

Living in Balance

January 2007

The International Newsletter of Workaholics Anonymous

From the Editor- "HAPPY NEW YEAR"

To W.A. Members wherever and however you may find yourself in 2007. New Year's follows a holiday season for most of us and during whatever time off you may have taken, you, like me, have perhaps reflected on the past year some. And now at the start of another year, you may be creating a list of resolutions/to do's/projects etc for this coming 12 months. I only have one suggestion for the Work Addicts who are in a "goal fervor".....

"Don't just do something.....Sit there."

Now, for those on the Work Anorexic side or are avoiders/perfectionists, like myself, I hope you can be accountable to another safe person or persons in program and use the WA tool of prayer and meditation to access some personal visions so as to guide goal setting/to do's for ourselves for 2007 (or maybe just next week!)

For vision work I like this Kipling Quote:

"Drift...Wait...Obey."

I can hardly believe it has already been over 2 months since we in Florida were fortunate enough to see many of our W.A. friends from near and far all in one location here on the West Coast of Florida for our Annual W.A. convention. We want give mention and thanks to the service work of the many people who graciously gave of their time and energy and dollars to make the convention a pleasant, healing, and hopefully fun excursion for all who attended. Our busiest (without overscheduling we trust) trusted servant this time out was D. of the St. Petersburg meeting. Certainly the convention was a team effort but D. contributed quite a bit of her time and effort to this convention, handling literally details for all facets of the event and we owe her a *big Thank You*. Also rounding out the local list was: P.B. who helped with Fun and Games Materials and planning. M. W. could not attend due to a surgery but before the convention she created and filled all the Welcome Packets each convention go'er received as well as attended to meal plan details. And finally yours truly who was a moderator at our Saturday Evening Fun and Games time. Out of town service contributors helped the locals not get too, too overwhelmed so we want to also thank those service people for their contributions. S. P from CA and M from OR--Convention Program...A. from CA-- Hospitality...J. from CA-- Recording meetings and Airport Shuttle...J.C. from PA-- Researched recording options.... L. from CA-- Saturday Nite Game show Hostess...D. from TX and D. from OR--Handling Financial and Registration details----Thank you one and all! As a board member I was fortunate enough to be present when our W.A. Board at the Convention telephoned Germany and we all talked by speakerphone with reps for a large set of German workaholic groups who just happened to also be having their convention- in Germany of course- on the same weekend! Although Germany has their own version of WA they are very interested in our literature and expressed strong interest in continued contact and even translating our literature into German. We were happy to know that our experiences as addicts are pretty much the same in all languages and we even ended our phone call with both the English *and German* versions of the Serenity Prayer! Kinda neat. We would love to have you all back to Florida but next years convention date/place has not quite been decided. However it is our sincere wish, no matter where we all meet this next time that all who wanted to attend any past convention but could not, will be able to attend our next one- more details in April's issue about a date for this year.

Please distribute this issue to your groups and newcomers alike and don't be shy about writing in about your own recovery experiences. (See pg 3 for that and other service openings) *Thanks for the chance to serve- Editor Walt.*

-IN THIS ISSUE-

Co-Sponsorship Option Article · NEW- Service Opportunities Page · 1st Step Focus
Member Survey (Help guide what direction W.A. takes) · W.A. Book of Recovery Order Form

About Workaholics Anonymous

Workaholics Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover from workaholism. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop working compulsively. There are no dues or fees for W.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. W.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stop working compulsively and to carry the message of recovery to workaholics who still suffer.

Workaholics Anonymous World Service Organization
P.O. Box 289, Menlo Park, California 94026-0289
510-273-9253, WSO@workaholics-anonymous.org
<http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org>

Co-Sponsorship---A Viable Option for Healing and Accountability within W.A.

W.A. is a relatively young fellowship compared to, say, A.A. and there are relatively few long-timers in the program; however there are lots of W.A. members with a year or two in program. This means that the conventional concept of the grizzled long-term A.A. veteran taking the newcomer (sponsee) under his/her wing as a senior mentor, is not usually practical in W.A. However it may not even be a desirable recovery model for us, given the difficulties which workaholics often have with power inequalities and authority figures in their workplaces and in their lives and other relationships.

