central florida intergroup
overeaters anonymous

New Beginnings April '10

a journal of experience, strength & hope

Dear OA Friends,

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 20th Annual OA Florida State Convention such a success this year. For the past three years the convention was held in Cocoa beach and now it is time for a new location. Mark your calendars Central Florida because the 2011 Florida State Convention is going to be held in Altamont Springs February 25-27, 2011. In our next issue will be information on how you can offer service to this wonderful event.

Also in your next issue you will find information about what happened at the OA Region 8 Business and Recovery conference in Memphis during the weekend of March 19-21.

Please remember that this newsletter needs your experience, strength and hope! Please keep sending in your articles. Your story will help someone else today!

Jane C.

Your Trusted Servants for Central Florida Intergroup

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To order literature send an E mail to **literature@oacfi.org**

NEW BEGINNINGS

The monthly newsletter of the Central Florida Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. The newsletter presents experiences and opinions of OA members and is not to be attributed to OA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement either by OA, or the Central Florida Intergroup. Comments, suggestions, and articles sharing your personal experience, strength, and hope of recovery in the OA fellowship are encouraged. Please email your articles and suggestions to **newsletter@oacfi.org**

You can read *monthly editions of New Beginnings on line at www.oacfi.org*

SEND ARTICLES TO: **Newsletter Editor, CFL Intergroup, P.O. Box 180293, Casselberry, FL 32718-0293 OR newsletter@oacfi.org**

If your article is for a particular month/topic, please submit by the 1st Saturday of the preceding month. Individuals may reprint articles from New Beginnings, crediting one's source. ***PLEASE,* when emailing anything to newsletter@oacfi.org, type OA NEWSLETTER in the subject heading.**

Next Intergroup Meeting: February 13th, at 10:00am

St. Marks Presbyterian Church
1021 Palm Springs Drive
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701

World Service Web Site http://www.oa.org **Region 8 Web Site http://oaregion8.org**

OA ON LINE AND TELEPHONE MEETINGS

For a current list of telephone and online meetings go to OA.org. Put your cursor over **Meetings** on the tool bar. Click on Find an Online/Telephone Meeting. On the page you are taken to go toward the bottom and **select your meeting type**. **Select the day** you would like to participate or none to get the full list. Then click on **Find Meetings.** Go down the list and click on the icon in the column "**Click to View**" next to the meeting you are interested in for all the details about the meeting. See your group's designated downloader for list copies.

Watch out for H.A.L.T.

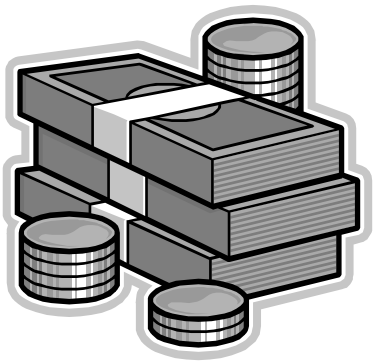
If you get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired

Reach out/make a call/come to a meeting!

Thoughts to Digest

Watch out for BLTs: Bites, Licks & Tastes are triggers. ♦

Failure does not have to be fatal ♦ I don't have all the answers and that is okay because I do not even know all the questions ♦ Abstinence first—absolutely ♦ Isolation is the dark room where we develop our negatives ♦ Take an action, then let go of the results. ♦ Easy does it!



Treasurer's Report
February 2010

	Group Contributions	
Mon	Kissimmee Fl Hospital	187.80
Mon	Leesburg Unity of Leesburg Church	45.00
Mon	Orange City Fl Hospital	30.00
Mon	Orlando, Holy Family	25.00
Mon	Winter Park St. John's Luthern Church	72.00
Mon	Winter Springs, Grace Presbyterian	19.00
Tue	Maitland Asbury United Methodist Church	300.00
Tue	Winter Park St. John's Luthern	51.00
Tue	The Villages, Chatham Rec Ctr.	30.00
Wed	Lady Lake United Methodist Church	75.00
Wed	Tavares First United Methodist Church	60.00
Wed	Longwood St. Stephen's Lutheran	50.00
Wed	Orlando Fl Hosp E Lk Underhill	30.00
Wed	Winter Park St. John's Luthern Church	72.00
Thurs	Lady Lake, North Lake Presbyterian	25.00
Thurs	Longwood Wekiva Presbyterian	50.00
Thurs	Ocoee -- Health Central	25.00
Fri	Lady Lake , Library	75.00
Fri	Orlando, St. Lukes United Methodist	15.00
Fri	Winter Park St. Peter and Paul	3.00
Sat	Altamonte Springs St Mary Magdalen	80.00
Sat	Central Florida Intergroup Mtg.	60.33
	Special collection Region 8 and WSO	19.53
Sat	Orlando -- Steppers	40.00
Sat	Dr. Phillips (Orlando Sand Lake) Hospital	60.00
Sat	The Villages, Hibiscus Village Rec. Ctr	136.00
Sat	Winter Park St. John's Lutheran	150.00
	Total Group Contributions	1785.66

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

After years of struggling to control my weight and my food, I was finally able to "surrender" to the program. I went to meetings regularly, found a sponsor who had what I wanted, read some of the literature, and grudgingly made a few phone calls. I was losing weight and "working it." I didn't understand why I had to make a list of the persons, places and things that I resented or feared. How the heck did this have anything to do with food scales, portions, or losing weight?

