

June 2012

www.dc-metro.org

Infoline: 301-460-2800



A PUBLICATION OF THE DC METRO INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

TOGETHER WE CAN

Taking Program on Vacation

Wherever I go, There I am!

I am incredibly grateful for almost seven years of imperfect, binge-free eating in this program. As a low-bottom, eat-out-of-garbage-cans binge eater, this is a big deal. Wearing the same (normal) size clothing for the last six years is a miracle to me as I once weighed over 200 pounds.

In the last seven years, now that our kids are married with children of their own, we are fortunate enough to have the money and sometimes even the time to travel. In my abstinence I've traveled on six continents. (I don't think I'll ever get to Antarctica!) I've been abstinent on safaris, boat cruises, bus trips and 10k walks.

I may go on vacation, but my disease doesn't. It comes along with me every time! So how do I stay abstinent? I'm sure it's with the help of my HP, but here are some action steps I've taken:

I pack literature. Old Lifelines are my favorite, and after I'm done, I often leave them in the seat pocket of a plane for whoever finds them. Now that I have an electronic reader, I have the OA 12 and 12 and For Today with me on all trips.

I try to write every day, even if it's just: Dear God, help me stay abstinent today. Thank God for computers.

Whenever possible, I keep in touch with OA friends online. There was no wifi on safari in Africa or on the Yangtze River, but those were exceptions.

My suitcase contains healthy snacks when I am in places where stores are not readily available. This makes sure I have something appropriate to eat when everyone else is snacking.

I write down my food every day without exception so that I am accountable for what I eat. I email it to my

sponsor when possible.

In addition, I wear my abstinence like a loose garment as I travel. My food plan involves counting calories, so I compute my total each day. It's inevitably more than I consume at home as I try new foods and have limited choices at many meals. I try not to panic, but recommit each day that I no longer need bingeing in my life.

I walk as much as possible on vacation. Exercise improves my mood and reinforces my commitment to healthy living.

We just returned from Europe and I'm already planning my next trip, this time walking in Idaho. With the help of my HP, I can enjoy the wonders of seeing the world and the gift of recovery.

Marge

Silver Spring

"He can go anywhere on this earth where other free men may go without disaster, provided he remains willing to maintain a certain simple attitude."

Page 26 – 27 – Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book

Helpful Tips

I've been in program so long, no one had a home computer when I started to travel. Thus I used to take people's addresses and every day or two write a postcard, imagining the face of the recipient as if I was just sharing at a meeting or on the phone. These days, I still do that but use e-mail - it saves postage and buying all those

cards. My friends don't mind but a few of them still ask for the great pictures from wherever I happen to be.

If I'm in the U.S. I always look up meetings in the area I'm visiting, but for the past 15 years, more of travels are international, so I take my traveling program with me:

email addresses, my journal and one or two Lifeline issues. I read a story and try to imagine it being told at a meeting just for me. I can't say I use all these tools every day, but even using one of them every day or every other day, keep me connected.

- Janet S.S.

This newsletter is a publication of the DC-Metro Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. The opinions expressed are those of the writers, not of the OA DC-Metro Intergroup or OA as a whole.

Please send submissions to newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org. The editor reserves the right to edit any material submitted.

From The Editor

I have taken many vacations during my active addiction where the focus was all about food: when I was going to eat next, what I was going to eat, what other people were eating. I once had 9 months of being sugar free (before I found recovery in the rooms of OA) and figured it was o.k. for me to have sugar since I was on a cruise and not at home. It led to one of my worst binge periods, gaining almost 40 pounds in about 4 months.

In recovery, I have cruised, been married on a tropical island, traveled to Central America, and everything in between. My program and recovery is only as far away from me as I allow it to go. I have weighed and measured on vacations (I can tell you that a small bowl, to the rim, on one cruise line, equals exactly 1 cup. Perfect for measuring my oatmeal and fresh fruit for breakfast!), I have packed my own food in my luggage, and even have a vacation food plan my nutritionist developed for me. While I can't say that I have necessarily loved using the tools in order to keep my food in its place while I am on vacation, it has been a true life saver.

My first abstinent vacation came only 6 weeks into putting down the food. And it was a cruise! My sponsor told me that just like I wouldn't walk into a restaurant and think I could eat everything on the menu, not all of the food on the cruise ship was mine to eat.

Some of my favorite vacation memories have come with the help of modern-age portable devices. While lounging pool-side in Hawaii, I participated in a phone meeting. Lying on the beach in Florida, I listened to a great LA meeting on my iPod. I have read OA literature on my Kindle in multiple cities both in and out of the US.

Recently, I have found a couple of apps on my phone to help keep my program close to me on the road. Steps Away, locates all 12-step meetings close to my actual location. I can even add an OA filter to find the OA meeting closest to me. Twelve Steps, the Companion, is the AA Big Book on my phone.

