

LOOKING UP

Tri County Intergroup Newsletter / March 2010

A CHILD'S FIRST STEP

To call myself a child is a bit humorous. Not too many children are afraid of breaking the chair offered to them, but it is the best way to explain my initial feeling as I set out on this 12 Step Journey.

The first meetings were an absolute whirlwind filled with new faces of hope and absolute confusion about the definition of "abstinence". Supported so well by my group and my sponsor, I let the wave of the program take me where it would.

I had a little help from my previous journey with alcohol. I knew that if I gave it a chance the cure would bring me to a life that I would find worthwhile. Looking at the joyous faces of the in the rooms of OA, I believe that will be the result. It was my first sponsor who pointed this out to me after 90 days in the program. He asked me how I was feeling and I said, with all honesty, "Fantastic!" He then said, "Well, the cure is working – maybe you have the disease." And so the reality and the spirituality of the 1st Step came alive for me and the alcohol was placed on the shelf where it belonged.

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.

There is a necessary right of personal passage in this 1st Step that is so well protected in the rooms of OA. No one will proclaim your faults or your disease. They will however, make sure you have the tools to name it yourself and the essence of the 1st Step is SELF-HONESTY.

I am sure they chuckled as I repeatedly begged for a definitive answer to the question of abstinence but continued to allow me my search for the reality between me and my Higher Power. Slowly, like watching paint dry, I stumbled through this mighty quest sometimes screaming "Eureka," only to find another question to ponder.

I became aware of a new desire that was not present in the first days of the program. I desired the sense of program that comes from actively working the Steps. My sponsor gave me another gift, the gift of acceptance. I was not going to ever find the fullness of my brokenness. The wonderful miracle of the OA program is that abstinence will grow as our inner ability (that is the wonderful stuff that comes from being aligned with our Higher Power) grows and all through the journey we will be blessed with His healing hand.

The Good Lord will not give you more than you can handle today... Hmm – maybe that is why He waited so long to point to my compulsive overeating....

Filled with a new purpose and sense of direction, I work on naming my compulsion; not looking for perfection but living with the self-honesty that is always present in each of us.

Close your eyes and look at your eating. See the inner pain and turmoil as only you can see yourself. It does not matter what others say, but what you see within your own being. You know its name and until you say it, it will have power over you. The first step of freedom is to name the disease so your Higher Power can take it away.

Not too sure it will work? The program thought about that too. Wait until you get the gift of the 2nd Step!

– Anonymous

RECOVERY FROM RELAPSE

When I walked in the door of OA back in 1983, I was desperate. I could not stop eating and weighed nearly 200 pounds on my small frame. I became abstinent, to the best of my understanding, the next day. Unfortunately, this abstinence lasted only seven months, due to my unwillingness to attend enough meetings and do the service my sponsor suggested. It was followed by seven –years– of relapse. A health scare got me back on track again for nine months. When I failed to attend meetings during the transition involved in a move across country, I relapsed again. This time "only" for three years. I finally became abstinent again in 1995. How did I do that? First of all, only through the help of my Higher Power. Specifically, I became willing to listen to what others who were abstinent had to say, even if I didn't like those people. What they were saying was that, no matter what the circumstance, they didn't pick up. No matter the divorce, family crisis, the unfair boss, the rude people in the store, or the mess in Washington, they didn't eat compulsively. I suddenly realized that if they could do that, I could too. And being willing to do service, even when it's not fun (which it sometimes is), has helped keep me abstinent, along with the help of H.P. and all my OA friends.

-DB, reprinted from "Letters of Hope," newsletter of the Dallas Metroplex Intergroup, December 2009

MESSAGE FROM A MEETING

*Do I still view food as a reward? Food should not be a reward it should be fuel for my body, nothing more.
Service work helps to reduce my self centeredness and turn my thoughts toward others.*

Heard something good at a meeting? Send it in for publication.

A PERSONAL VICTORY

I knew that visiting family would be difficult since almost EVERYTHING revolves around food – and it has been. I've only been here one day and it's been a challenge to stay abstinent. My mom has trigger foods in every corner of the house! (okay, kitchen). But it's EVERYWHERE.

This morning I was feeling really angry. My mom was pointing out all this food she had gotten for me but it seemed so gross and bland compared to everything else in plain sight and I was getting mad. I couldn't figure out why I was so mad! So, when I went upstairs and was alone for a minute, I really tried to think about what was going on. I realized this: I was feeling resentful of my mom for having all this sugar in the house. And I was feeling resentful of her for having all that sugar in the house my whole life. "No wonder I'm fat."

Then something happened – I realized that I can't blame my mom or anyone else for my disease. This program has taught me that we cannot live in the blame and resentment of others. I am responsible for my own actions. No matter what happened through my life that helped my disease along, I am the only one who can change anything about it now. By the grace of God and this program I can be abstinent and choose to eat the food on my plan. In that moment of self-pity (over not being able to eat what everyone else can) I asked God for help. He will be there for me. He was the one that gave me this small moment of clarity this Christmas morning.