The good news is that many of us have evolved a system we call "co-sponsorship" which has usually worked out very well for us. This is an agreement between two W.A. members, preferably with at least one having had at least some but not necessarily a lot of experience with the program, to meet or talk/correspond on a regular basis to support one another's recovery. Instead of the traditional hierarchical senior-mentor/junior-novice relationship, co-sponsorship offers the opportunity for learning and supporting one another along the journey of recovery without the encumbrance of an explicit or implicit relationship of unequal power and knowledge between the two parties.

Co-sponsorship frees the participants from the sponsor's needing to feel like the "expert" (which can be quite intimidating, and is the main reason it seems people are nervous about being asked to sponsor someone) and the other the receiving "novice" or "apprentice". Co-sponsorship allows both members to support one another, each offering their experience, strength, and hope to one another; systematically studying W.A. materials and discussing them together; studying and working the Steps together; supporting one another in setting recovery goals ("bottom lines"), work plans, abstinence plans; and helping each other be accountable for progressing towards the goals they each have set.

So don't feel disappointed if you have difficulty finding a "senior" member to be your sponsor. The "buddy system" of co-sponsorship (we would call such a person a "trail buddy" on a long backpacking trip, and is actually an excellent metaphor for the journey of recovery) can be a wonderful support for one's recovery, offering flexibility and freedom from the baggage of hierarchical expectations that people often bring to a "sponsorship" agreement. It has worked very well for me and I say this from long experience (28 years in various Twelve-Step programs and 13 years specifically in W.A.). Participating in the telephone meeting is one way to meet a sponsor until you get a meeting going in your area.

PORTABLE PROGRAM (easy to remember-fun to say)

"The slower I go, the faster I grow."

"Everything can wait but Love."

"I live by divine appointment with broad margins."

"Even when offered the best, I say no if I need rest. Rest is the best reward I can give myself."

"If it's worth doing, it's worth doing so-so."

Excerpted from "Affirmations For Workaholics" & "Our Favorite Slogans" with permission of the W.S.O. board of W.A., Workaholics Anonymous Book of Recovery (Pages. 182-183) See order form page 6.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN W.A.

These service positions are listed so that all W.A. members, not already serving others in W.A. as board or committee members, consider adding this dimension of commitment to their/our program. Early on, many of us are so unclear about work and how much we are able to do that it becomes easy either to fear, and hence disregard entirely, service work - or jump in before first consulting with our W.A. friends. We recommend neither extreme! We have found that, ironically, the work of service in W.A. does, with time, (and Stepwork as well) helps to heal and restore balance as to how we experience any and all work in our lives. We ask you to consider serving but we want members to accept on a gentle basis and know that we are all imperfect as we take on these tasks. A good way to "try on for size" is to volunteer for committees where your contribution or any "deadlines" are generally very flexible and rescheduling or reprioritizing your efforts is par for the course. Gentle service work is actually fun (believe it or not!) and very healing and leads to new experiences in our spiritual awakening. At a very minimum you can make great friends working alongside those who know your work troubles best, other W.A.'s. That being said, here are the latest opportunities:

Helping to Upgrade Our Website

At our National Convention this past November, it was decided to set up a committee to study an upgrade of our website. In that this is our primary means of outreach, it is important that it be as effective as possible. We are seeking W.A. members to serve on the committee who have some expertise in this area and are not already over-scheduled. We anticipate some email correspondence and telephone meetings once or twice a month with a target for completion by May of 2007. If some of you are not in position to actively serve, but want to be "In the Loop", perhaps you would like to participate in an advisory capacity. This would mean reviewing our endeavors before we make the move. Please let us know soon! Contact us within two weeks at TALR@Workaholics-Anonymous.org or W.A.-W.S.O., P.O. Box 289, Menlo Park, CA 94026.

Creating New W.A. Literature- Step Study Book

If anyone is interested in helping develop creative questions for stepwork, if anyone has artwork (especially black and white line drawing, cartoons, coloring book style artwork, etc.) they might like to contribute, or give a hand in editing a few passages from the draft that's being developed, please email literature@workaholics-anonymous.org and join the fun! Our vision is to extend the step study material in the WA Book of Recovery and give space for responding to Step questions in the hopes that such a tool will deepen the fellowship's recovery.

