



Writing: what a great tool to use to stay abstinent!

Recently, in my Creative Writing Class, I had to write a type of poem called a sistena. In doing this challenging assignment, I decided to expose myself. Needless to say, I was hesitant at first but this has been a humbling experience. I thought it would go further to share with my OA family. ~Love Nicole

My Name is Nicole, and I Am a Food Addict

All along her issue has been food
Or is food the mere symptom of a life
full with emptiness and despair
It cushions the blows of the world and
presents great comfort

It numbs the hurts, mask the fear,
and silences the compulsions
In all her strength, she'd become
powerless
This is the life of a food addict

I am a food addict
Trying to fill the God hole with food
I know that I am powerless
Trapped in the art of despair
A slave to compulsion
At every turn seeking comfort

Food creating that fallacious comfort
Will there ever be comfort for an
Addict
Freedom from food compulsion
A sane relationship with Food

Freedom from despair
Empowered, no longer powerless
The first step is to admit that I am
powerless,
And turn to God for comfort
No longer do I sit in solitude and soak
in despair
I am an addict
Powerless over food
Fighting food compulsion

A daily compulsion
That leads to powerlessness
Over food
Displaces comfort
And creates the addict
To live in despair

God now my confidant in times of
despair
One day at a time, lifted is the
compulsion
I am a food addict
Who is powerless
Over life's discomforts
And my addiction to food

Cunning, baffling, and powerful is
my addiction to food
I am a food addict
Who no longer needs food to provide
a fallacious comfort

—Nicole, Baltimore



Happy Abstinent
Fall From
STEPPINGSTONE
EDITOR

Greetings my fellow compulsive overeaters!
It's a short edition this time. We are two articles short which is my fault since I seemed to have misplaced them at the last minute! I send sincere apologies to the two authors of the missing articles. We are in DESPERATE need for people, especially different ones, to submit to this publication. Service and writing are 2 awesome tools to help your recovery. Our next edition will be out in January, I encourage everyone to submit something regardless of your writing expertise. The theme will be on the tool of meetings.
Best Regards, Ashley, Balto

A Dog's Point of View

My dog is better at working the 12 steps than I am. Thank you, HP, for sending me a role model to follow.

My dog does what works - and stops doing what doesn't work. Begging at the table doesn't work so he stops doing it. Sitting quietly by my side in mid-afternoon usually gets him a walk so he keeps doing it. What

for recovery. Whine, regret, ignore the steps and tools that I don't feel like doing...those things don't work anymore.

My dog wakes up every morning grateful for another day on earth. When we take one road that day, not another, he doesn't stop, stare down the other road with longing and regret, nor does he complain about the road we're on. He goes along with the plan, happy to have company by his side and curious about all that crosses his path. I need to follow his lead, realx, take it easy and appreciate the journey that HP is taking me on each day.

My dog does not complain about his food plan. He's happy and excited about each meal, even if it's the same one he had yesterday. He teaches me to accept my limits

graciously and enjoy all the foods I can eat with pleasure.

My dog is most secure and balanced when he knows his humans are in charge. He doesn't have to be afraid of potential harm since he trusts me to protect and provide for him. He teaches me how to trust my HP with all of life's decisions and choices and in return I get that same sense of security and serenity.

My dog doesn't want to live his life alone. He wants and needs companionship to make his life rich and full. I need OA, the fellowship I find here, to teach me how to live freely, compassionately and lovingly. Thanks, HP, for putting a 12 step guide dog in this OA's life.

