

March 2006 Welcome, Spring!

Volume 29, No. 2

heard at meetings

Steppingstone will now be published six times a year (every other month); and we hope that EVERYONE will find a way to participate in the success of this endeavor.

Your ideas, suggestions and stories will make all the difference in whether those who read it grow through your shares of experience, strength and hope. NEWCOMERS, OLD-TIMERS, THOSE WHO STRUGGLE, THOSE IN RECOVERY – ALL HAVE THOUGHTS TO OFFER.

Please consider serving as a morning dove, night owl, being available as a speaker or sponsor, joining the email list – writing a poem, constructing a puzzle, writing an article, contributing to “heard at meetings” – you will be performing a service for your fellow OAs!

Meeting changes? TELL THE STEPPINGSTONE! Events taking place in our region? TELL THE STEPPINGSTONE. Also – we want to print the meeting list in every issue – PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR MEETING CONTACT INFO IS CURRENT! THIS IS HOW NEWCOMERS REACH US!

Yours in service, Joan 410 483 4212/ 410 522 2505 x1264
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Integrity is when you do the right thing even when no one is around to notice.

Be kinder than necessary; for everyone is fighting some kind of battle.

Step 4: taking the ground glass from within that cuts and inhibits. (Bill W.)

To compare is to despair

If you are crazy and obsessive you are not on the right food plan

Bloom where you are planted

Bermuda triangle of OA: couch, fridge, TV

If you want success in OA surround yourself with people who will tell you the truth about yourself.

Head - with G'd - Mouth - in between - Heart with myself and others -- If my head and my heart are in the right place what goes in and out of my mouth will be the right thing.

Isolation is the darkroom where I develop my negatives.

When I'm in my disease, clarity is so confusing.

If you don't have all the things you want, be grateful for all the things you don't have that you didn't want.

Abstinent One Day At A Time (for 5900+ days!)

In 1983 when I first entered the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous as an anorexic 15-year old, I liked the unconditional approval I found in these rooms, but I had no clue about a food plan or why it might be necessary and the “one day/meal/hour at a time” concept eluded me completely. I never took Step 1, and I know today I hadn't hit bottom yet.

I went out for some more personal research, trying to do things my way. At 19 I found myself being 12-stepped again. This time I got a sponsor and took half of Step 1. I could see that food and body image were making my life unmanageable, but I didn't believe I was powerless over them. Since I didn't believe I was powerless, I couldn't take Step 2. That was a miserable place to be. I was close to a bottom but not quite there. That lasted two very long, very desperate years.

At 21 my disease had finally convinced me I was powerless over food and body image. I took all of Step 1, and recovery began in earnest. Since that time I've been blessed one day at a time with more than 16 years of continuous abstinence as I define it: sane eating that allows me to practice the 12 Step principles in ALL my affairs.

To maintain my abstinence and recovery there are several questions I ask myself each morning. Recovery is individual and mine has changed over time, but this is what's working for me today:

- 1) *What Step am I on? If I'm working the Steps with my sponsor this question is easy, although I also then need to ask myself when the last time I sat down and worked on it was. More often, I know what Step I'm on based on the principle that's up in my life. For instance, if I'm upset about not being able to control something, that's usually Steps 1 and 3.*
- 2) *When did I last speak with my sponsor? Today I don't usually need to speak with my sponsor every day (though I do speak with several recovering people daily). I do need to check in with my sponsor at least once a week, though, and I have to check with myself to make sure I'm not “hiding” from her.*
- 3) *When did I last attend a meeting? My home group? I know from experience that my life goes more smoothly when I'm going to more meetings. I also know that having a home group that I attend regularly helps me feel connected which is very important to my recovery. As I'm blessed with recovery my life becomes full, and this question becomes that much more important.*
- 4) *What service work am I involved in right now? As a recovering anorexic I am phenomenally self-centered. Service work gets me out of self. Attending meetings, being abstinent, accepting service positions with meetings, Intergroup, region and world service, writing for the newsletter, calling my sponsor, sponsoring, making phone calls, returning phone calls, helping organize OA events, taking the lead in arranging OA events, are ALL forms of service. For me, I try to be able to name 5 types of service I'm involved in each day, and at least one of them should be outside of the OA fellowship. For instance, last night I named talking with my sponsor, making an OA outreach phone call, writing for the newsletter, having non-OA friends over for an abstinent home-cooked meal, and calling a work colleague who's having a tough time.*
- 5) *Is my OA recovery my #1 priority today? I was told early on that anything I put before my recovery I'll lose. As my life has become busier with fun and fulfilling things I have to remember that it's OA and my Higher Power that have blessed me with this.*
- 6) *Finally, I ask myself the last time I've talked and actively listened to my Higher Power (otherwise known as praying and meditating). When I don't do this I feel out of kilter and get into self. When I'm into self, I usually haven't spent time – or enough time – praying and meditating.*

