

## **TRADITION STORIES**

### **For use in OA Service and Traditions Workshops**

#### **Teenie Weenie Intergroup (TWIG)**

Teenie Weenie Intergroup in Smallville wanted to have a convention with the world famous OA speakers Anna Nimity and E.Z. Duzit but found their prudent reserve rather slim. It cost a fortune to bring these great speakers in and they didn't know what to do. Smallville is a wonderful skiing community and does well in the winter but the summers are quite dull. The three major corporations in the town, Yum Yum Foods, Big Wig Airlines, and Soft-N-Cozy Hotel chain caught wind of the impending convention and saw dollar signs. They approached the local intergroup office and offered to be the "Official Sponsors of the TWIP Convention." Not only would each of the corporations take care of the food, transportation, and sleeping accommodation needs of Anna Nimity and E.Z. Duzit, but with each meal eaten, each flight booked on BWA, and each night stayed in the local Soft-N-Cozy Hotel, the TWIG Intergroup would receive monetary compensation. Each of the companies want to interview OA members about the food and services rendered for use in their respective trade magazines. Yum Yum Foods also knew that many OA members did not use white flour or sugar in their food plans. Yum Yum Foods is a socially conscious company and was taking a stand against Sweetness Sugar Company's policy of using young children in the sugar cane fields to harvest the cane and wanted to circulate a petition at the TWIG convention for OA members to sign. The intergroup is eager to get the convention planning in full force but they feel something is quite wrong and can't quite put their finger on it. A call was made to the regional trustee asking questions about their plans. What traditions did the trustee suggest they study before the intergroup makes any further plans? What are your reasons for such conclusions?

#### **Monday Morning Marvelous Maintainers Meeting**

The Monday Morning Marvelous Maintainers Meeting was hurting for money and members. They (the 4M: Monday Morning Marvelous Maintainers) had many wonderful ideas and no funds to get their ideas in action. They decided to write a diet book as a group project to bring in the necessary cash to spread the word about OA to enhance attendance at their meeting. They figured that since they were at maintenance they could have quite an impact in the intergroup. They

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also decide the recipe book was the perfect way to be of service to the intergroup and OA as a whole since they had all the answers. They collected the recipes, gave their insight as to how to be at maintenance and keep their weight off, and even shared program bits in their book. They had the famous diet guru, Lotta Man, write a forward about the wonderful techniques shared in this book. The group hired a consulting/marketing firm to sell the book at the intergroup office and local bookstores. The book promotion took off well and sales soared. They still felt, however, the OA members were not participating as they should. The members of the 4M decide to hawk the book themselves by going out to all the meetings in the intergroup and sell their book of recipes and recovery. One night a member of the 4M was attending a meeting and stumbled into a Traditions study. The member took back to the 4Ms that they may have violated some tradition, but some the 4M members were confused. How could they be breaking any of the Traditions because they were giving service and only had the good of the fellowship in mind. They studied the Traditions and figured maybe they were wrong. Which Traditions could they have violated?

### **Tuesday Night Always Right Group (TNALG)**

The Tuesday Night Always Right Group (TNALG) was about ready to have their semi-annual steering committee elections. The group was formed in April 1976 and had been most successful over the years. They welcomed all OA members but had a rule that people who only had 30 pounds or less to lose and who ate chicken and cantaloupe each day could be regular, verbal contributing members of TNALG. It had been determined many years ago by the six members who founded the meeting they would always have to run for an office because they demonstrated the "right recovery". It was also determined only they could vote because not only did they found the meeting, they felt they were the only ones who fit the parameters for group service. The meeting had lots of newcomers, but many of them left because they felt they did not "fit" the model set up by the founding members, yet the founding members could not understand why this group was slowly going down the tubes. An OA long timer from another area moved to town and stated it was her belief some Traditions were being violated. Which Traditions did the long timer tell the TNALG members were being violated and why?

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#### **Jumbo Jim**

Jumbo Jim was an extremely overweight, loud, abrasive, obnoxious comedian who in a fit of despair came to OA. He took to the program like a duck does to water and began to lose weight at a tremendous rate. As he mellowed out he became even a “bigger star” and his body size continued to shrink. He was interviewed by Ima Blabbermouth, local TV talk show host, and she noticed a big change in him, not only physically but emotionally as well. He shared with the TV audience that he was in Overeaters Anonymous and that it was OK for him to tell people because he was famous and it was his responsibility to tell people about OA. His most famous interview was with Jay Letterman of the Tonight with Jay Letterman talk show. Jumbo Jim told viewers that OA was the best thing that ever happened to him. Jumbo also invited all of America to come to his OA meeting in Hollywood to see all the famous people who were members of the fellowship. He gave out the group contact’s name and telephone number for interested people. Jumbo also mentioned Hesa Goodguy, his sponsor, by name and thanked him for saving his life. Hesa sees Jumbo at the meeting the next night and decides he needs to help Jumbo with the Traditions. Which Traditions does Hesa let Jumbo know that he has broken and why does Hesa feel they were broken.

