



Passages to Recovery

Diamond State Intergroup

DSIGpassages@gmail.com
OAdelaware.org

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2024

Serving the State of Delaware and Cecil & Worcester Counties, Maryland

Upcoming Events

(see OAdelaware.org for more details)

DSIG meetings

Oct. 12 • Nov. 9 • Dec. 14
(Visitors welcome with voice but no vote)

OA Region 7 Convention

Nov. 1-3, 2024
Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort, Ocean City, MD

IDEA Day - 10-2 ET

Nov 16, 2024 - 10:00-2:30
Bay Health, Milford DE & perhaps Zoom

12th Step Within Day

Dec 12, 2024
Zoom

OA Birthday

Jan 18, 2025
Zoom workshop

Unity Day

Feb 22, 2025
Bay Health, Milford, DE & Zoom

DSIG Beach Retreat

April 25 - 27, 2025
Carousel Oceanfront Resort
Ocean City, MD

Phone-In Holiday Marathon Meetings

Sponsored by the
Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

712-432-5200 Conf ID 4285115#

If you have trouble keeping your abstinence during the holidays, join a meeting! Don't white-knuckle it!

Thursday, October 31, 2024	Halloween
Thursday, November 23, 2024	Thanksgiving Day
Tuesday, December 24, 2024	Christmas Eve
Wednesday, December 25, 2024	Christmas Day
Sunday, December 31, 2024	New Year's Eve
Monday, January 1, 2025	New Year's Day

Meetings are every hour from 8:00 am - 12 midnight ET with regularly scheduled meetings.

Remember, together we get better.

-Laura S.

Trick or Treat Trick

My daughter and I share an addiction to food so to be sure we don't have leftover triggers in the house, we stopped giving out candy on Trick or Treat night in our 378-townhouse community.

Don't worry, though, the tiny tikes don't go away empty handed - in fact, they get something better than candy, they get toys!

Yep, we give inexpensive bouncy balls, spider rings, temporary tatoos, glow-in-the-dark stuff and such to every child over the age of three. The tiny ones get duckies that they couldn't possibly swallow or choke on. And they LOVE them!



The first year we gave duckies a whiny very tired child in a stroller was making his family miserable. When he saw the duckies in our Halloween basket and was allowed to choose one, he perked right up, smiled, grabbed one, and held it to his chest. That was better than any sugar high for me.

Another year, a father kept trying to get his child to choose a fireman ducky but the child wanted another one - so we gave dad the fireman ducky for his very own and his smile lit up the world.

It's fun to give something other than just another sugary something - try it and see!

-- SJ, North East, Maryland // (photo from www.landscdjrnorman.com/story-behind-jeep-ducks)

I've been told by various members to "give over" that first compulsive bite to H.P. when the urge hits me," writes a member from Connecticut, "and I must say it works. For all the times I've done it, God must be very overweight by now!" - Lifeline, July 1990

Not Worth Losing

I am a food addict in recovery. As such, I cannot compulsively overeat. Do you know how long it took me to accept that? Two and a half years of working a daily program in OA! I didn't want to be an addict, and I fought long and hard against it. I wanted what I wanted in whatever amounts I wanted. And I wanted to be thin!

That kind of thinking is why it took me so long to make a full surrender of my disease and will to my Higher Power. Prior to OA, whenever I could summon the will to diet, I always made sure it coincided before a holiday or special event. Losing some excess weight allowed me to go all out in my holiday bingeing. After all, I had earned that right by dieting, or so I thought.

But when I came to OA, program expected me to stay abstinent through any holiday or special occasion. How was I to do that? Why in the world would I do that? My first summer of abstinence led to an event that changed my perception of special occurrences.

