OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS ~ FLORIDA'S FREEDOM INTERGROUP

A Monthly Newsletter serving the Citrus, Hernando, and Pasco counties
December 2010

www.oafreedom.org
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Recipe For Happiness

2 Heaping cups of patience
1 Heart full of love
2 Hands full of generosity
1 Head full of understanding
Dash of laughter
Sprinkle generously with kindness
Add plenty of faith and mix well
Spread over a period of a lifetime
And serve to everyone you meet

STEP 12

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Lifelong Project

We will never "arrive" in this program. We never "graduate." This is a lifelong project. It is a journey God is taking us on with him. It is a wonderful journey of hope and trust--two things I never thought I would have before OA. God is teaching me to have a fulfilling and prosperous life. I need to always move forward in this journey, and I need to carry the message to others of what I have been wonderfully given and use what I have learned in all my affairs.

-Susan L., West Berlin, New Jersey USA
Lifeline, page 20, December 2009

TRADITION 12

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Anonymity, Not Celebrity

One of the first things I heard in OA was people sharing from their hearts, souls and guts. I'd never heard that before, anywhere. I also heard, "we eat over what is eating us." I understood that what was said in OA rooms or to another OA member was a confidence to be kept. This gave me the freedom to share what was in my heart and gut--what was eating me up. Anonymity still gives me that freedom, whether at a meeting or on the telephone.

I learned it is wise to be discerning about where and to whom I reveal personal information because we are all at different stages of recovery, and some individuals, especially newcomers, may not fully understand the deep commitment required for anonymity.

The Tradition of anonymity makes us all equals. OA has no stars. I must not put anyone on a pedestal, because we are all human beings with flaws. There is good in the worst of us and bad in the best. If I pu OA members on pedestals, when they reveal their flaws, I could become devastated because our star has been tarnished. I must learn to accept that human failings are normal in program and in life. No one is perfect. Sooner or later we each display our clay feet. I don't expect perfection from anyone anymore, not even myself!

-Ellen C., Boynton Beach, Florida USA
Lifeline, page 19, December 2009

The Twelve Steps to a Better Holiday

1. We admitted the holiday season has a deeper meaning than devouring food.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could help us see and celebrate the true meaning of the season.
3. We came to believe our Higher Power could help us appreciate the joyfulness of the season as we understand it.
4. We made a searching and thorough examination of our relationship with food during the holidays and other things we enjoy about th season.
5. We admitted to our Higher Power the exact nautre of our food habits during holiday seasons past.
6. We became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to remove our attachment to food as a necessity of the holidays.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our desire to partake of holiday treats.
8. We made a list of all persons whose presence makes the holiday season joyful for us and with whom we would like to share our joy.
9. We made plans to spend the time with those people whenever possible, except when to do so would remove us from our primary purpose of abstinence.
10. We continued to enjoy the company of friends and family and other non-food aspects of the season.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our appreciation of the season, praying for knowledge of its meaning and the joy we feel at this time.
12. Having realized that sharing the joy of this season with others far outlasts the fleeting pleasure of food, we gave ourselves the gift of abstinence throughout the holidays and gave others the gift of our full attention and appreciation.

-Season taken from the November 2007 edition of LIFELINE

If we refuse to hear criticism, we have no chance to learn from it.

STEPS TEN AND ELEVEN INVENTORIES by Barefoot Bill

I ask that my Higher Power guide me through this meditative and constructive review of the day, being careful not to drift into worry, remorse (which means regret) or morbid (which means unhealthy and unproductive) reflection:

