

Mark Your Calendar!

New Meeting Reminder: Recovery From Relapse at Up the Street Club in Webster on Mondays @ 6:30 PM

New Study: OA in Deer Park has begun the book study of the new Overeaters Anonymous Book "ABSTINENCE" -- 2nd Edition.

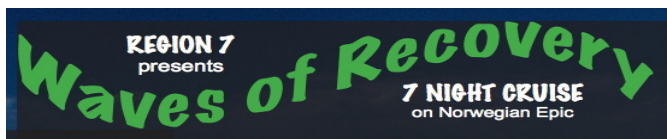
December 12

Twelfth-Step-Within Day

Celebrated each year 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.

January — OA's Birthday (third Saturday of January)

February — Unity Day - This day recognizes the strength of the Fellowship worldwide. On the last Saturday in **2014** February, at 11:30 a.m. pacific standard time, OA members pause to reaffirm the strength inherent in OA's unity.



April 4-13, 2014

More info @ <http://oaregion7.org/event/region-7-cruise/>

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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So many holidays and food, food, food! My disease doesn't care about special days. To it, every day is the same. It takes no vacations, no matter how long I've been abstinent. It waits with patience for my vigilance to waiver: special day, just this once, it's been such a long time, she made it especially for me, dinner is late and I need something to tide me over. Then it attacks! One bite of my trigger foods, or even overeating nontrigger foods, can activate the disease and lead me back to the hell from which I had escaped. Insanity will come if I take no action. It starts as a little pleasure and ends in torture. A sequence leads up to the first bite. I make up my mind to do it before I do it. I may have a long argument in my head (the obsession) or very little discussion. Either way I've rationalized that it will be okay; it's not really a problem; a little doesn't matter; this is part of my plan; this is the wrong plan of eating since it's so hard to follow; I deserve it; I give up; screw it; who cares; or I can't not do this. But this is toward the end of the sequence. What precedes it is a stimulus, a positive or negative feeling, and before the feeling comes a person, place, thing or situation that's at the root. To help stop the sequence from reaching the end, I must avoid whatever starts the sequence and/or learn to change my thinking. The Twelve Steps and Big Book are about changing my thinking and, therefore, my feelings. This improves my ability to cope with life. In the process, I learn how to live life without the need to medicate myself with food. Using the technique of avoidance has helped and will help me break bad habits because every good decision I make strengthens my ability to withstand the situation later. However, lots of things can't be avoided. I must learn to deal with those by changing how I look at them. That's why I must live the principles underlying the Twelve Steps. They help me change how I look at things and how to cope without starting the sequence. One of my mantras when faced with troublesome situations is "What Step, Tradition, tool or slogan applies?" I often tell sponsees to make an OA call before the first bite. If that's doesn't work, do four brief writings.

- 1) Write the feelings you are having, e.g., angry, lonely, tired.
- 2) Write what the extra food will do for you.
- 3) Write what the consequences will be of eating the extra food.
- 4) Write how you are likely to feel an hour after eating.

—Edited and reprinted from Calling newsletter, South Central Pennsylvania Intergroup, December 2010

Inspiration

Today I know sanity does not mean never feeling bad; sanity means not trying to escape bad feelings with self destructive behavior.

