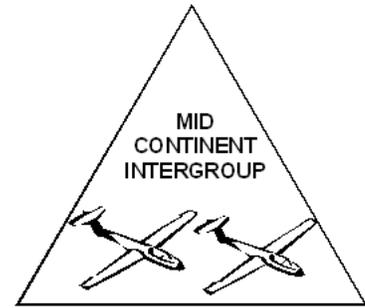


THE PILOT

MID-CONTINENT INTERGROUP
7701 E KELLOGG DR STE 835
WICHITA, KANSAS 67207-1767



February 2013

Literature Selection ~ *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* ~ 1 February **A.A. Thought for the Day**

When we think about having a drink, we're thinking of the kick we get out of drinking, the pleasure, the escape from boredom, the feeling of self-importance and the companionship of other drinkers. What we don't think of is the letdown, the hangover, the remorse, the waste of money, and the facing of another day. In other words, when we think about that first drink, we're thinking of all the assets of drinking and none of the liabilities. What has drinking really got that we haven't got in A.A.? *Do I believe that the liabilities of drinking outweigh the assets?*

Meditation for the Day

I will start a new life each day. I will put the old mistakes away and start anew each day. God always offers me a fresh start. I will not be burdened or anxious. If God's forgiveness were only for the righteous and those who had never sinned, where would be its need? I believe that God forgives us all our sins, if we are honestly trying to live today the way He wants us to live. God forgives us much and we should be very grateful.

Prayer for the Day

I pray that my life may not be spoiled by worry and fear and selfishness. I pray that I may have a glad, thankful and humble heart.

Literature Selection ~ *For Today* ~ December 26

Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist, but in the ability to start over.
~ Scott Fitzgerald

What injustice to think myself a failure because I have to begin again! So I slipped, or relapsed; so what? Starting over is what all creation is about; it is part of the fabric of success in enterprises ranging from spinning a web to splitting the atom.

Willingness to make a new beginning is a sign of growth. It means I am returning to the program with a deeper understanding of myself and my illness. Far from wanting to hide in the back of the room, I feel I have something of value to contribute. The Big Book tells me that to get started on the road to recovery, nothing works better than getting out and working with others. One way to do that is to share my

discovery that relapse, which for me is the only alternative to the OA program, has renewed my faith in that program.

For today: I think of the term, "retread," as proof of how wonderfully accepting and free we OAs can be about the nature of our disease. If there were no Overeaters Anonymous I might have to give in to the gloom and doom; but OA is alive and well and going strong — and so am I!

Literature Selection ~ *Seeking the Spiritual Path*, p. 24-5

Steps to Spiritual Awakening

It was time to write on Step Twelve again, and again I was asking, "What spiritual awakening?" I picked up my pen and started to remember and write.

In Step One, I recognized and came to believe that food was my Higher Power. Not that I expected food to work miracles for me, but I did use it to buffer my emotions. I'm happy—eat. Poor me—eat. Food would make me feel better. It didn't work anymore, but I couldn't see that. Food buffered my feelings; therefore, my life became unmanageable. Just as it is hard to drive a car with insulated mittens, it was hard to live so deeply muffled.

In Step Two, I saw the futility of making food my God, so I had to look elsewhere. First, I looked to the group and my sponsor, and eventually to their beliefs and practices. Slowly the power of OA became real, believable, and even possible for me. By doing as they did, I might change as they had changed. Hope was born.

In Step Three, I jumped in. I took a sponsor, became abstinent, and started to work the Steps on paper. I defined God. I hadn't run my life well; maybe HP and OA could do better.

In Steps Four and Five, I saw much as I wrote my inventory. Still, it took a while to sink in. Not until Step Five did my defects become real. The exact nature of my wrongs became apparent as I shared my inventory and realized how much time I had spent taking other people's inventories.

By Step Six, I wanted to wake up a saint. No work; no worries. I felt ready, but didn't act ready. I wasn't ready to try to change my life by replacing the old ways with new ways. I was still trying to wish my way through life.

By Step Seven, I thought I was humble. I was begging to have my shortcomings taken from me—now! To me, the word “humbly” almost denies asking. When God is ready, he will take them away if I will let them go.

In Steps Eight and Nine, I made a list of all persons I had known. I still had (have) quite an ego. My sponsor and I worked through the list one by one. I made some amends and let go of others. A new way of living emerged as the old baggage was removed. I could remove a resentment as soon as I saw it, so it wouldn't fester and poison me. Though much of me was still old, the new slowly became stronger. Life became worth living again.

