



SAIL



SUMMER 2007
VOLUME 19, ISSUE 7

SYRACUSE AREA
INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

THE SAIL IS BACK!

THE SAIL IS WRITTEN BY, AND FOR, OA MEMBERS. YOU ARE WHAT MAKE THE SAIL GREAT! KEEP YOUR RESPONSES, COMMENTS, IDEAS, AND FEEDBACK COMING. THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT SAIL IS AUGUST 15, 2007. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!



READER'S CORNER

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR CONCERN YOU'D LIKE ADDRESSED? SEND IT IN. WE'LL PRINT IT - AND RESPONSES TO THE CURRENT QUESTIONS - IN THE NEXT SAIL.

Q: "WE ALL PASS THROUGH DIFFERENT PHASES IN RECOVERY AND I THINK THAT I'M AT THE PHASE OF PERSISTENCE FOR THE DURATION. I HAVE A YEAR AND A HALF OF ABSTINENCE. I'M NOT NEW ANY LONGER SO I KNOW I DO IT OVER THE LONG HAUL ONE DAY AT A TIME. BUT SOMETIMES I GET BORED WITH MY FOOD AND I HAVE TROUBLE ENDURING. HOW DO YOU ENDURE?"

Q: "TO WHAT WALKING AREAS DO MEMBERS GO TO FIND SERENITY?"

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? PLEASE EMAIL YOUR RESPONSES TO [KARENSCHWARZ@TWCNY.RR.COM](mailto:karenschwarz@twcny.rr.com)

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IMPORTANT REGION 6 PHONE NUMBERS

NAME/POSITION	PHONE #
Pam E: Chair and Webmaster Vice-Chair: <i>service is needed</i>	452-6326
Rose I: Corr. Secretary	451-0438
Janice C: Telephone	635-1172
Janet R: Treasurer	469-3578
Louise Y: Region 6 rep/Utica Area Rep	735-0358
Margaret Ann B: Region 6 trustee	617-868-9355
Ruth W: Region 6 and World Service Rep Monday Big Book meeting Intergroup rep Public information and professional outreach Chair	457-6261
Sylvia: Phone List	472-6544
Carol A: Meeting list	
Helen M: Intergroup Secretary	218-5048
Liz M-P: Thursday Miracles group in Liverpool. Intergroup Rep	445-0378
Jeanne S: Sat. Jamar Drive Intergroup Rep	458-2209
KAREN S: SAIL EDITOR EMAIL: KARENSCHWARZ@TWCNY.RR.COM	637-1834

PLEASE CONTACT KAREN S WITH ANY CORRECTIONS!



LETTERS FROM WITHIN

These are open comments from OA members that address a wide range of OA topics.

The SAIL, and OA members, welcome your comments!

IN DOING MY STEP WORK, I LEARNED THAT I HAD THE IDEA I WAS THE CENTER OF MY UNIVERSE. I HAD TO GIVE UP THAT FALSE IDEA. SO I CREATED A VACANCY AT THE CENTER OF MY UNIVERSE AND PUT OUT A SIGN: "VACANCY. ROOM AVAILABLE. GOD IS WELCOME." *Louise*



THE THIRD STEP PRAYER IS MY PETITION TO BE RELIEVED OF THE "BONDAGE OF SELF" AND THAT GOD WILL TAKE AWAY MY DIFFICULTIES THAT I MIGHT BEAR WITNESS TO HIS CARE FOR ME AND HIS ACTIONS IN MY LIFE. THAT IS HOW I MAKE ROOM FOR GOD EVERY DAY AS I AGREE NOT MY WILL BUT THINE BE DONE THROUGHOUT THE DAY. *Anonymous*



PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO HAVE RELAPSED

"O GOD OF ALL MERCIES AND COMFORT, WHO HELPS US IN TIME OF NEED, WE HUMBL Y ASK YOU TO BEHOLD, VISIT, AND RELIEVE THOSE WHO HAVE RELAPSED FOR WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE DESIRED. LOOK UPON THEM WITH THE EYES OF YOUR MERCY; COMFORT THEM WITH A SENSE OF YOUR GOODNESS; PRESERVE THEM FROM THE TEMPTATIONS OF THEIR ADDICTION; AND GIVE THEM PATIENCE UNDER THEIR AFFLICTION. IN YOUR TIME, RESTORE THEM TO THE PROGRAM AND PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH. AND HELP THEM, WE PRAY, TO LISTEN, BELIEVE AND DO YOUR WILL."



