



NEW HORIZON

OA Manasota Intergroup's Quarterly Newsletter

Information Line
(941) 957-1488
www.oamanasota.org

2402 Hermitage Blvd.
Venice, FL 34292

Freedom

When I was asked to do an article on serenity, after hemming and hawing, I agreed to write one. I thought sure, no problem, I'm feeling pretty serene right now. The problem is, today, I'm not feeling very serene. My husband and I took a risk and bought another house (luxury "problem"). The day after the seller accepted our offer, I woke up in a panic saying "Holy crap, what did we just do?" We already have a house--in fact, we have two, what do we need another one for? Then came the onslaught of all kinds of feelings--panic, fear of financial insecurity, excitement, giddiness--but no, no serenity is in the mix.....yet.

I guess what I have learned over the years of being abstinent is that no feeling is worth eating over. Eating cannot fix me or my feelings. It will only make things worse. It's not that I haven't had any of those thoughts, but they are fleeting. When I think it through, compulsive eating will bring back the guilt, powerlessness, and

worst of all, the obsession. I can then ask myself, "is taking that first bite worth it? Do I want all that misery back?"

When I get the compulsion to eat, (notice I said WHEN, because even after 11 years of abstinence I still do get them), I know what to do if just thinking it through isn't cutting it. The next step is to pray (this is usually done in the bathroom, it is a holy place). Usually, this is sufficient to remove the obsessive thoughts. However, the next thing to do is to call my sponsor, another OA member, or if that's not available, read some OA literature. I have never had a compulsive thought NOT be lifted IF I picked up the simple tools laid at my feet.

The great thing about learning these tools is that they can be used for any situation--big or small. In fact, I can use them on my "situation" now. I guess one of the blessed things about having some time being abstinent is I know "this too shall pass". I used to hate it when my sponsor

said that, but it's true. I used to think if I had a feeling--it was going to last forever, and there was nothing I could do about it, so I may as well eat. I've learned that EVERYTHING passes--good or bad. Somehow, I am less afraid knowing this. I have been taught to face my feelings and I have been given the tools to deal with them through OA--if I choose to use them. Even though I'm not feeling really serene right this second, I know it will come. I will sit still, breathe, pray and call my sponsor. I'm feeling more serene already. MBG



Upcoming Events in the Region 8:

Dec. 12, 2009:

Celebrate 12th Step Within Day!!
Unitarian Universalist Church
3975 Fruitville Road
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
\$5 suggested donation
For questions, call:
Wendy C. (941) 349-0009

Feb. 26-28, 2010:

"Together we can surrender to
win in 2010!"
Florida State Convention
20th Anniversary
Cocoa Beach Hilton Oceanfront
For more information, visit:
www.oaregion8.org

March 19-21, 2010:

Region 8 Business Assembly &
Recovery Convention
Memphis, TN.
For more information, visit:
www.oaregion8.org



Important Addresses:

World Service Organization
P.O. Box 44020
Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020
(505) 891-2664
E-mail: info@oa.org
www.oa.org

SOAR 8 Treasurer
P.O. Box 1277
Largo, FL. 33799
Www.oaregion8.org
Make checks or money orders to:
Region 8

Manasota Intergroup
ATTN: Mary Foushi
P.O. Box 50126
Sarasota, FL. 34232
(941) 342-4939
Make contributions to:
Manasota Intergroup

Intergroup Members:

Chair	Wendy C.	349-0009
V-Chair	Open	
Secretary	Open	
Treasurer	Mary F.	342-4939
Literature	Anna D.	378-9944
Public Info	Open	
WSBC Rep	Open	
12th Step	Open	
Within		
Soar 8 Rep	Lynn S.	371-2213

Newsletter Editor

Alina alinak23@hotmail.com
(941) 323-1983

Positive Pitch

You may recall that, in my last Positive Pitch, I made the case for a new Chair to take over my position as I have served for 2 years. Since then, my Higher Power kept nudging me to consider I one more year of service. I brought this to the IG meeting. We decided that I will stay for I more year, particularly as a way to follow our by-laws that indicate that the Chair position is suppose to shift during an even numbered year. This means that I will serve until November 2010. I have an over-arching goal for the next year. The goal is that our members grow exponentially in the area of service. That is, knowing that service helps our own recovery, perhaps more than any other tool. Our event on 12-12-09 will focus on this area in a very powerful and entertaining way. Gerri, our Region 8 Chair, is driving from the east coast of Florida to lead us in a day filled with deep recovery and fun as she shares her PowerPoint presentations and leads us in discussion about OA on a personal and group level. I look forward to a packed house!!