Step Ten is like a daily vitamin pill. It improves the quality of my life. I can skip it now and then with no apparent loss. Yet, I am healthier if I partake of its blessings daily.

Step Eleven is a humility-enhancing, ego-reducing Step. I need to seek God's will and request his power. As I seek, I remember that it's not up to me to fix, control, help, or direct the world. I am best and happiest when I can see myself as God's tool. When I don't fight the flow, I can just be.

So there is my spiritual awakening. It surprises me that I still have to look for it. It amazes me that when I do look for it, I find it. All I need to do now is share it.

~ Illinois USA

Literature Selection ~ *Lifeline Sampler*, p. 352.

Anatomy of a Slip

How honest am I with myself? Learning to live the OA way is leading me to examine this question in depth.

I have been involved in Al-Anon for several years, but facing up to my disease of compulsive overeating six months ago brought me to a deeper level of acceptance and self-honesty than I had before.

To illustrate my dishonesty: At a meeting recently I described how the compulsion to overeat had that day “hit me so strongly, fiercely and suddenly” that I had a slip.

At the time, I couldn't see how dishonest that statement was. As I spoke, I felt almost self-righteous and quite full of self-pity. Poor old me, I just couldn't take it when the compulsion hit. I saw other members nodding sympathetically and felt even more smug.

Next day, reading the “Twenty-Four Hour Book,” I came upon the following:

“Nobody entirely escapes temptation. You must expect it and be ready for it when it comes. None of us is entirely safe. ... You must be able to recognize temptation when it comes. The first step towards conquering temptation is to see it clearly as temptation and not to harbor it in your mind. Disassociate yourself from it, put it out of your mind as soon as it appears. Do not think of excuses for yielding to it. Turn at once to the Higher Power for help.”

I saw clearly my lack of honesty. My slip had not been “strong, fierce and sudden.” It had been quite premeditated. I had not recognized temptation and had let food thoughts stay in my mind.

So, it's back to the first step, and more soul-searching with the fourth. I realize now that as a compulsive overeater I have always been dishonest with myself about my motives.

With the help of our program, I am growing slowly into a more honest person — and a far freer and happier one.

~ March 1980

Literature Selection ~ *Alcoholics Anonymous* (4th ed.), p. 70

Suppose we fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble? Does this mean we are going to get drunk? Some people tell us so. But this is only a half-truth. It depends on us and on our motives. If we are sorry for what we have done, and have the honest desire to let God take us to better things, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience.

Literature Selection ~ *Voices of Recovery* ~ 3 September

“I do not need to fear failure. I need, rather, the peace of mind that comes with taking the action I have been putting off.”

~ For Today, p. 168

I had been trying to get back on track with my food for months. I kept veering off and on again, never staying long enough to get to my destination. Then I read just what I needed to help me with yet another “new beginning.” This reading helps me realize that fear is a four-letter word for procrastination. How can I get away from fear? Meditation helps me recall that the answer to fear is faith. God is the engine; I am the caboose. Once again, I humbly ask for His help and guidance to kick my disease off the tracks and get my life back on the rails. I go to a meeting. I make outreach calls. I hear what I need to hear through the combined wisdom and faith of the program. I commit to follow my food plan one day at a time. I am once again clicking along the track and feeling grateful, joyful, and quite capable, thanks to God and the program.

Literature Selection ~ *Overeaters Anonymous* (2nd ed.), p. 166-171.

Journey Through Deception

Before I came through the OA door five years ago, I had done little about my weight problem. I blamed my sluggish metabolism. I complained that other people could eat more than I did without gaining a pound. Life was so unfair!

Years ago I discovered that when I kept busy, the weight melted off without any conscious effort on my part. So I started a cycle that alternated between distraction and depression for the next twenty years. While busy, I maintained a low weight of 120 pounds. When the distraction lost its charm, as it inevitably did, I became depressed and immobilized. My weight would skyrocket, rising higher with each slump.

At five-feet, three inches, I weighed 178 pounds. I know this was only because I visited a diet club where they weighed me. Normally I shunned scales, mirrors, and cameras so that I could keep my self-deceptions intact. I went through my fat periods in a state of isolation and suspension, waiting till I could become “real” again with another spate of activity.

Five years ago I was in another slump. This time I could not afford to wait for something to spur me out of it. I was facing possible bankruptcy and had two lawsuits pending. It might be years before these were settled. I had to come to terms with my weight problem now. I had no experience with other diet systems, but the choice was easy: I was broke and OA was free.

