



Together We Can

Summer 2018

newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org

11th Step meetings and Learning to Meditate

When the Sunday Holy Cross OA [9:30] meeting started in the early 1990's, it was a men's meeting. After some months of 2-4 guys recovering together, we decided to make it a meeting open to everyone. And now it is the largest meeting in the region.

A few years later, I was in CA and was excited to see in the OA directory an "11th Step Meeting". I had a fair amount of training in prayer and meditation as a youth, but found it very difficult to sit still long enough to meditate. I was excited about the prospect of going to a meeting on the 11th step.

The meeting was a mixed bag and somewhat disappointing. I was hoping we would actually meditate in the meeting. The ambience was there - a candle lit room with comfortable chairs. And the meeting was an hour of people talking about the 11th Step. While helpful, I didn't experience anything that helped me sit still and meditate.

When I got home, I was talking with an OA friend about this experience. He suggested we start an 11th Step meeting where there was actually time to meditate. So we did. The Wednesday 12:30 PM meeting at St. Luke's Church in Silver Spring was born out of this dis-

cussion and desire for a meeting to practice together meditation.

A few years later, the Sunday Holy Cross meeting was big and I was not feeling so connected there. There was not the clarity or structure that exists today from years of group consciences! Instead there were a lot of people and a fair amount of chaos and not much opportunity to share. I had learned in our sister program that the only requirement for starting a new meeting is a resentment, a coffee pot, and a meeting room. In this case, mild dissatisfaction combined with hunger for another 11th step meeting resulted in a group of us deciding to start the I am Sunday Holy Cross 11th Step meeting.

What's the point? Why do we need 11th Step meetings? What are the benefits of attending?

That is a personal question we each need to answer. For me, my desire for 11th step meetings where we meditate together comes from my understanding of the Steps and the nature of my disease.

I am well trained in using my mind to figure things out and trying to control outcomes. As a compulsive person, I like guarantees and to be in control. Yet our Big Book tells us that "lack of power is our dilemma". Our first three steps tell us that we can't win the food battle

through our unaided will. We need a power greater than ourselves.

Where does this Power come from? We are each free to decide that for ourselves. We are told in our OA 12 and 12 that some of us first find that power in the unconditional love and acceptance we find in OA meeting rooms. Just as you can feel the love and power of recovery in OA meetings and are drawn to come back even when you don't want to, there is a power when we sit in silence together and meditate on our connection to our Higher Power.

So for me the benefits of an 11th step meeting where we meditate together are many. I get to practice in a structured environment doing something hard for me by nature to do - sitting still and focusing on nothing but my HP for 10 or 15 minutes and my desire to deepen my relationship and trust in that HP. I get to do that with others who share the desire and our collective power is greater than me sitting alone. I am in community with fellow seekers and through our silence and our sharing we deepen our faith in HP and our commitment to recovering from this deadly disease. And we read from the OA and AA approved literature (*cont'd on page 3*)

NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo



It was my privilege to spend two hours in the OA booth at the Health Fair held at the convention center. Many people came by to find out about the program. The coordinators had set up the brochures beautifully, and made the 'where and when' lists for DC, MD and VA available. We distributed quite a few. In addition, we were able to reach some health and fitness professionals who are interested in helping their clients. A lady from Winchester, where the OA meeting is very small was very excited to see the booth and took a picture for her husband (who is the OA member in her family). A psychologist from Mexico, who is looking forward to attending a meeting as part of her graduate studies, was interested to find out that OA is world wide. Quite a few passersby who do not have an eating issue took literature for friends or loved ones who do. I encourage anyone who is able to do so to volunteer at next year's Health Fair.

-Angie

Intergroup Outreach

Area Inreach

IDEA day

I attended my first IDEA Day workshop on November 19, sponsored by the Arlington 100-pounders and Everyone Welcome meeting. It was just what I needed to enter into the holiday season. I was reminded how joyful it can be to be with others in our fellowship. The exercises we did were fun and helpful, and I feel more prepared to deal with "things that used to baffle me" around holiday meals and more (picture below) I appreciate the initiative the host meeting members took by creating such a great afternoon for all. There were take-home OA gifts, door prizes, and even a humor table with funny OA cartoons and humorous bits from our literature. This workshop is on the top of my gratitude list this month!

-Suzie

Unity day

Unity day, held in Severna Park this year, was fantastic. It included a 1st-step workshop and terrific speakers. At 2:30, it is tradition that all Unity Day participants all over the world, join hands physically among themselves and figuratively with OAers worldwide and recite "I Put My Hand In Yours". We are so blessed to be growing together in OA.

