

Letters of HOPE

A publication of the Dallas Metroplex Intergroup * February 2008
331 Melrose, Suite 116 * Richardson, Texas 75080 * 972-238-0333
www.oadallas.org * THE NEWSLETTER IS NOW ONLINE !!!

"The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual OA member and do not necessarily represent those of the Director, DMI, or OA as a whole."

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"True Humility"

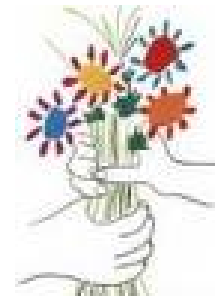
"Liking myself, as God does, opens new doors, evokes a new spirit that gives me courage and makes room for true humility." *For Today*, January 24.

When I first walked in to "the rooms" of Overeaters Anonymous I hated myself and what I had become on the outside and realized after a few meetings I really didn't even know who Karla was on the inside. I was so confused about me, my life and where I was headed.

I remember the "sick" state of mind I was in the first week I joined OA all too well. Oh, the painful memories...I was in a dressing room at Target, shopping for a trip to Florida...yes, the "dreaded" swimsuit shopping that I had been putting off for weeks in hopes of losing a few pounds. My mind was racing and I was thinking oh God please let this suit fit and look good so I can get the heck out-of-here! I managed to pour myself in to the first swimsuit. Slowly, but surely I finally looked up at myself in the long-length mirror and how

disgusting I looked! I shook my head in disbelief. I said to myself, "I hate you" and asked, "Karla, what have you done to yourself?" I didn't even recognize myself!

Today, almost eight months in the program I am learning "to know" Karla and actually learning to like myself on the outside as well as the inside (with the help of my Higher Power, of course). OA gives me the tools to help me learn about myself and it was when I took my first Fourth Step and trusting my sponsor that helped me along the way. I am so thankful for the Program and the many new doors that are opened daily in my life. This Program gives me a true sense of humility! Thank you OA.



Karla

"OA Preamble"

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a fellowship of individuals who through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN

Step 12 tells us that we are to carry the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers...

We all work to help carry the message of joy, hope and recovery to those around us.

However, imagine what it would be like if we could carry the message even further to those yet unseen, those secretly suffering from this disease.

Dallas Metroplex Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous is beginning a campaign to get the message out even louder and we need YOU!!! **Big thanks** to the Plano Saturday meeting the message got out that there is a solution, and that message was given in a BIG way. Now they challenge YOU to help get the message out...

HOW IT WORKS

Tuesday Farmer's Branch meeting has taken on the challenge by Plano. They are passing the basket a second time for the month of February to help carry the message.

After the end of February, Tuesday night Farmer's Branch is going to challenge your meeting.

Get your meetings involved! Who will be the next meeting to take on the challenge!!!





“Overeaters Anonymous Public Awareness Campaign”

According to **Tradition Five**, the Primary Purpose of Overeaters Anonymous is “to carry the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.”

Delegates at the Annual World Service Business Conference in May passed a motion to support a National Public Awareness Campaign using the services of an outside public relations firm. The expenses connected to the campaign will be supported by member and service body contributions to a special fund established by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may use \$20,000 from OA’s reserves to get the campaign started.

Purpose of the campaign:

- Inform the public about Overeaters Anonymous
- Educate people on OA’s success
- Provide contact information

The campaign will show how the program works in helping compulsive overeaters recover and

reach healthy physical, emotional and spiritual states. It will also focus on OA’s long history and the public awareness effort will differentiate Overeaters Anonymous from other food-related Twelve-Step programs and the commercial weight-loss programs.

In keeping with OA’s **Eleventh Tradition** of attraction rather than promotion, the campaign will make no promises regarding weight loss, time frames or other guarantees.

The campaign will also educate the public that Overeaters Anonymous does offer a solution to the problem of compulsively overeating.

Phase I:

Develop a comprehensive media relations tool kit. This kit will include general news releases; fact sheets; stories of recovery; the philosophy of Twelve-Step Programs; articles for local placement; and recommendations to intergroups on how to find, contact and develop relationships

with the local reporters to place stories. Health and human-interest media outlets will also receive information about OA.