From the time of my first meeting I abstained and called my food in daily to my sponsor I chose that night. The food plan I adopted was a new game to me and by playing it I lost 52 pounds in four and a half months. My “tools” were diet pop, artificial sweeteners, and nail biting. I went to many meetings but treated them as living soap operas. I tuned out what I thought of as the “religious” part of the program. I stayed aloof because I did not want to identify with losers, i.e., compulsive overeaters. I was there to lose weight, not to change my personality or get religion. I thought my personality was just fine, and I already believed in a loving God. When my weight got down to 120 pounds, I left OA with my slim body and my fat head.

I continued to abstain by myself and lost four more pounds. I was filled with complacency: I had the magic formula and I could do it alone! For the next two and a half years I weighed myself daily, kept a log of everything I ate and “passed” as a thin person. Certainly, I never gave any credit to OA.

I did learn three things from that first experience with OA: to follow a food plan, to be aware of what I ate, and never to overeat because of guilt about overeating. I applied the discipline I had learned from abstinence to other areas of my life and was quite successful. My new job was the best I had ever had. I learned sports and tried my hand at new hobbies such as dressmaking. Every relationship in my life bloomed. I never looked or felt better.

But something was missing. Toward the end of this period my weight began to climb until it reached 142 pounds. The new pants I had just made soon would not fit.

Back I came to OA, more desperate, less cocky, more willing. While I had been away I had given up my “tools.” I decided not to take them back. This time I would be forced to work the program instead of transferring my compulsions. This time, if I blew it, I knew it would be with food.

I began by attacking my self-serving deceptions.

I had no metabolism problem. My glands worked just as well at one weight as another. I couldn’t blame heredity. True, my mother and sisters were compulsive overeaters, but my father always ate moderately and kept his normal weight.

I couldn’t blame my attitudes toward food on my conditioning. My mother had served large portions and insisted that I finish them. But millions of youngsters are given too much to eat and are urged to finish it because “wasting food is a sin,” yet they do not wind up gorging themselves. It was true that it pleased my mother to see me enjoy her cooking. But I rebelled against her authority in other ways constantly and felt no compunction about not pleasing her.

It had not been my parents who told me to devour my lunch on the way to school, to steal candy from neighbors, to take nickels from my mother’s purse for candy bars. They told me candy was junk and stealing was wrong.

I could not blame lack of parental love either. I assumed guilt by association when my mother told me that my birth coincided with her goiter operation, which left an ugly scar. I believed myself rejected when my father said that before my birth he was fearful about the Depression and really didn’t want another child. I took up martyrdom because my parents gave me approval only when I was polite and obedient, and they seemed unable to accept my feelings.

But I came to realize that most people are raised with conditional love; that nearly everyone is sometimes made to

feel inferior by his parents; that many men and women lack self-worth. But they do not become overeaters. While I cleared my head of these old tapes, I had to abstain.

I could not blame my compulsion on the burdens I had grown up with. I was born with some physical abnormalities. My mother and sister were psychotic. My brother was mentally retarded. My father deserted his family when I was twelve, and we were destitute. We lived in a slum where violence was commonplace. Food was my bit of sweetness in such misery.

But I have learned to live with each of these facts, and I have grown stronger because of them. Others have just as much to contend with and they do not choose to eat over it. Living in the past, bemoaning my fate is just a way to justify my eating.

I have learned to see myself as one of God’s children, neither the best nor the worst. I know I have a talent, intelligence and ability, and I have had many fine accomplishments. But my self-worth is not validated by any of these. I can love and accept my weaknesses as well as my strengths because they are part of me. I make many mistakes as I reach toward growth, but I no longer expect perfection from myself or anyone else.

Despite this acceptance, I am still tempted at times to kill myself by overeating. My loving self has to work a very tough program to prevent my destroying self from taking over.

I have learned to value more of the simple things, such as the sheer joy of being alive. My happiness depends on my attitude, not on circumstances. Whether I am a compulsive overeater or not, life presents daily problems; how happy I want to be while dealing with them is up to me.

I know now that my immature personality was the root of my problem and that growing up was the solution. I learned to accept my feelings and to take responsibility for channeling them constructively. I went through the Steps. I became more patient, compassionate, and honest. The changes in me brought loving responses from those around me. My weight dropped to 105 pounds.

But I had more to learn. It was painful to realize that my feelings were not the cause of my eating. I had gone through temper tantrums, guilt, loneliness, resentment, fear—many negative emotions—all my life. I overate not because of the feelings, but because I was food-obsessed and I gave myself license to overeat by producing the negative emotions. In other words, I made myself upset so that I had an excuse to overeat.