—Anonymous, Baltimore



about me? I was more stubborn and slow to learn. Use the tools, work the steps, that's what works

Dear Members of the Recovery Group,

It is with great joy and pride that we send to you the following letter from the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous. As the oldest online meeting group on the Internet, the Meeting Leaders of our OA Online Meetings Around the World Around the Clock have worked diligently to make our meetings the best they can be in the medium we serve. Tenacity and love of service has been exemplified by the Recovery Group Meeting Coordinators, their team of leaders and the administrators of the Recovery, ODAT and Discovery support loops. Recovery OA Online Meetings are held every three hours around the clock beginning at 12:00 midnight Eastern time. We have a doorway set up on our website at: www.TheRecoveryGroup.org which provides an easy entrance to the meetings held on the Starchat Network on IRC #Recovery. We hope you will attend both face-to-face OA meetings and OA Online Meetings as often as possible and if you would like to

What's it Like to be a Region Rep?

I write this a few weeks before my last Region Assembly in the current rotation of service, and am looking forward to serving the Intergroup in this capacity this last time. You may be asking what is a Region Rep? Let me first explain what a region is.

In the structure of service in Overeaters Anonymous, the World Service Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico serves all of us, first at the "region" level. The world is divided into ten regions, each served by a Region Trustee. Sanci M. of Chevy Chase is the Trustee for Region Seven, which encompasses six mid-Atlantic U.S. states and Washington, D.C. The Baltimore Area Intergroup is one of over twenty Intergroups served by Region Seven, and in turn serves 25 meetings in central Maryland.

Region Seven is a resource of information about Overeaters Anonymous for its Intergroups and the meetings they serve. You can find out how to start and to expand the Tradition 11 services of Intergroups in providing public information services, services to hospitals, institutions, professionals, and the military. This is done by sharing literature and meeting lists, sending people to share their experience, strength, and hope in recovery, and so much more to carry the message to those still suffering. The Region also hosts an annual convention in

member, helps with dealing with youth and teens that share our illness, and is a liaison for exchange of information and ideas between Intergroups.

The Region is able to provide these services through its officers and region representatives. For every ten meetings or fraction thereof, each Intergroup can send one region representative to semi-annual Region Assemblies, where decisions are made, problems and discussed and solved, and ideas are shared through a weekend of committee and business meetings. The Baltimore Area Intergroup has three Region Reps, currently Carol S., Joe Y., and me. At the October Assembly, Tania S. has graciously agreed to step in for Carol, who will be out of the country at that time.

It's an exceptional opportunity to provide service with recovering compulsive overeaters with deep recovery. There are people that serve in the Region level with sometimes 25 years or more of recovery! It's an amazing experience that has only deepened my commitment to the Twelve Steps and Traditions.

The Baltimore Area Intergroup sends representatives for four assemblies. Alas, the October Assembly in Rehoboth

Beach, Delaware is my last assembly in this rotation. Our Intergroup is looking for a new Region Rep to begin service at the April 2005 Assembly, again in Rehoboth Beach. To commit to this experience, the Intergroup asks for someone with six months continuous abstinence who can attend a total of four assemblies, two weekends a year in early April and in early October. The Intergroup will pay for your registration, which includes a Saturday luncheon and a double-occupancy hotel room for two nights. You will be reimbursed for mileage for driving. Please consider this important service opportunity that is great fun! For more information, please contact me at



and come to the Intergroup meetings on October 23, November 20, and/or December 18. Also, take a look at the Website at

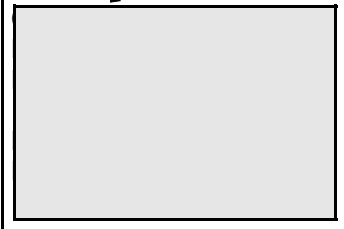
www.oaregion7.org.

--Mike B., Baltimore

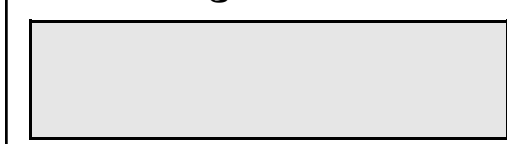
SPONSORS, NIGHT OWLS, AND SPEAKERS

Service is an important tool to give and keep our recovery from compulsive overeating. Intergroup asks members to give service as Sponsors, those committed to abstinence and working the Steps and Traditions to the best of their ability that are willing to help others; Night Owls, those willing to take calls late at night. Speakers are those who speak at meetings about their experience, strength, and hope. Your name, telephone number, or e-mail will be listed in future editions of the Steppingstone. To be listed, contact your Intergroup rep or The Steppingstone.

