired of misery. I'm tired of depression, self-absorption, obsession, worry, anxiety, and the false belief that one-day this will magically change.

Thinking does not change anything. Action is the key. I can think all day about abstinence, working the steps, writing, making a food plan, calling someone, reaching out, reading, praying, exercise, but if I am not doing what I need to do then I will remain miserable. When I keep doing what I've always done I will continue to get what I always got. It's the willingness to change, the willingness to practice new habits, the willingness to work a program, the steps, the willingness to pray for guidance that are the actions I take to recover. To experience the promises and benefits of the program and abstinence I am willing to do whatever action is necessary for today.

For today I will pray, work the steps, reach out, read, attend a meeting, follow my food plan, and most of all remain abstinent. I will stay into today in order to make this possible. I want what the winners have, and know all too well what those who still suffer want to be free of.

Love,
Cyndi

CONTROL

I hear it said that this disease is so much about control. I believe this is true for me. I ate because I wanted control. I wanted my parents to stop fighting. I wanted my classmates to accept me. I wanted to be a "good girl". I wanted to feel loved and important. I was not in control of any of these things, so I wanted to numb the pain. And food let me feel good. It anesthetized me. And I could control what I put in my mouth-even if everything else in my crazy life was out of control. This was the lie I lived and subconsciously believed.

Today I practice surrender. I pray for peace and joy about my present circumstances, whatever they are. Staying in the moment and trusting God helps me to trust that in any situation my Higher Power is working through it on my behalf and I can surrender control of the outcome. That's when things work out better than I imagined. All I have to do is stay out of the way and give God a chance to work the miracles. Sometimes I still don't like the way the picture looks, but if I give it time and don't try to control it myself, manipulating things into a disaster and myself into a frustrated jangle of despair, I begin to see the beauty of each new learning situation. It's great being in recovery and OUT OF CONTROL!

Diana E.

CLASSIFIED SECTION

Help Wanted:

PIC

Dayton IG is in need of Public Information Volunteers and a Chair for the position.

Experience is not necessary. Some aspects are getting info to doctors, the Military, advertising, faxing and e-mailing, speaking to groups.

Recommended time in program: 30 days.

Sanctuary

May need an editor to correct paper and come help me write it one time per month. Call Claudia @ 298-8216

COMING OUT OF THE DESERT

There is a story of a young man who is sent into the desert by his father to seek enlightenment. The young man goes into the desert, a dry desolate wilderness, and spends many days fasting and meditating. Finally after some time a powerful man comes along, but not to offer enlightenment.

The powerful man is there to tempt the young man, a young man who is destined for greatness. The powerful man wants to turn him against his father. He tries to tempt the young man to eat, but he would not eat as he had been instructed to fast. He tries to tempt the young man with offers of all the power he could ever want if he turns against his father's will, but the young man stands firm refusing to turn against his father. The young man is tempted again and again but refuses to be swayed by any offer. When the young man emerged from the desert he was

powerfully enlightened and proceeded to fulfill his destiny. The point of the story is that despite adversity, despite temptations galore, the young man stayed faithful to his fathers will and gained remarkable enlightenment as a result.

That story is more than two thousand years old, told at a time of great upheaval and change in the world. What does it say to us today? What relevance could it have to OA's? I found it to be an eye opening and thought provoking.

To me being trapped in compulsive behaviors is like being stranded in the desert. We find ourselves alone unable to confide in another, unable to comprehend that we are not the only one who has had the kind of insane thinking and behavior that makes us act out on our compulsions, particularly (but not exclusively) compulsive eating.

When we are in the desert of compulsive behavior we quickly become irrational. We are tempted by the most powerful thing; our compulsive triggers that lure us into insane behavior. We are tempted, just as the young man was tempted, and fail because we are following self will, or self will run riot to put it in better context. What we should follow at the time we are in the desert is strict adherence to our Higher Power's will not our own just as the young man adhered to his father's will. Rather than fasting and meditation for enlightenment we should be praying and meditating for our Higher Power's will for us each day and follow that to the letter! That is the form of enlightenment we need and we need it daily.

By following our Higher Power's will for us we find that resisting the compulsion to overeat is gone or at least well in control. Not our control, but Higher Power's control, for we cannot function in the desert alone. I remember a time not long ago when I was in the desert of compulsive behavior, binging eating daily, and it was a horrible experience.

Trapped in the desert of compulsive eating my body was dry, parched, thirsty for the living water of sanity and freedom from compulsive eating. My body was covered with sweat soaked dirt of fear caused by the swirling sand storm of my addiction. My mind spun from the heat of guilt, shame and resentment that compulsive

eating caused. I ached to be cleansed of this filth with its stench of compulsion.