In Service and with Blessings to each of you,
Wendy C.
Inter Group Chair

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Notice: OA needs you to fill the Opened Intergroup member's positions mentioned above. Contact Wendy C. 349-0009. In addition, many service positions will be opening up in the coming year. Please consider giving your time for these valuable and necessary positions!!!

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Editorial Policy: Opinions expressed here are solely the writer and not OA as a whole or necessarily those of the Editors. Articles are edited for style but not content.

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The newsletter needs your stories!! The next newsletter topic is "New Beginnings". Please submit a story of any length sharing your experience, strength, and hope on this topic. Thank you!

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SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

After a life of binge eating, primarily on sugar, I finally found my way to OA in 1991. I became abstinent right away, got a sponsor, worked the steps and remained abstinent for about 2 years. Then I lost my abstinence and was in relapse for 4 ½ years, became clinically depressed and gained all of my weight back and then some, and for the first time weighed over 200 pounds.

My current story begins in 1997, with how I found abstinence again with the help of 5 angels, strangers who came into my life for a short time, and changed my life forever.

I began going back to OA meetings, found a sponsor and tried to work the steps, but nothing seemed to be working, I kept going back to the food. But then a series of incidents occurred that turned my life around.

My dentist referred me to a specialist for gum surgery, and on the way to the reception area, his assistant gave me another referral, explaining that she really wasn't supposed to do that but that she thought I would like this woman better. I took her advice and when the specialist saw me for the first time, she looked at my chart and said that she thought I was taking way too much medication for such a young woman. She suggested that what might be helpful to me was an exercise program and proceeded to refer me to her personal trainer. I didn't make the call immediately, because I was almost as opposed to exercise as I was to diets but eventually I did make the call and met a young woman, who continues to be an inspiration to me today. She started me on a three day a week program of weight training and aerobic exercise. But when she suggested I keep a food diary and show it to her at each visit, I balked. I tried it for awhile but it was obvious that I wasn't adhering to the suggested food plan so she recommended a nutritionist she thought would be helpful. But I knew that a nutritionist without a background in food addiction would be of no help to me. That's when I called an eating disorder treatment center with which I was familiar.

While on the phone with the receptionist, making an appointment with the nutritionist, she informed me that they were currently offering an outpatient group that was meeting weekly for compulsive overeaters working the OA program, and asked if I might be interested. I told her that I would and she suggested I come in and fill out some paperwork and meet with the therapist who was facilitating the group. The paperwork consisted of an application detailing what would be expected of me. I filled it all out and signed it, committing to attending at least 6 outpatient meetings in a row, in addition to one or two OA meetings a week, abstaining from any mood altering substances and participating in all group sessions, as well as completing all homework assignments. I believe this was my first step in surrendering to the program.

At my first meeting at the center, I was asked by the therapist to give a brief history of my eating disorder. I proceeded to explain my behavior over the past 4 1/2 years which included non-stop eating and especially an inability to control my intake of sweets. When I finished she asked me if I would be willing to eat 3 meals a day with nothing in between, a snack at bedtime and no hard sugar. Well, that seemed impossible to me based on what I had just told her, but I thought I would at least be willing to try (because by this time I was desperate)...but then I remembered Yoda's words to Luke Skywalker in Star Wars...there is no try, there is only do or not do. So I thought that saying I would try would be a pretty lame answer. It was then that I had a spiritual awakening...my burning bush.

I visualized my higher power standing before me with a silver platter in his hands on which was the gift of abstinence, a food plan that I could live with; and I realized that the therapist had not asked me if I "could" do these things, but only if I would be willing to do them. So, I thought, if the gift of abstinence were handed to me on a silver platter would I be willing to accept it? Of course, then my answer was a resounding "YES". I knew for the first time that I could not do it, but I would be willing to accept it if it were freely given to me! And I understood that this was God doing for me what I could not do for myself.

