

## Mark Your Calendar

### Newly Started Meeting

Recovery from Relapse Monday October 6  
Up the Street Club every Monday at 6:30 p.m.  
508 West NASA Pkwy

### Region 3 presents The Abstinence Workshop

facilitated by: Region 3 board member from Colorado  
Saturday, December 6, 2014

1 - 4 PM Kleberg Hall @ St George Episcopal Church  
4301 N Interstate 35 Austin, TX 78722

Contact Martha at 512 589 4620 [mchickadee@gmail.com](mailto:mchickadee@gmail.com)  
or Mercy at 512 363 3345 ~ [mercy.fudell@gmail.com](mailto:mercy.fudell@gmail.com)

We will also hold the drawing for the winner of a free trip for the  
Region 3 OA Cruise March 2015



Telephone Marathons for December  
Listed on Datebook Calendar at [oa.org](http://oa.org)

### December 12

#### Twelfth Step Within Day

To encourage OA service boards, meetings and individual  
members to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are  
still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors.



#### Region III Presents Sailing into Recovery

7-Night Cruise on Royal Caribbean's Navigator of the Seas

March 22-29, 2015 Welcome aboard OA'ers worldwide!

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 eating and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.

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### The Power of Negative Thinking. Really Positive

In my nearly seven years in OA and six months in another program / spiritual program I have discovered that walking in serenity is not really about doing anything but rather un-doing some of the stinking thinking, resentments, constant cold rage, etc. For now I am doing well with it. Next week or even tomorrow I may not do as well. The thing I have to remember is that even if these thoughts and feelings knock on my door I don't have to open it up to them. Like a thief passing through an empty house. Don't have to give them any energy.

One of the best places to start in my humble opinion is to realize what is and is not my responsibility. This leads me into realizing what I am not:

1. The CEO of the universe. The sun, the moon and the stars will follow their due course w/o much effort on my part. This comes with knowing what is and is not my responsibility.
2. The United Nations appointed mediator that is obligated to make peace among conflicting parties especially when they have no desire to cease and desist or have any desire for my help.
3. Anyone's Lord and Savior who is obligated to save people from their situations some of which they may have been responsible for in some way or another (much like myself in my own situations). This especially applies to those who think everyone is responsible for their well being except themselves.
4. A low interest, no interest, no payment banker. The Bank of Robert does not get bail outs for bad loans. If you can't do without a certain amount of money or an item best not to loan it.
5. A current member in good standing of the debate society where I am obligated to argue and prove my point of view. Debating rarely solves problems and often produces more heat than light. People (myself included) have the right to their "wrong" opinions. LOL.
6. A people pleaser. Often displeasing someone is more a matter of an offense not so much of doing but rather an offense of being. Not being a card carrying member of their clique is often reason for someone not to like you. If you do not mirror or echo them they will often get offended. If they don't see themselves or hear themselves in you then don't be shocked if they may not treat you well.
7. A 24/7 Open for Business establishment for all my resentments, regrets and anger issues. I can now hang the no solicitation sign and they usually obey it.
8. A Sunday morning TV Show talking head that feels obligated to provide comment and input to all situations many which don't even pertain to myself.

Power of negative thinking. Actually positive.

--Robert S

### Abstinent Holidays

I have maintained a more than 100 pd. Weight loss for 24 years of back to back abstinence and been blessed to experience over 2 decades of holidays and celebrations without eating compulsively. I have compiled tips and strategies for abstinence through the holidays based on my experience and that of others in recovery.

Cont. on next page

Planning is the key factor in maintaining abstinence through the holidays. It is asking for disaster to rely upon others, no matter how dear they are, to meet our needs. We must plan for family expectations about how the holidays are properly celebrated, for the special foods that make their once a year appearance, and for meals that are served at odd times. In addition, we must plan for the magnification of the existing stresses of family interactions.

We can avoid food-focused activities and instead plan abstinent ways to celebrate. Baking, purchasing food gifts or seeking out holiday recipe books and other food-focused media only indulges our disease. Why not instead create new holiday traditions and gatherings that don't involve food? These can be based on holiday decorating and crafts, movies, music, or gift-giving. We can also celebrate the entire season instead of a single day filled with high expectations. We can treat others or ourselves to some pampering or volunteer to help children or those in need. We can avoid unstructured time and not allow emotions or boredom to lead us to food.

For the times when it's necessary to attend a food-focused gathering, there are many strategies and tools to stay abstinent. The first is to remember that a food plan is a choice, not a punishment. Plan for the meal to include foods that allow you to remain abstinent, even if that means bringing backup foods. Avoid taking servings from a communal dish; weigh and measure in the kitchen instead. Enough is a feast, and now is a good time to offer gratitude for our physical needs being met. It's also a wonderful time to focus on the company and not the accompaniments.