Whenever I cruise, I always try to attend at least one Friends of Bill W meeting. Sometimes I am the only person to show, which gives me the opportunity to at least slow down and connect to my HP. On one cruise, a staff member was in the meeting. He got sober on a ship and never missed a meeting in 4 years. He met his sponsor on the ship and would visit him every time the ship was at his sponsor's port. Talk about going to any length! If he could do that, there's no reason I can't follow my program when I'm away from home. With so many tools, I have no excuse not to bring my program wherever I go.—Sabina

The much-anticipated kick off to our 2nd annual cookie poster plastering contest is here! Please announce the contest at all meetings

Taking OA On Vacation

There are so many tools that are available compliments of modern technology for reaching out to program people when on vacation. I have found that the OA phone meetings are extremely helpful when it is difficult to attend face-to-face meetings. There are podcasts that are available on the web that will also provide you with inspirational speakers that are at your fingertips.

Here is a link to one. <http://www.oalaig.org/speakers-podcasts/the-laig-virtual-speakers-bureau.html>

Of course there is always the use of the phone to make a hook-ups with a program person, a sponsor and also emails to make the same connections..

Going on vacation should be exciting and fun, but that doesn't mean that you have to leave program behind. You can take it anywhere in the world with the tools of the program.

Literature Corner

"The celebrations of this day will be over at midnight, and tomorrow I will wake up glad to be alive and abstinent." – For Today, P. 151

A holiday, a birthday, a wedding: these events roll around and allow me to reach for the tools the program has lovingly handed me.

I start my day asking the G-d of my understanding for help. I've learned to pick up the phone, and kind words receive me on the other end. They gently remind me of the pain I thought would grip me forever and the most important thing I will do today: keep my abstinence.

Gratefulness envelops me, I say a quiet thank-you, and go through my day.

When I lay my head down, gratitude lulls me to sleep

- Taken from Voices of Recovery: A Daily Reader, page 332

Friends of Bill W

A chuckle from a recent trip: On a recent cruise ship, I met a man whose first name was Bill and last name started with a "W". I had asked the ship to put "Friends of Bill W. will meet at....." and the time and place. I've done this before, but this time this man showed up wondering who all his "friends" were that were there to meet him!
- Janet S.S.

Into Action

Fear, procrastination and--if I delay long enough--depression have long plagued me. The program has helped so much, but those old habits are my default method of dealing with rough patches. My life recently became quite unmanageable due to health problems. Luckily, I faced them with the help of family, program and health professionals--all who laid out a series of steps to take.

Our program community has carried me so I could follow through with these actions. Over the past year or so I finally have been able to stick with a daily spiritual practice--quiet time in the morning, reading, writing, 10th step and gratitude list. I'd drag myself out of bed over the winter, only due to my commitment to my sponsor, others, or just through force of habit. Often I could not remember what I'd just read or written, nor appreciate the things I came up with on my gratitude list done by rote--beginning with employment, income, food, abstinence, program, apartment. But through repetition I began to identify things that in the past I'd taken for granted--the childless aunt who became available to go with me to appointments, the health insurance, especially COBRA which held out just through the bulk of my treatment; or the

functioning 13-year old car, or public transportation and supermarket within walking distance. So many bad things that were happening were balanced out by wonderful, supportive people and events. My food was often shopped for and meals "assembled" by rote--like filling in boxes in a chart, but then I had the proper food to sustain me and maintain my abstinence.

This spring, things came to a head, and I feared everything would fall apart, but the program caught me. My sponsor said that sometimes the program *works us* even more than we work the program. I've seen that with my ability to remain abstinent through the help of previously-prepared frozen food; the old program friend who belatedly returns a call; a co-worker presents an opportunity for 12th step work; a run-in at the supermarket provides an opportunity for service; a family member emails or texts that they are only slightly willing--all these have helped me get outside myself.

Inch by inch, row by row--as the garden song goes--is how I get through. Tiny steps do it.

Walking Toward Serenity, As Bill Sees It, p.92, Letter,1960

"When I was tired and couldn't concentrate, I used to fall back on an affirmation toward life that took the form of simple walking and deep breathing. I sometimes told myself that I couldn't do even this--that I was too weak. But I learned that this was the point at which I could not give in without becoming still more depressed.

"So I would set myself a small stint. I would determine to walk a quarter of a mile. And I would concentrate by counting my breathing--say, six steps to each slow inhalation and four to each exhalation. Having done the quarter-mile, I found that I could go on, maybe a half-mile more. Then another half-mile, and maybe another.

"This was encouraging. The false sense of physical weakness would leave me (this feeling of being so characteristic of depressions). The walking and especially the breathing were powerful affirmations toward life and living and away from failure and death. The counting represented a minimum discipline in concentration, to get some rest from the wear and tear of fear and guilt."