—Lifeline, February 2006

November & December

Getting Over Myself “If only you had my problems, you’d eat compulsively too.” I campaigned hard to sell that brand of insanity to anyone who’d listen. How many times had my circumstances frustrated and saddened me? I was a grown man humbled by my unwillingness to see the connection between my compulsive eating and my inability to change. Early in life I had made the faulty association that food was a comfort I had “earned” during the hard times. By chasing that lie again and again, I compromised my emotional development and my ability to cope with pain. After all, I liked the taste of food, and what is more natural when one is hungry than to eat? So when my frustrations grew, when the pressure of daily responsibilities (like doing my homework or practicing my guitar lessons) became too much, I chose to run away from my responsibilities and toward the temporary relief I demanded from food. All I did was postpone the inevitable and reinforce a level of emotional immaturity that favored personal comfort over character building. I avoided the basic trial-and-error way of living that turns most healthy children into responsible adults. OA has allowed me to reconcile my past mistakes. OA asked me to accept that I wasn’t perfect and it was okay because none of us is. The sooner I got over myself, the sooner I’d find a world that was everything I ever wanted. It seemed too simple. OA asked me to accept that I lacked the basic ability to comprehend how much food was enough to maintain and sustain a healthy body and that I should ask someone in OA who had found recovery. After years of petulant refusal, I did ask, and after repeated failures, it became clear surrender was a necessary ingredient to begin to get well. Once I had endured that forced humiliation (I always blamed external forces for my problems), OA asked me to do weird things: write down precisely what I planned to eat and check in with my sponsor to “commit” my food. Was I some kind of child? Duh . . .yeah! At each fork in the road (pun intended), I wanted to rebel and had to get over myself again, until it dawned on me I was my worst enemy when it came to viewing simple acts as an effective path to finding a spiritual way of life! It’s been over 11 years (and 12,000 consecutive meals) since I last broke my abstinence. I’ve replaced the big lie with a more reliable voice that says, “Quiet the disturbance and see what God would want you to do.” In taking that simple advice, I’ve found most of the things I always wanted: friendship; acceptance; a thin body; and the quiet confidence that I can endure emotions, setbacks and hardship without seeking relief. I still have days where the petulant child comes back, but now I tell him that sometimes life is tough and everything is going to be all right. I just need to ask for help, wait and do the next right thing. The little guy just needed to hear that calm voice.

— Neil R., Baltimore, Maryland USA

I’ve been experiencing feelings lately. They ebb and flow, washing into my consciousness, surprising me with their presence. Through some miracle, I’m now able to identify them and smile as I feel one coming in. “So this is sadness,” I say to myself. My natural reaction, fear, starts creeping back. As it does, I immediately think of ways to avoid this feeling. Fantasize. Sleep. Drink. Eat. Then a new voice—my OA program—says, “It’s okay, this is normal—this too shall pass.” I’m grateful I can now accept feelings without being threatened by them. I thank my Higher Power for the gift of a life filled with the blessing of emotions, so new to me. As with the tide, the sadness leaves me as it came. In its place is serenity, the gift of my Higher Power, and unconditional love, the gift of my OA Fellowship.

— Lifeline, December 1991



Only Hams Are Cured

Two women at my first OA meeting in 1991 had lost more than 100 pounds (45 kg). They talked about not eating between meals (unheard of for me—I ate all the time). I went home intending not to eat again that day, but snacked that night. I got abstinent the next day and lost 68 pounds (31 kg) in nine months, eating what I wanted. Then I took Step One. Working the Steps, I reached

normal weight and thought I was cured. At a meeting I heard only hams are cured. I stopped weighing, my weight went up, but my pants fit. Finally, I stepped on the scale; I was up 10 pounds. This is what has worked for my maintenance since 1997:

- I write down what I eat and am willing to let go of foods am obsessed with.
- I record my weight once a week.
- I record my blood pressure.
- I write down my daily physical activity: vacuuming, mowing, etc.
- I have a normal-weight sponsor who in turn has a normal-weight sponsor.
- I sponsor and am available to sponsor or to help someone find a sponsor.
- I work the Steps and live the Traditions.
- I go to at least three meetings a week, regular and HOW concept.
- I am at peace with food.
- I get on my knees and thank God for one more day of abstinence
- I read and reread OA and AA literature.
- I am a good listener.

By doing these (not much when I look at my eating disorder), I don’t have to weigh 281 pounds (128 kg). I’m at a healthy range, 166 to 171 pounds (75 to 78 kg). I qualify at meetings. A speaker said he qualified for two reasons: to let newcomers and people unhappy with their weight know OA works and to remind himself where he came from. Thank you for your love and support.

— J. F., Olympia, Washington USA

Serenity Times Publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup Meeting List 2013

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 p.m.

508 W Nasa Pkwy. (Up the Street Club)

Contact Rebecca 832-297-4114, Donna 409-935-5663

Intergroup Business Meeting

Jan., April, July, Oct.

3rd 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 6 p.m.

Rosa May Catching Annex Bldg.

12045 15th (on corner of Hwy 6 and Ave K)

Guest Speaker on 5th week of a month

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)

6:30 p.m. Up the Street Club

508 W. NASA Parkway, RM 2 Discussion Meeting

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

More Listings @ galveston.org