

CARNIVORES ANONYMOUS August 11, 2003

CROCODILE: Hi, I'm Crocodile and I'm an carnivore. Welcome to the group inventory meeting of the Wild in the Streets group of Carnivores Anonymous. Just a couple of announcements before we begin. For the smokers, Dog was sniffing the butt (*pause*) can and found candy wrappers in it. Please use the right receptacle. The Zoo has been very good to us over the years and I would hate for them to kick us out over a preventable fire. Restrooms are in the back and they include a litter box and fire hydrant. Okay, we are going to jump right into the inventory using the questions on page 35 of The CA Group pamphlet (that's "c" as in Carnivore not Cocaine). I'm not a member of this group which hopefully will allow me to be neutral. I am honored that the group asked me to moderate your inventory and I will take notes as we go along. Who wants to kick it off?

LION: I will. My name is Lion and I'm a Carnivore. I think question one "what is the basic purpose of the group" is interesting. The way I see it the basic purpose is to insure that when a newcomer comes in the door who is sick and tired of being a carnivore we are here for him or her. When I first came here 16 months ago I was a mess. I had hit my bottom. I staggered into the rooms with Wildebeest still on my breath. I was welcomed and that made me feel so good. We have to be available to newcomers. (*excitedly and with relish*) That obsession of spotting your prey, breathing in its heavenly scent, slowly, ever-so-slowly creeping up on it, then pouncing on it, and ripping your teeth into it's glorious, meaty flesh is so overwhelming! Whew, I think I need a cup of coffee. I'm just grateful that when I needed it, Carnivores Anonymous was here.

CROCODILE: Thanks Lion, who is next?

EAGLE: My name is Eagle and I'm a Carnivore. I looked at question 2 "What more can the group do to carry the message"? This is a great question. One thing that I experienced when I came here was the lack of birds. All I saw was a bunch of crusty old mammals! I tried to look for similarities instead of differences, but it was tough. Now Carnivores Anonymous has changed a lot since I first came in and birds are well represented now. I have noticed that we don't keep copies of the pamphlet "CA for the Feathered Carnivore" at this group and maybe that would be a good thing to add to the literature rack.

CROCODILE: Good idea, Eagle. Who is next?

SHARK: Hi my name is Shark and I'm a carnivore. I have to agree with Eagle. There are many different kinds of Carnivores and they should all be made to feel welcome. I skipped down to question 10 : "are we doing all we can to provide an attractive meeting place"? When I first came into the rooms of Carnivores Anonymous, it was hard to go to meetings because...well, there was no salt water there! This group saw to it that carnivores like myself who have special needs are made to feel welcome. It's all about accessibility. The 100 gallon salt water tank they added to the meeting made me feel like someone was concerned about me and wanted me to be there.

CROCODILE: Thank you Shark. Who's next? Yes, Platypus, go ahead.

PLATYPUS: I'm Duck-Billed Platypus and I'm a carnivore. Hey, I hate to break up the love fest here, but I think we're not talking about the elephant in the middle of the room. Oh and Lion, you can stop licking your chops, that's just a figure of speech! When I was new, it was very difficult to break into the different cliques here. Everyone seemed to stick with their own little group. You had the canines, the felines, the birds; it was like a freakin' National Geographic Prison movie or something! The birds didn't want me around even though I have a bill and webbed feet and the mammals felt I wasn't one of them because I lay eggs. I was stunned, considering one of our co-founders was a Platypus. So instead of just sitting here patting ourselves on the back for what a great job, we're doing, we should be aware that there are definitely improvements the group can make as well.

CROCODILE: Good points, Platypus thank you. Anyone else?

VENUS: Yes, my name is Venus Flytrap and I am a grateful recovering carnivore. I completely agree with Platypus. The cliques here were stifling! Try being the only plant in a roomful of animals! I also had the stigma of the quality and quantity of the meat I ate being brought into question if not openly ridiculed. I can't count how many times I've had oldtimers say "Why, I spilled more meat on my fur than you ever ate!" Man, am I sick of hearing that! Sure, carnivorous plants don't pounce on zebras, but bugs are meat! I earned my seat here just like any meat-eating animal! One of the questions in the inventory asks "are we seeing a good cross-section of our community" and I don't know that we are. The Carnivores Anonymous

membership survey we conduct every three years shows that our fellowship is still comprised of 88% carnivorous animals and still only 1% carnivorous plants. I happen to know a few pitcher plants that obviously have a meat-eating problem, but they won't come here because they don't feel they belong with all of the animals.

CROCODILE: Thank you, Venus. Yes, go ahead Wolf.

WOLF: Wolf; carnivore. I'm glad we're putting all this stuff on the table today because I have long felt that there are many serious issues we need to address in Carnivores Anonymous. Ideally change begins here in the local home group which is at the top of the inverted triangle of service in CA. So I am really glad we're doing this inventory today. One thing that has been on my mind lately goes back to question one about what is the basic purpose of our group. I am concerned that our singleness of purpose is being lost in the name of political correctness. I was stunned one day when I came to our home group and heard a gazelle and a yak sharing! What are they doing here? Not only does the presence of herbivores make home group members like Venus Flytrap understandably nervous, but they should be at an *Herbivores Anonymous* meeting! I know some people accuse me of being intolerant or just mean, but I am very concerned about our adherence to the primary purpose.

CROCODILE: Thanks, Wolf. I think we have time for one more. Yes, Otter, go ahead and take us out.

OTTER: I'm Otter and I'm a member of Carnivores Anonymous. Wow. There has been some great stuff said here today. I think the issue brought up by Wolf is paramount. I was at that meeting with the plant-eaters who were sharing. Tiger, a sponsee of mine who was shaky, but seemed to making progress, was also there and he went out yesterday. I hear he went on a serious bender. Nine rabbits and seven muskrats in one day! I'm not saying the reason he had a relapse was that one meeting, but it didn't help. Thankfully Tiger called me this morning and wants to get more serious about the program, but I wonder how many don't identify with all the herbivores there and go out never to return? Then we have the omnivores too like Polar Bear and Possum who have to identify themselves as a carnivore *and* a herbivore. We need to cut down on the confusion and stick to our singleness of purpose. We need to keep it simple the way Duck Bill Wilson and Dr. Bobcat intended!

CROCODILE: Thank you, Otter. Thank you all for participating. Well, we are out of time today, but we will have a second session next month and afterward try to formulate action points on the concerns you all have raised. Well, let's go to lunch. Before anyone groans yes we are going to Fresh Choice yet again. Thank you.