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Hey, there, everyone!

I'm Joan, and I'm a compulsive overeater and the grateful editor of the Steppingstone.

I so enjoyed IDEA Day and I'm excited about the Sponsorship Workshop on Sunday. I'm also looking forward to Unity Day on February 24 – OA has given me a life beyond my wildest dreams and I'm not letting go. Surrounding myself with program activities and program people is the best way I stay connected one day at a time.

A blanket apology is due to anyone whose article or information did not appear in this issue. I've been distracted these last two months and I'm not sure I caught everything tossed to me. PLEASE remind me (if it's not too late) and it will be included in the next issue.

Yours in service,
Joan 410 483 4212 jmwehberg@hotmail.com/joanmwehberg@yahoo.com

Let Go...

*To "let go" does not mean to stop caring
it means I can't do it for someone else.*

*To "let go" is not to cut myself off,
It's the realization I can't control another.*

*To "let go" is to admit powerlessness
Which means the outcome is not in my hands.*

*To "let go" is not to try to change or blame another,
It's to make the most of myself.*

*To "let go" is not to care for,
But to care about.*

*To "let go" is not to fix
But to be supportive.*

*To "let go" is not to judge,
But to allow another to be a human being.*

*To "let go" is not to be protective,
It's to permit another to face reality.*

*To "let go" is not to deny,
But to accept.*

*To "let go" is not to nag, scold, or argue
But instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.*

*To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires
But to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it*

*To "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody
But to try to become what I dream I can be.*

To "let go" is not to regret the past,

But to grow and live for the future.

To "let go" is to fear less, and love more.

Anonymous

From the 2006 World Service Business Conference

Part Three - Business Meetings

There were five business meetings during the week, and a summary of actions is featured in this article. Each meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer, once each day in a foreign language: Hebrew, French, Spanish, Swedish, and Italian, and then in English. A roll call of the Regions where delegates and visitors were asked to stand as their state, province, or country was called. What a thrill to see people from all over the world! Reports from the Trustee Chair, Treasurer, Managing Directors, Region Chairs, and Committees were reviewed and approved. Trustees Debbie Wilson of Region 3, Margaret Ann Brady of Region 6, Dominique Buffet of Region 9, and General Service Trustee Michael Buckley were approved and installed.

Business motions were discussed and acted upon. These are the results of the motions:

- Move to change the name of HIPM (Hospital, Institution, Professional, and Military) to Professional Outreach adopted unanimously.
- Move to change the structure of solicitation of and financial distribution for regions to co-host or host World Service Conventions was split into two motions to address structure and financial distribution separately. The structure motion failed, the financial distribution motion was withdrawn.
- Move to combine February's Unity Day with the January OA Birthday celebrations - after a correction to the motion was made, an amendment was suggested to change the time of the Serenity Prayer from 11:30 a.m. Pacific Standard time to 11:30 a.m. local time. The amendment failed, and the original proposal was withdrawn.
- Move to add a ninth tool, exercise - the motion was amended to add a ninth tool, a plan of physical activity, which would parallel the tool a plan of eating. The motion failed with about 65% of delegates voting against it.
- Move to amend the OA, Inc. By-Laws to require all groups and service bodies to have by-laws compliant with and including OA Subpart B. There were three motions, one each affecting Intergroups, National Service Language Boards, and Regions. The first motion failed, just missing the 2/3 vote required to pass. The latter two motions were withdrawn and all three will be reworked and reintroduced in the 2007 World Service Business Conference.

Trustees answered Ask-It Basket questions, similar to what we see in Lifeline. For example:

- If someone is cross-talking during meetings, it may be best to talk to that person privately to explain crosstalk, why it's harmful, and show them in our literature that in the meetings we share about our own experience, strength, and hope. One may suggest that to fully understand the concept, the member can talk with a sponsor and other members.
- When asked if extra Conference books are available, we were informed that Conference information is available on www.aa.org, but the books are provided only to delegates as they are covered by the cost of delegate registrations. This book is available for review. Contact me and I will lend it to you.
- It is important for all OA meetings and Intergroups to have and *use* the OA Handbook for Groups and Intergroups.
- Meetings and service bodies can reprint without permission any downloadable documents from www.aa.org. Many OA newsletters allow reprinting or use of articles by other OA members and service bodies.
- Sometimes we give too much weight to anonymity - so much so that members won't know that we are giving service. We must be careful to not hide behind the tool.