Just when I thought there was no way out, my Higher Power showed me the way. I had reached the bottom, a point where there was only one way to go on living. I had to accept that I had a problem; that I was powerless over food and my life was unmanageable. I realized that and that I could not get better alone at about the same time. These two steps led me out of the desert of compulsive behavior and to the *OAsis* where I live today. These steps and ten others are cleansing my mind, my body and my spirit of detrimental effects of being stranded in the desert of compulsive behavior.

I'm getting better now. Instead of floundering in the shifting sand of compulsive eating, I am walking on the fringe of the desert. Sometimes I slip into the sand and must struggle free; sometimes I walk in green pasture absolutely free of my compulsive behavior. Mostly I walk on the fringe, meaning I have to work my program diligently, follow my food plan and concentrate on staying abstinent and in the green grass of my *OAsis*.

Pat

MEDITATION

In studying Steps 3 and 11, we learn that we are instructed to practice regular prayer and meditation to discover Higher Power's will for us. We're told we seek HP's will for us (through prayer) and try to listen to what that might be (through meditation). Most of us have an understanding of what it means to pray, but what actually is meditation? One distinction that program members often make is that prayer is speaking to HP/God, and meditation is listening to HP/God. While it's important to ask HP to reveal HP's will to us, it's also important to listen to hear the answer.

Many of us resist prayer and meditation. Is it possible that we still want our own way, that we are "too busy" to take the time required to meditate, or even pray? Generally, we are often willing to pray, but the emphasis here is the willingness to practice meditating. I've sometimes wondered why we resist taking the time to truly listen to Higher Power even when the evidence is convincing that real power is the result of taking the time regularly to do this.

The answer seems to be, once again, self will run riot. I've learned that the earlier steps can keep me sane/abstinent from compulsive eating, but Step 11 can keep me growing if I'm willing to try hard and work at it consistently. Besides praying, this means I must decide also to practice meditating.

When I was early in recovery, I used the AA "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" a lot. Today that book reminds me (p. 101-2) that, "meditation is in reality intensely practical. One of its first fruits is emotional balance." I was surely seeking emotional balance as well as spiritual growth. So what is the hesitation to PRACTICE daily meditation?

Well, I've learned that practicing part of Step 11 is not the same as working Step 11. I've learned also that I must not be vague about the need to practice meditation. We are kidding ourselves if we think Step 11 "comes naturally" to us or that we can work this Step once in awhile. Step 11 offers an involved program that includes meditation daily. It requires a great deal of self-discipline to work this Step.

In the beginning of our recovery from compulsive overeating, it may take a lot of effort to develop a habit of including meditation with prayer as Step 11 requires. Over the years our performance with practicing meditation may be very uneven. Most of us will sometimes not be willing. However, once we develop the habit, the paybacks for practicing meditation as well as prayer create a momentum that carries us forward. This is not to say that we won't occasionally choose to not practice, but perhaps this is an area, and reason, that we still need sponsors to remind us that we are remiss in not working this Step. I am now convinced that without living a regular program that includes meditation, as well as prayer and self-examination (Step 10), we are not working Step 11.

So, when we make a choice -- a decision -- to practice meditation, what does that mean? What do we do? First, I use the term "practice" meditation because I understand it takes practice to do it. I see this like learning to play a sport. I accept that I will not be able to start right away and play expertly. The same understanding is required of my ability to meditate. My purpose in meditating is to listen to HP, to seek HP's will for me. I accept that it won't come immediately,

that I first have to work on (*practice*) tuning out all the "head talk", i.e., the noises I hear, what I will be doing tonight, what I'm not getting done while I'm sitting here, what's going on outside, what's happening on the weekend, etc. I start by sitting in a comfortable chair, sitting up straight, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in my lap. I have two examples of how to shut off the mind talk, and I'm still practicing.... One is to focus on my breathing, concentrating on taking deeper and longer inhales and then slower and longer exhales. This in itself is a real effort, since many of us in this society only breathe very shallowly and use only the top part of our chest rather than the diaphragm. But again, practice... Another example is to quietly hum or "chant" with each exhale and concentrate on that quiet, regular sound. While I'm "practicing," especially at first (several weeks or months), I often am aware that the mind talk has returned and I need to gently bring my thoughts back to my breathing (or humming/chanting). To me, this is part of our willingness to "trust the process." By taking some time daily to practice quieting myself, I trust that eventually I will get to my internal spirit; I'll get in touch with my HP, my spiritual self; and be able to sometimes "hear" my HP's guidance.

