

STORYLINE

From Workaholics Anonymous SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER 2014



“Our primary purpose is to stop working compulsively and to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer.”

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STORY: FOUR YEARS

When asked of their favorite number, few people may reply “four.” But the value of this seemingly small number should not be overlooked. After all, there are four seasons in a year, four wheels on a car, four breaks to Kit-Kat Bar, and even the infamous four-leafed clover! What’s more, these marvelous exemplars do not even begin to tell the story of four years in recovery. Where do I begin to explain four years in recovery?

I don’t know. I can’t fully grasp it. Somehow, it happened.

And it had absolutely nothing to do with my control.

I wish I could explain it, but my words fail me.

If there is a story to be spoken of how recovery happens, it is at most one collectively told among those of the WA fellowship who, through sharing their experiences, acknowledge recovery as stepping into a bigger world of others. It never ceases to amaze me how each voice spoken awakens a resounding spirit of strength. Something keeps me coming back to these WA conferences—to see people I barely know, and yet know so well. In a world where I sometimes feel lost, I feel found in the wisdom and vulnerability others express in this fellowship. Four years ago, this spirit latched onto my shoulder and whispered into my ear, “This is where you belong—welcome home.”

Furthering this homecoming was an invitation to serve on the WA Board, an invitation that opened onto a four-year journey of rich opportunities to learn with others while witnessing personal growth. While it saddens me to realize just how many people in the world are affected by workaholism, I’m gratified by the fate that leads prospective members to WA. Receiving others’ requests in search of support while also nurturing the development of meeting groups, I experienced a service role on the Board that has constantly served me in return.

These fulfilling moments happened when I wasn’t looking.

But when I search for meaning to define my four years in recovery I see them.

And it was the shared faith through fellowship that made them possible.

Before his life’s end Socrates proclaimed, “An unexamined life is not worth living.” The past four years of my life carry significance, not so much because of what I did but rather what I recognized. Living a life forward may get us somewhere, but if we never take the time to turn back to see how we arrive at where we stand, we miss out on witnessing our lives as they happen. In other words, there is a lot happening to us, by us, for us each day that can easily go unnoticed. The greatest gift of recovery is its reflective momentum that centers us, keeps us in balanced tension between the horizon of our futures and the underlying treasures of this very moment. This life of recovery is indeed a life worth living.

As a trusted servant, I thank you all for supporting my service to the Board over the past four years. My recovery has been systemically interwoven through my relationships with you all, the members of this fellowship. Beyond what I can explain, I am grateful.

—Laura R.

QUESTION: TOOLS

Question 1 from the Book of Discovery, Step One: How do the tools, the telephone, meetings, sponsorship, meditation and service, restore me to sanity?

This is how I see it: All the tools on our list, collectively, help restore me to sanity because they are different ways of helping me focus on the program and its spiritual principles, which is exactly what I need when I am "losing it".

The tools, for example the slogans and gratitude lists and the serenity prayer, are quick and easy ways to get myself back on track, and especially important if the going gets rough or if I have a slip. I can look for which slogan or slogans I need in a particular situation and see how I can apply them. I can read the pages on the discussions of the slogans in recovery readers or other program literature. If I am tempted to sink into depression or self-pity, a gratitude list, if done thoroughly, can have me counting my blessings and seeing the glass half-full, instead of half-empty.

The serenity prayer brings me straight back into contact with my Higher Power, the absolute priority in any situation where I am struggling with myself. This prayer reminds that if I am serene I can best achieve anything. It tells me exactly what I need to do—to accept the things I cannot change (anything from the weather to my husband), decide what I can change (my thoughts, attitudes and behaviors, for example)—and then find the courage to try to change those things.

The telephone alleviates isolation and keeps me connected with other program members. Others are generally able to listen and try to understand me, without trying to fix me. They use their experience to give ideas which might help me, too. I used to hate the telephone and avoid it whenever possible. I still don't see it as an extension of myself, but local circumstances have made it vital for me to overcome my "phonophobia". There are no other WA members on the island where I live, so I have had to reach out and make use of what is available, rather than look in vain for what I wanted. I have learnt so much from conversations with people who are good for me. It also helps me to reach out to others on a regular basis and pass on the program in between meetings.

