

Living in Balance

July 2011 *The International Newsletter of Workaholics Anonymous*

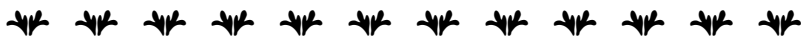
“Our primary purpose is to stop working compulsively and to carry the message of recovery to workaholics who still suffer.”

(from The W.A. Preamble, page 3, “Workaholics Anonymous Book of Recovery”)

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You are receiving this issue of “Living in Balance” via email. This is with the intent to save paper, trees, work, money and to lessen our carbon footprint. If, for any reason, you would prefer to receive this via USPS, please let us know at:

Newsletter”at”workaholics-anonymous.org



The WA 7th Tradition Fundraiser

The first effort of what may become an annual 7th Tradition Project Awareness effort brought in \$1,780. At the same time, group donations were \$ 360. and individual donations were \$ 485. These will go towards modernizing of our website. The current website is cranky and hard to keep up to date. It also lacks connectivity to other facilities, such as registration for conferences. We have hired a part time professional to help us with this project.

WA literature being translated into German

The Board of AAS, our German sister organization, is embarking of the task of translating our literature into German. They will be submitting their work as they move along to our “Intellectual Property” and “Literature” committees.

An upcoming vacancy as Newsletter Editor

Your editor is planning to turn the job over. I have been at it for almost two years and want to allow new people to offer their insight and energy to the newsletter and the WA program. The newsletter is published four times a year and all activities can be performed at your computer without overly technical requirements. No prior experience needed, just your enthusiasm and creativity. The position also involves serving on the Board of WAWSO for a two year term, with several telephone Board meetings per year and attendance at our annual conference. If you would like to know more about this, please contact: newsletter “at” workaholics-anonymous.org

An opportunity for service:

A vacancy on the WAWSO Board has not yet been filled. The position is “Communications Coordinator”. The duties involve retrieving and responding to messages from our answering service, incoming mail and email. Requests often involve seeking a meeting, a sponsor, literature or just general information about our program. If you don’t know the answer, there is good backup to help solve any issues. Only a basic knowledge of using a computer is needed. These duties can be fulfilled at your home and at your own time schedule. As a Board member, the term of service is two years, and you would be attending telephonic Board meetings and the annual WA Conference. It is a chance to become more connected to the Workaholics Anonymous program and to offer back some of the benefits you have received. If you would like to know more about this opportunity, please contact: wawso “at” workaholics-anonymous.org



2011 W.A. World Conference in Austin, Texas!

Sponsorship & Service - How it Works



This year, the WA World Service Conference will be held Friday, October 28th through Sunday, October 30th, 2011 in Wimberley, Texas at the 7A Resort, with an optional Pre-Conference day on Thursday, October 27th. For more information see our website: workaholics-anonymous.org

Conference Details:

- **Location:** 7A Resort See www.7aresort.com for MapQuest directions or facility information, call (512) 847-2517
- **Meals:** Special meals may be arranged but we will need the information with your reservation and cannot guarantee this without prior notice as of October of Conference.
- **Accommodations:** 30 rooms are available for double occupancy, 10 for single in the 3 Lodges we have reserved. There will be additional space available beyond the Lodge accommodations but room and bed configurations are variable in this additional space. Some family rooms can be accommodated but be sure to book early for these accommodations. Linens, towels and washcloths are provided. Double rooms have two queen beds and single Rooms have queen beds in the 3 Lodges we have reserved.
- **Transportation:** The nearest airport is Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS). Public transportation is limited in most Texas markets as most natives have cars and horses. The Austin host committee will make their best efforts to provide free ground transportation for those who need it and to insure smooth ground transportation arrangements for all others attendees but it is imperative that you provide good contact information and stay in touch with them regarding your travel plan.
- All major rental car companies operate at the Austin Airport. Cabs are also available and the one way fare set by the City of Austin for all cab companies is \$104 as of January 2011. They have not raised this rate since 2007 and will accommodate up to 4 adults. Shuttle companies are cheaper in groups of 10 or more but require that all passengers board at the same time and this will require planning. For those attendees that need free transportation, the Austin host committee will make their best efforts to accommodate all requests but you must give proper notice of your needs for this to be practical. All others that do not wish to travel as individuals can expect to pay around \$50 or less round trip but this too will require that you make your plans known to the Austin host committee so that cabs and shuttles may be configured for the best utilization. You may contact us at waconference2011@workaholics-anonymous.org

Conference Schedule Outline: This is a summary agenda and a detailed agenda will be made available later in the year.

