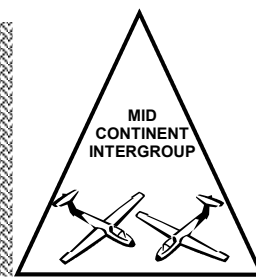


THE PILOT

MID-CONTINENT INTERGROUP
7701 E KELLOGG DR STE 635
WICHITA, KANSAS 67207



January 2011

"Lights, Camera, Abstinence!" (Lifeline, Dec 2010)

Dear God, thank you for an incredible experience of living my creative dreams through the miracle of abstinence. I found myself onstage in New York City, starring in a one-woman show with song and dance numbers, numerous costume changes and long stretches of monologue. It was a dream come true.

They say an ancient curse is "may you get what you pray for." I was alternately thrilled and terrified in the months leading up to the show. A simple question from my sponsor the month before—"So, how are you doing?"—set me to bawling. I was so scared.

She gave me three hints that helped me stay connected to my Higher Power and myself the entire time. First, she said, "Dare to be average. Your Higher Power can be fabulous through you. You, however, just need to show up." What a relief!

Second, she suggested I keep my meals simple and not exciting. She said I should accept that for the rehearsal period, during the show and for some time afterwards, my meals would be a five on a scale of 10. Again, average.

This proved to be of enormous help. When a meal was less than satisfying, I could look at it and say, "Yep, that was a five, all right," instead of getting angry that my meal wasn't good. My excitement had to come from my life, not my food. This is probably a good idea all the time.

Finally, she recommended I try weighing and measuring everything I ate, including my vegetables. I already use a scale for proteins and starches, but I thought I had free license with veggies. But the road gets narrower, as they say. When I first came into program, I didn't measure anything. My abstinence and food plan were more or less the same: three meals a day, no sugar. Since then, time, experience and my Higher Power have taught me that certain suggestions make it easier to stay abstinent from bingeing. One of those things is knowing exactly how much I am eating. Guilt-free eating is the goal. Nothing tastes good enough to be worth the noise in my head that questionable foods and amounts create.

I made it through the show abstinely by the grace of God. Because I was not in the food, I could feel the amazing highs and lows of my emotions. I learned that regardless of what happened with the show, if it soared or sank, I was still loveable. Work is only a tiny part of my life, in the grand scheme of things. The love of my husband, family, friends and especially my OA community is always here for me. God and program come first. I learned the birds would still sing and the flowers would still bloom whether the show went well or not. God and OA would be there for me before, during and after, and for that I am grateful.

Thank you, God. Thank you, OA. (Oh and by the way, standing ovations and sold-out houses filled all four nights—God was showing off!)

~ Leslie L.S., Naples, Florida USA

Lifeline, Jan 2011—"Internal Transformation"

In 2001 at my first OA meeting, I felt in awe and no longer alone. People were experiencing the same things I had with compulsive overeating! I belonged. Discovering I had a disease and it wasn't my fault was amazing! Wow!

But I was still living in a compulsive overeater's diseased mind. I laughed at someone in distress who confessed to eating a cookie. I had much to learn. I went awhile without a sponsor because I found it hard to trust. When I got a sponsor, I was a difficult sponsee. I took the program for granted and didn't maintain abstinence. My weight climbed to 300 pounds (136 kg) at 5 feet 1 inch (155 cm) tall. I had high blood pressure, heel spurs and borderline diabetes.

My disease progressed, and I binged for two weeks straight. It scared me to death! I had to prop myself up to sleep. My stomach hurt from stuffing and stretching it. Each day I told myself it would be my last binge, but I couldn't stop. Having the food control me was awful. I hated to admit it, but food was my God. I turned to food when I was stressed, lonely, sad and even happy. I had to leave the nursing field because my weight was unbearable when I stayed on my feet. It reminded me of alcoholics and drug addicts who lose their jobs because of their addictions. I am living proof it can happen to a compulsive overeater.

