

WMI

WESTERN MASS  
INTERGROUP

April 2006

# RECOVERY LINES

A TWELVE STEP PUBLICATION OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.

## Recovery on the Rails

My mother is snow birding in Florida, my son is off from school and I hate winter. It's time to visit-to-visit mom/grandma and enjoy a warm Florida vacation. The question was, "What mode of transportation should we use?" I left the answer up to God and my son to decide. My 15-year-old son suggested we go by train, and thought it would be fun to see the old railroad towns along the way. I agreed the train would be fun, as we would get to sleep, eat, talk, stare at the different cityscapes, sit in comfortable seats, stare at each other, talk and stare so more. Each one-way trip would take 30 hours. God had a plan for us and I accepted that the unexpected might happen. We did talk and laugh a lot and the laughter was God sent. Every time we laughed, it made our very small 7' X 4' roomette seem huge. We also had quiet times that suited us just fine, and wonderful meals with plenty of water and easily accessible snacks for my son at the snack bar, which he could get himself. I also brought B.O.B. pronounced Bob, Bag Of Books. Bob turned out to be a real lifesaver because, during those 60 hours of train travel, I had the opportunity to turn to the 1000 hours of blank journals, unopened *Lifeline* pamphlets, unread OA literature, and the all important and necessary STEP 4. After winning two copies of the book, *Beyond our Wildest Dreams* by Rosanne S., at an OA marathon, I was even more grateful to finally have the opportunity to read our founder's story. I helped me understand the relevance

of doing service and how service is the glue that holds together our wonderful organization.

By the title of this story, you may have thought that this article would be a negative piece on recovery. However, I want everyone to understand that, in order to be successful in our own recovery process, we need to give each other the **opportunity and time** to get to know the people closest to us and the **opportunity and time** to work the program. It works if you work it!

Grateful Recovering Compulsive Overeater

### Regarding Step One:

I used to think that if I said I was powerless over food, there would be no hope at all for me. I didn't believe that this step could be freeing, uplifting and lead to feeling such hope -- the direct opposite of what I feared.

Just when I realize just how crazy I am about eating, and feel the least able to help myself, by praying and working my program, I am somehow given the grace, the peaceful ability to actually put down the food. Left to my own devices, I would not be able to attain abstinence. It is truly only through God's power, the OA fellowship, and the system of working the 12 steps, that I am open to the **concept of abstinence**.

## WESTERN MASS INTERGROUP CONTACTS

Please direct **WMI** correspondence to:

**WMI** of Overeaters Anonymous  
Communications Committee  
Post Office Box 2911  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01101-2911

Telephone: (413) 783-4198  
e-mail: [correspondingsecretary@oawmass.org](mailto:correspondingsecretary@oawmass.org)

Please mail **WMI** contributions to:

**WMI** of Overeaters Anonymous,  
Treasurer, Frank S.  
Post Office Box 2911  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01101-2911

The following information allows us to properly acknowledge your meetings contribution:

WSO Group Number  
Meeting Name  
Meeting Day and Time

Your canceled check is your receipt. Your meeting will receive an acknowledgement at either the next **WMI** meeting and/or found in the next issue of Recovery Lines. Groups Representatives are to pick-up information and newsletter at the next **WMI** meeting. Please ask your group members to be as generous as possible. Thank you for your support, service and contributions.

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Recovery Lines is the publication of Western Mass Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous  
Post Office Box 2911  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01101-2911

### Editorial Policy

Recovery Lines is the quarterly newsletter of Western Mass Intergroup. The deadlines for copy are March 1 for the spring, June 1 for summer, Sept. 1 for fall and, Dec 1 for winter. Materials sent to WMI cannot be returned nor can payment be made. All submissions to the co-editors must be signed and when published, will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request. Recovery Lines reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity. Other OA groups may reprint without permission. We ask that you cite the writer and Recovery Lines as your source. Courtesy copies of reprinted articles are appreciated. The opinions expressed are those of the writer, not those of Western Mass Intergroup or OA as a whole. Please address all submissions and correspondence to Recovery Lines via e-mail to [newsletter@oawmass.org](mailto:newsletter@oawmass.org) or via US Postal Service in care of the Communications Committee at the address designated above.

