

# The Road To Recovery

The Newsletter of Westchester United Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

May 2003

## Westchester United Intergroup

All Welcome To Attend  
First Thursday of the Month  
7:45 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.  
Emanuel Lutheran Church  
197 Manville Road, Pleasantville

## Upcoming Events

OA World Service Convention  
August 7-10, 2003  
New Orleans, LA  
www.oa.org

Region 6 OA Convention  
October 31- November 2, 2003  
Sheraton Fallsview, Ontario, Canada  
www.oaregion6.org

## Pass It On

Share your experience, strength, and hope with Westchester and Putnam OAers in the next issue of The Road To Recovery. The topic for the July 2003 issue is Dealing with Feelings of Deprivation. Suggested focus:

- In what circumstances do you feel deprived?
- What strategies help you not to feel deprived?
- How do you use the OA Steps to deal with deprivation feelings?
- How do you deal with the holidays?
- How does your food plan support you in not feeling deprived?
- How do you deal with feelings of deprivation not related to food?

**The deadline for submission is May 10th. Send to Priscilla at: Thunderstorm6@MSN.com or call (914) 722-9263.**

The Road To Recovery is automatically submitted to Lifeline and World Service. Submission of an article constitutes permission for possible national/international publication. Each article is the sole opinion of the individual author and does not represent the opinion of WUIG or OA as a whole.

Comments or suggestions?  
Call Priscilla R. at (914) 722-9263.

## From the Editor

Twenty years ago, when I first arrived at the doorstep of a Twelve Step program, I carried my childhood understanding of the God of my parents. It was a strong foundation based in both dogma and spirituality and I refrain from any criticism of their religion. It would be foolish of me to discard any learning life offers me and I try to utilize this foundation. However, God led me to another understanding through the suffering from addiction and my desperate search for recovery. In the Twelve Steps, I found a faith which works under all conditions. It sustains my life.

There are three ways in which I practice the use of prayer in Step Eleven. First, during my daily Tenth Step inventory, I acknowledge my shortcomings and successes, asking in prayer for God to put my defects of character into remission and thanking Him for any successes He has granted me. Secondly, when a condition arises during the day, I take a spot-check inventory and pray for help on an immediate basis. Lastly, I enter into prayer periodically with others as at meetings and other OA gatherings.

In prayer, I seek to find my right size and my identity. I look for my relational proportion to creation and the potential plane of existence beyond what I see with my eyes. When I resigned my self-appointed godship, I was free to explore a conscious contact with a power outside of the egocentric trinity of me, myself, and I. Knowing my failure to conquer not one of my addictions, entering a phase of life where my addictions and defects of character were going to cost me my life, and straining under the weight and responsibility of the self-curing self-will, I gave up. I looked around for One who had the power. I had certainly proven it wasn't I.

At the darkest hour, a hand not my own moved me towards the door of a meeting. I stayed and prayed with the group. I prayed for a sponsor, a special person who would guide me through the Steps in a way which would awaken my spirit which had been dying for years. When answered, my faith increased and I rolled up my sleeves and went to work eagerly. When we spoke each day, I could feel a special presence greater than either of us weaving gently through each moment, guiding us as if with one voice. This was a love I had never known. Was it real?

When I had been brought through the Steps and began to sponsor, I again felt the Presence moving between us. My faith increased. I heard an echoing, "a channel of God's will". As an artist, I was familiar with being a conduit of what I observed and painted. As a channel, my ego was out of it and I felt peace. The suffering of the past could be put to good use. The drive for more left and the rapacious creditor could demand no more of me.

To ameliorate fear and paralysis, I pray for the knowledge of His will for me each day. Prayer embodies the power of the word which, if I believe, manifests in my life. Meditation embodies the power of silence, not easily acquired by the busy mind of an addict. In silence I have found power to do what I could not before, unaided. The power to carry out God's will requires a daily asking in prayer and meditating in silence. My conscious contact with God stands between me and insanity or death.

Thanks to **Dee M.** for The Road To Recovery graphic design, **Jim B.** and **Steve F.** for editorial assistance, and all the OA writer-contributors of this newsletter.

*Priscilla R.*

**The Road To Recovery is happy to announce Westchester United Intergroup's new Chairperson, Carol B. Thanks, Carol.**

Westchester United Intergroup, P.O. Box 125, White Plains, NY 10603/Hotline: 914-633-2988

## A Chance to Live Differently

In recovery, I have discovered a new relationship with God. As a child growing up in a Catholic home, I believed in God. However, I did not understand that not all prayers are answered in the way I want. I ceased to believe God played an active role in my life when He let my Grandmother die despite my prayers that she live.

