

Central Mass IG Newsletter

Overeaters Anonymous

January - March 2014

HONESTY

Only God can fully know what absolute honesty is. Therefore each of us has to conceive what this great ideal may be – to the best of our ability. -- Bill W.

Truth is always the same; honesty changes with my awareness. Honesty has many facets. There is cash-register honesty, usually accompanied by making sure other people know about it. There is let-me-tell-you-for-your-own-good honesty, which is hurtful, perhaps dominating. There is one-sided honesty, which is a recitation of my spouse's or lover's or friend's wrongdoings, sometimes dumped on a hapless OA meeting. And there is self-honesty, which serves the purpose of keeping my life in order, and personal honesty, which is a sharing of feelings, experiences and strengths without egotism, self-pity or exaggeration.

For today: A fundamental principal of this program is to be as honest as possible with myself and everyone my life touches.

Pg 46, **For Today**

This newsletter offered by the Central Massachusetts Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. Submissions are welcomed. Original writings, or firsthand reports from retreats/ marathons/conventions are all appropriate for sharing. Opinions expressed are those of the writer or editor and not those of the Central Mass Intergroup or OA as a whole. Address all newsletter correspondence to Heidi K by email to heidicoe@gmail.com or by mail to Central Mass Intergroup Newsletter, PO. Box 20539, Worcester, MA 01602.

Rozanne's Prayer

(also known as The OA Promise or the Unity Prayer)

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.

--- Reprinted in memory of Rozanne S., founder of OA, who died peacefully in January of this year at the age of 84. Rozanne began Overeaters Anonymous in California on January 19, 1960, and fulfilled her dream that it become an international organization. We are forever grateful to her for her vision, perseverance, and love, through which so many have found recovery from compulsive eating.

For more of Rozanne's personal story of recovery, see "Keep Coming Back: Rozanne's Story," Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition, p. 7.

*Welcome to the new format of the
newsletter for the Central Massachusetts
Intergroup*

of Region 6, Overeaters Anonymous.

*We appreciate hearing your
suggestions and comments*

concerning our new format and content.

Please forward them to heidicoe@gmail.com

OA in the Public Eye

The following Dear Abby letter and response appeared in newspapers all over the world on Feb 24, 2014.

DEAR ABBY: I'd like to tell your readers about a wonderful program I discovered about a year ago. It's called Overeaters Anonymous (OA). The program is similar to AA, but it's for people with an eating problem.

For years, I struggled to lose weight. I tried dozens of diets, pills and saw several doctors. I would lose some weight, but I could never stick with a program, so I gained back more than I lost. I felt like a loser.

I was a food junkie. I ate when I was happy, sad, depressed, bored or lonely. I would buy candy at the checkout counter at the market and eat it on the way home. Then I'd hide the wrapper in the garage so my family wouldn't know I ate it.

I hid candy in the kitchen cabinets so no one would find it, then I'd sneak in and eat it later. I could never have only one serving size of chips or cookies. I would consume half a bag before I stopped.

Since joining OA, I have lost more than 50 pounds and feel like a new person. I have a new outlook on life and no longer have to rely on food. It's good to be able to talk with people who have the same problems I do. It's a daily struggle, but I have a sponsor and others to talk to when I'm tempted to return to my old life.

Compulsive eating is a disease, Abby. And unless people have it, they don't understand. I hope this letter will help someone who is also struggling. --
GRATEFUL O.A. MEMBER IN ILLINOIS

DEAR GRATEFUL: I'm glad you found OA. It's a wonderful organization that has been around for many years. About 20 years ago, I was fortunate to meet the woman who founded it -- and she was a doll -- and I know the program has helped many thousands of people. Often when a person has weight issues, it is less about what he or she is eating than it is what is eating the *person*.

Readers, OA has about 6,500 groups in more than 75 countries. There are no requirements for membership except a sincere desire to stop eating compulsively. Everyone is there to offer mutual support. I have attended some of the meetings, and there is no weighing and no embarrassment. There is only a fellowship of compassionate people who share a common problem.

There are OA chapters everywhere, but if you have trouble locating one, go to www.oa.org, or send a long, self-addressed stamped envelope to Overeaters Anonymous World Service, P.O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020. The email address is [info\(at\)oa.org](mailto:info@oa.org).

PI/PO stands for Public Information and Professional Outreach. OA is a program of attraction not promotion. However, if someone doesn't know OA exists, it is difficult to be attracted to it. So Public Information walks the fine line between selling OA and making sure people know about OA.

