



Monarch Monthly

Three Rivers Intergroup Newsletter
April 2008

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First, thank you SO much for the responses to polls and other questions! This issue is fantastic! I was overwhelmed by content this month! I can officially say: We have three pages!

Next month's topic will be ARTISTRY! Please send us information concerning whatever hobby you participate in! I view these things as, art but also as a vital tool for coping! Whether you knit, paint, or write poetry, we'd like to hear from you and represent you in next month's issue!

The question for next month (that I'd like responses to) will be: If you could add another "tool" to the list, what would it be? What would it's description be? How would this improve program for me and others?

Looking forward to hearing from you! Thanks for allowing me to serve!

Bethanie



Beginning June 1st (which is a Sunday) a new meeting will begin. It will be a closed, women's focused meeting held at Lutheran Hospital. The meeting will be at 3:30 pm in classroom 1 and 2 (they are located in the main hospital in the basement...follow the signs "Roxanne's Friends"). For more information, contact Jennifer @ (260) 450-0062.

Blaming Other's Doesn't Go Well with Principle 11

I choose not to point the finger at myself or anyone else. You may say...then who do you blame!? The answer is: I blame no one. Things happened the way they did for a reason. I admit, for awhile I was very mad at my Higher Power...I avoided Him as much as possible. But I learned that even God is not to blame.

Things happen the way they do for a reason, like I just said. And seasons, I must not forget seasons. Oh, and valleys, and mountain tops, and floods, and all of the wonderful pictures in nature that reflect how things happen in our lives. Pits. I was in a pit, or at least standing in quicksand. I blamed a lot of people, particularly, [insert your own!]. I can think of other people I blamed for a long time, I even blamed God.

I, right now, make the decision to stop pointing fingers. I am responsible for myself and will only apologize for my own actions. However, when I hold myself responsible for my actions, or admit an error, I am not too hard on myself. As my nephew says: "Accidents happen."

When I want to blame other people, especially when it seems like they are not trying as hard as I am, I remember that everyone is doing the best they can to their understanding and awareness. The more I blame others, the more I realize that "their" fingers are pointing at ME! When I acknowledge my part in a wrong, no one can say, "she hasn't been honest," because I told where I had been wrong. I learn to look at my own part in situations where I feel others have failed me. I often find things that I do not like about myself. BUT there is now one positive thing I can say about myself: I have been honest to the best of my ability and awareness.

BH

We Care List



*Telephone calls
are a tool of the
OA program! We
reach out to ac-
complish some-
thing we cannot
do alone.*

Thumbs Up on Individuality by M.K., Chicopee, Massachusetts (*Lifeline* August 1982)

While WSO is busy counting noses (*Lifeline* survey report, February '82), I would like to have my thumb counted. Why? Because there are similar noses—long, short, thin, pug—but no one has a thumbprint like mine. It's unique, as I am. No two alike in the whole world.

I came into Overeaters Anonymous six winters ago and have yet to see two people who work the program in exactly the same way. Like thumbprints, our approach to program is individual.

When we gather in OA meetings we are all alike in our addiction and our powerlessness. We are drawn together by our weakness, and thus we become strong. Alone in our compulsive overeating, we were lost, as if adrift on a vast ocean. Overeaters Anonymous is, was and always will be our safe harbor.

But these similarities of ours make in of ours make it necessary to bear in mind that

we are also individuals, as distinguishable from one another as our thumbprints.

Why is there so much emphasis in so much emphasis in so me meetings on doing program a certain way? Your way is wrong, my way is right. Follow a certain food plan.

Read the Big Book X number of times. Do the steps according to such-and-such a formula. Make a specific number of phone calls, attend this many meetings, write on these particular topics, follow this schedule.

Where is my thumbprint?

What happened to that which is only mine? Isn't it a special gift, something that makes me *me*?

Recovery is the most important thing in my life today. How I choose to pursue it is as unmistakable as my thumb print, for it is mine alone. I identify with other OAs and I need their experience and help, but God is handling my recovery by letting me make progress in my own way, at my own pace.

As unmistakable as my thumbprint, for it is mine alone. I identify with other OAs and I need their help and experience and help, but God is handling my recovery by letting me make progress in my own way, at my own pace.

My recovery has been difficult and simple, rapid and gradual. My weight loss is more than 200 pounds, and my spiritual growth has been equally great. The emotional baggage was just as heavy to carry as the excess weight. Slowly, it is being lifted as I find my own way of living the steps.

We OAs have much in common, including a Higher Power that made each of us unique and guides us according to our individual needs. I am thankful for all that have made their impression on me, for all the helping hands that have reached out to me. I love us all.

