

LOOKING UP

The OA Tri-County Newsletter
September 2006

Facing Your Fears

When you think of one of your biggest demotivators for healthy living, what is it that comes to mind? I can tell you one of mine in a heartbeat. *Fear*. A small word for such a powerful emotion. Fear has and, unfortunately, continues to keep me from doing many things I would like to do. Then again, fear can be good – I haven't fallen off any cliffs lately because I'm too scaredy-cat to get too close to the edge!

I have been feeling fear a lot lately with things going on in personal and professional areas of my life. Unlike the thrill fear of a roller coaster ride, my fears seem to loom over me right now and they are no fun! I will probably always feel fear, though. I believe this is supposed to be a protective emotion. The recovery part, however, is that I now know there is a difference between protection and paralysis. I want fear to enhance my life, not inhibit it.

We have so many wonderful acronyms in program and fear has a few of its own. The first sequence that I remember hearing in program was "FEAR – F\$@# Everything and Run OR Face Everything and Recover". I hope everyone has an acronym that helps them. I have devised my own based on what fear does to me and why I don't want it to paralyze or overwhelm me: Feelings Enter and Reduce. And, this is an intentional play on words. When I let fear of feelings or actions consume me, my self-esteem gets reduced, my optimism gets reduced, my faith gets reduced, my possibilities get reduced, my happiness gets reduced. When I work my program and face those feelings of fear – let them enter my life rather than stuffing them down – I turn away from the food fix and I physically reduce.

I may not go out to the edge of any cliffs, but program is helping me to face fear and go out to the edge towards healthier and happier living. Well, let me rephrase part of that sentence, I KNOW scaredy-cat me won't be going to the edge of any cliffs!

Carolyn

reprinted in part from LETTERS OF HOPE, Dec. 2001

Climbing Out of the Pit

I love to hear from people who are enthusiastic about their abstinence, but like another member said, I also get a lot of hope and inspiration from people who talk about difficulties that they DIDN'T eat over...or who admit that they slipped but still end on a positive note about what they learned and how they'll apply Program to a similar problem in the future.

What I don't find helpful is hearing someone go on and on about the problem without ever tying it to the solution. When I came to OA, I had spent a lifetime wallowing in the "poor me" quagmire and the last thing I needed was someone to encourage that by commiserating with me, no matter how well-meaning they were. Instead, I needed people around me who had a solution and could show me how to climb out of that pit. I needed people who would say to me, "Yes, I understand where you are...but *where are you going from there???*"

From those people, I learned that negativity breeds more negativity and that's how the disease keeps us trapped. Dwelling on the problem keeps us in the self-destructive cycle, while tying everything back into the solution helps us break free.

Life is going to happen to all of us. We're all going to have family problems and job problems and health problems and financial problems from time to time. We're all going to have emotional struggles too...and sometimes that will result in struggles with food. If it didn't we would not be compulsive overeaters.

When things get rough, I've found that the best thing for me to do is to keep one eye on the prize of RECOVERY, even if I am in the middle of a shit storm. As long as I do, I have a beacon of hope that serves to guide me through the storm. The last time I let myself lose sight of it, I stayed lost for a very long time. I don't intend to let that happen again.

Dana



Join Intergroup - We Want You!

This is a call for service.

- Can you spare a couple hours a month for OA?
- Do you like to spend time with friendly people in recovery, all working for a common goal?
- Do you believe in giving back the recovery you have received?

"Trust God, clean house and help others" is the short version of OA's 12 steps. Helping others - service - is the foundation of our recovery in OA. Many of us know from personal experience that, "You can't keep it if you don't give it away". We've also learned that the more you give, the more you receive. Showing up for meetings is great, but it's just the beginning.

Intergroup is crucial in letting people know we are here and in spreading OA's message of recovery. In addition, Intergroup provides a central link among OA meetings in the Fort Worth area and the larger OA community as a whole.

Intergroup is an outlet to give back the gifts you have received. If your program feels stagnant or you think you're not "getting it", you might find that joining Intergroup as a meeting representative, officer or chair gives you just the boost you need.

Come to our Intergroup meetings. Volunteers are needed to fill soon-to-be-open positions. Nominations will be held in November with elections following in December. Our 2007 officers will take their positions in January. And don't worry, you won't be enlisted to serve at your first Intergroup meeting; you must attend at least 3 Intergroup meetings before you can serve in a position. Feel free to contact one of the current Board members if you have questions about a position or about the next Intergroup meeting.



What Does Your Intergroup Do?

Tri-County has several responsibilities, including:

1. Maintaining a phone line and website and responding to inquiries so that newcomers know where to find an OA meeting.
2. Publishing a newsletter and updated meeting list to inform OA members of upcoming events.
3. Organizing workshops and retreats to bring members from our various groups together to share in their recovery.
4. Keeping a stock of OA literature for sale.
5. Responding to public information requests from local media, businesses, etc.
6. Making health professionals aware of OA.
7. Representing local groups at OA's World Service Conference.
8. Representing local groups at Region III meetings.
9. Offering assistance to newly forming groups in the area.
10. Making ongoing efforts to support OA members in relapse.

Help Support Your Local, Revived Meeting

The HOW OA Meeting at Millwood Hospital in Arlington is reviving itself and could use your support.

They are meeting in the Library on Thursday evenings from 7:00-8:30 pm at the Millwood Hospital (1011 N. Cooper Street at the corner of Randol Mill Road). Personnel at the information desk will be able to direct you to the Library if you do not know where it is.

For support, along with your attendance, the meeting could use coins/chips, program pamphlets, Big Books and OA 12 & 12s. For more information contact January K. at stayandgetstay@yahoo.com or Bernie at (817)451-7493.



Late, Breaking News

A Sunday, late afternoon meeting in Arlington is in the works. Details are in the process of being finalized. If you'd like more information, or wish to help out, contact Glinda at (817)456-1602.