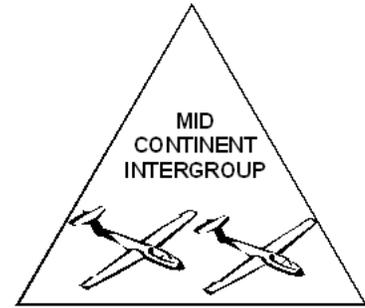


THE PILOT

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



March 2013

Literature Selection ~ *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* ~ March 22

A.A. Thought for the Day

We're all looking for the power to overcome drinking. A fellow comes into A.A. and his first question is: How do I get the strength to quit? At first, it seems to him that he will never get the necessary strength. He sees older members who found the power he is looking for, but he doesn't know the process by which they got it. This necessary strength comes in many ways. *Have I found all the strength I need?*

Meditation for the Day

You cannot have a spiritual need which God cannot supply. Your fundamental need is a spiritual need, the need of power to live the good life. The best spiritual supply is received by you when you want it to pass on to other people. You get it largely by giving it away. God gives you strength as you pass it on to another person. That strength means increased health; increased health means more good work, and more good work means more people helped. And so it goes on, a constant supply to meet all spiritual needs.

Prayer for the Day

I pray that my every spiritual need will be supplied by God. I pray that I may use the power I receive to help others.

Literature Selection ~ *For Today* ~ July 7

If all pulled in one direction, the world would keel over.

Yiddish proverb

It is rightly said that our common bond in Overeaters Anonymous is greater than our individual differences. Aside from the experience we share as compulsive overeaters, however, we are as diverse as any group of people anywhere.

In offering help to someone who asks for it, I must keep individual differences in mind. We are not carbon copies of one another. What may benefit one person could be entirely inappropriate for another. Each of us must be free to find our own way, both in the adoption of an eating plan and in working the program.

For today: Am I helping those I sponsor find what works best for them?

Literature Selection ~ *Seeking the Spiritual Path*, p.16-17

God with Skin On

I once heard a story in church about a little boy who was afraid of the dark. His dad tucked him into bed one night, said goodnight and turned off the light. But each time the father tried to leave, the little boy came up with some excuse to get his dad to stay a few minutes longer: a goodnight kiss, a drink of water, a final trip to the potty. Finally, in desperation, the child told his father that he was afraid to stay in the room by himself. His father said, exasperated, "Don't be afraid, son, God is in here with you." The reply: "Well, could you stay in here, too? Tonight I think I need somebody with skin on."

Sometimes I think I need a God with skin on too. Especially when I feel alone with my troubles. In those times, God puts skin on in the form of other OA members. When I am hurting, struggling, sad, angry, or lonely, I call someone from OA and I always find relief. Someone is on the other end to listen to me, share his or her experience, and offer hope. They let me cry and say silly, irrational things. They tell me that this, too, shall pass; that I don't have to eat over it; that God loves me; and that thing will get better. Their words are like salve on my aching emotions. I find myself comforted and able to breathe again, and then I can figure out what actions I need to take next. I feel as if I've been sitting in my Higher Power's lap, with my head tucked under his chin, wrapped in his arms, listening to his heartbeat. It's a wonderful feeling.

As I experience the love and acceptance of other recovering compulsive overeaters, I'm learning to understand what God is really like. He's knows that sometimes the best way to comfort his hurting child is to use another of his children; that sometimes the only thing we need to know is that someone else has been where we are, understands, and has made it out just fine. A God like this is trustworthy, and it's slowly becoming easier to turn my will and my life—especially around food—over to him. God is not out to get me, after all! In my hardest times he proves most gentle and caring.

After several years, I continue to work this program, learning about God as I experience his qualities in other people. I guess we never know when we will be "God with skin on." One of the miracles of this program is that struggling

compulsive overeaters who feel hopeless become useful within our Fellowship. Just by listening to someone on the phone; sponsoring him or her; or sharing before, during, or after a meeting, I may be sharing God's love at the very moment that person needs to feel it. I may unknowingly say exactly what the person needs to hear—just like when I call someone and that person does the same for me.

Suddenly, answering the phone and making phone calls look more important. I see sharing before and after the meeting in a whole new light. Writing an article is more of a joy, because I never know when I will be God's "skin"!

—Virginia USA

Literature Selection ~ *Lifeline* (Sept/Oct 2012)

Living Traditions

Tradition 10: *Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*

Serenity, Not Drama

Drama! It's fascinating on stage or in a movie or novel. But what purpose does it serve in my personal life? The answer is none. That may be one of the changes we observe when we come into OA. As we clear away the wreckage of our past and learn to have honest, loving relationships with others, some of us find we no longer want or need drama. Just like food, it was effective for a time.

