



Stepping off the Rollercoaster

Surrendering a Life out of Balance

Balance is not a word I am very familiar with, in more ways than one. As a child I earned the nickname "Grace" as an ironic response to the fact that my family thought I had none. No grace, no balance, no poise, no ability to keep from tripping over things, falling into our creek or pond, skinning my knees, and running into doorways. Emotionally, I struggled to find the middle ground as well. I was either WAY up or WAY down. My mama called me her red rubber ball.

Adulthood did not bring me much growth in this area. I saw the world as black or white. Grey area scared the hell out of me! It made me a vigilant bible thumper in college, unable to give grace or to understand people's hearts. I had no room for people who made mistakes and plainly told them so. It ended up costing me a lot of friends.

Addiction was the last phase of this life out of balance. When a rapist robbed me of my virginity, something I had held up as a last vestige of why I was still a 'good girl', I decided I had nothing left to keep me on this side of addiction. I began a cycle of sexual binging and anorexia that lasted years. During the binges, I hated myself and even the people I was with. I flung myself head-long into horrible relationships with people who could not have cared less about me, who didn't really want or love me for who I was. I was unable to end the relationships; a junkie for the fix I got from just being with someone. I cruised for men in all kinds of places and found how easy it was to pick someone up. The thrill of that alone, as a girl who had struggled lifelong with self image, was enough to keep me coming back for more.

During the sexual anorexia, I convinced myself and everyone around me that I was a 'good girl,' that had no sexual knowledge at all and any talk or action in that direction was just plain shocking! I dove into work with my church and youth group, trying to build up a high enough wall round myself to keep the next binge from coming. I built a façade around myself, convincing even the cleverest and most perceptive of people of what a wonderful and wholesome person I was.

Marriage, the 'ultimate solution', didn't fix it. I brought all of that crap right in, dumped it in the middle of the floor and expected him to make me normal, which he obviously could not do. The screaming rage fits and seduction that had played out in early dependency relationships resurfaced in this one and the drama began.



This is a verse from a song I wrote in '00, entitled "Rollercoaster"

"I keep livin' my life
like a theme park
With thrills and chills and spills
And things that make me
want to hide my face.
There is no calm stroll
through the midway,
Attractions and distractions
on all sides
Dragging me this way
and that way."

(Apropos, no?)

That pretty much sums up the acting out life, and now for the little bit of experience, strength, and hope that I've found. Since balance is such an unnatural thing

for me, I am learning do it, one little tiny step at a time, with lots of help. Every time I wanted to seduce or just have sex with my spouse, my therapist made me take 10 minutes and journal about why. Talk about a mood killer! When my first reaction is anger, I have to go make a phone call, talk about my feelings, and come up with a plan. I still struggle with this one. I have to limit the things in my life to what I can do, and do well and still have time for my home and family, because I choose a new hobby and immerse myself in it. I have to own my own crap, every single day, even when I feel like it's 'not fair' or my spouse isn't doing the same so 'I don't WANT TO.' (might as well cross my arms and stamp my feet when that comes out of my mouth) I give friendships space to breathe and grow instead of smothering them. Instead of choosing a new crowd of enablers when my old ones won't enable me any more, I ask for help in choosing people who I see as healthy, who help me see where I am out of balance. The program has taught me to leave room for the grey and to not fear it. My favorite and most feared prayer is "I ask for your will for me today." I finally have a choice to get off the rollercoaster and live a different way. Surrendering, one day at a time. ~Ariana E.

(Cont'd on other side)



Editor's Corner

Happy Holidays everyone!! I love this season. I get my expectations so high and then when some fool family member spoils it all by not doing X, Y, or Z like I want them to, I go flat, like a cake when kids won't stop stomping through the kitchen. This year, I am going to try something new though! I am going to work on lowering my expectations. I know that sounds like such crap to some of you. It did to me when I first heard it. I mean REALLY! I have a right to want what I want, right? Nope. I don't. I can take care of myself, and ask for what I need. If my expectations aren't met and it costs me my serenity, I need to take steps to get that back, like making phone calls, and not demanding perfection from those around me.

I hope that all of you have serenity through this season, no matter what your current situation or level of sobriety, and celebrate the gift of another season to make a living amends to those around us. It's gonna be beautiful. Happy Holidays!

~ Ariana E.

Your Intergroup Newsletter Chair

Service and Announcements Bulletin Board:

There are lots of opportunities to serve in Nashville! Here are just a few:

SA/SANON INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Newark, NJ

January 11th - 13th, 2008

See flyer in meeting or visit

www.chorusofrecovery.org

***Outreach To Memphis ***

December 15th

**Great food and Great Fellowship! -contact Jon B.
Check the blackboard in the portable for updates**

DONUTS IN THE MORNING!

**6:30 am meeting has
donuts on Mondays.
Start the week with a
meeting!**

INTERGROUP SERVICE!

Service is one of the pillars of our program!

- **6:30am meeting GSR position is OPEN**
(your GSR became our new
Communications Chair!)
- **7:15 pm Sunday GSR Position is OPEN**
- **Intergroup Vice-Chair position is OPEN**
- **Newly Created Literature Vice Chair
position has been filled**

Mini Conference

"The Journey Continues"

Norcross, GA Feb. 9th

Registration is \$20 'til Jan 9th, \$25 until Feb. 8th,
\$30 walk-in

Regional Meeting to follow

Contact Gary D. gr8fulgary@hotmail.com

H & I

***Panel Positions
available!*
2nd Saturday of
each month
8am, Star Bagel**