Phase II:

In late 2008, WSO will undertake large-scale placement of public – service announcements. The Board of Trustees suggests that each service body determine the method to promote this special fund campaign in the manner that best suits its particular membership. Some service bodies may decide to send in a contribution from their reserve funds. Another may pass the basket a second time at its meeting once a month. Others may pass the basket a second time at every meeting for a month.

Whatever the method your service body decides on, it is very important that all members have an opportunity to contribute to this very important campaign. Contributions made to Overeaters Anonymous will help carry the message to other compulsive overeaters who still suffer.



“CARRYING THE MESSAGE”



Groups in and around Dallas have already started to support this campaign:

- Some groups are passing the basket a second time.
- **DMI** sent \$100 to WSO.
- **Highland Park UMC** group voted to contribute \$50.
- **Tri-County Intergroup**, also a part of Region III, contributed \$850.

We are getting the word out in other ways too:

- **McKinney Care and Share** group had very nice coverage for their 27th Anniversary last year. They invited the public to come and celebrate and to learn more about OA’s Twelve-Step program

of recovery.

- **Frisco Overeaters Anonymous Tuesday Meeting** provided information about their location, the time of their meeting and also listed the DMI Website in a Dallas publication.
- The **DMI** sponsored a **Unity Day Celebration** in 2007 to celebrate the Founding of OA and obtained coverage in a Dallas newspaper.

The **Public Information Director for DMI**, Donna S. Sherdmony@msn.com has written letters on behalf of DMI to advice columnists. She is contacting some of the local newspapers to get the word out— that there is a solution. She works

with the media to carry the message of OA to the compulsive overeater.

ACTION: What can you do?

- Go online to OA.org to learn more about the campaign and/or make a donation.
- Talk with your group about passing the basket a second time.

Let us know about your efforts to carry the message.

Contact: acdc1322@aol.com

Also remember, that our financial contributions sustain our primary purpose of carrying the message for the still suffering compulsive overeater who may not realize that OA even exist.



“Try OA”



My doctor told me to go to meetings and that it would help me to loose weight and by loosing weight the illnesses that I have would get better also. I ignored her. I did not even check it out online to see what it was about. I just continued the same way. Every time I saw her she would mention OA. She also recommended that I get grief counseling. I did take her suggestion and found a therapist to help me deal with the loss of my parents. But guess what – during my visits to my therapist she also suggested that I should try OA. **I could not make any more excuses.** Coincidence? I think not. I think that this was God’s way of telling me to find an OA meeting and check out the program. Well I followed the suggestions of both my doctor and my therapist and found an OA meeting to attend. I had no idea that it was a 12 step program – I had done very little research on Overeaters Anonymous.

Phyllis

I had gotten on the website and answered the questions and decided that it was possible that I was an overeater. At my first meeting I got such a warm welcome and felt so at home. I was amazed when I left the meeting I was actually looking forward to the next meeting. A very special person in that meeting offered to send me some information on OA. I got the information and began to see what Overeaters Anonymous was all about. I eventually asked her to sponsor me and she said yes. I have been working the steps with my sponsor and I have changed a lot since that first day in Overeaters Anonymous. The steps are the heart of the Program and they are set out in the order that they are in for a reason. They work! The steps work if you work them. You need to want the program and the recovery in order to get the recovery. It is not something that is going to happen overnight.

The 12 steps and 12 traditions give us guidelines to live our lives to the fullest. I am working and following the steps to the best of my ability and my life is changing everyday. I am starting to see the promises come true. I now understand why my doctor and therapist recommended Overeaters Anonymous. They both knew it was a program that I needed. I needed to be healed, physically, emotionally and spiritually. This is what the Program of OA gives to me. I am in the process of healing and it feels wonderful. I thank God for directing me to Overeaters Anonymous through my doctor and my therapist and I want to thank OA for all the wonderful recovery that I am able to receive through working the steps. For Today: there is nothing more important to me than my abstinence and I would not be able to have this abstinence without the Program of Overeaters Anonymous. Thanks, OA.