- Anonymous

Diversity in OA

World Service Business Conference delegates is recommending the following statement on diversity for inclusion in meeting formats. This was first passed several years ago - this is a new push to remind meetings/groups that its inclusion is a recommended guideline.

"As we extend the heart and 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."

Principles of the month:

June – Willingness July – Humility

In step six we learned more about the necessity of *willingness* as we became entirely ready to let go of our shortcomings. We apply this principle in many ways now, learning through each day's experience the difference between self-will and a simple willingness to cooperate with the guidance of our Higher Power.

In step seven we began to understand the meaning of *humility*. We practice this principle today by continuing to let go of status-seeking and of thoughts and actions by which we belittled ourselves and others, and to humbly trust G-d for the removal of our shortcomings.

Taken from The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Step Twelve, Pgs 104 – 105

4th of July Reflection

Freedom! What a blessing it is to have this gift, one day a time: freedom from food and drink obsession; freedom to make good choices for myself; freedom to say "yes" to good things; freedom to say "no" to self-destructive things; freedom to release habits that inhibit joy and greater happiness; freedom to choose life-enriching activities; freedom to recognize and choose creative responses; freedom from negativity, fear and anxiety; freedom to live a positive life, make positive choices, think positive thoughts and act in positive ways!

To Weigh or Not to Weigh (written by Katrina 10/20/11)

I wanted to weigh myself today

I don't need to weigh

I don't need to look at a scale to feel my body

Looking at a scale doesn't help me get in touch with me nor does it help me get honest

Only the love and acceptance of program, HP and others helps me get honest

Honest about my pain

Honest about what it feels like to carry excess weight of the body, mind and spirit

Honest about me. Not anyone else

Too many others have occupied my body, mind and spirit for too long

They have been unwelcomed guests

I would assume the longer I am in program, the more I will start to feel as though I am in enemy territory, or, enemies have invaded my space when these unwelcome guests arrive

God

I so desperately need to clean house

Clean those who don't belong out of my system

Like doing a massive overhaul on my computer

A total virus scan plus major installation of a really good firewall

It is so very hard to find the real me

Where is she?

Will she come out to play?

Can she come out?

Is it possible for her to come out to play in a much safer environment?

Can it be safer for her both inside and outside?

She has been held captive for too long

She is finally really feeling the affects of captivity, of too much on her ~ her body, her mind, her spirit

She has been able to get help over the years

Thank God

There is still so much weight, so much pain, so much confusion, so much uncertainty, so much anger, so much hurt, so much anxiety, so much fear

It is all OK though

She prays

She prays that the will of God will comfort and shield her, guide her, provide protection

She asks that she be the light and love of God for herself and others instead of the presence of destruction, anger, hurt, toxicity

She asks for help to truly see and know in her bones and in her belly that she is truly, truly, truly a child of God

*Going on vacation? What is
essential to pack?*

Of course - a couple

issues of Lifeline plus some other

OA reading and writing materials!

Wherever I Go

I have always believed that G-d will always provide an abstinent choice for me wherever I go. It is up to me to make that choice. It may not be exactly what I want, it may not be the time that I want. I may have to eat earlier or later. It may not live up to my expectations of the best choice but it will be there. G-d will always provide for me. That is something that I bring with me and sustains me. All I need to do is let go of the fear and perfection and trust. A little footwork helps too. I may need to call ahead, check menus online or ask questions. My program works anywhere. It may not always be "my way". I just have to keep trusting G-d.—Randi

World Service Board of Trustees

Dear WSBC 2012 Delegates (-- and now others --),

As you may be aware, there is a vacancy in the position of Virtual Services Trustee, a position created by the adoption of a motion by the delegates of World Service Business Conference (WSBC) 2012. In accordance with the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, the Board of Trustees will appoint a qualified member to serve through WSBC 2013. In order to best serve the virtual (telephone and online) groups and service boards, as well as OA as a whole, it is important to make this appointment as quickly as possible.

The trustee application can be downloaded from the WSO website at

http://www.oa.org/pdfs/VST%20Trustee%20Application%2005_12.pdf. Completed applications must be received at the World Service Office by **Monday, July 2, 2012**. The application may be sent by registered mail to the WSO, faxed to (505) 891-4320, or emailed to info@oa.org. An officer of the service body (intergroup, service board, or region) must sign the application, verifying that the candidate's enclosed resume was affirmed either by majority vote of a service body in which the nominee has recently served, or by majority vote of the officers of that service body (only in the case where the entire body does not meet between now and June 30). Please let it be known throughout your area that the Board of Trustees is solicit-

ing qualified applicants who are willing to fill the position. It is the intention of the board to appoint a new Virtual Services Trustee as soon as possible after that date.

The Virtual Services Trustee will serve from July 2012 through the close of WSBC 2013, and will attend quarterly BOT meetings in Albuquerque. If you should have any questions about this appointment process, please do not hesitate to contact the World Service Office.

