

ANCHORS OA

VANCOUVER ISLAND OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

Acceptance



ACCEPTANCE IS A PROCESS

Acceptance: My Take

ac•cept•ance

1. the act of taking or receiving something offered.
2. favourable reception; approval; favour.
3. **the act of assenting or believing: acceptance of a theory.**
4. the fact or state of being accepted or acceptable.

Here is where I have been stuck in my desire for recovery for a very long time: I thought of the definition of 'acceptance' as the one stated above #2. I now call this little 'a' acceptance. All my life I have been looking for acceptance from anyone and everyone. I required other people's approval almost as much as I needed air, or I thought I did. If I liked something or someone, believed in something or someone, I needed someone else to agree with my opinion. Without this external approval I held little faith in my opinions or beliefs. It is extremely exhausting to never truly believe in yourself and your own inherent worth.

It has taken much reflection and struggle to realize that the kind of acceptance I need to enable me to find and stay in recovery is much bigger, yet smaller at the same time, because it is within me. Within me and my Higher Power; whomever or whatever I choose that to be. It is between me and me my HP. I don't need anyone else's approval or validation. My recovery has no need to depend on the belief of another person. That is his or her recovery. For me, the '*believing*' in definition #3 is about *believing in myself and my Higher Power*. And my HP doesn't have to look or sound anything like any other member's. I believe that I am capable of recovery. I believe that I am worthy of recovery. I accept my past and leave it there. I accept that where I am now is where I am supposed to be right now. I accept that I am a good person who is worthy of being well.

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I accept that, in time, my HP and I will figure out my recovery, when the time is right. I accept that the 'when' is not up to me, but the ground work to get there is. I call this Big 'A' Acceptance.

Acceptance doesn't happen overnight. In my opinion, it comes in waves. Sometimes the waves are only rolling in like a light chop on the water, and at other times it can feel like a tsunami rolling over me. I have only had one conversation with my Sponsor in the past year but that conversation was beyond invaluable. We talked about acceptance. Since then I have been MIA at meetings but my mind and spirit have been working hard to process that one conversation and the question my sponsor asked me that day: "*what would true acceptance feel like to you?*" (I paraphrase, but the core of what you said, Dear Judi, is in there). My acceptance: Stop fighting everything and attempting to control every detail of life. Accept that I cannot be everything to everybody. My life only needs my approval and that of my HP. Be patient and willing. Be still. Listen. Listen to nature, my soul and my Higher Power.



WAVES OF ACCEPTANCE

-Ann P.

A Member's Prayer for Acceptance

Today I leave the running of the universe up to you. I trust that everyone and everything in this world are in your will. Therefore; by grace, I accept this day as I find it. I accept those in my life as they are. I accept I'll not be left alone in situations or conditions as they present themselves today. By that same grace I will leave the past and the future in your care and I will live in your present moment. Please give me the willingness to live and to eat according to your will.

Thank you God,
Amen!



-Joy



Pertinent OA Event Dates

OA Birthday (third Saturday of January)

January 15, 2011

January 21, 2012

January 19, 2013

Unity Day (last Saturday of February at 11:30 am PST)

February 26, 2011

February 25, 2012

February 23, 2013

IDEA Day (third Saturday in November)

November 19, 2011

November 17, 2012

November 16, 2013

World Service Business Conference

April 25-30, 2011 (Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town)

April 30 – May 5, 2012 (Embassy Suites Albuquerque)

April 29 – May 4, 2013 (Embassy Suites Albuquerque)

April 28 – May 3, 2014 (Embassy Suites Albuquerque)

World Service Convention

August 1-4, 2013 (Cleveland, OH)