Zippering through these questions actually takes less than a minute, but it keeps me on track, and lets me know if I'm falling (or have fallen) off the beam. I know for me long term abstinence is possible and has brought gifts and blessings beyond my wildest dreams. I'm willing, just for today, to go to any lengths to maintain this recovery. Ashley - Baltimore

What's OA Worth to Me in Dollars?

Frankly, one of the most attractive parts of OA when I first came into the rooms was the part of the 7th tradition that says, "We have no dues or fees." Truthfully, it was actually years before I really understood the part about, "we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions." For me, in my insanity, I lived in a world of fear of financial insecurity and felt entitled to see OA work for me before I was going to put ANYTHING in the basket. I remember thinking I was different and "they" didn't mean for me to put money in the basket when it went around because I was "poor."

And then a sponsor suggested I do a financial inventory on what I'd spent on my disease. She suggested I put a dollar figure to it. The process helped me see that the therapy that didn't work because I was still using food, the exercise equipment, the gym membership I used abusively, the diet food, the doctors' appointments for complaints related to my eating disordered behavior, the meals out, the clothes that no longer fit, the days of lost pay because I couldn't function due to my eating disorder, were all financial costs of the disease. I realized that my insurance company and I had spent well over \$15,000 on my disease. Compared to that \$2 in the basket or \$5 for a workshop or \$150 for a retreat is a bargain!

Today part of my recovery in addition to my \$2 in the basket at meetings is a yearly donation to OA of \$365 (\$366 on leap years!). Meeting rooms, clerical staff, and hotel rooms for Region and World Service meetings all cost money, and I need this program. Since we are self-supporting through our own contributions, I have a responsibility to do my part financially. I realize what I choose to spend money on speaks volumes about my priorities. Spending this money in support of OA has consequences: my vacations aren't as fancy, I don't go out to eat as often, and I choose not to get cable television. But the program is worth it to me.

And in the long run, the program saves me big money! Indeed, my fear of financial insecurity has been lifted. I'm healthy and rarely have to go to the doctor. I'm wearing clothes from 10 years ago. I can hold a professional job. When I start thinking I'm special or different and don't need to put money in the basket, that's a danger sign. It's then especially that, in honor of Steps 3 and 7, I need to be sure to get my \$2 in the basket and pray to be reminded that I'm just another bozo on the bus and that if recovery is the most important thing in my life today, then I can't shortchange OA financially.

Anonymous

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT INFORMATION PACKETS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED AND ADDRESSED TO HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS ARE AVAILABLE FROM BILL R., OUR PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER. IT IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO SHARE RECOVERY WITH OTHERS THROUGH THE PARTICIPATION AND INTEREST OF THOSE WHO SHARE IN OUR CARE.

I can see the light at the end of the tunnel - goal weight is in sight. I've touched it a few times in my life. Usually for a few days before I give up doing what got me there in the first place, beginning the inevitable ascent to a place where I am miserable, uncomfortable, and hate myself, but which feels "safe" in its familiarity.