It was September of 2004, right after Labor Day, when the aftermath of a hurricane besieged our valley. What a scary Friday that was! Constant heavy rains resulted in flash floods, heavy mudslides and overflowing rivers and streams. I had no electricity or water and was stuck in my home for three days. What pervasive thought was running through my mind? This is an excellent reason to binge! I began to laugh as I realized no reason on the face of the earth was good enough to lose what little abstinence I had accomplished. I had just finished my first 90 days. The summer had been one of great joy being free of food obsession. After 35 years of my adult life spent in compulsive- overeating hell, I was now free. **No holiday or special event is worth losing my abstinence; abstinence was only the beginning of my recovery.**

For the past three years, I have moved through every holiday and special event abstintently. Recovery means the world to me. It has given me back my life and has allowed me to become the person my Higher Power meant me to be. Program is meant to be worked one day at a time. No matter what the occasion, each day is one of recovery for those willing to put down the food and pick up the program.

Use the eight tools of OA and the Twelve Steps to help yourself through that day. I do. I returned to OA in January 2002 and have been abstinent and in good recovery since June 2004. I have lost 89 pounds (40 kg). OA has changed my life from the inside out.

- Cindi B., Bridgeport, Ohio USA * Lifeline November 2008 Pg 15.

12 Steps to a Better Holiday Season

1. We admitted the holiday season has a deeper meaning than devouring food.
2. We came to believe a power greater than ourselves could help us see and celebrate the true meaning of the season.
3. We came to believe our Higher Power could help us appreciate the joyfulness of the season as we understand it.
4. We made a searching and thorough examination of our relationship with food during the holidays and other things we enjoy about the season.
5. We admitted to our Higher Power the exact nature of our food habits during holiday seasons past.
6. We became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to remove our attachment to food as a necessity of the holidays.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our desire to partake of holiday treats.
8. We made a list of all persons whose presence makes the holiday season joyful for us and with whom we would like to share our joy.
9. We made plans to spend time with those people whenever possible, except when to do so would remove us from our primary purpose of abstinence.
10. We continued to enjoy the company of friends and family and other nonfood aspects of the season.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our appreciation of the season, praying for knowledge of its meaning and the joy we feel at this time.
12. Having realized that sharing the joy of this season with others far outlasts the fleeting pleasure of food, we gave ourselves the gift of abstinence throughout the holidays and gave others the gift of our full attention and appreciation. - Edited and reprinted from New Horizons newsletter, West 10th Street Big Book Meeting, November/December 1998

- Lifeline, November 2007 pg 16

Earthbound but Soaring

Hi! My name is Santa, and I'm a compulsive eater. I have some lovely reindeer. To keep fresh in my mind reminders that I have this disease, I've given my reindeer special names.

DASHER - Reminds me I am always dashing about on Christmas Eve, eating on the run and under stress.

DANCER - Reminds me of the one thing I can't do very well with all that fat wobbling about. It's uncomfortable, and I feel everyone is looking at me. I wish I had joined OA earlier.

PRANCER - Helps me hold my head up, prancing with pride and people pleasing with gifts.

VIXEN - Gives a name to my cunning and baffling disease of compulsive overeating.

COMET - Is the blinding light of my spiritual awakening.

CUPID - Shows the love I have found in our Fellowship.

DONDER - (German for "thunder") - Reminds me of the thundering inner voice that told me I am totally powerless.

BLITZEN - (German for "lightning") - Represents the streak of lightning that lit my inner spiritual awareness when I found I had come home.



The first four reindeer are earth-oriented steeds and remind me to keep my feet firmly on the ground as I work the program. The last four reindeer are sky oriented and tell me that while my body is earthbound, my spiritual self can soar to unknown heights. Happy Holidays, everyone!

- Lifeline December 2012, pg 16

My Thoughts on the Holiday Season

When thinking about the holidays or attending a party or special event, I have to come prepared. I usually do this by volunteering to bring the vegetable tray, it's sometimes hard to find a vegetable that's not in questionable sauces that I can't handle. I also try to find out what's being served so if I need to I can bring something else. To make sure all of my components are filled, I bring what I need, and usually enough to share. I just make it abstinent for me. I am really blessed that my mom will specifically make things gluten free for me and isn't offended if I bring my own stuff, and she lets me know if there are dishes that I should avoid.