Acceptance: Members Share



ACCEPTANCE BLOOMS

Acceptance in my recovery is being willing to take whatever happens today and apply the 3 A's—awareness, acceptance and action. I used to think awareness was enough and then I thought action would be enough, not realizing if I didn't first accept the reality of any situation I would not be able to move on. Like with my disease—in OA becoming aware I had a disease not a weakness, acceptance down deep that I had something that I would always have (I only had a daily reprieve) and action—what did I need to continue to do to keep my illness in remission. As I became abstinent, the emotional part of the illness became more prominent. Accepting I hadn't done a very good job of “growing up” when I was compulsively eating. I found I needed to be responsible and accountable for my thinking, my actions, my behavior of blaming others, and owning and accepting my shortcomings. That was a big chunk to swallow. Slowly, I began to accept what I would need to do if I wanted the peace other's had. I was willing, eventually more open and honest and trusting the “program” to give me what other's had if I could accept what the disease had done to me and in using the tools and steps I too could be relieved of the bondage of self--and accepting a God of my own understanding that would help and guide me to do His will, even when I wasn't willing.

Some days I am not so willing to accept life on life's terms. So I turn to page 417 in the Big Book and read it over and over till the acceptance comes. I also have a page someone gave me that summarized that page using OA terms. I keep it in a plastic sleeve on my desk. I need all the reminders I can get to remember God is the one in charge of my life and my job is to accept that. I am so grateful for OA and HP and with acceptance I have found a way of life that gives me peace beyond my wildest dreams.

“So I turn to page 417 in the Big Book and read it over and over till the acceptance comes.”

ACCEPTANCE IS THE KEY TO MY ABSTINENCE TODAY

It has helped me a great deal to become convinced that compulsive eating and eating disorders are diseases, not moral issues. Compulsive eating is a result of obsession or addiction and abstinence is not just a matter of willpower.

In OA I found something that looked better than anything I had but it still took me a long time to take advantage of this program. There is so much security in the familiar and I was afraid to let go of my old beliefs to try something new.

Acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, I find some part of my life unacceptable and I cannot find serenity until I accept that person, place or situation. Absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I accepted my compulsion and life completely on life's terms, I could not stay abstinent. I have to concentrate on what needs to be changed in me, not on what needs to be changed in the world.



I had always been able to see the flaws in other people or situations and I was always ready to point them out—for the benefit of everyone! Acceptance and working the 12 Steps of OA has taught me that there is a bit of good in the worst of us and a bit of bad in the best of us. When I complain about others, I am complaining about a Higher Power's handiwork, I am saying I know better than God.

For years I thought the worst thing that could happen to me was that I would have to admit that I was a compulsive eater. Now, I think it's the best thing. This proves I don't know what is good for me—and if I don't know what is good for me, I certainly don't know what's good for anyone else. I'm better off not giving advice and just accepting life on life's terms. Before OA, I judged myself by my intentions, while the world judged me by my actions. Now, I work to not judge at all. I try to accept my life as it is and to discover my Higher Power's will.



FAITH BLOOMS

When I was eating compulsively, the food affected my vision. Instead of seeing what was good in my life, I saw only the defects. The more I focused on these faults, the more they grew and multiplied. Every time I told my family or friends how awful they were, they became more awful. The more I used food compulsively, the more the world receded from me. Then one day I was told I had my glasses on backward! When the Serenity Prayer says, "the courage to change" it means I need to change myself, not others. I need to look at my own behaviour and attitudes and accept others as they are. Today I work to focus on my challenges and let my Higher Power help others with theirs.

Acceptance is also the key to my relationship with my Higher Power; I try to do whatever is in front of me and leave the results up to God. I try to keep my mind on acceptance and off expectations. I try to ask, "How important is this compared to my abstinence, my serenity, my emotional sobriety?" When I place the most value on my abstinence and serenity, I maintain them at a higher level, one day at a time. When I remember this, I can see I've never had it so good. Thank God for OA.

(Adapted from the 3rd edition of the Big Book, pages 448-452 or the 4th edition of the Big Book, pages 416-420)

-Sheila L.





Acceptance: Members Share *continued*

Acceptance means living peacefully in all the circumstances that life presents to me. I strive to love and accept myself and others as we are right now, in this moment. That is hard when I fight thoughts of it not being enough. I pray to stay connected to my HP through the 12 steps because I know that the only way I can love myself and others is when I am filled up with recovery and not food. Otherwise my life is ruled by my disease and my so called "willpower" and for the past 36 years that has never accomplished anything positive in my life. Learning and practicing acceptance has helped me lose and maintain a weight loss of 120 pounds 7 years ago.