Meetings are a wonderful way to learn to relate to other people in more healthy ways than many of us have previously experienced in our lives. At meetings, we are all equals and we are all encouraged to participate, right from the word go. There are no rules but there are guidelines which promote harmony in the group. We learn to apply these guidelines to our home lives and our other relationships outside the group. We "listen and learn" instead of "talking and dominating," the experience many of us have had in group situations before coming into the 12-Step program. We share our experience, strength and hope in order to encourage others and show them what marvelous changes are possible if we are willing to follow the suggestions we hear about. We treat each other with courtesy and respect. We learn to focus on "principles not personalities," and to be open to what everyone who comes along has to offer, even if, for whatever reason, we do not particularly like them. Meetings

keep us out of isolation. One of the first things I learnt was that my head is "a dangerous neighborhood" and that it is inadvisable to "go there alone." I no longer allow myself to create mind monsters. I get myself out and I share what is going on with me, even if I don't feel like it. I never regret doing this.

Sponsorship is a wonderful way to learn how to trust and how to relate in a healthy manner. It is a two-way process in which both sponsor and sponsee gain. In sponsoring someone, we reinforce what we know and we also "teach what we need to learn". Many a time I have found myself saying something to a sponsee, which is also something I really need to hear. It is an equal relationship, as are all relationships in the program. In sponsorship, it is possible to discuss our lives and our difficulties in detail, which may not be appropriate in the meetings. A sponsor is there to lend an ear and give emotional support. If things go wrong, a sponsor can very often help us not to make a bad situation worse. It's always good to have a guide and a sounding board, however long we have been in the program.

Meditation is also important because it is a way of establishing and maintaining conscious contact with a Higher Power, as we understand such a power to be. It helps us slow down our racing thoughts and to listen to ourselves, our instincts and our intuitions. This is very often how Higher Power speaks to us. It is very often said that prayer is talking to God, which may often be the easier part of communication with a Higher Power, while meditation is listening to the answer. It's impossible to do that with a head full of to-do lists and other junk. Meditation helps promote that priceless serenity, which is necessary for our healthy functioning and wellbeing.

Service is also very important because of the paradox, "If we want to keep the program, we have to give it away". We are all capable of service from the moment we walk in the door. We can put out or put away chairs, and make tea or coffee. Sharing is service. Making a phone call to a newcomer is service and there are service roles both within the group and in the organization as a whole. One of the Concepts says, "Participation is the key to harmony," and harmony is what helps us maintain both unity and serenity. If we have those three things, then we are restored to sanity. Everyone is important, and everyone has a say. We all learn how to do all the roles within a group so that the group can continue to function, even if members in roles are absent for a while or if they leave. Nobody holds service roles for too long and so nobody gets too big for their boots. If we have a service role we are "trusted" to do it. All of this helps increase our self-confidence and self-respect, and promotes and maintains our sanity for as long as we are willing to serve.

Whew! I did not know I was going to go into all these ideas and this much detail when I sat down to write. So, how has sharing in this way on this question contributed to my sanity today? Well, I was well on the way, out of habit, to get into a higher gear. However, my HP helps me out by giving me good reasons to sit. This writing has stopped me from going from one task to another. It has helped me focus on what I have learned in the program, which I still need as much as ever. Yesterday, I had a similar encouragement in that I had a long wait in a doctor's waiting room with my husband. Initially, I felt restless and a bit edgy but when my husband told me I could go if I wanted to, I suddenly remembered how much better I feel if I sit

down during the day. And so it was. I have already sat down, for quite a while, this morning, having gone to my meeting and participated in discussion afterwards, and now I have done some writing. So this was an exercise in taking care of me, and I hope it helps some of you, too.

–Love in Fellowship, Jane

QUESTION: MA HONTE (in French)/SHAME (in English)

Question 10 du «discovery book» première étape, p. 24. De quoi j'ai honte à propos de moi? Comment ma honte gère ma compulsion autour de mon travail et de mes activités ?

Dans un premier temps, je ne me sentais pas vraiment concernée par cette question, mais en creusant, j'ai trouvé beaucoup de choses. J'ai honte d'être maladroite, de manquer parfois de bonnes manières, de faire entorse à l'étiquette, d'avoir un comportement inadéquat. J'ai honte quand je ne sais pas, quand je ne suis pas capable, quand je dois dépendre de quelqu'un. J'ai honte quand je m'aperçois que je me suis mise à nu devant un étranger ou que j'ai dit des choses qui relevaient de mon intimité. J'ai peur de perdre le contrôle de ma vie, de mes émotions, d'avoir l'air d'une folle. Je me sens coupable si je ne réponds pas aux attentes que je perçois de mon entourage, de ma famille dysfonctionnelle comme si je devais réparer les tares des générations passées. J'ai honte de ne pas être capable d'arrêter quand je suis dans la compulsion.