<u>Thursday, October 27:</u>	<u>Friday, October 28</u>	<u>Saturday, October 29</u>	<u>Sunday, October 30</u>
<u>Pre-Conference</u>	8:00 Breakfast (Pre Conference)	8:00am Breakfast	8:00am Breakfast
1:00 pm Registration	12 Noon – Lunch (Pre Conference)	9am-12pm Meetings	9am-12pm Meeting &
2-5 pm Meetings and activities	3-5 pm Registration & Early Bird Meeting	12:00 pm Lunch	Closing
5 pm Dinner	5:00 pm Dinner	1pm-5pm Meetings	12:00 pm Lunch
7pm Meetings	7:30 pm Meeting	5:00pm Dinner	
		7:30pm Meeting	

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Questions? Email us at “at” workaholics-anonymous.org conference 2011

Please consult our website: workaholics-anonymous.org, for more complete information regarding various Conference Package Options and how payment can be made by mail or electronically. Register early and you will be eligible for various discounts.

A limited number of *Partial Scholarships* are available. Please email your request to [facilitator “at” \[workaholics-anonymous.org\]\(http://workaholics-anonymous.org\)](mailto:facilitator@workaholics-anonymous.org) to WAWSO Requests must be received before September 15, 2011 to be considered. No exceptions will be made. Notifications of scholarship awards will be made not later than October 1, 2011.



A prayer

I am ready for change. I am awake and listening for voices that speak languages other than logic and willfulness.

Higher power, grant that I may be aware of your presence in my daily life.

Let me learn humility and value loving over being loved, listening over being heard and understanding over being understood.

Let me see each new day as a gift and an opportunity to be respectful and compassionate to all people, while keeping a sense of humor.

- by a member of our fellowship



ADD and Workaholism:

From early childhood, I have had to deal with trying to do too many things at once, failing to pay attention when my mind was occupied, needing to interrupt when my ideas were pressing to get out, requiring action all the time. These are symptoms of ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and as an adult, I still experience these things. There are some striking similarities between this condition and positive answers to the WA “twenty questions”. Scientists believe that this disorder does not go away as we age, but it can be mitigated by learned coping skills using such strategies as: making lists of things that need doing and learning to prioritize, to count to ten before interrupting, to make and keep a time schedule, learning to finish one thing before starting another, all of which are very similar to our WA Tools. But, long before, I had already found another method, which was intense concentration that could block out the many distractions. This became compulsive as the only way I could be relieved of my agitation. It looked a lot like compulsive working.

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Studies show that ADD is hereditary, and is passed on by a cluster of genes, which can show up in quite different ways in individuals of the same family. There are six people in my immediate family with this condition in three generations, all showing a variety of traits: inability to concentrate, agitation, a need for action and variety. Many people with ADD find that intense work allows them to relax a part of their inner tension, to get a sense of relief from the constant distraction and inability to perform. Cocaine and other drugs can produce similar effects, and like intense working are easily addictive. This is where the 12 Step programs and ADD therapy share some common ground. One of the problems for people with ADD is low self-esteem, which starts in childhood founded in an inability to follow the rules at home and at school. But, work is praised in most societies, offering a way to get praise, which can reduce the inner turmoil. This can create an all too easy progression from an ADD child to a workaholic adult. So, the ADD/workaholic has a problem of several layers, as controlling the overwork reveals the situation that underlies the work addiction, and in ADD this does not go away.

Current scientific thinking indicates that behavior becomes “hard wired” when it is repeated over and over again. This causes behavior to become fixated, like Pavlov’s dogs that salivated at the sound of the dinner bell. This is not too far from addiction, and like addiction is ingrained deeper each time it is repeated. New neuronal pathways must be created before new behavior is available. New responses to old stimuli or a new way of perceiving old stimuli can be practiced until alternatives to the old behavior become as deeply entrenched as the old. This is in line with the WA program, in that new ways of being are the result of “one step at a time” which requires relinquishing the hard-wired running of our lives.

I had wanted to be more relaxed and present for people, to have fun, but without giving up the ADD/Workaholic lifestyle. When I gave in and admitted that my life was not getting better by repeating the same old behavior and willfulness, I experienced a deep sense of relief. I no longer had to struggle without success to lead a sane life. Step 1, allowed me start to give up an old “me” and start to accept myself for who I am. The stubborn nature of my ADD plus workaholism had kept my spiritual side behind a locked door. The other Steps of WA were a key to this door, providing a serenity where important changes could take place.

- from a member of our fellowship



Meeting Development

Workaholics Anonymous is offering mentorship to meetings that are just starting or that are having trouble keeping going. We have formed a committee called “Meeting Development”, which has a list of people in the fellowship who are willing to confer by telephone with people in these situations. We believe that meetings are a foundation for recovery and are missing in many communities. Where there are no meetings and someone is trying to start one, it is a lonely place to be, so any support we can give is of great value. If you have any enthusiasm for this, please volunteer your service as a mentor by emailing: [newsletter “at” workaholics-anonymous.org](mailto:newsletter@workaholics-anonymous.org) The time requirement would be minimal, but the service very worthwhile.

