



TOGETHER WE CAN

A publication of the NYS Capital District Intergroup

December 2012

Don't just survive, THRIVE THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS!!!!

Whining about the holidays is so yesterday. So much a function of our disease. Now that we're in recovery, let's seize **The Promises** and float through the holidays free from food and frenzy.

*"If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. **We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.***

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. ***We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.***



No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. ***Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.***

Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. ***We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us.***

We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us — sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. ***They will always materialize if we work for them.***"

This issue of *Together We Can* brings together the ideas and wisdom of people who, collectively, have experienced many, many years of seeing promises fulfilled. Read, share, and have a serene holiday season!

Waking Up From the Buffet Nightmare

There is no eating situation more challenging to me than extended party time at a buffet. When the buffet is intended for partygoers to have a full plate as a meal, the “one plate” rule sometimes works well. But other times, eating anything will set me up for eating too much; so, I don’t eat anything. In those cases I eat my usual fare at home before and/or after the party.

If I’m not planning to eat at all, I arrive a little late, grab a glass of water, and leave a little early. In between, people often assume (and I don’t correct them) that I have already eaten. If asked directly, I say something vague like “I am headed in that direction now.” Or, I say “Isn’t the food amazing. I don’t think I can eat another bite.” I spend my time talking to people rather than plunging into the food.

However, when the expectation is several hours of “grazing,” the situation is much more challenging. The most difficult holiday buffet for me is my boyfriend’s traditional Christmas Eve buffet, which is a grazing event. Food comes out in waves from noontime to late evening and is designed to “cover” both lunch and dinner. There is no sit-down meal. You are supposed to eat a little here and there as it suits you ... which he can do, but I can’t. Grazing is downright *dangerous* for me.

A few years ago I developed an interesting plan of eating just for this event. I know what foods will be on the table, and most of them I can eat ... just not all nor a lot of any one thing. So, I have something (*one* thing) about 15 minutes after I arrive and check my watch. I add 20 minutes and that is the next time that I eat. When it’s time, I have *one* thing. I continue eating at planned 20-minute intervals, but only *one* thing each time. Usually, I get so involved in the fun that my 20-minute mark passes, and it is actually longer between items. The advantage is that I get to try everything that I want, I don’t overeat, and I fit in. It’s a bit odd, but it works for me.

Whatever the holiday eating challenge, it’s best to have a plan. As they say, “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” Happy holidays! *KT*

No “Days Off”!

Don’t forget my action plan! Whatever I do everyday — food plan, meditation, meetings, exercise, yoga — I need to do every day through the holidays. There are no “days off” because I am busy or my attention is wanted in a holiday activity. I enjoy everything better when I honor my recovery and myself first. *KG*



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In response to people who can't restrain themselves from pushing food on her, one of our members finds it helpful to say, "I am enjoying the green beans and your company so much ... I'll just focus on that for now, thank you." ☺
Thank you *HD*

Avoiding "Food on Display"

The first OA meeting I attended was on November 24, 2008. This turned out to provide a substantial advantage for me. With the meeting at the beginning of the holiday season, all the sharing revolved around how individuals were planning on dealing with the upcoming month.

Many facets of the challenges for compulsive overeaters were discussed, but there were two strong messages that I took away and still focus on at this time of year.

The first was an issue that I had no awareness of previously was the increase of "food on display," whether it involved food coworkers bring into work, huge pictures of sugar-laden food on billboards or the plethora of food-related ads on television. What this translated into for me was the need to redouble my efforts in terms of limiting my exposure. I found a way to avoid "the table" at work that was constantly full of holiday fare and I reduced the amount of time I spent watching television.

The second issue was the most salient and emphasized the importance of taking care of oneself. In support of that goal I was advised to consider if actions taken or events attended at holiday time were truly mandatory. In this case, particularly so early in recovery, I chose to skip the work-related and neighborhood parties. I also packed my food for the day every morning in a cooler so that I could be sure that I would follow my eating plan. *D*

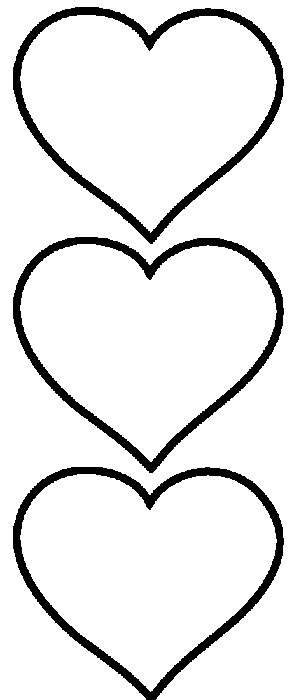
Looking for Love ... in the Right Places

Prior to being in this fellowship, all I wanted was to be with food. In my diseased thinking, the food loved me and would not judge me the way family and friends could. My day would have been filled with an abundance of fear of being judged, resentment that they didn't understand that the food was calling me. Sadly, my whole life revolved around an inanimate object that was destroying me.

Today, my life revolves around my family and friends and events. Yes, there will be food in abundance, but I will be able to be present for my friends, not zoning them out so that I can hear the food calling me.

So, on that day that's just another Thursday, I will have done those things that are on my action plan so that I can have an abundance of gratitude that I am surrounded by people who love me, who will always care about me.

During this particular season, there are so many people who won't have an abundance of anything: food, heat, electricity. So part of my action plan was actually started last week in the hopes that they may have some of those things that they're lacking in such as heat,



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shelter, electricity. I was able to give money and blood at places that collect for the victims of disaster.