When I'm going down, it's o.k. that my body isn't "perfect" because I don't expect it to be. But once I'm there the trouble begins. Other people lose their excess weight and look beautiful. I lose mine and my body is still not the way I want. I lose everything on top, and my bottom half never seems to come in line with my top half. I hardly lose anything around my knees. I'm short, so my thighs always look chunky. I'm pear shaped, so my hips look disproportionately large, and after 8 children, my abdomen would need major surgery to keep it from protruding, so when I sit down I still have to cross my arm across it because I feel self-conscious. Be that as it may, thanks to the program and my Higher Power's patience and care with me, I am almost here again. What will the difference be this time? Well, first off is total surrender to the great fact of my life - I cannot stay there without working the 12 steps and staying abstinent one day at a time. Now there's a concept I never liked. I was never a "one day at a time" person. I had neither patience nor humility for that concept. I was all or nothing. Either I was doing great and sure I'd stay there forever or into my old self-destructive habits with a vengeance. So I'm working my program differently this time. A lot more humility, a lot more surrender, a lot more compassion and honesty - one day at a time - focusing on what the 12 steps means for me - sanity, emotional sobriety and freedom from obsession.

I also need to remember that the light at the end of the tunnel is not a perfect body. The light at the end of the tunnel is G-d, inner peace, self-acceptance, happiness and the satisfaction of being of real service to others. So there really is no tunnel, and there is no end, because as long as I work my program I can have all that today - one day at a time - for the rest of my life. Rivka

This is a partial list of affirmations that were written in a recovering compulsive overeater's daily 10th Steps, compiled from various entries. We hope that these will bring you comfort and the courage to deepen your recovery and abstinence from compulsive eating.

- ❖ I continue to trust God and do what is in front of me. I enjoy the joy of life and find joy at some point every day. I am amazed and delighted at the gifts that each day brings. I use that to be of service to others and to pass on the message of recovery.
- ❖ I turn over my dreams and needs to God and know that they are met in God's time.
- ❖ I listen for my Higher Power's call to do the next right thing in all things - intuition, from others, at a meeting, and then I do it.
- ❖ Though life sometimes feels like a bumper car and my steering wheel and gas pedal don't work, I do what I can and turn the results to God, trusting all needs are met and all things that are meant to be done will be.
- ❖ The more I accept and embrace God's will today (and remember to pray and ask about it) the more serene I am and the easier it is to stay abstinent from compulsive eating.
- ❖ I am open to ideas and am willing to try new things to maintain and deepen my recovery.
- ❖ I keep a positive attitude in today and make life good all around me. I trust all of my needs to be met, and they are.
- ❖ I laugh at my foibles and myself and enjoy the hilarity of their lessons.
- ❖ I enjoy and appreciate the mundane and routine. I savor the serenity of nothing unusual.
- ❖ I let my hair down and have fun without the crutch of extra food.
- ❖ I celebrate my talents and hard work and graciously accept compliments and affirmations.
- ❖ I appreciate the opportunity for relaxation and revel in it, as it is a gift, as it is activity and energy.
- ❖ I love and am of service in spite of fears.
- ❖ I am blessed. The more I remember that the more I can be of service to others.
- ❖ I celebrate hope, transitions, and the possibilities that life affords.
- ❖ I relax and enjoy great and good things even when I have unresolved issues over which I am not serene.
- ❖ I persevere, even when I feel resistance, and enjoy the process and the surprises and delights of finished work when it comes.
- ❖ I get through rough days abstinely with the help of the OA program.
- ❖ I stand up for what is right, even if I am the only one and it scares the **** out of me.
- ❖ I ask my HP for help and guidance regarding taking on too much, as I tend to do that.
- ❖ I stop when I need to stop, go when I need to go, and ask my HP for perpetual time management help.
- ❖ I recognize my limitations and adjust my activities to compensate for them.
- ❖ I can do a lot, but I say NO when I need to.

