



Four Dates Set For Workshops

More Good Happenings

By Mike B.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

We have had a great Marathon on Idea Day and wonderful speakers supplied to us by the guaranteed speaker program. However, that is not all the renewal is doing. In the new year we will have four sets of workshops to look forward to. Tentatively, they are scheduled for four third Sundays of the first four months. The first will be January 21, 2007, the second February 18, 2007 the third March 18, 2007 and the last April 29, 2007.

Each workshop will include some of the steps. The first will feature steps 1,2 &3. Then each of the next two will feature only two of the steps. The last workshop will be featuring the last three steps 10, 11 & 12.

There will also be many topics on the workshops that will especially help newcomers. In the first workshop will have focus groups on, "Plan of Eating," and, "Using the Tools." Also, we have topics for the member with longer abstinence. They include, "Being Sponsored and Becoming a Sponsor", "Value of Slogans," and "Big Book Study." The third workshop will be focusing on building membership with topics, "Attracting and Retaining Newcomers," and, "Member Retention. There is more exciting topics so do not miss the workshops. 🌐

F-E-A-R

By Kimberly C.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTOR

Fear seems to be at the base of so many aspects of my disease. It seems I am afraid all the time. A new social situation: what if they don't like me? An important project at work: what if I'm not good enough? My mother-in-law calls: what if she wants me to do more than I can? What if, what if, what if... Sometimes the fear presents itself simply as free floating anxiety, and then it's just "what if something happens?" or "what if I mess up?"

Before I came into OA, my primary reaction to fear was avoidance. I avoided new social situations, dodged high profile projects and carefully used caller ID to miss certain

phone calls. Perhaps you've heard the saying that F.E.A.R. means "F... Everything And Run". Well, that's essentially what I did – I ran from the situations that frightened me, straight into the food.

Of course, I didn't realize I was doing that. It's just that nothing took the edge off the anxiety the way overeating did. It could be a favorite binge food, or just a PILE of *any* food – enough to eat calmed the twirling "what ifs" that tortured my mind. That's not an option for me today in my recovery, so I've developed different ways of dealing with my fears. When I remember that I'm no longer running the show, I don't feel so much fear. When it does crop up, the Big Book tells me to remember to trust infinite God rather than my finite self – and to ask God to remove the fear and direct my attention to what He would have me be. It's amazing how much less fear I feel when I'm thinking about what God would have me be and do instead of trying to figure out what *I* think I should do! Still, fear and anxiety do crop up in my life today. When I can't quite make the spiritual connection the Big Book suggests, it helps me to remember another meaning of F.E.A.R.: **Face Everything And Recover**. One of the gifts of abstinence is the ability to do things even though I am afraid – the willingness to do things that I don't *want* to do. In facing the situations I tried to dodge in the past, I find the reality is never quite as bad as the "what-ifs" wanted me to believe.

SEE F-E-A-R ON PAGE 2

CONTENETS

PAGE 2

★Meeting News

★F-E-A-R Continued

★Facing Fear Without Food

PAGE 3

★Experiencing the Promises

THE BACK SIDE

★OA Promise

★Slogan of the Month

★Call for Articles

Meeting News

By Mike B.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Sometimes no news is good news. There is not much to report this month. Still Monday and Wednesday need support in Collegeville. No new meetings this month. Stay tuned for more next month. 🌱

F-E-A-R

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The fact of the matter is, I can "feel the fear and do it anyway." It's just that idea never occurred to me when I was eating! Abstinence gives me the clarity I need to face situations and deal with them as they are, and the willingness to take action even when I'm frightened. When I need help, I can reach out to prayer, the steps and tools or program friends to help me "take the edge off," rather than to excess food. And in doing so, I safeguard my recovery. 🌱

Facing Fear Without Food

By Virginia G.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTOR

I had lived in a tuff neighborhood, survived emotional abandonment and neglect as a child, and had become a parenting child at a very young age so I was very independent. Fear? I wasn't afraid.

At the age of 36, 150 pounds overweight, depressed and with all the exhausted strength I had left trying to just get through the basics of a day between waking up and going to bed, I walked into the rooms of OA in a state of willingness. Finally, I had the willingness to learn how to have a better life. People often talked about fear. For many years in OA I listened, believing I was not plagued by fear. No, I was not afraid to make decisions, to re-mortgage my house, live alone after my husband died, raise my three children, be in the dark, encounter a thunderstorm.

If you like everyone you've met in OA, you haven't been to enough meetings.

Through working the steps, listening to others at meetings and actually feeling my feelings I came to be able to identify many fears that were now clear to me. Once I could identify fear I could learn to work through its crippling hold on my life. Turns out it was the following types of fear that were the deadliest: fear of saying no, of saying yes, of disapproval, of not doing enough, getting enough, being enough. Fear of not having my desires, not having enough time or having too much time. Fear of asking for help or asking for anything! Fear of success and fear of failure, and oh, yes...of course the fear of what you were thinking about me and for this compulsive overeater especially, **the fear of intimacy.**

Under the thought/feeling suppression induced by overeating was my deepest personal fear...if you knew me of course you would go away like my father did or like my mother's disease caused her to do, my false belief was that no one wanted to know me.

When I came into the rooms of OA no one did. How could they? I did not know myself. Fear was a large part of the chain of addiction that kept me hiding in the food and the eventual fortress of a 315 pound body that all the extra food had produced.

Today, I feel fear and I use honesty as my guideline. Do I really want to say yes?

Do I need to tell you that I am not in agreement with you and have or pray for the courage to stay with any uncomfortable feelings I may experience? After all, I have learned that feelings do change. When I am happy, sad, content or angry I do not need to pretend anything else to please you.