Overeaters Anonymous Treasurers Report, April 2008

<u>Balance as of 3/19/08</u>	405.75
Debits:	
Monarch Monthly	-30.00
Shaefer's Anserphone	-55.00
Credits:	
Literature	+13.50
Saturday	+61.23
<u>Balance as of 4/22/08</u>	395.48



Help the members of the intergroup by bringing up important issues such as a need to re-stock literature supplies

Literature Inventory April 22, 2008

<u>Balance 3/16/08</u>	1,164.12
Debit	13.50
<u>Balance as of 4/22/08</u>	1,150.62

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia S.
Treasurer

Minutes of March Intergroup Meeting

For meeting 31 March 2008. The meeting was called to order by Ron, Vice-Chair. The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer. Those present were: Ron (Vice-Chair), Marcia (Treasurer), Bea (Secretary), Marilyn (Literature), Sally (Newsletter/Regional Rep), Bethanie (Newsletter), Jennifer (Friday Rep), Justine and an Ivy Tech Student Nurse.

Minutes of the last meeting were read. Jennifer made the motion to accept and Bea seconded it. Minutes were accepted.

Marcia gave the treasurer's report. Bethanie made the motion to accept as read and

Jennifer seconded.

Calls: Marcia had 1 call, Sally 5 calls, and Debra had calls but was not present.

Literature: Marilyn brought a lot of literature and it was purchased by those who needed supplies for their meetings and/or themselves.

OLD BUSINESS:

Region V Report:

1. We are in good standing with Region.
2. The new bylaws were accepted.
3. Concerns were raised that checks sent to Region are not being cashed on a timely basis.
4. Convention flyers are out and can be found on line.

5. Decorations have been approved.

Convention: The 2010 convention will be held in Michigan. Question was raised about why we are not hosting the 2010 convention. Answers were

- 1) its their turn and
- 2) we do not have enough people to run a convention at this time.

Public Information: We are looking for a public information person. They would get media out to the public via cards, flyers, news media, hospitals, mental health facilities, health fairs, etc. Some of our literature can be copied and the 12 Tradition guidelines would have to be followed. If you are interested, please let an Intergroup member know. As our Tradition Five states, it is our "primary purpose to carry our message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers." Jennifer brought it to the attention of the group that World Service will give Intergroup financing for media information.

Spring Retreat: Debra is going to keep reservations open until the second floor is filled or two weeks before the retreat, whichever comes first. This is going to be a great time to both relax and refresh.

Newsletter: Bethanie is going to become our new newsletter editor. She and Sally put out

last month's paper and we thank Sally both for her help in working with Bethanie during this transition and for the years she has given to put out the newsletter. Your service is greatly appreciated.

Hoosier Day of Recovery: The 28th of June is Hoosier Day of Recovery. Everything is done and ready to go. Ron, Jennifer, and Debra will be getting together to tie up loose ends on 7 June 2008.

NEW BUSINESS:

Answering Service: Marcia says we can get the answering service at lower price from AT&T. Shaffers is \$55.00 and AT&T is \$38.83 per month. The difference is that Shaffers is a real person giving information and AT&T is a recording. Bethanie suggested we use voice mail on a cell phone. It was tabled for now as we cannot change the phone number listed in the phone book until January. Bethanie requested a check to pay for printing of the newsletter. \$30.00 check was written for supplies. The mailbox key was given to Ron.

Following a short question and answer session with the student nurse, the meeting was closed. Jennifer made a motion to close the meeting, it was seconded by all, and we closed with the serenity prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Bea
Secretary

Leap into Recovery!



*Friday and Saturday May 2-3
At Kempski Retreat Center at
Camp Lutherwald, near Howe, IN*

What to bring? Bring your own clothes and toiletries, and food as I mentioned in the other email, including COFFEE if you want it.

You might want to bring your OA/AA books and a notebook and pen.

If you want to go outside early or late, bug repellent and a flashlight would be helpful.

Also, bring your own single sheets, blanket or sleeping bag. The rooms are indoors and kept at a comfortable temperature.

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The beds are single beds with a regular (somewhat thin, though) mattress on each one. (They are not bunk beds.)

I'm fairly sure there are towels provided, but it wouldn't hurt to throw in your own towel. (But don't throw in the towel. Keep working your program!

Can we come early and/or stay late?

I was asked by a member if it was possible to arrive early and enjoy the camp. I have sent an email to the camp to find out and will let you know. I can tell you that "check-in" time will not be until 4 pm, so if you come, you'll have to work out of your car and won't have a room until that time.

Service Opportunities:

I have several people assigned to jobs already. I don't mind waiting to get meeting leaders and some clean-up jobs assigned after we get there. Of course, we'll all be helping one another, but we want to be sure that some particular areas are taken care of.

