

Member Survey Results Are In!

Here they are, the results you have been waiting for! Included in this newsletter is an insert with the detailed results of the Brandywine Intergroup Member Survey. You'll find each question with the list of answers and the percentage of respondents who selected that response. There are also some "write-in" comments, which are included in the summary.

These results will be used to guide our Intergroup's strategic direction in the months ahead. They will prove instrumental in addressing the needs of our area members and creating targeted programs based on our group conscience.

A big "Thank you!" to everyone who submitted a survey and expressed interest in doing service. We **all** have something to give, and can all benefit from helping our program on every level.

One thing that is made clear with the survey... we are so fortunate to be a part of a program where **every voice counts!**

OA Glossary Term of the Month

As a new feature to the *Recovery* newsletter, each month we will define an OA term (as defined by OA World Service) that is heard often in the rooms, but may not be completely understood by everyone.

Abstinence:

The following is the official definition of Abstinence as stated by OA World Service:

"According to the dictionary, the word 'abstain' means to refrain from. Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program."

Brandywine Intergroup Board Election Results

Let's welcome our new trusted servants who were elected to the Intergroup board at the June meeting:

- **Chairperson** – Don C.
- **Vice Chairperson** – June D.
- **Treasurer** – Josie W.
- **Recording Secretary** – Susan A.
- **Corresponding Secretary** – Mike B.
- **Conference Delegates** – June D, Don C.

A reminder that everyone is welcome to join us at monthly Intergroup meetings:

7:30-9 PM, The 3rd Monday of every month
King of Prussia Church of Christ
590 West Valley Forge Rd.
King Of Prussia, PA

Is your meeting relatively new? Are you looking for a format to bring structure to your business meetings? The OA website has posted a new document that can help!

Visit www.oa.org/pdf/GroupConscience.pdf for the new document,

"Guidelines for a Group Conscience Meeting"



Cookies and crackers and candy oh my!
Would start me a binge to be sure, by and by!
The secret to abstinence is not to defy
Just keep coming back or I surely will die.

I wanted to eat all the goodies I saw
And then I was told they would stick in my craw
And so this conclusion I was soon to draw
That I'd feel and do better if I didn't gnaw!

The physical changes have caused me some pain
And there was some doubt— in the end would I gain?
A physical comfort would soon become plain
And abstinence daily could now have the reign!

Emotional binges would next come to task
I could no longer hide with my self-imposed mask.
Once again there was pain, and I was aghast
But in peace, borne of step work, I was soon to bask.

And then without warning I was to find
That my eating disorder caused me to be blind
To a God of my own, that I now can call mine
And a feeling of wonder that's truly sublime.

And it's thanks to OA and the people I've met
That have helped me and guided me without any threat.
I am truly so grateful and must not forget
That like those gone before me, I must pay my debt.

I shall carry our message, which is not just a fable
And in doing just that, my food remains stable
I thank God and OA when I sit at my table
Sharing my hopes and my blessings whenever I'm able!

- *Anonymous*



The fork in the road

As I go
through the
day – every
day, really –
I have many
choices to
make. Cut



corners on a project, or complete it thoroughly?
Make an excuse about something or take
responsibility? Weigh my food or 'eye-ball' the
portion? Answer in a short tone or take a breath
and speak calmly?

These kinds of situations represent a fork in the
spiritual road of my life. Will I take the road that
leads towards self or the road that leads towards
my higher power? Will I feed my ego or nurture my
connection to spiritual values? This is, after all, a
spiritual program – one that suggests I seek to
improve my conscious contact with the Power that
has relieved me of the compulsion to eat. If an
action makes it harder for me to make that contact,
makes me more aware of my self-will and less able
to feel close to God – why would I go down that
road? I am so used to relying on my own power,
my self-will, that it is easy to ignore the other road.
Yet every time I make a decision that is more 'spirit
oriented', more "God-directed", I feel better about
myself and sometimes actually feel serene.

I used to joke that when I came to a fork in the
road, I'd pick it up and eat! Today, I can see these
daily 'forks' as opportunities to pause and ask for
the right thought or action so that I might move
closer to my Higher Power. Each step on that path
is a step away from self-will and another step
forward in recovery.

- *Kimberly C.*

**The Conshohocken Thursday OA
Meeting has a NEW starting time!
10:15 a.m.**

**Conshohocken United Methodist
Church
6th and Fayette Sts., Conshohocken.
We hope you'll join us!**

Vacation Dreaming...