I also do a lot of preparing ahead of time. I start my day out with the third step prayer asking God for direction. I'm prepared to gather the dinner dishes up and start the dishes or another sidestep, just so I'm not in the middle of the chaos or if I'm feeling awkward or emotionally taxed. I don't seem to mind dessert time as much as I did in the beginning, but it's always a good idea to have a plan of action or distraction, if needed.

Some things that help are:

* I bring an abstinent dessert

like a fresh fruit tray, sugarfree baked apples, or sugarfree Jello parfait.

— I love babies so I frequently offer to hold the baby while the parents eat (usually leaving me at the table with my meal while others partake in dessert.)

— Sometimes I just get a cup of coffee as dessert, depending on where I'm at emotionally; and I go to another room to drink it.

— I play with the kids. I am a kid at heart. The kids are usually gone from the table quickly and I follow them and spend time with them.

— I bring a cell phone and excuse myself to "check on someone"; usually it's me reaching out because I need it. Contact with a fellow OAer can make a huge difference.

— I pray before re-entry for the next right action. Sometimes it's the next right words to say. Sometimes I need to step away and it's OK as long as I'm taking care of myself.

My Al-Anon mom reminds me of the 3 "S's"

Sit down
Say nothing
& Smile

Sure beats my diseased 3 "S's"

Scream
Smack (someone)
& Stuff (my face!)

Most of the time my side steps happen at dessert time because it can be uncomfortable and most non-compulsive eaters don't understand that I can't just have one. If I have one, I might not have another one in front of them but it won't be over for me. The cravings will return along with all the mental torture my disease throws in to try to trap me in its vicious cycle. There is one thing I know and that is I have another relapse in me, what I don't know is if I have another recovery. So I am going to hold tight to my abstinence and work my program extra hard during the holidays and in other stressful times. I don't want to go back to the hell I was in before I came to program, my serenity and peace of mind are worth far more than any compulsive bite or annoying relative!

The holidays are trying times. We all have family members who push our buttons (they should, they installed them!).

Remember to take a break, before you break!

You're worth it!

Wishing you all the happiest of holidays.

- Kris M, Rising Sun, MD

Have a Happy & Abstinent
HallowThanksAll !!

Gift of Abstinence

The last holiday season was my first abstinent one. It was also the most enjoyable, largely because of the recovery rules I instituted to protect my abstinence. Here are my rules.

I have \$xxx to spend on the holidays. This includes gifts, cards, holiday food, wrapping, everything. I will not spend money I don't have for gifts people don't want. I will give tokens of my love and lots of cards. Overspending is stress, and stress leads to overeating.

I will tell everyone that I'm not buying gifts this year. I am giving them and myself the freedom of not going into debt. If someone buys me a gift, I will say "thank you" without apologizing for not having one for him or her. Instead, I will give that person the gift of seeing how much I appreciate his or her thoughtfulness.

I will not allow nonabstinent food in my living area. I will ask my family members to keep such food in the nonabstinent closet, the lower refrigerator shelves or their own rooms. My home is my refuge, and I don't need to be exposed to food pornography. I will not force myself to be in the presence of food that makes me uncomfortable. If I feel fine while others indulge in holiday treats, that's wonderful. But if I feel "iffy," I will leave for a while. I won't make a fuss; I just need "fresh air."

I will arrive late to parties and leave early. I will not overextend myself. I will say no to a party or gathering when I don't feel strong in my program. I will bring abstinent food to every holiday gathering with plenty to share. If someone offers me nonabstinent food, I will not go into lengthy explanations. I will just say, "No thank you; I'm not hungry right now."

I will not drink alcohol because it lowers my defenses against food. I will be the designated driver for those I love.

I will keep my exercise routine during the holidays - a living amends I make to myself.

