

Tidewater
Intergroup
Overeaters
Anonymous
Hotline

757.456.1530

The Guidepost

Volume 7, Issue 1

January 2012

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Tradition One, Editorial

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the principle of humility--that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are--"a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why A.A. Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?"

No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics Anonymous has no "musts." Few A.A. groups impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "Judge not," we observe most literally.

"But," some will argue, "if A.A. has no authority to govern its individual members or groups, how shall it ever be sure that the common welfare does come first? How is it possible to be governed without a government? If everyone can do as he pleases, how can you have aught but anarchy?" The answer seems to be that we A.A.s cannot really do as we please, though there is no constituted human authority to restrain us. Actually, our common welfare is protected by powerful safeguards. The moment any action seriously threatens the common welfare, group opinion mobilizes to remind us; our conscience begins to complain. If one persists, he may become so disturbed as to get drunk; alcohol gives him a beating. Group opinion shows him that he is off the beam, his own conscience tells him that he is dead wrong, and, if he goes too far, Barleycorn brings him real conviction.

So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole, "our common welfare comes first." Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves.

Eventually, of course, we cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A., and that without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm A.A. We humbly confess that we are but "a small part of a great whole."

Bill W.

The A.A. Grapevine, December, 1947



*Author,
Author
Submissions
accepted for
OA, 2nd Ed
Due NLT
31 January*

The WSBC Issues a Call for Submissions!

Conference Literature Committee is soliciting stories of recovery from OA members for the proposed revision of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition.

The committee is looking for stories that emphasize members' experience, strength and hope achieved through working and using the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service and nine tools of the Overeaters Anonymous program. The committee is interested in stories that focus on how members have achieved and maintained long-term physical, emotional and spiritual recovery.

We are seeking stories written from the perspectives reflected in our membership today. For example, we welcome recovery stories that reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as age and gender differences in our Fellowship. We are also looking for stories that show various ways the disease of compulsive eating manifests itself (for example, obesity, bulimia, anorexia, etc.) Your story may include physical, medical and mental health challenges that are part of your recovery. In addition, stories can incorporate experiences of recovery in non-English speaking countries.

For questions, contact Barb G., Conference Literature Committee chair:
barb72874@aol.com.

Word length: 750-1200.

Please email submissions to info@oa.org

on or before January 31, 2012.

Please put "OA2 Submission" in the subject line. Submitted materials will not be returned.

Steps 1, 2, & 3 . . .

Honesty, Open-mindedness, and Willingness

Step 1 talks about the necessity of the alcoholic first hitting bottom in order for him to be honest. This has been true for me. Anytime I have suffered from depression and demoralization as a result of living in denial about my disease, it has only been by reaching the bottom - becoming so low that I've been able to wake up out of the fog of self-deception and lies to be honest about what I've been doing with food.

Step 2 is a commitment to open-mindedness because it requires me to trust in something that is not embodied in a physical form that I can literally see, hear, or touch. It requires me to be open-minded enough to trust that a *spirit* can be what can change my life. This pushes the limits of my limited human mind. It requires me to be open to the possibility that it might actually be true.

Step 3 is a commitment to willingness because it suggests I need to cast aside all the ideas I've had (that haven't worked), and try someone else's ideas instead. I need to be willing to take and follow direction. I need the willingness to do whatever it takes. My life can and has changed as a direct result of stepping down out of the director's chair and letting my Higher Power take over. My Higher Power shows me His directives through hearing other OA members share their experience and what has worked for them. These then are my directions to do the same, thus requiring willingness to do as I'm told.