Professional Outreach is the part of spreading the word on OA that is directed to health professionals. These can include doctors, nurses, nutritionists, physical therapists, psychologists, eating disorder counselors, inpatient treatment centers and Bariatric Surgery Centers. We try to enlist their support to refer patients to OA who may be compulsive eaters.

If you have ideas and/or energy to spare to extend the hand of OA, please join the PI/PO committee. Email our new PI/PO committee chair, Randy D, at r.dupell@yahoo.com. Even if you cannot join the committee, please send Randy your ideas for spreading the word.

Fed from Within

Reprinted from OA Literature "Seeking the Spiritual Path", pg 100-101

When I first came to OA, my program was a food plan and meetings. I also exercised. These were enough to take off the pounds, but not to keep them off.

For the next decade, I went deeper, learning to recognize feelings and how to cope with them. When I was angry, I saw that I "ate at" people instead of confronting them. When I was fearful, I ran away into food. No matter what the feeling – lonely, depressed, hurt, self-hating, guilty, deprived, worried – I used food to bury it. Since I was "abstinent" and didn't overeat, I maintained my weight loss.

Gradually, I learned healthy alternatives. When I was envious, I realized that the person I envied was someone to learn from. Loneliness didn't mean I needed other people; it was a sign that I was alienated from myself.

Boredom signaled that I was understimulated. When I found a challenging book, I felt mentally fed and my hunger vanished. Slowly, I substituted emotional and mental sustenance for food.

In this decade, my food is spiritual. Because I've surrendered my will, because my heart has been opened by twenty-six years of sharing with thousands of OA members, I am now fed by:

- ❖ Gratitude: I am grateful for simple things, for being grateful, for being alive, for being me. I don't need success to feel grateful.
- ❖ Coincidence: Constant serendipity reinforces the feeling that I am moving in the right direction.
- ❖ Connection: I sense a close bond among the different aspects of myself and between my Higher Power and me.

- ❖ Meaning: The world is no longer a jumble. I find pattern and divine order in everything,
- ❖ Trust: I know that despite the dangers around me, I am protected by being connected.
- ❖ Faith: I feel that God has ordained me to do the work I do and that my Higher Power is helping me attain my life's purpose.
- ❖ Guidance: At the right time, God is leading me to the people, places and things I need or is attracting me to the people, places and things I need or is attracting them to me. This has happened so many times now I cannot deny it.
- ❖ Serenity: I have serenity attacks often. I feel calm and assured for no apparent reason.
- ❖ Peace of mind: The internalized self-hate is gone. I am my own best friend. I encourage myself.
- ❖ Contentment: Although the world seems to be getting more brutal and mechanical, I am convinced that God is still in charge. I do what I can to brighten my corner, but I no longer feel hungry because everything appears to be going downhill.
- ❖ Love: I am God's child, and I am loved and cared for daily. God knows what I need better than I do, and he wants me to have it even more than I do.
- ❖ Inspiration: I am given what I need when I need it. I am in the flow of divine ideas. Because I have emptied myself of self, I can be receptive to spiritual food. I am now a vessel; I am fed from within.

Meet the Intergroup Members

Each issue of the newsletter, an Intergroup Officer or Service Position Holder will be profiled. For this issue the Intergroup Chair, Nancy H, was interviewed:

Tell us your OA story. How long in OA? Abstinence? Home meeting?

Nancy H: I have been in OA for 38 years and count my current abstinence from February 16 2001. Gardner, Tuesday at 6:30, is my home meeting. I go to 3 meetings a week because that keeps me on an even keel. My first OA meeting was on January 16, 1976. At that meeting I heard someone say, "We aren't bad people trying to be good, we are sick people trying to get well." and that really stuck with me.

Describe your life before and after recovery?

Nancy H: Before, I weighed 236 pounds and ate every moment I could. My spirit was dead. My marriage was the pits. My first year in OA I cried the whole year. The second year I was angry the whole year. By the third year I had learned to deal with life on life's terms and relied on an HP to do so.

What do you do regularly to keep yourself in touch with program?

Nancy H: I pray and meditate every morning. I have a quiet corner at home where I sit and light a candle. I offer my day to God and repeat a mantra "God is love. God loves me. Love everyone. Judge no one." I read and write every day and sponsor. I am sponsoring 5 people at present. Currently some of my reading and writing center around the new "For Today" workbook. And I do a 10th step every day and review every night.

What are your recommendations for newcomers?

Nancy H: Get a sponsor and start working the steps immediately.

Tell us about your Intergroup service?

Nancy H: I've been Chair for over a year now. Before that I also have served as Region 6 delegate, WSBC delegate, and newsletter editor.

Why get involved in Intergroup?

Nancy H: Intergroup's main purpose is to help the individual groups and to spread the word about OA. We are giving back.