It's that time of year again, when vacations are on the minds of many a compulsive overeater. I, for one, am forced into using the tools of our program even more than usual. In particular, the tools of sponsorship, writing and literature are playing an important part in my abstinence during this time. I'm writing about this because the other day I found myself off in a dream world, thinking and actually romancing foods that I know I shouldn't have—foods that would trigger me right back into a binge or worse yet, a total relapse. Why it is that vacation time seems to conjure up thoughts in my head that it's a perfect time to overeat those deadly sweets and goodies that would do me such harm? This is something that I wouldn't dream of doing while I'm at home. It's true that our society tells us, "that's part of what you do on vacation, isn't it? Isn't this the one time of year that you can go hog-wild, let loose, live it up?" Well, maybe for the normal eater it's OK, but for me and other compulsive overeaters like me, not only is it not OK, it's downright disastrous thinking.



How does it happen that my head goes to this dangerous place without my even knowing it? I didn't plan this little reverie. I just found myself there! And what's worse, it seems to me, it happened during my quiet time. When I came out of it and realized what I'd been thinking, I couldn't wait to call my sponsor and tell her my plight. This thinking scared me into alertness. My sponsor reminded me that this is a cunning, baffling and powerful disease. You never know when it's going to rear its ugly head. She also reminded me that once I start the compulsive overeating, stinkin' thinkin' takes over and that could ruin a wonderful vacation. OA taught me that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. When I leave for vacation, you can be sure that I will be packing my **For Today** and **Voices of Recovery**, as well as a couple of Lifelines along with my notebook to keep track of my food and my thoughts. I'm positive this experience has taught me a valuable lesson. I will remember that I can do this one day at a time if I just practice the principles of this program and use the tools that you've given me. I thank my Higher Power and OA for helping me stay abstinent just for today. **- Anonymous**

Q: *Even after lots of prayer, how does one know when actions taken are HP's will, not self-will??*

A: I begin each day praying for God's direction and the power to carry it out. As my conscious contact with God increases and I grow spiritually, I am more in tune with God's will for me. I have a feeling of rightness — an inner calmness that tells me I am in line with my Higher Power's wishes for me. I can never be certain that my actions are God's will, but I have some criteria I follow to help me make that determination. First, I put any pending decision in my Higher Power's hands. Then I continue to do what is in front of me, focusing on service to others to diminish my self-centeredness. When my proposed action is obvious, comfortable and complete, it feels like God's will. I learned this from my sponsor. If one of these components is missing and there is a struggle, I don't take any action but continue to pray and wait until those missing pieces are in place.

An example is when I considered running for the trustee position. When it was first mentioned to me, it was not obvious or comfortable. I turned over this

decision, and my desire to run for the position increased, so it became comfortable. I then received my region's affirmation, so it became obvious I could do this. I also needed my husband's support because of the increased travel schedule and time required to perform trustee responsibilities. My husband gave me his blessings, and it became complete. It felt like God's will for me.

I don't always make the best decisions, and as the Big Book states, "It is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed., p. 87). As I have continued to ask for freedom from self-will and trust in my Higher Power's guidance, my actions have become less absurd and more obvious, comfortable and complete.

[Members of the Board of Trustees provide answers to these questions]

- Reprinted from OA Ask-It-Basket at oa.org

Step of the Month:

Step 8:

Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition of the Month:

Tradition 8:

Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Subtitle: “All I ever needed to know I learned from my character defects”

I have recently been doing a lot of program work around my character defects and it has been uncomfortable, to say the least. It is a difficult task to look myself in the mirror and honestly evaluate those traits which cause me trouble and led me to the depths of my eating disorder.

Being in program has given me an awareness of “bad behavior” that I can recognize easily but am not always able to change just yet.

What will lead me to a better way of acting and thinking? Here are just a few of the many steps to freedom available to me in OA:

- Trusting a loving Higher Power to show me the next right thing
- Staying abstinent
- Connecting with my sponsor and other program people on a regular basis to “check in” when I am unsure
- Continuing my step work
- Going to meetings to hear how others are dealing with the same issues

Luckily, these options are all freely given to me if I choose to work the program and open my heart. There is nothing so difficult that I can't get through without a Higher Power, and all of you – my loving friends in OA!

- K.C.

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: newsletter@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.

Brandywine Intergroup Speaker List

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Mary L. (610) 604-0440	Sherry (610) 361-1390
Don C. (610) 935-1484	

This is the speaker list that is currently being maintained by 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 the newsletter editor at newsletter@oa-brandywine.org.