

JULY 2010



Easy Does It



Madison Area Intergroup

Visit the Madison
Intergroup Website:
www.oamadison.org

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NEXT INTERGROUP MEETING –

Mount Olive Church
110 N Whitney Way
(at Langlois St.)

**JULY MEETING
POSTPONED TO
JULY 8, to allow for
final BIG BOOK PREP.
6:15pm**

August 5, 2010

6:15 pm

WRITE FOR EDI

~We'd love to hear from
you, please share your
experience strength and
hope!

The EDI is always in need
of personal stories or
artwork. Email or snail-
mail the EDI editor at
caspoohbear@aol.com

Madison OA
P.O. Box 294
Madison, WI
53703

Step 7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

To a new member of our OA family

My advice (should you be interested; if not 'take what fits and leave the rest') would be to start simple. Like committing to 3 planned (if at all possible) meals a day (Maybe a light snack towards bedtime if you need four 'feedings' a day) and write down what you eat (or, better yet what you plan to eat for the day and call it in to a food sponsor) daily including beverages on a check off or hatch mark list. As time goes on most of us have found trigger foods or foods with trigger ingredients in them as evidenced by the fact that we just can't stop at one serving. Be gentle with yourself but keep honest. We didn't develop our compulsive eating habits overnight and we have a lot of other things going on as well. We usually find that, as we are increasingly successful in eliminating compulsive eating behaviors, that sometimes annoying emotions, feelings, etc will come up for us. That is a good thing because most of us used food to numb out, avoid, feel loved, avoid anger, etc. etc. This is where the emotional part of recovery comes in. The spiritual part (spending time reading OA approved materials, meditating or just being quiet with your concept of your higher power) comes in as we try to start and end each day with time for spiritual contemplation as the foundation for the rest of our day and the key to how the program works. It is a to and fro process and these issues are the place where reaching out on the phone, email, online or telephone meetings (go to www.OA.org for links) are necessary. Our disease is one of isolation and we need to accept and then follow through on new, recovery behaviors. That's doing Our Part. We admit daily that we are powerless over controlling our compulsive behavior but that we ARE NOT HELPLESS [unless we're in a coma ☺]

Accepting ourselves as lovable and learning to truly love ourselves as imperfect human beings is, I believe, key to doing anything good or healthy for ourselves. We recover for OURSELVES not for anyone or anything else although others may well reap benefits from being in the presence of our recovering selves.

Welcome aboard. God doesn't make any iunk. ~Don

Tradition 7: Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

ONE WAY TICKET

I try not to talk about my chosen religion in program, but please bear with a quick reference to that religion so I may reach my point... Today in church, the reading told of God telling people to follow him, not do anything else first, just follow. Our pastor was relating this to a one-way travel ticket. That we generally travel with round-trip plans. We know where we're going, we know when we'll get home, come back to what we know, those we love. But God expects us to follow him, with the uncertainty of a one-way ticket. Not knowing exactly where we're going, or what we'll do when we get there. Leaving behind everything, not knowing if we'll ever come back. This may cause anxiety for some, but as we're told in program, HP's plans for us are so much more wonderful than what we could ever imagine.

Reflecting on what I heard today, I'm thinking about how God has played this out with my recovery in OA. How I pray that this is truly a one-way ticket to recovery. I have already seen new lands, experienced birthday parties without "HAVING" to have cake, potlucks with only one plate of food, developed friendships with people I would never have known before OA... (continued p2)

One way ticket (continued from page 1)

... I don't want to make this a round trip journey. I almost did, but was blessed with a "layover on the return trip" so-to-speak, a recovery from a fortunately short relapse last year. I don't want to go back to rolling around on the floor of the bathroom in misery from too much indulging, I don't want to relive screaming at my family and not knowing why, there's no good reason to return to missing work because of a food hangover from overeating the night before. I don't have to go back where I came from. I have "home movies" in my brain, called dreams, where I wake up and have to hit my knees because the bingeing or screaming didn't really happen this time, it was just a memory. I have "postcards" from newcomers that remind me. I have my own postcard to them: Wish you were here, on this journey to the fourth dimension. This one-way ticket, it won't be easy, it may be a bumpy ride, but I've got the Steps, the Traditions, the tools and all of you to hang onto.

~Grateful

Heard at Meetings

Recently (as usual) I've been inspired by fellow members at meetings when they share their experience, strength and hope. Sometimes there are simple comments that shoot right through to my heart, as if directly from my higher power. Other times I find myself reflecting on the meeting and a comment or idea comes wafting back into my head with a new twist that applies to my situation in the moment. Below are some ponderings from meetings that have helped me work my program, thus helping my program work me.