I may never be emotionally mature. This is an endless journey. But while I travel on it, I cannot use my lack of maturity to justify my eating. Emotional and physical binges are no longer substitutes for action.

I see now that the alternative to abstinence, for me, is suicide. I am no longer able to tell myself lies to excuse binges. In order to abstain, I keep these things in mind: (1) I believe, for today, that I must compensate for my lack of food brakes by maintaining those disciplines that enable me to be moderate. (2) For me, one bite of certain carbohydrates is suicide, fast or slow, because I lack psychosomatic immunity to them. (3) I cannot indulge in negativity, because it blocks out my program awareness. Self-pity is a luxury I cannot afford because it causes amnesia, and I revert to old habits. (4) My primary responsibility is to abstain. All roles—wife, mother, friend, employee—come second. If abstinence is not

first, I will lose it. Everything that interferes with it must go. (5) I never have it made. My compulsion never goes away; it waits for me to become careless or cocky. (6) The OA program at its toughest is better than bingeing. Life at its dreariest or scariest is better than death by overeating.

I am continuing to discard more lies. I have the love of OA friends and my family in making this painful, joyous journey. I am grateful because I know that getting rid of deceptions makes me freer to see the ones that still blind me, still bind me.

SKY PILOT'S "FUEL" FOR FLIGHT

No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

~ *Alcoholics Anonymous* (4th ed.), p. 60

ASK Anna Nimity

Dear Anna,

I keep putting things off that I know I should do because I'm afraid I can't do it perfectly. I don't want to break my abstinence.

Fearful

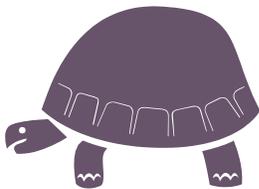
Dear *Fearful*,

Fear often causes us to procrastinate. This can become a dangerous habit when we put off unpleasant tasks because we can revert back to our old escape route—eating. Examine the motive and use the 12 Step Recovery program to form a new habit of action.

Yours in humble service,
Anna

Myrtle the Turtle:

Nowadays, I'm *meeting*
instead of *eating*!



"BIG BOOK" READING LIST FOR FEBRUARY 2013

1	246	15	522
2	359-364	16	553
3	364-368	17	338
4	193	18	531
5	232-239	19	407
6	239-245	20	Random open
7	171	21	494
8	446	22	328
9	535	23	476
10	432	24	268
11	281	25	44-49
12	458	26	50-57
13	151	27	348
14	289	28	561-574

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Intergroup Meeting 12 February 2013 @ 6:30 PM
Intergroup Office: 7701 E Kellogg Dr Ste 835
All are welcome!
www.oawichita.org

COME ONE—COME ALL!!!

Mark your calendars for April 26-27, 2013.
An OA Sharathon is scheduled for that date.
The theme is sponsorship, and the speaker is Zeb.
Don't miss out on this opportunity for growth and fellowship!

Mid-Continent Intergroup Treasurer's Report for month ending 31 October 2012

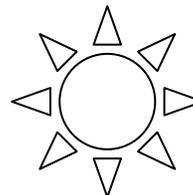
Checking:

Beginning Balance (11/01/12)		\$	1730.97
Donations			
Mon (10:00 a.m.)	\$	40.00	
Mon (5:30 p.m.)	\$	24.50	
Mon (7:30 p.m.)	\$	382.00	
Wed BB (5:30 p.m.)	\$	34.00	
Fri (noon)	\$		
Sat (9:30 a.m.)	\$	36.00	
Sat (1:30 p.m.)	\$		
Towanda	\$	20.00	
Step Study		44.00	
Total Donations			\$ 580.50

Expenditures

Telephone	\$	(52.63)	
Adj. to Balance Ckbk	\$	(0.90)	
Off Exp.—Stamp	\$		
Reimburse Literature	\$	(43.95)	
Reimbursement to Region 4	\$		
Rent	\$	(780.00)	
Total Expenditures			\$ (877.48)
Net (Donations – Expenditures)			\$ (296.98)
Ending Balance (01/08/13)			\$ 1433.99

Publicity Budget (Fall '11)	\$		\$ (127.76)
Prudent Reserve (09/30/12)	\$		\$ 3371.12



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	(2 nd term, '11)
Vice Chair:	Laura L	316-687-5904	(2 nd term, '12)
Secretary:	Barb H	316-733-2136	(1 st term, '12)
Treasurer:	Jane V	316-558-1625	(1 st term, '11)
Literature:	Jill C	316-371-2045	(1 st term, '11)
Pilot Editor:	Bruce C	316-630-0863	(1 st term, '12)
Parliam.:		[unfilled]	

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