“A BLAST FROM THE PAST”

From the May, 1996 edition

“Kitchen Colander Craziness”

Steam rose in a hot stream above the kitchen sink where I stood staring at a large colander full of carbohydrates. It had been a difficult day. As an at-home mom with three preschool children, most days have some trying moments. The difficult portion of this day had come now just before dinner, a dangerous time for me. I had been abstinent for 10 months. The first few months had been an almost unbearable minute to minute struggle. But recently, by the grace of God and with the daily help of my sponsor through whom I believe He often instructs me, I was beginning to

have runs of serene abstinence. But this last week had been tough my husband had changed his work hours, throwing my usual mealtime and exercise routines into chaos. And I had been battling a painful, exhausting and serious internal problem. The cure for this problem, I was told was to put nothing but fluids into my body for a couple of days. Then slowly I could reintroduce solid foods. So as I stood before that full colander, two hours past my normal mealtime having missed my workout, husband late, kids screaming and gut aching, I began thinking: “I want the entire colander full. I’ll fix something else for my husband and the kids. It won’t really

be a binge. I need it. If I eat this entire thing it’ll push everything right on through those intestines and clear this problem up. I’m so tired. It’ll give me energy.” God must have intervened on my behalf at that point because suddenly it came to me that what I was thinking was totally crazy! Even knowing the severe pain and threat to my health abusing food at that point would cause, I still desperately wanted to abuse it. In that moment it was brought home to me clearly once again that.....**I AM INDEED POWERLESS OVER FOOD, I DO NEED A POWER GREATER THAN MYSELF TO RESTORE ME TO SANITY.** I turned and left the kitchen.

Regina R.
Lewisville, TX

DMI Meeting List

Dallas Metroplex Intergroup (DMI) is a service body of Overeaters Anonymous. DMI carries the message Of OA to the greater Dallas area by maintaining and distributing meeting list, serving as community outreach, acting liaison with other OA service bodies, and providing guidance to local groups when requested.

Sunday			
10:00 AM North	Richardson DMI Svc Center MAP 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance # 2)	EMAIL	Literature For Today
12 Noon North	Richardson DMI Svc Center MAP 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance #2)	EMAIL	Big Book Study
5:00 PM Far North	McKinney Medical Ctr of McKinney - Wysong Campus 130 S Central Exprwy (SW corner Virginia Pkwy & US 75)	EMAIL	Step Study more information
6:00 PM North	Richardson DMI Ofc (only: 3rd Sunday of the month) 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance #2)	EMAIL	Intergroup Meeting
7:00 PM North	N. Dallas Congregation Ohr Hatorah 6324 Churchill Way, Dallas 75230 (intersection Churchill & Hughes) between Preston & Hillcrest, south of LBJ	NA	90 Day/Phone
Monday			
12:00 noon North	Plano Prairie Creek Baptist Church 3201 W. 15th Street, Room 103	EMAIL	
12:00 noon East	Dallas St. Matthews Episcopal Cathedral 5100 Ross Ave., Garrett Hall, The Garrett Room Park off Garrett Ave. in circle drive	EMAIL	Literature For Today
7:00PM North	Richardson Arapaho Methodist Church Arapaho at Coit	Email	
7:00 PM Southwest	Duncanville Charlton Methodist Hospital near Hwy 67 & Wheatland, in Conference Room 5	EMAIL	
7:30 PM Central	Dallas Highland Park United Methodist Church 3300 Mockingbird Lane, Wallace Building 387	EMAIL	Step
7:30 PM Northwest	Lewisville Esperanza, First United Methodist Church 907 W. Main, Room 123. (near the church offices). Off I-35 on Main Street near Sam's Wholesale Club. Call for directions.	EMAIL	Closed Mtg
Tuesday			
10:00 AM East	Mesquite Eastridge Park Christian Church 2701 N. Town East Road, Parlor	EMAIL	
12:00 Noon North	Frisco Stonebriar Community Church 4801 Legendary Dr, Bldg F-1, Frisco	EMAIL	Discussion
7:00 PM Far North	Sherman Serendipity, Wood Street Church of Christ 2100 Wood Street, Sherman, TX	EMAIL	Open
7:30 PM West	Farmers Branch Ridgeview Presbyterian Church 12717 Marsh Lane, 1 block N of LBJ-on the left	EMAIL	Literature OA 12 and 12
Wednesday			
12:00 noon North	Plano Prairie Creek Baptist Church - 3201 W. 15th Street, Room 103	EMAIL	Lifeline
12:10 PM Central	Dallas Holy Trinity Catholic Church , 3826 Gilbert Ave Pastoral Care Center, basement conference room	EMAIL	Literature Abstinence
6:30 PM North	Medical City Hospital, Bldg E - Room 3 7777 Forest Lane, Dallas - more information		90 Day Phone
7:30 PM Far North	McKinney Care and Share-First Christian Church 1800 W. Hunt east of 75, left on Redbud @ Hunt - back parking lot	EMAIL	Leader's Choice

