



DESERT RECOVERY

May / June
~~March April~~ 2014

SOUTHERN ARIZONA INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

How can I live in Abstinence?

The story “AA TAUGHT HIM TO HANDLE SOBRIETY” starts out with a quote: “God, willing, we...may never again have to deal with drinking, but we have to deal with sobriety every day.” (AA 4th edition, p. 553) this rings so true in my heart and mind. Later, on that same page, he describes how he could stop drinking at any time, but the issue was STAYING stopped. Immediately, I am flooded with the ways I stopped, (for a day, hour, week) my insane vomiting, running to the grocery store for another dozen of my go to ‘goods,’ or anxiously awaiting the newest weekly add to go and get my cold, sweet and creamy 99 cents comfort. But time and time again life would happen. I would get angry at my life and my actions. I would not express my emotions and hurts and struggles with loved ones. I would get envious of what others had and what I did not have. My boss would give attention to someone else and I immediately thought no one would see me. I would tell myself that no one else understands or cares. Then I would eat and binge and purge and eat again; there was always something to 'act out' over. I would start another new diet and food plan and fantasize how when I am a size 8 I will be happy. Everyone else around me is happy and they are about a size 8. Oh how the size 8 came and that did not solve anything; in fact it fueled the control and weight loss even more!

The basic fact is that I can't live life on life terms without the grace of God, a relationship with my God, the steps of this program, the support of others and *enough willingness to try something new*. It involves choosing honesty, hope, humility, surrender, integrity and service. It involves a desire to not play around with selfishness, self-pity, victimization, resentment and fear, but to put them to death (or they will kill me first). I can choose to acknowledge and confess my emotion, ask for its removal, make amends if necessary and turn toward loving others. This is not my default yet; I tend to still stew in those emotions at times, BUT one day at a time and one situation at a time, it becomes more and more a habit and blossoms into a new way of life.

~Allison M.

SAVE THE DATES



upcoming event in the works

Sponsorship Workshop

For sponsors and sponsees!

July 12, 2014 at St. James UMC

Fall 2014 Region III

Assembly and Convention

Phoenix AZ - August 8-10

“SUPERSIZE YOUR RECOVERY”

Fall Retreat Oct. 10-12, 2014

In St. David, Arizona

Next Planning meeting June 21

at St. James UMC at 1pm

Questions? Mike A. 520-445-6630

Email: Spunkyoldfart@Yahoo.Com

MORE SHARING FROM UNITY DAY...

Unity Day 2014 (Feb. 22nd) we were asked to do a journaling exercise from the A Commitment to Abstinence pamphlet by answering the question “How do we help ourselves keep this commitment”? We were asked to choose and write on one of the eight possible answers. I chose “**We strive to entrust ourselves and our abstinence to a power greater than ourselves every day. All we need to do is make the commitment**” and here is what I wrote:

How ironic that the one thing that I changed 3 weeks ago is at the top of this list of choices. I had thought and thought about what I could do to keep abstinence and my HP in my mind all day long every day. I knew if I had my HP closer, my focus on recovery would also be closer and clearer. I had heard so many people talk about having their HP/God close at hand during the day, so maybe I could do that, but how could I get that going? A list of actions on my to-do list wouldn't do it. Just wishing it to be wouldn't do it. Then I realized that maybe I needed to invite my HP in for the day each day. I remembered in movies that vampires can't cross the home's threshold unless invited. Perhaps my HP needed and wanted an invitation also. That invitation was the clue that said I no longer was defying HP but relying on HP. So the next morning I started inviting my HP in for the day to guide me with my abstinence and to help me be healthier, wealthier, and wise. Hey, might as well go for the gold! Each morning before getting up, I visualize a small door in my mind and verbally issue an invitation for HP to come in; I wait for the crossover and then close the door. Amazingly enough, I think of my HP often during the day and HP does give me guidance and I listen. Over the last 12 years I expected HP to be there with me because that's what program said needed to happen, yet I never realized that an invitation was my way of showing my willingness to give up control and let HP take over.

~Janis R.

