

The Road To Recovery

The Newsletter of Westchester United Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

November 2003

The Step Principles: Spiritual Foundation of Life

The First Step principle is Honesty, an admission that I am unable to win out over my compulsive overeating. I had been kidding myself for years I would one day control and conquer by sheer will power. The rapacious creditor would finally be paid off. Honesty dismissed my self-deception long enough for the veil of lies to be swept aside revealing the unmanageability of the daily practice of addictive behaviors. Complete defeat laid a foundation without which the rest of the Steps would not be possible.

Hope, the Second Step principle, followed closely on the heels of my desperate defeat, the kind of hope only the dying may know. I began to sense the great bondage in which I had been held and hoped for a reprieve. My desire for sanity propelled me onward towards Faith, the Third Step principle, in which a small measure of trust, a mustard seed of faith, began to grow. I was choosing life over death, an easy choice under the lash of compulsive overeating. I asked God to take away some of my difficulties and came to believe that victory really was possible through a paradoxical submission to His Power. This was a faith that might work under all conditions. How was I to walk in faith and trust this God? I asked for Courage, the Fourth Step principle, to see myself as I really was and seek fearlessly into each corner of the darkness until His light shone. I summoned the courage to share my story with another person, coming out of my secret garden, facing my sorrows, and experiencing the mercy of God in the compassionate personage of my sponsor. Shame departed. Self-deception abated. Integrity, principle and promise of the Fifth Step, was mine! I felt forgiven and joined the human race!

How would I summon the Willingness, the Sixth Step principle, to go on? Here was the most challenging Step of all. I looked back for a second time to grieve and let go of the person I had been. Who would I become? I was afraid again. Through Willingness, Step Six provided me with the best possible attitude for God to offer His reprieve of the defects of character I had so tenderly cradled close to my heart, the reprieve I had dreamed of in Step Two. However, my pride conspired with my fears to drive me back to the safety of my old ways. Through prayer, the help of other OAers, and the lessons of pain, Humility, the principle of Step Seven, entered into my way of life. As one of many, I felt no more nor no less than others, seeking to be right sized. Compassion started to become part of my way of thinking for if I were to be forgiven so must I forgive.

The undisciplined addict knew no boundaries and often offended. The Eighth Step principle, Self-discipline, appeared more desirable and I began to try to practice restraint of pen and tongue. Through Step Eight, I developed boundaries to distinguish between which responsibilities are mine and which belong to others. I received some measure of the gift of discernment. Squarely facing Step Nine and the principle of Love, it was love of God, self and others which carried my commitment to making amends and to the amendment of

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Topic of this issue: The Step Principles

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
www.oawestchester-ny.org

Upcoming Events

WUIG IDEA Day Workshops
Pleasantville Presbyterian Church
9:30-4:00 PM, November 15, 2003
For info call Carmela (914) 769-5151

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Celebration of OA's Founding in 1960
January 17, 2004

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OA's 44th Birthday
January 19, 2004

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Unity Day
February 28, 2004 - 2:30 P.M. EST

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 January, 2004 issue is *Sexuality and Body Image*. The deadline for submission is December 10th. You may mail your submissions anonymously to WUIG, PO Box 125, White Plains, NY 10603, e-mail to Thunderstorm6@MSN.com or call (914) 722-9263.

Suggested focus:

- How has working the Steps changed your perceptions of your sexuality and body image?
- What obstacles did you have to overcome to achieve a realistic idea of your sexuality and body image?
- What is your body image today?

The Road To Recovery is submitted to World Service Lifeline Magazine. 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? Contact Priscilla R. at (914) 722-9263.

Thanks to **Dee M.** for The Road To Recovery graphic design and to all the OA writer-contributors of this newsletter.

WUIG, P.O. Box 125, White Plains, NY 10603/Hotline: 914-633-2988/www.oawestchester-ny.org

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my life. I stepped joyfully into the Stream of Goodness and felt peace. I had transitioned from a person seeking to take from life into a person seeking to give to life.

Perseverance, the principle of Step Ten, keeps me walking on the right path as I continue to take personal inventory and admit my errors. By doing so, Spiritual Awareness, the principle of Step Eleven, supports my ability to persevere and broadens my understanding of how to live my life. Prayer and meditation place me in God's presence where I can leave my addictive behaviors and defects in His care again and be converted to a channel in Service to others, His will for me and the principle of Step Twelve.

Practicing the Step Principles places me in the best possible position to interact effectly with groups of people to carry the message of our recovery and live the OA Traditions. My compulsive overeating will remain in remission only in so far as I am committed to carrying the message. The Twelve Step Principles are the spiritual foundation of the the Steps and, therefore, must also be the spiritual foundation of my life.

*Priscilla R., Editor
Scarsdale, NY*

A Faith that Works

I have Faith that I will get better. I Hope that my program will work for me. I want to have Courage to stop overeating, having Integrity to go forward, and Willingness to admit when I am wrong. I want Humility around others who are having the same problem as I and to Discipline myself around food at all times. I ask for Perseverance and Spiritual Awareness.

