

LETTERS OF HOPE

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"The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual OA member and do not necessarily represent those of the Director, DMI, or OA as a whole."

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HP Calling

For the past several months, I have been sensing that my Higher Power is calling me to make some rather large changes in my life. One is to change my food plan to address an issue that I suspect is food-related. The other is to address an emotional/spiritual issue. While food changes scare me, digging into emotions scare me even more.

A number of years ago, my husband and I went to counseling for our marriage. We each took a psychological test, and my results showed that I had extremely blunted emotional responses. The counselor said that my expressed response would have to be multiplied by a factor of ten or more to represent my true feelings.

That statement planted itself in my memory. I have known since college days that I had to have solitude to get in touch with my own feelings. Apparently, even when I am aware of emotions, I don't let myself feel in any depth. I believe that emotional blunting has affected so much in my life. I read about people following their passions, but what are my passions? Occasionally I get small clues, but suspect that my mind won't allow anything beyond that. I've never known how to address this idea of passions.

However, the program is teaching me that I should follow what HP has set in front of me as the next right thing. Right now, one of those things is OA. I will continue to go to my three meetings a week, talk to my sponsor as often as possible, and work at using the tools more often. The shell I have built so carefully around my feelings is thinning a bit, and I am allowing a few more people to move closer.

The feelings that I have allowed in so far haven't killed me, although they are sometimes quite painful. I have realized that to feel the joy, I will have to feel the pain also. I'm scared. Still, I know that I have my friends in OA and my HP to hold my hand if I can reach that hand out. I am so grateful for the Twelve Steps that lead me where I need to go.

By Betty

Focus on Steps 5 & 6

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs" and "became entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

OA 12 & 12

In practicing Steps 5 & 6, we:

1. Have met our Higher Power with our Step 4 inventory, and have selected a trustworthy and understanding person, (often our sponsor, spiritual leader, or counselor) and shared our inventory with him/her.
2. Are praying for the willingness to let go of our faults, even if we do not know who we will be without them, and are working towards recognizing how our faults interfere with our happiness, the ability to be of service to others, and our connection to our Higher Power.

While Step 4 required courage to look honestly at ourselves, Step 5 asks that we have the courage to share our findings with another. It is a testament to our continued commitment to our program of recovery. It is also a major stride towards ending the isolation we have experienced through living actively in our disease. We experience the love and acceptance of another person, and the peace that comes with freedom from secrecy. We experience growing acceptance and love for ourselves, and are brought closer to our Higher Power.

In Step 6, we work towards a willingness to surrender to our Higher Power the character defects we have uncovered. Prayer, meditation, and writing can help us recognize how our defects have hurt ourselves and others, preparing us to be entirely ready that they should be removed. Having worked Steps 5 and 6, we can experience the joy and healing of recovery on an even deeper level.

OA 12 & 12: pages 46-76

The Big Book of AA: pages 72-76

Voices of Recovery pages 15, 59, 153, 164, 216-17, 263, 304, 314, 13, 106, 162

For Today pages 171, 290, 299, 308

A Message from Our Convention Chair

On the weekend of February 28-March 2, we hosted the Region III Convention & Assembly during our regular annual convention, the "Texas 12-Step." As the chair of the convention planning committee, I had the honor of being the "Voice of the Convention." I had a wonderful time working with my team and attending the convention. It was a weekend filled with recovery and love. We had a great time at the Westin DFW, which is a different hotel than we had used for the two previous years. If you didn't make it this year, seriously consider attending in 2015.

The Dallas Metroplex Intergroup is seeking a new theme for the 2015 convention, and we will award a free registration to the person who submits the winning idea. If you have an idea for the theme, please send it to me at: joycarrico@gmail.com. We will need to make the decision soon so that we can move forward with the planning of the 2015 Convention. Send me your inspirational thoughts, and maybe you will attend next year for free!

Upcoming Retreat

The McKinney Care and Share group is hosting the 11th annual silent OA retreat, September 5-7 at Montserrat Retreat house on Lake Dallas. The cost this year is \$230, and the flyer with registration forms and details can be found at

www.OADallas.org

Please feel free to contact Rosemary at 757-389-2996 with any questions.

Heard at a Meeting

- "Face your stuff or stuff your face!"
- "I need to stay in the present. Otherwise, I get caught up in the wreckage of my future."
- "I have a living problem, not an eating problem."
- "We have a disease that tells us we don't have a disease."
- "Pray daily, God is easier to talk to than most people."
- "Relapse starts long before food is overeaten."
- "A smooth sea never made a skillful sailor."