Abstinence- the 24 hour plan



When I think of abstinence, I think of my first meeting in OA (this last time). At the time, I had little-to-no-idea what abstinence meant, but I knew that OA was the only solution left for me. And I had faith that it worked. The other thing I think about when I hear the word abstinence is a phrase used recently where the speaker referred to herself as 'stark-raving abstinent'. There can be no contented abstinence for me without taking the steps and continuing to [try to] enlarge my spiritual life. I cannot sustain stark-raving without the accompanying disease of compulsive eating.

Somehow, I have been blessed in my OA journey to know that whatever the solution or direction required of me, that it will not be a one-off. In other words it will not have a distinguishable end. It will be a 24-hour journey, one day at a time and there will be no finish line as I've come to know them in diets and 10-week get-well-quick programs. What I have is a disease of the mind that must be treated with a spiritual remedy, always the treatment is in the current 24 hours.

I want to thank Rosanne S. our founder who died recently for starting the OA program. Because of her efforts, others before me have proven long-term recovery from compulsive eating; giving me the hope I needed to make a start. From that kernel of faith, I moved forward into my first abstinence of just not binging and throwing up no matter what. I also want to thank OA and the membership as well as my sponsor for allowing me the dignity of choice to choose my own path when it comes to a food plan and a personal definition of abstinence. Today, almost 14 years later, I choose to refrain from eating or drinking caloric beverages in between my 3 daily meals, and I do not eat sugar in its recreational forms of cake, candy, cookies, soda, etc. This is an undreamed of outcome that you can bet I would NEVER have asked for, but have received through the grace of my higher power, a sponsor and the 12 steps of OA. Thanks Roseanne and thank you OA!!

~Anonymous

SEEKING ABSTINENCE

As an OA member in quest of abstinence, it is helpful to know the invitation to "Abide with Me" is ongoing. HP knocks ever so gently on the door of our desire for wellness. The promises outlined in the 12 steps assures us that God loves us and is willing to guide us. There is no need for anxiety if we have yet to become abstinent. Cast all your cares on HP. In so doing, we are promised recovery.

I'm attending Overeaters Anonymous meetings. I'm calling other members, writing the steps and praying, I believe I too can "join the ranks of those who recover". OA encourages us to "keep coming back." This invites us to latch on to the hope the 12 steps provide.

HP offers unconditional love -- isn't that the same atmosphere we enjoy at meetings? Of course it is! We share a common goal, a desired outcome and freedom from food obsession.

Those who endure shall prevail. God has opened a window and continues to do so even when we have shut the door. Just knowing how precious each of us in His sight is cause for celebration.

Cultivating a relationship with our HP resembles the friendships we make at meetings. Acceptance enables us to make mistakes, learn from them and return to start fresh. We abide with our HP and await the miracles he has in store for us.

~Rebecca



**FACES (*Fully Accept
Complete Entire Surrender*)**

Face your FEAR
(Face Everything And Recover!)

Befriend your FAT
(Food As Terrorist)

Let go of ANGER
(As New Gifts Emerge in Recovery)

Get a Higher POWER
*(Problems Overcome While Exercising
Reliance)*

“You are not ALONE anymore.”
(Always Left Out – Needing Everything!)

“You are one of us...”
“Welcome HOME.”
*(Hugs, Open arms, Merrymaking, and
Enjoyment of life here.)*

We hope our recovery shows on our
FACES.
(Just keep coming back – you’ll get it.)

~Neva

There once was a Girl Named ???
Who kept re-defining the term Extra Large
So she cried and she swore
and talked about weight until labeled a bore
She prayed and implored, but
Until OA and Surrender,
Couldn’t find a second of peace or even any relief.

