

Joyful Movement

This month's theme speaks to the transformation in our thinking from grim determination to a **joyful** relationship with **movement**. Many of us have needed an overhaul in this department too; our thinking was just as sick in this arena as it was with the food. The way we **moved** our bodies reflected how we viewed and treated ourselves- as a project that needed to be fixed, something that was broken or flawed and required alteration. In our ABA book, Frank describes how his pursuit to "get fit" led to "an obsession that assumed control of his life and was destroying his marriage." (pg. 43)

Today there is a flow for many of our members who have also surrendered over their exercise to Godde and our fellows. The

compulsion to control the amount or type of food or shape our bodies through **movement** has been removed. They find **joy in movement** and can exercise to celebrate their bodies rather than punish it.

How?! We first must get honest with what we were doing. How many of us minimized the amount of exercise or justified it "being healthy to **move** our bodies?" Or like Sandra, we have thought, "that section about surrender of exercise does not apply to me." (pg. 287)



Joy Continued...

The journey to freedom begins with us getting honest- with ourselves, our Higher Power and any other members of our recovery team.

Some of us received the instruction of no exercise, including walking, unless it was to get us from point A to point B; others were given very clear guidelines on **movement**. It didn't make a lot of difference what directions we received but rather were we willing to surrender and trust the care of our **movement** to another?

Having to let go terrified many of us who used exercise to practice the illusion of control over our body, weight and shape. Even when our sponsors explained to us that it was a temporary situation, this did little to assuage our fears. Many

of us argued or flat out became belligerent as we panicked. How many of us were dependent on the adrenaline release or tranquilizing effect to cope with anxiety?

Our text warns us, "half measures avail us nothing," and we are then to ask "how free do you want to be?" For those of us who prayed, were willing and stepped out in faith/trust/desperation to surrender exercise, we discovered the fears that we had were not realized at all. In fact, we found a new freedom and a new happiness as promised. (BB, pg. 86)

Movement is not just a bodily experience. Read on to see the **Joyful Movement** highlights within ABA!



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A Personal Story: With Freedom Attached

This month's personal reflection was inspired after attending an exercise workshop in April held by the members of the Mon/Wed Australian ABA Meeting.

There was a panel of three speakers sharing their experience, strength and hope including Hayley. This article begins with two ABA book quotes and her own personal experience.

“The amazing paradox is that when we surrender our eating and our exercise to a Higher Power, followed by the vigorous action of the Twelve-Step Program, then this Power returns our eating and our exercise to us, but with freedom attached! No longer are we compelled to eat a low-fat diet or to consume more than our bodies need. Now some of us return to

vegetarian eating as a truly spiritual or ethical choice. Now we can run in the river valley or swim laps because it really is good for our bodies, not because we are driven to keep ourselves in shape. To all of us anorexics and bulimics, who had hitherto known only compulsion, this liberation of our minds is miraculous indeed. When we were still enslaved by our deadly obsessions, such freedom was only a dim memory from the past or an impossible dream for our future. Now, with sobriety first, it becomes a glorious reality of our present.” (pg. 69)

“Continuing to exercise in early recovery almost always sabotaged our healing process. It kept us at least mildly intoxicated and prevented us from connecting with our Higher Power so we could

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A Personal Story Continued: With Freedom Attached

be restored to sanity. Sobriety requires absolute surrender of our body to the Creator. Only with sobriety first can we recover from anorexia and bulimia.” (pg. 68)

When I came to ABA I thought I had surrendered exercise through another fellowship. A few yoga stretches in the morning, the odd class during the week and lots of walking in fresh air.

However when I was asked to put down all exercise, initially the intense anger I experienced was overwhelming. It felt as if my body was melting through the floor.

The ABA book talks about ‘our cells vibrating’ when we can’t move to appease the physical discontent and I became aware of the control hidden beneath my little rituals. I was still needing to move to burn off the food I was eating; I thought quite normally. Then of course, meal support showed me how my orthorexic choices were carefully micromanaged to avoid that terror of getting fat. I had to surrender to all the foods I had so conveniently labelled ‘unhealthy’ and keep praying for the willingness to surrender.