John Bradshaw (Libérer l'enfant en soi) a écrit «S'affranchir de la honte». Il explique qu'il y a une honte normale qui se rapproche un peu de l'humilité et qui permet de reconnaître qu'on a nos fragilités et qu'on n'est pas omnipotents. Celle qui fait qu'on se garde une petite gêne. Il y a la honte toxique qui fait qu'on ressent qu'on est médiocre ou anormal, le sentiment de ne pas avoir un comportement adéquat (c'est ma hantise...) qui fait qu'on prend trop ou pas assez de responsabilités. La honte normale nous renseigne sur nos limites, elle nous aide à donner une structure à notre vie. L'humilité nous donne un mode de vie. Lorsque nous bloquons nos émotions, nous n'avons pas accès à ces informations et nous n'avons pas de frontières. Désorientés, nous perdons beaucoup d'énergie. «Nous développons des problèmes d'accoutumance parce que nous ne savons ni **à quel moment nous arrêter**, ni comment dire non.» Ce passage m'a beaucoup parlé, en fait il m'a à la fois éclairée et troublée.

Bruno Bettelheim a fait tout un travail sur les contes de fées. Ceux-ci ont beaucoup contribué à ma résilience vers 10-12 ans. J'ai tout lu et je me suis identifiée à certains personnages humiliés qui travaillaient fort ou apprenaient à être de bonnes personnes et finissaient par s'en sortir. Cendrillon, Blanche-Neige, les petites filles modèles et Blondine de la Comtesse de Ségur. Je n'ai pas eu de belle-mère méchante, mais ma mère était prise avec tant de problèmes que j'ai toujours essayé de ne pas l'embêter avec les miens et quelque part mes besoins de dépendance

d'enfant n'ont pas été comblés. J'ai été très troublée en réalisant cela. Quelque part, je m'en suis sortie, mais cela s'est tourné en suffisance et finit par me coûter cher.

Dans un tableau, John Bradshaw compare la culpabilité et la honte toxiques et normales, la moralité et l'estime de soi de quelqu'un qui vit de la culpabilité toxique est décrite comme : «Je peux être bon, si je me montre parfait, si je me soumetts à toutes les règles et si j'accomplis mon devoir.» «Il n'y a aucun droit à avoir des frontières, hormis celles délimitées par le rôle rigide ou la performance.» C'est tout un fardeau. Quelque part, je me suis sentie libérée en me disant que je n'étais pas condamnée à faire cela toute ma vie, je pouvais déposer mon fardeau et le donner à ma Puissance Supérieure. Si je crois que je suis inadéquate et que je ne peux pas changer ce que je suis, mais que j'ai un impact sur ce que je fais, j'embarque dans la spirale de l'activité compulsive. Je deviens un «faire» humain au lieu d'un être humain. Mais avec le programme des 12 étapes, je change ce que je suis. Je peux mettre des limites à ma responsabilité, je peux me permettre et je mérite de vivre simplement.

–Caroline R.

QUESTION: SHAME

Question 10 from the Book of Discovery, Step One, p. 24: What about myself am I ashamed of? How does my shame lead to compulsivity around my work or activities?

At first I did not feel really concerned by this question, but digging, I found many things. I am ashamed I am clumsy sometimes, lack good manners, or behave in an inappropriate manner. I am ashamed when I do not know, when I am not able, when I have to depend on someone. I am ashamed when I realize I shared too much about myself to a stranger or that I said things that should remain private. I am afraid of losing control over my life or my emotions, or that I appear crazy. I feel guilty if I do not live up to the expectations that I sense around me, such as fixing the flaws of my dysfunctional family going back many generations. I am ashamed of not being able to stop when I am acting compulsively.

John Bradshaw wrote "Healing the Shame That Binds You." He explains that there is a normal shame, the humility that helps us recognize our weaknesses, so we know we are not omnipotent. It gives us detachment and some necessary perspective. There is also a toxic kind of shame, which makes us feel like we are weak or abnormal, that we do not behave appropriately (which is my obsession), and that we take on either too much or else too little responsibility.

Normal shame tells us about borders and boundaries. It helps us add structure to our lives and gives us a new way of living. When we block our emotions we do not have access to important information about ourselves and our limitations. Disoriented, we lose a lot of energy. "We develop addictions because **we do not know when to stop or how to say no** (Bradshaw, 2005)." This passage speaks a lot to me, although it leaves me both enlightened and confused.