Drama or controversy can be thrilling. It can give me motivation to act in my life when I don't have the balance and grounding that comes from a relationship with a Higher Power. Some people are addicted to drama and don't feel alive unless their struggling, fighting or striking back. Gossip gives some of the same kick as _____ (you fill in the blank). Today, I get what I need from serenity, not drama.

To me, Tradition Ten says, "Check your weapons at the door." If an issue "out there" has got me going, it's personal and not part of OA. OA has no part in outside issues. One might expect OA to have an opinion on several issues: stomach surgery, weight loss pills and programs, treatment centers, the First Lady's *initiative* to tackle childhood obesity. As an individual, I can have all the opinions I want, but Tradition Ten advises me to keep OA's nose out of others' business.

Why? Let's return to where I started: drama. It's distracting and it's divisive. If OA gets drawn into public controversy, it dilutes what we're doing in OA. We're here to recover from a deadly disease and be of service. It's not service for those who need it. How many times have I said to myself, "Gee, if they would only listen to my opinion." I need to be here for people who want OA, not out providing sound bites.

Let's leave opinions on outside issues to those who don't have the responsibilities we have in OA or those who can successfully keep the two separate.

— Edited and reprinted from *Serenity Press newsletter, Arizona Serenity in the Desert Intergroup, June 2010*

Literature Selection ~ *Voices of Recovery* ~ July 30

"... a loving witness, someone who will keep our confidences and will listen without judging us or seeking to fix us."

~ *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 49

Someone who doesn't judge—I wasn't accustomed to that before OA. What a wonderful difference it is to find people who really listen to me! What a talent they have for listening and not attempting to solve my problems.

Can I also learn to do this? Why not? If I can work the Steps in the footsteps of my sponsor and others in the program, I can also learn to listen. Slowly, this ability is coming to me. I no longer plan what I am going to say while you are speaking. I actually strive to hear the feelings behind your words. The words themselves are not as important as the feelings conveyed.

Discovering people who listen to me is one of the many gifts of the program. And it is one that I can pass on to others. God has blessed me with many gifts since I walked through the doors of OA. The ability to be a loving witness is but one of them.

Literature Selection ~ *Living Sober*, pp. 26-30

11 Availing yourself of a sponsor

Not every A.A. member has had a sponsor. But thousands of us say we would not be alive were it not for the special friendship of one recovered alcoholic in the first months and years of our sobriety.

In the earliest days of A.A., the term "sponsor" was not in the A.A. jargon. Then a few hospitals in Akron, Ohio, and New York began to accept alcoholics (under that diagnosis) as patients—if a sober A.A. member would agree to "sponsor" the sick man or woman. The sponsor took the patient to the hospital, visited him or her regularly, was present when the patient was discharged, and took the patient home and then to an A.A. meeting. At the meeting, the sponsor introduced the newcomer to other happily nondrinking alcoholics. All through the early months of recovery, the sponsor stood by, ready to answer questions or to listen whenever needed.

Sponsorship turned out to be such a good way to help people get established in A.A. that it has become a custom followed throughout the A.A. world, even when hospitalization is not necessary.

Often, the sponsor is the first person to call on a problem drinker who wants help—or the first recovered alcoholic to talk with the inquirer if he or she goes to an A.A. office—or the A.A. member volunteering to "sponsor" an alcoholic about to be released from a detox or rehab unit, a hospital, or a correctional facility.

At A.A. meetings, people often recommend that an A.A. beginner get a sponsor, and it is left up to the newcomer to pick someone as his or her sponsor, if one is wanted.

One reason it is a good idea to have a sponsor is that you have a friendly guide during those first days and weeks when A.A. seems strange and new, before you feel you know your own way about. Besides, a sponsor can spend far more time with you, and give you far more individual attention, than a busy professional helper possibly could. Sponsors make house calls, even at night.

If you do have a sponsor, some of the following suggestions may help. Remember, they are based on thousands of A.A. members' experience over many, many years.

- A. It's usually better if men sponsor men and women sponsor women. This helps avoid the possibility of romance rearing its lovely head—a development which can hideously complicate, if not destroy, the sponsor-newcomer relationship. By trial and error, we've discovered that sex and sponsorship are a very bad mix.