## What is **WMI**?

Western Mass Intergroup consists of Overeaters Anonymous group meetings from the following approximate geographical locations in Massachusetts: Agawam, Amherst, Greenfield, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Northampton, Palmer, Southwick, Springfield, Westfield, West Springfield and Wilbraham.

The purpose of Western Massachusetts Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous is:

- To further the OA program in accordance with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA;
- To maintain communication for all Western Massachusetts OA groups. Specifically excluded is the endorsement of any outside enterprise as outlined in Tradition Six;
- To provide a forum for the selection of Intergroup, Regional and General Service Representatives;
- To host Western Mass Intergroup Marathon;
- To work for OA as a whole within the Region, Intergroup or Committees appointed by World Service.

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## Check Web Site for Future Site **WMI** Changes

The **WMI** meeting is scheduled for every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, meeting time 6:30pm to 8:00pm. At the Holyoke Soldiers Home, Rte. 202, Holyoke Mass. Meeting site change is expected soon please verify meet site on **WMI** web site for notification.

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### RECOVERY LINES STAFF

The Recovery Lines is produced through the combined efforts of the members of the **WMI** Newsletter Committee, the Communications Committee and Archives Committee.

#### We are:

Mary M. and Jeff A. -----Newsletter Co-Chairs  
Lyn C. -----Phone Service Liaison  
John C. -----Chair of Communication Committee  
Sue S. -----Archives Committee  
Daniel D. -----Website Coordinator  
Gabby-----Vice-Chair of HIPM  
Pat-----Member of Public Information  
Susan-----Meeting List Coordinator

\* Reprinted from OA website –Tools of Recovery

## The Glass Horse

Many years ago, I had a job mowing lawns at a small New England Arts summer camp. I always enjoyed the camp's ambience with its spacious layout and the unique structural design of each building. The real story begins many years later when my sponsor told me that she would like to have a safe place for people to meet to help them fight our disease. She called that dream place, Recovery House. I shared with her my earlier work place experience, and asked if she would like to see the place and get some new ideas on how Recovery House might look. I wanted my sponsor to experience some of the feelings I had over the camps features. I thought the camp was closed for the summer, but thought an arts class might be in session. However, I was unaware of that an annual second sale of art was beginning that day. We were the first to arrive. After looking over most of the buildings I noticed the four dorms were each given a letter, L, I, F, E, spelling out LIFE. Being in OA for only six months (still somewhat of a newcomer), it was nice to have time to spend with my sponsor. When I worked at the camp, I never noticed such things as the letters on a dorm. At this time, I noticed and realized that with art, people can express life or experience life-changing events because of art. When my sponsor and I finally started to explore the main buildings, I was surprised to find hundreds of pieces of art. We noticed the way the early morning sunlight, hung low in the horizon, shown on every piece of art setting them a glow. Upon entering the room, a 6" high glass horse immediately drew my gaze. I was overwhelmed with memories of fear and anxiety. I turned to my sponsor and said that I needed to tell her my memories of another glass horse. I explained that I was playing "throw the ball" with my 5-year-old son inside the house, and when I tried to catch the ball, I lost my

balance and crashed into a glass horse exactly like the one at the second sale. I also reluctantly explained, with great humility and humiliation, that when my wife had inquired about the broken horse, I had blamed my son for the accident. My sponsor said to me "I wondered why we were here!" When she asked a few questions about how I felt about what I had done, I began to understand that the underlining memory that came out so easily had been years buried by me with food. Each day, in an attempt to bury that memory, I buried myself in food. At that point, we both knew that I needed to make amends to my son and ex-wife as soon as possible. The point of our trip was now apparent to me -- I was there to understand God's will for me, and to start the journey to recovery from this disease and to help my sponsor listen to God's will. I bought the horse and placed it in the back seat of the car. A few days later I picked up my 15-year-old son from school and asked him to be careful with his school bags since I had a piece of art in the backseat of the car. I nervously explained to my son that I wanted to set up a meeting with him and his mother to discuss a very important issue, and that I would need to make amends to both of them. He turned to me and said, "is it about the glass horse?" I was floored that after ten years, he remembered about that damn horse. Nevertheless, I was happy to have the opportunity to take responsibility for my childish behavior and replace my son's memories with new ones of my being able to act like the father he deserves. When I did make my amends to my ex-wife and son, my ex-wife said was "You did not have to." I said it really was not for you, but for me (and my recovery).