Any final thoughts you'd like to share?

Nancy H: I'm glad I joined OA when I did. I now have a design for living that will last me one day at a time forever.

For this newsletter I would like to share a favorite selection from OA literature --"Seeking the Spiritual Path", pg 100. I am fed now by all the same things as in the story. My food is spiritual now.



Central Mass Intergroup of OA – Officers and Service Positions

Chairperson: Nancy H
Vice Chairperson: Pamela A
Recording Secretary: **Emily R(new)**
Correspondence Secretary: Anita
Treasurer: Tom D
Web Mistress: Julie O
PO/PI Committee Chair: **Randy D(new)**
Newsletter Editor: Heidi K
Events Committee Chair: Jacki G
Region 6 Reps: Rick B and Austine R
WSBC Delegate: Austine R

How to contact CMI:
P.O. Box Box 20539,
Worcester, MA 01602.

OUR MEMBER GROUPS (MEETINGS)

The meetings above are associated with our Central Mass Intergroup. If anything about your meeting is not correct, please contact the newsletter editor heidicoe@gmail.org AND also update the information on the OA.org website.

Town	Day	Time	Location Name	Special Topic/ Focus
Auburn	Monday	7:00 PM	Bethel Lutheran Church	Speaker/Topic
Millbury	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Millbury Federated Church	Big Book
Gardner	Tuesday	6:30 PM	Legend Rehab & Nursing Ctr	Varies
Worcester	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Adcare Hospital	For Today
Westboro	Tuesday	7:30 PM	St. Luke Catholic Church	OA Steps and Traditions
Fitchburg	Wednesday	11:00 AM	Madonna Holy Rosary Church	Big Book
Milford	Wednesday	6:00 PM	Library	Literature Study
Shrewsbury	Thursday	7:00 PM	Veteran's Inc.	OA Steps and Traditions
Leominster	Thursday	7:00 PM	Our Lady of the Lake Church	Varies
Southborough	Friday	10:15 AM	Southboro Public Library	Big Book
Leominster	Saturday	8:30 AM	Leominster Hospital	None listed
Worcester	Saturday	7:30 AM	UU Church, Holden St	None listed
Charlton	Saturday	9:00 AM	Saint Joseph Church	OA Steps and Traditions
Leominster	Saturday	10:00 AM	Leominster Hospital	OA Steps and Traditions
Worcester	Sunday	7:00 PM	St. Michaels on the Heights	Speaker
Fitchburg	Sunday	7:00 PM	The Highlands	Literature Study

Meeting time and location for any OA meeting around the world can be found on the web at <http://www.oa.org/membersgroups/find-a-meeting/>

Calling All Meetings: Is Your Voice Being Heard?

Do you want to strengthen OA in your area and throughout Central Massachusetts? Make sure your voice is heard in full force by sending an Intergroup Rep to your monthly Intergroup meeting. Give your members an opportunity to serve and help all of us benefit from a strong and diverse OA organization.

CMI meets the first Saturday of each month from 8:45 AM to 9:45
at the Unitarian Universalist Church at 90 Holden St. in Worcester.

Announcements:

- Please note that April's Intergroup Meeting will be held April 12 in lieu of the first Saturday – April 5 – to allow our members to attend the Central Mass IG Sharathon.
- See our newly designed **website** at www.centmassint.org. Forward comments or suggestions to Julie at boscopippa@gmail.com.
- Use your computer skills to help others in OA and become a **Designated Downloader** (DD) and pass on information from the WSO and other OA websites for your local group, intergroup, region or service board.
- The Professional Community newsletter **Courier** is an annual newsletter providing OA information and news to the professional community. Find it at oa.org.
- Thank you to our member groups for your **donations**. As always we pass on 10% to Region 6 and 30% to World Service.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Into Serenity Sharathon

9:00 – 3:00 Saturday, April 5 2014

*Join us on a journey through meditation, speakers,
and spirituality that will spring you into serenity!*



Speakers

Group Sharing

Spiritual Stroll

Lifeline Swap

Bring your lunch; water and coffee provided.

**Fidelity Bank Community Room, Leominster
9 Leominster Connector (For GPS, please use 478
Mechanic St.) Leominster, MA 01453**

Western Mass Intergroup Retreat

June 6 – 8, 2014

A Guided Journey Through the 12 Steps of OA

Join us for a weekend of recovery through the 12 Steps guided by a retreat leader. Weekend includes workshops, meetings, fellowship, accommodations and five healthy meals in a beautiful setting.

Genesis Spiritual Life Center

53 Mill St

Westfield, MA 01085

For more information contact

Karen M, 413-783-4198