



Celebrate “IDEA” Day November 19 (International Day Experiencing Abstinence)

The season for overeating is upon us. With so much emphasis on food as the holidays arrive, people who suffer from compulsive overeating find themselves faced with temptation everywhere. Where can they get the support they need to discover other ways to celebrate the holidays — ways that will leave them feeling good about themselves instead of guilty or full of regret? Overeaters Anonymous — that’s where!

Since 1992, on the third Saturday of November, members of OA worldwide observe an International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA). The OA Fellowship created IDEA Day to encourage members and newcomers to abstain from compulsive overeating.

Brandywine Intergroup will be hosting an IDEA Day mini-marathon on **Saturday, November 19**. It will be held at the **Bryn Mawr Hospital Clothier Auditorium from 9:30am – 12:00 noon**. See you there!

God’s Gratitude List

I’ve often heard that my higher power will do for me what I cannot do for myself. Happily this proved true for me in a very practical way just about a year ago.

Last November, I was attending an OA marathon in the basement of a country church. With the great speakers to focus on and the service I had offered to do, I was consumed in the moment. At one point, I turned to walk across the back of a large room, took two fast steps and slammed – face first – into a large concrete pole. OUCH! I literally heard my nose crack. I was stunned for a moment, then started to realize what had happened – which meant feeling the incredible pain and a creeping worry about having a broken nose

Someone helped me find ice, and while I nursed the injury I began to wonder why I was so inattentive. Why did I have to hurt my nose again? Would it be badly broken? Would I be end up with a clown nose? Self-pity hit me as hard as I hit that pole, and I could not shake it. I have enough recovery to recognize ‘stinking thinking’, so I told myself I needed to make a gratitude list. One problem: I was not grateful, but worried I’d be traumatically disfigured. I could not will any thankful thoughts to come.

I went into a side room, sat down with the ice on my nose and prayed. “God, please let me be willing to be grateful. I don’t feel grateful right now, don’t want to do a gratitude list, so please let me be willing...” When I opened my eyes, I noticed a flip chart in the room with the following notations:

- That...
- I’m loved
 - I’m born in USA
 - Rising and setting sun
 - Cycles in life
 - Beauty in world
 - Educated
 - Faith
 - Loved by God
 - Food

Before my eyes, in black magic-marker, was a simple list of things to be grateful for! You might think it was a church lesson about Thanksgiving, but I’m quite sure it was God’s gratitude list for me. (Note the entry of food – a sure sign HP was thinking of me!)

I laughed, thanked God and copied the list down. The fear of looking like WC Fields was lifted, I was able to be grateful and think clearly. Sanity returned. And today, when I begin to feel overwhelmed by any event in life, I try to remember that if I turn to my higher power, he will do for me what I cannot do for myself.

- Kimberly C.

- *Alive*

ANOTHER HIGHER POWER MIRACLE....

This is an amends true story that I experienced recently that is worth sharing. I have been blessed by my higher power to have the chance to make amends through this program. During my first year in OA six years ago my sponsor took me through the steps. When I did my first eighth and ninth steps she had me write down my defects and the people I had harmed during my active addiction. I worked through the fear and pain to uncover that I had to make amends first to myself then later to a number of individuals.

One of the people I with whom I had to make amends was an ex-boyfriend whom I had lied to and treated very poorly. I thought I could do anything I wanted and get away with it. I couldn't let go of the four year relationship that I had thrown away by acting out in my disease. I was compulsively exercising at that time, smoking, and drinking alcohol. I wanted to join the 12 step rooms because I wanted to "win" him back. I finally realized that it would never happen. With the help of my sponsor, I wrote an amends letter to him and mailed it. I did receive a written response that he was hurt by what I did. It took a long time for him to get over the "episode", he said. He was in a new relationship and was happy. What, happy without me? I couldn't conceive of it. So, more eighth step work needed to be done as was suggested in the previous newsletter.

A few more years went by and my Higher Power kept giving us chance encounters. I "bumped" into him and his new girlfriend last year. So, my obsession returned. Now, this fall I started running again to train for a 10k race. I would see him every Tuesday night with the group. But the miracle really happened on 9/11/05. Maybe it was because it was the anniversary of 9/11 and positive hope and recovery was in the air. But there he was again put in my path from my H.P. because I obviously had unfinished business. I was all alone on a patch of grass stretching before the race. He came up to me and said he heard I was engaged. He looked me in the eye and said he was "genuinely happy for me and all has been forgiven." I said I still thought he was mad at me. We both had tears in our eyes and he gave me a nice hug. The last few days since that happened I have felt such an incredible sense of inner peace and calm. It is a high on life that I could never get from excess food. I am a beautiful child of God that is loved and accepted. Most of all I can reach a deeper level of forgiveness for myself.

I hope my message of experience, strength, and hope helps another member of OA to trust that the steps really do work!

- SL

Step of the Month:

Step 11:

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Tradition of the Month:

Tradition 11:

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.

12 TIPS FOR ABSTINENT HOLIDAYS

1. Line up extra OA activities (meetings, phone calls, service, intergroup).
2. Entertain OA friends, especially newcomers, at home or at a coffee shop.
3. Keep your OA telephone list with you at all times.
4. Find out about holiday meetings or celebrations in local groups.
5. Skip any parties/eating occasions you're nervous about.
6. If there's one you can't skip, take an OA friend – or keep literature and a gratitude list handy.
7. Don't think you have to stay late (plan an "important date" in advance).
8. Go to special places that are meaningful to you... church, a park, the shore. And don't forget about extra meetings!
9. Don't sit around worrying or brooding; catch up on reading, OA tools, museums, walks, letters.
10. Don't project about holiday temptations; remember "One day at a time."
11. Even if you cannot give material gifts, you can share the gift of your recovery and enjoy the beauty of the holidays.
12. Carry the message. Give joy away, and it will be yours to keep.