Collected and Shared by Kay, Jan, and Mary

It Works If You Work It

It took me a while in relapse to recognize why I could not stay abstinent.

Although relapsed, I was doing something right: I was using the tools. I kept coming to meetings, reading program literature and listening to OA speakers on tape. One day I heard a long-timer say, "this program is not for people who need it, or our rooms would be packed. It is not even for people who want it, because everyone in the rooms wants it. **It is for people that work it!**"

I had one of those "ah-ha" moments... I need the program, and I knew that back in 2007 at my first meeting. I clearly want recovery since I keep coming back... but am I working the program? Working the program is not merely using the tools, but is working the steps to the best of my ability. I stopped trying to find abstinence on my own and started working the steps - and voila! - abstinence found me. My recovery reminds me of what we read about the promises at every meeting: "They will always materialize IF WE WORK FOR THEM."

By Anonymous in Dallas

What I Know for Sure

I have been in the rooms of OA for 7 years, and my abstinence date is 2/21/07. Yippee! What I know for sure is based on experience, program literature, and what I have learned at meetings.

- Food is not the first thing to go when you are in relapse; failing to use the tools comes first.
- Meetings make a huge difference!
- Some kind of service is imperative to help us get out of our selfish ways: arrange the chairs, help clean up; anything!
- A plan is better than no plan.
- I have a clear-cut definition for my abstinence, so that at the end of the day I can answer the question, “Was I abstinent or not?” I can sleep better knowing where I stand.
- Working my program is MY responsibility, not my sponsor’s.
- Sponsoring others is also good for me. It strengthens my program!
- Saying negative things about myself and shaming myself is hurtful and unproductive.
- Mistakes and slips are lessons learned. Learn from them and move on.
- When you come, you are free to leave; when you leave, you are free to come back, but those who stay get better!
- Do something for your program every day: read, write, call; go to a meeting. Keep OA in your present consciousness.
- Get a buddy who is not your sponsor.
- Listen to podcasts at www.oalaig.org You’ll realize you are not the only ‘crazy’ one out there when it comes to food!
- Recovery is the only way to go through life. It gives us tools to live “out there.”
- Reporting your food is as much for you as it is for your sponsor. You can become a “conscious observer” and more readily see where your problems lie. Also, knowing you will have to tell someone helps you make abstinent food choices.
- Diets do not work long term! The OA program helps you get to the root of what is going on in your life. Temptation is an opportunity to peek into the crack in the sidewalk and see what feeling is really behind the craving. Do not miss that opportunity!

Thanks for letting me share.

Yours in service,

Amy S.

Progress, Not Perfection

This program slogan is a constant reminder to me in my journey of recovery. This idea frees me from the “should-haves” and the “what-ifs” of my past, and it changes my perception of myself and where I am today. Through this slogan I can recognize that my friends, family and co-workers will never be perfect, and one day I will die as an imperfect person in an imperfect world. But as I have come to see and understand, perfection was never the genuine goal. The obsession with perfection will keep me in the disease and focused on the negative, living in misery. The goal is to move in the direction of recovery, and work towards healthy changes: In other words, progress! Some days progress is made faster than others, so I need not apply any unrealistic ideas of perfection to the speed of my recovery, either! The idea of progress frees me from the pressure of perfection, keeps my energy focused on what I *can* do, and allows me to celebrate the miracles of life in program and love myself exactly as I am today.

By Anonymous

If you have a recovery story of your own to tell, please submit it to rosej2911@yahoo.com

OA Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex:

