



TOGETHER WE CAN

a publication of the D.C. Metro Overeaters Anonymous Interaroup – June 2015



For Today

I love our *For Today* book. For me, it's become much more than a daily inspirational reading. For several months now, I've been writing on the *For Today*. I write on whatever resonates with me at the time. It might be the quote at the top, the affirmation at the bottom, or a phrase or two from the body. It serves the purpose of a daily inventory for me in that it gets me thinking about my program and my life in general.

My very favorite "For Today" is May 11:

"I surrender everything that compulsive overeating means to me, trusting God to put something incomparably better in its place."

The first time I read this, I copied it onto a slip of paper and carried it around in my pocket for several days. For me, this is steps 1-3 put into one perfect affirmation, and it is a reminder that as much as I might want to binge — to take back the foods I have given up — abstinence is so much better.

Then there's the ego busting January 13:

"I will not waste time blaming myself, but instead, try again."

Call it the ego or the self-critic or the evil inner roommate. Call it whatever you want, but above all, call it out and take its power away. Let it know that you have embarked on a spiritual path, and it is not invited along. Listening to this self-created entity becomes a life-long habit. It's a tenacious habit to break but well worth the effort.

August 30 goes along with this nicely. In the middle it says, "Uncertainty, confusion, and fear of leaving the safety of my old ways behind me are natural, but the need to save my life pushes me on."

Or how about: "Courage has no guarantees, or certain outcomes. It is a risk taken on an unknown path. Courage brings about change." This is from June 28, and we are nothing if not courageous people.

I will leave you with December 23:

"When I get caught up in materialistic values and think that money or position will fix me, I remind myself that neither money nor position could have given me what I received in OA."

Enjoy your *For Today*!

Cheryl W.-C.

New Meeting Started

Saturday Speakers Monthly Meeting - first Saturday of each month (began June 6th)

4:00pm

Northwood Presbyterian Church

1200 University Blvd West

Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Speaker meeting - same format as the LA Podcast meeting (this meeting will not be recorded at this time). The format is some readings, anniversaries, speaker for up to 40 minutes, 5 minutes of questions and answers with the speaker.

For more information, please contact Elana P. - **301-466-3226**.

2015 Conference Keynote Speaker

Listen to this compelling and moving story from OA member Matt S., who was the banquet keynote speaker at the [2015 World Service Business Conference](#) held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 27 – May 2, 2015. (Go to [OA.org](#), WSBC 2015, Conference Keynote.)

Opening a New Dialogue

Several DC Intergroup members received the communication on the next page. The writer has been contacted and encouraged to open a discussion so we can move forward on this issue. For reference purposes, Traditions 6 and 10 and the OA preamble are reprinted here:

Tradition 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.

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

OA Preamble: 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 (& *) to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

*updated to "and compulsive eating behaviors"

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Clare & I am a recovering bulimic, compulsive eater with 25 years in Overeaters Anonymous. There is a violation of Traditions 6 & 10 in the new Suggested Meeting Format, which deserves the forwarding of a motion to debate this violation at the Overeaters Anonymous Convention [*World Service Business Conference – ed.*].

I refer to the 3rd paragraph, containing mention of OA's new "Unity With Diversity Policy". (edited in 2014, by the World Service Business Conference.)

Previously, and for many years, this sentence read: "Always to extend the hand and heart to ALL who share my compulsion, for that I am responsible. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?"

The paragraph has been edited to read: "As we extend the heart & hand of the OA Fellowship to those who still suffer, let us be mindful of "OA's Unity with Diversity Policy, which respects our differences, yet unites us in the solution to our common problem. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting, regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other traits. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?"

The LGBT Diversity movement is a public organization & political movement with an ideological agenda. Placing it front & center in the OA Meeting Format serves as a lightning rod for public controversy, while platforming that ideology. It is a violation of Traditions 6 & 10, first, by virtue of its many outside issues, which are currently being hotly and publically debated & are very controversial in nature, and secondly by endorsement of a public and political organization.

I suggest Paragraph 3 be returned to its previous & traditional meeting format: "Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to ALL who share my compulsion, for that I am responsible. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?"

I am deeply concerned with this serious threat to the unity of our primary purpose in Overeaters Anonymous. Please help move forward this motion to debate this issue.

Recently, at an intergroup meeting, a self-described 'diversity trainer' accused me of being 'politically incorrect'.

I could be 'politically incorrect' and yet, just using the word 'politically' strongly infers a violation of our Traditions here.

People who come to us for help with this deadly disease need to know that we are and have always been inclusive. The previous Suggested Meeting Format has always been so.

Respectfully,
Clare O.
Chesapeake Beach, Md.

The Flowers Lay Wild

The flowers lay wild,
under the sun,
we who are happy
never need to run.