Two and a half years ago, I left my beautiful warm island to move to Seattle to pursue my doctorate. That was one of the hardest years in my life. I knew that God was calling me to do this. School was hard, it was freezing, and I felt so alone. A big part of why that year was challenging to me was my lack of acceptance of my circumstances. I truly believed that if I was in God's will then life would be easy. That is not true, life has ups and downs, and God is with me to give me peace in the midst of circumstances, not because of my circumstances. This was a hard lesson to accept.

At times acceptance has meant letting go. In November, my husband and I had a miscarriage. In that moment, when the baby was leaving me – I thought about a mother's love. I thought about the kind of mother that I hope to be. I told that baby that he/she can go if that is God's will. But take with you – knowing that your mommy loved you and wishes that it could have been different. From that experience I learned and have had to accept a lot. It isn't about what I think I want and need to be happy and sober, it's about accepting life on life's terms and staying sober. No matter what the circumstance.

Now my husband and I are trying again for a baby. I have to constantly surrender my dream of being a mommy to God's timing. It is a roller coaster ride of emotions. I am getting better though, I feel it. By living one moment at a time, accepting minute by minute what life is presenting me, I get to stay sober. Today when I started my monthly cycle, I did not go through the pain that I did last month. I accepted that today in this moment I have my cycle. I trust that one day, In God's time, I will carry a baby in my womb. I have faith. I also have gratitude, when I was in my disease I went 2 years without my cycle from all the exercise bulimia I put my body through. I have much to be grateful for.

I am grateful so grateful for this program, for the people that I have met and the relationships that I have formed. I used to think that once people knew the real me they would hate me. I have found the exact opposite. I am learning that it is ok make mistakes, okay to have bad days, and even ok to dream and hope for the best. There is so much that I do not know, but I am so grateful that I know that is okay. I do not have to have the perfect life to accept it; I need to accept my life as perfect, right now. Thank you, OA, for teaching me about acceptance and life on life's terms.

-Elena A.



ACCEPTANCE SETS YOUR COURSE

to



Overeaters Anonymous Meetings on Vancouver Island – August 2011

Victoria

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: noon – 12:45 pm, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kirk Hall, 680 Courtney St., (ring the bell), Contact: Joy 250-386-4784

Monday: 7:15 – 8:45 pm, Step Study, Les Passmore Centre, 286 Hampton Rd., Library, Contact: Ethel 250-658-4889

Tuesday: 5:00 – 6:00 pm, H.O.W. #103 – 904 Hillside Ave., (ring #102) Contact: Joy 250-386-4784

Thursday: 7:30 pm, OA Workbook/For Today, Blanshard Community Centre, 901 Kings Rd. Contact: Donna 250-384-2150

Friday: 5:00 – 6:00 pm, H.O.W. 3027 Henderson Rd., Contact: Loretta 250-592-6705

Saturday: 10:30 am - noon, Love in Action & Newcomer meeting, CHR Health Unit, 947 Cook St. Contact: Marguerite 250.384-9332

Sunday: 5:00 – 6:00 pm, H.O.W. Phone ahead. Contact: Jayne 250-598-7707

Duncan

Thursday: 7:00 pm, New Life Church, 1839 Tzouhalem Road, Contact: Marita 250-709-2608 (call to confirm location)

Sunday: 8:30 am, 371 Festubert St., Contact: Rita 250.746-9366



Nanaimo

Saturday: evening 6:00 – 7:00 pm - Into the Light
VIHA Mental Health & Addictions Services; 3151 Barons Rd, Nanaimo
Contact: Suzanne 250.618-5667

Parksville

Tuesday: 7:30 – 8:30 pm, Step & Tradition, Knox United Church, 345 Pym Street Room 4, Contact: Elise 250-248-2719, gladysu@telus.net or Lorri B. 250-248-2582, Imbrisson@shaw.ca

Friday: Noon – 1:00 pm, Topic Meeting, , Knox United Church, 345 Pym Street Room 4, Contact: Elise 250-248-2719, gladysu@telus.net or Laury CM 250-594-4282, laurycm@shaw.ca

Courtenay or Campbell River: Interested in starting up meetings?

