

Northwest Indiana Intergroup 800-589-6262 (OAOA)



The OA Promise

I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.



Christmas past and present

Before program, holidays were a frenzy of baking and making candy from Thanksgiving until Christmas day. I made tins upon tins of homemade candies. I made tins of cookies for all the neighbors, coworkers, and family. I had an antique pickle jar that held about 25 dozen cookies, and I layered those with tinfoil. Each day I went to these jars or tins and ate a layer or so, and had to start all over.

My compulsion also was in card writing. I sent out about 100 Christmas cards, each with its own note. I remember thinking how loved I was when I hung all

the cards. I did not ever feel loved or loving. I had about 10 boxes of inside decorations, tons of wreaths, and outside lights. I did all of it myself.

In addition to this flurry of activity, I worked full-time, and had three small children, no family in the area to help me, and a husband who drove a truck on the road. I could not handle all of this work. The result was I screamed and yelled at my children and constantly said I hated Christmas and could not wait until it was over.

As this Christmas approaches, I am nearing five years of abstinence. It

is so different today. The first two years I made some cookies and candy—I thought the family expected it. I decorated a big tree and the inside, but not the outside. Last year, I bought a small pre-lit tree and decorated the outside with one snowman. I still made the candy...one or two batches last year.

This year, my soul is full enough that I don't have to do all of that. It does not show love to my family and I have learned that it is an anorexic behavior to cook for others and watch them eat it. It is eating vicariously, so to speak. I do not have to do that today.

Continued on Page 2

Remembering the primary purpose

Recently, I was reminded of a very important principal of the OA program – our primary purpose.

As I have learned in the few years that I have been a member of OA: my ego loves to tell me that the world revolves around me, and my needs. My ego tells me that how I feel and think are the most important things in my life. It would rather it be the most important thing in your life also!

Because of this fact regarding my ego, I must remember at all times what

the primary purpose is of my membership in OA. To carry the message to the compulsive overeater that still suffers. This principal is stated in our Steps, Traditions, and generally in our meeting format.

It is very easy for my ego to allow me to use meetings as a forum for my personal recovery. This is not the purpose of a meeting. I believe that my responsibility at an OA meeting is to share my experience, strength and HOPE to the new members and fellow members alike. By myself, I can't hope to

achieve recovery by listening to my own "stuff." Remember, my best thinking got me here.

The only way for me to get recovery is to give recovery. Newcomers to our OA meetings are our future. They are the future of my recovery. Where will we be if we selfishly keep the message to ourselves?

Anonymous



The Twelve Steps of Overeaters

Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

My favorite holiday brownie

I am most grateful for my recovery in OA at the holidays. My abstinence anniversary falls between Christmas and New Year's. It was Dec. 28, 2002, when I finally began living the Steps, and got the life for which I was meant.

Was it the power of the season – with its message of peace, love and forgiveness – that brought about this life-altering transformation?

No, a brownie forced me to see the light. Actually, it was more like six brownies. They overcame my will,

and left me hopeless and helpless.

Until that day, I did not realize I was only working the program to rid myself of excess food and weight. I gave my HP only what I didn't think I could handle myself. I practiced only the steps and used only the tools that I wanted. The rest of my life – most of my life – I still tried to manage.

Then a brownie knocked me down. I realized that, if I can't tackle a pan of sugar, flour and chocolate, there's a pretty good chance I cannot handle

the rest of my life either. What I was doing was not working against compulsive overeating or for life.

That day, I reached out my hands for help. My Higher Power took one and OA took the other. I no longer pick and choose what I want to do. I let HP choose for me and I pray for the willingness to do the next right thing.

Every Christmas, I meditate on that day, and the lesson that began with a brownie and ended with acceptance and renewal.

Karen N.

Overhead at OA

Following are some bits of experience, strength and hope that one OA person heard in our rooms:

- * How long do I want to take to work the steps? Well, how long do I want to stay sick?
- * Morning prayer, "Please." At night, "Thank you."
- * If I attend to the program, the weight goes away. If I attend to the weight, the program goes away.
- * The disease is progressive - so is recovery.

* If I don't take a chance, I don't have one.

* If I'm working my own program properly, I won't have time to work someone else's.

* Food never really made me happy - but it made me think I was going to BE happy in about 15 minutes.

Christmas past, present

Continued from Page 1

I sent out 25 cards with a pre-done letter to close family living far away. I have the small tree and the main living room with decorations. I am not baking or making candy today. I have a simple meal planned.

I do not scream. I am not angry or stressed. Today, I

have time for what is important: family, prayer, and program. I can live one day at a time in this season well, so that the new year brings happiness and recovery.

Thank God I have the gift of OA and I do not have to live that way anymore!

Diane C.
Michigan City

OA's Mission

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively.

There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political

movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues.

Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

OA meetings in northern Indiana

Chesterton

-Wed. 6 p.m. Duneland Health & Wellness Center, 810 Michael Dr. Contact Benji 219-996-3190
-Sat. 8 a.m. Duneland Health & Wellness Center, 810 Michael Dr. Contact Jan 219-926-1178

Crown Point

-Thurs. 7 p.m. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 250 S. Indiana Ave. Contact Bruce 219-663-9079

Delphi

-Tues. 7:30 p.m. Delphi United Methodist Church, 118 N. Union Contact Martha 765-564-6350

Demotte

-Tues. 7 p.m. Oak Grove Retirement Community, 221 W Division Rd. Contact Darcy 219-987-4745

Hammond

-Mon. 10 a.m. First United Methodist Church, 6635 Hohman Ave. Contact Mary 219-932-4771
-Tues. 7 p.m. FUMC Contact Marion 219-844-6426
-Wed. 10 a.m. FUMC Contact Bob 219-769-3072

Highland

-Fri. 10 a.m. First Christian Reform Church, 8910 Grace St. Contact Georgia 219-924-3543

LaPorte

Sat. 10:30 a.m. YANA Service Club, 1621 Roberts St. Contact Cassie 219-362-7244

Michigan city

-Mon. 7 p.m. St. Anthony Memorial Hospital, 301 W. Homer Contact Fran 219-874-9400
-Thurs. 9 a.m. Trinity Church Barker Hall Lounge, 600 Franklin Square Contact Cinda 219-878-1749

South Bend

-Wed. 7:30 p.m. Christ the King Lutheran Church, 17195 Cleveland Rd. Contact Jan 574-234-5116
-Sun. 5:30 p.m. Unity Church of Peace, 905 E. Colfax St. Contact Cookie 574-246-0249
-Fri. 12:10 p.m. Madison Center Riverside Hospital, 533 N. Niles Ave. Contact Marina 269-683-3029

Valparaiso

-Sun. 7 p.m. Porter Hospital, 814 LaPorte Ave. Contact Jan 219-926-1178

Westville

-Tues. 6 p.m. Family Life Center, Methodist Church, 154 W. Main St. Contact Rhonda 219-785-4296



Seventh Step Prayer

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. Amen. (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 7)

No more negativity

So often he has said to me, "You're so negative." My response was always bewilderment and hurt (which lead to a little self pity as well). Surely he's mistaken. He doesn't understand my sense of humor. I'm Miss Sunshine, always smiling, well liked, funny, happy, and spreading joy to one and all.

And then one day I passed on an email to all my teacher friends that enumerated all the things a teacher was expected to do for a pittance of a salary. I was shocked when one of the teachers replied with an answer that listed all the things she enjoyed about teaching. Didn't she know that was a joke? How could she take it so seriously? I didn't mean anything by it. And then it occurred to me that the

email was rather negative — but I thought it was funny.

The next week we took a five-day vacation with three other couples. It was quite an eye-opening experience to observe one of my friends always saying something positive. She even commented that it took much more energy to be negative than positive. I started to pay closer attention to everything everyone said. She even made an effort to compliment people regularly. What an eye-opener! I realized how really negative I was. She was such an example; I decided to try to be like that also.

The next Sunday, upon arriving at church, I noticed the pew backs were covered with quilts that one of the ladies' groups had made. They are sent somewhere to some cold natives who need them. My first thought was how

inconvenient that was to get to the hymnals. Oops — negative! Then I counteracted that thought with how nicely the colors in the quilts blended. The bulletin said they would keep the recipients warm. Second negative thought: they're not heavy enough to keep anyone warm. Oops!

When my God goes to work pointing out my shortcomings, He doesn't mess around. He makes it very clear to me. Complaining and fault finding falls under the category of negativity. Negativity isn't funny at all. Negativity is not a joke. I honestly never thought of it that way before.

Since I've been practicing positive thinking, I find myself being Happy, Joyous, and Free and I have no need to yield to the temptation of food. Thank God.

Connie

Highlights of NWI Intergroup

When you attend an OA group and listen to the "Reports" portion of the meeting, you may have heard the term "Intergroup." OA has no firm rules or regulations and no central authority. Instead, OA groups are guided by the Twelve Traditions. The essential group work is done by volunteers who are giving service as part of working the Twelve Steps. In some areas, such as Northwest Indiana, groups form an Intergroup to help perform certain functions. This is part of the Ninth Tradition and springs from a need to provide service to groups – such as literature distribution – and to keep the individual groups better informed about OA.

Each group in NWI can send two representatives to Intergroup, and other OAs may attend as visitors. Intergroup reps attend monthly meetings – usually the fourth Saturday morning at 10 a.m. -- at the Highland Library. Meetings last about an hour.

Among the services that NWI Intergroup provides the groups are literature ordering and distribution; information on other groups, conferences and conventions; this newsletter; and financial assistance such as seed money to new groups for literature and a fund to reimburse delegates to Region V conventions.

Most recently, the NWI Intergroup approved seed money to assist the new group meeting in DeMotte, and accepted a volunteer to serve as our second representative to Region V Assembly in March 2007.

The next Intergroup meeting is Jan. 27, 2007, at the Highland Library. Other upcoming events are:

- Big Book Study Weekend, Madison, Wis., June 1-3, 2007
- Hoosier Recovery Day, Indianapolis, June 23, 2007
- Region V Convention, Louisville, Ky., Oct. 19-21



The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Twelve Traditions of OA

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

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

8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Northwest Indiana Intergroup
P.O. Box 11478,
South Bend, IN 46634
 1-800-589-6262 (OAOA)
email:
nwii@region5oa.org
www.oa.org
www.region5.org