A Grateful Compulsive Overeater

## To My Disease

You scare me. You make yourself known in frightening ways. I can hear you cackling and laughing at me. You don't have to lift a finger to destroy me; you just sit back and watch as I destroy myself.

You watch me push God away questioning His wisdom. You watch me shut the door in His face and pull the blinds at the windows. And you love every minute of it.

You watch me, as my anxiety increases, and I can't calm down. You add just one more thing hoping and waiting for me to crack. You feel the confusion and indecision in me. You smell the fear, and you don't stop. You keep closing in, waiting for the moment to pounce. You watch as I become anxious of food, knowing that as the anxiety increases so will my desire to stuff it down with food. You place seeds of illogic in my head. Making me worry for hours so that when the time comes, I'll be so convinced that I deserve a binge it will seem like the right thing to do.

But you will not succeed. I am not alone anymore. The blinds are up and the windows are wide open. The door is open as well. I have the Program to guide me. I will use these tools to bury you. Every minute that goes by your grave is getting deeper and deeper. No matter how much dirt you throw back in, I will not stop digging.

Thank you God.

**On Acceptance** -- when I accept that I am not "normal" about food, never have been, never will be, that's when I can feel peace, be sane about food and start to heal.

**My food addiction** is like a demon inside me. It makes it clear that what I experience is a power struggle between my Higher Power and my disease. Whose side do I want to be on? Do I align myself with the disease so I can eat whatever I want, or do I align myself with my HP and have a real chance at a sane and happy life?

If I want it, **program can teach me a new way of life**. This is the delightful promise of OA, the reason all the rest of changing what I do is worthwhile, because if I want it to, program can teach me a new way of living. All I have to do is follow the steps and do what my sponsor tells me to do. I'm no longer alone; I'm no longer hopeless and helpless. I'm no longer unable to change. I have hope and I see the changes happening.

Anonymous

### What the Steps Mean to Me

The steps are a way for me to have a purpose; a way for God to take the broken, mismatched and abused parts and shape them into a lovely piece of beauty. The steps are a way for God to repair a life that had been unnatural and driven by self-will into a serene, flowing and orderly way of living. Thank you God, Bill W. and Dr. Bob for giving me the 12-step recovery program.

A recovering member of OA

The following people are willing to speak at your meeting, sharing their experience, strength and hope of recovery in Overeaters Anonymous. If your meeting has specific requirements to speak, i.e., length of time, length of abstinence etc, please inform that person at the time you ask him/her to speak.

Amy	Longmeadow	413-567-9399	Kathy	Windsor, Conn.	860-688-5697
Beth B.	Northampton	413-584-0238	Linda A.	W. Springfield	413-788-7167
Carol C.	Pelham	413-256-3754	Linda B.	Longmeadow	413-567-7204
Carol N.	Suffield, Conn.	860-668-4807	Linda C.	Agawam	413-786-5480
Cindy B.	Longmeadow	413-567-2002	Maria S.	Windsor, Conn.	860-688-3535
Darcy	Chicopee	413-575-0971	Mary	Easthampton	413-527-0750
Dawn	Southwick	413-569-3439	Maureen	Holyoke	413-493-7890
Deb	Connecticut	860-623-8501	Melanie	Northampton	413-582-0351
Diane	E. Longmeadow	413-525-3511	Naziia	Springfield	413-731-0798
Diedra	Longmeadow	413-567-5750	Pat	Easthampton	413-527-5388
Doris	Connecticut	860-741-5174	Phyllis	Longmeadow	413-567-0762
Ellen	South Hadley	413-534-0000	Rita	Westfield	413-562-0527
Gabrielle	W. Springfield	413-734-8285	Robin	Westfield	413-568-0349
Heather	Springfield	413-782-2578	Robin	Feeding Hills	413-789-1396
Jeffrey	W. Springfield	413-734-4305	Rose	Chicopee	413-594-2606
Jess	Longmeadow	413-567-6544	Sue	Holyoke	413-536-5604
Joette	Springfield	413-781-4070	Sue S	Westfield	413-568-5694
John C.	Westfield	413-562-8912	Kathleen	Monson	413-267-3869
Mark C.	Pelham	413-256-3754			