Bruno Bettelheim has done work on fairy tales. His work has added to my resilience over the past 10-12 years. I identified some characters who were humiliated, but who learned to find their way, for example Cinderella, Snow White, "Good Little Girls,"; and Blondine from la Comtesse de Segur. I did not have an evil stepmother, but my mother had so many problems that I always tried not to bother her with my own. This contributed to some of my normal needs as a child not being fulfilled. I was very troubled by carrying this burden of my problems and hers, for which I needed support. Somehow I pulled myself out, but the task cost me dearly on an emotional level.

Using the matrix as a visual aid, John Bradshaw compares guilt and shame, describing them as toxic or normal. The morality and self-esteem of someone who lives with toxic guilt is described as a paradigm in which: "I can be good only if I am perfect, if I submit to all the rules, and if I do my duty," and "I have no right to have boundaries, except those defined by the rigid role or performance." What a burden! Somehow, I felt liberated by understanding this was my myth. Once in program I told myself that if I had any obligation to obey these rules I could surrender such a burden and give it to my Higher Power.

If I think I am inadequate, and I cannot change this inadequacy by changing what I am but rather I have an impact with what I do, I get into a spiral of compulsive activity. I become a human doing instead of a human being. However, with the 12-steps program I am changing what I am. I am learning to set limits on my responsibility, and I can afford, and deserve, to live simply.

–Caroline R.

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

Storyline is the quarterly newsletter of Workaholics Anonymous, published in order to share our experience, strength and hope with each other, and to announce information about our fellowship.

In addition to rich stories and shares, in this issue readers have offered submissions for two categories new to STORYLINE, Questions and Activities, which can help us work the program in new ways, as the *Book of Discovery* suggests. Please also note our contributions from Board members in this issue. We have our first piece submitted in French, Ma Honte, in the spirit of being an international journal with global reach.

Storyline is created by all of us. We welcome your shares, stories, commentaries, quotes, and poems...just about anything that we can reproduce. Please send contributions for future editions to: storyline@workaholics-anonymous.org, with STORYLINE in the subject line.

–Shelley, Chicago

NOTE ON SHARING: *At meetings, time is generally allotted for individual sharing. No one speaks for WA, but we recover by sharing our experience, strength and hope with each other, that we may solve our common problem and help others recover. Please submit pieces from members who have shared on emails and at meetings. The names can be changed, to protect anonymity.*

SHARING: A FALSE SENSE OF CONTROL

I think my workaholism is rooted in childhood experiences of feeling like I didn't have control: over my mom's alcoholism and cigarette addiction, our poverty, my mom's illness and eventual death, my sister's abusive relationships, my foster parent's moods and lashing out, and more. I overachieved to get attention, to get out of the place I grew up, and to change my class status, in the hope I could control my life and be secure.

I blamed myself for the things that went wrong and took on a deep feeling of striving; like if I just work hard enough I can make things better for myself and for everyone. My overwork is definitely about a false sense of control that can become a bigger picture, because the work I do is social justice work. I can literally have false ideas that I can save people's lives, or participate in changing the course of history, ending huge injustices by overworking.

I know that isn't true—that overworking undermines the work rather than supports it—but I can lose track of that. I can feel like if I don't answer people's requests for help no one will, even though the volume is beyond what I can manage. This is all a false sense of power and control.

Through WA I have been seriously looking at how small my life is, how insignificant my work is, and how none of it is worth suffering for, harming my health, harming my relationships. Many of the strategies I've spent my life pursuing, hoping for change, might not work anyway. Ultimately, the outcome is out of my hands. As I take on the idea that HP is my employer, I am better and better able to let go and be guided regarding an appropriate amount of work, times when it's okay not to respond to requests, and times when I should rest.

–Dean S.

QUOTE: Whatever you do doesn't add up to a hill of beans -- but do it anyway.

–Ghandi

SHARING: PEOPLE PLEASING

My thoughts are two-fold: I often have to remind myself that pleasing people is not a defect, pleasing people to MY DETRIMENT is the character defect, or negative coping skill. You've done a great job of listing what it costs you in terms of time and relationship; there is no doubt there is an "opportunity cost" involved in giving a client freebie add-ons, for example. The question becomes does it harm you? For me, harm is often indicated by resentment, or pain whether physical or emotional. As a recovering workaholic, I'm getting better at identifying or anticipating resentment or pain arising from people-pleasing. I'll withdraw from people-pleasing behavior before it escalates to chronic resentment that destroys relationships, or pain that destroys me.