That was 9 years ago on July 9 of 1997, and I have been abstinent one day at a time ever since. Not only was I able to follow the food plan she had outlined for me beginning that day, but I was also relieved of my cravings and no longer obsessed about food, and I have maintained a 40 pound weight loss.

-Patti S., Tampa FL (reprinted from OA Region 8 website: www.oaregion8.org)

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - WINTER/SPRING 2009-2010

BG Beginners * BB Big Book * ST Step * TR Tradition * DC Discussion * LIT Literature * SP Speaker

SUNDAY

4:00PM Englewood/ST/TR
 Gulf Cove Methodist Church
 1100 McCall Rd
 Port Charlotte
 Rt. 776 S. Englewood
 Sheryl: 876-6173

MONDAY

10:00 AM Nokomis/ DC/LIT
 Venice/Nokomis United Methodist Church
 208 Palm Ave. Room #6
 Gloria: 488-2533

7:00 PM Bradenton/BB
 Trinity Lutheran Church
 2200 26th St. W. (side office)
 First week tools
 Kathy: 544-6948

7:00 PM Sarasota/ST
 First Presbyterian Church
 501 Bowman Ct. (off Oak St.,
 East of 301), Room 203
 Beginner last Mon.
 Pam G: 343-9579

TUESDAY

10:00 AM Sarasota/ST/TR
 Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
 4041 Bahia Vista St. Portable 17
 Last Tues. tradition
 Loretta: 923-9481

7:00 PM Sarasota DC/Spanish Speaking
 Quick Kick Tae Kwan Do
 3135 N Tamiami Trl
 Park in rear of bldg
 Cathy: 914-4602

WEDNESDAY

10:00 AM Nokomis/ST/TR
 Venice/Nokomis United
 Methodist Church
 208 Palm Ave. , Room #6
 Beth: 484-4881

7:00 PM Sarasota/LIT
 Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
 4041 Bahia Vista St., Portable #18
 Andrea: 926-7555

THURSDAY

10:00 AM Bradenton/ST/TR
 Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church,
 9th St. East
 (Between 63rd Ave E and Whitfield)
 Rm #8 in School Bldg
 Helaine: 758-8896

7:00 PM Englewood/DC/ST
 United Methodist Church
 700 E. Dearborn, Room 101
 Church Parlor
 Mary Ann: 474-9355

10:00 AM Port Charlotte/DC/ST/SP
 Pilgrim United Church of Christ
 24515 Rampart Blvd. (off King's Highway)
 Fran: 764-7719

6:30-8:00 PM Sarasota/H.O.W./SP
 Church of the Holy Spirit Episcopal
 129 S.Tamiami Trail, Osprey, FL 34229
 Mary F.(941-342-4939)
 Linda S.(941-484-9373)
SPECIAL FOCUS MEETING
 O.A. H.O.W.
BEGINS 11/05/09 (Directions:
 Immediately north of Wal-Mart,
 turn east at the M&D restaurant,
 turn left towards the sanctuary.
 Enter first door on the right at
 NW corner of building.)

FRIDAY

10:00 AM North Port/LIT
 Bon Scour North Port Health Park
 HWY 41 Sumter Blvd, Conf. Room #2
 Denise: 624-6723
 Barbara K: 423-2632

7:00 PM Sarasota/SP/DC
 St. Wilfred's Episcopal Church
 3773 Wilkinson Rd
 Conf Room
 Sandy: 365-6059

SATURDAY

8:30AM Venice/Outdoors/BB
 Manasota Beach Pavilion
 (RT AT BRIDGE, SHELTER ON LEFT,
 PARKING ON RT)
 8570 Manasota Key Rd.
 RED TIDE ALERT: MEET AT
 ENGLEWOOD SPORTS PARK
 ON RIVER ROAD
 Ann P: 474-2988
 Barbara: 423-2632

10:00AM Sarasota/BB
 Unitarian Universalist Church
 3975 Fruitville Rd.
 Jefferson Room
 Rich: 954-8476