



Looking Up

Tri-County Intergroup Newsletter - May 2010



Misery is optional.

Trust God, clean house, help others, pray.

The best things in life aren't things.

Loved and Safe

When was I seven years old, I believed that if only I could be more like my mom, stepfather and half-brother, I would be loved and safe. "Like them" meant among other things, "not fat".

At age 28, with three sons and a husband, I still believed that all my problems would be solved if I could only get control of my weight, so I bought a membership in a weight loss organization. Faithfully and to the quarter-cup and half-ounce, I followed the food plan and lost weight—mission accomplished.

With no better motive than staying thin, I went to work for the weight control organization, and was convinced I had all the tools to keep me where I wanted to be. "Where I wanted to be" was not about integrity, responsibility, honesty or generosity. Proud of my rigid control over food intake, I thought I could manage everything as I whistled in the dark.

I stood before the eager members in the weight loss classes as if I were a mystic in cute outfits and matching shoes, manifested before them to impart wisdom and inspiration. They hung on my words. "All we have to do is follow the food plan and modify our behavior. Today, we will learn how to make desserts with sugar substitute, get all food that is not on the program out of reach and out of sight, and lay down our forks between bites to slow down the meal." I knew it all.

So, why couldn't I stop eating when I tried to eat foods allowed on the "maintenance plan?" Why did I eat for days, in secret, and until I was sick? And why did I want to die? The short answer, which I couldn't have known then, was that I was a compulsive overeater and my life was unmanageable.

In 1981, I was still thin, but the problems hadn't gone away. I was divorced for the second time, had no money, no education past high school, and no job. I needed a husband. My attitude was "Look at me, guys—don't you want to love me and take care of me and my kids since I am all pretty and isn't that what you want?" As it turned out, it wasn't.

I, the Big Deal Weight Loss Teacher, had a little issue with eating. A friend said, "Maybe you are powerless over food." Offended, but still smiling, I agreed to try her suggestion to commit to 24 hours without sugar, which was the biggest ingredient in my preferred binge foods. We went together to an OA meeting and my life began to turn in a wonderful direction.

While taking inventory of my past, I realized that I had been every bit as obsessed with cooking, eating and losing weight as with my obsession about being overweight. My daily routine revolved around what I could do to entertain and satisfy myself. In recovery, I know that I must focus on what I can "pack into the stream of life," as the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, says. Where can I be of service? How can I be useful? The irony is that I am never happier than when employing that spiritual principle.

I once believed that the key to success, which I spelled T-H-I-N, was to avoid seeing, cooking or being anywhere near the foods on which I once binged. In OA, I have learned that I can be anywhere at all as long as I have a good reason for being there. When I am in fit spiritual condition, I am perfectly at ease being near, smelling or being offered my old binge foods. Spiritual fitness comes when I work Steps 10, 11 and 12 daily. Working these three maintenance steps can take less time than I used to spend stripping down to my hardy-anything, adjusting the scale to perfect balance, then gently stepping on it while exhaling so that any extra breath wouldn't add weight—then weighing myself again a little later in the morning in case something had changed for the lighter.

Remember the behavior modification techniques I mentioned? I didn't want to lay the fork down between bites. I ate like a woman on a mission and couldn't see any reason to deprive myself of the comforting rhythm of fork to food to mouth and back again in a nice circular motion with no interruption to the workflow.

I still want to be loved and safe, but I no longer strive and scheme about how to have those things. They are not a goal. They flow freely and abundantly into my life as I live in recovery. I am a compulsive overeater abstaining from compulsive overeating one day at a time. Just for today, I don't have to manage my own or anyone else's life. I just have to "clean house," maintain contact with my higher power, and carry the message of recovery while practicing the principles in all my affairs. I am grateful for OA, and for the safe and loving friendships I find in the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous.

Sherril G., Arlington

Message from a Meeting

I am fortunate to have my food plan, because not only am I taking care of my body, but the plan also enables me to recover from my mental and emotional issues, and to live a better life.

NOTICE REGARDING THE USE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS LITERATURE BY OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

AA's General Service Office has requested that the wording of AA literature not be changed when quoting in print or reading aloud. The only exception is the permission granted to OA to change the wording of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. The OA World Service Office understands that groups may decide the "reading aloud" issue by group conscience, but recommends that groups NOT substitute the words "compulsive overeater" for "alcoholic" and "food" for "alcohol" when reading aloud. Tri-County Intergroup recommends that all member groups follow WSO's recommendation and not make these substitutions when reading aloud from AA literature in meetings, workshops, and retreats, or when quoting in print.

Honesty

I want to be completely honest with myself and I do that by being honest with my sponsor. Regarding anything that disturbs my peace, I should go to God in prayer and if I'm still ill at ease, talk to my sponsor about it, because God may work through her to help me see His reality in the situation.

Susie, Fort Worth, Texas

Why is it important that I think of myself first?

If I don't think of myself first I will slip. Just like I thought of myself first when in the food, I also must think of myself first when I am abstinent. I am a food addict. I will always think of food first; therefore, I must, without exception, think of myself first in order to tame the beast. The beast is always there; it may as well be a menacing lion facing me. I must be on guard for my life, as if the addiction were a physical threatening being. I will pray to my higher power, but I have to deal with the physical reality of the dangers that surround me; I have to lock my car, lock my house, keep my purse close, be aware of my surroundings, avoid suspicious people, not let uninvited strangers into my house, and all the things I've learned about living in the world. Part of my reality, my world, is that I am constantly presented with food. If I am not spiritually and mentally prepared for the onslaught, I will slip. I think of myself first when I write down my food plan, work the Steps, call my sponsor, journal, go to meetings, make sure my food is prepped first before starting the food for the rest of my family, take abstinent foods to meals that will be eaten out, check online menus or call before going to a new restaurant and use the assets that my higher power gave me to live smart. The point is to live, not just exist at the whim of the forces that surround me. I have been given the power to control some things in my life and today I choose to use that power for the good of my emotional, spiritual and physical health. This is the way of life that OA taught me. This is my life.