My spiritual awakening occurred the day I became aware, admitted, and began to accept that I was an addict. God was throwing me a life preserver and a chance to live differently. I had hope. God did indeed exist because He gave me a newfound awareness and the solution as well! A few weeks before, my best friend and drinking buddy had told me about AA. I was grateful for the solution to my misery. I was so desperate, as only the drowning can be.

Since then, I have come into the rooms of OA and now practice the Twelve Steps of recovery in both programs. I rely heavily upon my Higher Power for strength and on the wisdom found in the Fellowship. I talk to God as my very best Friend as He is indeed. I feel His absolute and uncondi-

tional love. He has forgiven me for all my character defects. I honor His devotion to me by trying as best I can to work my Twelve Step program and be a better person. I try to adhere to the Golden Rule. If God loves me and believes I am worth saving from addiction, I can love and care for myself as best I can for today. I thank Him daily for the gift of my life in recovery.

In difficulty, my first response is to ask God to help me with my emotions. From experience I know if I pray and give time, the difficulty does pass. I have found God in His creations in nature. I am connected to all living things today. I meditate using the imagery of the many beautiful wonders of our planet. When I hear the song of a bird, I consider this another of God's gifts given for me to enjoy. I take my lumps as they come and savor the details of the good things in my life. I avoid individuals to whom I can lose my serenity. I live day by day, knowing I am not alone as God is there to help me. Prayer and meditation is for me more than for God - that's just the kind of Friend He is!

*Soledad*

## The Key to Success

I try to start each day with a prayer, either the one I wrote or, more frequently, a prayer I just put together as I lay in bed. I still haven't been able to establish a pattern whereby I set aside time each day to pray and communicate with my Higher Power and thank Him for giving me the strength to deal with this disease. I still find it difficult to ask God to help me with my issues. Something about asking Him seems

selfish to me. However, I realize full recovery is not possible unless I establish a solid relationship with God and surrender my will to Him. This is the piece of the equation that will make the difference between this and every other attempt I have made to deal with my disease. I know this is the key to my success.

*Janet B.*

The **OA 12 & 12** is now available on CD from WSO or the OA website, oa.org.

**New! Open Meetings:** On the first Friday of each month, the Friday Friendship group meeting is open to family and friends. The group meets at the Ridgeview Congregational Church, 12 Ridgeview Avenue, White Plains, in the first floor Conference Room at 10:30 AM. On the first Thursday of each month, there is an open meeting at Temple Israel Center, 280 Old Mamaroneck Road, White Plains, Room 20. All are welcome.

**WUIG is asking for volunteers** to do service at the Historic Mamaroneck Street Fair on Sunday, June 8, 2003. Help carry the message of recovery! Call Carmela at (914) 769-5151 or Carol at (914) 478-2853.

**Voices of Recovery**, a daily reader of inspirational quotations from OA literature and the experience, strength, and hope written by OA members for the OA Fellowship, is now available online at oa.org or from the WSO.

**WSO Announces A New Service to OA Members:** WSO has developed the Loner Program to support OA members unable to attend regular OA meetings if a person is living in a remote area away from meetings, if their lifestyle requires constant travel, or if a person is housebound and unable to travel to the nearest meeting. The program is free and offers benefits such as periodic mailings from the World Service Office (WSO), a listing with the WSO, and a list of other loners worldwide. For more information about the Loner Program, contact the WSO at (505) 891-2664 from within the US or email [info@oa.org](mailto:info@oa.org).

The Road to Recovery is a bi-monthly publication of Westchester United Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. Dates of publication are January, March, May, July, September and November. We reserve the right to edit submissions for spelling, length and clarity, but not for content. Articles may be submitted by e-mail or U.S. Mail and may be typed or legibly handwritten. Submissions must be received by the **10th of the month preceding publication**. Include your name and telephone number or email address.

**Name published upon request. Send to Priscilla at: Thunderstorm6@MSN.com or call (914) 722-9263 for mailing address.**

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## A Faith That Works

Prayer and Meditation are continuously shaping me into the person I want to be. I was afraid of everything - afraid of people, of the monster inside me becoming known if I were noticed, of doing or saying the wrong thing, of not doing or saying anything at all. My fear kept me holed up in a very small world with a blanket over my head and a refrigerator under the covers.