For the rest of the day I will not wallow in resentment or pity, but I will rejoice in other things that bring me joy.

– Michelle, Fort Worth, TX

OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

I believe the primary purpose of Overeaters Anonymous is to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. What will newcomers see and hear when they visit my meeting? Will it be that I am still overweight but much happier than I was 32 years ago when I entered the rooms of OA? Will I be one of the people in the rooms who is now in a normal size body and living in recovery and happy, joyous, and free? Will I be one of those people who is still overweight but confess that "no matter how hard I try," I cannot work this program or achieve long term abstinence? Will I be one who has chosen to learn to be happy just where I am?

These are in no way judgements of others. Thank God you have all loved me and accepted me right where I was until I could finally start working some part of this program. I know that there are many legitimate and medical reasons for many of our issues. I have had those, too. I know how it feels. I have been on both sides of the fence. I know the excuses. Sometimes it is easier to eat than not eat, and I can allow myself to live with the lies that I have told myself. I can no longer do this and promote OA as it should be -- a program of attraction.

I am taking a risk at sharing this -- the risk that you might not like me for bringing this touchy subject up. So what about my story? Yes, I have obtained long term abstinence (11 years). I have stayed on an abstinent food plan but the weight has not moved in several years. This year bought me to 'new soil' in my life. I have a new sponsor and have opened myself up to her like I have never done with anyone before. She has become very important to me and my recovery. Yes, if she says "jump," my response is "how high?" I absolutely love this person whom I have never officially met or seen. My life through this study of the BB has changed me. I have finally given up the position of God and to let God be God. He either is or He is not. Today I know that He is.

What has come out of this so far is that I want full recovery in Overeaters Anonymous, which includes obtaining a healthy, normal body size. Sitting in the rooms being overweight is not acceptable for me today. I do not have a large amount of weight to lose, but it may as well be a lot. God has given me much direction on this. I realize my thoughts may not be yours but thank God they have finally come to me. I have finally asked for medical help with my plan of eating. What was I told? I am eating more food than my body requires for my age and activity level. So I am now on a new way of eating. I am willing.

I thank OA for my life today. I am committed to do the work that this program requires, not suggests -- for me it is a must. Life is good one day at a time, and I want more!

– Judy, e-mail submission

There are none too dumb for the 12 step program, but many are too smart.

Faith is our greatest gift; sharing it with others, our greatest responsibility.

The price for serenity and sanity is self sacrifice.

**2010 TRI-COUNTY
INTERGROUP BOARD**

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www.aa-tricounty.org

LOOKING UP is a monthly publication of the OA Tri-County Intergroup. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and not of the OA Tri-County Intergroup or OA as a whole. Editor reserves the right to edit material submitted.

Monthly Treasurer's Report and Intergroup Meeting Minutes are available at www.aa-tricounty.org

Seventh Tradition Donations

OA's Seventh Tradition tells us that we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions. After paying group expenses (rent, literature, supplies) and maintaining a prudent reserve (determined by group conscience), OA suggests that groups distribute the remaining funds as follows:

60% : Tri-County Intergroup
Billie Stamp
1513 Tyler
Arlington, TX 76012

30% : OA World Service Office
P.O. Box 44020
Rio Rancho, NM
87174-4020

10% : Region III
Jan Blue
Region III Treasurer
8610 W. 68th Place
Arvada, CO 80004

Give as if Your Life Depends On It.

OA Responsibility Pledge: Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsions; for this,

Intergroup News & Information

Save these Dates!

Tri-County Intergroup Workshops

May 1, 2010 • August 7, 2010 • January 8, 2011

Tri-County Intergroup Meetings

03/06 • 04/10 • 05/01 • 06/05 • 07/10 • 08/07 • 09/11 • 10/02 • 11/13 • 12/04

Tri-County Retreat at Glen Lake

November 5-7, 2010

McKinney Silent Retreat

October 15-17, 2010

The Tri-County Intergroup **Speaker & Sponsor List** is being updated. This list is meant to be used by your group for locating speakers and sponsors, so please send your updates to Intergroup.

Arlington Wednesday HOW meeting has changed time to 7:30 p.m.

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace • Alcoholics Anonymous Annual Conference

April 9-11, 2010 • Crossroads Convention Center, Crossroads Mall, San Antonio, Texas.

Conference events include a dance, talent show and silent art auction, and pre-conference kick-off golf tournament on Thurs., April 8, 2010. Call (210)884-3626 for more information.

Please send newsletter submissions to bethelhow@gmail.com

Thoughts for the day, journal entries, step writing, Lifeline articles, etc.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please send an email with the subject line "Subscribe" to bethelhow@gmail.com

Bethel UMC Group Recipe Book

To submit a recipe for the 2010 edition, or to receive a free electronic copy of the 2008 book, email bethelhow@gmail.com

RECOVERY CONNECTIONS

Tri-County Intergroup <http://www.aa-tricounty.org>

OA Region 3 <http://www.oaregion3.org/>

Dallas Metroplex Intergroup <http://www.oadallas.org/>

Telephone Meetings List http://www.aa.org/pdf/phone_mtgs.pdf

Online Meetings List <http://www.aa.org/pdf/OnlineMeetingsList.pdf>

iTunes Podcast http://www.aa.org/get_podcast.htm

Use iTunes to search for OA Podcasts, OA readings, long-timers share experience, classic OA speakers, special speaker events and more.