Contributing Literature to this Newsletter

Living in Balance invites all W.A. members to submit writings to share their experience, strength, and hope with other WA members around the world. Don't be shy! Each of us, at all levels of recovery, has something to share that can help another workaholic abstain from compulsive working for one more day. Please submit your stories, articles, and artwork by emailing them to newsletter@workaholics-anonymous.org or mailing them to Newsletter, Workaholics Anonymous World Service Organization P.O. Box 289 Menlo Park, CA 94026-0289. Please include your contact information and whether you would like your first name and location to be included as an author, or if you would like to remain anonymous. Please note that any materials submitted to the newsletter are assumed to be intended for publication, are subject to editing, and become the property of Workaholics Anonymous, which may publish them in any format and in any Workaholics Anonymous literature. *SEE SCHEDULE BELOW FOR IDEAS AND DEADLINES.*

Issue	Step	Topics/Theme	Tool or Principle	Submission Date	Publication Date
Spring 2007	Step 2	Connecting with Higher Power	Listening	March 15th, 2007	<i>April 2007</i>
Summer 2007	Step 3	Letting Go – Big Decisions and Everyday Life	Action Plan, Accepting	June 15, 2007	<i>July 2007</i>

STEP/TOPIC FOCUS FOR THIS ISSUE:**STEP ONE / UNMANAGEABILITY / PREVENTING RELAPSE****Step One in Workaholics Anonymous:**

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to workaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

The following ten questions about Step One were designed to be answered in writing, one question a day for ten days, while working with a sponsor/co-sponsor. It is also suggested, if possible, that they be written in a Step Group. It takes time to face the full consequences of our affliction and how workaholism is manifesting in our lives. For many of us Step One is challenging but we have found that if we don't honestly admit how powerless we really are over this affliction, we are doomed to continue our insane lives. For some of us we are well aware of our condition and in one setting we are ready to move on to Step Two where we begin to feel hope and a path to peace of mind. You are free to use these questions to stimulate your thinking about workaholism and how it affects you.

Step One Questions:

1. How has work stress and excess work and/or work avoidance affected my health?
2. What is the history of my workaholism, starting with my family history of addictive work and other addictions?
3. What have I tried in the past to control my problems with work: changing jobs, taking classes, retreats, taking time off, reading self help books, etc.?
4. Free - write about what I am powerless over, and my feelings about powerlessness.
5. Using another workaholic's example of Step One qualifications, how would I quantify my workaholism? (See first Step One story).
6. How have my relationships or lack of them been affected by my work problems?
7. What seems unmanageable in my life? How has this addiction diminished my life?
8. How would I describe my relationship to money and power?
9. How would I describe the criticism I direct to myself, on my negative thinking and poor self-esteem? How do these drive my decisions?
10. How do procrastination and perfectionism and loved of power affect my life? How have I been deceptive and tried to cover for how out of control my life feels?

This page of W.A. First Step discussion and questions is an excerpt from the W.A. Book of Recovery Pages 109-110 and is reprinted with permission of the W.A. World Service Board.

A Meditation on Powerlessness

I offer a metaphor for powerlessness and my hope that it will help you to have compassion for yourself in all your imperfection and beauty. "Anonymous" from California W.A.

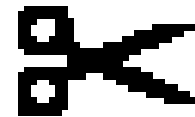
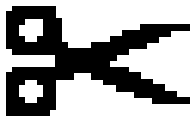
Imagine you are going to develop Type I diabetes as a teenager. Through your youth, you eat whatever you want and you feel fine. Then one day you don't feel too good. Over the next few days, you feel worse and worse. A week later, you go to a doctor. You find out you have diabetes. You will be fine; you can live a long and healthy life. All you need to do is educate yourself about the disease and take the steps needed to care for yourself. You will never be cured, but you can feel well most of the time.

Is the diabetes your fault? No – Type I diabetes is genetic. What is your part now that you know you have it? Following medical recommendations, monitoring your blood sugar and taking your medication. The disease calls you to pay attention to yourself.

