



# OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

NOVA SCOTIA OA INTERGROUP #09262 NEWSLETTER – REGION 6

APRIL 2020

MEETINGS of OUR FELLOWS

**Monday Meeting: 7pm**  
Beacon United Church  
25 Beacon Street, Yarmouth NS  
Contact Mary: 902-742-3725

**Monday Meeting: 7:30pm**  
Douglas St Recreation Center  
40 Douglas Street, Truro, NS  
Contact Marie: 902-843-5678

**Tuesday Meeting: 12:40 pm**  
Corner of Kent & Hillsboro Streets  
221 Kent St. down stairs, Charlottetown, PEI  
Contact Morag: 902-867-7084

**Tuesday Meeting: 7pm**  
Lunenburg, NS  
Call for info  
Contact Rhonda: 902-209-0408

**Wednesday Meeting: 8pm**  
O’Leary Community Hospital St Classroom 1  
O’Leary, PEI  
Contact Cheryl: 902-859-3860

**Thursday Meeting: 7pm**  
St James Church 2668 Joseph Howe Dr, Church Hall  
Armdale Rotary, Halifax, NS  
Contact Tob: 902-237-9707

**Friday Meeting: 10am**  
Cornerstone Wesleyan Church  
1215 Hammonds Plains, NS  
Contact Dianne: 902-835-2718

**Friday Meeting: 10:30am**  
Wolfville United Baptist Church  
487 Main St & Highland Ave,  
Wolfville, NS  
Contact Pete: 902-542-9710

**Saturday Meeting: 1pm**  
Trinity Anglican Church  
321 Main Ave, Halifax, NS  
Contact: Kathleen: 902-877-4498

**Sunday Meeting: 1pm**  
Community Center  
45 Connolly Rd. Sackville, NS  
Contact Bonnie:-864-9646

*“We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”  
-OA Promise*



*“I put my hand in yours,  
and together we can do  
what we could never  
do alone....”*

*-OA Promise*

**DUE TO PANDEMIC  
CANCELLED  
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

## Upcoming Events

**April -Apr 3rd-5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 NB Spring Retreat**

- Apr 6<sup>th</sup>, Apr 3rd-5<sup>th</sup> 2020 **BirthDay Speaker Meeting.**

Monday night 7:30pm Truro Group, 40 Douglas St Truro, Room E. Celebrating 27 years of abstinence/recovery for Joanie M.

- Sat Apr 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **Region 6 Spring Assembly** New York

- Sat Apr 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **NS Intergroup Meeting.**

-Apr 20<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **World Service Business Conference.**

Theme: OA Celebrates 60 Years! Looking into the Future!  
Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**May -May 1st, 2020 BirthDay Speaker Meeting.** Monday night 7:30pm Truro Group, 40 Douglas St Truro, Room E. Celebrating 1 year of abstinence/recovery for Melanie B.

**August -Aug 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 World Service Convention:**

Theme: Sunshine of the Spirit! 60 Years around the sun! Orlando Florida, USA



NS Intergroup #09262

OA REGION SIX - NS INTERGROUP #09262 The OA NS Intergroup serves Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island. Opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong to contributors and may not represent Intergroup or OA as a whole.

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## From the Editors Desk

Well it has certainly been an interesting winter; full of much learning and blessings. For the past few weeks, it most definitely has been challenging to get things done; for life happened, throwing one of them curve balls in my path.

Two weeks ago, my son came home from work distraught. He had lost his job due to the government closing restaurants. It was difficult to watch my 34 year old son consumed with stress and worry and visibly upset. I tried to distract him in many ways but nothing worked. I began to be pulled into that stress, when I took a step back and decided to go for a walk; a walk with my HP.

My son having Aspburgers can be challenging at times for he processes things differently and at times has difficulty in expressing emotions, words etc. In moving last fall, finances with renting became a bigger responsibility and in recognizing that, I knew that extra burden on my son was there, especially him being a huge contributor in our expenses. I had years of experience and a program to know that we would be OK, he didn't. I knew I had to allow him time to process. The next day, I sat down to talk with him. Finally he was able to release some of that stress through tears, and in discussing everything openly we were able to get a plan in place. I seen the stress leave his body.