- B. Whether or not we like what our sponsor suggests (and sponsors can only suggest; they cannot make anybody do anything, or actually prevent any action), the fact is that the sponsor has been sober longer, knows pitfalls to avoid, and may be right.
- C. An A.A. sponsor is not a professional caseworker or counselor of any sort. A sponsor is not someone to borrow money from, nor get clothes, jobs, or food from. A sponsor is not a medical expert, nor qualified to give religious, legal, domestic, or psychiatric advice, although a good sponsor is usually willing to discuss such matters confidentially, and often can suggest where the appropriate professional assistance can be obtained. § A sponsor is simply a sober alcoholic who can help solve only one problem: how to stay sober. And the sponsor has only one tool to use—personal experience, not scientific wisdom. § Sponsors have *been* there, and they often have more concern, hope, compassion, and confidence for us than we have for ourselves. They certainly have had more experience. Remembering their own condition, they reach *out* to help, not down. § Someone has said alcoholics may be people who should never keep secrets about themselves, especially the guilty kind. Being open about ourselves helps that, and can be a good antidote for any tendency toward excessive self-concern and self-consciousness. A good sponsor is someone we can confide in, get everything off our chests with.
- D. It's agreeable when the sponsor is congenial, someone who shares our background and interests beyond sobriety. But it is not necessary. In many instances, the best sponsor is someone totally different. The most unlikely pairings of sponsor and newcomer sometimes work the best.
- E. Sponsors, like most everyone else, are likely to have some family and job obligations. Although a sponsor will, on occasion, leave work or home to help a newcomer in a real bind, there are naturally times when the sponsor is truly out of reach. § Here is the opportunity for many of us to use our reawakening wits and figure out a substitute for a sponsor. If we genuinely desire help, we do not let a sponsor's illness, or momentary unavailability for any other reason, stop us from getting some help. § We can try to find a nearby A.A. meeting. We can read A.A. literature or something else we have found helpful. We can telephone other recovered alcoholics we have met, even if we don't know them very well. And we can telephone or visit the nearest A.A. office or clubroom for A.A. members. § Even if the only person we find to talk to is someone we have not met before, we're sure to encounter sincere interest and a desire to help in any A.A. member we reach. When we really level about our distress, true empathy is forthcoming. Sometimes, we get really needed encouragement from recovered alcoholics we do not much care for. Even if such a feeling is mutual, when one of us trying to stay sober asks any other recovered alcoholic to help us not drink, all petty and superficial differences melt away.
- F. Some people think it is a good idea to have more than one sponsor, so at least one is always likely to be available. This plan has one additional advantage, but also carries a slight risk. § The advantage is that three or four sponsors provide a wider range of experience and knowledge than any one person possibly can. § The risk in having several sponsors, rather than just one, lies in the tendency some of us developed during our drinking days. In order to protect ourselves and keep our drinking beyond criticism, we often told different tales to different people. We even learned how to manipulate people, in a sense, so the people-environment would practically condone, or even encourage, our drinking. We may not have been aware of this tendency, and it was usually lacking in any evil intent. But it really became a part of our personalities in our drinking days. § So a few of us with a clutch of sponsors have caught ourselves trying to play off one sponsor against another, telling one thing to a first, something else to the second. This doesn't always work, since sponsors are hard to kid. They catch on pretty fast to the tricks of anyone wanting to drink, having used

almost all such wiles themselves. But sometimes we can keep at it until we get one sponsor to say something directly opposite to what another sponsor has said. Maybe we manage to wangle out of somebody what we *want* to hear, not what we need. Or, at least, we interpret this sponsor's words to suit our wishes. § Such behavior seems more a reflection of our illness than the honest search for help in getting well. We, the newcomers, are the ones most hurt when this happens. So maybe if we have a team of sponsors, it would be a good idea to keep one eye cocked sharply, alert to catch ourselves if we should find ourselves getting into games like that, instead of trying to progress straight toward our own recovery goal.

- G. Being recovered alcoholics themselves, sponsors naturally have their own strengths—and foibles. The sponsor (or any other human being) without flaw or weakness hasn't turned up yet, as far as we know. § It is a rare occurrence, but it is possible that we can be misled or given a bum steer by a sponsor's mistaken advice. As we've all found by doing it ourselves, even with the best intentions, sponsors can goof. § You can probably guess what the next sentence will say. . . . *A sponsor's unfortunate behavior is no more a valid excuse for taking a drink than anyone else is.* The hand that pours a drink down your gullet is still your own. § Rather than blame the sponsor, we've found at least 30 other ways to stay away from a drink. Those 30 are laid out in the other sections of this book, of course.
- H. You are under no obligation ever to repay your sponsor in any way for helping you. He or she does so because helping others helps us maintain our own sobriety. You are free to accept or reject help. If you accept it, you have no debt to repay. § Sponsors are kind—and tough—not for credit, and not because they like to “do good works.” A good sponsor is as much helped as the person being sponsored. You'll find this to be true the first time *you* sponsor someone. § Some day, you may want to pass such help on to someone else. That's the only thanks you need give.
- I. Like a good parent, a wise sponsor can let the newcomer alone, when necessary; can let the newcomer make his or her own mistakes; can see the newcomer rejecting advice and still not get angry or feel spurned. A sharp sponsor tries hard to keep vanity and hurt feelings out of the way in sponsorship. § And the best sponsors are really delighted when the newcomer is able to step out past the stage of being sponsored. Not that we have to go it altogether alone. But the time does come when even a young bird must use its own wings and start its own family. Happy flying!

