

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ The Newsletter of the Brandywine OA Intergroup ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Relationships in Recovery

I am approaching my 8th anniversary in OA. It's hard to believe I have been in program so long. I have never maintained membership in ANYTHING for 8 years. I have experienced "pink cloud" abstinence, imperfect abstinence and relapse during this time. I am currently abstinent about 2 ½ years.

During my years in OA, the relationships in my life have improved drastically. Before OA, I would isolate at every chance I could. I could even isolate in a room full of people. Since getting into recovery, I have learned to be more honest – with myself and others. At one point during my recovery, my husband and I separated, and then reconciled. I am sure neither of these things would have happened without program. Although the separation was difficult and painful, I was able to know what I was feeling and have the voice to express this. The ability to do this contributed to my husband and I reconciling. Without program, who knows what would have happened?

Other relationships in my life have also improved as a direct result of my emotional and spiritual growth in OA. I am emotionally available to my children. This is a big difference from the days when I was stealing their food. I am better able to accept my siblings, and their paths in life. I am even learning to accept my mother-in-law for who she is (this is an ongoing work in progress for me!)

Recently I have been struggling with relationships with my co-workers. I am a control freak, in addition to being a compulsive overeater. With the help of my OA friends and my sponsor, I am learning to know where my responsibilities end and the responsibilities of my co-workers begin. I am also learning to stop being a "people pleaser" and "caretaker" – 2 of my character defects.

It's funny to me now that when I came into OA, it was to lose weight. I never thought OA could help to improve the relationships in my life. OA helped me to grow and improve myself as a person. It's me that has changed, not the others in my life. This is just one more gift of this program.

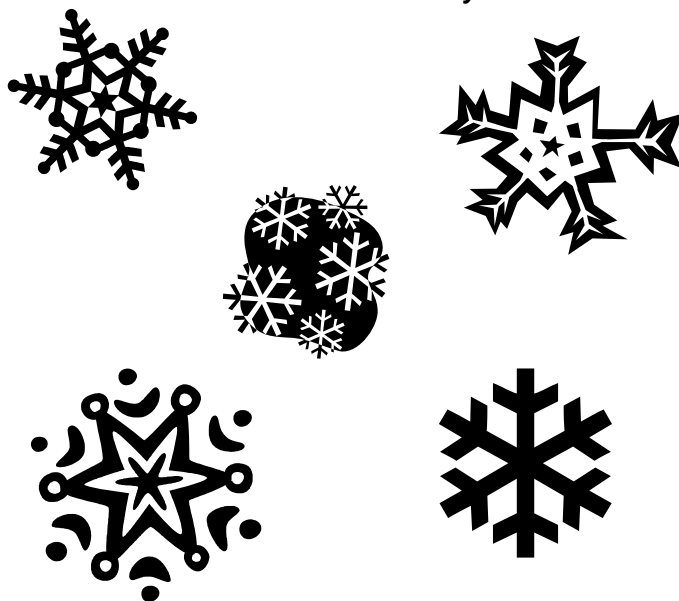
- Anonymous

Happy New Year!

What it was like: As soon as the ball dropped, I was on another diet. I made resolutions that I did not have the willpower to keep. "This year, I'll finally lose that 10...25...50 pounds. This year, I'll really change my life around." Inevitably, within weeks, days, sometimes hours, I would break all of my resolutions, and feel completely dejected and hopeless.

What happened: I stumbled in the doors of OA!

What it is like now: New Year's Eve is just another night! I don't make any resolutions (except to work my program, call my sponsor, commit to my food plan...JUST TODAY). Every morning is a new beginning – a chance to be grateful for recovery!



Battling a Deadly Foe

There are moments when my powerlessness over food manifests itself in such a way that I need to put a hedge of protection around myself against the onslaught of the disease, which I visualize as the enemy. The power that I've learned to reach for is not the self-will of years past in which I made attempts at diets or distraction, which led only to disease, despair and disillusionment. A favorite step I use to combat the disease is Step 11. I discern Higher Power's will for me in relation to food and ask for the power to carry it out. The way I seek God and God's will is through prayer. When I earnestly seek his will through prayer he provides me with the armor I need to go to battle against the disease.

He provides me with the belt of truth – I become truthful with my sponsor about any slips I may have had or if I've eaten off my food plan. My honesty with myself, God and another person brings the situation into the light. In the light I am emptied of my will and become the recipient of God's love and strength. If instead I choose to keep my slips a secret, my spirit gets poisoned just like my body does when I eat trigger or binge food.

I take up the shield of faith. This becomes manifest by "acting as if". Even if my recovery and abstinence are not as planned on any given day, I make note of how I have healed, grown and changed from the place I was days, weeks or months ago. I remember the words and experiences of those in the rooms, some of whom are experiencing fewer and other more struggles than I am. This builds humility within me and increases my faith to keep working the program.

Finally I pick up the sword of the spirit which reminds me that my abstinence depends on the spiritual condition I have as a result of my relationship with my Higher Power. One way I cultivate this relationship is through writing. I write a love letter to my Higher Power and label the emotions I'm experiencing which are often guilt, fear, and worry. By the time I describe the circumstances which are generating the emotions, I experience serenity and peace and recognize I have gone through, not around my emotions and that they are no longer beckoning me to the food.

As you work step one this first month of the year, glance ahead to steps two and three by acknowledging that God is interested in how we engage in self-care or self-destruction around the food. Then call and rely on your Higher Power for the awesome and powerful being that he is and the source of all strength to combat this disease providing us with his full armor of truth, faith, and spiritual wholeness.

- Susan A.

Step of the Month:

Step 1:

We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition of the Month:

Tradition 1:

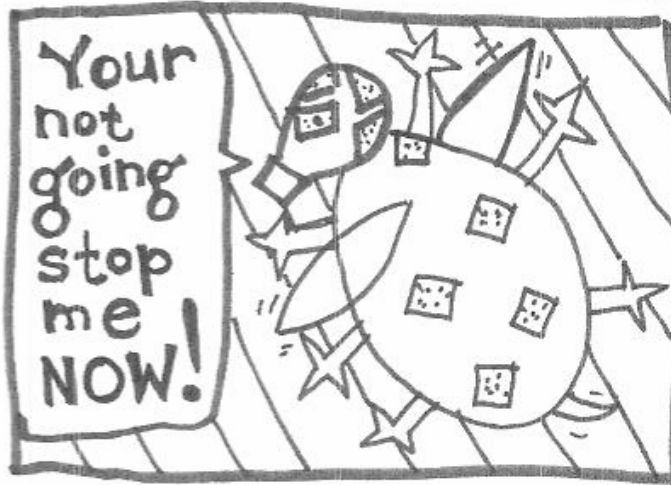
Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

Q: What are the step principles and where can I read about them?

A: The principles referred to in Step 12 are implied throughout the Step chapters in the 12 and 12 of OA, and are explained on pages 103 through 106. The principles are the practical, functional way in which the Steps can be practiced in our daily lives.

Step 1	Honesty
Step 2	Hope
Step 3	Faith
Step 4	Courage
Step 5	Integrity
Step 6	Willingness
Step 7	Humility
Step 8	Self-discipline
Step 9	Love
Step 10	Perseverance
Step 11	Spiritual Awareness
Step 12	Service

- Reprinted from Lifeline "Ask-it basket", July 2001



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.

Winter Marathon

The **Saturday Morning Green Tree Meeting** will be hosting a winter marathon called "*The Courage to Change*" at their new location:

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

Date: Saturday, February 25th, 2006

Time: 8:30am – 12:00 noon (8:00am registration)

Donation requested: \$5.00

