



The Trusted Servant

Fall 2007

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'JUST TWO OR THREE MORE'

Halloween horror, happy ending

By Margaret Ann B.
Cambridge

I was in bed, looking out over the expanse of my big flannel-covered belly. It was 10 o'clock. Oct. 31, 1990. Halloween. Trick-or-treating was long over, but in the foyer of my building was a large steel bowl filled with candy. My neighbor had left them. My favorites.

To get them, I had to tiptoe down two floors. I wanted just two or three. Tiptoe upstairs, get back in bed. Upwrap candies. Vow that these would be the last. Consume. Feel urge for more. Wrestle with urge. Lose wrestling match. Tiptoe down two floors. Just three more candies. Tiptoe back upstairs. Consume. Feel urge ... wrestle.... lose... tiptoe....

Repeat until disgusted with self. Repeat until filled with fear that neighbors would notice. Repeat until passed out.

I'd been attending OA meetings for almost nine months. Obviously I hadn't yet experienced the miracle of abstinence. But I'd been trying. A year earlier, I wouldn't have bothered with the bowl downstairs; I'd have had my own trough of junk.

But the helpless horror of this experience, two or three bites at a time, was as awful as if I'd been emptying bag after bag. I wanted to control it. I wanted to be able to stop. I wanted to be normal. I just couldn't.

I had no idea that two weeks later, I would have my last binge (to date, by

God's grace). But the pain of that night took me that much closer to surrender. I knew I was looking down the triple barrel of a holiday season that would kill me if I continued eating the way I had been. It used to be that my intake would increase in November and December before I'd "get ahold of myself" in January (at least until mid-January). But by this year, I knew that intake would increase and stay increased.

Even though I have been free of the Halloween horrors (and the big flannel-covered belly) for 17 years, the memory is still fresh. It's refreshed again every year when I sit at the Metrowest Thanksgiving Share-A-Thon, because I recall how that event got me through my first abstinent holiday.

All the OA members who did service for Metrowest Intergroup gave me that freedom. I not only received the gift of abstinence, I also received the gift of gratitude that has given me the same love for service that they had. I do service for the same reason that Dr. Bob describes in his story, "Dr. Bob's Nightmare" (Big Book, pg. 181):

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in doing so I am paying my debt to the [people] who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

¹Service, *n* fr. *L. servitium* **1 a** : Contribution to the welfare of others; **1 b** : Contribution to one's own recovery; **2 a** : Endorsed method for weight loss in Overeaters Anonymous, as in, "Service is slimming."

Every word of this newsletter was written, edited, composed, printed, and distributed by peers in OA who believe that when they do service, they get as good as they give. Is there any room in your program to do a little more service?

PROFESSIONAL HELP

Spreading the news about OA

By **Steve M. Ashland**

In a world where eating disorders are on the rise, how many who suffer from our disease haven't heard about OA's solution? OA doesn't have the exposure in popular culture of our AA brethren. It's hard to be a program of attraction if sufferers don't see that solution working in the lives of others.

To help get the word out, the World Service Business Conference in May authorized the board of trustees to create a professionally prepared public awareness campaign and to solicit money from the fellowship to support it. To answer an Ask-It Basket question on this, our trustee replied: "No compulsive eater should be denied the solution found in Overeaters Anonymous because she or he lacks knowledge of the program."

The conference had quite a bit of discussion about the idea of using an outside agency to conduct this campaign. No public step will be implemented without the review and

approval of the trustees. As guardians of our Traditions, the trustees will seek to ensure that the message given will be only of attraction, not promotion. The message of attraction will be ours. The 12th Step work will be ours.

The agency will help us get our message out. Remember that the Traditions permit us to use special workers. If you have questions about this campaign and our Traditions, the board has provided some answers in the Ask It Basket.

To support this campaign, members are being asked to consider donating to the fund created for this purpose. Donations can be sent to our World Service Office or they may be made at www.oa.org. Be sure to designate them for the public awareness campaign. Groups may also contribute, of course, but all donors are asked to consider making additional contributions so that groups and intergroups, which continue to need financial support as well, will not suffer.

OUR SURGICAL FELLOWS

Outreach to bariatric patients

By **Sandy J. Lancaster**

I loved the program when I came to OA. I really enjoyed being able to talk to other people who ate like I did and then felt bad about it. But I didn't exactly lose a lot of weight.