SKY PILOT'S “FUEL” FOR FLIGHT

“God has created all things for good; all things for their greatest good; everything for its own good. What is the good of one is not the good of another; what makes one man happy would make another unhappy. ... God knows what is my greatest happiness, but I do not. There is no rule about what is happy and good; what suits one would not suit another. Thus God leads us by strange ways; we know He wills our happiness, but we neither know what our happiness is, nor the way. We are blind; left to ourselves we should take the wrong way; we must leave it to Him. Let us put ourselves into His hands, and not be startled though He leads us by a strange way ... Let us be sure He will lead us right, that He will bring us to that which is, not indeed what *we* think best, nor what is best for another, but what is best for us. ... O, my God, I will put myself without reserve into Thy hands ... ”

~ John Henry Newman

ASK Anna Nimity

Dear Anna,

I am searching for a sponsor to remove my obsession with food so I can live a life of perfect abstinence. Can you offer advice?

No Quarter

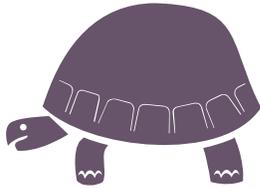
Dear *No Quarter*,

Sponsors do not “remove” things for others, but they do offer good advice—based on their own experience—on how to stay in recovery and be of service to OA and its members.

Yours in humble service,
Anna

Myrtle the Turtle:

A sponsor is simply a recovering compulsive overeater who, through experience, can help another compulsive overeater achieve abstinence



The Iowa Intergroups present **SPRING SUPER SATURDAY**

Date: April 6th, 2013 Time: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Location: Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston, IA

“THIS ADVENTURE CALLED LIFE”

(B.B. 4th Ed. Pg.288)

“Welcome Everyone Into Recovery”

(Promises of Eastern Iowa Intergroup)

“Abstinence vs. Food Plan” (Central Iowa Intergroup)

“Service” (Quad Cities Intergroup)

“Acceptance” (Northeast Iowa Intergroup)

SHARE YOUR WARES TABLES AVAILABLE

Donation basket will be passed. Lunch on your own, or Brown Bag. Small kitchenette available.

PLEASE JOIN US, BRING YOUR RECOVERY, and a FRIEND
Stoney Creek Inn, 5291 Stoney Creek Dr, Johnston, IA 50131

Phone: (800) 659-2220 <http://www.stoneycreekinn.com/>

Room (includes microwave and fridge) \$92

Mention Overeaters Anonymous when checking in.

Questions? Contact Bev C. at (608) 943-6016.

“BIG BOOK” READING LIST FOR MARCH 2013

01	151	16	17
02	359-364	17	535
03	364-368	18	XI-XXIV
04	246	19	388
05	512	20	561-574
06	Dr's Opinion	21	182
07	544	22	122-129
08	171	23	129-136
09	446	24	348
10	219	25	522
11	501	26	476
12	382	27	437
13	44-49	28	268
14	49-57	29	458
15	295	30	104-113
		31	113-121

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Intergroup Meeting 12 March 2013 @ 6:30 PM

Intergroup Office: 7701 E Kellogg Dr Ste 835

All are welcome!

www.oawichita.org

Invitation: St. Pat's Potatoes with Pals

You are invited to an OA get together at Phil and Gay's place.

When: Sunday, March 17, 5 to 7 p.m.

Where: 1736 N. Edwards Ave. (Indian Hills)

What: We'll provide baked potatoes and beverages.

Please bring a topping to share. You are welcome to bring your own dinner if your food plan requires it.

Please RSVP to: Gay (nonmatchr@yahoo.com).

Sig O's (significant others) welcome.

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 Cbk \$ (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 (2nd term, '11)

Vice Chair: Laura L 316-687-5904 (2nd term, '12)

Secretary: Barb H 316-733-2136 (1st term, '12)

Treasurer: Jane V 316-558-1625 (1st term, '11)

Literature: Jill C 316-371-2045 (1st term, '11)

Pilot Editor: Bruce C 316-630-0863 (1st 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!