Anonymous

By the grace of my Higher Power and the help of all of you in this wonderful program, I will be celebrating 26 years of continuous abstinence on January 17. On January 16, 1980 I had been in OA for almost 3 years. I had gone through 7 sponsors. I could barely accumulate more than 3 days of abstinence. Since coming into program in 1977 I had gained weight and my life was becoming more unmanageable. I watched many friends in program get abstinent and lose weight and I was jealous and miserable. I was convinced that my Higher Power was going to let me die of compulsive overeating to make an example to everyone else of what happens when you don't do it "right."

Fortunately, my Higher Power is far more loving than that. During those very painful 3 years, I developed a food plan that I felt I could live with if I had to follow it the rest of my life. I had begun to work the steps. I had started to look for all the things that triggered a binge; most of which were emotional upsets. I called a sponsor and other people on a daily basis. Right before my last binge I went on a weekend OA retreat.

Nothing magical happened on January 17, 1980. I made a decision not to pick up the food that day, and (miraculously) was given the strength not to. I added another day to that and one more to that. I wasn't thinking in terms of years or even days, just one more minute of not picking up the food. I am going to make that decision today and do the foot work (sponsorship, food plan, steps, literature, meetings) to insure that I get that miracle today. The great news is that I'm not special and that same miracle is available to you. Today. Right now. It works! JS

It's a new year, a time for beginnings and yet a time of continuity for those of us in OA. We in OA know that our program of recovery is an ongoing process. There are ways I have of achieving and maintaining my recovery over time. There is no end to this program, only an ongoing journey of discovery with my friends and my Higher Power.

I remember before coming into OA, I thought, "if only I lost "x" number of pounds, I'll be happy. I will have arrived and achieved something." Yes, I may have achieved that weight loss goal, but it was always temporary. In OA, I have achieved some physical recovery by the grace of God and with the help of others in program, yes. But more than that, I understand now that I have a disease that is physical, emotional, and spiritual. My recovery is dependent on my understanding that I need to use the tools of the program—every day, one day at a time. That is the only way I will achieve freedom from the food obsession and compulsive overeating.

Yes, there is definitely a beginning to our recovery from compulsive overeating addiction, but there is no end—rather, it is an ongoing process of exploration and discovery. This gives me comfort and hope. Thank you God and thank you OA!
Jill, Laurel, MD

The Twelve Steps A Wonderful Way of Life for All

Over the last year or two I have been reading the Big Book. I wish I had started reading it in 1992 when I came into program. It showed me that the Twelve Steps are a way of life for all, even for those without addictions. I first thought the Steps were like a Religion, but today I see the Steps as a means to be better at our own Religions and getting closer to our own Higher Powers.

The first three Steps help us to recognize that we are all powerless over something or things, even for those with no addictions. We see that we can't manage every part of our lives as we wish, that all will not go as we want - that maybe we could use some help. Some have a hard time believing that there is a Higher Power and I don't know what to say to help - just that when I realized that something bad was happening or going to happen, I involuntarily asked G-d to help me and somehow whatever was going to happen was not bad enough for me not to find a way to deal with it. I often experience or see that "What Goes Around Comes Around". How does that happen? I think that when it works there must be some intervention from Higher Power. Made a decision to turn over our will to G-d. I think that when we begin to believe in Higher Power and are able to sincerely recognize that we are powerless, we have indeed turned our lives over to the care of G-d.

The next seven Steps tell us how to figure out what character defects we have and what behaviors of ours in the present and/or past have hurt others. These steps help us to sincerely admit our weaknesses and our poor behaviors. It is only with sincerity that the middle seven Steps can work. Once we cleanse ourselves from the guilt of our past that we can take a regular personal inventory and promptly fix our wrongs and misdeeds. Working at it will make us better people and give us a special closeness to our Higher Powers. If we adapt "Treat other people the way you want to be treated" to say "Treat other people better than you want to be treated," we will feel much better about ourselves.