For if I could be,
a quiet happy tree,
my roots in the soil,
my leaves falling wide,
shading the flowers,
not wanting to hide.

We who are here,
must try to understand.
Nature is God given,
And, so is Man.

Ron B.

Learning God's Will

Faith in God is what I've found
And it is the most wonderful thing around.
Every day I resolve to stay sober
As I let the Higher Power take over.
Spirit comes from deep within
When I'm in touch with spirit, in all things I win.
God has created a beautiful perfect day
To live, love, touch others and play.
Today I live the abundant life;
With God I can handle any strife.
Today I learn to follow directions
From God and others, not at my own discretion.
I use the principles laid out before
To approach and open the spiritual door.
I learn to be myself the best that I can,
To live by God's Word however I am,
To follow my heart, deal with what's on my plate,
Get closer to God, be who and what God did create!

Hannah G.
May 18, 2015

Erratum: The article entitled "Step 3 Principles" in the last issue was misidentified. The writer was Hannah G.

Two Reports on the Business Assembly in Reading, Penn., Spring 2015

Report One

I always look forward to spring and fall regional business assemblies. It's the perfect opportunity to ensure that I keep my abstinence. OA meals and being around other members with strong recoveries is the best way for me to become abstinent.

Anyone who participates in monthly DC Metro Intergroup Meetings is eligible to be one of the four representatives to our Region 7 business assemblies. The friends and the associations that you make there give you the impetus to keep up or get on a strong footing with your program. I meet many people from other Intergroups where we pick up new ideas for programs that we can offer in the DC Metro area. Region 7 consists of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Baltimore, Annapolis, Virginia and West Virginia. Each group is allotted a specific number of representatives based on the size of their Intergroups. Usually, there are about 70 representatives and board members for Region 7 that attend these regional business assemblies.

Meeting with a diversity of people gives me the opportunity to network and make friends from the different areas. We have workshops and presentations of how each Intergroup contributes to reaching out to the struggling compulsive overeater. I work on the 12 Step Within (In reach) which specifically develops programs to reach the compulsive overeater. Also, we are working on putting together a survey to be distributed to all OA members in this region to find out how we can make our programs better and how to retain struggling members. Additionally, we are working on creating a Master Sponsor & Speaker List for this region.

On Friday evening, we had a meeting called Intergroup Renewal that consisted of people from all the Intergroups sharing what they were doing on renewal projects.

Saturday, we had a business meeting to discuss finances and by-laws for OA. This business assembly emphasized the use of Robert's Rules of Order since many of the representatives are going to Albuquerque, New Mexico, for OA's World Service Business Conference where abstinent OA members from all over the world meet to discuss programming and by-laws for OA International.

Sunday, we concluded our meetings with speaker who talked about how important it is to use the 12 Traditions in conjunction with the 12 Steps.

Bob G.

Report Two

This was either my fifth or sixth time at the Region 7 business assembly. Each time I have come with some trepidation, some fear and the feeling that others won't (or already don't) like me.

This time I came to R7 with two very different sets of feelings. One was a calmness that came from knowing my resources - knowing the steps, traditions, and concepts, and knowing what is allowed and what is not. The other was knowing that I was sitting on the Bylaws committee for the second consecutive R7 business assembly.

The drive up was rough: a planned 2.5 hours turning into an actual 6 hours. But the obstacles that occurred became fodder for me to work through with someone during free time. On Sunday, I worked with a very smart newcomer (2 years versus my 27) who has figured out a way to work through a resentment in 15 minutes or less. Very helpful. I was able to let go of anger that was nearly a year old in a way that nothing else I've done has.

Those of us who are lucky enough to be representatives of our Metro DC Intergroup at any business conferences get so much more out of the experience than just being a local presence at the event. We get to play, we get to connect, we get to be with others who have many years of abstinence in OA. There is also comfort in knowing the area in Pennsylvania where we always hold the business conferences. For those of us without cars, there are a multitude of places to see, to learn, and to eat within walking distance. And the best part is that none of the wait staff at the restaurants in Reading, Penn., balked because they have lots of years of experience with us very precisely ordering patrons.

At business assemblies, we spend a good part of the weekend in committees, most often following through with whatever we have been working on from the previous meeting. Occasionally something comes up at the last minute that has to be dealt with immediately.

On our Bylaws committee, we were presented with an urgent request to address the registration and credentials of the Regional Representatives, as some groups had more than one person sharing a credential. (This would be the kind of situation where one person had to leave and another took over for the remainder of the time.) As we strove for unanimity, there were quite divergent viewpoints, so further action is required and the issue has been held over until the next business assembly.

Carrying the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers is the basic purpose of our Fellowship; therefore, it is the most fundamental form of service. Any form of service—no matter how small—that helps reach a fellow sufferer adds to the quality of our own recovery. I so appreciate being able to represent us at these regional business assemblies.