I hit rock bottom and went to an OA meeting. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I have been abstinent since September 2007. God blessed me with a wonderful sponsor. I learned I couldn't maintain long-term abstinence because I still thought I could control my food. Once I surrendered my delusional control to God, I received long-term abstinence. As long as I did the footwork, attended meetings, worked the Twelve Steps, called my sponsor daily and stuck to my meal plan, God took care of the rest.

The compulsion has lifted, and God has arrested my disease. I accept I will always have this disease, but I'm grateful. This disease keeps me close to God, because I rely on him daily to keep me abstinent. Daily journaling is a tremendous help, getting my feelings out instead of internalizing them to the point where I would eat over them.

Before recovery I perceived God as a fire-and-brimstone deity. I saw him in the same light as my father, who looked for faults and didn't acknowledge my good behaviors. I realized I was not receiving God's love because I felt unlovable. Recovery has been a wonderful self-discovery journey. I see things clearly through my spiritual glasses. Before recovery I existed, but now I am living. I am amazed at my recreational time, which was once spent compulsively eating.

I love the support and positive input from my OA brothers and sisters. I have always been introverted, but now I love becoming extroverted! I am pursuing things I have always wanted to do, and I am becoming courageous. One of my favorite OA sayings is "Three meals a day, and life in between." The teachings in OA and the AA Big Book are so true. I am working on my character defects, and all areas of my life are experiencing growth.

I have so much gratitude. I daily list at least 10 things for which I am grateful. So far I have lost 98 pounds (44 kg), which is great, but the internal transformation is remarkable! I am no longer on blood pressure medicine. I'm getting healthier every day and learning patience. My timing does not line up with God's perfect timing.

The program teaches that to keep what you have (abstinence), you must give it away. I love doing service. I now have two sponsees and don't hesitate to speak at my meetings so others can get help. This program works if you work it!

— Tara N., Evansville, Indiana USA



Galveston OA Newsletter Sept 2008 "FORTUNE-TELLING"

More Inaccurate Thinking Patterns (Third in a Series)

I have already explained how PERFECTIONISM and CATASTROPHIZING caused me to think negatively, so now I would like to explain my brand of FORTUNE-TELLING. My reason for sharing these personal thoughts is that I realize how central negative thinking has been in my overeating and eventual food addiction. What did I do with the anxiety and panic that these defects of thinking caused? I soothed myself with food. This led to more crazy thinking and more erosion of self confidence which led to more overeating. Possibly you will see these defects in yourself. Possibly you can recognize the joy that these inaccurate thought patterns have stolen from you. I am grateful for the self knowledge that the steps have given me. I wish the same for you.

Fortune-telling is thinking I could foretell the impact of future events in my life, usually in a negative and ominous way. The best example of fortune-telling is probably the first time it was pointed out to me. I went through a time of dreading trips to visit my family of origin. "This visit is going to be the worst!" I truly believed that it was and I experienced so much dread, I became panicky and begged for someone to talk me down emotionally. I was kindly told that yes, some trips were difficult and this next one will probably not be the best, but nor will it be the worst. The probability of life is that it will land where most situations land, somewhere in between, in the gray area. The impact that this had on me was immense. I was predicting my own future and I was calling it wrong because I had trouble facing life for what it really was. Gray is the land where most of life falls.

Thinking like this, tripped me up in many ways. I became a victim of my own self-fulfilling prophesy. If I believed a situation was going to be horrible, that increased the chances that it would end up miserably. If I foretold that I was going to fail when I tried, then that increased the probability that my negative thoughts would negatively impact my performance. If you think something is going to be bad, then it probably will be. I was trying to control the future so that I could handle it and I was really hoping someone would give me permission to avoid it altogether.

I overcame fortune-telling in several ways. First of all, I learned to identify it when I thought it. I learned the results of it, the panic it provoked and the self confidence it destroyed. It was a high price I was paying. I also realized what I was really trying to do was to control my future so that I could handle it. I learned better ways to cope with life. I turned the dread and the worry over so My Higher Power could do for me what I could not do for myself. I learned I had choices where I could decide not to do something but never to avoid it just to stop the dread. I talked myself down by learning to live in the gray where most of life happens and to have realistic expectations of this.