"No matter how far down the road you travel, you are still the same distance from the ditch." I don't know the origination of this clever quote, but I find it immensely grounding. To me it symbolizes the true nature of humility – not falsely proud, able to recognize and celebrate that a long distance has been successfully traveled, but reminding me that if I don't have a healthy spiritual practice I am only a couple of steps away from the ditch.

"If I take that first bite, I have no more than a 50/50 chance of relapse." I so appreciated this comment because it spoke to me of all of the false starts I've had in program, only to be wrecked by trying a dangerous food behavior again because I got away with it once, or twice. I can so easily be fooled by the "well, I ate this last week and I was fine" thoughts, or "if I just do this, I won't gain weight, and that's the whole point, isn't it??" It might not be the first bite, or the second. But do I want to gamble my precious sanity on odds that are not remotely in my favor? In gambling, they say "the house always wins." I am pretty sure that in gambling with tricky foods, the disease always wins.

"I only weigh myself on the 1st and 15th of the month." This very practical comment has been helpful to me, and I have adopted this idea as my practice. I realize that not all readers of this message will find it applies to them, and certainly this is the type of program detail that is between each of us and our higher power (maybe our sponsor, too). But for me, it has been a way to avoid the obsession with the scale that so often sabotages me during phases of weight loss. I know that, however tempting it is to get on the scale if my pants feel a tiny bit looser, I am better off waiting until the scheduled day to weigh myself and thus be spared from the obsessive thoughts that can make me crazy and lead to bingeing.

"I am powerless, but not helpless." I love to hear this common saying in meetings & see fellow sufferers get some comfort from the sentiment. I have felt helped by this phrase recently when feeling "stuck" in an emotion that is tempting me to use old coping mechanisms (food or compulsive food behaviors.) I am not helpless to get up and move, use the phone, write in my journal, simply distract myself with a good book. These elements of "footwork" can be lifesavers when I'm tempted to feel helpless.

"...in these rooms." I love to hear people say that they have been "in these rooms" or that they learned something important "in these rooms" or remember the first day they walked "into these rooms." No matter in which room we are currently seated, we all know to what "in these rooms" is referring – the collective heart space of the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. I feel like I belong, like I am a presence "in these rooms" and all of our higher powers gather there as well. It has a multiplying effect – even if only 6 or 8 of us are physically together, "in these rooms" are hundreds of thousands of us around the world.

~Anonymous (June 2010)

Editorial Statement

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Practice these principles in all our affairs

Tradition Seven: Responsibility

One definition of responsibility states it is a form of trustworthiness; the trait of being answerable to someone for something.

The principles of our program can and should transcend all areas of our lives. This definition of responsibility, has been an area of growth for me. When we decided 2 years ago we needed a local meeting, we planned that at least one of us, and preferably both, would be there every week for at least the first year. For one or two exceptions we found "coverage" in advance, so there's been a meeting every week. I am usually the keyholder, making me responsible to OA friends and newcomers that come to our doors.

Am I responsible for my sponsees' recovery? For her slip, her break of abstinence, her relapse? Absolutely not. Nor is my sponsor responsible for the relapse I'm recovering from. But, I feel I am responsible for sharing my experience. I am responsible to be a listening ear. Not for her recovery. For mine. When I hear your struggles, the newcomer's challenges, the binge stories of people who have yet to find OA, I have the responsibility to this new person that I am becoming, to hear what I used to be like. What I don't want to be again.

Before program, when I only answered to myself, I was answering to a dishonest, out of control, fatigued, barely-being human. Not great standards to live up to. But now, as I'm becoming the person God wants me to be, the principles of program are closer to the surface. Tradition 1: Unity, Tradition 2: Trust, Tradition 3: Identity, Tradition 4: Autonomy, Tradition 5: Purpose, Tradition 6: Solidarity, Tradition 7: Responsibility, Tradition 8: Fellowship, Tradition 9: Structure, Tradition 10: Neutrality, Tradition 11: Anonymity, Tradition 12: Spirituality. (<http://www.oa.org/new-to-oa/twelve-traditions.php>).

I feel I have a responsibility to myself, my fellow OAers, newcomers and those suffering with compulsive overeating who have yet to discover OA. What takes more effort, is "practicing these principles in all my affairs". Practicing neutrality at work, trust in my family. Tradition 5, "purpose", I have to remember in my marriage, our primary purpose is to be loving witnesses to each other's growth and support each other and tradition 1, our common welfare should come first. I know, thanks to this program, that I don't have to react, that I can remember these principles and usually don't have to do or say things that might make a situation that is none of my business worse.

Simple, but not easy, these principles are simply saving my life.

~CS

NEW MEETINGS!!!! See the meeting list for details
Cambridge: 8:00AM Friday Mornings
Young People's Focus Meeting: Tuesday nights 6:00PM

I put my hand out...

