

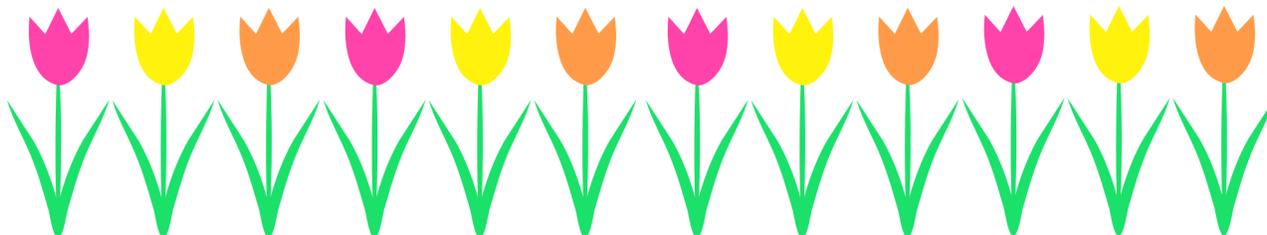
Sponsored by the Morro Bay Tuesday 7:00 PM meeting, Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, 480 Monterey, Morro Bay. Thanks everybody! Please support this great meeting — they'd love to have you drop in and join them! Unless otherwise noted, material in this Newsletter was submitted anonymously.

What a wet Winter we've had. Every time it rains, I remember the dry dry months that preceded this wet season. I remember thinking that God had forgotten us here in CA. People were suffering, plants and trees were dying, wild birds and animals were perishing from lack of water — what was going to happen? All the reservoirs were drying up — it was scary and easy to lose faith. It became my daily prayer to ask God to help relieve the suffering that the drought was causing. It was part of my every day meditation and prayer. God listened and came through BIG TIME! So now is my time to be thankful. To be extra observant of the green hills, the flowers, the running streams and waterfalls that I see on my hikes. It's easy to become complacent and just live without noticing the beauty that the rains have brought. To even say "I am sick of this rain" after a few weeks of it. As human beings, some of us have a hard time being satisfied with what we have. To be grateful every single day for what God provides. Stop and smell the roses, the lavender, the citrus blooms, the sage . . . it's a beautiful World!



Lotsa Rain = Lotsa Flowers!
It's a beautiful green blessing!

Page 101 of the OA 12x12 says: "For years we looked for gratification in unbridled eating; in material possessions; in careers; in our many attempts to have perfect bodies; and in money, sex, and social status." All those things can really get in the way of helping others in this program and my being of service to you, my fellows. Every day I still look to HP to help me handle those pressures that I have daily reprieve from. After over 2 years of abstinence, my career pressures haven't changed. I'm adjusting to taking the word "fat" out of my vocabulary. I'm seeking other steps to work on my spending addiction, and I have more crap around the house than I need. None of these things prevent me from helping others, giving service, helping someone else through the steps, or mean that I'm not living by the principles. Rather I use the principles, seek God, have humility, love others, and get through my days as joyfully and serenely as possible.



THE JOY OF MEETINGS . . . PEACE, SERENITY, FELLOWSHIP FOR A COUPLE OF \$\$



There is no place I am more comfortable than being in an OA meeting with my fellows. Even though we may have different food behaviors, and have to find our own food plans, as well as focus on different areas of our lives to recover — OA's are my fellows and understand me like no others can.

When life happens, good or bad, it often makes me want to act out my compulsive and obsessive food habits. I cannot get away from the need for food. I have to learn how to work my program to live through the good, bad and indifferent situations life presents without acting out with food. OA has taught me first to recognize what is going on, then to take action. I ask for help from my Higher Power to enable me to see what needs to be done. I get the message often that I need to do some writing or share what is going on because secrets are like poison for me. When I keep something inside without sharing it either in a meeting or with a sponsor or another OA member, it keeps my emotions festering inside me. Often I have to repeat these actions before I finally write, surrender or make amends if applicable. It is so helpful to hear others share similar situations. Sharing our experience, strength and hope in a meeting is priceless for us.