My sponsor gently reminded me that OA offered a spiritual solution, not a diet club, and suggested that I inventory a little each day. I eked out a few lines, but before long, I stopped. This just didn't make any sense to me. I re-read "How it works" in the AA "Big Book" and chapter 4 in the OA "12 & 12." I then went on the internet and re-searched how other OA's did their inventories. Still not satisfied, I checked out other 12-step program websites, looking for how they structured their inventories and…as you may have guessed, the more I researched and tried to analyze the step, the less time I had to actually do the step.

After four months of gentle phone reminders later, my sponsor was not quite as gentle when she stated in no un-certain terms that I was delaying my recovery and putting my abstinence in big trouble by not working the steps. But, "I've been working the steps!" I exclaimed. "Look at all the work I've done!" She then asked me how many pages of my inventory I had completed, and as I looked at the relatively clean binder of lined paper, I was too ashamed to answer her honestly, so I remained silent. She sensed it over the phone, and very soberly told me to "just do it." Then she hung up.

Two painful months later, I finished that inventory. It was not pretty and I was pretty sure it wasn't perfect at all, but it was done. I called my sponsor the same day and we set up a time to meet and for me to give it away. Two years later, after a bunch of inventories, steps and over 100 lbs lost, I'm glad I finally took my sponsor's suggestion to heart.

I realize that after a lifetime of hiding from life, it had been too scary for this newly abstinent OA to actually come face to face with my shortcomings, fears and prejudices. Once I was gently pushed through this process, however, I could begin to see the patterns of fear which had so dominated every fiber of my being. Over and over again, "I wasn't good enough," "I wasn't loved enough," or "I didn't have enough," covered the pages of that inventory and started to bring to light the reason why I ate compulsively. It was only then that HP was able to start healing the wreckage of my past and that my journey to "happy destiny" could honestly and truly begin.

-Anonymous

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral *inventory of ourselves.*

"…As we took an honest look at the past, at who we'd been and what we'd done, we began to understand ourselves better. That understanding was the beginning of emotional healing."

"Writing our step-four inventory enabled us to begin cleaning up the messes of the past so we could start life over, afresh."

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous pg. 29.

"As we work the fourth step, we develop a new ability to see our own dishonesty and a greater willingness to live by the truth."

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous pg. 30.

"As we reach the end of step four…We are moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience."

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous pg. 44.

"What do I need to write about? I do not have to be afraid to look into my heart and put down what I find."

For Today pg 178.

"The fourth step inventory, taken not once, but repeatedly allows me to keep yesterday as a teacher on an ongoing basis; and everything I learn advances my recovery."

For Today pg 273.

"This requires complete disclosure and absolute honesty. I can make no excuses for my behavior, only a bare bones examination of my conduct."

Voices of Recovery pg 92.

Tradition 4: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

Akin to individual OA members, our groups are alike in spirit but retain individual personalities. Some meetings study OA literature. Some focus on a speaker and open sharing. Other groups might pick a different concept each time they meet and discuss it at length while another group may focus completely on the needs of newcomers. Some meetings allow mention of foods and others do not. It is the group conscience of a meeting that decides these things—not any higher 'OA' authority. To be a 'real OA meeting' all a group needs do is be open to anyone who has a desire to stop eating compulsively. OA groups can have a specific focus, such as men's issues or body image but they are all open to anyone who has a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Anonymous

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Meetings, Telephone, Sponsorship, Anonymity, Service, Plan of Eating, Writing, Literature

We need your experience, strength and hope!

Please write an article to appear in New Beginnings for May, June or July. We are seeking articles describing how one or more of the tools of recovery has helped in your own recovery. Is sponsorship your strength? Do you find your greatest hope in outreach calls? Has adherence to a food plan helped you find greater serenity in your daily life? Your experience will give hope to other compulsive overeaters. Please email your article to:

newsletter@oacfi.org

Or, mail your article to
Newsletter Editor, CFL Intergroup, P.O. Box 180293, Casselberry, FL 32718-0293

When your head
begins
to swell your mind
stops growing

A First Step Prayer

Today, I ask for help with my addiction. Denial has kept me from seeing how powerless I am and how my life is unmanageable. I need to learn and remember that I have an incurable illness and that abstinence is the only way to deal with it.