Secondly, my test for my people-pleasing behavior includes asking myself: what happens (or might happen) if I stopped doing/giving this service? You see, I've come to see that what I offer as a service, a benefit to another, when offered (often without being asked) consistently over time, often becomes an expectation of the relationship, by me and/or by the other person. So that when I become tired, fed up, or stretched too thin and opt to withdraw, others often feel abandoned, betrayed, or frustrated. That rocks the boat. I don't like rocking the boat; it leaves me feeling scared and unsafe.

I'm an addict and when I feel unsafe I tend to act out or act in in destructive ways. Another option as a codependent is to try and control others to attempt to feel safe. In any case, the relationship is rocked. I'd rather be clear at the onset that I'm offering a service as a gift, with no strings or obligations for me or others. But like most gifts, they happen infrequently, they're given from my overflow, and they're given from a contented heart. Anything else is likely to become self-serving. And that's another character defect for another day.

–Thanks for letting me share, Glynis
(*a grateful recovering workaholic*)

SHARING: SIGNPOST 12

Signpost 12: Many of us are concerned with image. We think that looking busy makes people think we are important and gains their admiration. By seeking others' approval of us, we lose ourselves.

When I first read this, I went "ouch" because it hit home. Then I conveniently didn't look at this signpost again for a while, because it really makes me aware of how I do things. My life's goal is to be rich without looking rich (i.e. not dressing in designer clothes, not driving luxury cars, etc.), but I am concerned with image of a different kind: the one that gives me admiration

because of the help I give others and the service I give to whatever group I am involved in. With this kind of behavior I often become driven to serve and give beyond my capacity. (I am also aware that there are much deeper issues than plain doing too much, so I am looking forward to doing step work.) Anyway, I call my behavior "over-volunteering" and it is causing me great problems. Volunteering was the deciding factor in getting me back into WA this year.

I joined the first time back in 1997 or 1998 when I over did the service to a point where I gave 20 hours away each week, picking up all the little extra jobs that seemingly needed to get done (and done by me). I lived off the admiration others gave me for doing such a good job. I lived off the idea that I knew everything there was to know about every facet of my work.

To this day I still do more than my fair share in most groups I am affiliated with. This will take some time to "unravel and hand over." I remind myself of the slogan, "progress, not perfection".

I am also aware that no sooner had I rejoined WA and I found myself starting another email meeting, which required a fair bit of work to set up. However, we are well on track with it now and I schedule only a small amount of work on it each day, rather than totally forget about having other interests. Also, I am asking for help with things from the people who are involved and in a position to help and give me advice. So at least I am not reinventing the wheel, trying to teach myself everything I might need to know. I am not doing the work alone.

Do I still gain a thrill from thinking about the new meeting? Yes, I do. I would be lying if I said no. But my recovery will benefit from the work I do. Also, this is different, because I am not doing it primarily to help others, but rather to work through the step questions myself. It's about my own recovery first. If others find it helpful, then I am glad.

–Thanks for reading my share,
Anylength
(me2Ladybug@yahoo.com)

QUOTE: It has been said: Looking good is our primary addiction.

SHARING: ASSUMPTIONS

While I was having a massage recently I thought about how my brain holds an accurate map of my body. This provides a mental picture so I can easily identify each place that is being touched, each muscle. This kind of knowledge allows me to pull my hand away from sharp or hot things, to place my foot accurately where I want it, to find and scratch the itch that is annoying me.

However, our brains do not keep such a map of our assumptions. I have read that our brain creates abbreviated systems of thought and observation in order to save time in the reasoning process. These condensed versions of thought are assumed to be correct and can thus be called assumptions. Of course, they may be in error and cause difficulty by leading us to bad decisions, and they may become a hindrance to learning new things. Unfortunately, our brains are unaware of these assumptions, which are in fact largely invisible, below the horizon of consciousness.

I have lately discovered that I had been operating blindly on some assumptions that were leading me to take the same bad actions over and over. Some of these were:

- Just plain me is unlovable;
- I am flawed and needed to struggle just to be barely acceptable;
- When the women in my life are angry, they are completely unreasonable;
- Most people around me instinctively understand things that baffle me;
- Doing something for money is very close to prostitution; and
- Reasoning is the only way to make sense of myself in the world.

There are others, but this gives an idea of how hampering and misleading my assumptions were. Feeling unlovable made me hard to love. Being flawed meant that I had to work all the time to compensate. When women became angry, I withdrew and did not stand up for myself nor really listen. In that others seemed always to know how to behave, I became cautious and withdrawn for fear of looking stupid. In trying to make a living, I retreated from things that might have produced profit for fear of being judged venal. Being devoted to reasoning, I had become blind to the spiritual, the non-material aspects of life.