As I learn to pray and meditate, my fears wear down and the covers are thrown aside. To the offerings in my life, I've begun saying, "Yes! I love the results. I am making friends with people who would have intimidated me and from whom I would not have made my presence known. I am enjoying activities, treating myself well, and learning to love myself. I am worthy of the good stuff life has to offer. As I peel back the layers of the onion, I'm finding a beautiful person inside. I like her. Depression which has plagued me most of my life is lifting.

Will this last? I have soared to great heights and plummeted to the depths of depression before. I now feel I am on more level ground. The key is keeping my Higher Power close to me always. That takes practice. I can accomplish anything I want, including keeping my demons at bay, as long as I pray to God for His infinite strength and power. If I forget, I start to fall. When I am falling, I forget even more. As long as I remember I can handle anything as long as I consciously cling to God, I do not have to fall back into those infernal pits.

My goal is to never forget. I work on building a faith that will not begin to disintegrate at the first sign of trouble. As long as I live, I want to practice the art of moving closer to my Higher Power, that I may live a rich, full life.

*Cindy N.*

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## Comfort, Strength, Salvation

My journey towards my Higher Power began in 1974 as I began my Steps. At the time I believed in a Power greater than all else. I believed that this Power was a loving and kind Person. It was I who was doing the wrong things.

My Higher Power offers me the choice of right or wrong action. He was always there. It was I who shut Him out. I needed to open the door for Him to come in. It is I who needed to reach out for His help for abstinence and guidance.

The Higher Power works through people who are in and out of the program. Through knowledge and practice came the willingness to be open and honest. Knowing I have a loving Higher Power is my comfort, strength, and salvation.

*Linda M.*

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## What Am I Willing To Do?

In order to let go and let God, I had to let go and I simply haven't been willing. As time goes by, it gets worse. The isolation, the fear and anxiety, the withdrawal from people, places and things - I'm so good at all of that. What am I willing to do to change?

*Anonymous*

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Speaker Bank: Looking for a speaker? To be or find a speaker, contact Kathy D. at (914) 381-4989.

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## I Rest In His Arms

From the outset of my recovery, my admission that I was powerless over food was a Higher Power-inspired admission. I had been too prideful to admit there was any problem. I knew I could not "do the food" any longer. No food plan alone could help me. I felt crazy and out of control.

When I began to hear about a Power greater than ourselves, I thought I recognized Him as God. It did not take long for me to get the idea that this is a three-fold program. After my attempts to recover upon a purely physical basis failed, I began to include the mental aspects of the program. I had been in therapy for nearly five years with some success, but therapy had not provided a cure. Eventually, I was unhappy and desperate enough to try to work the spiritual aspect of the program.

Having grown up in a Southern home in which church was an ever-present influence, I believed I was somewhat familiar with God. When I began to attend meetings regularly, my idea of God broadened. I repeatedly heard about how the Higher Power can remove our shortcomings, such as hatred, envy, feelings of unworthiness, and many other feelings I had. I clearly heard that the Higher Power can put our compulsive overeating into remission. I figured it was worth a try to work a three-fold program.

I am an eternal work-in-progress. I am a grateful "lifer" who works the program one day at a time. The gifts I have received in OA are greater than what I alone have contributed. My Higher Power supports every aspect of my life. He is part of my every decision - from deciding what to make for dinner to how to refrain from entering into someone else's insanity. I can ask Him for my needs and thank Him for His gifts. Mostly, I rest in His Arms where I find peace, sanity, and serenity.

*Virginia*

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## Why Is There War?

I am so grateful that I am able to know God today. I search and searched as a child, asking questions but never hearing responses that satisfied me. I heard that God was good and all powerful. He lived in all places even in the air around us. So why was there war? Why were people killed in accidents? Why did my parents fight? And why did my heart ache so?

Not until I came into program did I begin to understand that yes, God is good and powerful but individuals also have power. We each have the power to embrace God's will or throw it aside. I can choose to live in God's light, treating others as I want to be treated, or I can take an evil road, selfishly going after only what I want without thought to the consequences of my actions to myself or others.

I guess my spiritual life began when I accepted God as a good force, evil as a real force and that I am can choose with which influence I want to live. I have chosen God.