Now I’m happy to say
She starts off her day,
With a prayers of surrender and
Thus her life is more tender
She is more serene and we’ve happily seen
That letting it go and turning it over
Has created a life of true freedom, with
Serenity, Acceptance, Courage & Wisdom
With Promises fulfilled in ways never dreamed.
If you haven’t yet tried it, you might find you like it
Just give it a chance, it’s like learning
The steps of an awesome new dance
Life gets better each day, and I can happily say
That the Abstinence Path, if given a chance, leads in
Undreamed of directions even when
Life is less than Perfection

~ Marj



Seventh Tradition of OA

Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. To be self-supporting means OA stays as pure as it can be. Outside issues stay out, and recovery issues stay in. I know I would spend money in a heartbeat to buy food I didn't need before abstinence and recovery. So, I can certainly put into the basket the money I would have blown at a drive-thru or convenience store before recovery. OA has given me a life. **Giving as if my life depends on it** is the least I can do.

~Angela



\$\$\$\$\$MENU\$\$\$\$\$

Specialty Coffee Drink	\$4.49
Sugar-laden dessert	\$3.99
Cost of heart attack	\$38,000.00
Annual cost of diabetes	\$7900.00
Abstinence, Recovery, Life	??

Medical totals from www.diabetes.org
and cbsnews.com

LIVING IN ABSTINENCE

In the story "AA Taught Him to Handle Sobriety" in the book Alcoholics Anonymous, a recovering alcoholic discusses the life he had to learn to deal with when he became sober. I know this has been one of the biggest challenges of my recovery. Doing all the growing up that I avoided by compulsively eating. Learning to have friendships, learning to have acquaintances, and learning to be myself fully are some of the lessons I've been learning in Overeaters Anonymous.

On page 556, the author writes "I didn't enjoy life without drinking [compulsively eating]. I had to cope with the demands of everyday living without my comforter....And I didn't like it." When I first became abstinent, I was overwhelmed with wave after wave of emotions. Although today the emotions aren't as overwhelming, I am still uncomfortable with them. Over the last couple of weeks, in my "new" abstinence, I have become a grandmother and been hired for a full-time job in my field of study. These are good things, but to feel excitement and joy and some anxiety over them is not easy. But I am doing it today, while living in abstinence.

~Angela

Integrity in Recovery

I was thinking of the hope and pride I have in my beautiful OA 12-step program and how inconsolable I would be if anything threatens its integrity. Broken dreams and disappointments, although painful, did not decrease my pilgrimage search for the ideal world I was sure God had created. Like Diogenes of Sinope, who became famous for carrying a lamp in the daytime, claiming to be looking for an honest man, I have spent most of my life chasing this dream.

I felt I was home about 20 years ago when I found hope in my first 12 step program. When I later discovered OA, I also found all the honesty, love, humility, and generosity promised to me. I am finally able to be proud of, to be part of, hang my heart in, and place all my dreams on the integrity of my OA program. I know I am home.

When first in OA I remarked on OA's excellence in organization and respect between members. I was told we are enjoying this fruit of labor of others who came before us. They wanted a good program, were willing to work hard, learn the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, and give service. Most important they were ready to learn, understand and follow our HP's Spiritual meaning behind it all. Even when it was lonely and painful, they found the courage of conviction required to make necessary changes. With love for OA, through Higher Power, and Group Conscience, decisions resulted in what is best of OA as a whole. So today we have a program that brings us joy, takes us out of our disease, our loneliness, and day by day literally saves our lives.

How grateful am I for this past service? Grateful enough to know it's not going to stay a great program by itself. Like all living breathing things we love, we need to nurture OA, where self-esteem and self-respect and healing can be an everyday miracle. Members need to humbly guard its integrity, keep it healthy and share it with others. The key words are acceptance, courage, wisdom, love, and integrity One Day at a Time. If anything were to diminish OA's current Integrity it would really break my heart.

~ Susan C.

A thought left over from March Madness:

My disease is like a full-court-press in basketball. It never lets up. I can't be lackadaisical. I don't get to "dribble up the court" of life, without compulsion trying to attack me.

Recovery is the ball. If I try to dribble it up the court through the full-court-press alone, I will probably lose the ball. I need help. "To keep it, I have to give it away" to someone on my team. I have to "pass it on".

With my teammates [others in recovery], practice [meetings], my Coach [HP] and the play book [The Twelve

This is how I Live in Abstinence. [Thanks to another OA member for the analogy.]

~Sara J.