Step Eleven reminds us how to improve our conscious contact with G-d and helps us so that we might pray as we believe our Higher Power would like us to pray. A Minister told me in 1996 that I might try adding to my prayers "to will myself the will to _____". In the same year a Rabbi suggested to me that when praying outside of a house of worship to pray in our own words and inside a house of worship say the prays from the prayer books. I don't believe that we should follow the Rabbi's suggestion exactly, for we all have prayers such as the Serenity Prayer that we will want to say anywhere we are and any time we want. In 1996 I also met a man of a different religion from mine who was sitting over the Scripture of his faith and was crying. I asked him why he was crying and he said he lost the G-d of his belief. I asked him how he knew and he said he couldn't understand the Scriptures, so he can't have a relationship G-d. I had just finished a reading in my prayer book that said "*Make every effort to pray from the heart. Even if you do not succeed, in the eyes of G-d, the effort will be precious*". All we have to do is just try. I believe that the closer our relationship with our Higher Power the more that we will enjoy "The Promises" of our program coming true.

Step Twelve asks that we, by practicing the first eleven Steps, carry the message of the first eleven Steps to all who need them. Helping others and doing volunteer service in our communities will give us a feeling of being part of our groups and communities.

A whole page of writing and all I am trying to say is that The Twelve Steps provides us a map of how to live our lives better than we do now. Thanks for reading, Peter, Columbia, MD

Region 7 Assemblies are held twice a year in Rehoboth Beach in April and October. The commitment does require a weekend stay. BAIG covers the hotel cost with limitations. There are several committees to choose from and participate in over the weekend. Your voice and participation count! We currently have 2 region reps and are actively seeking the third. The weekend is filled but there is time for socializing, there are several meetings that take place and DON'T forget the beach!

Note from Wajeeha: This assembly takes the big "I"s and the little "U"s out of OA. Our voices do count! I have met members and stay in contact with some from the other states in our region. The recovery, struggles, fellowship and love is the same. These are two of the most recovery-filled weekends you will ever experience. My 1st year, I was "green" too so don't let fear keep you away! 3 year commitment, 2 weekends a year...not bad for recovery! My service keeps me active in OA, my recovery and maintaining abstinence.

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE REGION 7 CONVENTION, IN 10 BULLET POINTS

- The ride to Ocean City and back with my OA buddy was a sheer pleasure, a great time to get to know a good friend in recovery.
- Reading Lifeline on the balcony of our hotel room was glorious with the ocean surf and sun surrounding me.
- I met some wonderful recovering people from all over the country and we all got to make these really fun nametags.
- I was blessed with the opportunity to help a struggling member from another area and encouraged him to start a meeting in his town where there are very few. He did!
- OA takes years off our figures! I spent time with a delightful 73-year-old long-time recovering woman who looked at least 15 years younger.
- The meals were scrumptious AND abstinent!
- The evening Talent Show was a blast; the Mad Lib went over famously.
- The Sunday morning beach meeting with the rising sun was fantastic.
- Inspiring speakers boosted my recovery and reminded me how good I have it in life.
- That I get to come back to tell you about the convention with the hope that you will join me at the Region 7 Convention in Ocean City, Maryland next November for this amazing recovery experience. *Mike B., Baltimore*

JOURNAL OF AN INSIDIOUS AND CREATIVE DISEASE

I was taking a walk this morning to boost my metabolism and to get me out into the fresh air when I spotted lots of pine cones, fallen from trees, lying innocently on the ground. My first thought was "should I gather some to use for an arts and crafts project when my grands are here next week? Suddenly a flash from my disease: "and get a jar of peanut butter to fill the pinecones, and leave them on your terrace to attract birds." Innocent enough for some -- but for me, a compulsive overeater who lists pbutter as one of many "crave" foods, it's an invitation to binge. Got to store and back safely, purchased only legal foods, and enjoyed my lunch, as well as my walk. (Once you recognize the intruder, *send it away!*)

2/9/06 Slept late today. Had breakfast at 11-11:30 am. Enjoyed it, and then my disease, Ms.Monster said, "why not just double it and have your lunch right now? Why not?" (I can screw up my day by being hungry by evening and perhaps having a fourth meal.) Instead, got up from table and onto computer. Will now do dishes, call OA friend, go for a walk, and perhaps take a neighbor to do her shopping. Or library. Attend meeting tonite. Even a game of solitaire, anything but food: **don't feed the monster!** Lunch will be at around 3pm, and dinner not before 7 or 8 by grace of this program and HP.