~ KB, Goode, VA

One Story, Two Perspectives

The Joy of Living, A Twelfth Step Story

Hi I am C. I have been in the OA/HOW program three times before. This is my fourth. I would like to share on how my HP gifted me with abstinence after two very long years of being lost in the food. I work from home and it was so easy to eat all day long. My weight was on a constant rise while my energy was declining. Soon I found myself lying on the couch by 2 pm daily and napping to sleep off whatever it was I found in the pantry to soothe my unsettled spirit about my business or lack of it. I tried for months to get some abstinence to no avail. I started thinking that this is it, I have done it, and I have reached the point of no return from my food hell. It was soon after that when my phone rang as I lay in a trance on the couch. I jumped up thinking it was a business call, but it was J making a hook-up call. Her voice was calm, clean and right to the point. "So how are you?" J said, and then there was a silence. I hesitated, not my normal reaction by any means. Then I decided J was in program and I needed to be totally honest. With that thought, I told J, "I am not well, I have gained so much weight and abstinence I could not find." I told J I had been on the couch every afternoon when I should be working, but the food fog was so dense I could not find my way out. J said, I really don't have time to take on another sponsee, but if you will commit to HOW, I will sponsor you. Well I was silent when those words were spoken in my ear. Then J said I want you to pray about it and call me back. I agreed and we hung up. Well I did pray about it the rest of that day and the next. It was evening time the day after when the nudge of my HP told me I could not turn down the offer of someone willing to save my life.

I called and got J's voicemail, I was disappointed. My crazy mind had crazy thoughts of J changing her mind now that she had time to think it over. I left a message that yes, I have prayed about it and yes, I will work the HOW program, please call me back.

J did call me back and my HP gifted me with abstinence that same day. My mind was quiet, I could be still, and I felt the joy within me of a child on Christmas morning with many gifts. As the days passed, my daily writings were filled with the presence of my HP being with me. I never had abstinence like this, it is so clear to me how in my mind my compulsive eating began and how it was the only thing for many years that I thought could fill me. Today my HP fills me, not with food, but pure joy, grace and love.

Everything I can be, my HP shows me. This is a daily experience for me. I never live anywhere but in today. I am so grateful to my sponsor and my HP coming together to reach out and pull me up from the darkness and despair of compulsive eating. Everyday I work my program to keep me honest about my compulsive eating disease and to manage it. I know without a doubt if I stop working the program my disease will take over and I will have no defense against it. I have reliance on my HP daily to do for me what I can not do for myself.

~ C

(See page 7 for The Other Perspective)

COME to YOUR . . . **“FAMILY REUNION”**
BEACH RETREAT 20!



In honor of the Beach Retreat's 20th Anniversary, you are invited to Your "FAMILY REUNION." FAMILY is not just the one into which we are born. FAMILY is found in the care, concern, and the special bonds we have built over the years—20 Years, and counting! If you haven't been to a Beach Retreat yet, this is your chance to join the Beach Retreat FAMILY. Together we gain new strength and courage to recover from this disease.

You are not alone! Please join us at the beach. You'll experience recovery, while we celebrate the "FAMILY REUNION" Beach Retreat 20! Your 20th, promises to be an unforgettable Beach Retreat!

March 23-25 2012
Holiday Inn & Suites,
North Beach
3900 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA 23451





Beach Retreat 20

Registration Deadline— March 9, 2012

Occupancy	Per Person Cost
Single	\$ 295
Double (1 King)	\$ 210
Double (2 Queen)	\$ 210
Triple	\$ 175
Quadruple	\$ 155
Day Tripper	\$ 80
Saturday Banquet only	\$ 40

Per Person Cost includes:
2 nights Ocean view room w/balcony,
microwave, & refrigerator. Breakfast,
Lunch, & Banquet on Saturday.
Breakfast on Sunday.

Day Tripper includes all
meetings and Saturday
Banquet.



- ⇒ All registrations must be made using the form below and sent to Estelle A., address below.
- ⇒ Payment Option: Pay 50% now, 50% later. The 2nd payment MUST be Postmarked by March 9th.
- ⇒ \$25 Late Fee for any payment (full or partial) received after March 9, 2012. No refunds (for full or partial) after March 9, 2012. No onsite registration. Do NOT send registration & checks to Holiday Inn.

