

Tips for Getting Through the Holidays Abstainently



1. Focus on the true meaning of the holiday or event rather than the food orgy that sometimes accompanies it.
2. Don't set yourself up to feel bad because of unrealistic expectations of what the holiday will bring. Sometimes we're with family, sometimes with friends, sometimes we are alone. Face the reality of the situation beforehand. For example, if a family occasion almost always turns unpleasant, plan not to be part of the unpleasantness. If you're going to be alone, face that you may face sadness. Plan to deal with it, without excess food.



3. From the perspective of food, treat the holiday like any other day. Our disease never takes a holiday.
4. Set an extra space beside you (in your mind or for real) at the table for your Higher Power.
5. Plan! Plan! Plan! Be proactive toward the holidays and the meals. Don't just lie back and hope for the best. Rehearse in your mind over and over exactly what you will do, particularly what, where and when you will eat. Pray just before sitting down to the meal.



6. Gratitude, gratitude, gratitude. There is nothing as good for staying abstinent – particularly during the holidays – than focusing on the many things we have, rather than what we don't have. Do gratitude lists frequently.
7. For many of us the most dangerous period for our abstinence is after we have successfully gone through a difficult occasion. The insanity of our disease subconsciously or consciously tells us to reward ourselves with food because we did so well yesterday. Or, we suffer some kind of letdown about the occasion. It didn't meet our expectations. Some of us feel an emptiness after holidays that in the past we have tried to fill with food. For these reasons, plan to go to meetings the next day after the holiday.



8. A holiday is not a crisis. Holidays come every year. They are merely calendar times set aside to honor certain things. We deal with the holidays just like we deal with the rest of the days in the year. You can do it. Relax and work your program the way you know how.

- Reprinted from December 2001 Promises (Westchester, NY Intergroup Newsletter)

Step of the Month:

Step 12:

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Tradition of the Month:

Tradition 12:

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Spiritual Awakening? Yikes....!

I've been in the rooms of OA for a few years, and can't say that I've made it all the way through the 12 steps yet. Progress, not perfection, right? But as I've been working my program, I hear a lot about "spiritual awakenings" and "spiritual experiences". Especially during the month of December, when many meetings focus on the 12th Step: "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps...". To be honest, this concept made me very nervous! I imagined the skies opening up, angels descending, harps playing, and a beam of sunlight piercing the clouds. What if I don't ever have such a drastic spiritual awakening? What if the heavens never open up for me? Am I doomed to "fail out" of the program if this "miracle" doesn't happen?

Recently, my sponsor had me read the story, "It Might Have Been Worse" in the Big Book. It turns out that this story is exactly what I needed to change my thinking about spiritual experiences. In the story, the author writes:

"A spiritual experience to me meant attending meetings and seeing a group of people all there for the purpose of helping each other; hearing the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions read at a meeting; and hearing the Lord's Prayer, which in A.A. meetings has such a great meaning – "Thy will be done, not mine." A spiritual awakening soon came to mean trying each day to be a little more thoughtful, more considerate, a little more courteous to those with whom I came in contact."

-Alcoholics Anonymous 4th Edition, p.356

What? No choirs singing and harps playing? Now this was the kind of spiritual experience I could relate to! What a beautiful concept – to find spirituality in kindness, love and togetherness. To feel a spiritual experience by holding the hand of the person next to me and knowing we are all going through this together. Maybe it would happen to me, after all!

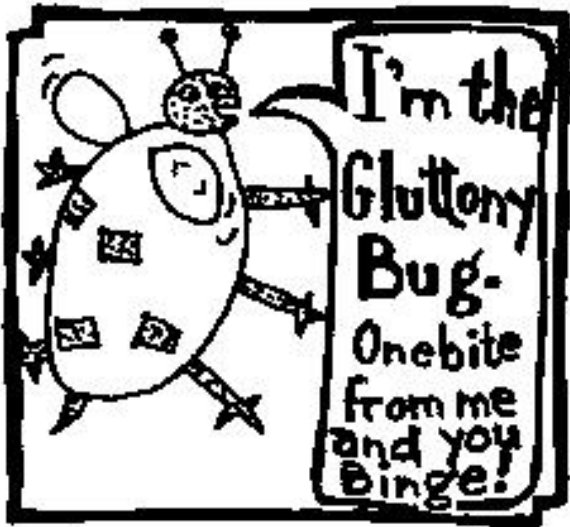
Thanks to OA, I am able to keep an open mind about things I do not understand. I am willing to listen to others, like my sponsor, who have a wonderful way of showing me a new way of thinking, and a new way of living! Thank you, OA!

- Kelly C.