Workaholism is the same kind of disease in many respects. You are not responsible for it and you can't will yourself not to have it. You can live a full and happy life if you educate yourself about the disease, pay attention to how you are feeling, and take your medication: meetings, program calls, Step work. No diabetic would take insulin once and feel she was cured for the rest of her life. So for workaholics: we need daily contact with our Higher Power to get well and remain well. We check our level of anxiety and stress by listening and sharing at meetings. We learn a new way of living by working the 12 Steps.

We can't recover perfectly any more than we could work perfectly. If you had a rough day today, if you worked too hard, felt overwhelmed by resentment or anger or spent too little time on self care, do not despair. You have not failed. Today is just one day. Be kind to yourself. Make a program call, go to a meeting, read some literature. This day will pass and ahead is a better day, thanks to the grace of the program.

Being Powerless does *not* relieve us of our responsibility to take our medicine. But our experience has shown that accepting our Powerlessness *does* lead to relief from the regret and self hatred that used to accompany our frustration at our inability to change through sheer will power. We are sick people, not bad people; we are trying to be well, imperfectly, one day at a time.



Newsletter Subscription Form

Please enclose (sliding scale) \$8 to \$20 payable to W.A. World Service Organization and mail to Treasurer, W.A. W.S.O., P.O. Box 289, Menlo Park, California, 94026-0289.

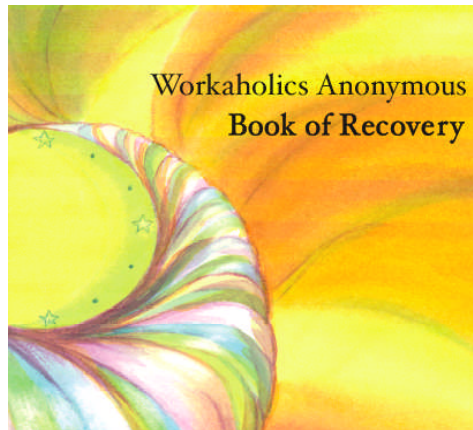
Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone (optional, in case there are problems with the address or payment): _____





Workaholics Anonymous Book of Recovery Order Form

The W.A. Book of Recovery is chock full of member stories, helpful literature, information about the tools and principles, & W.A. basics. It also includes a Step Study Guide— everything to spread the message of recovery!

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number/Email _____

Yes, I would like to order the following number of W.A. Books of Recovery:

Number of Books _____ Times the Cost of Books @ \$15 each (for 1-9 books)= 10-19 books, the cost is \$12.50 each = 20-99 books, the cost is \$10.00 each =	\$
+ Shipping and Handling.....(See chart below right)	\$
= Total Enclosed PAYPAL Users can email us for details at fulfillment@workaholics-anonymous.org (Otherwise allow up to 4 weeks for delivery. Int'l orders: OK to write \$US on your check.)	\$

Mail this order form with your check or money order in \$US made out to Workaholics Anonymous at the following:
 (Please send book orders only to this address)

**W.A. Book of Recovery
 PO Box 56416
 PORTLAND, OR 97238**

US Shipping	US Postal Service Priority Mail
1-4 Books	\$4.60 total
5-10 Books	\$9.20 total
CANADA & MEXICO	US Postal Service Global Priority
1-4 Books	\$9.00 total
INTERNATIONAL	US Postal Service Global Priority
1-4 Books	\$11.00 total

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Date Received	CheckNo.	Pymt Amnt.	Date Sent	Scan & Send	InventoryID

Below is a copy of a survey that we in WA service hope, through your responses, will give us an idea of what kind of healing focuses today's WA members need. Please take 5-10 minutes and answer as many questions as you can and then mail us back the results to W.A. W.S.O., P.O. Box 289 Menlo Park, CA. 94026-0289
Attention: Survey *It would help us to help everyone. Thank you.*



About my recovery: (Please check all of the following that are true)

1. MEETINGS

- 01 I attend "live"/in-person W.A. meetings
 More than once a week Once a week Once a month Intermittently Never
- 02 I attend online W.A. meetings
 More than once a week Once a week Once a month Intermittently Never
- 03 I attend W.A. meetings on the telephone
 More than once a week Once a week Once a month Intermittently Never
- 04 I have attended the W.A. National Conference
 Many times Four times Three times Two times Once (this one) Never