A couple spots I'd like to fill before we go:

You would lead this meeting in much the same way you'd lead a meeting at home - begin and end the meeting, ask people to read the readings, and such. There will be a meeting format sheet and all the readings, ready for you!

Are you a Night Owl? Please consider leading the 9 pm meeting Friday night. This will be a topic meeting, with the topic yet to be named. Like the one above, you would lead this meeting like you'd lead a meeting at home.

Contact Debra at: itsdebra@comcast.net

Poll results by correspondent J.C.

Your turn to respond:

Next month's topic will be about the role of other interests in working our program. This sounds confusing but it's really simple! An example would be a person who paints. We would like some pictures that will copy well (these will be black and white reproductions only) and a little bit about how you use your art/hobby to bring yourself serenity and further the working of your program. This month someone has given us a poem! It is the perfect segue way to next month's topic! This artist has shown how she uses art to intensify and focus her program. We will produce as much of the art as we get! If your hobbies involve something we can't reproduce on paper, we would still love to hear how you use art or your hobby as a coping mechanism.

Principles Before Personalities

"Your voice makes me tired."

"I don't like what you just said."

"You talk too much!"

"That's not how I would handle that."

"Do you have to be so arrogant?"

"You haven't been in the program long enough."

"You've been in the program too long."

"Oh my god, not *her* again!"

"You're not the expert on OA."

"Your way is not the only way."

"Sit still and quit fidgeting!"

"You said that at the last meeting."

"I understand what you were saying."

"I have been there before."

"I feel your pain."

"I share your concerns."

"Wow! I can hear you working the steps."

"I love you."

We are all here for the same reason:

Not to compulsively overeat-

To gain strength from the fellowship,

To not be alone anymore,

To trust in a power greater than ourselves to restore us to sanity,

To live "...beyond our wildest dreams!"

~J.W.

How many OA meetings do you feel you need to attend? Surprise, surprise! The average amount of meetings= 3. Here are comments from a couple of the numerous responses!

"As many as I can, at least 1 per week. 2 is a good number for me. Keeps me "in the program." -Anonymous

"I find that attending two or three meetings a week keeps me in the best 'shape' for working my program. I have to deal with the food every day, so I want to stay in contact with my sponsor and other OA people. Being at a meeting reminds me that I'm a compulsive overeater and that there is a solution to my problem."- DM

"At least 1; 2- 3 are better!" -JW

"For my recovery I feel the most comfortable with three 12 step recovery meetings a week. When I travel I go to meetings in those towns as well or log on to online OA meetings. That really helps as vacation can be a little more challenging. I find that, for me, when I start skipping meetings that is when I am toying with extra food and possible relapse." -Anonymous

"I attend three to five OA meetings a week, most of the time four. If I have less than 2 I really need to use the phone. I call at least one OA person a week for other than "business" purposes."- Anonymous

Saturday Speaker Meeting Interview

- 1. What surprised you most about being in the program?** At first the thing that surprised me most was everyone's honest openness about their struggles with this oppressive disease. I remember thinking "My God! What courage these people have to speak so openly about their problems with food." When I was doing everything I could not to talk about it and feeling enslaved and ashamed that I had this problem. I thought talking about it would only bring more shame. In reality it brought hope and freedom! I wasn't alone anymore and others had found help, and if they could then maybe I could.
- 2. What is your favorite CD/book/TOOL?** My favorite tool is the phone. It wasn't always my favorite, in fact I hated picking up that phone. I didn't want to have to tell someone that I had failed and was struggling again. My shame ran pretty deep. I was also very defiant, about my abstinence. I would say to myself (stinking thinking) "I was good all week, I should be able to eat what I want today ", and that's exactly what I did. I would do everything else beside picking up the phone. I thought if called someone I would be bothering them, or that I would have to spill my guts about what a loser I was because I couldn't stay abstinent. The truth is I don't have to spill my guts every time I call someone. I just need to make a connection with someone other than me, myself and I. When I call someone I'm pulling myself out of isolation and for me isolation is an abstinence killer! I can call and just say " Hi how are you?" That action alone is sometimes all I need to keep me going.
- 3. What is your favorite OA slogan?** I love all the slogans! But the one that has helped me the most recently is H.A.L.T. Hungry , Angry, Lonely, Tired. If you're feeling like you want to eat, stop and, HALT, and think . Are you feeling too hungry, too angry, too lonely, or too tired? I've realized that these are triggers that cause me to eat.

I used to think that only certain foods were considered triggers to eat and maybe some situations like being at a buffet. I knew that I was eating for emotional reasons also, but I was thinking they were the deep emotions not just the everyday kind of feelings.