Of course, we know that meditation is only one way to understand HP's will for us. But I do believe this effort to practice meditation is expected of me and like other program guidance, I've become willing to do what it takes to stay in recovery, to remain abstinent from compulsive eating, and to continue to grow. Most days now I am willing to take even a few minutes to practice meditation. I don't do it perfectly, but perfection is no longer a goal. There are other benefits, like calming myself or de-stressing, etc., but my main goal is to get in touch with my spirit, my HP, to listen. I've become willing to do this, to practice meditating, simply because it's part of the instructions I'm provided on to how to get well, stay out of the excess food and stay in recovery. I enjoy living in recovery and wellness and abstinence and (most days) I'm willing to do what I must to stay there.

I can figure out my next best move today if I quiet my mind long enough to receive God's (HP's) message."

Sherry

Saturday morning, St. Mark's

Note:

If you are a Group Rep please remember to take the meeting details back to your group.

- The Friday Night meeting is still going folks and can use support.
- New Tuesday Noon meeting at Kettering Moraine Library will need support to get started.

Thank you very much for all of the articles that were sent in this month. You've made the paper completion a breeze.

KILLER IN THE MIST

In Friday Nights meeting we read of a woman who died of this disease as her sponsoree watched in horror. She died weighing 1000 pounds. I needed to be reminded that the first bite counts. It leads to the last bite in the casket. I was also reminded in the meeting that we must not love each other to death. If we see one of our brothers or sisters on that path of destruction it is our duty to say something. More research may be necessary on their part, but we need to be willing to risk and step out of our comfort zone to say something. As Jerry of (Matt and Jerry, AA) says, "be willing to cut off my legs with a blunt axe to save my life." Sounds rough, but not as rough as ye old pine box.

Please remember that OA is self supporting. Your donations are tax deductible whether they are in the basket or as a tithe. Remember how much you've spent on the old binge foods and give an extra buck.

The opinions expressed here are the opinion of the writers and not of OA, and are the individual's experience, strength, and hope. Permission to reprint is given to any 12-step member of any program. Thank you.

Greater Dayton Intergroup Minutes
Saturday, September 21, 2002

Opening Claudia opened with the Serenity Prayer.
Sue read the Purpose of Intergroup.
Nan read the 12 Traditions.

Meeting Attendees Claudia, George, Nan, Sue, Tim, Ginger

Remarks: Claudia distributed the "Roll Call Sheet" and asked that it be updated
Claudia asked Ginger to be the alternate secretary for this meeting (only), since Nora is absent due to injuries sustained from a serious auto accident.

Reading of the Minutes:: Ginger read the minutes and they were approved

Reports:

1. Chair None
2. Vice Chair None
3. Treasurer (Nan)

Report was distributed and discussed.

Group donations are down, but individual tithes/donations are up

Preliminary tabulations look like there will be a net of \$700 from the Retreat Individual tithes are not part of the 60/30/10 formula of income distribution

4. Secretary None
5. Bylaws None
6. Hotline None
7. Sanctuary (Claudia)

Per Judy, articles are coming in. There is no editor for the Sanctuary, since Claudia has stepped down. This position needs a volunteer.

8. Bookstore None
9. PIC None

10. Region V Becky was not present; however, she did submit a report to the Intergroup.

Intergroup earned \$56 from participating at Ohio Day of Sharing in Columbus on 8/24/02.

Region V Convention deadline has passed...Registrations will be accepted at the door, but will not include any meals.

11. 12 Step Within None
12. Old Business None
13. New Business

***George: October 20, Wilmington Meeting will celebrate its 2nd year anniversary of existence, and invites OA members from other groups to attend this celebration. Information is as follows: 6:00 pm=Supper, Lead=7:00 pm...Call George or Diana for information. It is suggested that you bring a covered dish, but not required.**

***IDEA Day = November 16**

International Day of Experiencing Abstinence Paperwork was placed in Becky's mailbox for 12 Step Within possible work

***PIC**

This committee is non-existent at the moment...no chair nor members. Will list the tasks of this committee in the next Sanctuary and also send an email, in the hope of having members volunteer for individual tasks. Intergroup will take over a few tasks of this committee until volunteers are found, such as: Stamping new OA "business/information cards" with OA phone number and email address (will do at next Intergroup meeting)...in order to get these out prior to the holidays. Ginger will check on advertising costs in the Dayton Daily Newspaper for the month of January, 2003.