2/13/06 Enjoyed dinner, wanted to double it; didn't, came to my senses, am thinking program/consequences. Hardly recognize this new me.

2/14/06 To love and be loved, and to be abstinent and content: what more could anyone want this Valentines Day!!!

2/14/06 Who am I? Don't even recognize this person who was out of house from 10:30 am - 4pm and, despite many "suggestions" from my disease, did not eat/cheat, very happily making my abstinence lunch rite now; hungry but happy. Just for today I am living this program and have made abstinence the most important thing in my life.

2/15/06 "It's" up bright and early, has seen that I awoke with a headache as well as dread of tasks scheduled for today, and has suggested procrastinating over a favorite, illegal, breakfast out. However, after a glass of water, and a prayer, my headache has gone and I am in a great mood: noting that waistband of my slacks has become loose, I examined at my tush in mirror, and acknowledged that the program food plan is the way to go, just for today.

2/17/06 It sure does help to have sponsee (in addition to a sponsor). From sponsees I get memories of myself, fighting the food plan, explaining how they are different, and other things I did, to no avail when I came into the rooms. Fear of surrendering "my" food, fear of giving up my "independence" a strong desire to keep things as they were/familiar, even tho "familiar" ways had led me to a slavish, robot-like way of living, in which I responded to the nearness of food, instead of to people places events-real life. Because I have had, and often am on the brink of having, these experiences I am able to assure the sponsee that "half measures avail us nothing." and that turning my life and especially my addictions over to hp can free me, rather than imprison me.

2/24/06 Broke my abstinence last week: am now on day 4 of new abstinence. Feeling ill, have a cold, sore throat and am nauseous from postnasal drip. Nevertheless, my disease assures me that I would enjoy a cake (the whole thing, of course, and that it would be a great idea to bake one right now. (For some reason I have 2 cake mixes in my pantry) luckily I can still recall how ill I felt from sugar and from overeating, and today continue to soothe sore throat with tea, chicken broth, sug-free jello. Do not want to spread out, do want better health and appearance!!!

3/10/06 Suddenly have realized that instead of adjusting my goals and behavior to fit my addictions, I am instead responding to an inner voice, reminding me of my goals, and the need to adjust my behavior to meet them: this inner voice is my higher power.

3/13/06 After picking up some greeting cards, aspirin, and sugar-free jello, at rite aid I was on a slow-moving line awaiting my turn to pay, when I noticed a sale price on addictive items: formerly 79cents to a dollar apiece they could now be had 4 for \$1.00...wow! Said my disease, you can spend only \$2.00 and have a binge on 8 of these substances...I silently repeated the serenity prayer, over and over again, until a sane voice chimed in reminding me of how ill I can feel, how high and then depressed, and physically ill; how my waistline would expand as my addiction took over, and I got out of this danger spot as fast as I could.

3/13/06 Why is it so hard for me to realize that I cannot do it alone, even after years and years of proof? The disease persuades me that I "should" be able to, "just try it for a week, no one has to know." As an isolator I am most anxious to believe that message: all it takes is a few weeks of "success" in program to make me forget all previous lapses, and the weight gain and pain gain they brought. I hope that my program skills build up as much muscle as the disease has. In order for it to do so I must exercise them faithfully, one day at a time. I have called food in to my sponsor and am on my way to grocery to purchase abstinent foods. Will make 3 calls today, in addition to the one to sponsor, and do someone a good turn without being found out. Will attend a meeting and share. Your sister- in- abstinence, Anonymous

**QUESTION SENT FROM MEMBER TO WORLD SERVICE OFFICE AND ANSWER FROM REGION 7 TRUSTEE!!!
(Region trustees are in charge of answering inquiries regarding the OA program and Traditions)**

For the past several months I have been doing some thinking and trying to find something to read about what it means to "work the steps." When I first came in the program about 16 years ago I worked the steps with my sponsor. I went through each of the steps then and have done it several times since then. But the thought keeps coming up, and every once in a while I read something about "working the steps" *in our every day life*, and I keep trying to understand exactly what it means *to work the steps in every day living*.