Sun	10:00 am	Richardson - DMI Svc Center, 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (ent #2 - entry code 0333*)	Literature - For Today
Sun	4:00 pm	Tyler – Christ Church Episcopal, 118 S. Bois D’Arc. Brandi, 903-316-8002	Open
Sun	6:00 pm	Richardson - DMI Svc Center, 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance # 2 - entry code 0333*)(3rd Sunday of month only)	Intergroup Business Meeting
Sun	7:00 pm	Dallas - Congregation Ohr Hatorah - 6324 Churchill Way, btwn Preston & Hillcrest Phone Mtg also: 712-775-7100, access# 897214	90 Day and Phone
Mon	Noon	Plano - Prairie Creek Baptist Church, 3201 W. 15th Street, Room 103	Leader's choice
Mon	12:10 pm	Dallas - St. Matthews Episcopal Cathedral 5100 Ross Ave., Garrett Hall, The Garrett Room. Park off Garrett Ave in circle drive - use side ent. w/ chair ramp, ring bell	Literature - For Today
Mon	7:00 pm	Richardson - Arapaho Methodist Church, Arapaho at Coit. Anna, 214-663-5895	Literature/Discussion
Mon	7:00 pm	Duncanville - Charlton Methodist Hospital, 3500 Wheatland, 3rd floor, Conf Room 5	OA12&12/Big Book
Mon	7:30 pm	Lewisville- First United Methodist Church, 907 W. Main Street, Room 123 (near the church offices). Off I-35 on Main Street. Michele T., 972-539-4248	Leader's Choice Closed Meeting
Tues	10:00 am	Mesquite - Ridge Park Christian Church - 2701 N. Town East Road, Parlor	Literature
Tues	Noon	Plano - Prairie Creek Baptist Church, 3201 W.15th St. Plano, Room 103	Abstinence Lit.
Tues	5:30 pm	Mineola-St. Dunston’s Episcopal Church, 800 N. Johnson St.	
Tues	6:00 pm	Palestine - Palestine Regional Rehab Hospital (Dogwood Room), 4000 S. Loop 256	Leader’s Choice
Tues	6:00 pm	Plano – New Location—2109 W. Parker Rd., Ste 728, Plano. Call Carol B. for directions, 214-228-2830.	
Tues	7:15 pm	Denton – First Baptist Church, 1100 Malone St, Room S-110	
Tues	7:30 pm	Farmers Branch – Faith Un. Presbyter. Church, 12717 Marsh Lane, 1 block N of LBJ	Lit—OA 12&12
Wed	noon	Plano – Prairie Creek Baptist Church, 3201 W. 15 th Street, Room 103	Literature – Lifeline
Wed	12:10 pm	Dallas – Holy Trinity Cath. Church, 3826 Gilbert Ave., Commun. Life Ctr. Media Room	Lit–Abstinence
Wed	7:00 pm	Lewisville – First United Methodist Church, 907 W. Main Street, Family Life Center (behind church) – 2 nd floor – Room 303	Step Study / Writing
Wed	6:30 pm	Phone Meeting: 712-775-7100 access# 897214	90 Day Phone
Wed	7:30 pm	McKinney Care and Share – Medical Ctr of McKinney, 130 N. Central Expressway	Leader’s Choice
Thur	12:10	Dallas – Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 3826 Gilbert Ave, Community Life Ctr. Media Room	Lit–OA 12 & 12
Thur	noon	Tyler – First Christian Church, 4202 S. Broadway, Tyler,	Open
Thur	noon	Plano – Prairie Creek Baptist Church, 3201 W. 15 th St. Plano, Room 103	Writing
Thur	noon	Sherman – Wood Street Church of Christ, 2100 N. Wood St <i>Lunchtime meeting please feel free to bring your sack lunch!</i>	Open
Thur	7:00 pm	Richardson – DMI Svc Center, 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance # 2 – entry code is 0333*)	Discuss Lit
Thur	7:00 pm	Mesquite – Eastridge Park Christian Church, 2701 North Town East Blvd. Parlor Room	Step Study
Fri	10:00 am	Mesquite – First United Methodist Church – 300 North Galloway	Literature
Fri	noon	Plano – Prairie Creek Baptist Church, 3201 W. 15 th Street, Room 103	Literature – Big Book
Sat	7:00 am	Plano – ODAAT 2109 W. Parker Road, Suite 728, Plano	Men’s Meeting
Sat	9:00 am	Plano – New Location—2109 W. Parker Rd., Ste 728, Plano. Call Carol B. for directions, 214-228-2830.	Discuss Lit
Sat	9:00 am	Frisco – First United Methodist Church, 7659 Preston Road, Room #1 in the Ministries Building (brick building on the south side)	Leader’s Choice Closed Meeting
Sat	9:00 am	Whitehouse– Gateway Baptist Church, 101 Leisure Lane. Lee, 903-571-8938	Newcomer Meeting
Sat	10 am	Palestine - Palestine Regional Rehab Hospital (Dogwood Room) - 4000 S. Loop 256- Contact for both Tues and Sat meetings is Cheryl, 903-948-2956	Steps/Traditions/Topics
Sat	11:00 am	Farmers Branch - Faith United Presby. Church, 12717 Marsh Lane, 1 block N of LBJ	Lit-Steps & Trads
Sat	noon	Dallas - Our Redeemer Lutheran Church - 7611 Park Lane at Boedecker. Behind sanctuary from Boedecker, <i>Call Ryan R for info, 469-233-0945</i>	Men’s Meeting

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