I will keep healthy and abstinent snacks stocked in my fridge and pantry at all times.

I will enjoy my friends and family this holiday season. **Holidays are not to celebrate food; food is used to celebrate the holidays.** I give myself the gift of freedom from eating unhealthy food. -

-Anonymous, Virginia USA, Lifeline Nov 2007 Pg 15

Holiday Hints See These Big Bumps!

When I know certain people will be making particular food items just for me, I tell them in advance I have joined OA and have given up specific ingredients. Then I tell them the ingredients. I let them know it would be fine if they bring the items for others, but they should not bring them for me because I would not eat them.

I also tell these people I appreciate their friendship and company, and that is all I need from them. At dessert time, I get up and start the dishes or cleanup. People who are involved in dessert don't notice you are gone. A few people who do not eat dessert, or who are curious why I don't, usually join me, and I have private time with them.

In response to comments like, "Oh my God, how can you not want a piece of this?" I reply, "**I do want it; I'm just not going to eat it**" or "I'd love to, but it's just not good for me." In response to "Why not just have a little piece, or just take one bite to try it?" I reply, "That sounds lovely, but unfortunately I'm incapable of that; I'm happy you can do it, but I cannot."

If the person is a normal eater, intuitively thin, he or she tends to drop it. If the individual is a compulsive eater in denial, he or she may still try to sabotage me by arguing the point, and then I will often go to the "allergic defense." I say I'm allergic to it. That often stops the offers. If questioned, I say it makes me break out in huge bumps. If further challenged, I grab hold of the fat on my belly, butt and thighs while saying things like, "See these big bumps? I get these all over, like here and here and here." Usually they laugh and quit offering.

If a person persists, I have to wonder how this individual got into my friend circle and think about moving the person out. If it is someone I've just encountered at an event, I'll walk away. If that is insufficient, I will just leave the event, explaining myself to the hosts at a later time if necessary.

Mard, Arizona, Lifeline December 2012, pg 16

Serene Holidays

As a compulsive overeater, I find holidays difficult. Being from the southern part of the United States, I have ingrained notions concerning etiquette and hospitality. Several program tricks have helped me during times like these.

First, the concept of staying in the present. It's October now, and already I'm worried about how to avoid my mother's eggnog when I go home in December. When I get overwhelmed, I try to ground myself in reality by making a mental list of what I'm doing. "I'm sitting here writing this, the house is clean, my car has gas, everything is OK. I will take care of the eggnog when the time comes." I am amazed at how powerful this is when I make the effort.

When I am at parties or picnics, surrounded by tempting food I know is not good for me, I find it difficult to resist. My disease and I enter a battle over whether I should take the first bite. This cunning and baffling disease presents a series of convincing arguments: • I can't refuse this food because I'll offend the host. • It'll be just this one item; after all it's a holiday. • I'll look weird if I'm the only one not having any.

It is especially hard to turn down food when a party guest or host is insisting that I try some. At such a time, I use an idea from a fellow OA member. I remind myself that, for me, this particular item is not food, it is poison. Consuming it will not nourish my body; instead, the consequence will often be physical, emotional and spiritual pain. When I say a quick prayer, I discover the relief and comfort I vainly seek in food. To me, the Lord's Prayer is particularly special during cravings: "Lead me not into temptation but deliver me ... " Usually, an alternative to eating presents itself. That's when I feel most loved by Higher Power.

L.M., Boulder, Colorado USA
Lifeline, November 2007 Pg 16

Help Us Out with Our Next Newsletter

We're starting out with a lot of awesome, helpful articles taken from past Lifelines. We would like to add more original content, tips, tricks, suggestions, drawings (funny or serious) as we go on.

Would you please send an article of how OA has helped you gain food sobriety in your life and lose the insanity of binge eating? Keep it short. And if you submit someone else's work (written, photo, or drawing), it must be free, have permission to reproduce, or a link to where you found it.

Thank you!!