

SEPTEMBER 2008

VOLUME 33, NO. 5

CHANGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We will soon be electing a new World Service Business Conference Representative to replace Mike B who has been our trusted servant in that position for the last three years. I hope you haven't missed his series of reports here in the 'stone. Where once I was never interested in anyone's point of view but my own, I find I am now fascinated with the various points of view expressed in our Intergroup meetings, Region 7 Assemblies and World Service Business Conferences. Me interested in new ideas? Astonishing!! And incredibly rewarding!

At our December meeting, we have elections for our Intergroup officers for 2009 and Region 7 representatives and Steppingstone editor(s). This is an exciting process as it takes our accomplishments of this current year and bears them forward as we continue to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer from the devastating effects of the disease of compulsive overeating.

That said, I'll point out that there is a flyer inside for the workshop "Be the Message, Carry the Message." Looking forward to seeing everyone there! Spread the word at your Meetings!

TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS

ABANDON YOURSELF TO God as you understand God; admit your faults to Him and to your Fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us . . . (from AA BB pg 164)

Yes, join us at the Overeaters Anonymous Region 7 Convention 2008 at the Dunes Manor Hotel in Ocean City!

Come for the RECOVERY:

Workshops ~ Meetings ~ Fellowship ~ Meditation

Come for the RECREATION:

Swimming ~ Fun & Games ~ Entertainment ~ Clothing Exchange ~ Auctions ~ Prize Drawings ~ Beach Activities ~ Boardwalk ~ Dance with DJ

Come for the RELAXATION:

Ocean Sights and Sounds ~ Sundeck ~ Quiet Activities ~ Beautiful Sunrises & Sunsets ~ Rocking Chairs on Oceanfront Porch

November 7 - 9

Register online at: OARegion7.org

DON'T MISS THIS TOTALLY AWESOME RECOVERY-FILLED WEEKEND!!!!

2008 WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE – PART THREE OF SIX

With this issue, we're halfway through our articles about the 2008 WSBC. I hope the articles are of interest and will help you and your meetings carry the message of recovery. Overeaters Anonymous has embarked on an ambitious five-year plan spread that message. At the Region Forum on May 7, our own Region 7 Chair, Janice presented the Strategic Plan, displayed at <http://www.oa.org/pdf/StrategicPlan.pdf>, which laid out short- and long-term goals, such as:

- Investing \$100,000 in the Public Awareness Campaign by 2013
- Translating and posting the entire www.oa.org website into Spanish by this year, French in 2010, and into two other languages by 2013.
- Increase membership in OA by 20%.
- Survey our meetings to determine the current size of the fellowship. This survey is in progress.
- Create strong meeting checklists and encourage meetings to abide by them.
- Facilitate the participation of more service bodies at the WSBC. About one-third send delegates now. The goal is that half of all service bodies will send delegates by 2013.
- Increase 7th tradition donations in greater proportion of the total income of OA. Only 22% of OA's income comes from the 7th tradition. Most comes from literature sales.

After Janice's presentation, 20 groups of delegates addressed 20 separate questions related to the goals. My table addressed how individual groups can address financial health. Answers that came up was to show members how much the group contributes to 60/30/10, keep careful records, give regular Treasurer's reports, and educate the members on the various levels of service bodies and how they help the fellowship, as well as how much it costs.

Also, it was generally agreed that with our current economy, those who can give more than \$2.00 per meeting at the 7th tradition are encouraged to do so. There are many who cannot afford even the \$2.00, but many of us can. If you are one of those of us who are a bit more flush, consider giving an extra \$2 or \$3 to the 7th Tradition to help those who can't. It's easier for me to throw in extra when I remember how without hesitation I used to drop \$10 or more for a night's worth of binge food.

I'll share a bit in the next two issues about some of the great things I heard in the workshops and the regular meetings that were offered three times a day all during the conference. Until then, may your recovery and abstinence be strong and life giving!

--Mike B., a gratefully recovering compulsive overeater in Baltimore



"CARRY the Message, BE the Message"



*An OA Workshop Sponsored
by the Baltimore Area Intergroup*

Sunday, October 12th - 1PM - 4:30PM

Registration starts at 12:30

Topics Include

Be the Message - 101 Ways to strengthen your recovery. Everything you always wanted to know about *Doing Service, but were afraid to ASK.*

Practice the Message - Our recovery depends on OA unity, together we can build strong meetings, intergroup, & region.

Carry the Message - Create action plans to carry the Message of OA to the compulsive overeater still suffering, and reach out into our communities.

Where?

Church of the Redeemer

5603 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21210

From I - 83 - Take Northern Pkwy. East to N. Charles St.
Go Left onto N. Charles. Take Right on E. Melrose Ave. and then
a right into the parking lot. Look for signs for the Workshop Room.

\$8 suggested donation (if you can't pay, please come anyway).

For more information, please contact Suellen (410)435-1155 or Adam (443)703-6202

No ifs, Ands or Buts

*Through the pain of living a self-willed life we find the master key to recovery:
Renewal of the third-step commitment on a daily basis.*

Many times in my life I thought I had surrendered all to my Higher Power, but only recently did I realize what that really means.

I came into Overeaters Anonymous five years ago weighing 236 pounds, and in seven months I was down to 148. I was so proud of my appearance! My husband bought me a beautiful, expensive coat which I loved with all my heart; and when my daughter came home from college we wore each other's clothes.

But I forgot that thin is not well. Before I knew it, I was overeating. Within a few months I gained back all the lost pounds. Only another compulsive overeater can know that particular pain.