That is what I am most grateful for, that I am able to look outside myself and not only am able to see that I have so much to be grateful for, but am able to put my hand in someone else's and help them have some of my abundance. *GH*

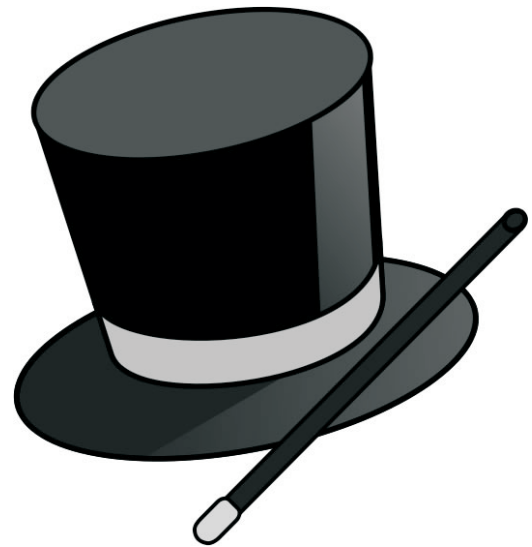
Food Doesn't Make the Magic

Ah, holiday times. When I was growing up, this was my favorite time of the year. The lights and decorations, holiday music, excitement, and yes...special foods too are part of those memories. Since becoming an adult, I have wanted to relive those happy, joyful times and return to that childhood feeling.

There have been times that I've thought those "special" foods will help me return to those days. But I've learned that food does not take me back to the days when everything was so magical. It's quite the opposite. If I get into the food, I will not enjoy anything about the holidays. A holiday haze of compulsive overeating would result in my waking on January 2nd, miserable and unhappy.

If I take each day of the holiday season, one day at a time, each challenge and joy at a time, being ever mindful of my program, I will thrive through the holidays. Happy New Year to everyone!

LL



News from Intergroup! Listen up

- 1) The annual **Thanksgiving Day meeting** will be held at Unity Church corner of Bradford St and King Ave from 9:30-11am on 11/22/12
- 2) Intergroup is looking for an OA volunteer to chair a Public Information Committee
- 3) The annual 100 Calls Project is up and running from now until the end of the year. We are all encouraged to call someone we haven't seen in our meetings recently and see how they are doing.
- 4) The revision of the bylaws was presented to Intergroup and approved. Copies will be printed so that each meeting will have one.
- 5) IDEA Day was November 17th – International Day of Experiencing Abstinence
- 6) Individual OA members are encouraged to go online at the World Service website and respond to the 4th step inventory OA is doing on itself. Responses can be given online or the form can be downloaded and answered and mailed in. These inventory forms were mailed to OA meetings contact people last month. They can be copied for members who don't have access to the Internet. We can help the World Service office to make OA even better by participating in their inventory.

Let's all remember to thank our Intergroup trusted servants ... it can sometimes be an arduous gig!

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My Vision for the Holidays



- Quiet time with friends and family
- Setting out a puzzle for my guests to do on that food-focused Thursday
- Peppermint tea and good books by the fire
- Few gifts given and received, each carefully selected
- Candles and music
- Secret service instead of Secret Santa
- Pulling out Grandma's dishes to set a beautiful table
- News and cards to and from far-flung friends
- The smell of evergreen, cinnamon and burning fires
- Wearing my special velvet skirt on Xmas eve
- Seeing *Anna Karenina* and *Les Mis* at the movies
- Singing carols and enjoying religious rituals
- Making floral arrangements, both fresh and dried
- Waking in the middle of the night and watching snow fall
- Waking on January 1 feeling lean and clean after a holiday season free from food compulsions. *KA*

Just Do It!

Same old, same old

- Go to a meeting-face-to-face, online or phone
- Stick to your food plan
- Write in your journal

Party time

- Bring an abstinent dish to pass around
- Take phone numbers when you go to holiday events
- Take some of your OA literature with you.
- If you are going to be alone, bring the party home: invite OA friends to share a meal — have each one bring an abstinent dish to pass

Chill out from holiday stress

- Rent a movie you have been wanting to see
- Read a book that you have been wanting to read

Meetings Ended

Unfortunately, two of our regional meetings have ended: Monday night at the Pride Center in Albany and the Hudson meeting. This will be reflected in our next printed meeting list. Changes to our website and information line will be made soon.

You will find the current version on the Capital District Intergroup site.

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Editorial Policy

Together We Can is the newsletter of the New York State Capital District Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous.

Submissions will appear with the author's initials unless otherwise requested.

Materials cannot be returned nor can payment be made. *Together We Can* reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity.

Other OA groups may reprint without permission. We ask that you cite the writer and *Together We Can* as your source.

The opinions expressed are those of the individual writers and not those of NYSCD IG or OA as a whole.

Please address all submissions and suggestions to the editor, Kathryn A.

About Our Organization...

The NYS Capital District Intergroup provides support to OA members and groups within the greater Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Saratoga and Glens Falls area.

Christmas and New Year's Day Meetings

The Tuesday meeting at noon (Unity Church, Bradford and King in Albany) and 6:30 (Evergreen Commons, 1070 Luther Rd, East Greenbush) will be held on both Christmas and New Year's

We're on the Web!

Check It Out:

nycd.oagroups.org

Meeting Lists

OA Information

Inspiration

Event Calendar

Links

World Service

www.oa.org

Region 6

oaregion6.org

Capital Region
Answer Line

Meeting
Information

(518) 292-0666