Over and over again I see how HP helps me when I help myself, often through others. Answers come in amazing ways I never would have imagined. I recognize that my thinking is not the best for me. What is best for me is trusting in my HP for the right answers and truly great things happen. Feelings are still there, but they do not rule my life anymore.

In addition, I love OA meetings because I get to talk about what's going on with my food. I know I am not alone. There is a solution: My Higher Power and the 12 Steps when I'm alone. It feels good to be able to wear clothes that fit!! Keep coming back! If I can, you can too. None of us are hopeless. There's always hope when there is willingness and open-mindedness.

More wise words . . .

From the moment I walked into a meeting of Overeaters Anonymous 4 weeks ago, I felt a sense of peace and relief. My earliest recollection of compulsive overeating was seeing my father soothing his feelings of anger, resentment and discomfort with a half gallon of chocolate ice cream. I was in third grade. By the fourth grade, I didn't recognize myself right away when I saw my class picture because I had gained so much weight. That year was a turning point for me for I, too, had begun a lifelong habit of using food to soothe my feelings of anger, resentment and discomfort. In my mind, I was "self-nurturing" with food. After 51 years, chocolate ice cream is still my number one food of choice that I use to bring me solace and comfort. I realize now that I have been in a hopeless and futile cycle of gaining, losing and re-gaining the same 30 pounds year after year. Walking into the rooms of OA has given me the option of finding a healthy food plan for myself, as well as the tools of the 12 STEPS and group support that are necessary to my recovery.



Together, we get better . . .
We don't have to do it alone!



Voices of Recovery workbook question for February 17: “Is my conception of a Higher Power a loving one? How do I experience this love?”

Answer: My HP loves and accepts me just as I am and is always with me, supporting me and encouraging me. When I hear the negative voices of my disease, HP reassures me: “It’s OK. I’m right here with you.” HP helps me see the lies the disease tells me for what they are and reminds me that I don’t have to believe them, and helps me refocus on HP, recovery, balance and self-love. HP fills me with the faith that whatever life brings we will face it together — sanely and serenely.



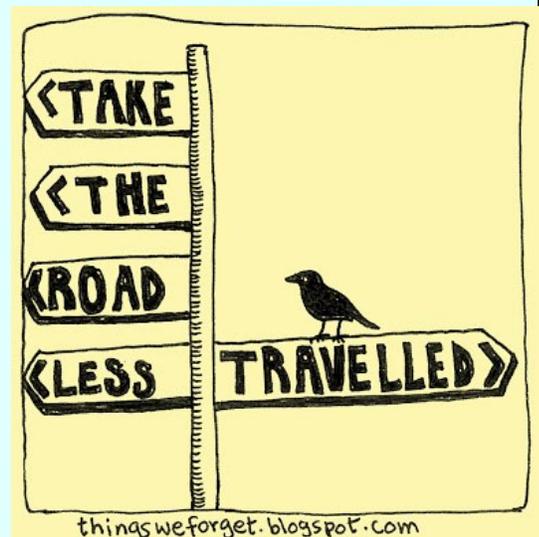
“For every drop of rain that falls, a flower grows.”

“We give up fear and indecision, knowing that if we are sincere our Higher Power will give us the knowledge of our best course in life, along with the willingness and ability to follow that course, even when it seems difficult and uncomfortable.” (From The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Page 24)

It is so hard for me to just “stay on course” sometimes. I can hear my HP during prayer and meditation. He gives me a clear road map for how to reach abstinence and recovery. It seems like such a great plan and one that is very achievable, but I veer off course, step out of bounds, turn left instead of right — then all of the sudden I am lost and wandering back to my scary out-of-control life of rotten thinking and rotten eating!!

When this happens, I have only one course of action. Pray for God to once again let me hear His plan and give me the “willingness and ability to follow that course, even when it seems difficult and uncomfortable.”

It isn’t always easy to stay on course. I mess up time and time again, but there is still the “map” — I have it, I just have to use it and I will soon be back on course.



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