#### **Bigtown Metropolitan Intergroup**

Bigtown Metropolitan Intergroup has a slight problem on their hands. The “Live and Let Live” gay/lesbian/bisexual parents with small children OA meeting is a regular contributing member in terms of money sent to the intergroup for 12<sup>th</sup> Step work, sending in intergroup representative to each intergroup meeting, and always does a great deal of service for the intergroup. They have a strong meeting in the Meccaville section of Bigtown, averaging between 30 to 40 members at each meeting. Each member has at least one child and the meeting was founded because baby-sitting is available for the members. The intergroup has learned, however, that the babysitters are paid from the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition collected. Many of the members also believe that this is “our meeting” and the rest of Bigtown has enough meetings for the non- gay/lesbian/bisexual members to attend. The “Live and Let Live” meeting held a group conscience and decide to make this a closed meeting, meaning this was a meeting only for those

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gay/lesbian/bisexual members with children. Although the “Live and Let Live” meeting reads and studies OA literature, some members did not feel as though OA addressed their specific problems. The members have produced some fine, yet non-conference approved literature. The group also purchases some literature from other “recovery resources” (AA literature is not considered as another “recovery resource”) because they want to get some other ideas as to the correct way to recover from compulsive overeating. The annual gay/lesbian/bisexual pride parade is to be held within the month and the group informed the intergroup meeting that they will be marching as a group in the parade. The “Live and Let Live” members have designed and made a beautiful banner for recognition during the parade. The intergroup is in a real dilemma as they want to keep the vital support they receive from the “Live and Let Live” group. They wish to talk to the group about the Traditions and some violations the intergroup has found. Which Traditions are being violated and why?

#### **Paula Perfect**

Paula Perfect was the model employee: well-groomed, intelligent, well-versed in her field, on-time for every appointment and a top sales associate. She caught the eye of upper management who thought, with her skill sets, she could bring more stability to their company. They proudly named her a vice-president and let her loose. All seemed to go well for a while and then trouble begin ... her employees found out that all of their ideas which they had told her in confidence were presented as her own. She would draw aside some of the “lesser” producing members of her team and tell them what they were doing wrong and how to fix their flaws. She divided her employees into the following categories: the “Super Novas”, the “Shining Stars”, and the “Dim Bulbs”. A list of the members of each team was posted outside her office door. When things would fail, Paula knew exactly where to lay the blame. Needless to say, she was fired because of her actions. She was alarmed that such an organized, honest and dedicated employee with her skill set should be dismissed. Paula, in a fit of tears and despairing comes to you asking where she possibly could have gone wrong. Using The 12 Traditions as your guide, which ones would you suggest she consider to prevent further problems?

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### **Rev Goodness**

Rev. Goodness was a seemingly kind holy man. He felt moved to begin his own church and knew that society would benefit from his ministry. He chose his church council with great care, people of great importance in all fields of industry, business and academics. Their bylaws and constitution stated that only “pure addicts” could be members and the church flourished. They were raking in the big bucks after every service and decided to open an educational facility for grades K to Master’s degree programs. Their main purpose was to educate the students in the “right way” of life. They wrote their own text books and educational materials to assure the “correctness” of their message. The church council had so many directives and opinions that even some of their own were kicked off the council for not “living right”. Personalities flared and the church fell apart. Had they lived by the 12 Traditions, which tradition would have been helpful in preventing the meltdown?

### **Gonna Be Perfect Soccer Club**

Bob and Marj are loving, doting parents and most active in their four boy’s lives. They believed their sons were gifted athletes and enrolled them in soccer. The soccer organization seemed to be poorly run to their way of thinking so they wrangled it so that they were elected co-chairs of the “Gonna Be Perfect Soccer Club”. They ran the pace with an iron fist – Bob made sure they had the perfect coaches and fired the old ones. Marj took over The Soccer Auxiliary and had fundraisers out the wazoo. They handpicked their committee chairs and berated them in public when they did not live up to their expectations. Bob and Marj made sure their club was plastered all over the internet, on television and even produced their own slick 12-page magazine. People began leaving in droves and they were devastated. “Why,” they thought, “are these people abandoning us” Why look at all the wonderful things we have done!” They hired an outside consultant to help them find the problem and were flabbergasted to find they, Bob and Marg, were the problem! Which traditions see to have been ignored in their quest for perfection?