Thank God I have my program to keep me balanced. There were some trying times, when my character defects volume control gets turned up, but grateful for my HP giving me daily awareness to nip it in the butt asap and show me what action I needed to take.

Life certainly has changed with all that has been going on with this pandemic, but in all honesty, it really hasn't been too bad. True, my service has increased because in seeing the need of so many being affected by the added stress, I am grateful to be recovered and of service. I am able to keep

my head out of the chaos with my HP's guidance. I know if not for my program, I know I'd be insanely back into the food, in fear, obsessiveness and craziness. So grateful for my Program.

My job as Newsletter Editor for this edition wouldn't be possible without the generous outpouring of Experience, Strength & Hope from our fellows. I thank you. With each share submitted, I am inspired and encouraged in my own recovery.

So grateful to; Barb, Adrienne, Joyce, Rhonda, Claudette, Cathy, Elizabeth & Joanie. Without your contributions, our Newsletter would have very little content. Thank you for your service in sharing.

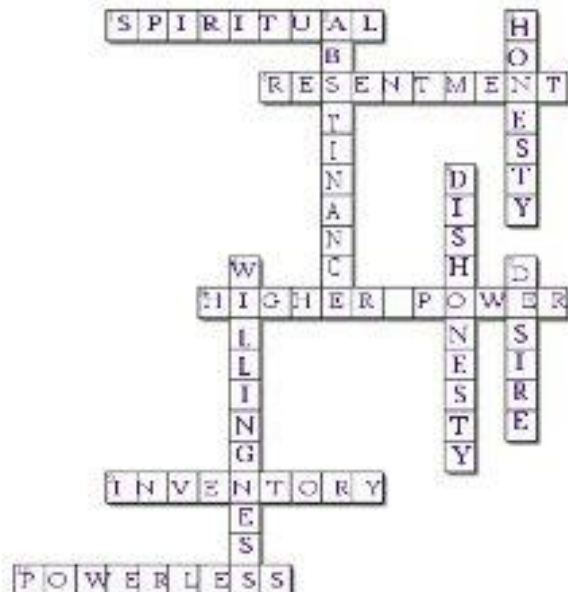
Thank you again, for this opportunity to serve.

**Please join in submitting your ESH for August's Intergroup Newsletter by July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

**If you have any questions or answers for the Ask It Basket, please forward to same email below.**

**Email : [OAIGNSNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:OAIGNSNewsletter@gmail.com)**

*Answers from Last Newsletters Crossword:*



## UPDATE ON MEETINGS



Due to COVID 19's social distancing and our meeting locations closing down due to the virus pandemic, some meetings are finding ways to still have meetings, via Phone and Zoom which is a virtual video chat on-line.

Here is a list of the meetings being held in the interim while our face to face meetings are on hold;

1. Monday Night Truro PHONE Meeting.  
7pm. To be added in on the conference call, please call Joanie at 1-902-369-2393 or call or text Melanie at 1-902-986-8636 at least ½ hour before meeting.
2. Thursday Mission Possible Meeting on ZOOM at 7PM  
Meeting ID 706 590 884 PW: 824926
3. Saturday Big Book Meeting on ZOOM 1PM  
Meeting ID: 757 017 307 PW: 068209

## TO SET UP ZOOM

1. Go to <https://zoom.us/> and click on the blue button in the top right corner that looks like this

**SIGN UP, IT'S FREE**

2. Place your email address where it says "your work email address" and click "sign up".
3. You then will have to go to your inbox of your email account and open the email they sent, so you can activate your account. Click on the blue tab that says "activate Account" ... like this

**Activate Account**

4. You then will be taken to a screen like this... Fill out your name, and make a password...then put in that password to confirm and then hit the orange "Continue" button.

### Welcome to Zoom

Hi, blue@melsgraphics.com. Your account has been successfully created. Please list your name and create a password to continue.