-Dale B

25th Annual Health Expo at First Baptist Church of Glen Arden

For the first time, DC Metro OA exhibited at the health fair sponsored by a very large church in Upper Marlboro. The fair is regularly attended by 2000 participants. Our table was a huge success. We were visited by former members reminded of the program, people who were interested in attending a meeting, and people who had never heard of OA, but knew they had problems with food.

Look for intergroup announcements about volunteer opportunities for future health fairs.

Newcomer corner

Reflections and observations from our most important members

Together We Can: When did you attend your first meeting?

JP: I attended my first meeting in January 2018.

How did you feel at your first meeting? Were you welcomed?

I felt very welcomed. Everyone was nice and happy to see me. I LOVE how the newcomer packets are passed around with everyone's name. I love how people wrote nice little messages. I loved how there was a place where people raised their hands if they're available to sponsor or get someone started. I felt like I was at the right place, but was very confused about what I was supposed to do in terms of eating food/stopping overeating.

Is this the first time you've joined OA?

This is the first time I've joined. I've been thinking about it for more than 5 years. Within to 2 or 3 meetings, I knew OA was for me.

How did you find out about OA?

I first heard of OA more than 20 years ago, as my Aunt from California was an active member.

What did you think OA would do for you, if anything?

I wanted freedom from my obsession with food, I wanted to stop eating things that I knew made me feel terrible but I couldn't stop myself from eating anyway, and I wanted to fit into my wardrobe again.

What made you want to come back?

Hope for a better way of life. Connection with warm people.

Is there anything confusing about the program or the meetings?

The concept of abstinence was confusing. It still is a little confusing, even working with a sponsor and 3 months abstinent. I love that there is flexibility, and it also makes things a little murky (what I should have as my food plan, etc). I read the brochures which were very helpful, but it's still tricky. With that said, I don't have too much of an idea how to make it more clear, or if that would even be desirable.

Is there anything you wished had been different when you first joined?

Not that I can think of.

Has your life changed for the better since you've been in OA? How?

I am much less obsessed with food. I feel more free. I fit into many more of my normal clothes. I feel healthier and less sick. I feel better about myself.

(continued from first page) about the 11th Step and meditation and hear how others are practicing the 11th Step.

The 11th Step is called a "maintenance step". That means it is important to keeping my abstinence and living a healthy, full life. So, for me, the step is not optional. Attending 11th step meetings and meditating together has given me power I would never have imagined. When my parents both died over the past couple years, I felt grief deeper than I had ever experienced. At the same time, I felt my heart opening wider to love myself and others with more compassion. I attribute this gift directly to the practice of meditation.

Have you thought about coming to one of the two 11th Step meetings? You are invited to join

us Wednesday at 12:30 at St. Luke's Church in Silver Spring or on Sunday at 11am at Holy Cross Hospital. [Editors note: This meeting is now closed, but can be revived if members volunteer. See back page for more info.] Or consider starting an 11th Step meeting in your community! While service works when all else fails, service supported by prayer and meditation has the benefit of the added power of our HP.

-Tom A, Greenbelt MD

Help others take the 11th step by volunteering to organize a step workshop this fall! See back page for details.

DC OA Intergroup

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Lifeline quote of the month: **“Fat or fit? Same or sane? Hell or help? Piece or peace? Ail or aim? Lessen or lesson? Repeat or repent? Stop—or Step? Sometimes changing just one little thing makes all the difference”** ~K.H., Dayton, OH

Get more inspiration from *Lifeline*, OA’s international magazine, an indispensable “meeting-on-the-go.” *Lifeline* is available both as a print magazine and as an online magazine. (Subscribe [here](#))

Intergroup News

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:

- An 11th-step workshop will be held this fall and volunteers are needed to help put it together. Contact Amy T (amygeorgetinto@yahoo.com) or Tom A (thadamsjr@gmail.com).
- Want to help with outreach? Contact Carlean P (smilingcheron@yahoo.com) to help explore possibilities for putting ads in local small newspapers.

Meeting closed

- Meditation
- Sundays, 11 AM
- Holy Cross Hospital
- If interested in reviving this meeting, email Sealani, the OA hospital contact (sealani@comcast.com)

Next intergroup meetings:

Sunday, July 8, 2018: 1:30-3:30pm

Sunday, August 12, 2018: 1:30-3:30pm

Holy Cross Hospital (Edu 4) 1500 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, 20910

Or

Join by phone! 605-472-5235 (code 445423#)

CryptOAGram

In this phrase, one letter is substituted for another. Use small and repeated words and the length and formation of words as hints.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
			P																	F					

U

G F Z A B A H K A D N A L H X J B H K A O J

D

D C U X A P J G F Z A B A K Y A L H X J B H K A

U D

O J D C R X H K A K F P J

Answer to last CryptOAGram: THERE'S NO SITUATION SO BAD THAT A COMPULSIVE BITE CAN'T MAKE WORSE