How did I find out that these assumptions were false and crippling? The place to start was admitting I was a workaholic and that I was powerless to change. So, one assumption, that I was actually in charge of my life, fell away. From there, it seemed like a chain reaction, as letting go of one of these assumptions started to weaken the others.

–Harry W.

SHARING: LOOKING BACK

I have been involved with WA for over nine years and can say that there are no iron-bound rules about how to do it. I believe we must forgive ourselves first, and only then can we forgive others. The effect of amends is to relieve the stress we feel when we hold on to resentments and confront our actions. This makes it possible to accept the concept: "I'm not perfect, just human". This has allowed me to forgive my faults, not to say that it is OK to continue unchanged, but to start again on level ground with my family, friends and co-workers.

In entering WA I was inclined to leap ahead and get into the heart of things fast. This did not work. The process of amends must be slow and deeply experienced to do its work. My perspective today is that there is no hurry, as hurry got me into my workaholism in the first place. Also, "doing" the steps is not something I can do once and for all. When things are going badly I keep coming back to the 1st Step, because my continuing hang-ups seem to stem from clinging to a hidden hope that I can still manage some unhealthy parts of my life by will alone.

–Harry W.

ACTIVITY: HELP WANTED

Write a "help wanted" ad for your Higher Power. Step Two asks us to consider a new relationship with a Higher Power than we have had before. For this exercise, pretend you are creating an ad for the newspaper and describe the kind of new Higher Power you require. Remember you are essentially seeking to hire what will become your new employer! (*Workaholics Anonymous Book of Discovery*, World Services Organization. 2010. Question 12, p. 46)

URGENTLY WANTED

- Tough but tender spiritual power for full-time permanent pro-bono employment.
- Taking care of enthusiastic and generally well-behaved but very willful emotional child.

Duties will include challenging of questionable behaviour, boundary-setting, disciplining and some cleaning work (to remove stubborn character stains and burns from denial). Sense of humour and a good listening ear, a must.

Qualifications in patience, tolerance and compassion necessary. Must be very tall. References desirable, but willing to take on trust one day at a time.

--Love in Fellowship, Jane

FROM OUR BOARD: THE SIERRA RETREAT

What happened at the Serra Retreat doesn't stay at the Serra Retreat! We all left the retreat from the 2014 World Service Conference carrying fond memories and even more ready to carry the message of recovery. It is one thing to go to a conference with like-minded people; and quite another to be at a conference with like-hearted people. It was wonderful to connect again with those we know from prior conferences, and beautiful to meet newcomers and those who made this conference their first. What moves me each year is that we come as friends, meet as companions, and leave as Fellow Travelers.

Our sincere thanks to the Los Angeles, Culver City, and Woodland Hills WA Groups for hosting the 2014 WAWSO Conference at Malibu. Special thanks to Amy for chairing the conference, Ivania for arranging travel assistance, Anike for attending to dietary requests, Jeff for hosting hospitality, Rachel M. for arranging a great auction night and performing live music, and Angela for developing the program.

This year's conference was special in that it was an election year for the Board of Trustees' new two-year term. Nominations were received in May, provisional elections held in June, and consideration for confirmation voted by WSRs by mail-in and conference ballots in August. We acknowledge our appreciation for the faithful and trusted service by Terry A., Laura R. and Jerry S. as they retire from the Board. We enthusiastically welcome Michael B. and Lia F. as new trustees, and we welcome Drew D. back from "retirement," after serving the past two years in the non-voting status of facilitator *emeritus*. The complete list of current trustees and their contact emails is printed at the end of this article.

While on the subject of your Board, we mention that there are **two vacant customary service positions**. One is for the Communications Coordinator. The other is for the trustee called Undesignated Trustee #1 who coordinates with meeting groups for assistance and who fulfills other committee functions. Anyone interested in serving the Fellowship in either of these positions, or in other ways as a committee member, may self-nominate for consideration by the sitting Board. Service descriptions and self-nominating forms can be obtained by email: facilitator@workaholics-anonymous.org.

We also have not found a **Meeting Group yet to assist us** as the local host for our 2015 WAWSO Conference. If any Group would like to consider this service, please let us know as soon as possible. We will be selecting a location for the 2015 WAWSO Conference in September for publication in October. We are available to discuss what it means to host a Conference and our recent host chairpersons have told us they would be willing to speak with interested Members.

Your Board welcomes your suggestions and comments. This year we prepared a form entitled “Memo” that can be used by any Member and the WSRs to submit any consideration or comment to the Board. You don’t need the form, though. Write an email; send a letter.