By signing up, I agree to the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).

**Continue**

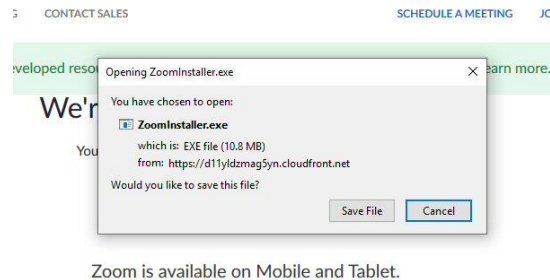
[Help](#)

You now have created and account.

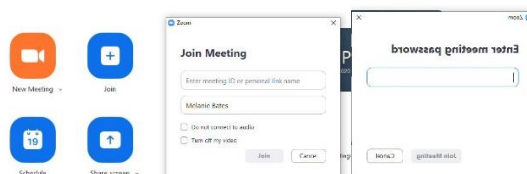
## DOWNLOAD ZOOM

NOW you download ZOOM to your computer/ Laptop/Ipad / tablet etc.

1. Go to <https://zoom.us/support/download>  
A box will appear like this below, click "save"



2. Double click on EXEC file to install. Zoom will open, you will enter your email and password. Then you will see "join" click on it. Then add ID number, click "join", then password, click "join meeting".

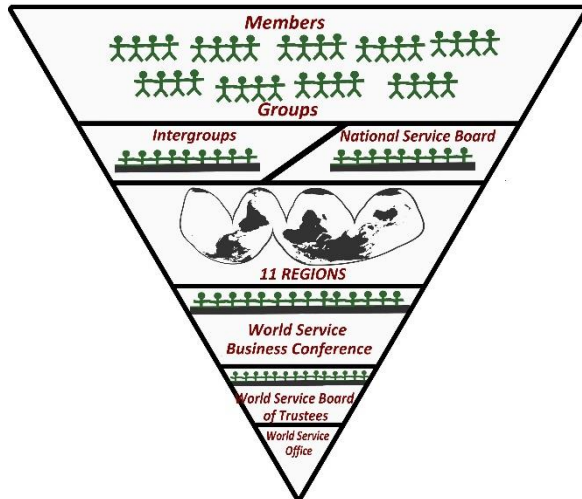


3. You then joined the meeting!

## A Little OA Info *continued*

### Recap of last time:

I talked about OA's Structure in our last Newsletter. If you look at the inverted triangle perhaps remember that as a member, where we actually fit within that structure. As a member we form groups. Those groups



form an Intergroup (or outside USA & Canada they are called NSB's). Those Intergroups form 11 Regions all over the world. Our Intergroup is within Region 6. As members, we have opportunity to do service in our Intergroup as well as go to WSBC (World Service Business Conference). And as a member, can have an opportunity to become a part of the BT (Board of Trustees). All service positions of course, may have prerequisites according to their by-laws. World Service Office) is run by non-OA members.

### How Each Work Together:

As many of you know, there is only one requirement for membership in OA. "A desire to stop eating compulsively".

**Groups** consist of two or more members. Each group practices the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service. No member of a group is required to practice any actions to remain an OA member or to have a voice at a meeting.

**Intergroups** and service boards consist of two or more groups. Intergroups (IGs) are formed to provide services beyond the group level.

**Service boards (SBs)** are service bodies that provide support for groups and/or intergroups that are not otherwise served within the existing service structure. They include national service boards (NSBs) and language service boards (LSBs). NSBs may be registered in countries outside the United States and Canada in

which the intergroup or service board serves the entire country. LSBs serve common needs of a language group, regardless of geo-graphic proximity. OA has one virtual and ten geographic regions around the world, which maintain direct communication with groups and intergroups/service boards and sponsor regional conventions and assemblies. The eleven regions each have regional trustees. The seventeen-member OA Board of Trustees is elected at the annual World Service Business Conference. The board is responsible for representing the Fellowship as a whole, including oversight of finances at the world service level. The World Service Office in Rio Rancho, New Mexico USA, receives contributions from all levels of OA. Its purpose is to support all levels of the Fellowship and help spread the OA message of recovery worldwide



