

Today

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Words of Wisdom From World Convention

Here are some "one-liners" that I gathered from the 2004 World Convention in New Orleans.

Pain is a gift - it leads us to the willingness to surrender our wills to a power greater than ourselves.

You can't binge on the truth - You can only binge on a lie - The LIE is that the food will take care of my problems.

Insanity is hurting myself - and not being able to stop.

The Problem brought us together - the Solution keeps us together.

When should you "make the decision to turn your will and life over to a Higher Power?" Whenever necessary!

Using a sponsor is like navigating an airplane. Like the pilot who regularly checks in with the air controllers, I check in regularly with my sponsor. I don't wait until I crash.

Higher Power fills all of my need and none of my greed.

If any substance becomes so important that I have to have it, it is probably something I need to let go of.

The Steps and Tools are grown-up ways of dealing with Life.

We have a very powerful disease...AND... we have a very powerful medicine.

Without a handle I would not have the strength to open a door that is closed. Higher Power is the handle that opens the door to a life that is Happy, Joyous and Free.

~Bridget R.

What have you Heard Round the Rooms...?

Most of us write down the words of experience, strength, and hope that speak to us at meetings, Super Saturdays, and Convention.

Why don't you send your favorites to the newsletter to share with others in the area!

E-mail to the editor at stlouisatoday@hotmail.com

Surrender

Don't continue to travel with the storm rather, turn around and travel into it.

Yes, the storm will be more intense, but you will sooner pass through it and experience peace for having done so.

~Ruth M.

Meeting of the Month

Monday Night St. Peters, MO.

Welcome to the Monday night St. Peters meeting! Guess what? We meet in a food pantry! Actually our meetings are held in a wonderful room in the Care Center behind Sts. Joachim and Ann Church in St. Peters, MO. The parking lot is two feet from the door. We are wheelchair accessible.

Approximately 15 members attend each meeting, while we have around 40 names on our telephone list. Our format rotates each week: Week 1 - Step Meeting; Week 2 - Alternating between Big Book Study and Tradition Study; Week 3 - OA literature Meeting; Week 4 - Speaker Meeting.

We have long-term, abstinent members and we have newcomers who are actively working a program. We welcome newcomers, and try to give them extra support as they learn about our strange and wonderful program of recovery. We have inter-group reps and we are sponsoring our first Super Saturday on Sept 27 at St. Joseph's Health Center in St. Charles. We also do service at the annual convention, donate a basket for the auction every year, and contribute regularly to Intergroup, Region IV, and the World Service Office.

There are a couple of practices we find helpful at our group. First, everyone who attends our meetings gets their name added

to our telephone list. Then every week, a member volunteers to telephone those members on our list who did not attend that meeting. Often we hear at our meetings, "Thanks for the telephone calls!" or "If _____ had not called me, I would not have come tonight." Sometimes one telephone call, strategically arranged by our Higher Power, can pull a member back from relapse and from quitting the program.

The other practice we adopted is passing 2 baskets at each meeting. The second basket collects donations to rent a room at the Fall Retreat or the Spring Convention. Many of our members have enjoyed these events that would not ordinarily have been able to attend. And, of course, the whole group benefits from the additional recovery brought back to our meetings.

So thanks for reading about our little group in St. Peters! We welcome any and all who care to come to our door! Hope to see you someday on the Road to Happy Destiny!

~Sally W.

Group Of The Month

Would **your group** be willing to share its gifts with the rest of the Bi-State by writing a story for the newsletter? If your group is interested, please contact the newsletter editor via e-mail at

stlouisatoday@hotmail.com

Inspired by August Newsletter

Who is this friend that I've known for so long;

consistent and real, versatile and strong;

Not always agreeable, but a comfort no less,

soothing my pain, anger and stress?

I reach out to it, it calls out to me

in my vast and flowing piteous sea.

It knows my desires and weaknesses too,

knowing how to deceive and ways to get through.

It's a terrible thing, I both love and then hate;

my future now held in the fate of my plate.

A wicked inducement to feed a deep hole

trying to protect what's left f my soul.

A fear of not knowing what's yet to become.

In a flash, any moment I may yet still succumb.

My God has listened and heard my distress,

planning for me which pathway is best.