*Dee M.*

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## Strength From Surrender

I begin by telling you that from the start my sponsor suggested I begin and end my day with prayer. I was reluctant and doubtful about the effectiveness of this suggestion. I grudgingly accepted the necessity of prayer and meditation in my life. Since I have always liked personal stories, I will share my experience in this way.

Many years ago I was dating a wonderful girl. We talked of marriage, kids, and a great future. We were in love. Soon after the New Year, she went for tests to see why she felt so tired. She was diagnosed with aplastic anemia and admitted to the hospital. Fourteen days later, she died.

Between the time of her funeral and until fairly recently, I was very angry at God. I felt He existed, but He had a very perverse sense of humor and thought it funny to see me in pain. Through talking to my Higher Power, reflection and meditation, my attitude has changed from resentment and sadness over her loss to thankfulness for having had her in my life and for the joy of the gift of love. As I write, tears well up in gratitude to a loving God who gives me comfort and strength to handle whatever I must face in life. Strength has come from surrender.

Today I am blessed to have a soul mate in my wife. I have a daughter who has taught me more about life and love than I ever suspected was possible. My disease tries to tell me to fear, to doubt, and to resent. Today, I have a loving Higher Power Who encourages me to have faith, to believe and to forgive. If anyone asks me about the power of prayer, I answer that it has been powerful enough to free me from the bondage of myself and has changed my life.

*Jim B.*

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## A Beginning Without End

Upon entering program, I embarked upon a true journey into myself. Unknown to me at the time, it has a beginning, but no end, thank God.

First I had to become willing to put down the food. Then, I had to develop the willingness to refrain from excessive judgment of myself and of others. It was difficult to find a replacement for my excesses. After my food was in relative order, the Steps became increasingly the focus of my recovery efforts. I began to replace the mean God of my past understanding with a God who is always there, one Who is there with praise and encouragement.

My new concept of God was the beginning of a new attitude towards life. I became willing to reverse my negative thinking and develop positive thinking. I do this on a daily basis, albeit not perfectly, one day at a time. By turning things over to God, I convert a negative attitude into a life positive attitude. I turn over judgment and argumentativeness. I needed to learn to just shut up! On some days, this is easier than on other days.

On page 570, the Big Book states, "There is a principle

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Temporary Sponsor Bank: Looking for temporary sponsorship? To be or find a sponsor, call Priscilla R. at (914) 722-9263.

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## Parting the Waters of Insanity

God brought me into OA many years ago. After trying every diet ever invented, I was desperate with my weight problem. My recovery began with Step Two. I grabbed a hold of a "God" image I had created with all of the hope and love I had left to give from my empty soul.

My prayers were answered as I asked all of the many questions I had held inside me for so long. My emptiness began to be filled as I found God working through other people. I began to experience a sense of safety as I practiced prayer and meditation on a daily basis. I felt safe from the tyrant, food. My time of rejoicing in being human arrived!

Through my OA meetings, God provided all that I needed - I was very needy. My taste for recovery increased as I worked through the Steps. I heard others talk about what "enough" meant to a compulsive overeater. Could I get enough food? Enough understanding? Enough love? The discipline of the Steps provided the answers - the Steps put it all together for me. I could become a channel! Through sponsorship this has come true for me - I have enough! I have all I need. At last, I have become a child of God.

The gift of a sense of humor is the most precious of the gifts of the Promises, which have come true in my life. Without knowing it, all I had to do was to be me!

In the beginning, my Higher Power had to work overtime to part the waters of sanity from insanity. By the grace of God, today I can turn to God in prayer and meditation so that my insanity dissipates. Life is comfortable and meaningful at last! It is one day at a time.

*An OA Member of the Friday Friendship Group of Overeaters Anonymous*

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which is a bar against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep us in everlasting ignorance - that principle is contempt prior to investigation." Spirituality means when I see a person who is hurt and afraid, I share my God with her until she is willing and able to find her own concept of the Higher Power.

*Anonymous*

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## Prayer - Dr. Bob

Humility is perpetual quietness of heart.

It is to have no trouble.

It is never to be fretted or vexed, or irritable, to wonder at nothing, which is done to me,

to feel that nothing is done against me.

It is to be at rest when nobody praises me,

and when I am blamed or despised,

it is to have a blessed home in myself

where I can go in and shut the door

and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace,

as in a deep sea of calmness,

when all around and about is seeming trouble.

*Prayer on Dr. Bob's desk of unknown authorship*