Deborah

By the Grace of God

By God's Grace and OA, I am a different person from the one who walked into these rooms many years ago. I love deeper. I am more honest and listen with concern. My connection to my Higher Power is much stronger. I continue to attend my meetings, pray and meditate on a daily basis. I give the best service I can, on some days more than others. My willingness, which comes from God, keeps me coming back. In the beginning, I heard bring the body and the mind follows. I bring home to my family the wisdom and serenity I get in OA. I've learned to love myself and I can love others.

Fanny Z.

The Twelfth Step Principle: Service

"The principle of service which underlies OA's twelfth step can guide our actions both inside and outside the program." (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, pg 106) Not long ago I discovered the meaning of life for me: responsibility and *service*. I believe the God of my understanding works through us all. I have not had an easy time with abstinence. Many times service has been my lifeline. Going to meetings because I am expected or for the newcomer has kept me coming back. Making calls to people who may be missing from the rooms in case they need a "hand up" out of isolation has kept me from isolating.

Recently, I experienced the grace of God working through me as well as for me. I went to a local OA meeting because it was announced they might close and needed support. It was a convenient time and location for me so it wasn't a big deal. There were 3 different newcomers at the first two meetings I attended. If we hadn't been there, they might have left—for a long time or forever. If I hadn't been there, I might have isolated and not remembered how important OA is to my life and how grateful I am for the steps and all the people encounter in the rooms.

One of the tools I always need to push myself to use is the phone. Lately, I have concentrated on calling those people that I miss seeing in the rooms. Maybe they have changed what meetings they are attending, or maybe they are isolating and could use some help. I've made 3 such calls this week and found the voice on the other end of the phone incredibly relieved and grateful to hear from someone in program. There was another person, I thought to call but didn't. I saw that person at a meeting saying how much trouble she was experiencing, I felt bad. How hard is it really to pick up the phone to say, "Hi, I've missed you. Are you all right?"

The principle of service is important to me in all aspects of my life. Being involved keeps me living. Whether it be the PTA, my Religious Community, OA or just saying "Hello" with a smile to those I pass on the street, I feel that service to my fellows IS life. I am grateful to God and to OA for showing me the way.

Dee M.

It is when we try to make our will conform with God's that we begin to use it rightly.

Bill W.

Westchester-Putnam OAers to Celebrate IDEA Day on November 15, 2003

Westchester/Putnam OAers will have the opportunity of celebrating OA's International Day of Experiencing Abstinence by participating in a full day program featuring a choice of workshops, a powerful panel discussion, a poignant play, and a world-wide moment of silence. The date is November 15, 2003, from 9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, 400 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY. Workshops will include: A Tool Kit for Abstinence, Sex/Body Image and abstinence, Climbing the Ladder Towards Recovery - One Step at a Time. Stay in recovery. Step out of relapse. For further information, go to our website at www.oawestchester-ny.org or contact Carmela S. at (914) 769-5151 or csirico@us.ibm.com.

Turn It Over

Honesty is the first and most important Step Principle for me; honesty, first with my food, then with myself. Hope is next, hope to get and stay thin. Then comes Faith, which was more difficult, for faith involved God, which was very hard in the beginning. Now I use faith more and more. Humility was something I detested. Turning over my bossism, control if you like, was not easy. It was the beginning of truly understanding "turn it over". Lo and behold! There actually was a good me on the other side! Courage was necessary for willingness to grow. I knew I had to keep going. When I really wanted to stop, faith, hope, and courage gave rise to Integrity, something I thought I had, but only gave to others. No wonder I did not know who I was! The Humility to say I was wrong broke down barriers of anger and resentment. A developing Self-discipline increased my awareness of my responsibilities to life. Love connected me to my soul. I first became willing to let other OAers love me and then to love other OAers. Perseverance challenged me to keep coming back, even after finishing the Twelve Steps. From the Spiritual Awareness I received from using all of these Step Principles, I became a total me. Lastly, in doing Service I give back what I have received. God bless to all.

A Member of the Friday Friendship Group of OA

Anonymity Above All

Sharing at meetings is so important and should be taken seriously. What is said, let it stay here. I was overwhelmed recently when I heard a comment repeated from a Fourth Step meeting. This scares me as I am now put into the position of being very selective about what I say at meetings since this breach of confidence. This is very threatening to OA as a whole. I feel everyone should look at this very carefully.