All the while, I was watching and waiting for "something" to help me lose, because "if only" my weight was down, I could deal with all my other issues.

Eventually, I decided to have bariatric surgery, which I thought was an easier, softer way. I did lose weight, but eventually gained most of it back. I was so embarrassed, I stayed away from OA for 11 years, feeling like a failure.

Many of you may know someone who has already had the surgery or may be considering it. There may be people who attend your meeting who

have had one of the surgeries to lose weight and may have had weight loss initially only to gain the weight back or have realized that there is more to losing weight than the actual pounds we lose.

I have just recently returned to OA. I know "I am home," and want to help ensure that others don't have to follow the long, frustrating path that I've taken.

Our intergroup is forming a committee to provide information about OA to hospitals and surgeons who work with those who have had, or are considering, the surgery.

I have volunteered to chair this effort. If anyone is interested in assisting in these efforts or even forming a support group of individuals who fit this category, please call me at 978-368-0894 or send me e-mail at sandyluv_01510@yahoo.com.

SHAREATHONS

The Promises, followed by Body Image

The 12 Promises of the Program will take the spotlight in Metrowest Intergroup's winter shareathon Nov. 3 in Holliston. There will be speakers, sharing, and time for writing, so bring your journal or paper and pen.

Registration opens at 9, and the event will run from 9:30 to 12:30. A donation of \$5 is asked. Please come to share experience and receive some strength and hope of the program.

The shareathon will be at the First Congregation Church, 725 Washington St., routes 16 and 126. For more information call me at 508-881-4372 or Tricia at 508-429-1075.

— **Jean E.**, Ashland

Meanwhile, preliminary plans are under way for MWI's next quarterly event, probably in February, **Steve M.** of Ashland says:

I don't know about you, but I came for the vanity. Sanity wasn't even on my radar. For me, a big part of vanity was my fear of how the world saw me. I hadn't caught on that my disease was driven much more by how I saw myself. And it's pretty clear that I'm not alone: In August at the World Service Convention in Philadelphia, the Body Image and Sexuality workshop drew huge crowds. Twice.

MWI will seek to bring that experience to our area early next year, so be looking for flyers; announcements will also be made via e-mail and at www.metrowestoa.org. If you're want to help plan the event or just to volunteer, send e-mail to Q1service@metrowest.org.

OA online

◇ **metrowestoa.org**: Minutes of the most recent Intergroup meeting; the agenda for the next one (see "About OA"); meeting and event information; and more.

◇ **oaregion6.org**
◇ **oa.org**

MY HOME MEETING

'When I leave, I feel like I worked a program'

By Mag M.

Framingham

I'm not sure why Ashland's 10 a.m. Saturday meeting is special, but I do have some ideas why I love and value it. (Just a note: I've never been to any meeting that I wished I had not attended).

I love our comprehensive format. It seems to cover *all* the bases. We begin with the Serenity Prayer, read the 12 Steps, read and/or share on the tools, pass the phone list, and

define cross talk. A speaker then qualifies for 20 minutes, after which we break for 5 minutes. We then call for announcements, newcomers, and sponsors while the 7th Traditions is passed. Open sharing is next and welcomed without restrictions. The Promises are read and we close with the Serenity Prayer.

The opening sharing is truly "open," sincere, and honest. I don't recall anonymity ever being broken. I feel comfortable sharing my experience,

strength, and hope, and have been able to share at those times I feel less connected to my Higher Power, more vulnerable, and may be having food issues.

Ashland does have a terrific meeting, but it's not just one thing that makes it special. I do know it couldn't be what it is without the love, wisdom, support, and caring of the people who attend. Most important for me is that when I leave Ashland's meeting, I feel like I worked a program.

NEWS BRIEFS

South Coastal rebounds with a world of help

South Coastal Mass. Intergroup, which suffered a very severe financial setback through the improper dealings of a trusted servant, reported to the Region 6 assembly last month that donations from neighboring groups and intergroups had erased the deficit, which had approached \$15,000.