Amen.!

My First OA Florida State Convention

It was a bit overwhelming walking into the opening ceremonies of the 20th Anniversary of the OA convention. I arrived from an abstinent dinner with five other OA'ers. It was a standing room only crowd. We heard an amazing speaker and some really great, honest sharing from people in the crowd. How amazing it was to have over a hundred people standing in circles, or reaching across chairs, holding hands and saying the Serenity Prayer. I could feel the power in recovery from each hand I took. What a great way to start off the weekend activities!

On Saturday, I went to a Men's meeting, which was very impressive. We had about 20 men led by a speaker with a very powerful story. Then after the speaker spoke, one man after another got up to the mike to speak open and honestly, unlike the way most of us were brought up to believe men should act. For myself, I grew up with the belief that men never cried, never showed weakness or vulnerability, and never spoke of their feelings. It was a good feeling seeing us all share with each other and then hold hands to close the meeting with the Third Step Prayer.

On Sunday, the Dialogue with God workshop is not something I will soon forget. We did some letter writing to God and to ourselves from God that was a very powerful exercise. Some of the sharing was so gut wrenching with emotions, it left many in tears. I do not think anyone left that workshop without hugging someone.

If I had to pick one thing that really stuck with my about this weekend, it was definitely service. From the people setting up, to the people manning the hospitality suite, to the person who donated his time to tape all the speakers, to the people who led all the workshops, to the speakers, to the people who shared, etc. It definitely proved that you have to give it away in order to keep it. You could see the hap-

CALLING ON ALL CENTRAL FLORIDA INTEGROUP MEETINGS

Currently, OA in Central Florida has no newcomer meetings. We can all appreciate the importance of newcomers. Discuss with your group whether your meeting may be interested in starting a newcomer meeting. One suggestion is to have the newcomer meeting 30 minutes before the regular meeting, with a rotating schedule of 4 people who would volunteer to lead the meeting if a newcomer came. That way, each of the 4 people would possibly only have to be there 30 minutes early once a month.

Human Limits and the Recovering Addict

Can there be "too much" of a good thing? Too much fellowship, too much service? You might be like me and answer "no", but I was recently reminded of my ordinary human limits in an unexpected way. This last weekend was the 20th Anniversary of the OA Florida State Convention. It was my second convention and I had a great time learning from, eating with and hugging a lot of friends, old and new. It was a busy weekend going to all the meetings and workshops, chatting during meals, on the beach, in the halls and late night in the boutique, and helping set up and take down displays. It was a weekend stuffed full of recovery and I didn't want to miss any of it.

Imagine my surprise when Monday afternoon rolled around and I found myself with thoughts and feelings of alienation, irritability and discontent. People began to annoy me, lines seemed longer, traffic moved slower. I didn't want to go to a book study that I usually loved. My thighs started looking too large to me. I even started to have fears that my daily food wasn't going to be enough. I was definitely *not* in a good place.

Thank HP, I called my sponsor, ranting as I tried to explain all of this and also feeling guilty since I'd just had this wonderful weekend of recovery. She was very calm. She didn't get excited or judge me or try to fix me. She took time and listened to everything I had to say (even though she was in the middle of spending time with friends) and she suggested I take some time alone for myself tonight and write. So I did.

I slowed down that night and relaxed and prayed. I took the literal flood of venomous thoughts and pushed them into the sieve of the pen/keyboard and onto paper/screen. By exercising these disciplines, I realize that I had severely overextended myself this weekend. I had gone to bed very late and woke up very early and had not had nearly enough sleep for healthy brain function. I took no quiet time to meditate with HP or even to simply disconnect from the world.

I had wanted to give all that I could and take in all that I could, forgetting my physical and mental limits. I had "gorged" myself on the experiences of the weekend, which is not healthy for my addictive mind and body. I was blessed to have enough awareness to reach out for help and not simply continue to blame myself or others. So I prayed and I wrote and I meditated and I slept and today I don't feel anything like that person I was yesterday. People are my family again and life is Beautiful, for today. – Dave C.

DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH FOOD?

- **Do you eat when you're not hungry?**
- **Do you go on eating binges for no apparent reason?**
- **Do you have feelings of guilt and remorse after overeating?**
- **Do you give too much time and thought to food?**
- **Do you look forward with pleasure and anticipation to the time when you can eat alone?**
- **Do you plan these secret binges ahead of time?**
- **Do you eat sensibly before others and make up for it alone?**

Overeater's Anonymous Can Help

No Dues

No Fees

For More Information Phone: 1-888-294-4216

Web: http://www.oacfi.org Email: oacfi@oacfi.org

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