For more information regarding the Beach Retreat 20, please contact:

- Estelle A (757) 539.2657 est731@aol.com
- Laurie O (757) 375.3304 laurie.oleary26@yahoo.com
- Maura Z (757) 394.1118 koala3bears@hotmail.com
- Susan K (757) 461.0180 susan.kosiek@cox.net

Please PRINT CLEARLY and return with payment

Please check one: Single Double (1 K) Double (2 Q) Triple Quadruple Day Tripper

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) _____ or _____ Email _____

Roommate #1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____

Roommate #1 Phone _____ Email _____

Roommate #2 Phone _____ Email _____

Roommate #3 Phone _____ Email _____

Please find a Roommate for me (Doubles Only)

Special Needs (Check all that apply): Vegan Handicap Accessible

All Rooms Non Smoking



Send check payable to OA and completed Registration Form to:
Estelle A., 1104 Pitchkettle Farm Lane, Suffolk, VA 23434



YES, Contact me, I would like to give Service

One Story, The Other Perspective

The Joy of Living, A Twelfth Step Story

As a member of HOW, I commit to my three hook up calls every day. Some days it seems like I have to call 15 numbers before I can connect with three real live people. It was one of those days when no one was answering, so I searched my phone for more numbers. Then I saw C.'s name, and remembered that she had been struggling and that I hadn't seen her in a while. I called, and thankfully she picked up. I asked her how she was, and she told me. She mentioned how she hadn't been to a meeting in a long time and that she was now a dangerously high weight and unable to stop eating. I heard her. I remembered that she had asked me to sponsor her some time back, but I didn't feel I had time to sponsor someone else at that time. Despite the fact that I already had 3 sponsees, and had been turning down others who asked because I just did not have time, I found myself saying, "C, I do not have time to sponsor you, but this is a life or death issue for you. If you have the willingness to work HOW again, I will sponsor you. Pray about it and let me know." In my heart, I just felt like saving her life was more important than 15 minutes of my time a day. She thanked me, and called me back a day later.

What happened next has given me great joy and has refreshed my awe and gratitude for the miraculous and supernatural gift of abstinence from God. C got abstinent...not just abstinent...but that total release, full of joy, food cravings removed abstinence. The kind of abstinence I received after my own three and half year relapse...the kind of abstinence that is a joy because of the un-doubtable direct intervention of God working a miracle in ones life. When I was given this gift after years of struggle, my whole life both before and after OA, I found and regularly attended OA. I was given an even greater gift, the knowledge that God is real, and that He is with me and personal to me. Working with C and talking with her every night has reminded me of when I first received the gift - my desires changed with food and with how I wanted to use my time. I suddenly and strongly desired to read and write and seek God. I saw my disease and the literature completely differently. Insights poured down like rain, and as I wrote on the literature my jaw would drop as suddenly things that used to baffle me became clear.

I have been overwhelmed by how God has worked in both our lives, and how he brought us together. Oh, and by the way, I found out that the C I thought I was calling that day was a different person of the same name!! I would not have offered to sponsor C had I not thought that she was the woman who once asked me. God is not subtle!!! I feel so blessed to have been used by God in this way to reach out to another sufferer, and to see him take His mighty hand and pluck her out of relapse. I can see how the 12th step is the joy of living step, as we become part of what God does. Real joy is knowing who God is and what He has done, being humbled and awed by how He uses us and empowers us to love His people and care for His world.

~ J

Tidewater Intergroup Overeaters Anonymous



JOIN US—All are Welcome!

Intergroup meets the first Monday of each month from 7:15 to 9:00 PM at:

Kempsville Center, 860 Kempsville Road, Norfolk, VA

Service Opportunities abound, some with abstinence requirements and some without. Current Intergroup service opportunities include Bylaws Chair, & Special Events Coordinator. Are you listening to that little nudge you're getting about giving service?

Relapse Survivor Phone List



Zaida	201.8543	Jennifer	732.252.9501
Carrie K.	531.6621	Bethanne	650.4233
Lou	356.0411	Jill	340.2903
Amy R.	319.0116	Pam	481.5605
Melissa	672.1815	Susan K	461.0180 (before 8 pm)
Casey	560.2872	Wendy	580.8059
Ginny	287.0751	Maura	394.1118

I put my hand in yours . . .

YourNameHere

email koala3bears@hotmail.com and add your name

Now accepting all entries for future issues of Guidepost. Please take a few moments to ponder all the blessings that living in recovery have brought to you. Did you smile at a particular memory? How about sharing that smile with someone in relapse, a fellow OA who might be thinking about leaving... before the miracle happens. Write it down on paper or at your keyboard and sent it to: Maura at koala3bears@hotmail.com or call 394.1118 if you need a snail mail address.