Negative thinking is the enemy of my disease. I know I cannot afford one more negative thought! Abstinence now helps me to see faulty patterns of thinking more clearly and I am empowered when I use the steps to take action.

~ Anonymous, Clear Lake

Alcoholics Anonymous (The "Big Book") -

Excerpt from "Acceptance Was The Answer" (p 417, 418, 419, 420)

And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing or situation--some fact of my life--unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment...unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes...It was as if I had, rather than a Midas touch which turned everything to gold, a magnifying mind that magnified whatever it focused on...When I focus on what's good today, I have a good day, and when I focus on what's bad, I have a bad day. If I focus on a problem, the problem increases; if I focus on the answer, the answer increases...Perhaps the best thing of all for me is to remember that my serenity is inversely proportional to my expectations. The higher my expectations...the lower is my serenity...I must keep my magic magnifying mind *on* my acceptance, and *off* my expectations, for my serenity is directly proportional to my level of acceptance. When I remember this, I can see I've never had it so good.

Lifeline, Jan 2011—"After the Fear"

My life before OA was empty. I sought but seldom found God, relationships and happiness. I was an only (lonely) child, and alone time increased after my parents' divorce. My alcoholic dad was often absent. Mom worked full time, leaving me with the TV for company and the kitchen for comfort. Making friends was hard; I wasn't relaxed or easygoing. Food was my friend.

With mom's help, I went on my first diet at age 11. Mom tried every diet fad or club, with a long binge in between. I followed her model for eating if you're bored, lonely, angry, tired, happy, celebrating, sad, depressed or socializing.

Before OA I thought I was in control. I had a wonderful husband; beautiful child; comfortable, safe home; education; financial security; friends; freedom and opportunities. But I felt guilty; I wasn't happy. I thought only of food.

I stressed over decisions and took everything personally, feeling attacked, misunderstood, unappreciated and taken advantage of. I didn't trust or like most people; they didn't seem to value me as I thought they should. If friends or family didn't put my needs first, then something was wrong with them.

I was dishonest, not telling people, God or even myself the truth about me. If I didn't like part of me and couldn't easily change it, I changed my values about it. I sank into a valueless oblivion, eating to escape life and feelings.

In recent years I spent much time isolating in bed, watching TV and eating. I wondered how actors stayed so thin and watched diet commercials with disdain, knowing the products didn't work. I was a worthless wife and mother and wondered why my husband didn't leave me, why my friends didn't call, how I'd gotten so fat and what I could eat. When I was willing to leave the house, I left only for food. Holidays were an excuse to buy or bake my favorite sweets. Guilt came over what and how much I had eaten. I ate to feel better.

Two things changed. I became aware of my disease's progression (not knowing its name), and I moved to Placerville, where I couldn't isolate (my mother-in-law lives next door).

I was reading OA meeting ads in the newspaper—God's intervention—but would go back to bed thinking anything with anonymous" was for losers.

The progression of my disease became more severe. I was ill, selfish, far away from God's plan and hurtful to everyone. At the bottom of a deep pit, I had no idea how I got there or how to get out.

One evening in bed, I finished my third fat-filled snack and wondered if there was more. God intervened, ringing in my ears, "Why can't I stop?" I knew then I was beyond my own help and was willing to do anything.

Freaked out, I went to an OA meeting. I don't remember what was said, but I remember my feelings. The new vocabulary and ideas confused me. I was unsure whether I belonged, but the honesty I heard amazed me. I decided to return, if only to hear more. I became more comfortable at the next meeting.

I bought the "Twelve and Twelve" after my first meeting, drank it in and carried it everywhere. I attended a month of meetings before getting a sponsor, willing to do whatever members told me to do to find recovery. I read OA books in parking lots, waiting rooms, parks and fast-food-restaurant play areas.

Fear was my biggest obstacle to working the Steps. I learned to trust God using baby steps. He came through on the little stuff, so I figured I could trust him with the big stuff. After sharing my Fifth Step with my sponsor, I felt freedom I had never known. Sanity began.