Thursday			
12:10 noon Central	Dallas Holy Trinity Catholic Church , 3826 Gilbert Ave <i>Pastoral Care Center, basement</i>	EMAIL	Step Study
12:00 noon North	Plano Prairie Creek Baptist Church 3201 W. 15th Street, Room 103	EMAIL	Writing
12:00 noon	Frisco Stonebriar Comm. Church		Writing
	4801 Legendary Drive, Portable E-2	Email	
1:00 PM Far North	Sherman Wood Street Church of Christ 2100 N. Wood St., Sherman, TX	EMAIL	
7:00 PM North	Richardson "Happy, Joyous, & Free" DMI Svc Center 331 Melrose, Suite 116 (entrance #2) MAP	EMAIL	Literature & Discussion
7:00PM	Grand Prairie Our Redemmer Lutheran *begins 10/18		Friendship
	4729 S. Carrier Pkwy	EMAIL	OA 12/12
7:00PM	The Colony First UMC		
	4901 Paige Rd. , The Colony	EMAIL	Literature
7:30 PM West	Irving Serenity in Irving Group North Christian Church 2901 N. MacArthur	EMAIL	
Friday			
12:00 noon North	Plano Prairie Creek Baptist Church 3201 W. 15th Street, Room 103	EMAIL	Big Book
Saturday			
7:00 AM North	Plano - Please Call for Location - 972-517-8506 (Dick)	EMAIL	Men's Meeting
9:00 AM North	Plano Highland Oaks Church of Christ - Room E112 1815 W. 15th At Rio Grande (park near flagpole)	EMAIL	Step Study
11:00 AM North	Prosper First United Methodist Church 207 S Church St.	EMAIL	
11:00 AM West	Farmers Branch Ridgeview Presbyterian Church 12717 Marsh Lane, 1 block N of LBJ-on the left	EMAIL	Steps and Traditions

According to our third tradition, we welcome anyone who thinks they may have a problem with compulsive eating and wants to stop. Everyone is welcome at an open meeting. However, a "closed meeting" is open only to those who think they may have a problem with compulsive eating and have a desire to stop. All meetings are open unless stated otherwise.

Meetings

In working Overeaters Anonymous' Twelve-Step program of recovery from compulsive overeating, we have found a number of tools to assist us. We use these tools regularly to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In Overeaters Anonymous (OA), abstinence is "the action of refraining from compulsive eating."

Many of us have found that we cannot abstain from compulsive eating unless we use some or all of OA's eight tools of recovery. Meetings are one of the tools we use. Meetings are gatherings of two or more compulsive overeaters who come together to share their personal experience, and the strength and hope

OA has given them. Though there are many types of meetings, fellowship with other compulsive overeaters is the basis of them all. Meetings give us an opportunity to identify and confirm our common problem and to share the gifts we receive through this 12-Step program of recovery from this disease.



“It’s Only A Cookie”

One of the most difficult things for me when I first joined OA was to not eat in between meals. Those first couple of weeks I remember saying the Serenity Prayer over and over again, sometimes 5 minutes apart. This weekend was a long one, and it is still difficult, but not quite as hard, as the first time I became abstinent. I was hungry when I went grocery shopping, a situation I try never to be in. But I was able to come home and not snack on even healthy foods, as I put them away. Tonight, also, I wanted to just have a dessert, not because I'm hungry, just because I want it emotionally - but I know I made a commitment to God, myself and others — and so I choose abstinence. Sometimes it's not easy, but life is always better because of it. Thank you for being there and for listening - it really helps! Tomorrow I will be home all day because my son and I are sharing a car until he finds a new one, so I will find holiday

projects to do. It's also hard for me not to bake right now, but I know that it wouldn't be a wise choice for me this first or second week of abstinence. Once a few years ago, after hip and knee surgery, my family had moved my bed downstairs to a spare room behind our kitchen because I couldn't walk up the stairs. And after a couple of weeks one night when everyone was sleeping, I missed doing things, and I decided that my family should have cookies! (They are all adults - and no one was asking for cookies!) So I got up and hobbled around and managed to cook a batch of chocolate chip cookies. I decided to have 1/2 a cookie, just to taste them, and I went back to bed. An hour later when it was time to take my pain medicine, I decided to have a cookie because I had to have my pain medicine with "food". Several times that night when I woke up, I ate a cookie. When I woke up the next morning I wrote the following poem:

It's Only a Cookie

**It's only a cookie
It's only a bite
It's only a smell
That lurks in the night.**

**It's soft and it's luscious
It's calling my name
But when I eat sugar
I'm never the same!**

So when I am tempted to eat anything that is not abstinent for me, I say the Serenity Prayer and then say that poem substituting the item I think I want for the word cookie. For years, we used to have "Donut Day" on Wednesdays with coffee at work. The administrator would buy all the employees donuts. Wednesday after Wednesday, I would repeat: It's only a donut, it's only a biteetc., and I got thru years of Donut Days without ever having a single bite!

Pat C.



“Gods Guidance”



I have always felt that I could pray to God. What I did not understand until I joined OA is that when you pray and seek God’s guidance He is there to show you the way. Always before I would pray and most of the time I was asking God to do the impossible, things I knew that He could not do. I did not do this to say that God does not answer prayers or that I don’t believe in God. I did it because when I prayed it was always in a crisis situation. I have always believed in God and because He could not answer my crisis prayers

I did not ever resent Him. Even before OA God guided me in ways that I did not know until later when something would happen to show me how God had been in my life. I have done many things that God does not approve of but that did not stop Him from guiding me when He knew what I needed. Today I am in recovery through the precious program of OA and I am trying to live, as God would have me to live. I may not pray as often as I should, but you know what, I can see a change in myself and in the number of times

a day that I pray. It is wonderful to know that if no one else will listen God will and if you wait long enough and do not act on impulse God will guide you in the right direction. Every day I try to turn my life over to God and ask for His guidance through the day. I am powerless over my life and God has the power to help me. With this in mind I will remain in recovery, not just for the weight loss but more importantly to have a closer relationship with God and to hopefully live the way that God would have me to live my life.

Anonymous

OA Kinder Reminders



Abstinence Art and Fork Hall of Fame

Have you put down the fork? Do you have an abstinent coin? We are making an artwork made up of abstinent coins (from members) and forks. If you recently received a 60 day coin – can you donate your 30 day? If you got 33 years, can you donate your 32 year one? This is a fun(d) raiser for the delegate fund. For \$10 and a donated coin, your place will anonymously be preserved on the wall of the DMI Office! We will be collecting them at the February Dallas OA Convention or mail to OA-DMI, 331 Melrose, Suite 116, Richardson, TX 75080. Questions? Email: Tonnabelle@aol.com

Abstinence Art and Fork Hall of Fame	
Name:	_____
Group:	_____
Email Address: (optional)	_____
Length of Abstinence:	_____
Coin Donated:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO \$10.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check

DMI Phone Hotline

- **Mon Plano Prairie Creek Baptist Church**, manned the Hot Line during January. **Job Well Done!** To volunteer, contact Kathi: 972-977-1350 E-MAIL: kathi-oa@tx.rr.com

Special Events

- **I Put My Hand in Yours...O.A. Convention** Hosted by Dallas Metroplex Intergroup February 22-24, 2008. Please join us for a weekend of UNITY and RECOVERY Registration info: Michelle S. 469-831-9961

The Dallas Metroplex Intergroup

- **Meets on the third Sunday of the month.** Time: 6:00 PM at the DMI office, 331 Melrose, Suite 116 in Richardson. Location is on the W. side of Central Exp (between Arapaho & Campbell) Suite 116 is in the center of the bldg. Enter through entrance 2.

DMI Elections

- **Elections were held January 20, 2008:** Election results for the following positions are: Chair – Delia, Vice Chair – Maureen, Newsletter Dir.– Dolores, Convention Chair– Julie Anne, Workshop Director – Whitney, Public Information Dir.– Donna, Tri - County Liaison – Sarah, Website Director – Amy
- **Current Open Service Positions:** Secretary, Twelfth Step Within Cte. Chair, Speaker's Bureau Director, Outreach Director

To Be Announced

- **Monthly Workshop**

Meetings

- **Showing Our Support...**The Thursday Our Redemmer Lutheran Grand Prairie meeting located at 4729 South Carrier Pkwy, needs everyone's support in order for it to continue.