***Sanctuary Needs helper and articles.**

***Election of Intergroup Vice Chair**

The election for this position will be at the November Intergroup meeting. George, who presently holds this position, stated that serving OA in this capacity has helped him learn what is going on, and has taught him to be involved with Intergroup. A listing of the duties of the Vice Chair is listed in the Bylaws; however, George stated that he pretty much just steps in when the Chair is unavailable. He also stated that new people need to take this on

so our organization can grow. If you are interested in this position, contact your Intergroup Rep or an Intergroup officer. Interested members are always welcome to attend Intergroup meetings.

***Election of Intergroup Secretary**

The election for this position will be at the November Intergroup meeting. Nora took this position when Judy stepped down. Nora informed Intergroup that she is willing to run for this position in November. If anyone else is interested, let your Intergroup Rep or an Intergroup officer know, or come to the November meeting yourself. The Secretary's duties are listed in the Bylaws.

***Token Problem and Resolution**

Claudia informed the group that tokens from the World Service Organization of OA are no longer available for the following: 24 hour abstinence token, 21 day token, 30 day token, 60 day token, 90 day token, Etc. (all tokens prior to one year)

OA tokens now start at one year. A motion was made by Tim and seconded by George that Intergroup buy these discontinued OA tokens from the AA office in downtown Dayton. These tokens do not have AA written on them, and can be used for the increments which OA discontinued. It was felt these early tokens mean a lot to our new members; thus, we should continue them. Any group needing tokens or wanting to become a token meeting can buy them at the OA Bookstore, second floor, St. Mark's.

***Audio-Tape Procedure**

Several newer members have asked what the procedure is to check-out audio-tapes. This is the procedure.

The bookstore must be open to check-out a tape You place \$3 for each tape into the yellow tub in the bookstore cabinet You complete a check-out form When you return the tape, your \$3 is refunded.

***Audio-Tape Machine Problem**

Claudia volunteered to contact the inactive/former OA member who took the audio-tape copy machine, and try to get it back.

***Campaign for 7th Tradition Awareness**

Since OA membership is down, group donations are down. It is felt that one of the reasons for this is that we have no PIC (Public Information Committee). Sue suggested that each Intergroup Rep tell his/her group that costs have gone up for everything, and encourage, those who are able, that \$2 is more appropriate as a donation for the 7th tradition basket than \$1.

Ginger suggested that a note be placed in the Sanctuary that donations are tax deductible. Tim stated that cash donations are deductible up to \$500 per year; however, if you would like a receipt, you can give an individual donation by check (whereby your cancelled check is your receipt): Make checks payable to: Overeaters Anonymous of Dayton Mail to: Treasurer of Overeaters Anonymous P.O. Box 1919 Dayton, Ohio 45401

***2003 Scholarship Money for Region V Convention**

It was suggested that some money in the 2003 budget be designated for scholarships for those unable to afford to go to the convention.

***Service Structure Questionnaire**

It was decided not to complete this form as no one present volunteered to take it to his/her home group; thus, it was discarded.

There being no other business to conduct, this meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Balance Forward 7-1-02 \$9954.68

RECEIPTS	July/Aug	Year to Date	Budget 2002
Group Contributions	\$662.45	\$2,473.29	\$5,093.00
Individual Donations	\$998.25	\$3,097.25	\$1,000.00
Region V Convention		\$964.04	\$894.00
12 Step Within	\$60.50	\$96.00	
Retreat	\$2,335.00	\$3,070.00	\$2,800.00
Sanctuary	\$3.50	\$58.10	
TOTAL	\$4,059.70	\$9,758.68	\$9,787.00
DISBURSEMENTS			
Rent	\$400.00	\$1,600.00	\$2,400.00
Phone	\$107.16	\$424.12	\$600.00
Insurance			\$533.00
P.O. Box Fee	\$44.00	\$44.00	\$64.00
Internet Service	\$45.95	\$45.95	\$90.00
Retreat	\$27.13	\$277.13	\$2,800.00
Sanctuary Committee		\$88.17	\$400.00
Public Information Committee			\$300.00
12 Step Within Committee			\$100.00
Bylaws Committee			\$50.00
Rep. Travel	\$200.38	\$508.09	\$1,600.00
World Service/Region V		\$1,172.02	\$750.00
Scholarship Fund	\$287.87	\$287.87	
Office Refurbishment		\$46.96	\$100.00
Miscellaneous		\$24.61	
TOTAL	\$1,112.49	\$4,518.92	\$9,787.00

Balance 8/31/02 \$12,901.89