GOD SLOWED ME DOWN IN ORDER TO SAVE ME.

MY LIFE WAS OUT OF CONTROL, AND I DID NOT WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT. I HAD SPENT THE LAST THREE YEARS SLIDING DOWN THE SLIPPERY SLOPES OF COMPULSIVELY OVEREATING AND RESTRICTING. I BEGAN USING DIET PILLS, TOO. I ASKED GOD FOR HELP, AND STILL I COULDN'T STOP. WHY? I ATTENDED MEETINGS, BUT DID I REALLY USE THE STEPS & TOOLS AS DESIGNED? I WAS ALSO RUNNING A LOT, TRAINING FOR AN ANNUAL RACE, AND WEIGHT LIFTING, GETTING LEANER AND LEANER, ALL ON A SMALL BODY FRAME.

OVER TIME, I SUCCEEDED IN LOSING TEN POUNDS, MUCH BELOW MY GOAL WEIGHT, AND WEARING SIZE 0-1 JEANS. I THOUGHT IT WAS GREAT, BUT IT WAS NEVER ENOUGH. NOTHING WAS. I COULD NOT CONTROL WHAT MY HUSBAND DID NOT DO MY WAY, I COULD NOT CONTROL MY CATS, HOW I THOUGHT EVERYONE SHOULD ACT OR WHAT I THOUGHT I DESERVED AT WORK. I WAS AN ANGRY AND SELFISH PERSON.

IN MAY OF 2006, I WAS INJURED DURING TRAINING, AND MY CONDITION WORSENERED OVER TIME. I SOUGHT DIFFERENT THERAPIES UNTIL, IN DECEMBER, ONE WEAKENED MY BODY ENOUGH TO BE TOO MUCH FOR ME PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY AND SPIRITUALLY. THE PAIN BROUGHT ME TO MY KNEES FOR DAYS. I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE. MY WORLD AS I KNEW IT CAME CRASHING DOWN AROUND ME. BY THE GRACE OF GOD, I BECAME ABSTINENT. THROUGH MY HUSBAND'S WORDS, I STARTED TO GRAB ON TO HOPE, FAITH AND BELIEF.



THIS EVENT HAS CHANGED MY LIFE. I DO NOT WANT TO BE THE PERSON I ONCE WAS. I WANT TO BE THE PERSON GOD INTENDED ME TO BE, HAPPY, HEALTHY AND LOVING. I REALIZED GOD DID NOT PUNISH ME BY GIVING ME THE DISEASES IN MY BODY AND MIND. IT JUST SIMPLY IS. NOW I JUST DO MY BEST TO SURRENDER TO GOD ONE DAY AT A TIME AND BELIEVE HE WILL TAKE CARE OF ME.

(CONT'D.)

LETTERS FROM WITHIN (CONT'D.)

YES, IT IS NOT EASY, AND IT IS TIRING. I CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE DEMONS IN MY HEAD. AFTER ALL, I TRAINED THEM WELL. I MUST CONTINUE TO LET MY BODY HEAL, AND IN GOD'S TIME, I HOPE TO BE BETTER. BUT I ALSO SEE THE SIMPLE GIFTS GOD HAS BLESSED ME WITH. A LOVING, SUPPORTIVE HUSBAND, A CARING FAMILY, A GOOD JOB, ABSTINENCE, AND AN OA PROGRAM THAT TEACHES SPIRITUALITY, THE "HOW TO." I THANK GOD WHEN I WAKE UP IN THE MORNING, I ASK GOD TO DIRECT MY THOUGHTS, MY WORDS, TO TAKE AWAY MY FEARS AND SELF-PITY, TO BE MY SPIRITUAL PROVIDER; AND I AGAIN THANK GOD WHEN I LAY MY HEAD DOWN AT NIGHT. MAY WE ALL KEEP ON KEEPING ON, TOGETHER. *Amy*



FROM "THE MESSENGER", SEPTEMBER, 2006: "FROM 'LESS THAN' TO EMBRACED"