The whole experience was totally surreal from back to front, but I learnt that my best thinking had got me here, so perhaps I needed to take suggestions from others who had been where I was and had found freedom and a new way to live. I am so grateful



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A Personal Story Continued: with freedom attached

to ABA for the support of my dietician, meal support helper and the miracle of working the Steps with my sponsor. My thinking changes and therefore my actions daily, as I live in the growth Steps of 10, 11 and 12. To be able to eat soberly and live in my body rather than stuck in my head is a huge gift of recovery. My Higher Power does for me what I cannot do for myself as I live by these spiritual principles.

Just for today I am so grateful to enjoy movement without obsession, to be able to gently walk my dogs and enjoy being in nature to stop and notice what is around me. Today I have a real desire to take care of my body instead of being compelled to control my body, weight, and shape.

Hayley, UK

Cleaning House!

Our new treasurer, Kelly B., is working with our accountant and the GSA to streamline and coordinate the financial process for easier access. Also, our financial reporting system is receiving an upgrade as new categories are being created to show where our 7th tradition monies are being allocated. This will give an exact picture for anyone wanting to understand the financial statements.



A Work in Progress

The Literature Committee is working on a guideline for future translations of our book.

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Momentous Movement



*We could not
have done it
without you !!*

The Hebrew effort has received enough funds to complete the last part of the translation of our ABA text.

The Polish effort is ready to translate “*Sobriety is Surrender*”, the last of the 4 documents being worked on.

Joyful technology



The Website Committee has come up with a solution for those interested in sharing sections of the newsletter.



The newsletter is now available in a PDF format. Just look for a conversion button on the website below the current newsletter!

♥ A Moving Newsletter ♥

“A monthly dose of joyful recovery in my inbox.”

“Beautiful (May) newsletter focused on prayer- just what I needed.”

“The green in the (June) newsletter made my day...it is honestly refreshing and comforting!”

We love getting your feedback; thank you for the heartfelt messages and inspiration!

Joyful Recap

The Unique Nature of ABA Workshop

I loved the fact there were two members whom each had a slightly different approach to the topic of the Unique Nature of ABA.

Torrey had mentioned the action over the thought and about speaking prayers to God aloud. I now aim to make all my prayers verbal; my connection to God feels deeper.

Louisa described the ABA community with its online and in-person participants as a “global hug”. This resonated with me, especially as there were many nationalities connecting for those 2.5 hours. We share the blessing of having made

wonderful friends worldwide from this programme.

I appreciated the questions posed, and in the first instance- the reflection on what vestiges of control that I had and hadn't surrendered- made me dig further into where I was in my recovery, admitting what I was still powerless over and hand to my Higher Power.

The quiet time task was writing a letter to our eating disorders. This was powerful, both the experience I had and the intimacy of those who shared. Whilst I didn't finish the task, it gave me a useful tool to return to.

-Lizzie, UK



A big **THANK YOU** to all those who attended our latest workshop. We had 33 registered and 30 members came out to make this a heartfelt experience.

Almost \$600.00 was raised!

**The recording is being edited for future posting.*

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More Joyful Movement

The Retreat is a Go!

The retreat center is available to work with whatever numbers we have.

We currently have 20 members registered!

If you need financial support, we do have *partial* scholarships. Contact abaretreat@gmail.com for more information.

Click
to register!




Jump for
Joy!
it's
coming....

Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous

**ABA
RETREAT
2024**

Embraced by Fellowship:
A Retreat of Connection



OCTOBER
18 - 20
2024

BETHLEHEM
CENTRE
NANAIMO, CANADA



Sign up today folks...
the Early Bird pricing ends July 15th.



A Joyful Sound

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How exciting that several of our ABA members are lending their voices for our recovery. An audio version is in the works of our beloved ABA text!



June Birthdays...



Stephanie - 2 Years
Hazel - 6 Years
Kate - 8 Years
Zoe - 16 Years

Joyful Movement
can be physical activity that emphasizes pleasure, choice, flexibility, celebration, and intuition.



Upcoming Meetings...

Board Meetings

are on *SUMMER VACATION!!*

Next Meeting is
Sept. 15th!

The GSR Meets

Saturday, July 6th at
2:30 EDT
Zoom: 874-9756-8589
Pw: solutions

Closing

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this virtual community connection. If you have enjoyed reading about our members' recovery please think about supporting the newsletter. We would love to speak to you about any submissions.

Contact Jessa jessaatheart@gmail.com