Sponsors:



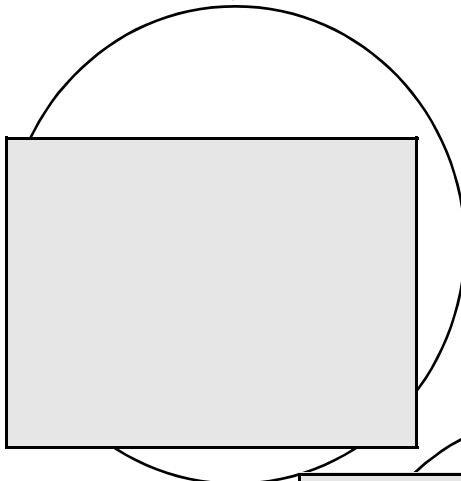
Night Owls:



Did you know that the **Baltimore County Public Library** system offers *hundreds* of diet books --- and only a handful of Overeaters Anonymous books? To help get the **message of recovery** to struggling compulsive overeaters who are searching the library shelves for diet books, a collection is being made to **purchase OA texts** for every one of the BCPL branches. Between the spring Marathon at the Serenity Center and the Tuesday 1 pm meeting, \$150 of the \$193 needed to make the initial purchase of one copy per branch has been collected! If you wish to **donate** to this project, please call

or see me at a meeting. P.S: Request and check out any OA texts at your local branch --- BCPL has a "use it or lose it" policy regarding books in their collection!

Speakers



01-596-0663

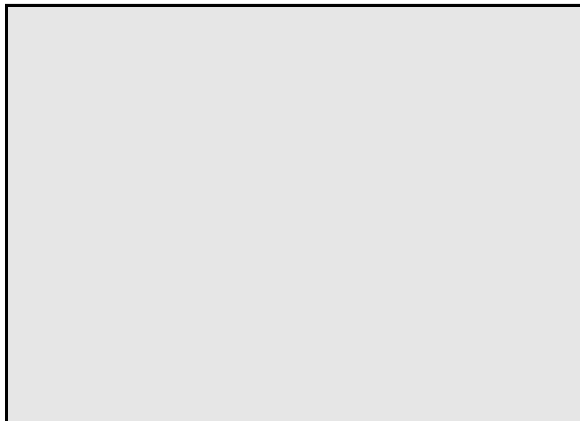


The art in this publication is courtesy of Overeaters Anonymous and Microsoft Office Clip Art and Media.

*The Baltimore Area Intergroup hopes your reading this newsletter will strengthen your recovery and allow you to maintain or attain your abstinence from compulsive eating. Please share by writing about your experience, strength, and hope for the next issue. Contributions for the next issue are due **Oct 1st, 2004**. Share and do a wonderful thing for your fellow recovering compulsive eaters!*

THE BALTIMORE AREA INTERGROUP OF
P. O. Box 20013
Baltimore, Maryland 21284
Hotline 410-764-3136
Website: <http://www.oabaltimore.org>

YOUR TRUSTED SERVANTS:



7th TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS:

- 60% Baltimore Area Intergroup, Box 20013, Baltimore MD 21284
- 30% OA World Service Office, Box 44020, Rio Rancho NM 87174
- 10% OA Region Seven, 15 E. North St., Dover DE 19903

OTHER INTERNET RESOURCES:

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

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

The Steppingstone is the quarterly 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 two weeks before publication: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Submit your contributions by mail to BAIG, P. O. Box 20013, Baltimore MD 21284, or by e-mail to the