Said Gil P. chair of South Coastal, "We are grateful for the generosity and caring of all our members, and would especially like to thank the individuals and groups in Metrowest, who donated more than their share." Gil said that donations came from all over the world, and that the sum was recouped in less than 8 months.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

MWI is entering its election season. Many of the service positions last for one year, and generally are filled through nominations and votes by year's end. Positions are available

for OA members in search of service opportunities.

Service positions at the intergroup level include chair, vice chair, treasurer, editor of the Trusted Servant, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and delegates to Region 6 and World Service.

GET READY TO SHARE

Though details are incomplete, the annual Thanksgiving shareathons will take place again this year, in Boston and in Framingham. Look for flyers.

NEWS FROM OTHER INTERGROUPS

The Friday night meeting in Westwood celebrates its fifth anniversary on Oct. 26. There will be raffles, prizes, and recipe and clothing swaps. The event will be from 7-9 p.m. at the Westwood Senior Center, 210

Nahatan St.

...

A new meeting in Hingham focuses on issues specific to anorexics and bulimics. The details: Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at House of Prayer Lutheran Church, 916 Main St. (Route 228). Contact: southcoast.mi@comcast.net

Write for us

One way to practice the tool of writing is to contribute an article to the Trusted Servant.

Whether it is a story about your home meeting, or how wisdom from a Step recently helped in your daily life, or even if you just want to respond to something you've read by contributing a letter to the editor, we want your voice.

Send queries to servant@metrowestoa.org.

MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

May through September, submitted by treasurer **Julie C.** of Medway

Meeting	Amount	Meeting	Amount	Meeting	Amount
Ashland Sat 10 am	\$150.00	Hudson Wed 7pm	\$200.00*	Southboro Fri 10 am	\$60.00
Boston Mon 5:30 pm	\$50.00	JP Sun 9 am	\$650.00	Southboro Thurs pm	\$75.00
Brookline Sun 6pm	\$290.00	Marlboro Mon noon	\$35.00	Brighton Sat 9:30 am	\$271.18
Brookline Thurs 7 pm	\$449.00	MWI	\$94.50	Sudbury Tues 7:30 pm	\$112.00
Framingham Sat 4 pm	\$250.00	Natick Thursday am	\$47.35	W.Roxbury Tues 7:30 pm	\$100.00
Framingham Sun 10 am	\$103.50	Natick Tues am	\$100.00	Workshop-relapse NWH	\$137.00
Framingham Sun 7 pm	\$125.00	Needham Wed pm	\$200.00		
Framingham Wed 7 pm	\$300.00	Somerville Tues pm	\$475.00	Total	\$4,274.53

* Includes a prior contribution that was mistakenly left off report in summer issue.

THE MEETINGS OF METROWEST

October 2007

BY TOWN

Acton Tues
Ashland Sat
Boston Sun, Mon
Brighton Sat
Brookline Sun, Mon, Thurs
Cambridge Thurs, Sat
Framingham Sun, Wed, Sat
Holliston Mon
Hudson Wed
Jamaica Plain Sun, Tue
Marlboro Mon
Natick Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri
Newton Fri
Needham Wed
Somerville Tue
Southboro Thurs, Fri
Sudbury Tue
West Roxbury Mon, Tue

♻ Accessible for special needs

Ⓣ Accessible by public transportation

SUNDAY

Boston 10 am, Speaker/
Discussion, Our Lady
of Victories Rectory, 27
Isabella St.,
Woody: 781-393-2518
Brookline 6 pm,
Speaker/Discussion,
N E W All Saints Church,
1773 Beacon St. (new
location)
Michael: 781-777-9772
Framingham 10 am, Big
Book, MetroWest Medical
Center, 115 Lincoln, 1st floor
Amy: 978-443-3690 ♻
Framingham 7 pm,
Speaker/Newcomer
MetroWest Medical Center
1st Floor, 115 Lincoln St.,
Susan: 508-405-4544 ♻
Jamaica Plain 9-10:15 am,
Speaker/discussion Ⓣ
Farnsworth House, 90
South St.
Marthajoy: 617-277-9838 ♻