1. Did I start the day in prayer and meditation?
2. When facing indecision today, did I ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision? If I did seek God's help, did I then relax and take it easy, constantly reminding myself I am no longer running the show? Theirs is a big difference between "making it happen" and "letting it happen".
3. Was I resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid today? Was I prideful, angry, jealous, or anxious? When these things came up, did I at once ask God to remove them? After seeking God's help, did I then resolutely turn my thoughts to someone I could help?
4. Was I thinking of myself most of the time or was I thinking of what I could do for others, of what beauty, truth and love I could pack into the stream of life? Were there any cases where my ancient enemy, rationalization, has stepped in and has justified conduct which was really wrong. Was I tempted to imagine that I had good motives and reasons when I really didn't. (I should carefully examine my motives in each thought or act that appears to be wrong. In most cases my motives won't be hard to see and understand.)
5. Did I "constructively criticized" someone who needed it, when my real motive was to win a useless argument. Or, the person concerned not being present, did I think I was helping others to understand them, when in actuality my true motive was to feel superior by pulling them down.
6. Was I depressed and complained I felt bad, when in fact I was mainly asking for sympathy and attention? (This odd trait of mind and emotion, this perverse wish to hide a bad motive underneath a good 1, permeates human affairs from top to bottom. This subtle and elusive kind of self-righteousness can underlie the smallest act or thought.)
7. Did I avoid falling into worry, remorse or morbid reflection today? (These things diminish my usefulness to others.)
8. Did I hurt someone I love because they needed to be "taught a lesson," when I really wanted to punish?
9. Am I keeping something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once? (This includes secrets, inappropriate thoughts and behavior, etc.)
10. Did I set right all new mistakes as I went along? Do I still owe an apology?
11. Was I kind and loving towards all today? In other words, who did I not love today? (Including myself.) Did I constantly carry the vision of God's will into all of my activities? Did I say to myself many times today, "How can I best serve Thee, Thy will (not mine) be done."?
12. Did I remember that real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints and a respect for their opinions are attitudes which make us more useful to others?
13. Can everyone rely absolutely on anything I say? Did I continue grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty?
14. Did I pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action?
15. In what ways did I forget that love and tolerance of others is our code?
16. Did my actions today indicate that I have ceased fighting anything or anyone?
17. Is there something I could have done better during my day?

Learning daily to spot, admit, and correct these flaws is the essence of character-building and good living. An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets I shall seek. Here I need only recognize that I did act or think badly, trying to visualize how we might have done better, and resolve with God's help to carry these lessons over into tomorrow. After making my review, I now seek self-forgiveness, God's forgiveness, and now ask for God's help about what corrective measures should be taken and to give me the power to carry it out. Having so considered our day and having searched our hearts with neither fear nor favor, we can truly thank God for the blessings we have received and sleep in good conscience.

SPIRITUAL PATH

Turning to HP

When I joined OA two years ago, I wasn't thinking of a Higher Power, especially one who would help me stop my compulsive eating. Yet I found my Higher Power at the very first meeting. I listened while others spoke about being powerless and nodded in agreement. I felt welcomed.

The Higher Power I found is kind, loving, gentle and caring. He cares about each part of my life and wants me to be abstinent and happy. He gives me unconditional love and understands me, even when I don't understand myself. How do I walk the spiritual path in life? I walk with much awareness. At first I only acknowledged my Higher Power by thanking him before bed. Yet I found out I need him 24/7. Now upon waking, I acknowledge him and read out of meditation books on today's page. Before each abstinent meal, I ask to let the weighed and measured food fill me. I stay open during the day for my Higher Power to use me to help others. Being of service is the only way I can keep what has been freely given to me. At night I thank him for another day and ask him to bless everyone in OA.

How is my life different with Higher Power? Wow! I no longer crave food but only eat what is on my food plan. I can relax. I don't have to worry where my next meal is coming from. He gives me more opportunities to be a part of life and be active. I am no longer in the food, but can truly socialize today. Best of all, I have given back by starting and participating in a telephone meeting on spirituality. We're up to 27 attendees--the most yet. I do whatever I can to serve in OA. It is a blessing. Thank you, OA and my Higher Power.

-Mary E., Glen Dale, West Virginia USA
Lifeline, page 22, December 2009

OA Word Search Puzzle

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

1. HONESTY
2. HOPE
3. FAITH
4. COURAGE
5. INTEGRITY
6. WILLINGNESS
7. HUMILITY
8. FORGIVENESS
9. AMENDS
10. PERSEVERANCE
11. SPIRITUALITY
12. SERVICE
13. SURRENDER
14. COMMITMENT
15. VIGILANCE

FREEDOM INTERGROUP MINUTES
November 13th 2010

OPENED with the Serenity prayer at 9:00AM Lead by chair, Jeannine

ATTENDANCE: Jeannine & Barbara Joy, NPR; Belinda, Brooksville; Dolores, Inverness and Kathleen, Zephyrhills

MINUTES: Read by all who attended. Motion to accept as submitted by Belinda, seconded by Barbara Joy. UNANIMOUS

TRADITION OF THE MONTH: Tradition Eleven

TREASURER'S REPORT: Checkbook balance forward - $1817.53; Total Monthly Income - $158.38; Total Monthly Expenses—$241.35; General Fund—$880.21; Literature—$211.92; Special Events—$156.65; Retreat Scholarship Fund - $57.25; Region 8 Scholarship Fund - $11.50; Prudent Reserve - $500. Motion to accept treasurer's report as submitted made by Dolores ~ seconded by Belinda. UNANIMOUS

REGION 8 REPORT: None.