In Part Four in January, I will tell you about some of the workshops I attended. I could not attend all of them, but if we raise enough funds to send a second WSBC rep, we both can catch them all. You can help! Please make sure the envelopes for the WSBC are passed around regularly at your meetings. The funds raised will help our Intergroup become a full participant in the worldwide group conscience of OA by sending the maximum number of reps: two that Intergroups our size can send. *Mike B., Baltimore (410-467-7472; MikeB1Bear@aol.com)*

Hi! My name is Neil and I'm a compulsive overeater.

I've been a member of OA for almost 17 years, and maintaining strong abstinence for the last 11 years.

After spending over ten years involved with Intergroup activities in the Boston area, I moved to Baltimore in July and have found it a wonderful place to live.

I was recently elected Vice Chair of Baltimore Area Intergroup (BAIG), which makes me a liaison to all BAIG member groups. I make sure that all BAIG OA meetings are properly registered with World Service, and that each group has a designated secretary and contact person in case we need to be in touch with you.

Furthermore, I would like to develop a relationship with each and every group, to better understand the makeup and focus of your meeting, and to offer my personal experience, or just be a sounding board about group issues or problems that might be of concern.

I look forward to a wonderful year serving you through the Intergroup, and as a grateful member of OA.

Neil R. 410-318-6737

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(NOTE FROM THE EDITOR – ALL OFFICERS ARE LISTED ON THE BACK PAGE OF EVERY ISSUE)

Procrastination and self-esteem and abstinence.

What do these words hold in common? For me, one is not viable with the aid of the other two.

When into my disease, I procrastinated constantly. "I'll start after I have dinner; I'll start after a snack; I'll start tomorrow." Hmmm . . . all these were lines I used to fool myself and others into thinking I would truly do what I promised. My house looked like a tornado had hit it several times. I had newspapers in the washer, swept there as I went to answer the door that was located by the laundry facilities. Dirty dishes crowded an oven unused because of eating out. Eating in the car on the way home from fast food places meant nothing ever made it whole all the way back the thirteen miles from the nearest fast food joint.

I lived with the doors locked and window shades drawn. No phones were answered even if the telephone was not off the hook. I hated myself but could not stop eating.

September 1st 1975 I attended a meeting of OA in downtown Baltimore, one hour from my home. I went denying any ability to return. But at that meeting I found a sponsor who told me to do things on the **Just for Today** pamphlet. "Do one today," she asked me, and so being compulsive I picked five. **Do two things a day you don't want to do** turned into using the telephone and emptying waste baskets long overdue for the big green bag I lugged around the house for ten minutes at a time. I took newspapers from the dryer and added them to the big green bag. Hmmm . . . room to wash a load of clothes left for months at the bottom of a closet. Dirty dishes came out of the oven now used to cook abstinent meals and the unused dishwasher went to work.

My house became clean miraculously. My self-worth felt a tiny nudge.

Dress as becomingly as you can was difficult. All my clothes had holes from burning as thighs rubbed against each other. But now they were clean clothes. Hmmm . . . another notch for self-esteem. **Speak quietly.** Oh boy, how I hated people shushing me which was a nightly occurrence at noisy restaurants. So when the voice went down the self-worth crept up.

Just for today I can be as happy as I have a mind to be. Hmmm . . . well, for a professional victim who could only get pity for friendship the happy thing was amazing. As I "acted as if" I was happy, people stopped avoiding me or looking like they were just waiting for the opportunity to bolt. I soon I realized that I was happy. It was how I handled things that changed fearful to happy. Hmmm . . . another notch up for self-esteem. As I took responsibility for my actions I stopped feeling like a victim.

And here is the biggy. **Just for today my feelings may be hurt but I will not show it.** "I am entitled to show it, I won't stuff feelings" I said that I have heard others say that. I have a choice - I can be explosive and drive people away or I can admit I gave people plenty of ammunition for the hurts they sent my way. If your parents did it to you when you were six shame on them, if you are doing it to yourself now shame on you. Hmmm . . . I went to lots of meetings and lots of retreats and heard lots of things that helped heal me. I learned to become just another bozo on the bus (most of the time, of course - my ego raises it's head on occasion). I started to like myself so I had no need to abase others to seem better myself. When I ceased to criticize others I went easier on myself. My self-esteem fed the ability to care about my fellows, as it says in the promises.