MONDAY

Boston 5:30 pm, Step,
Paulist Center, 5 Park St.,
3rd floor library Barbara:
617-523-7285 Ⓣ ♻
No meetings on holidays
West Roxbury 6 p.m.,
N E W Speaker/Topic with
HOW focus, Emmanuel
Episcopal Church, 21
Stratford St. Judy 617-
512-4090
Brookline 7:30-8:45 pm,
N E W Women's Focus, Temple
Kehiilath Israel, 384
Harvard St., Novakoff
Hall. Ⓣ (new location)
Emily: 617-512-2150
Holliston 7 pm, Step/
Tradition, 1st Congregational
Church, Route 16/
Washington Street, 1st floor
Debra, 508-881-0381
Marlboro Noon, Step,
Marlboro Library, West Main
Street, Prue: 508-485-7227
No meetings on holidays
Natick 6 pm, Step AA12/12
Morse Institute Library, Rt.
135, Wendy: 774-217-1972
♻ Ⓣ

TUESDAY

Acton 7:15 am, West Acton
Baptist Church, 592 Mass
Ave. Steve: 508-277-1662
Natick 10 am, Speaker,
Temple Israel, 145 Hartford
St., Donna F.: 508-429-5201
Jamaica Plain, 7:15 am,
Big Book ♻ Municipal
Building, 20 South St.,
Vivienne: 617-522-3090
Somerville 7:30 pm,
Speaker (Step on 2nd
Tuesday), United Methodist
Church, 14 Chapel St. at
College Avenue
Elaine, 617-876-6470
Sudbury 7:30-8:45 pm,
Speaker/Meditation/
Newcomer, St. John's
Lutheran Church, 16 Great
Rd. (corner of North Road
and Route 117)
Susan: 978-897-7652
West Roxbury 7:30 pm.
Step, VA Hospital, 1400
VFW Pkwy, Room A217,
2nd floor
Mary: 617-323-1420 ♻

N E W MWI's monthly meeting has moved to the Stephen
Palmer Senior Center, corner of Pickering and May
streets, Needham. Time and day are unchanged: third
Tuesday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m. You're invited.

WEDNESDAY

Framingham 7 pm,
Speaker, Metrowest Medical
Ctr, 115 Lincoln St., 2nd floor,
Lisa M: 508-881-2996 ♻
Hudson 7 pm, Step,
1st United Methodist
Church, Felton and
Pleasant, Suzanne A.:
978-562-1366 ♻
Needham 6:45 pm,
Literature/steps/traditions
Stephen Palmer Center,
May and Pickering streets,
basement.
Judy: 617-527-1705
Park on street ♻
Needham 8 pm, Speaker/
newcomer, Stephen Palmer
Center, May and Pickering
streets, basement.
Judy: 617-527-1705
Park on street ♻

THURSDAY

Brookline 7 pm,
100-Pounder Focus
(all welcome), First
Presbyterian Church, 32
Harvard St., main floor.
Rachel: 781-894-0707
Natick 10 am Step,
Temple Israel, Hartford
Street, 1st floor
Fran: 508-653-4840
Southboro 7 pm, H.O.W.,
St. Matthew Parish, 105
Southville Rd.
Virginia: 508-881-8922
Cambridge,
N E W 11:30 am, Step, First
Congregational Church,
11 Garden St.
Monica, 212-864-6303

FRIDAY

Natick 7 pm, Step,
Metrowest Medical Center,
Leonard Morse Campus,
Union Street, 2nd floor
conference room,
Victoria: 508-647-4732 ♻
Newton Noon, Discussion,
Eliot Church, 474 Centre St.
Constantine: 617-562-8642
Park on street ♻
Southboro 10 am, Big
Book, Southboro Library,
Routes 30 and 85,
Bruna: 508-481-9417 ♻

SATURDAY

Ashland 10-11:30 am,
Speaker, St. Cecelia's
Family Center, 54 Esty St.,
Mary: 508-429-2813 ♻
Brighton 9:30 am, Step
Study, St. Elizabeth's
Hospital, Cambridge Street,
4th floor hospitality room.
Joanne: 617-787-5548
Suggested fragrance-free
Ⓣ ♻
Cambridge 5:30 pm, Big
Book, First Congregational
Church, 11 Garden St.,
Michael R., 617-945-1419
♻
Framingham 4 pm,
Discussion,
Metro West Medical Center,
115 Lincoln St., 1st floor
auditorium
Judy: 508-842-2409 ♻

Meetings are one hour, except as noted. To alter a meeting's listing, drop a line to meetings@metrowestoa.org.