Service opportunities: *Big Book Study* in July. If you'd like to help at the event please call Jane G. 608-661-8091 or email Cassidy (caspoohbear@aol.com) for details. Still looking for donations of raffle items, if your group can donate something, please bring/send it to the next intergroup meeting or to the Big Book Study. THANKS!

Upcoming Events

- **Madison Area Intergroup Big Book Study Workshop (Madison) Friday, July 23-Sunday July 25th, 2010. Brochure is on the website to download. Have you registered yet? It's not too late! caspoohbear@aol.com www.oamadison.org THE HOTEL BLOCK IS AVAILABLE UNTIL JULY 6. <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=0907102012&key=D0914> **CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR RECOVERY BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY!****
- **Now Playing- 50 Years of OA Recovery WSO Convention:** August 26-29, 2010 Hilton Los Angeles Airport Hotel Los Angeles, CA <http://www.oa.org/world-service/convention.php>

MADISON AREA INTERGROUP MEETINGS LIST (updated June 2010)

SUNDAY		
<p>9:00am Meriter Hospital, Conf. Rm. D 202 S. Park St., Madison(Behind cashier's station in cafeteria)Format: Big Book Study Free parking available in ramp. Scent-free: no perfumes/scented lotions Contact: Dawn C. 608-838-8592</p>	WEDNESDAY	
THURSDAY (Cont'd)		
MONDAY		
	<p>Noon at Bethany United Methodist Church 3910 Mineral Point Road, Madison Format: 12 & 12 Study Contact: Ellie 608-255-5502</p>	<p>7:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Church Only the 1st Thurs/ Speaker Mtg. is OPEN* 110 Whitney Way, Madison (near Regent) basement level, Room 11 Format: OA 12&12 & Big Book Study Contact: Rhonda 608-692-7286</p>
<p><i>Noon at St. John's Church</i> 322 E. Washington, Madison (use elevator) 2nd floor down the hall on left Format: 12 & 12 Study Contact: Kate 608-335-4703</p>	<p>6:30pm McFarland Municipal Center 5915 Milwaukee St., McFarland Format: Discussion Contact: Dawn C. 608-838-8592</p>	<p>6:30 p.m. Morrow Memorial Home Chapel 331 S. Water St., Sparta Format: Varies Contact: Donna 608-269-8504</p>
<p><i>5:30pm Dean Clinic East</i> (downstrs. past restrooms) 1821 S. Stoughton Road, Madison Format: Literature Study Contact: Betty D. 608-257-5578</p>	THURSDAY	
FRIDAY		
<p>6:30pm First English Lutheran 440 Garfield Street, Wisconsin Rapids Format: Steps/Traditions meeting Contact: Lucy 715-886-4370</p>	<p>Noon St. John's Church (See Mon. noon) Format: Topic Meeting Contact: Kate 608-335-4703</p>	<p>8:00am Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church, 313 E. Main St., Cambridge ***NEW*** Format: Varies Contact: Kate 608-335-4703</p>
TUESDAY		
	<p>5:00pm Serenity Club House/OPEN* 401 N. Union St. Dodgeville (back entrance) Format: varies Contact: Hatheway 608-574-5797</p>	<p>1:00pm Grace Bible Church (previously listed on wrong day) 2939 County HWY CX, Portage Contact: Janet B. 608-297-8341</p>
<p>6:00pm Meriter Hospital (for location see Sunday 9am) Format: Young People's Meeting ***NEW*** Contact: Patti 669-8940</p>	<p>6:00 p.m. Colonial Club Senior Center (Board Rm) 301 Blankenheim Lane, Sun Prairie Format: Literature Study Contact: Fran 608-332-9688</p>	<p>5:30 p.m. Plymouth Congregational Church 2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison (ring bell) Format: Literature Study Contact: Marylu 608-249-6603</p>
<p>7:00pm Fitchburg Serenity Club, Room A 6048 McKee Road, Fitchburg Format: Literature Study Contact: Carole 608-233-7390</p>	<p>***The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.</p>	
<p>7:00pm St. Joseph's Outreach Center 826 Prairie Ave., Hillsboro Format: Varies Contact: Cassidy 608-489-3577</p>	<p><i>*Anyone can attend an OPEN meeting. This includes families and friends of those who experience problems with food, as well as health professionals, clergy or others seeking more information about OA. All other meetings are closed (for members only).</i></p>	
	SATURDAY	
	<p>8:30 a.m.—OPEN* Meriter Hospital (for location see Sunday 9:00 a.m.) Format: Literature Study (OA literature available for purchase) Contact: Debb F. 608-843-6306</p>	