The WA eNewsletter

Perhaps you didn't know that WA has a smaller, monthly eNewsletter. It is free and you can register to receive it at our website: workaholic-anonymous.org. There are currently 1892 people signed up for it.

Take a look!



Amends to myself

Six years ago I found 12 Step Programs after finally getting out of an abusive relationship. I started in Emotions Anonymous then found Under Earners which lead to Workaholics Anonymous. WA has been like a life-line to me. At the urging of an action partner in UA I got the Book of Recovery and have read it many times. I have found it to be an amazing source of revelation and inspiration. I have been working the steps. I attend phone meetings. My action groups have been life saving! It is amazing what happened once I became aware of my work and activity addictions. I realized I was predisposed to being this way from growing up in an abusive home. I found I'm not alone. I have developed a relationship with my higher power.

I've been really examining my life. Looking back I can see a pattern of overwork and burn out. One of the worst times was when my son graduated from high school and moved out. I really dove into my work. I was a single parent most of his life. Even before he left I started over working to avoid dealing with my pain in anticipation of his leaving. I had my marketing practice, started a new business, was getting my bodywork training, launching a young adult and sometimes taking a third job to make it all work.

I didn't want to face the fact that I didn't really have any very close friends. I didn't want to deal with my problems. Did I mention I was also going through menopause?! I was in a motorcycle accident which allowed me to have a huge healing adventure. It took years and \$15,000 to heal myself with alternative medicine. I was involved in an abusive relationship and tried to be a foster parent! I was trying to save the world again!

I am almost at burn out again. I am thankful I can now recognize what is happening. Looking back I can see the pattern: Unrealistic expectations. Having to be perfect. What am I trying to prove? I have wonderful practitioners to help me get well. I have great self-care! I have good friends. My health is improving mostly due to resting when I need to rest. I am getting better every day. I have managed to pay my mortgage and have the company of some wonderful roommates. I am on a dating web site and feel ready to trust again. I know I could not have done all this without my higher power.

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I am letting go of my unrealistic expectations of life! I just want to enjoy each day as much as I can without wearing myself out. I want to have energy so I can have fun with friends. I want to enjoy what I do. I'm learning to pace myself so I can have a safe and satisfying life. I forgive myself for any mistakes I have made in the past and I know I will make in the future. I'm letting go of the need to be perfect and to prove that I can give and receive love. I'm letting go of the fear and worry. I know that life is a gift and I can enjoy unwrapping it every single day! I'm looking forward to the arrival of my first grand child. What could be better than that?

- Jo Anne L.



Listening as an action plan

When I am most involved with my personal drama, I am the least in touch with compassion for others. It's like breathing in and breathing out, I can't do both at the same time. When I am listening to another person, really listening, it is like an inward breath, and with this tide my own agenda drops away. Compassion is allowed to flow in uninvited from a source I can only regard as from a Higher Power. It may have been in me all along, but was hidden from my knowing. For me, listening is an action plan for getting out of my ego. When my ego has receded into the background, I pay attention to what is going on around me in an awake and aware state. This has provided more love, relationships, joy and serenity.

- from a member of our fellowship



A workaholics' vacation:

A workaholic was walking down the street, pleased with himself over a pay raise. He passed a travel agency and was inspired to walk in and see what was possible. The agent showed him several ideas, which seemed to lack challenge. Then he mentioned a "rowing adventure in the North seas." This was appealing and the price was right. On the day of departure, he reported to the agency, when, BANG, a bag was thrown over his head and he passed out. The next thing he saw was that he was chained to a bench on a Viking ship with a huge oar in his hand and a mean looking Viking standing over him. He settled in and then asked his neighboring rower: "Is this a round-trip?" The neighbor, who was also a workaholic said: "Last year it was!".



Thank you, members of our fellowship, for your sincere and lively contributions. WSR's, please bring this to your meeting and urge members to tell us about their struggles, successes and reflections.

Living in Balance invites WA members to share your experience, strength and hope, as well as JOKES with the WA fellowship around the world. Each of us has something to share that can help another workaholic to abstain from compulsive working one more day. Please send your submittals by email to: newsletter "at" workaholics-anonymous.org Include your contact information and let us know if you would like your first name and initial included as author. Your contribution will make this newsletter more alive and improve your recovery by helping others. Please submit your materials before September 20th, 2011.

Note that materials submitted are assumed to be intended for publication, are subject to editing and become the property of WAWSO, which may publish them in any format in any Workaholics Anonymous literature.

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