Contact names:
Campbell River – Bonnie at (250) 286-9751
Courtenay - Karen at (250) 897-3384

Port Hardy

Interested in sharing fellowship on the North Island?
Contact: Julia 250-949-7069, juliaablair@yahoo.com



A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY...

Dear O/A Sisters,

I am writing today to share a humorous incident which I am sure you will relate to. ...here goes...

Seeing as I shop mainly at thrift stores and wear hand-me-downs, I often have things in the back of my drawers and closets I could miss seeing for years. Since losing 53 lbs over the last year, I had size 23 down to 14 of jeans in my closet and only recently purged the bigger ones. I wear jeans (all the time) as they are so comfortable and 1 pair in particular as they "fit" just right. After what felt like months of wearing the same pants and regaining some weight over Christmas (can you relate?) the pants were snug. I mean really snug. BUT still a size 14 and I wasn't giving that number up. *I'm sure you can all relate.*

Yesterday, I just knew I couldn't wear the same jeans one more day. I went on a hunt for a pair of black jeans I'd bought at Christmas. I couldn't find them and running out of time I found another black pair. I pulled them on...OMG...they were sooo tight. After a lot of heaving and tugging I managed to secure the 2 top buttons when I stood on my tippy toes and sucked my gut in for all I was worth! The zipper alas, was an absolute no go. In fact, where it should have slid easily up there was a bulge of tummy. Experienced in hiding my size for years, I knew I simply needed a large sweater that came down to my thighs and no one would be the wiser.

The first trip to the bathroom was a challenge...but I managed. In fact the pants had stretched some. By the end of the day, the pants had stretched enough that I was able, after jumping up several time and tugging, to finally close the zipper! I was ecstatic I could now claim that size 14 again. (I mean the zipper was closed).

When I got home, I immediately decided to get into sweats and I shed my clothes with lightening speed. Going through the bedroom later I saw I'd dropped my pants on the floor. Picking them up I peeked at the label and nearly croaked. They were size 10.

Hope you had a good laugh.

Your Abstinent O/A Sister

-Marita J.





Link to Sponsorship

Here is a link to allow members looking for sponsors to send an email to the Region 1 Sponsorship committee:

<http://www.oaregion1.org/Intergroups.html>

Under “**Find Email Sponsor**” on the left side of the screen under communication (shown below)

Communication

[Newsletter](#) *NEW*

[Find Live Meeting](#)

[Find Virtual Meeting](#)

[Find Email Sponsor](#)

[Listen to a Podcast](#)



Service-By-Mail Program Discontinued

The Board of Trustees passed a motion at the August 2010 meeting to discontinue the Service by Mail/Email program. The directory will no longer be distributed by the WSO. It was felt that this service is more appropriate at the region, service board or intergroup level.

Consider some of the following ideas if you haven't found a sponsor:

Attend as many different meetings as you can. You are not limited to any minimum or maximum number of OA meetings. There may be members available to sponsor who missed or two of the meetings you attended.

Another resource for sponsors is telephone meetings and/or online meetings. The list of virtual meetings can be found on the OA Web site at: <http://www.oa.org/meetings/find-a-meeting-online.php>.

Attendance at “Step Study” and “Big Book” special topic meetings will be helpful until you find a sponsor who will work the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous with you.

Sometimes local intergroups/service bodies provide a list of members willing to sponsor. To find the service body closest to your area consider using the OA Intergroup Director which lists intergroups and service bodies in each state and country. It can be found at: <http://www.oa.org/pdfs/monthlyigreport.pdf>.

A list of sponsors may be a service that your region provides. Each region and service body is autonomous; therefore some regions may have this service while others do not. To find a link to your region's Web site, visit the following page on the OA Web site: <http://www.oa.org/services-for-members/service-body/regions.php>.

Sandra Z.

Member Services Manager

szimmerman@oa.org



LITTLE GEMS FOR RECOVERY

None of these are original with me. Just wise words I have heard in OA over the years and recorded in my little book.