Betsy H., Fort Worth, Texas

Only as sick as our secrets

It's a dark, damp place,
Where the sickness
thrives,
Flourishing, expanding,

With the presence of
light,
I can see that it's not
as big and scary
as I thought,
and will actually die
in the light and air
of recovery.

Just for today, I'll open
the door a little more....

Heather G.,
Fort Worth, Texas

The 3rd Step - In His Arms

The time had come and the preparation was complete. Letting go was the most appropriate next action for me in my program and indeed in my life.

3. *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.*

It is no longer the donut hole – letting everyone else pull and prod me. Nor is it the vast canyon that needs to be leapt. It is the wonderful acceptance of God's embrace with the knowledge that He will hold me and comfort me on my journey.

I tell those who will listen to allow me my foibles as I use the name of God in my sharing now. You can quickly change it to "Higher Power" and maybe hear something that will enhance your program. Or you can get a big resentment – either way I have helped you. If the first, you may find an experience that lifts your spirit. If the second, you have something to complain about to your sponsor – see how helpful I have become in this wonderful program?!

I understand the ease at which we see the dark side. We stand in the shadow – even now that we know about the light. We are human and both time and circumstance continue to enshroud our journey. But something very special is about to happen and a moment is about to be etched into our life's tale.

Because we need to find relief from our compulsive disease, we can take this step almost without thought. Not a bad thing but there is more....

Because He wants us fulfilled with Him – this moment is more. It is the wonderful union of God's power with our desire and it is more...

- More than the disease
- More than the petty annoyances of life and family
- More than the fear of moving forward in life
- More than the lazy thoughts of an easier softer solution

In my other 12 Step program my group celebrated this moment of decision. We stood in a circle and those who had traveled the happy road of destiny before me shared the meaning of the 3rd Step in their life. I can still remember standing there as wave after wave of warm emotion covered me and tears filled my eyes. I had admitted the reality of my disease and I had let God show me the joy of His relationship filling my soul with hope. Now these wonderful friends showed me FAITH in vibrant colors and held me as I made my choice to follow this path to recovery.

May your journey to the Lord be touched.

Anonymous

**2010 TRI-COUNTY
INTERGROUP BOARD**

Chairperson: Betsy H.
(817) 870-8703
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Vice-Chair: Lucy
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Alternate: Billie S.

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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 compulsion; for this, I am responsible.

Intergroup News & Information

Intergroup Chairperson Betsy H. requests that **all groups** email an updated list of speakers and sponsors to betsyhorn@charter.net so that she can update and distribute the Speaker/Sponsor List.

Does your group have writing meetings? Pick a topic, write for 10 minutes and then share on your writings. Collect the writings and send them for entry into this newsletter. Please include your name and a note if you'd like your submission to remain anonymous. Email to bethelhow@gmail.com or send by postal mail to Molly Horn, 3634 Eldridge Street, Fort Worth, TX 76107. Include your return address if you'd like your submission mailed back to you.

Listen and watch for OA Public Service Announcements that are airing on radio and television in the DFW area. Is your group ready for newcomers?

- Keep on-hand a good supply of Newcomer Packets, OA-approved literature, Desire chips and 30-day chips
- Make photocopies of any sets of questions and handouts you distribute to newcomers
- Focus on "OA Spoken Here!"
- Have volunteers telephone newcomers to answer any questions they may have; hold Newcomer meetings if possible
- Are there available sponsors in your group, as well as those willing to stay after meetings and talk with newcomers?
- Does your group extend the hand and heart of OA to those who share our compulsion?

Examine your group's appearance from the eyes of a newcomer, remember to focus on the miracle of physical, emotional and spiritual recovery and take steps to make your meetings as friendly and welcoming as possible.

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 receive a free electronic copy, 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 03/2010

Your trusted servant, Billie S.

Beginning Balance	\$3832.32	Expenses	
Income		AT&T	\$60.00
Bethel HOW	\$54.96	Bank Fees	\$39.95
Eulless	\$60.00	Newsletter	\$41.02
Primary Purpose	\$30.00	Total	\$140.97
South Hills	\$50.00		
St. John's	\$30.00	Ending Balance	\$3937.75
Total	\$224.96		
		Delegate Fund	\$1474.05
Literature	\$71.50	General Fund	\$1648.87
		Retreat Fund	\$814.87

TRI-COUNTY INTERGROUP OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

4/27/2010

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
6:00 pm	Waco St. Alban's Episcopal Church 305 North 30 th Street Waco, TX 76710	Big Book Study	[pager]	(254) 260-1258
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	Literature: Step or Tradition of the Month	Happy	(817) 370-7207
TUESDAY				
Noon	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Reading & Writing: Big Book	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	Literature (variable)	Happy	(817) 370-7207
SATURDAY				
9:00 am	Fort Worth - South Hills South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Writing - topic varies	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 - meet in the Library 1011 N. Cooper Street @ Randol Mill Road 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."