For four years I kept coming back and trying to recover my abstinence. Sometimes I managed to abstain for month or so and lost 10 or 15 pounds, then out of the clear blue I was overeating again. Each time this happened, I was a little more desperate than the time before.

God has been good to me. I have a wonderful husband, five daughters ~ all out of college and married, except for our twelve-year-old sweetheart ~ and five grandchildren.

It seemed that God had answered all my prayers except one. Why couldn't I stop overeating? It was not for lack of prayer, I prayed constantly for God to help me.

During the years of my weight gain, our four older daughters left home and I was free of the responsibility of raising a large family. After the last one graduated from college, I quit the part-time job I'd taken to help with college expenses.

"Now I'm going to live for me," I thought. I decided, for the first time in my life, to put myself first. After all, I had worked hard and I deserved to take life easy.

The only thing is, I was miserable. I was fully controlled by an obsession I cannot describe. I went to bed night after night, crying and begging God to help me, yet unaware that I was not willing to surrender control of my life.

Then, in the midst of the turmoil, I discovered I was pregnant. Now, I thought, I would surely lose my mind. How could this be? A grandmother, in my mid-forties, and pregnant!

That month I did more praying than I had ever done in my life. After talking with my sponsor one day, I realized I had to surrender my will and life to God, without conditions. I immediately began repeating the words of step three over and over, alternating it with the Serenity Prayer, and adding "*thy will, not mine, be done.*"

When the doctor confirmed that I was pregnant, I got in my car and cried all the way home. I knew I had finally accepted God's will and surrendered mine. I was certain I would accept whatever happened.

I came into the house and told my husband and our daughter that we were going to have a baby. Within ten minutes, I began to experience severe pain, and that evening I had a miscarriage.

"It takes what it takes" I have heard many times. For me, that is what it took to learn what letting go is all about.

I realized I had to surrender my will and my life to God without conditions.

I began abstaining that week. Each day since then, I have turned my will and my life over to God completely. Each day, I live the program to the best of my ability.

The beautiful coat that was so important to me a few years ago fits again, but it doesn't seem important anymore. What is important is that I know what it means to surrender all that I am, think, feel and want to a loving God, who gives me what I need.

J.B., Michigan
Lifeline, December 1987, page 7

RESOURCES

Have you signed up for our email loop?

It's a totally anonymous way of keeping up with breaking news within the fellowship. If a meeting changes, an event is taking place, an anniversary is being celebrated ~ the quickest way to get ~ AND SPREAD ~ the word is through the email loop.

For inclusion, or if you have any questions, please contact Joan at jmwehberg@hotmail.com

Have you visited our awesome local website lately?

oabaltimore.org

REALLY FABULOUS! Our web manager, who can be contacted through the website, responds quickly with meeting updates and event information. Another quick way to get ~ and spread ~ the word!

How about our Region 7 website?

oaregion7.org

There are public information cards available to print out and so many other great things!

Learn about the other intergroups in our region and what they do to reach newcomers, the events they hold and how they maintain abstinence and carry the message!

THE OA PROMISE: I PUT MY HAND IN YOURS, AND TOGETHER WE CAN DO WHAT WE COULD NEVER DO ALONE. NO LONGER IS THERE A SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS, NO LONGER MUST WE EACH DEPEND UPON OUR OWN UNSTEADY WILLPOWER. WE ARE ALL TOGETHER NOW, REACHING OUT OUR HANDS FOR POWER AND STRENGTH GREATER THAN OURS, AND AS WE JOIN HANDS, WE FIND LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING BEYOND OUR WILDEST DREAMS.

STEP EIGHT REFLECTIONS

Step eight speaks to my willingness to make amends to all persons I have harmed. I have learned from being in OA for over 15 years that I need to start to forgive myself first. I think that in forgiving myself, I will be able to see others as persons with struggles similar to mine and be more willing to forgive them.

Making amends without hurting others has to be well thought out. Writing letters that can be sent up in smoke when I would be hurting someone after a long period of time, symbolizes for me, that I am willing and that I have changed and that I don't have to have a response. I am taking care of and being responsible for my part of the problem.

Being willing keeps me abstinent, and abstinence is the most important part of my life.

Anonymous, reprinted from "Recovery," Triangle OA News, August 2007

NIGHT OWLS - Taking calls at night			MORNING DOVE - Taking calls early in the morning			CAN AT TIMES PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER	HOW LATE?	NAME	PHONE NUMBER	HOW EARLY?	NAME	PHONE NUMBER
Ann T.	410-435-8435	11:00pm	Ann T.	410-435-8435	7:00 a.m.	Morty	443 850 2515
Jay K.	410 980 9624	24/7	Wajeeha	410-663-8403	6:45 a.m.		
Nicole	443 253 9430	11:30-2:00am	Sheffi	443-570-1882	6:00am		
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	Laura	443-631-6102	7:00 a. m.		
Jill P	301-776-4572	11:00pm	Portia	443-414-1948	6:50 am - 7:30am		

DOES YOUR NAME APPEAR ABOVE? CAN YOU PROVIDE THE SERVICE?

P O Box 20013 Baltimore, MD 21284 Hotline 410 764 3136

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 (call for mailing address) or by e-mail to the editor, Joan W. jmwehberg@hotmail.com or joanmwehberg@yahoo.com. Thanks for your support.

SPONSOR - I am willing to sponsor others		SPEAKER - I'll share my story at meetings	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER or E-MAIL	NAME	PHONE NUMBER or E-MAIL
Wajeeha	mspistivity@hotmail.com	Mary H.	410-256-8996
Jay K.	410-980-9624	Wajeeha	
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ARE YOU WILLING TO DO SERVICE????			

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