



## JANUARY 2010

### “Misdirection”

Last week, I saw two TV shows that dealt with magicians. I felt like HP was trying to tell me something. The theme seemed to be about misdirection...that something distracts you with this over here, meanwhile, the important stuff is happening over there, where you are NOT looking. If you could keep from getting distracted by the misdirection, and pay attention to scene as a whole, then you would easily see the key to the puzzle...the real thing that was going on under the surface.

This week, I got some real world experience in misdirection - I fell for an internet scam. If I had been looking at the scammer's website as a whole, I would have seen the terms they posted, instead of just focusing where they were misdirecting me to focus. I fell for internet sleight-of-hand. My spouse has pointed out to me that this is not by any means the only example of my impulsivity, and that I am doing it even more than I realize.

As humiliating as this experience was, a couple of great things came out of it. First was a motivation to release the character defect of impulsivity. Not out of fear, but out of fascination: How much more interesting might Life be if I allow myself to be more aware? Would I rather keep falling for the tricks, or see the truth? The truth is always far more interesting.

Even more importantly, in regards to food, I feel like HP has given me a new tool to deal with food cravings. For instance, if I have a food craving, I can stop and think: What is it that my disease is trying to distract me from? What is really going on here? Am I mad? Am I sad? What feelings do I have that need to be addressed? If I pause before taking an action, if I *reflect* instead of *react*, then I will be far less likely to put my credit card number in places where I shouldn't...and I also will be far less likely to eat compulsively. I will be living *actively*, and not *reactively*.

Of course, my willingness to actually do this is a big factor. I suppose that is where daily surrender comes in. I have often had trouble with daily surrender, because I didn't know what I was surrendering exactly. But now I can surrender my need to REACT, and ask HP for the willingness to REFLECT. It is a place to start, anyway.

~Kirsten W, Wichita

## Literature Selection: “Distinctly OA” (Lifeline, Jan ‘81, p16-18)

I don’t care how much I substitute the words food and compulsive overeating for alcohol and alcoholism, it’s different being a compulsive overeater.

It’s that last abstinent bite that gets me. Sometimes I’m not even hungry, but I eat because it’s mealtime (and because I love to eat). When I come to that final mouthful, I feel ravenous! Often my portions look gigantic and I fantasize being unable to finish, but when it’s all gone I feel as if I could go on eating forever.

Sometimes I get to the end of my allotted food and I am so turned on that I feel as if I’ll go into orbit. (Thanks to this program and the grace of God, I don’t—one meal at a time.)

And you should see me shopping for my lovely food. (Or maybe you shouldn’t. You’d probably find me hilarious—or pathetic, depending on where *you’re* at.) Broccoli or peas? Peas, I decide, and scoop them into a plastic bag. On second thought, those stringbeans look beautiful. Dump out the peas, grab a few handfuls of beans. God, that okra is tempting. I haven’t had it in ages. Another quick exchange. Maybe I should splurge on artichokes instead...

Finally, I’m so mixed up I feel like walking out. If I can’t have it all, I don’t want any.

“Keep it simple, silly,” I tell myself. “Take broccoli. It’s the cheapest. It’s the easiest. And you love it.”

I won’t go into such dramatic detail about my tizzies over muenster or cheddar, apples or melon—or about my shenanigans to ensure that I get the biggest eggs. (I switch them around a bit, getting the best of several boxes.)

Et cetera.

Sometimes, I feel guilty about all this. “The obsession hasn’t been lifted,” I cry in dismay, and I despair of ever qualifying for the ranks of the spiritually fit. When in such a morass, I remember how it was when I was compulsively overeating and suddenly this behavior seems mild by comparison.

I also remind myself that whatever it is I’m doing has allowed me to be abstinent in OA for six years, maintaining a 60-pound weight loss.

“Thank God I’m using all that energy constructively now,” I think.

In the back of my mind, though, I am convinced that other OAs would be utterly horrified and would disqualify me as a true-blue-and-recovering member of our Fellowship.

At times, I just plain accept myself. I’m grateful that I care about myself enough to give myself the best. Remembering my tendency to feel more comfortable with deprivation and suffering, I endorse myself for allowing myself the pleasure of my wonderful food. And if the obsession has not been completely annihilated, so what? My pretending it’s gone when it isn’t will not help me one bit. On the contrary, recognizing what I’m still capable of doing with food enables me to choose not to act on the obsession but to continue taking the options OA offers me instead.

In fairness, the craziness I have described (if it *is* craziness) is not a permanent state. When the food tizzies hit, I remind myself that they come and go, that they won’t last forever—and they never do. When I am free of the obsession I remind myself that this freedom also comes and goes, that I shouldn’t be surprised if it doesn’t last forever—and it never does.

Most of the time I’m somewhere in between these two extremes. And that’s what is important for me to recognize and accept so I can just live with it and quit fighting it. If I think of myself as either totally food-crazy or totally food-free, I’m passing unfair judgment on myself on the one hand and placing unrealistic expectations on myself on the other.