2. TIME

05. First W.A. Meeting (date) _____ 06. Continuous years in Program: _____

3. ABSTINENCE & PLANS

- 07 I am currently abstinent.
- 08 Abstinent since: _____ (could be stated in duration or a date)
- 09 I have an abstinence plan (leave blank for 'no plan')
 With clear definition Includes bottom lines Includes top lines Includes guidelines
- 10 I make use of my abstinence plan (leave blank for 'N/A')
 More than once a week Once a week Once a month Intermittently Never
- 11 I use an action plan (leave blank for 'N/A')
 Daily More than once a week Once a week Intermittently Never
- 12 I have conscious contact through prayer and meditation
 More than 1x/day Daily More than once a week 1x/week Intermittently Never

4. STEPWORK

- 13 I actively work the Steps in W.A. with (mark all that apply)
 A sponsor A co-sponsor A Step Study Group By myself Not currently working W.A. Steps
- 14 I am currently on Step _____ (leave blank for 'N/A')
- 15 I use the following to work the Steps (mark all that apply):
 W.A. Book of Recovery Step Study Guide Big Book of A.A. 12 x 12 Other:
- 16 The following things have helped me work the steps: _____

5. SPONSORSHIP

- 17 I have a W.A. (circle one) co-sponsor or sponsor with the following kind of contact,
 Daily 2-6x/week Weekly Once a month Intermittently Haven't spoken with
- 18 Duration of current (please circle) W.A. sponsorship OR co-sponsorship: _____
- 19 If you don't currently have a W.A. sponsor, please check any that might apply:
- I am currently actively seeking a sponsor
 - I am trying out a temporary sponsor
 - I have given up looking for a sponsor
 - I don't need a sponsor
 - I am working the Steps myself
 - I have a sponsor in another program that I also use for my W.A. Stepwork
 - Other/Comments

(Continue to next page)

6. SERVICE

20 I engage in the following kinds of service (place asterisks by top three most helpful)

- Share at meetings Help with meeting setup Chair meetings Am meeting Service Rep. Put up flyers about the meeting Tell others about W.A. Speak with the newcomers Take and make phone calls Sponsor or co-sponsor W.A. members Perform regional or world service Other:

7. TOOLS AND PRINCIPLES

21 My up to 3, most Favorite (please circle no more than 3. Leave blank if 'none') Principles are:

- Abstinence Sponsoring Writing Action Plan Humor Time Out Nurturing Literature
Anonymity The Twelve Steps Meditation

22 My up to 3, most Favorite (please circle no more than 3. Leave blank if 'none') Tools are:

- Listening Prioritizing Substituting
Underscheduling Playing Concentrating Pacing
Relaxing Accepting Asking Meetings Telephoning
Balancing Serving Living in the Now

8. W.A. PRIORITIES 2006-2008

Please mark how you would prioritize the following possible W.A.W.S.O. Board undertakings. You can either just mark your top 5 priorities, or number them 1-N in priority order, with 1 being highest priority. Thank you!

- Share the word about W.A. to the media
- Share the message with workaholics via EAP, frustrated partners, journalists
 - Youth Outreach
- Strengthening the Fellowship
- Member Attraction and Retention
 - Meeting Support and Longevity- Strengthen existing meetings
 - Cultivate and nourish new in-person meetings
- Developing the Virtual Community-Online and Phone Meetings
- Create More Literature:
 - Why Keep Coming Back?
 - A Rigorous Program of Recovery
 - Relapse Prevention in W.A.
 - Pamphlets for Friends and Family
 - Work Anorexia and Procrastination
 - Sponsorship Pamphlet
 - Recovering Workaholics Do Service Abstainently
 - Step Study Workbook
 - Meditation Book
 - Tools and Principles Literature
 - Member Attraction and Retention
- Work-Anon related topics
- Generate enough revenue to have a paid, part-time office staff
- Continue to distribute the W.A. Book of Recovery
- Answer phone calls, letters, and emails and connect people to W.A. resources
- Build out the website
- Publish a quarterly newsletter
- Support members in working the Steps
- Make more materials available online
- Translate literature into other languages

Any other ideas or comments?