So these days I try not to skip lunch because I'm rushed, or if I worked a 12 hr day and didn't get enough sleep the night before, or I haven't picked up the phone to say "Hi" or go visit with friends, or get angry over things I have no control over, like how many grouchy people I have to talk to at work. I try to think before I eat, or use a tool. Today I have options.

- 4. When did you first know that you didn't view food like other people?** I first knew something was just not normal about 2 weeks before I went to my first OA meeting back in 1983. I remember going through a drive-thru restaurant and getting a bunch of [items] and gobbling them all down and then wondering why I did it. I hadn't even been hungry. I heard someone say that in the 12 & 12 it says "Food is a rapacious predator" I knew that feeling that day but didn't understand it. I do now!!
- 5. What is your greatest joy as a result of working the Steps?** The greatest joy is that the nightmare of the obsession with my weight—and the food—the self loathing is over. Now I have serenity most of the time. If life starts getting unmanageable I have a Higher Power and a program and tools and my OA friends to help me.
- 6. How do you share the message with COE's who still suffer?** I try to share the message every time I do an outreach call. Also by sharing in meetings and being available to sponsor. I also try to share with people outside of program.
- 7. Topic Question: What have you learned in practicing Principles before Personalities?** I've learned that I still have trouble with "practicing". I usually run the other way when I encounter abrasive personalities. Principles before personalities was something I never considered, I just ran. Now I try to practice these principles in all my affairs including the situations that I don't feel comfortable in or with people I don't feel comfortable with. Progress not perfection.

Saturday Morning Interview

This is a new section we will be having every month. The idea is that each person who volunteers to be the Saturday speaker is asked several question. Some are general (about their recovery) and then a final question is asked concerning the topic of the month.

OA Literature

While OA literature is available at every meeting, it is difficult to stock everything. If you can't find something specific, the OA website (www.aa.org) is relatively easy to use and you can get any and all OA literature there!

Polls and Q&A

We don't mind asking questions, but we would love to hear yours. I think your fellow COEs would enjoy hearing your questions and responding to them, as well! Please send questions and answers to:

hirschelmanb@comcast.net

Date and Time	Town	Meeting Place	Type of meeting	Contact person
Monday 7:30-8:30 pm	Fort Wayne	<u>Park Center</u> 909 E. State Street Greenly Bldg. Room 105	Big Book & discussion	Sally (260) 623-3485
<i>Last Mon of the month</i> 6:30-7:30	Fort Wayne	<u>Park Center</u> 909 E. State Street Greenly Bldg. Room 105	Intergroup meeting	Sally (260) 623-3485
6:00-7:00 pm	Elkhart	<u>1st Presbyterian Church</u> 200 Beardsley Room 206 (babysitting rm)	Format varies	Debbie (574) 266-8710
6:00-7:00 pm	Portland	<u>Mt. Zion Lutheran Church</u> 218 E. High Street	Format varies	Judy (260) 726-9187
Tuesday 7:00-8:00 pm	Garrett	<u>St. Joseph Parish Center</u> 300 W. Houston Street	Book study	Gene L. (260) 357-4189
6:00 pm	Elkhart	<u>Freedom Hall</u> 2513 Eddy Street		Cindy (574) 534-6092
Wednesday 6:30-7:30 pm	Fort Wayne	<u>St. John's Lutheran</u> 729 Washing- ton (meeting in small house)	Step Study OA 12 & 12	Debra M. (260) 492-2581
Thursday 5:30 pm	Culver	<u>Culver Public Library</u> 107 N. Main St.		Chris (574) 850-3914
6:00 pm	Mentone	<u>Bell Memorial Public Library</u> 101 W. Main Street		Amy (574) 551-0727
Friday Noon	Fort Wayne	<u>Reliable Cleaning</u> 1015 Production Rd	Big Book meeting, bring abstinent lunch	Jennifer (260) 450-0062
Saturday 8:30 am	Kendallville	<u>Parkview Noble Hospital</u> Noble Room 3		Jackie (260) 347-8540
9:00-10:00 am	Fort Wayne	<u>Parkview YMCA</u> (off of Dupont) Meeting room D	For Today — <i>Speaker</i> <i>1st Sat of Month</i>	Patty (260) 338-1249 Also Debra M.
10:00 am	Goshen	<u>Trinity Lutheran Church</u> 202 S. Greene Road		Kevin (574) 533-3777

Special Events

May 2-3, 2008
Leap into Recovery Spring Retreat
Three Rivers Intergroup
Howe, IN

May 3, 2008
Spirituality Can Be Fun!
Chi-WIF
Elmhurst, IL

May 9, 2008
4th-7th step workshop
Detroit and Friday Novi Meeting
Novi, MI

May 26, 2008
Day Long Marathon of Meetings
Turning Point Intergroup
Chicago, IL

www.region5oa.org

About Monarch Monthly

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