As your trusted servants, we are here with you and for you, to assist you in carrying the message of the Fellowship.

–Thank you Friends & Fellow Travelers, Bruce

CONTACT INFORMATION: EMAIL WAWSO

For any Program issue, concern, initiative, suggestion, etc.:

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For general information: communications@workaholics-anonymous.org

For meeting and WSR assistance: Bob wrsupport@workaholics-anonymous.org

For WA Literature volunteers or corrections: Amber literature@workaholics-anonymous.org

For eNewsletter and Outreach: Michele outreach@workaholics-anonymous.org

For STORYLINE: Shelley storyline@workaholics-anonymous.org

For Meditation Book: MeditationBook@workaholics-anonymous.org

For literature ordering questions: Sandi fulfillment@workaholics-anonymous.org

For technology matters: Ken technology@workaholics-anonymous.org

General mailbox: wso@workaholics-anonymous.org

ANNOUNCEMENT: ANNUAL CONFERENCE



WA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2015

The WSO Board is looking for a **Meeting Group to assist us** as the local host for our 2015 WAWSO Conference. If your Group would like to consider this service, please let the Board know. They will be selecting a location for the 2015 WAWSO Conference in September, for publication in October. They are available to discuss what it means to host a Conference; our recent host chairpersons have told us they would be willing to speak with interested Members.

for more information:

www.workaholics-anonymous.org

STORYLINE REFERENCE LIST

STORYLINE is developing a comprehensive list of references on workaholism. We encourage input from our readership. Members of our fellowship may offer suggestions of reading materials that have helped them in their recovery. The materials are not WA Conference approved; the authors, publishers, presenters, and distributors of these materials are not endorsed by WA, but individual members are invited to refer to them according to their personal and professional interests. As we often say, "Please take what you like, and leave the rest."

Work Addiction and Work Anorexia Reference List

Douglas, E.J. & Morris, R.J. (2006). *Workaholic or just hard worker?* *Career Development International*, 11 (5), 394-417. doi: 10.1108/13620430610683043

Fassl, D. (1992). *Working ourselves to death: The high costs of workaholism and the rewards of recovery*. London: Thorsons.

Furnham, A. (1997). *The psychology of behavior at work*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Griffiths, M. (2005, April). *Workaholism is still a useful construct*. *Addiction Research and Theory*, 13(2), 97-100.

Hornbacher, Marya. *Waiting: A Non-Believer's Higher Power*

Killinger, B. (1993) *Workaholics, the respectable addicts*. East Roseville: Simon and Schuster.

Korshak, S.J., Straus, B. & Nickow, M. & Straus, B. (2014). *A Group Therapist's Guide to Process Addictions*. NY: American Group Psychotherapy Association.

Lawford, Christopher. *Recover to Live: Kick Any Habit, Manage Any Addiction: Your Self-Treatment Guide to Alcohol, Drugs, Eating Disorders, Gambling, Hoarding, Smoking, Sex, and Porn*

Lazear, Jonathan. *The Man Who Mistook His Job for a Life: A Chronic Overachiever Finds the Way Home*

Reddy, Sumati. *Workaholism Perspectives And Experiences*

Oates, W.E. (1972). *Confessions of a workaholic: The facts about work addiction*. Cleveland OH: World Publishing Company.

Palo Alto Group. (1990). *The twelve steps of Workaholics Anonymous*. Palo Alto, CA: The Palo Alto Group.

Porter, G. (1996). Organizational impact of workaholism: Suggestions for researching the negative outcome of excessive work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 70, 70-83.

Robinson, Bryan E. (2007). *Chained to the desk: A guidebook for workaholics, their partners and children, and the clinicians who treat them.* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Robinson, B. E. (1989). *Work addiction: Hidden legacies of adult children.* Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.

Workaholics Anonymous. (2005/1996). *Book of Recovery.* Menlo Park, CA: Workaholics Anonymous World Conference.

Workaholics Anonymous Book of Discovery

Research Reference List

Andreassen, C.S., Griffiths, M.D., Hetland, J. & Pallesen, S. (2012). *Development of a work addiction scale. Scandanavian Journal of Psychology, 53, 265-272.*

Burke, Ronald J. *Research Companion to Working Time and Work Addiction.*

Flowers, C. & Robinson, B. (2002). A structural and desrcriminant analysis of the Work Addiction Risk Test. *Educational and Psychological Measurement 62(3), 517-526.*

Sussman, S., Lisha, N., & Griffiths, M. (2011, March). Prevalence of the addictions: A problem of the majority or the minority? *Evaluation & the Health Professions, 34(1), 3-56.* doi: 10.1777/0163278710380124

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

TO OUR READERS:

Have you read about workaholism in the news? Send us articles and links that are of interest to you.