Each day I thank my higher power whom I choose to call God for my abstinence. I also thank God for the fellowship, which loves me and guides me in those things he wants me to do. Thanks for letting me share.

“TRYING TO BE” VS. “WILLING TO BE” ABSTINENT

ADAPTED FROM THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER ANN ARBOR MICHIGAN OA INTERGROUP,
THE TIGER SWALLOWTAIL

<p><i>Trying to be abstinent</i> is an act of submission/self-will <i>without an acceptance of powerlessness</i> so it . . .</p>	<p><i>Being willing to be abstinent</i> is an act of surrender to my HP, so it . . .</p>
Generates a state of great frustration .	Generates a state of great humility .
Implies that I <i>should</i> know how , <i>but can't find the one right formula.</i>	Accepts that it's OK if I don't know how -- because I trust that HP is there to guide the way.
Promotes self-judgement and self-condemnation , <i>if I don't do things perfectly.</i>	Promotes self-acceptance -- of me as I am RIGHT NOW.
Closes me to guidance, <i>because I assume that I "should" know how.</i>	Opens me up to receive guidance.
Sets me up to fear failure and To judge myself a failure, <i>because it assumes that my success or failure is all up to me.</i>	Helps me see needed lessons -- even when I fail.
Sets me up to see any setback as proof that I will never find a lasting abstinence.	Helps me accept I will be shown eventually -- even if I have a setback today.
Increases the distance Between HP and myself, <i>because I see any success is "mine" and don't let myself feel the support of my HP.</i>	Brings me closer to my HP -- as my feelings of isolation and fear fade.
Generates resistance and struggle .	Generates acceptance and surrender .

Willingness prayers:

Short: Dear Lord, please grant me the willingness to do Your will, not mine, today.

Long: Dear HP, help me be willing to be abstinent today by granting me:

- ❖ The humility to let go of the illusion of perfection;
- ❖ The serenity to accept life as life is;
- ❖ The courage to admit my missteps;
- ❖ The open-mindedness to see the recovery lessons my missteps reveal;
- ❖ The trust to believe that you will show me how to get beyond all of my setback and my fears;
- ❖ The patience to let the process occur in “your time,” not mine;
- ❖ The gratitude to appreciate that my abstinence is a gift to myself (and to you); and
- ❖ The willingness to do your will, not mine, today.

NIGHT OWL – I can take calls in the evening or at night.			MORNING DOVE – I can take calls early in the morning.		
NAME	PHONE NUMBER	HOW LATE?	NAME	PHONE NUMBER	HOW EARLY?
Ann T.	410-435-8435	11:00pm	Ann T.	410-435-8435	7:00 a.m.
Jay K.	410 980 9624	24/7	Wajecha	443-271-2273	6:45 a.m.
Wendy S.	443-854-4522	anytime	Sheffi	443-858-7030	7:00am
Hinda	410 764 2279	1:00am	Alice	410-243-2314	9:00 a.m.
Rachel	410 913 1989	2:00am	Annette	410-825-4639	5:00 a.m.
Ashley S.	443 570 7890	11:00pm	Lisa M.	410-663-8219 443-677-7219	7:00 a.m.
			Laura	914-645-9839	11:30pm

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BAIG Website: <http://www.oabaltimore.org>

Other Internet Sources:

Region Seven: <http://www.oaregion7.org>

World Service: <http://www.oa.org>

The Steppingstone is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Baltimore area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous.
Editorial Policy: This is your newsletter. Your contributions, comments, and experience in the OA way of life are needed and appreciated. We also would like to print news about your area or meeting. Publication of any contributions or editorial opinions expressed herein does not imply endorsement by OA as a whole, but only by the individuals who wrote them. Material submitted cannot be returned. We reserve the right to edit, and it is understood that other OA groups may reprint all items without permission. Deadline for submitting contributions is by the 10th of the month in which publication takes place in January, March, May, July, September, November. Submit your contributions by mail to BAIG, P. O. Box 20013, Baltimore MD 21284 or by e-mail to the editor, Joan W. imwehberg@hotmail.com or ioanmwehberg@yahoo.com. **Thanks for your support.**

SPONSOR – I am willing to sponsor others.		SPEAKER – I'll share my story at meetings.	
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The Baltimore Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

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