

STORYLINE

From Workaholics Anonymous

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER
2017



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

CONTENTS FOR THIS ISSUE

SHARING: TAKING THE RISK TO LIVE (page 1)

SHARING: MISTAKES (page 2)

SHARING: I WAS ELSEWHERE (page 2)

SHARING: GIVING MYSELF CREDIT (page 3)

SHARING: THE TOP LINES BROCHURE (page 3)

SHARING: I FEEL GOOD (page 4)

SHARING: REST (page 5)

SHARING: HUMILITY (page 6)

CONTACT INFORMATION: EMAIL WSO (page 7)

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY (page 7)

ANNOUNCEMENT: WA MEDITATION BOOK (page 8)

WA LITERATURE EMAIL GROUP (page 8)

NEW PHONE MEETING TUESDAYS (page 8)

MISSION STATEMENT (page 9)

SHARING: TAKING THE RISK TO LIVE

Signpost 6: Work has become an addiction. We lie to ourselves and to others about the amount we do. We hoard work to insure that we will always be busy and never bored. We fear free time and vacations and find them painful instead of refreshing.

Thanks to WA and its suggestions, I have more balanced days. I feel more "in" my life than in the lives of others, waiting for when someone needs me and in "doing" or "not doing."

I have been learning the importance of free time, vacation time, relaxation time, hobbies, and meditation. Living my life is a like taking a "risk" for myself. And I try to take some risks every day, one day at a time. I love the text in the WA literature speaking about "work aversion" which says, "there is no bigger risk than not taking any risk."

I have been used to lying to myself about what I was doing. I was exhausted and frustrated because I did too much "for others." I didn't do anything for myself, so much frustration! and fear of doing anything for myself. All my life was dedicated to others, living my life seemed to be a risk.

I came to believe that work was my life; that is, work "for the others" not for myself. In order to become myself I had to drink alcohol, another illusion! My life was "so boring," I thought I needed to make things good for others in order to feel like I existed at all. Work had become an addiction.

I see how much I can be a super woman who can do everything totally alone, without any help. I am a savior. I need to feel the best, to control everything, and I really think I am right. I need to be "useful." I am speaking in present tense, but actually these ways of being are becoming part of my past, as I am slowly changing all this.

-- With friendliness,

---Helen

SHARING: MISTAKES

It's not the mistakes I made that will hurt myself. It's denying them that really gets me in trouble - Unknown

--JC

SHARING: I WAS ELSEWHERE

Another thing I realize these days is that I had my mind and my brain all the time "elsewhere." Where ? I was always trying to know what the others were thinking, doing, and so on. All my life, I have tried to know by myself what the others would have wanted me to do. Why ? because there was absolutely no communication at home, my workaholic dad was always away, and in his books when he was at home, and my mom was drug addicted. It was the same with my grand parents, they did not communicate; they also suffered from workaholism and drug addiction. No communication at all. And a lot of loneliness, not really physically but psychologically. I felt alone all the time, and lonely even when I was with among others. Insecurity was also a feeling I had when I was feeling alone, without any communication with others around me. And of course guilt was there also. I often thought that all this was surely my fault.

All this gave me a lot of tension and stress. My own self ceased to exist. I adapted myself to the others. I was "elsewhere," not in my body, and not in my life. So I never gave myself a place, or any attention. I was not listening too much to the others, yet I was trying to guess what was in their mind. Thanks for reading this.

--Love in recovery,
--Helen

SHARING: GIVING MYSELF CREDIT

I felt angry when someone did not give myself the credit. I said to myself: "I thought they *should*." By HP's grace I was able to pause, recognize it was my ego pride and self esteem being threatened. I recognized my competitiveness and asked for God's help to remove these things, and then I acted as if I were confident and relaxed. Great progress. These things work when we work them!

--JC

SHARING: THE TOP LINES AND BOTTOM LINES BROCHURE

Last week I was overwhelmed by the number of emails I was receiving daily as part of my new job. I was so tense and my neck and jaw were like a rock.

Friday morning I remembered the "Top Lines and Bottom Lines" brochure which really helped me set some boundaries with myself. I also got clear with what my job is. I decided I would only spend a few hours per day on this and also make use of an email that summarizes the requests for each day. I also cleaned up my office which made other things more 'doable.'

--Linda

SHARING: I FEEL GOOD

I need to share that I need to rest. It is absolutely needed.

I have had a burn out in 2006 and I have been overworking even in recovery until now.

I have been practicing the WA program, but now I feel I need to rest. I have done so much until now. I have never rested. I felt lazy if I was resting. I needed to do do do, help help help help others, no rest at all.

When I had my burn out I often thought that my body did what I could not do: stop. Even after my burn out, even if I did not work anymore for money, I was still doing so much.