(cont’d on page 3)

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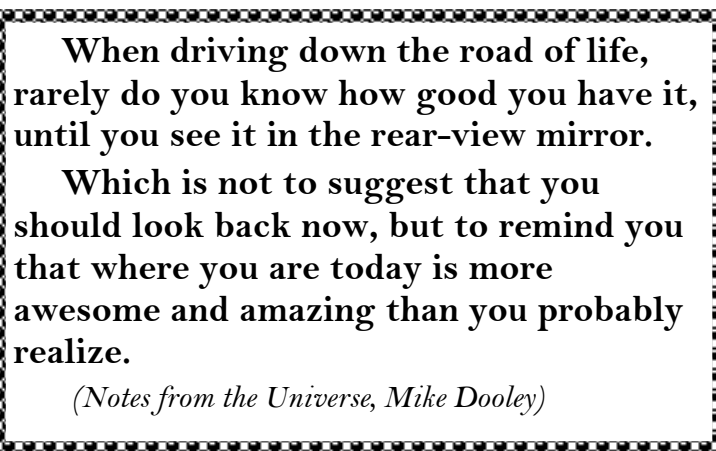
The point I'm trying to make is that compulsive overeating is different from alcoholism. And we all know why: we *have* to eat. We handle dynamite three times a day.

AAs don't have to take just three moderate drinks a day, nor do they have to choose between a daiquiri and a whiskey sour, or decide whether it will be Red Label or Black.

I used to envy alcoholics because they could totally abstain from alcohol and be done with it.

I envy them no more. Thanks to Overeaters Anonymous, I now enjoy my food to the hilt. Abstinence has given me back the pleasure of eating. And, occasional tizzies notwithstanding, I love every abstinent bite—especially the last!

~C.D., Redondo Beach, CA



### **“I Am Truly Powerless” (Unity Intergroup Society Pages, Jan 2009, p5)**

I am truly powerless over food. I've been fighting this every day during this holiday season. Maybe I could try the sugarless chocolates? I pre-arranged the experiment with my sponsor, no secrets here. Lo and behold, I can binge on them, too. I have a temper tantrum. Why can't I eat like normal people? So I tried the sugar-free hard candies the next day. Oops, the whole bag is gone. I am angry and feeling sorry for myself. It's not fair that I can't have just one chocolate goodie. I was doing pretty well. Having come to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, I was contemplating what it would look like to really turn my will and life over to the care of god, as I understand god, who I don't understand. (I give credit for that last phrase to the angel with skin on that led me to OA...thank you.) I am very hard on myself, my sponsor tells me. “Be gentle with you,” she says. But I am not sure I know how to do that. I know how to work very hard to overcome hurdles and have successfully overcome many of them. It is hard not to feel like I have to work hard in OA. Being gentle with me feels like I am not working hard enough. That is the point though, isn't it? To stop working so hard, release all of that desire to control, overcome, and fight. To let go of my will-power, accept that I am powerless, to become willing. Perhaps someday I could even be grateful for my powerlessness. For today, I surrender. I am truly powerless.

~Cathy C

The ego is infinitely complicated.  
Love is infinitely simple.

~Alan Cohen

**Ask Anna Nimity**

Dear Anna,

In 12-step programs, what is meant by “Two-Stepping”? Does that mean you just take Steps 1 and 2 and stop there?

*Possible Two Stepper*

Dear *Possible*,

That actually could be one interpretation. The original meaning refers to the sense of complacency some members feel once they achieve sobriety, which results in a willingness to accept ONLY the first part of Step 1 (powerlessness over the substance) and the first part of Step 12 (carry the message). Either way, the cure for this is repeated at almost every meeting:

**“It works if you WORK it!”**

Yours in OA service,  
*Anna*

**January Big Book Reading List**

- |                     |                           |             |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Doctor's Opinion | 11. Gratitude List        | 22. 522     |
| 2. 289              | 12. 486                   | 23. 470     |
| 3. 171              | 13. 151                   | 24. 30-37   |
| 4. 382              | 14. 531                   | 25. 37-43   |
| 5. 72-80            | 15. 476                   | 26. 375     |
| 6. 80-88            | 16. 58-63                 | 27. 494     |
| 7. 328              | 17. 63-71                 | 28. 437     |
| 8. 246              | 18. 348                   | 29. 553     |
| 9. 446              | 19. 501                   | 30. 232-239 |
| 10. 388             | 20. XI-XXIV               | 31. 239-245 |
|                     | 21. Make a plan of action |             |

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next Intergroup Meeting, January 12, 2010  
Intergroup Office, 7701 E Kellogg Dr Ste 635  
All are welcome!

Come and see our new space!  
We have a new office, and a new website:  
**www.oawichita.org**

We are so grateful for this opportunity to grow.

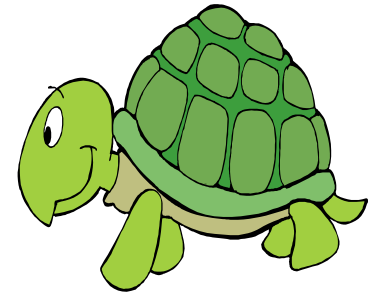
**Mid-Continent Intergroup  
Treasurer's Report as of 10/31/09**

**Checking:**

Beginning Balance	\$742.69
Donations (\$277.61)	
Furniture Donation	\$ 10.00
Monday 5:30 PM	\$ 15.00
Monday 7:30 PM	\$175.50
Wednesday 7:30 PM	\$ 42.11
Friday Noon	\$ 15.00
Saturday 9:30 AM	\$ 20.00
Expenses (-\$774.64)	
Nov and Dec Rent	-\$520.00
Xfer to Prudent Reserve	-\$200.00
Phone	-\$ 54.64
Net (Donations minus Expenses)	\$497.03
Ending Balance	\$245.66

**MYRTLE THE  
TURTLE:**

I am powerless  
over food, not  
powerless over  
footwork!



**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.:	Andy M.	316-613-9907 (1st term, '09)

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