I know that making amends whenever something occurs that I have been impatient, etc. with someone, is "working the steps", and turning things over - doing a 3rd step - with some decision that needs to be made is "working the steps." But I know that there must be much more than this that is involved with "working the steps" *in every day living*.

I would be very grateful if you could give me your thoughts on this topic. I keep searching but don't find any satisfactory answer.

Thank you very much! (I also wish/hope that some day you have an issue of Lifeline dedicated to this topic, getting ideas from a wide variety of people. Thanks again) Mary

Dear Mary:

My name is Donna and I am a compulsive overeater. I am also your Region Seven Trustee. I have by the grace of my higher power been in recovery one day at a time for just under thirteen years now and have found that without working the Twelve Steps and Traditions in my life through my higher power to the best of my ability one day at a time that I am just on another diet! Applying the Twelve Steps and Traditions to my life allows me to have a daily reprieve from eating compulsively while experiencing life on life's terms!

I would like to refer you to pages 146 - 147 of the Twelve Steps and Traditions which tells us that Tradition Five reminds us that our recovery does not come from simply talking about our problems with each other, but that it is in the OA message, in our Steps and Traditions that we find solutions to our problems. Living by the Step and Tradition Principles of honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, self - discipline, love, perseverance, spiritual awareness, service, unity, trust, open - mindedness, responsibility, acceptance, equality, and fellowship as I face life one day at a time has not just saved my life, but instead it has given me life! To live well is to be well!

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND OA?

JOIN THE RETREAT COMMITTEE!

The Retreat Committee of the Baltimore Area Intergroup invites you to join! This year's retreat, called "Willingness and Action" will take place August 18-20, 2006 at the Wellspring Retreat Center in Germantown, Montgomery County, Maryland.

There are literally dozens of service opportunities large and small that individuals or whole meetings can take on as we prepare for this premiere event! Like last year, we expect to sell out of available spaces quickly. Join in the fun of planning and putting on this incredible weekend of recovery. Remember that service is slimming and our recovery can only get better!

The committee has begun the planning and will continue to meet every three to four weeks. Please contact committee chair Mike B. at [Please see paper copies of the SteppingStone in meetings for this contact information.]

Sheppard Pratt Sunday 5:15pm meeting Changes!

The meeting room location has changed. We are still in the Conference Center however we now had a larger room. We realize the accommodations have been strained at best. Many weeks we have to move chairs and tables to name a few. Often the door is blocked as well and safety is always an issue. The center has agreed to allow us to move across the hall! The room is where we recently held that awesome Body Image workshop! It is set-up classroom style and they just ask as before that we leave the room exactly as we find it. The room has huge windows, allowing the sunlight to enter!! We may have to change the room a few times a year for business reasons with the hospital but we will be given adequate notice and directions will be posted. – Wajeeha

LATE BREAKING NEWS! WATCH FOR FLYERS FOR THE NVOA 12TH STEP WITHIN MARATHON ON SATURDAY, APRIL 22!!!

OA Double Puzzle

Unscramble each word. Then use the marked letters to solve the second puzzle. Answers will appear in the next issue!!

Thanks to Mary who created this great puzzle!

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	
<i>Please see paper copies of the SteppingStone in meetings for this contact information.</i>					
Email Outreach					
<i>Please see paper copies of the SteppingStone in meetings for this contact information.</i>					
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?
<i>Please see paper copies of the SteppingStone in meetings for this contact information.</i>					

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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.

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