I remember my youth. I was already doing a lot. At primary school I was thinking that I was an adult because I knew what was the meaning of the word "problems." I needed to help my family to find solutions.

But it did never stop.
It stops now.

I don't feel guilty anymore to stop during the day, to rest during the day, to do a nap during the day, to meditate during the day, I am sure that my body speaks to me when I feel tired, and I listen to it. Yesterday i was turning around and around, without doing anything. Finally, I did nothing and it was alright. Then I did just one more thing, and i was so happy for this sole thing. And today, i was able to paint my garden wall during the morning. Afterwards I was tired, and that was okay.

I need to rest today, and today I will rest. Now I know that when I rest one day, I will feel better the day after.

So many times I have gone past my limits. I was so aggressive, so ashamed, and so stressed. And I could not do anything for myself. First, I was earning money, and second, I would help others. And there were no stop to those things. No place for myself at all. No place for pleasure. Life was hard and this was normal. My expectations were high, very high. I was so terrorized not to meet these expectations. I was always sad not to be as perfect as I wanted to be. Now I stop all this when I need to, and I take a nap. I cannot do what I used to do anymore. And I feel ok, more than OK with this. I feel good.

--Gratefully,

--Helen

SHARING: REST

I tend to think my way around doing what's best for myself--my mind is very powerful and can confuse things that are very simple like taking time to rest because my body needs it. My mind loves activity and once it gets going it's hard to stop and I think I shouldn't stop and can't imagine what it would feel like to stop. It's all a very slippery slope. I appreciate honesty--that is what helps me cut through all the craziness in my own head and the lies I tell myself that keep me separated from my body and my needs. I hope I have the strength and courage to be open to stopping myself today!

--Caroline

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SHARING: HUMILITY

Step 7: Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

In the meetings I am learning that the 7th step means humility. I was not humble in my pre-recovery life. I thought I was humble because I was feeling ashamed a lot of the time, but in my way of looking for recognition for myself I recognize today that there has been a lot of "pride," the opposite of humility.

Doing too much, and trying to find "recognition" by doing too much, by working perfectly, by being the best, when I did not say anything or was waiting until the others asked me to do something for them, I was also "being proud," and I was hiding everything I hated in myself in order to be recognized, and I was appearing "strong," "the best," and blaming others who did not recognize what a good person I was. I asked for money, big projects, and whatever I needs to have the recognition I needed to have. I was all about my pride. I was trying to control everything.

Today, I am beginning to accept myself with humility. Sometimes I would say that humor is helping me to have humility with myself, even with my shortcomings. Humility is not "humiliation" because when I feel humble I see that life is easier for me to be live, the opposite of humiliation.

*--Love in recovery,
--Helen*

CONTACT INFORMATION: EMAIL WAWSO

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

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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. We welcome shares, stories, commentaries, quotes, and poems: anything original that we can reproduce. Please submit what you have to share and encourage others to do so as well. Send us your own work, and if you see something you like in your email group written by someone else, please secure permission from the author and send it in or include their email address so we can secure their permission.

The written word potentially helps so many people all over the world—those who live far from a meeting, those who are in denial about the patterns that drive them crazy, and those who never heard of workaholics anonymous, with its wisdom, tools and slogans. And then there are those who read the words in STORYLINE and find they resonate in a new way. From this issue, I'm realizing that I can spend ten or fifteen minutes on my email list every day and not be driven crazy by having pages and pages to read at the end of a week, and I can spend fifteen minutes a week-end on my kitchen or basement. I can rest when I need to rest, something against my training but nonetheless surprisingly energizing.

We are grateful for the generosity of the members of the email group Finding Balance, for their allowing us to reprint their shares. Feel free to join the discussion on STORYLINE, and share your own WA experiences and your experience, strength and hope. Send contributions for to: storyline@workaholics-anonymous.org, with STORYLINE in the subject line. STORYLINE depends on all of us!

-Shelley, Chicago

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

ANNOUNCEMENT: WA LITERATURE EMAIL GROUP

Are you interested in reading selected pieces of WA literature regularly and share about it?

check us out here: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/wa-stepping-into-recovery/info>

ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW PHONE MEETING

New WA phone meeting to be held on:

Tuesdays 5:15pm (PT) 8:15pm (EDT)

starting August 15, 2017

(605) 468-8037 Access Code 118778#

The meeting will be reading the entire WA Book of Recovery Second Edition. Questions, call or text: Leya (818) 235-6746

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, and are subject to editing to provide clarity and conformity for the newsletter. They become the property of WAWSO, which reserves the right to publish them in any format in any Workaholics Anonymous literature. The tentative deadline for submissions for our JUN JUL AUG issue is: May 15, 2017.

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