Los Angeles Area Intergroup Virtual Speaker's Bureau

<http://www.oalaig.org/html/speakers.php>

Audio recordings related to 12 Step Fellowships <http://www.gstl.org/>

AA Big Book online <http://www.aa.org/bigbookonline/>

Treasurer's Report 01/2010

Your trusted servant, Billie S.

Beginning Balance	\$3361.88	Expenses	
		AT&T	\$57.66
		Bank Fees	\$16.00
Income		Donation to So. Hills	\$30.00
Arlington	\$300.00	Harris, Finley & Bogle PC	\$14.07
(\$100.00 to Delegate Fund)		Newsletter	\$52.01
Granbury/Acton	\$25.00	Postmaster (PO Box)	\$72.00
Primary Purpose (Arlington)	\$55.00	Postmaster (Stamps)	\$8.80
South Hills	\$50.00	Website	\$108.35
St. John's	\$70.00	Total	\$358.89
Tarrant Co. Men's Group	\$87.00	Ending Balance	\$3979.99
Total	\$587.00	Delegate Fund	\$1454.05
Literature Sales	\$87.00	General Fund	\$1721.07
Workshop Donations	\$273.00	Retreat Fund	\$784.87
7th Tradition for Region 3	\$40.00		

TRI-COUNTY INTERGROUP OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

February 23, 2010

Day & time	City - <i>Group Name</i> - Address	Subject	Contact	Contact Phone
MONDAY				
6:00 pm	Granbury/Acton Acton United Methodist Church, Adult Ed. Bldg., Rm. 202A 3433 Fall Creek Hwy (HWY 167S) Granbury, TX 76049		Leah	(817) 219-2393
6:45 pm	Fort Worth - Bethel HOW Bethel Methodist Church, (corner of Southwest Blvd. and Vickery) 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76116 (not 76109)	HOW	Patrice	(817) 692-7180
7:00 pm	Arlington - Trinity Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	Abstinence	Billie	(817) 460-3083
7:30 pm	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Step Study/ Literature	Happy	(817) 370-7207
TUESDAY				
Noon	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Commitment/ Writing	Happy	(817) 370-7207
6:00 pm	Stephenville - Cross Timbers First Presbyterian Church 1302 N Harbin Drive Stephenville, TX 76401	Literature/ Topic	Pat	(254) 485-0921
7:00 pm	North Richland Hills - Daily Reprieve St. Johns Hall (center building) 4101 Frawley Dr (between Glenview and North Hills Mall) NRH, TX 76180	Step Study/ Literature	Keith	(817) 692-1641
WEDNESDAY				
12:00 pm	Fort Worth - King of Glory King of Glory Lutheran Church 1659 Sandy Lane @ Brentwood Stair Fort Worth, TX 76112 <i>*SPANISH Must call Gay to request in advance</i>	Literature	Gay	(817) 275-1085
1:00 pm*				
7:00 pm	Tarrant County - Men's Group Ste. 608, Radio Shack shopping center 4105 State Highway 121 @ Cheek-Sparger Bedford, TX 76021	Men's Group	Keith	(817) 692-1641
7:30 pm	Arlington - Trinity Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	HOW	Wendy	(817) 266-6975
THURSDAY				
6:45 pm	Fort Worth - Bethel HOW Bethel Methodist Church, (corner of Southwest Blvd. and Vickery) 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76116 (not 76109)	HOW	Patrice	(817) 692-7180
6:30 pm	Cleburne St. Marks United Methodist 1109 W. Henderson Street Cleburne, TX 76033		Roxy	(817) 641-5020
7:30 pm	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Big Book Study	Happy	(817) 370-7207
FRIDAY				
12:00 pm	Waco St. Alban's Episcopal Church 305 North 30 th Street Waco, TX 76710		Faye	(254) 678-3420
SATURDAY				
9:00 am	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Step Study/ Writing	Happy	(817) 370-7207
12:00 pm	Arlington - Trinity Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	Twelve Promises	Billie	(817) 460-3083
12:00 pm	Euless United Memorial Christian Church 1401 N. Main Street Euless, TX 76039	Step Study/ Big Book	Amanda	(817) 776-3030
SUNDAY				
4:00 pm	Arlington - Primary Purpose Millwood Hospital @ Randol Mill Road 1011 N. Cooper Street Arlington, TX 76011	Newcomer/ Literature	Rachel	(817) 595-3044

Tri County Intergroup meets at 10:30 a.m. the first Saturday of every month,
Trinity United Methodist Church, 3216 West Park Row Drive, Arlington, in "Wesley House."