-Marj R.

"No food tastes as good as abstinence feels."
 "No thanks, I've already had my lifetime quota of that."
 "If I don't take care of my body, where am I going to live?"
 "Face your stuff, don't stuff your face."
 "Nothing will ensure recovery more than working with others."
 "Walk softly and carry a Big Book."



Dare to be average.

I can't think my way into a new way of living--I have to live my way into a new way of thinking.

I came to OA to save my butt and found that my soul was attached.

Feelings won't kill me but the food will.

"God, come between me and the food, before the food comes between us."

I will suffer any embarrassment for my abstinence.

Digging my grave with my teeth.

A binge is never an act of love.

Carry the program, not the addict.

It's tricky to be in charge of the world.

Alone we are but one wing: together we can fly.

A life of sane and happy usefulness.

Fear is the dark place in my mind where the negatives are developed.

There is a God in my life and I'm not it.

Bitterness is like swallowing a bottle of poison and waiting for the other person to die.

No food tastes as good as abstinence feels.

Service is slimming.

Steps 4 and 5 opened the drapes and let the light in, and yes, there was a mess, but then I could see to start cleaning it up.

(Dare I add this one? DON'T EAT--even if your butt falls off--DON'T EAT!)



And these ones from John F., Olympia WA

Denial, didn't even know I was lying
Call before you fall
Write before you bite
Mail before you fail
Phone before you moan
Share it or wear it
Meet before you eat
3 kinds of programs: yours, mine and the??
5 S's: suit up, show up, stand up, speak up, shut up
3 kinds of businesses: yours, mine and none of my business



Special Phone Meetings

Greetings! I would like to inform you about a couple of OA phone meetings with a special emphasis.

One meeting is for OA members who follow a raw, vegan, vegetarian or alternative food plan. However, note that the meeting does not provide food plans, nor require the use of any particular plan in order to be able to share. It is a literature meeting that meets Mondays at 9PM EST. The phone number is [712-432-3900](tel:712-432-3900) and the PIN is 186262#.

The other meeting is for OA members who deal with health issues, illness and disability. Medical advice will not be given or shared at the meeting. The first meeting will be March 15, and it will meet Tuesdays at 7 PM EST. The phone number is [712-432-3900](tel:712-432-3900) and the PIN is 173645#.

The phone meetings provide a unique opportunity to connect with people who share common concerns in connection with recovery from compulsive eating, when you may not know anyone locally who shares those same issues. As with all OA meetings, the only requirement is a desire to stop eating compulsively, and all are welcome to attend and share at the meeting.

Yours in service,

Teresa K.

Region IV/Virtual Services Trustee

r4trustee@earthlink.net

[319-321-3429](tel:319-321-3429)

Lifeline Magazine

To have **LIFELINE** delivered to your home or your group contact the World Service Office:
[Lifeline](#), PO Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 USA • FAX 1- 505-891-4320 • Tel. 1-505-891-2664

or email info@oa.org

...or email **Ann P-S** at aperry30@shaw.ca.

Vancouver Island Members:

If you do decide to subscribe to Lifeline via WSO be sure to mention our Lifeline Rep is Ann Perry-Smith, so Vancouver Island Intergroup receives free items used at retreats and marathons.



Support Your Anchors OA Newsletter

Send a submission! Get creative!

I encourage members to submit ideas, articles, poetry and share their stories for inclusion in Anchors. Our newsletter needs you! Together we get better and together we can make Anchors OA better for everyone.

To submit material, make comments or to get on our mailing list contact Ann:

aperry30@shaw.ca

Thank you!!!

I cannot thank you enough for your incredible contributions and your continued support of Anchors OA

Sincerely,

Ann

Signing off:

*After MUCH contemplation I have come to realize that my time as editor of Anchors OA has come to an end. At this time, I cannot give the newsletter and our members the time you deserve, and stay true to my search for recovery and wellness. I am very grateful that I was allowed this opportunity to serve. I encourage a member to come forward and bring her or his special touch to our newsletter as our new editor for Anchors OA. It is a truly rewarding endeavour. **THANK YOU!***