The Power of 12 Stepping – Public Information (August 2023 Newsletter)

I am a long time member of OA and through the years have often traveled on vacation with my husband. We generally stay in a time share unit which works beautifully for someone like me, because the accommodations include a kitchen. Therefore, I can shop for my abstinent food; and prepare my own meals with less distraction.

Recently, my hubby and I were celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary and wanted to visit somewhere in Europe. I prayed about it and was willing to step outside of my comfort zone and take my first trip, including with a tour group, to Greece. This meant staying in hotels, therefore, putting my trust in God to help me get all of my food needs met. Greece seemed to be a reasonable and a safe choice, based on my knowledge of the Mediterranean diet, which is how I basically eat.

I get to Greece and OMGosh! Despite the abundance of healthy food choices, there was sooooo much gluttony (of the unhealthy choices) within the tour group and all around me!!!

I am so grateful for the buildup of years I have of continuous abstinence!! It definitely helped me. However, my biggest concern was not the foods and/or treats that are ***not*** on my food plan, it was that I would pile my ***abstinent food*** onto my plate. You see, that’s what I heard my disease saying. It was gently trying to trick me into succumbing to the old idea, ”At least it’s not the wrong food…” Yipes! And that thought, my ‘sticking thinking’ absolutely terrified me!! So I began to pray before each meal, “God, please, I’m begging you…. help me to ***not*** be a glutton”.

About 6 days into the tour, I noticed another couple from our tour group walking towards the hotel dining room for dinner. My husband and I joined them in the walk. Out of nowhere, the gentleman started telling us about his poor health; and the serious blister on his foot; and his doctor wanted to amputate. He was apparently overweight and suffering. He continued to complain that he's tried so hard to lose weight.

I looked at him square in the eyes with understanding and compassion. When he was done talking, I gently said, "There is a solution to your problem. I found it." He said, "OMG, there is, I've tried everything, even 2 weight loss surgeries, but nothing’s worked. Then he told me, “They did surgery on my body, but they didn’t fix my brain.”

I began the conversation about my compulsive eating and the solution I found in the 12 step program of Overeater's Anonymous, and if it could work for a gal like me, it could work for him. We had many private mini meetings during the remainder of the tour. Truth be told, I needed to talk program to someone (actually anyone) to maintain a peaceful and happy abstinence during my trip!!! This was God in action.

And the great news of all is, this gentleman and I have stayed in communication, he's been reading the BB, OA 12X 12; he’s been on zoom meetings and has attended face to face meetings in his community (lives in LA); and has reported to me that he’s looking for a sponsor. Please keep him in your prayers, as I am.

Lastly, this is an example of the gift we give away (and the joy we receive) each time we share about the program to a fellow sufferer ‘outside’ of OA. This gentleman, in his mid 50’s, had never heard of OA before. Even though he had heard of AA, he had no idea our program even existed.

I leave you with this thought: Each time we share about the hope and recovery found OA - with a fellow sufferer *outside of the fellowship* - we are actually doing “Public Information’ service. Another term you may already be familiar with is: 12th Stepping. Our Intergroup (NFI) has an active Committee, called ‘PIPO-Public Information/Professional Outreach’ which focuses on this very topic.

To find out more about the work we do in this committee, or if you may have an interest in joining the PIPO committee, please reach out to me at: **516.286.1888**. Kindly leave a message if I do not pick up and I will definitely return your call.

In loving service, Nancy K., PIPO Chair