If you would like to add your name to the speaker's list, please let us know.

### WMI ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Who: Communication Committee Meeting  
 When: April 28, 2006  
 Time: 7:00pm  
 Where: Southwick Community  
 Episcopal Church, Southwick, MA

Who: Good Orderly Direction  
 Workshop – Steps 3, 7 and 11  
 When: April 30<sup>th</sup> 2006, Sunday  
 Time: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm  
 Where: Southwick Community  
 Episcopal Church, Southwick, MA  
 Contact: Lyn C. (413)-562-8912

Who: Marathon Committee Meeting  
 When: May 3, 2006  
 Time: 8:00pm  
 Where: Church of Atonement, Westfield, MA

Who: OA Anniversary  
 When: May 16<sup>th</sup> 2006  
 Time: 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm  
 Where: Bethesda Lutheran Church,  
 Springfield, MA

Who: OA Retreat 2006  
 When: June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> 2006  
 Time: 5:30pm Fri. to 11:30 am Sunday  
 Where: Genesis Spiritual Life Center,  
 Westfield, MA  
 Contact: Genesis (413) 562-3627

Who: OA Region 6 Convention  
 When: October 27-29, 2006  
 Time: 2:00 pm Fri. to 1:00 am Sunday  
 Where: Friar Tuck Resort, Catskill, NY  
 Contact: [www.oaregion6.org](http://www.oaregion6.org)  
 See **WMI** website  
[www.oawmass.org](http://www.oawmass.org) for:

- OA Information
- Meetings locations and times across Western Massachusetts.
- Event Calendar
- OA Promise and Prayers
- Recovery Insurance Policy
- Lifeline Magazine Form
- **WMI** minutes
- **WMI** e-mail contacts

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### **New Tee Shirts Now Available!**

Please fill out order form or send a **note** with name, address, phone, and sizes to:

**Western Mass Intergroup**  
**P.O. Box 2911**  
**Springfield, MA 01101-2911**  
**Attn. Rhea**

Tee shirts costs: \$15 plus \$5 for mailing. Please make checks payable to: Western Mass Intergroup with completed order form or note required.

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**WMI** offers all groups to order all OA materials, soft-literature and hard-literature through its service members who can order and sell to group representatives at intergroup meeting.

Soft-literature --Terry D., (413) 827-0077  
 Hard-literature-Ellen W., (413) 534-7192

Being a group representative is an important link for your group to communicate with Intergroup, Region and World Service Organizations.  
**Ask your group who your rep is for Intergroup!**

**Toolman says:**

### **Service**

Carrying the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers is the basic purpose of our Fellowship; therefore, it is the most fundamental form of service. Any form of service—no matter how small—which helps reach a fellow sufferer adds to the quality of our own recovery. Getting to meetings, putting away chairs, putting out literature, talking to newcomers, doing whatever needs to be done in a group or for OA as a whole are ways in which we give back what we have so generously been given. We are encouraged to do what we can when we can. "**A life of sane and happy usefulness**" is what we are promised as the result of working the Twelve Steps. Service helps to fulfill that promise. \*

### **Telephone**

The telephone helps us share one-to-one and avoid the isolation which is so common among us. Many members call other OA members and their own sponsors daily. As a part of the surrender process, it is a tool with which we learn to reach out, ask for help and extend help to others. The telephone also provides an immediate outlet for those hard-to-handle highs and lows we may experience. \*

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God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.