**Seventh Tradition contributions make all this happen – for you and others.**

How are finances handled within the OA structure? OA groups and service bodies are encouraged to be self-supporting, using their own contributions to cover expenses, carry the message of OA, and keep a prudent reserve at all times. Groups may contribute specifically according to the informed group conscience, frequently choosing to send 60 percent to their intergroup/service board, while forwarding 10 percent to the region and 30 percent to the WSO. Groups may also choose, instead, to contribute funds to their intergroup/service board, knowing that the funds may be forwarded to the region and WSO. The Executive Committee of the board makes the decisions about how to use OA funds at the 6 world service level. In addition, elected delegates at the World Service Business Conference vote on major new initiatives that involve the worldwide Fellowship. The full board approves the annual budget, and the Executive Committee reviews the financials monthly.

**Next time:** *What does OA do with your contributions?*

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

### Step 12, Tradition 12

*The Spiritual Principle of Step 12 is Service, for Step 12 Tradition, the Principle is Spirituality.*

It's not about me, my pain, my food addiction, my background, or my family of origin. It's about what I'm doing today to help myself. I heard a member say very recently, "Think kind thoughts, say kind words." Tradition 12 helps me to ask HP to help me think of others. How do I do this. Strangely in order to help others I have to first help myself.

I would not have thought I was a Drama Queen. I sure am. That's a newer part of my Awareness.

*"In order to help others,  
I must first help myself."*

What HP bought to mind when I was writing this was an image of me looking at a HEAVY rock, and complaining in my head that I'd have to move this rock, and that no one is around who can help me. That in fact no one is EVER around when I need help. I have to do it all by myself, as USUAL blah blah blah.

For Today, OA and the spiritual parts of this beautiful program, allow me to see the Rock. I know it is heavy, and know that asking for help to lift it, is OK. Asking for help is healthy. And of course, as soon as I do ask, someone gives me a dolly to put under the rock, and helps me with the whole process. Because I have given myself permission to ask for help, this service I do for myself, frees me up physically and emotionally to help others in return. This is the OA way. I help others by helping myself.

*-Barbara W.  
Stepping into Recovery Group, Outer Cove, NL*



### My Disease

One of the readings today reminded me about the resilience of my disease and how it is constantly waiting in the shadows and strengthening itself to manifest in cunning ways. If I am reminded of that on a daily basis,

what I need to do is simple - Work the steps and use tools! I'm am never done working the steps and there will never be a time when a tool isn't valuable for me. I will always have my disease and I'm grateful for this cure called OA. Sometimes I will invite myself to a pity party and wallow in the fact that I can't always eat what I want to eat. That to me is an opportunity to pray that the healthy foods that nourish me is indeed what I want to eat. So, today, disease, I got you. I have the upper hand because I've meditated, read literature, offered service, reached out to a fellow, wrote in my journal. Not every day looks like this, but for today, it's my battle armour against disease!

*-Rhonda L*



### Overeaters Anonymous 40+ Years in NL

*This is my Food Addiction Story and how Overeaters Anonymous saved my life 36 Years now. I am on this Recovery Road from my food addiction One Day at a Time.*

I was in the OA Program for over 25 years when I met my 2nd husband to be. He was very kind and attentive. One of the things I had to explain to him was my *abstaining* from foods and from compulsive food behaviors that would cause me to continue to overeat.

I had to tell him *at an appropriate time* in the early stages of our courtship, that I didn't want the sweet



treats he usually bought out at 10:30 at night. He got it after a while that I was serious about this and that it was important to me to abstain from these sweets, and when we were out visiting his relatives at night, and they'd offer a desert he'd say, "No, Adrienne doesn't eat the beginning. I shared my "Food/Dieting" stories with -

*Continued on pg. 6*

people who had experienced some or all of the same after her supper." I was glad that I did not have to explain it to them myself. They didn't care really. They thought it was some kinda diet and they'd pour my tea.