MOST OF MY LIFE I HAVE FELT "DIFFERENT" AND "LESS THAN" FAMILY, CLASSMATES, AND CO-WORKERS. AS A YOUNG CHILD IN THE 1930'S, I WAS DENIED THE 5 CENTS FOR THE DAILY SNACK MOST OF MY CLASSMATES HAD AT THEIR SCHOOL DESKS. SHOPPING FOR "CHUBBY" CLOTHES WAS SHAMEFUL BY FAMILY STANDARDS, AND I DREADED THE CHANGING SEASONS WHEN THIS BECAME NECESSARY. BY JUNIOR-HIGH AGE - GRADES 7-9 - I LEARNED ABOUT DIETING AND SKIPPING BREAKFASTS. THIS PATTERN WENT ON ALL MY LIFE TILL I CAME TO INTO OA. I WAS OFTEN VERY HUNGRY BUT NEVER HAD A LASTING WEIGHT LOSS. I WAS ALWAYS THE HEAVIEST AMONGST FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND CO-WORKERS. THE PAIN WAS ONLY ANESTHETIZED BY NUMBING OUT ON MY DRUG OF CHOICE, FOOD.

WHEN I CAME INTO OA IN 1985, I WAS READY TO DO WHATEVER I WAS TOLD TO EASE THIS LONGSTANDING PAIN OF BEING DIFFERENT. THE ROOMS AND THE LOVING, ACCEPTING PEOPLE IN THEM ASSURED ME IT WOULD WORK - IF I WORKED IT. I EMBRACED THE PROGRAM, STEPS, LITERATURE, TOOLS, AND ALL THE WONDERFUL NEW FRIENDS WHO LOVED ME TILL I COULD LOVE MYSELF. OA HAS GIVEN ME A LIFE, AND I'M ENJOYING EVERY MINUTE. *Louise Y.*



AN OBSERVATION FROM AN OA MEMBER:



I RECENTLY WAS AT A MEETING, LATE, I MIGHT ADD. AND WHEN I WALKED THROUGH THE DOORS I WAS SURPRISED TO FIND PEOPLE MULLING AROUND AND TALKING. THE BOX OF MATERIALS WAS NOT OUT. I JUST TOOK THE WHOLE SCENE IT AND DEBATED WITH MY EGO WHAT TO DO. THIS WAS NOT MY HOME GROUP AND IT WAS A LARGE MEETING. THE POCKETS OF PEOPLE NOT ADHERING TO OUR TRADITIONS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THEM ACTUALLY FRIGHTENED ME. WHAT IF THERE WAS A NEWCOMER IN THE MEETING? I DECIDED TO GET THE BOX OUT AND START TO PUT THE MATERIALS OUT. AS I WAS DOING THIS OTHERS CAME OVER AND PITCHED IN, EXPLAINING THEY WERE NOT EVEN PAYING ATTENTION TO THE TIME.

AS I WAS TRYING TO LOCATE MATERIALS TO ORGANIZE, AND WAS DIGGING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX, MY HEART SUNK. THERE WERE PILES OF FLYERS GOING BACK OVER THE YEAR. IT APPEARED THEY HAD NOT BEEN PLACED OUT OR HAD NOT BEEN TAKEN BY MEMBERS. I WASN'T SURE WHAT CONCLUSION, IF ANY, TO COME TO OTHER THAN "WHAT A WASTE OF MONEY."

I NEVER DID LOCATE: MEETING LISTS, PHONE LISTS, MARATHON FLYERS OR REGISTRATION FLYER, THE WSO FLYER, OR THE NOTIFICATION OF OUR NEW PHONE NUMBER. AND THEN MY HEART SANK A SECOND TIME WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THERE WAS A NEWCOMER AND THE MEETING DID NOT HAVE A MEETING LIST TO OFFER. WHEN ASKED WHO THE IG REP WAS THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANYONE WHO KNEW. SOMEONE SUGGESTED IT BE BROUGHT UP AT THE NEXT BUSINESS MEETING. I AGREED IT WAS A GOOD PLAN OF ACTION. *Anonymous*



SEASON TOPIC: **BEACH, BODY IMAGE, AND BRING YOUR OWN (PICNIC) BASKET**

My family and I were on camping in the Adirondacks. Part of the daily routine was to go to the beach for a few hours. I have always enjoyed swimming and playing in the sand with my daughters was a special time when I got to be a kid again. I can still recall the last day I went to the beach with them. It was a fantastic summer day- blue skies, warm but not oppressive, a slight breeze, and it was mid-week so the beach was not overly crowded. My daughters and I had been swimming and presently were occupying ourselves with building something in the sand. A mother and her small son, not more than 5 or 6, crossed in front of our staked out territory of beach. The boy examined our construction efforts, gazed at us and said in a very audible screech "Mommy look at the fat man." Mommy hustled him on to the far side of the beach. I died inside.