- Gratefully borrowed from a 12-step friend
and adapted for OA)

There Is No Magic

There is no magic. There are only slowly developing miracles that happen when I put myself in a position to receive them from the spirit of the universe, most easily defined for me as trying to live my life according to the principles of the twelve steps, twelve traditions and the eight tools. I fantasize of suddenly-occurring miracles where I am transformed into all I want to be. That is fantasy. There is no magic elixir of transformation. I visualize what it is that I want to be, then I visualize the action steps that may take me there, then I start taking the actions. If I can't see the later steps, I take the early steps and trust that God will take me where I'm supposed to go if I do my part. I trust the process. I trust God. I take actions. Growth and change are the slow results of minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day actions that I take. Sometimes they are physical actions such as changing my plan of eating or increasing my exercise or moving my body away from a toxic environment. Sometimes they are emotional or mental, for example, letting go of the idea that "if only" certain people, places or things were different I would be fine, or practicing on a daily basis forgiveness, acceptance, tolerance, and compassion and accepting responsibility for my life. Sometimes they are spiritual as I do more things that nurture my soul and bring me closer to my Higher Power. No magic...only actions and faith.

- Don C.

Let's Do Lunch...

I had my cell phone in my ear one Sunday morning while walking to church. Why not invite my father, stepmother and brother out for dinner later that night? Good idea, I thought. After all, how many times have they taken me out for dinner? This time it was different. I was doing the inviting. Innocent, right? Dead wrong.

You see, I am in recovery and they are not. I have chosen the path of practicing the 12 Steps while my family remains sick in their disease. Not surprising, I was flat out rejected. The answer was NO! Normally, this rejection would have let me to hurting myself with a binge. Not this time. I had 30 days abstinence and the clarity that comes along with it. The light bulb came on!

I closed the phone, sat down in church and began to see the unsafe (more like dangerous) relationship I had been accustomed to while growing up. I had been living a lie pretending that I was accepted by my father and I had been rejected all along. Denial was broken. It "suddenly" became clear that the only link in our relationship was our addiction – nothing more. My disease had masked itself as a loving father-son relationship that was really a deadly obsession and compulsion. A spiritual sickness that led me to eat compulsively. My expectations evaporated on the spot and as of this writing have not heard one word from any member of the family. So today I practice the principles of the program and forgive myself, my family and can respect them as well as myself by remembering to "Live and let live."

God's children have a right to choose. As painful as this has been, I too have a right to choose. I choose recovery today because the alternative for me is death. A horrible death from compulsive overeating.

I have learned, finally, to keep it simple and to let go. And unfortunately in this case it has included members of my own family. Yet, I am not alone anymore. I can move ahead, one day at a time with my Higher Power and you, my brothers and sisters in OA. My recovering family. My feelings are sometimes clouded by self-doubt and self-hatred, but always feel welcome and accepted by you, my OA family, and for this I am grateful.

- Carey B.
Berwyn, PA

Recovery Submissions

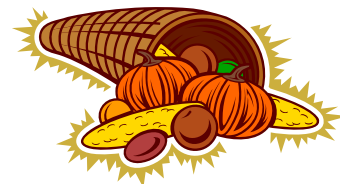
We are looking for original articles, poems and writings to help share our experience, strength, hope and continuing recovery from compulsive overeating. Recovery is published on a monthly basis, and we need your input! Please send your contributions to:

Recovery Editor
P.O. Box 605
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
Or email: info@oa-brandywine.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

Editorial Policy

The opinions expressed in Recovery reflect those of the writers and not the Brandywine Intergroup or OA as a whole. We reserve the right to edit for space and grammar, and it is understood that all copy may be reprinted by other OA groups without permission.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meeting Changes/Updates

Thanksgiving Day Meetings:

- ❖ The **Conshohocken** meeting will take place at **11:00 am**
- ❖ There will be a meeting at **Graduate Hospital** called "Attitude of Gratitude" from **10:30 to 11:30 am**

The **Saturday Morning Audubon Meeting** has moved! The meeting will now be called the "**Saturday Green Tree Meeting.**" It takes place at 8:00 – 9:30 am every Saturday, and is held at the following address:

Green Tree Church of the Brethren
1078 Egypt Road
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Brandywine Intergroup Speakers List

Susan 484/744-2770	John M 610/352-9287
Diane T. 610/494-6968	Marilyn 610/525-3397
Ethy 267/257-1173	Gil 610/864-8080
Laura 610/771-0142	Bruce 610/645-0790
Marilyn K. 610/356-2762	Lee H. 215/473-2232
Margie 610/642-3411	Kelly C. 610/240-0753
Jake 610/687-4201	Judy 610/586 –8855
Bob 610/753 –9231	Mike B. 610/970 –0570
Bobbi 215/753 –9231	Cathe 610/352-9919
Mary L. 610/604-0440	Sherry 610/361-1390

This is the new speakers list that is currently being developed for Brandywine Intergroup. The goal is to have a list of people willing to perform this vital service (if available) to call on if the need for speakers arises. This can be useful to assist new or smaller meetings, marathons or retreats. Anyone who is willing to have their name added to the list please contact John M. at 610/352-9287 or email mccreajf@aol.com.