And now I have you and you all now have me.

We've harbored together on the edge of our sea.

A teachable spirit, new heart and new mind

and together we'll leave our old lives behind.

~Marie S.

WORK WITH YOUR SPONSOR

So I finally decided to quit being stubborn and get a sponsor. I picked the sponsor that I have because she was the only person I knew that was a sponsor. Besides, she is really nice. Even though she is a lot younger than I am, I was a little self-conscious around her at first because she is rather collegiate and more serious than I am. I had to hit her arm when she was writing at least five times before she figured out I was messing with her.

I was going along with my program for a while, and then I started slacking off. My sponsor was very nice to listen to me moan and groan and whine about not doing my program. My sponsor finally saved the day by asking me what I needed from her and saying that if she wasn't meeting my needs I could get another sponsor because sometimes people change sponsors.

Well, that got me shook up. She called my bluff! I don't want another sponsor! So, I was honest with her and told her I do better with specific instruction and when someone is firmer with me. I was glad she didn't get hurt feelings and was willing to work with me. She said she could do that, and gave me specific things to do. She also said to JUST DO IT!

Boy, did that get me going. Instead of trying to figure out why I don't want to work on something I just do it. I can tell my sponsor I did it so I don't have to worry about her coming after me with a wet noodle.

I like having a working relationship with my sponsor where we can share our needs without either of us getting bent out of whack. Thanks to my HP and my sponsor, I have eleven days of solid, clean abstinence! It's all about helping each other.

~Tamara H

half of a mango

sitting at the kitchen table
 holding a cutting knife
 staring at the ripe mango
 on the shiny blue plate
 having half
 only half
 but the brain says to have it all
 it is easier than cutting it in half
 it is easier than wrapping up half
 why not have it all?
 rationalize with your 'self'
 it is only fruit
 make an exception this time
 make a bargain with your 'self'
 intuitively you know half is enough
 the plan was for only half
 stick to the plan
 stay within the boundaries you set
 not the whole mango
 cup your head in your hands
 with your elbows on the table
 you are not going crazy
 tell yourself that you are not going crazy
 over half of a mango
 trust that half is plenty
 trust in something bigger than you
 trust your own intuition of what is best
 for you
 you will not starve
 eat half and throw the rest away
 no, that would be wasteful
 go to the cabinet
 get some gladware
 cut the mango
 in half
 one half looks a little bigger
 put the 'smaller' half in the fridge
 wipe up the mess
 eat only half, the 'bigger' half
 trust that God will take care of you
 for whatever reason you think you
 needed to eat it all
 trust that God will take care of you
 in each moment

all the time-consuming angst
 all the irrational rationalizing
 be on alert
 your compulsion is active
 your addiction attempts to smother you
 even for half of a ripe mango
 even for half of a damn mango

~Julie H.

Articles Wanted

I just came back from the WSO Convention. The World Service Conference Literature Committee is working on 2 new pamphlets:

- Stories from black/African American compulsive eaters sharing their experience strength and hope they found in OA.
- Experience, strength and hope from compulsive eaters who have suffered from anorexia and bulimia, or were not overweight or obese when they came into OA, and have found recovery from obsession with food through the OA Program.

Tell us about how you felt coming into OA and thinking you didn't fit in because of your size, color or background. We want to provide newcomers and members with a sense that they belong even if they may not look like the majority of people at the meeting they attend.

Stories should be in English, a maximum of 750 words and preferably typed. They become the property of OA once submitted and may be edited for length, grammar and clarity. You will be notified if your story is selected.

Deadline is: 10/31/03

By Mail:

World Service Office
 Attention: Naomi
 P.O. Box 44020
 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020

By Email: nlippel@oa.org

~Ellen W.

World Service Convention 2003

I just returned from the World Service Convention in New Orleans. It was incredible! WOW! WOW! WOW! We drove to the convention and stayed in a quaint hotel nearby. It was such a shot in the arm for my recovery! Love and energy from around the world radiated everywhere. HP was working through us.

HP teaches in so many different ways. When I came to this program, I didn't know how to honestly and lovingly communicate with others. I was either fake or withdrawn, never being able to express myself openly. This program changes everything.