"Out of the mouths of babes" the saying goes. I was fat. The armor of denial had been pierced by a child's words of truth. I don't know what I weighed at that time. My guess is I was in the 375-pound range. Worse yet I had no idea of what I actually looked like. Weight and looks were just two of the areas where I practiced denial, about what compulsive eating was doing to me. Yet the truth had cut through me. I was ashamed, embarrassed, humiliated, mad and hurt. I didn't know it then but I was in the grips of a seemingly hopeless condition of mind and body. The solution that day to the problem of my embarrassment, shame and humiliation was simple: Don't go back to the beach. To this day, over twenty years later, I have shunned that place. For the remainder of the vacation I dressed in big baggy flannel shirts or sweat shirts...anything to cover-up and hide so the world could not see my body and ridicule it and me again.

By listening to many who have shared in the rooms of OA, I have learned that it isn't just the overweight that suffer in this way. There are many stories from the underweight that are just as painful as mine. I recall one young woman who arrived at OA's doors in the fall. She appeared to be very, very thin. As fall became winter, she continued to be dressed in layers of sweat pants, baggy shirts, and sweaters. As winter passed into spring she began to talk about her absolute dread of "shorts and swimsuit season." She was telling my story. Without her layers of clothes she'd be exposed - just like the fat man on the beach.



After many 24 hours in the program of Overeaters Anonymous, I am still working on this body image thing. I really don't know what I look like. My mind distorts what it sees in the mirror. Once in a while I'll catch an unanticipated full body reflection of myself and think "Is that really me?" From time to time when shopping with my wife I'll ask her to point out a man that has my shape. Whomever she points out is not how I think myself to look.

What I am slowly learning is this: my spiritual self - the real me - dwells within a material shell made of flesh and bone. I am not my body. Overeaters Anonymous and the given me a means to have a spiritual connection with my Higher fellows, AND the opportunity to have a healthy vessel to carry me may never have a realistic image of my body, but OA has made it so man on the beach. I am grateful for that.

ANONYMOUS



Twelve Steps have Power, with my around. My mind I am no longer the fat

BEACH, BODY IMAGE, AND BRING YOUR OWN (PICNIC) BASKET (CONT'D.)

ON LIES AND LIARS

I won't lie to you; I don't trust compliments.

My boyfriend related this story to me the other night at a family dinner: We had bumped into a friend of his, someone he had not seen in a long time. They chatted, and we parted ways. Later at party, he saw her again, and she gushed, "That was your girlfriend? I thought she was a supermodel!" Yeah, right. What did she want?

People have told me I'm pretty; sometimes I even get "beautiful", which I trust less. Flowers are pretty and they are one of God's creations, so okay, I can buy the pretty thing. But not beautiful. Beautiful is an artifact of social standards that Barbie and Kate Moss can live up to, but leave the rest of us in the dust. It isn't just the social standards that I take issue with. Mostly, it is that I don't believe it myself. So when someone I love tells me I'm beautiful, no matter how well meaning they are, I feel betrayed. I know the truth, the ugly Truth. How could they lie to me like that?



This, my friends, is a product of years of disease filtering down into my core self-concept, and twisting the love innate to any of God's creations into some sick thinking. It cannot be undone overnight. Moreover, it cannot be undone by me. How many years did I listen to others lament, "I don't know why you don't love yourself!" With just enough irritation and frustration, the effect of this statement was to rub that loathing in just a little bit deeper. The harder I tried, the more it escaped me.

What is truth?

I watch someone newly abstinent walk into a meeting. What is the first thought in my mind? "She's beautiful!" The truth lies in that first thought, uncensored, pure and untouched by disease. I have often resisted the urge to throw my arms around that newcomer, but lest I freak them out completely in their already raw state, I hold my seat. My HP puts that unadulterated love in my heart for others. One day I realized that maybe that is what other people are feeling towards me when they exclaim such things.