Today my days begin with the Third Step Prayer (Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed., p. 63) and end with a Tenth-Step inventory. I focus on program and God's will. If I don't, they will take a back seat to my emotions, self-will and all else.

Today I am sane and serene. I don't worry about my food, weight, people, or needs being met. I entrust all to God's care, listening to him to say where I can serve him and others. I set aside time for worship, devotion, and self-care through yoga and therapy. I deal with my addiction by attending meetings, calling my sponsor daily and working the Steps. I trust, love and honor people and make amends when necessary. The extra 50 pounds (23 kg) took care of itself. My trigger foods look like poison. I have seven months of abstinence, and I feel happy and purposeful.

~ M.Y., Placerville, California USA

The better I feel about myself,
the less I need you to be different.

~Alan Cohen

Ask Anna Nimity

Dear Anna,

Everyone else at OA meetings seems to be making more progress in recovery than I am. I feel I am too slow in learning the program. Can you help?

Pokey

Dear *Pokey*,

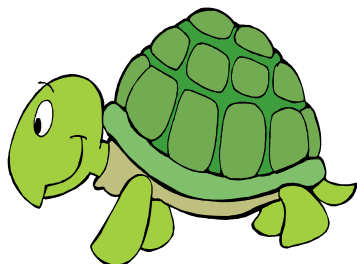
It is important not to compare your insides with other members' outsides. Even with the honest sharing at meetings, we only see a small glimpse of each other. Your path of recovery is your own, and the pace you move is just right for you. Even though you think your progress is slow, I'll bet others can see wonderful changes in you since you came to OA. Keep coming back!

Yours in humble service,

Anna

**MYRTLE THE
TURTLE:**

Happiness is found
along the way, not
at the end of
the road



January Big Book Reading List

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1. 17 | 17. Hug Day |
| 2. 407 | 18. Dr's Opinion |
| 3. 561-574 | 19. 470 |
| 4. 309 | 20. 104-113 |
| 5. 182 | 21. 113-121 |
| 6. 44-49 | 22. 289 |
| 7. 50-57 | 23. 193 |
| 8. 281 | 24. 338 |
| 9. 171 | 25. 219 |
| 10. 494 | 26. 348 |
| 11. 359-364 | 27. 232-239 |
| 12. 364-368 | 28. 432 |
| 13. 382 | 29. 268 |
| 14. 512 | 30. 136-145 |
| 15. 301 | 31. 145-150 |
| 16. XI-XXIV | |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Intergroup Meeting, Jan 11, 2010
Intergroup Office, 7701 E Kellogg Dr Ste 635
All are welcome!

www.oawichita.org

**Mid-Continent Intergroup
Treasurer's Report Oct 2010**

Checking:

Beginning Balance	\$920.57
Donations (\$472.90)	
Book Study	\$ 41.00
Monday 7:30PM	\$ 319.00
Sat Morn	\$ 15.25
Monday 10AM	\$ 20.00
Monday 5:30PM	\$ 20.00
Friday Noon	\$ 23.40
Wed Big Book	\$ 14.25
Sat Aft	\$ 20.00
Expenses (-\$312.43)	
AT&T	-\$ 52.43
Marketing Parking, Inc	-\$ 260.00
(Nov 2010 Rent)	
Net (Donations minus Expenses)	\$160.47
Ending Balance	\$1081.04



MID-CONTINENT INTERGROUP OFFICERS

(Terms are 2 years in duration, and are limited to 2 consecutive terms per position)

CHAIRPERSON:	Deb S.	316-734-6790 (1st term, '09)
VICE CHAIR:	Eva K.	316-684-5013 (2nd term, '08)
SECRETARY:	Mary M.	316-619-8142 (1st term, '08)
TREASURER:	Gay	316-260-5945 (1st term, '09)
LITERATURE:	Barb H.	316-733-2136 (2nd term, '09)
PILOT EDITOR:	Kirsten W.	316-214-9144 (1st term, '09)
PARLIAM.:	Mary G.	316-652-8689 (1st term, '10)

All officers are willing to lend an ear for your concerns, comments and questions! Please thank them for their generous