Yours in OA service,

Teresa Kopel
Chair of the Board of Trustees

New OA Literature

The delegates at the 2012 World Service Business Conference have approved the following new and revised literature:

- A rewrite of *Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite, Remember...*
- An updated version of *To the Newcomer*, which also includes updates to the Fifteen Questions
- A new item titled *Voices of Recovery e-Workbook*, which provides thought-provoking questions for each of the daily readings in *Voices of Recovery*; and
- A revision of *Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps*, to incorporate additional Big Book references.

Some items are back-ordered: Because numerous literature items contain the Fifteen Questions, the following items are

on back-order until updates are printed. Please watch "What's New" on the [oa.org](http://www.oa.org) home page for an announcement of when the updated pamphlets are available.

Items on back-order because of revised Fifteen Questions

- #130 A Program of Recovery
- #270 To the Newcomer
- #710K/711K Newcomer Packet
- #740 Newcomer Meeting Leader's Kit
- #750 Is Food A Problem for You?
- #753 Introducing OA to Health Care Professionals
- #755 Fifteen Questions
- #780 Introducing OA to the Clergy
- #150S Antes de Tomar Ese Primer Bocado Compulsivo, Recuerda
- #270S Al Recién Llegado

#755S Quince Preguntas

Item on back-order because of a complete rewrite

#150 Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite, Remember...

The *Voices of Recovery e-Workbook* will be available by mid-June. The e-Workbook will be a downloadable PDF at bookstore.oa.org.

Changes to *Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps* will be made when the current inventory is depleted. In the meantime, an addendum listing the changes will be included with all pamphlet orders.

Voices of Recovery

"This program is not a once-in-a-while thing. It is an everyday commitment. The abstinence is for the fat downstairs and the Twelve Steps are for the fat upstairs—in the head" - *Overeaters Anonymous, First Edition, p. 150*

As the holiday seasons approach, sometimes my disease wants to convince me that I can take a break from the discipline of my commitment to this program. That is when I need to remember that I still have some "fat in my head." Recovery is a one-day-at-a-time procedure that requires time for clearing away the debris of the past. I can do this best by adding more meditation, more meetings, and more service, rather than by taking time off. *Voices of Recovery, Page 146*

Submitted by Linda

Upcoming Events

Jun 22, 2012 5:00pm - Jun 24, 2012 12:00pm

TRANQUILITY WEEKEND RETREAT

Ivoryton, CT

<http://oaregion7.org/pdfs/scan0001.pdf>

JUNE 23, 2012 NOON - 2 PM

WSBC WORKSHOP ABSTINENCE: THE FOUNDATION OF OUR FUTURE

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH, Annandale, VA

http://www.oanova.org/documents/WSBC%20WORKSHOP_06232012.pdf

Jun 24, 2012 3:00pm - 5:00pm

MONTHLY STEP STUDY

Annandale, VA

http://www.oanova.org/documents/Step_a_Month_Study_2012-1.pdf

July 14, 2012 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

INTERGROUP MEETING

Holy Cross Hospital

Silver Spring, MD

July 15, 2012 3:00pm - 5:00pm

MONTHLY STEP STUDY

Annandale, VA

http://www.oanova.org/documents/Step_a_Month_Study_2012-1.pdf

August 11, 2012 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

INTERGROUP MEETING

Holy Cross Hospital

Silver Spring, MD

Aug 19, 2012 3:00pm - 5:00pm

MONTHLY STEP STUDY

Annandale, VA

http://www.oanova.org/documents/Step_a_Month_Study_2012-1.pdf

September 7, 8 & 9, 2012

2ND TOGETHER WE CAN RETREAT

St. Francis Retreat House in Easton, PA

<http://www.oa-centraljersey.org/PDFs/togwecan2012.pdf>

Sep 28, 2012 6:00pm - Sep 30, 2012 1:30pm

HAPPY, JOYOUS, & FREE; THE GIFTS OF THE PROGRAM

Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

http://oa-phila.org/pdfs/2012_Retreat_Registration_Form.pdf

October 12-14, 2012

STEP UP YOUR PROGRAM

Massanetta Springs, VA

<http://www.richmondoa.com/media/c2b72b8bf63f88d0ffff801afffffcdc.pdf>

November 2, 2012—November 4, 2012

REGION 7 CONVENTION

Ocean City, MD

<http://oaregion7.org/events/convention-registration>

Know of an event not listed here?

Send submissions to: newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org

Jot us a line...

Share your story in *Together We Can*, your intergroup newsletter. The theme for the August 2012 newsletter will be: **Living Life on Life's Terms**. E-mail your story by July 31st to newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org

Don't have much time? Just send us a line or two to be included in the next newsletter. No story too small! No abstinence requirement!