I thought that, like most conventions, Super Saturdays, and retreats, I would get inspired by the speakers and bring home the experience, hope, and strength they shared. Yes, that did happen. I heard an array of inspirational and spiritually sound speakers. They said many things I needed to hear.

However, my HP took my recovery to the next level, or perhaps I was just finally ready to go there with him. He gave me one experience after another to put all of the things this program has been teaching me for the last twenty months into action.

My character defects were given new light. While I was able to see them, I was also given the opportunity to take action and to show myself and my HP that I was ready for defects, such as people pleasing and lack of boundaries to be peeled away, one day at a time, one moment at a time.

How do defects like people pleasing and fear get peeled away for me? That is a question I have been struggling with for a long time. I kept telling HP, "I am ready!" but I wasn't doing enough action: setting and resetting clear, loving boundaries and taking the initiative to express

myself – my **true voice**. I put my HP, my abstinence, and my program exactly where they belong: at the top of my priority list – even in front of people pleasing – Yikes -- scary! Or so I thought, the freedom I receive from each lesson my HP gives me truly feeds my soul and fills the deep void within. Thank you HP – thank you OA for wonderful fellowship, unconditional love and acceptance, one day at a time.

~Lisa B.

**Wanted and Needed
OA CASSETTE TAPES**

You know, the ones you forgot you had! **They may be where ours were...**hiding among the dustbunnies, stacked with CDs or living in desk drawers.

Please return them on a Super Saturday or give them to your Intergroup Rep.

We thank you,
Betty S, Krista H., Kathy

A Reflection

If spirituality is the answer to this disease, acceptance must be my response – as I am today – practicing patience with myself, realizing that my recovery is none of my business – it's God's alone – all I have to be is willing – realizing I will make mistakes until the end of time – relax and none of that tight-fisted abstinence that doesn't work.

One day at a time is where I've been missing the boat and thinking about getting in the driver's seat, which goes down a road with a 500-pound gorilla at the end.

~Kay M.

Floating on the Breath of God

I am floating on the breath of God, Peace, serenity, tranquility, nirvana, Words fail to describe my experience.

With each of God's breaths,
I am pulled in to love,
and pushed out to service.

I let go,
and our breathing merges into one.
We become a mirror image of each other's, breath,
of each other's spirit.

I look into the mirror,
and I am overwhelmed.
It takes my breath away.

At that moment I die,
my ego self shattered into pieces,
and I am reborn
into a new reality.

I am floating on the breath of God.

The Sword of Truth

I hesitantly walk on the edge of the sword of Truth.
The path is straight and narrow.

The sword cuts into my indecisive feet,
and my blood bleeds on the path.

Like a straight line,
my blood flows down the path.

I follow my blood without realizing it.
I am walking mindlessly on the edge of the sword of Truth.

~Ruth M.

Submitted to WSO Pamphlet

“Call Overeaters Anonymous,” was the first thought that crossed my mind after eating so much food I was sick. I binged, purged, and set my alarm clock for a strenuous work out in the morning. The thought, “Call Overeaters Anonymous;” would not leave my mind. “But I am not overweight,” I said to myself. That did not matter anymore. I could not live with my food obsession anymore. Food consumed me. My day was planned around whatever diet and work out plan I was on. I tried so hard to follow my diet. I would wake up every morning with sore muscles from my previous day’s work out and then, work out again. Eat a tiny breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I was driven to exercise and eat healthy during the day, but then at night, when I was alone, I would just want one bite of something to make me feel better or to reward myself. One bite would turn into one bowl. One bowl would turn into enough food for two people, then three, then four, then more. Soon enough I was stuffing laxatives in my mouth and/or throwing up for the next twelve to twenty-four hours. Oh, I was so ashamed. What if my husband new? He would think I am disgusting, or so I thought. I did not know that I had a disease. I just knew I could not stop eating once I started. I hated myself for being so weak, but more than that, I began hating life. It was all about food. Every time I tried to control my food, it just got worse. I was living in a vicious cycle that I, alone, could not break. The food didn’t feel good anymore; I needed it. I could not imagine not bingeing and purging and had no idea how to stop. I knew I needed help.