WSO REPORT: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Retreat Report ~ 17 people registered for November -- still not too early to get reservations into the Franciscan Center.

SPECIAL EVENTS: November 19--20 Holiday Retreat Franciscan Center
State Convention Feb. 25—27, 2011

INTERGROUP OFFICERS UP FOR ELECTION: Volunteers are needed from all — Groups need to share with members to be open to participate in Intergroup — Everyone is eligible to serve no abstinence requirement is necessary to hold an office in Intergroup just BE willing.

NEWSLETTER: November and December newsletters will be completed by Mary Jane W. (Webmaster for our oafreedom.org site from Pinellas Traditions Intergroup) and we express our deep felt thanks. Belinda from Brooksville has volunteered to do the newsletter and will take over or in January.

12TH STEP WITHIN: – Still need representative

TELEPHONE HOTLINE: Everything still in place and Carol is still taking calls. Barbara Joy explained about the issues we had with Verizon which resulted in a late fee. She was able to get everything resolved.

LITERATURE: Kathleen was present with books if members needed to make purchases.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Another phone meeting has been started on Wednesday night's at 10:00 PM EST
Call in number 712-432-3900 Bridge number 915892#

Public Information: None

GROUP REPORTS: Brief discussion how the various groups were doing. Wesley Chapel's Thursday night poorly attended. Rent is an issue.

NEXT MEETING: December 11th

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

FREEDOM INTERGROUP MEETING LIST

	Day/Time	Name	Address	Contact
Citrus	Monday 1:00 pm	Voices of Recovery	Central Citrus Community Center 2808 W. Marc Knighton Court Lecanto, FL 34461	Delores D. 352-746-5019
Citrus	Tuesday 3:00 pm	Solutions	Inverness Lakes Regional Public Library 1511 Druid Road Inverness, FL 34452	Maralyn B. 352-726-9112
Citrus	Wednesday 10:30 am		St. Anne's Episcopal Church 9870 West Fort Island Trail (Mary Chapel) Crystal River, FL 34429	Peg D. 352-447-5080
Citrus	Thursday 1:00 pm		Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church 6 Roosevelt Blvd. Beverly Hills, FL 34465	Francisca B. 352-746-7749
Citrus	Friday 7:00 pm		Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church 6 Roosevelt Blvd. Beverly Hills, FL 34465	Carolyn R. 352-341-0777
Hernando	Tuesday 1:00 pm	Bridge to Serenity	West Hernando Branch Library 6335 Blackbird Ave. Brooksville, FL 34613	Belinda B. 352-293-3455
Hernando	Thursday 7:00 pm	Road to Recovery	Day Spring Presbyterian Church 6000 Mariner Blvd. Spring Hill, FL 34609 (Fellowship Hall)	Karen H. 352-200-8433
Hernando	Friday 1:30 pm		St. Andrews Episcopal Church 2301 Deltona Blvd. Spring Hill, FL 34606	Betty 352-666-1710
Hernando	Saturday 2:30 pm		"A" Club 18922 Titus Blvd. (1 block south of County Line Road) Hudson, FL 34667	Madeline H. 352-428-0815
Pasco	Monday 7:00 pm		Calvary Chapel Worship Center 6825 Trouble Creek Road New Port Richey, FL 34653	Carole G. 813-920-2001
Pasco	Monday 5:30 pm	Big Book Meeting	Florida Hospital - Zephyrhills 7050 Gall Blvd. (Wellness Conference Center) Zephyrhills, FL 33541	Ginny S. 352-796-5459
Pasco	Wednesday 10:00 am	Winners	Unity Church 5844 Pine Hill Road Port Richey, FL 34668	Peggy D. 727-817-0017
Pasco	Thursday 7:00 pm	Serenity Seekers	Atonement Lutheran Church 29617 State Road 54 Wesley Chapel, FL 33543	Beth M. 727-252-6441
Pasco	Friday 11:30 am		Seventh Day Adventist Church 7333 Dairy Road Zephyrhills, FL 33540 Location Change	Sharon T. 813-782-6005
Pasco	2nd Saturday of each month 9:30 am	Freedom Intergroup Meeting	Unity Church 5844 Pine Hill Road Port Richey, FL 34668	Jeannine A. 727-817-0017
Pasco	Saturday 10:30 am	Pasco Pioneers	Unity Church 5844 Pine Hill Road Port Richey, FL 34668	Jeannine A. 727-817-0017

The most current Face-to-Face, Online or Telephone Meeting Lists can be found at:
http://www.oa.org/meetings/ ~~~~~~~~~ or Call Our Hotline # ***1-800-544-6353***