You can get a complete review of the Spring 2015 Overeaters Anonymous Region 7 Business Assembly by going to our own Washington D.C. Area OA Intergroup website - www.aa-dcmetro.org , or going to OA Region 7, or by going to OA.org and following the links.

Sealani W.

Report on World Service Business Conference 2015

Working as a delegate at the Overeaters Anonymous World Service Business Conference is amazing (in the old-fashioned sense of the world.) This was my second year as a delegate. I have so much admiration and appreciation for all the people who took time from their “normal” lives to attend this international event where we set plans and priorities.

When one arrives on the Saturday night or Sunday morning of this business conference, they have opportunities to participate in diverse activities that are not part of the four-day intensive experience. There are “Early-Bird” Workshops, Board of Trustees meetings and various grocery runs. (The hotel provides refrigerators in every room.) I feel so lucky to have attended the entirety of this magical experience.

The first session I attended was Strategic Planning, specifically about what part we individually could play in moving the OA vision forward. There were exercises that asked us to stretch our minds, and then group brainstorming. Each table presented their top three ideas, which were then collected to be reviewed and disseminated. (A bonus for me was that someone I had a struggle with last year was at the same table, and when similar behavior began as last years, together we addressed our challenges and came to a positive resolution!)

The next day there were three workshops, all on “miracles:” “...Abstinence supported by Using the Tools,” “...Abstinence by Practicing the Spiritual Principles of the Program,” and “...Maintenance: How Continued Abstinence and Working All Twelve Steps Keeps Recovery Fresh.” The speakers were individuals with many years of continuous abstinence who each spoke on a specific connection to one of the topics above. There was a time for sharing and the bonus of an OA meeting almost immediately after.

Wednesday is always the day that all attendees come together for a presentation. This year’s forum, “There’s No Place Like OA: Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Recovery!” was a dramatic presentation along the theme line of the Wizard of Oz, costumes and all. The morning skit and the resultant laughter put many of us in a positive mood to begin the hard work of the later sessions. (The script for the skit is on the OA.org website under World Service Business Conference 2015 events.)

Wednesday is also committee day. I sat on the Finance Committee. OA is not self-supporting, and the Finance Committee’s job is to address that goal. Each year in committees, we have the tasks of creating new objectives, as well as completing previous tasks left undone from the prior conference. Here are some of the objectives for my finance committee, 2015-2016:

1. Increase donations for non face-to-face meetings by 25%;
2. Survey the membership for contribution data;
3. Encourage members of give regularly/more (via recurring contributions).

It was much easier to be relaxed after my first year at World Service. I won’t forget being told by an OA staffer, “You can always tell the first-timers, they have that deer in the headlights look.” The flurry of activity on the last three days is hard to track if one hasn’t looked at the motions, proposed literature, and trustee candidate information beforehand. Our excellent Chair of the Board of Trustees was wise, and sensitive, and funny.

Perhaps the most surprising event that happened at WSBC is that new wording was added to our preamble. This was a result of many years of motions suggesting the insertion of various specific kinds of eating and overeating. In exploring the history of suggested motions to change the preamble to include specific groups of people with eating disorders, (such as people with anorexia, people with bulimia, people with obsessive compulsive disorders,) and discovering they all did not pass, there was quite a bit of discussion about amending the motion. The Chair and the Trustees put together a quick workshop about why some motions were not addressed. It gave many of us a much better idea about deadlines, wording and what can be addressed through motions.

It was indeed a grace for me to participate in “good ole’ regular” OA meetings. These are sprinkled throughout the five days of the conference, so that at least four times a day, one can go to a meeting. Though anyone can attend these meetings, often there are folks who have many years of abstinence from compulsive eating. What a plus!!

There is always a boutique at which members of the fellowship bring OA items to sell, or in the case of newsletters, to share. I found myself thinking that it would be great to have a large version of the Steps and Traditions up in our meeting rooms, or at least, in the room where our Intergroup meets.

The folks from Region 10 had the following to sell:

OA Steps & Traditions Banner Set	\$50.00/set
OA Concepts & Serenity Prayer Banner Set	\$50.00/set
Individual Banner	\$30.00



You can go to the Region 10 website and see pictures of these large cloth pieces. (This triggered the idea, as well, that perhaps we could make banners, smaller than these large ones, and that could be a fundraiser for us!)

(not actual size 😊!)

Much was accomplished this year; here are the items that seem most important to me right now:

1. Our preamble was changed; compulsive food behaviors was added.
2. We are not self-supporting through our own contributions; without literature sales, we would not meet our expenses.
3. Members are encouraged to use the ARC (automatic recurrent contribution) option.
4. Passing along your Lifeline subscription, either online or the hard copy, inhibits others from subscribing.

More information is available on the OA.org website.

Sealani W.