Hence, my pain did not come from being overweight or being ridiculed (although I was when I was younger); it came from the intense compulsion to overeat and obsess about food, calories, and the scale. Sure, I would restrict my food intake for a while, but that would inevitably ensure a binge, more purging and over-exercising. I just wanted to live a normal life and not be tormented with constant thoughts of food and gaining weight. Yes, it is true, I am not at all overweight, but I am a compulsive overeater.

At my first meeting I said, “Hi, I am Lisa, and I am a compulsive overeater,” and cried and cried, but there was something deep inside of me: HOPE. I knew that if I was suffering from this disease and others had too, and they were getting better, then there was HOPE. One woman said she had been abstinent (refraining from compulsively overeating) for many, many years, and she was at a normal weight. That’s what I wanted. I believed it could happen for me. Sure, I noticed I was the youngest person there, for I was only twenty-five. And yes, I was the thinnest person there, but I felt at home at my very first meeting. I received love, acceptance, and lots of hugs from other members. I did what

they said and have been free of compulsive overeating since that very first meeting.

Sometimes, I am still too rigid with my food plan. I find myself going to the other extreme, but I find relief through the steps and tools. During those times, I ask myself, “Do I really belong here since I came here thin and bulimic, and sometimes still restrict my food intake, even though I am still craving food?” If I am being honest with myself, the answer is “Yes.” People talk about weight a lot in OA because that is a major symptom of compulsive overeating. I remind myself, for me, bulimia and food restriction are two symptoms of compulsive overeating. When I stopped bingeing, I stopped taking laxatives and throwing up. I did not have to fear gaining weight. I eat three balanced meals a day with nothing in between. Something I only dreamed about before OA. Eventually, I also realized that I don’t need to exercise compulsively either, for there is no need. Just as an overweight person loses weight when they are relieved of the disease one day at a time, my bulimia is relieved one day at a time. Thank you OA, Thank you HP.

~Lisa B.

There were three submissions about Thanksgiving/holiday meals that are being saved for October/November. All other articles that were received were printed. Articles can be submitted to the office or emailed to stlouisoa@today.com

Thank you

Service Vacancies

- 3 Trustees
- 2 Region Reps
- 2 World Service Delegates
- Ways & Means
- Lifeline
- Social Butterfly
- Young People

Reminder

Where & Whens will be published quarterly. Each meeting is responsible for making sure there are enough copies at the meetings. If you need a copy, stop by the office or email the newsletter & we'll send you one.

WANTED

Guest Newsletter Editors

The newsletter chair is looking for a committee.

If you are interested in being a guest newsletter editor, please contact Dawn S (see back of Where & When for trusted servant phone numbers) or send an email to the newsletter address.

Writing experience not necessary. Access to a computer is a must!

New Meetings

**No New Meetings
To
Announce This Month**



Contacting OA Electronically

Bi-State Fax number:

(314) 638-6071

Intergroup Newsletter E-mail:

StlouisOAtoday@hotmail.com

St. Louis Bi-State Website: www.stlouisoa.org

WSO Website: www.overeatersanonymous.org

Region IV website: www.oaregion4.org

Upcoming Events & Business Info

September 27

Super Saturday, 9-3:30
St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Charles

October 17-19

12th Annual Fall Retreat
Pallotine Renewal Center, Florissant
Registration Deadline: October 10
Commuters allowed if preregistered.
NO ONSITE REGISTRATION!
(See Flyer)

November 15

IDEA Day
Webster Groves Christian Church

December 6

Holiday Booster
Maplewood

**January 17 - Open
OA Birthday Party**

February – Open

**March 26-28
OA Convention**

To schedule a Super Saturday or other event, contact Lisa M. Any flyers for OA events submitted for dissemination to meetings or for publication in the newsletter must have received approval by the St. Louis Bi-State Area BOT (ask any BOT member).

Editorial Policy

As suggested by WSO guidelines, newsletters are to be a forum for experience, strength and hope. We encourage and give top priority to original material written by members of this Intergroup.

We reserve the right to edit any and all articles submitted for publication. Submission of article or flyers does not necessarily guarantee publication.

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily that of the St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup or OA as a whole.

Articles must be received by the Newsletter Chairperson prior to the 20th of the month for publication in the following month's newsletter.