To stay abstinent, we can also plan to respond from our portfolio of polite refusals: "No, thank you, I don't care for any right now." "I'm not hungry." "I'm still full." "That food upsets my stomach." "I have food allergies/dietary restrictions/problems with my blood sugar." "I prefer not to eat between meals." Some may ask about our abstinence. We can use this opportunity to carry the message.

We can plan to use the OA Tools before, during, and after holiday gatherings. Keep a list of OA contacts to telephone. Carry an issue of Lifeline or memorize passages to recite out loud. Go to meetings. Stay connected with sponsors and sponsees, including committing our food. Even if we commit generic choices, we will still demonstrate willingness and will feel accountable. Pray and meditate, even if a bathroom break is the only alone time. Write using an alphabetical, holiday themed gratitude list or write a letter asking for a recovery present or write a thank you note in advance to HP for the gift of an abstinent holiday.

I have a lifetime of regrets from eating compulsively 'however, I have never regretted ending the day knowing I have been abstinent. And I don't have to make New Year's resolutions to start a diet, begin exercising, or get my abstinence back. With my food, a holiday is just another date on the calendar, and this attitude means I have something to celebrate every single day.

Happy holiday! Happy every day!

--Ellen S., Laredo, TX USA

### Holiday Preparedness Wishing You Abstinence

To me, the holidays used to mean Thanksgiving and Christmas. In the 6 years I've been in OA, I have come to think of the holidays as the time from mid-September, when Halloween candy starts appearing in stores, to the end of February when the last of the Valentine's Day treats disappear.

I have had years in program when I barely noticed the insane amounts of holiday food and was able to enjoy spending time with family and friends. Those were times of freedom, when I felt a joy in abstinence that I can't compare to anything else.

But I have also had holidays when all I could think about was when I could shove the next thing in my mouth. The obsession sucked the life out of me. Just getting through one day was exhausting and depressing—never mind an entire season!

Several program tricks have helped me during times like these. First, the concept of staying in the present. It's October now, and already I'm worried about how to avoid my mother's eggnog when I go home in December. When I get overwhelmed, I try to ground myself in reality by making a mental list of what I'm doing, "I'm sitting here writing this, the house is clean, my car has gas, everything is OK. I will take care of the eggnog when the time comes." I am amazed at how powerful this is when I make the effort.

Holiday Preparedness – Wishing You Abstinence continued...

I dread the feeling of being harassed by the dessert table at holiday parties. I've noticed that getting on my knees in the ladies' room, going over my mental list of present reality and asking HP for help often relieved me of my obsession immediately.

These 2 bits of inspiration, which I've learned from other OA members, have been invaluable to me when I am overwhelmed by the holiday food craze. Wishing you an abstinent holiday season.--Edited and reprinted from Heart of Texas newsletter, Nov. 2003



### Serenity Times Publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup Meeting List 2014

#### **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**

**Webster**

**Recovery From Relapse 6:30 PM**

**Up The Street Club**

**508 West NASA Pkwy**

**Contact: Rebecca M. 832-287-4114**

**Intergroup Business Meeting**

**Jan., April, July, Oct.**

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

**Bay Area Community of Christ Church**

**Travis @ Austin Street**

**Contact: Kay H. 281-557-3881**

#### **TUESDAY**

**Santa Fe (52400)**

**Topic/Discussion 4:30 p.m.**

**Rosa May Catching Annex Bldg.**

**12045 15<sup>th</sup> (on corner of Hwy 6 and Ave K)**

**Contact: Linda 409-457-9517, Laura 281-507-4968/409-925-8353**

#### **WEDNESDAY**

**Clear Lake (13244)**

**Literature (Big Book/12&12), 10 am**

**Clear Lake United Methodist Church**

**16335 El Camino Real Rm. 311**

**Contact: Kay 281-557-3881**

#### **THURSDAY**

**Webster (30093)**

**Discussion Meeting 6:30 p.m. Up the Street Club**

**508 W. NASA Parkway, Rm #2**

**Contact: Chuck B. 281-770-7539**

#### **FRIDAY**

**Webster (53219)**

**Literature 12 p.m. Up the Street Club**

**508 West NASA Pkwy Rm #4**

**Contact: Bekki S. 409-454-5720**

#### **SATURDAY**

**Clear Lake (12635)**

**For Today/Discussion, 10:30 am**

**House of Prayer Lutheran**

**14045 Space Center Blvd.**

**Contact: Marcia 281-488-7684**

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