I am no longer afraid to be exactly who I am today.

What a gift! Thank you H.P. for OA and the new life or changed life I live today.

Fear without food is able to be looked at, processed and managed.

Compulsive overeating keeps fear sunken, hidden, denied, suppressed and eventually infects me with a spiritual death that only other OA's can understand.

Thank you H.P. and every other compulsive overeater I have ever met in the rooms of OA for setting me free of food obsession. I am truly grateful.

Experiencing the Promises

By Kathy K.

FELLOW OVEREATER

When I heard the promises years ago I felt far from experiencing them. But now they are becoming real to me.

... "new freedom"-Most days are free from food thoughts and cravings. I plan my food and forget it and fill my life between meals with work, play, service, love and creativity.

... "new happiness"-I choose to be happy and find delight in the smallest things-my dog, sunshine on autumn leaves, even in rain. When hurt I allow myself to feel the pain, let it pass, and emerge once again into happiness.

... "not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it"-Once a troubling memory or situation is exposed to steps 4 through 9 there is nothing more to do but let it go. The pain of the past is what brought me to the recovery I have today.

... "comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace"-Anxious was my middle name. Practicing step 10 keeps me at peace with myself and others. I'm learning to pause for spot checks during the day. Did I forget to do something? Am I at peace with those around me? Are my needs being met or am I allowing myself to be the victim? I crawl into my bed without regrets and usually sleep well.

... "our experience can benefit others"-At my first OA meeting I heard people share their experience, strength and hope. They had also done insane things with food and I was no longer

alone. Sharing my experience can help others the same way I have been helped.

... "feeling of uselessness and self pity will disappear"-There is no end to the useful things I can do in OA. I can lead a meeting, write an article, pack up the literature, and just stay abstinent. There is little time for self pity. And when I do indulge it doesn't last because I prefer happiness and am soon looking at things for which I am grateful.

... "I lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows"-The attention no longer needs to be on me. I have genuine concern and love for my fellow OA members. Compulsive overeating is a selfish behavior and I am no help to anyone when I'm in the food. Abstinence keeps me open so that

God's love can flow through me to others.

... "fear of people"-OA is a safe place in which to practice relationships.

... fear "of economic insecurity"- If or when I face economic difficulty the steps, HP, and the fellowship will still be there for me.

... "how to handle situations which used to baffle us"-Steps 3 and 11 are the answer here. The steps and tools open us to the wisdom of HP and we will find that "God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." ☺

KICK START

YOUR RECOVERY FOR THE NEW YEAR
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP 1

Sunday, January 21, 2007

2:30 to 5:30 PM

Unitarian Universalis Church of
Delaware County (UUC of DC)

145 West Rose Tree Road

Media, PA 19063

NEXT WORKSHOP SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2006

<http://www.oa-brandywine.org/>

OA Promise

I PUT MY HANDS IN YOURS AND TOGETHER WE CAN DO WHAT WE COULD NEVER DO ALONE! NO LONGER IS THERE A SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS, NO LONGER MUST WE EACH DEPEND UPON OUR OWN UNSTEADY WILLPOWER. WE ARE ALL TOGETHER NOW, REACHING OUT OUR HANDS FOR POWER AND STRENGTH GREATER THAN OURS, AND AS WE JOIN HANDS, WE FIND LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING BEYOND OUR WILDEST DREAMS.

Slogan of the Month

OA is not for those who need it, only for those who want it.

...And Even More Revealed

Laura S.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTOR

Upon reflecting on the past two years in this program, I have recently been very aware of all that I have to be grateful for. I am a college student who was fortunate enough to find OA during my senior year of high school. Because of the abstinence that the program allows me to have one day at a time, I am seeing clearly how different my life has become.

I can remember my pre-program days when I would go to bed at night feeling useless because I had nothing to show for the previous 24 hours. When I was in my disease, food consumed my mind and occupied all of its space. I had no motivation to do anything productive. My only focus was on finding something more to eat. I am grateful that living abstinely allows me to feel good about the way that I spend my time. I can move forward in my education with confidence. I have the hope of being a teacher in the

not-too-distant future, and having the opportunity to affect the lives of my future students. OA has brought me to a place where I can truly see my worth. I can see that I too has created for a purpose by my all-knowing, all-loving Higher Power.

Recently, as I have been working on my fourth step inventory, I have become overwhelmed with all that there is to be changed in me. One defect of character that has been glaring lately has been procrastination, and I was writing about it just this morning. Even writing this article is a task that I have put off. Thanks to my sponsor's persistence, I finally have something to submit. (My sponsor gave me the assignment to write an article for the newsletter last Spring!) But I am realizing that the recognition alone of this defect is the beginning of its removal. I have hope that one day God will remove it all together along with my other defects. He is allowing me to change in his perfect timing.

I am grateful that this program is for life. There is no deadline on which I have to reach perfection. I am in the process, moving forward at the pace that my Higher Power knows is best for me. I find that I am able to take from both my strengths and struggles with abstinence. During the times when I am feeling strong in this program, my Higher Power allows me to have hope for

the next day. During my trying times in my abstinence and recovery, I am able to learn and grow. I am able to live each day, knowing that it is exactly the way that it is supposed to be. I find hope in all that is yet to be revealed. ☺

Call For Articles

For January's Recovery Newsletter please write on topics:

1. Welcome Dear Newcomers
2. My New Life in OA

ARTICLES DUE:

Noon Saturday 16 December 2006

E-MAIL ARTICLE TO:

Newsletter@oa-brandywine.org

Brandywine Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

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