A Twelve Tradition Person

We find no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. Willingness, honesty, and an open mind are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable. AA Big Book, p.569

Trust, Faith, Action

I believe that the Step Principle of Faith has helped me most, while the principles of Honesty and Willingness have presented the most challenge. I overcame my struggles with honesty and willingness first through faith that my Higher Power and my fellow OAers would not judge me for my dishonesty and past mistakes, but would continue to love me. Secondly, my struggles abated by having faith that if I became willing to work the program and turn my will over to my Higher Power, I would attain a daily reprieve from my disease. I came to understand that without honesty and willingness, I was not trusting the program nor putting my faith in my Higher Power. In order to grow, I had to trust the program, put my faith in God, and take action. Letting go of my dishonesty has been such a release and the acceptance from program such a gift. The more I see how the Steps have helped me in my daily living, the more willing I become to work them even harder.

Anonymous

A Step Shorthand

The Step Principles help me to attach a one-word meaning to each of the Steps. They are the positive character traits which help me leave behind my negative traits. They comprise a concise list to which I refer when the going gets tough. They remind me why I am in OA.

Sometimes, when the I am just beginning a new Step, I am somewhat "fuzzy" as a result of a combination of fear and reluctance to move forward. The Step Principles help me to stay focused when I am straying. They define for me the difference between "right" and "wrong" thinking when I am confused. Referring to the Step Principles takes all the decision-making out of the equation, making it easier for me to turn it all over to God, exactly where it should be!

Janet B.

A Note from the Editor

Cross Talk, an excerpt from a March 2003 Lifeline article, appears in The Road to Recovery's September, 2003 issue. WSO has developed a Revised Suggested Meeting Format for OA Groups which includes a definition of cross-talk and suggestions for meeting leaders in addressing the cross-talk issue in their groups. Contact WSO at oa.org for a copy.

Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problems in the light of our experience can recover, provided he does not close his mind to all spiritual concepts. He can only be defeated by an attitude of intolerance or belligerent denial.
AA Big Book, p. 569

The Newsletter will publish **group anniversary** announcements upon request when submitted by the 8th of the month preceding publication.

OA Website Improved: If you have experienced any difficulty innegotiating the oa.org website, try it now. The OA website has been improved. One such improvement is a Download Files section which includes Registration Forms, Online Meeting Lists, literature Catalogue, Group Support, Service Body Support, Program Inspiration, Copyright Requests, WSO Newsletters (A Step Ahead, The Courier), WSCB Frequently Used Documents, Conference Mailings, Board of Trustees, and Press Releases. Go to oa.org and explore!

Temporary Sponsor Bank: Westchester/Putnam OAers have a new contact for the Temporary Sponsor Bank, Brian, who may be contacted at (914) 762-3150.

The Loaner Program name has been changed to the Loner Listing. Its purpose is to list members who live in remote geographical areas and are unable to attend meetings. An OA member traveling to the area may act as a contact by meeting with the loner, if listed.

A Step Ahead is a free, downloadable quarterly newsletter which provides informaton about issues important to the Fellowship. Go to oa.org and click on WSO Newsletters.

WUIG is developing an introductory packet, the goal of which is to support the transition of new Intergroup Representatives from the group service level to the intergroup service body level.

And Now A Word from Our Cofounder is available on a double CD set and audiocassette from WSO. Listen, learn and be inspired as cofounder Rozanne S. speaks to Conference delegates with love and hope. Speeches are from 1994, 1997, 2000, and 2001.

Group donations to WUIG during July/August '03: Mt. Kisco: \$67; Pleasantville: \$30; S. Salem: \$100; St. Matthew's Friday: \$100; United Methodist Wednesday: \$100.

Temporary Sponsor Bank

I want to say that I am very grateful for being so fortunate as to have the help of so many people in rekindling the Temporary Sponsor Bank this year. We now have thirty-five OAers willing to be temporary sponsors. Requests from the Fellowship and placement with sponsors averages three to four monthly. Each caller has offered me the opportunity to carry the message and to assist the newcomer to become part of the Fellowship. Each sponsor who gave service encouraged our tool of Sponsorship to be used as a major road to recovery. I want to say thank you to God and to our Westchester and Putnam members for this service. Let us continue to support the efforts of our new Temporary Sponsor Bank Chair, Brian, who can be reached at (914) 762-3150.

Priscilla R.

New Weekday, Lunchtime Step Meetings at the Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave., White Plains. 12:30-1:30, Mon., Tues, Thurs., Fri. For details, contact: Celeste (914) 390-9841. Bring your lunch. Entrance is through the courtyard in back.



Turkey Day Abstinence

We will plan and commit our food to someone, make a phone call to another OAer, pray and ask God's help, use the tools and Steps.

Wishing all a Thanksgiving Day filled with
Gratitude and Love.

WUIG Annual Elections

WUIG held its annual elections on October 3, 2003 at the regular meeting.

The elections results are:

Chairperson, Carol B.
Vice Chair, Bobby W.
WSBC Delegate, Carol B.
Region 6 Representatives, Larry F., Mary T.
Hotline Chair, Larissa
Newsletter Chair, Priscilla R.
Temporary Sponsor Bank Chair, Brian S.
Public Information Chair, Carmela S.
Website Chair, Beth T.
Speaker Bank Chair, Kathy D.

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.**