

## Slogans to Recover by

- ♥ Pain is inevitable; Suffering is optional.
- ♥ Resentments are like taking poison and expecting the other guy to die. ♥ **FEAR = False Evidence Appearing Real.** ♥ **Character Defects - if you spot it, you've got it.** ♥ Act with an attitude of gratitude.
- ♥ Resentments are acid - they destroy the vessel in which they are stored. ♥ **God may send a rowboat but we must work the oars.**



OA is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, hope, and the 12 steps of this program are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine: we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

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## Thank You

I am going through what feels to me like an epic event. Thank you OA for being! In last month's Serenity Times, I read how an epic event can cause relapse. That article has helped me determine in my mind that whatever I am going through and whatever is required of me, I will place a boundary around myself to get to at least one meeting a week, read OA Literature, and continue my service! I know that without God's help and the fellowship of OA it would be too easy to resort back to my old god, food and all the self-destruction that goes along with that. Thank you for this fellowship! I am a grateful member forever!!

Traca H

## New Discovery

This was a new discovery for me...podcasts. Check out these awesome websites of taped Meetings, Speakers and/or Literature Readings  
[www.oalaig.org/speakers-podcasts](http://www.oalaig.org/speakers-podcasts)  
[www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org) click on Podcast



## New Pathways

*I am not a scientist, but it seems my brain seeks to satisfy a certain level of compulsion. If I'm not satisfying it through one compulsion, another intensifies to meet the level. This is not a hopeless situation, though. From what little I know about the brain's workings, habitual ways of thinking become so deeply entrenched they result in "default" thought patterns.*

If that's true, maybe compulsions are a matter of deeply entrenched default patterns that compel me toward certain ways of thinking and behaving. I can reroute these powerful pathways, but it takes plenty of work by making a conscious effort to reinforce new ways of thinking. Perhaps that's why OA works for those who work it. Through the Steps and tools, we learn new ways of thinking that we reinforce over and over. Going to meetings and sharing experiences with others who are also trying new ways of thinking and acting outside of compulsion serve to redirect us from old, nonworking patterns. Perhaps the reason we can recover from but never be cured of compulsion is that our default pathways are like a set point. If our compulsive thinking and

acting is our default and we are not constantly reinforcing the new pathways, then these pathways “reset” to default mode.

I’ve been trying to understand my compulsions for a long time. I have come across some stuff that has led me to this theory about how compulsion works. I might be wrong. But if there’s anything to it, I hope scientists studying the brain are reading this and getting together with the medical community so they can help the myriad people suffering from compulsions. (When I imagine a world where people live free of compulsion, I see a happier, saner, freer world for *everyone*.)

I was watching a movie yesterday about a brilliant mathematician studying for his doctorate. He said through mathematics he sees amazing things others don’t. When he looks at numbers and formulas, he sees things my brain doesn’t seem to have the capacity to detect or to communicate to me. That made me think of how amazing it is that our brains work in unique ways; some can see things in a mathematic formula and others in a lump of clay.

I wouldn’t criticize a tree for not being a flower or a man for not being a woman. (Okay, maybe I have criticized my husband for not thinking like a woman, but that underscores my point.) Expecting a tree to be a flower leads to pointless frustration. A more apt analogy would be criticizing a word-processing application for not working like a spreadsheet application. Expecting software that’s programmed to work one way to work another way will lead to frustration. The good news is I can “reprogram” my thoughts and actions by always working to reinforce new patterns of thought and behavior. I must remember who I am. Compulsion is my default. If I want to live another way, I must keep working the new ways so my brain does not reset to the default.

I have learned I am not strong enough to overcome my default patterns alone. I am powerless over food, and being active in compulsion makes my life unmanageable. I need a Higher Power and the help that power makes available through OA to live free of compulsion and the chaos that comes with it.

— Anonymous, New Jersey USA

Reflecting on the above article:

This very first article in Lifeline March/April 2012 reminded me of a video I just watched Youtube Video on Toxic Thinking, by Dr. Caroline Leaf. She tells how our brains are wired and says, “Science is just now catching up with the Word of God.”

Step 11 says, Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

I know through His Word He wants me to “renew” my mind and one of the ways I do this is to think on, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think

on and weigh and take account of these things. Philippians 4:8. That is what I want programmed into my brain as my default, because I want my actions to reflect love. I “reprogram” my mind daily in scripture, and discover His will for me. I am recognizing “life” and “death” choices; Godly choices versus old default choices. Using food and sometimes alcohol to provide all my needs was killing me, literally. Seeking God’s will for my life and trusting in Him has made me alive spiritually, emotionally, and physically. My God sets me free from compulsion, when I think on Him and His will for me. Now even when I have a bad day, it is good! I am so grateful that OA along with the 12 Steps brought me out and continues to bring me out of old deadly default patterns of dealing and feeling and thinking, and brought me into a relationship with the living, loving God, who has a plan and a purpose and a future for me, to prosper me. I totally agree with the article I need to reprogram my thoughts; and I especially like the part that says, OA works for those who work it! At our meetings at the end we say, Keep coming back it works if you work it, and you are worth it!

Traca H



## Serenity Times, Publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup 2012 Meeting List:

### MONDAY

Deer Park (51567)

Open Meeting, Literature 11:30 a.m.  
In His Presence Fellowship Church  
1202 East P Street (Fellowship Hall)  
Deer Park TX 77536

Contact: Bekki S. 409-454-5720

### WEDNESDAY

Clear Lake (13244)

Literature (Big Book/12&12), 10 am  
Clear Lake United Methodist Church  
16335 El Camino Real Rm. 304

Contact Jean 281-488-2402, Kay 281-577-3881

### Intergroup Business Meeting

Jan., April, July, Oct.

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.

Bay Area Community of Christ Church  
Travis @ Austin Street

Contact: Kay H. 281-577-3881

### THURSDAY

Webster (30093)

6:30 p.m. Up the Street Club  
Suite 105, Big Book Study

Contact: Chuck B. 281-770-7539

### SATURDAY

Clear Lake (12635)

For Today/Discussion, 10:30 am  
House of Prayer Lutheran

14045 Space Center Blvd. Contact:  
Marcia 281-488-7684



Go to [oahouston.org](http://oahouston.org) for other meetings in this area.