The 7 signs that you work too hard. Published August 2014.

<http://qz.com/250109/the-seven-signs-that-you-work-too-hard/>

Are you addicted to your work? Published August 18 2014,

<http://www.thehealthsite.com/news/are-you-addicted-to-your-work/>

Are you addicted to work? Published August 2014.

<http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news/are-you-addicted-to-work-082014.html>

The dangers of workaholism for you and your employer. Published 21 August 2014.

<http://theconversation.com/the-dangers-of-workaholism-for-you-and-your-employer-30689>

Workaholics: The Socially Acceptable Addiction Of The 21st Century. Published 14 August 2014.
https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=http://www.science20.com/news_articles/workaholics_the_socially_acceptable_addiction_of_the_21st_century.142577&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoTNDM1OTQ4MzgyNjkxMTU1MTM4MjldM2EwYjM3YjVhNDFmMDliMDpb20uYXU6ZW46QVU&usg=AFQjCNHTysRINFgCOYf6fAZYM8etwEdyHg

[142577&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoTNDM1OTQ4MzgyNjkxMTU1MTM4MjldM2EwYjM3YjVhNDFmMDliMDpb20uYXU6ZW46QVU&usg=AFQjCNHTysRINFgCOYf6fAZYM8etwEdyHg](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=http://www.science20.com/news_articles/workaholics_the_socially_acceptable_addiction_of_the_21st_century.142577&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoTNDM1OTQ4MzgyNjkxMTU1MTM4MjldM2EwYjM3YjVhNDFmMDliMDpb20uYXU6ZW46QVU&usg=AFQjCNHTysRINFgCOYf6fAZYM8etwEdyHg)

Workaholism: The addiction of this century. Published 14 August 2014.
<http://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-08-workaholism-addiction-century.html>

Working Hard and no need for vacation? Here's why? Published 8 June 2014.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/douglas-labier/working-hard-and-no-work-life-balance_b_5655092.html?utm_hp_ref=business&ir=Business

Self-care tips for workaholics. Published 26 July 2014.
<http://www.boldsky.com/health/wellness/2014/self-care-tips-for-workaholics-043025.html>

CALL FOR BOOK REVIEWS

Readers are invited to submit a review of any book of interest to our readers. The review might be about two paragraphs.

ANNOUNCEMENT AND INVITATION: NEW MEDITATION BOOK

The W.A.W.S.O. Literature Committee is creating a meditations book. We would like all the meditations to come from the fellowship, so . . . **We need your help!**

All members are welcome to write and submit meditations for publication. These can be submitted individually, or as a group. Consider having a writing play day for your home group. Not only would this activity provide opportunities for reflection and meditation, but it would also allow group members to make contributions to a book that will serve the needs of the whole fellowship.

A suggested meeting format for writing meditations is available at the WA website. For more details about submitting meditations, please visit: <http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org/page.php?page=bookofmeditations>

Also, a suggested meeting format for writing meditations is available at the WA website at: <http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org/pdf/MeetingTypes.pdf>

We look forward to receiving your meditations!!
Have fun with us!!

Your trusted servants,
W.A.W.S.O. Literature Committee

STORYLINE: OUR MISSION

- To produce a quarterly publication of news about WA in a way that serves as an example of balance between service and our program.
- To provide a space for people of the fellowship to share their experience, strength and hope with the broader membership.
- To provide real stories from real people to those in our fellowship who do not have access to a local meeting.
- To bridge the gap between the fellowship and the WA Board, and aid in replenishing the Board with new members as the trustees' terms run out.

STORY LINE invites WA members to share their experience, strength and hope with the WA fellowship around the world. Each of us has something to share that can help another workaholic to abstain from compulsive working. Please send your submittals by email to: storyline@workaholics-anonymous.org, with **SL** in the SUBJECT LINE. Include your contact information and please also let us know if we can include your first name as author. Your contribution will make this publication more alive, while improving your recovery by helping others.

Note that materials submitted are assumed to be intended for publication, are subject to editing to provide conformity for the newsletter. They become the property of WAWSO, which may publish them in any format in any Workaholics Anonymous literature. The tentative deadline for submissions for our next issue is: NOVEMBER 15, 2014.

Workaholics Anonymous World Service Organization

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