Opening Up

**When your heart is closed and your mind is too,
The food calls you for there's nothing else to do.
You feel lonely, angry, tired and upset,
Your disease is active it's a good bet.
How tough it is to get through the day...
Experiencing life – that's the only way.
Then a friend says, "Here's a helping hand."
Then your Higher Power talks to you,
Another OAer will show you what to do.
Feelings come up and you express them now
The food obsession is passing and you don't know
how.
Doing it alone, you know that's not the way,
It's with your Higher Power and friend that you
found OA.
When your heart is open, you know the feeling,
It's being part of OA that's very appealing.
So when you're in relapse and life is tough,
Take the first step even though it is rough
And tomorrow will be different in a special way
Because you've found a home in good ol' OA.**

- Bob B.



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.

THIS SPACE FOR RENT

Price: FREE!

- Do you enjoy reading the Recovery newsletter every month? Do you find yourself nodding and saying, "I feel that way, too!"
- Do you find it helpful to read tips and suggestions as to how to get through difficult situations like the holidays, family gatherings, grief, etc?
- Do you laugh at the OA cartoon every month?

If you answered "Yes!", then PICK UP YOUR PEN, or GET TO YOUR KEYBOARD! We need your help!

This newsletter isn't written by "THEM", it's written by "US!" Please share your experience, strength and hope! Write a poem, a story, a letter, or just send in your "passing thoughts". Tell us about something that helped your recovery. Share a tip that helped you, so that another compulsive overeater may benefit.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2005 IDEA day Report

- Bryn Mawr Hospital Clothier Auditorium
- November 19, 2005
- Registration 9:30 am
- Speakers and sharing: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Nine OAers attended the workshop. There were 3 speakers and sharing after each one. Because of the attendance everyone had time to share several times and all agreed that they appreciated the intimacy of the gathering.

\$10.00 was collected for the raffle of a Big Book, 4th edition. We now have about 1960 raffle tickets available for future raffles. The party goods store only sells rolls of 2000 tickets!

\$12.50 was collected for 7th tradition.

\$22.50 was sent to the intergroup.

At the December meeting we will decide how much to send to Bryn Mawr Hospital for the use of the room.

Thank you to all who contributed service for this year's IDEA Day!

Meeting Changes/Updates

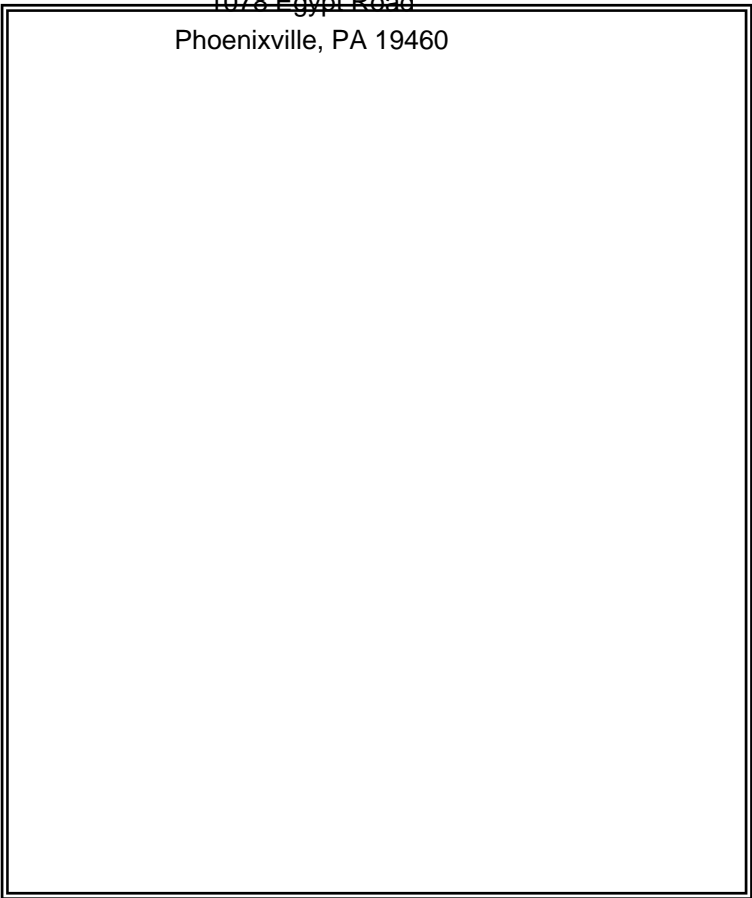
Holiday Meetings:

- ❖ The **Sunday night Phoenixville** meeting will take place at **7:30 pm** on Christmas night! Give this wonderful gift to yourself!
- ❖ The **Saturday morning Green Tree** meeting (see location below) will take place as usual at 8:00 am on Christmas Eve.

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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.