And maybe it isn't. I'll never know for sure. I do know that my disease tells me lies. But I don't have to believe them. After years of program, being around people all struggling towards the same Light, I have started to trust others. Selected other, but it is trust, none the when it comes from someone who would not lie to me my food, my pain, my struggles and my joys. suddenly turn on me? Not likely.



Look, people, I'm going to try to believe you. true so far. You might even say beyond my wildest dreams. I'm not fishing for compliments here. Just truth. So keep talking to me. I'm listening.

less. I try not to react with such skepticism about anything else. I trust my sponsor with would someone with a history of truth Everything else you have told me has come

ANONYMOUS

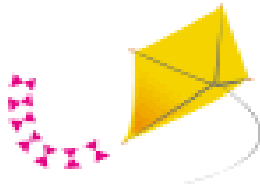
I don't quite know what 'body image' fully means and entails to me today. I have come from a place about my body of abuse and misuse, I just came to believe that I didn't have to worry so much about what a body image was cause I hated my body size and I could hide it behind clothes and my ability to become "invisible" in my surroundings.

What I know today is: the best is yet to come with who I am - the food is put down today, I am abstinent today. The destruction my food addiction caused my body is on the mend, I was born and gifted with the body I have, which is getting me around these days (very well, I may gratefully add), my body still continues to work with me - in short - I just can't believe sometimes what a miracle I am!

ANONYMOUS

SINCE THE NEXT SAIL WILL ARRIVE DURING BACK TO SCHOOL TIME, NEXT SEASON'S TOPIC WILL BE "THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON I LEARNED FROM OA." PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS TO KAREN S (CONTACT INFO ON PAGE 1)

FUN STUFF



FIND THE TOOLS! UP, DOWN, DIAGONAL,
BACKWARD, FORWARD

E	R	U	T	A	R	E	T	I	L
F	P	S	S	E	R	V	M	Y	L
Y	O	P	J	N	H	E	E	M	B
T	N	O	G	O	R	E	Y	A	
I	S	N	D	H	U	E	T	N	R
M	V	S	V	P	T	R	L	O	U
Y	R	O	O	I	L	T	N	N	T
N	E	R	N	P	N	A	N	A	I
O	I	G	C	O	U	R	N	A	L
N	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	H	E
A	R	E	P	D	O	O	F	H	P

Food plan
Meetings
Sponsor
Service

Phone
Journal
literature
Anonymity

EDITORIAL POLICY

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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION

INTERGROUP MEETS THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 7 PM AT THE DEWITT COMMUNITY CHURCH. ALL ARE WELCOME!

WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE: APRIL 30- MAY 6 RUTH W WILL ATTEND

SUMMER RETREAT IS 17 THROUGH AUGUST 19TH AT CHRIST THE KING RETREAT CENTER IN DEWITT, JANET R AND JEANNE S

WSO (INTERNATIONAL OA CONFERENCE): LABOR DAY WEEKEND. SEE FLYERS.

OUR NEW PHONE NUMBER IS 437-0088.



SERVICE



OPPORTUNITIES

} **SERVICE** IS NEEDED AT THE GROUP AND INTERGROUP LEVEL. IF YOU HAVE FOUND THAT OA HAS GIVEN YOU A GIFT OF HOPE THEN OA ASKS FOR YOU TO GIVE BACK TO THE NEWCOMER IN THE FORM OF SERVICE.

} RUTH IS LOOKING FOR MEMBERS TO ASSIST HER IN THE POSITION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH CHAIR. PLEASE CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION (SEE P.1 FOR PHONE NUMBER).

HOW HAVE YOU GIVEN SERVICE? CONTACT KAREN S, AND YOUR RESPONSE WILL BE PRINTED IN THE NEXT SAIL. WHO KNOWS? MAYBE BY PRINTING YOUR "GIFT OF SERVICE", YOU COULD "GIVE" SOMEONE AN IDEA AND ENCOURAGE HIM/HER TO TAKE A ROLE IN "GIVING" (AND, AS WE ALL KNOW, WHEN WE GIVE, WE GET!)

IMPORTANT OA INFORMATION

World Service Office: 1-505-891-2664

Web site: www.overeatersanonymous.org
(also www.oa.org)

OA Convention Tapes: 1-800-257-TAPE

New phone Meeting: 1-712-580-1800 code 12128#
Wednesdays 8:30 PM EST or see us on the web
www.oahowphonemeeting.com