Another "funny," back story here. Before I met Carl, way back when, when I was on one of my many diets I would have my 3 meals, have "legal" vegetables in between **AND** at night if I went out I would carry a Lunch Box made for the men who worked at the Grand Falls Paper Mill. (I've attached the picture). I would have a tossed salad in there and fruit.



At one point I went to my doctor for a regular check up and I said "my skin is orange," he guffawed me, and I showed him my hands and he said, "**YOUR SKIN ISSSS ORANGE.**" So, the diets did nothing for me. What they did was to show me how to hone my compulsive overeating skills to a higher, or rather lower level. I did lose weight that way, but in my heart, I KNEW I was learning nothing, and the guilt and shame of it, had me back to eating ALL my old trigger foods pretty soon.

*"I am very grateful that I can now, with the support I've been given in OA, celebrate festive events free from Compulsive Overeating."*

Overeaters Anonymous is different than anything I have ever experienced. It gets to the HEART of my insane fixation on food. Food for me was my lover, food was comfort, food was a mother, and a father. Food was Family. Food worked to sedate me when I was upset, or when I was happy. It was a reward when I worked hard, or it numbed my guilt when I did the "Avoidance," and didn't get tasks completed.

Luckily for me, Overeaters Anonymous has been in Newfoundland and Labrador for 40 plus years. I have been in the Program for 36 years and I have lost 35 pounds. The weight loss is one thing but the emotional freedom from compulsive overeating is what has been monumental. I have gained soooo much insight into my **SELF**. I understand now that I think very differently about Food, that knowledge has allowed me to make changes in my life to help me **NOT** take that first compulsive bite.

Overeaters Anonymous is as it says, "Anonymous". It is

this Anonymity that made me feel safe in the rooms in **the beginning**. I shared my "Food/Dieting" stories with people who had experienced some or all of the same struggles I've had. The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are used and the words "Alcohol," and "Alcoholic," are replaced with "Food," and "Food Obsession." A Higher Power *is* mentioned and for some this sounds, "religious," and therefore off putting, but Higher Power for me was simply a Power Greater than me which, early on was the group, was nature, was supportive friends in OA, and outside supportive friends not connected in any way to OA .

I truly feel I have an addiction to certain foods. Just as the person addicted to alcohol, or to drugs. Food, and in particular Trigger Foods, like chocolate, start me on a, "Can't get Enough," spiral to feeling hopeless, feeling ashamed, which sadly makes me, in my despair want to eat again so I can numb myself from feeling such self loathing for my weakness.

In Overeaters Anonymous we talk about One Day at A Time, one 24 hours that we are striving to not eat compulsively. Before it was about dieting for all kinds of reasons. To get into a bathing suit, or a dress, or with the men, suits. (Men come to OA and share their struggles and their recovery too). In the days before OA I would try to diet to *prepare for the overeating* on my Birthday, Halloween, Valentines, Christmas etc. etc. I didn't get very far with my resolve. I'd gained weight *trying* to diet.

Why am I sharing this story with you now? I'm sharing it because I am grateful to not have the "Food," monkey on my back. I'm sharing it because it IS 40 plus years that Overeaters Anonymous is in Newfoundland and Labrador. I'm sharing it because Christmas, the Biggest Food Feast of all is coming up and I KNOW there are people who are worried what they are going to do when the food comes out at the Christmas events. For me I'd be stuffed wayyyy more than the Turkey. But I'd still keep on eating well into the evening, even after that big meal. I know the discomfort; the pain and remorse overeating can bring.

I am very grateful that I can now, with the support I've been given in OA, celebrate festive events free from Compulsive Overeating.

For Today.... I am a grateful recovering overeater.

*-Adrienne  
Newfoundland & Labrador*

## True Freedom

I've been pondering a suggested reflection "**what is true freedom?**" and I've discovered that I could probably write a book on the subject as it pertains to life before and since my finding *Overeaters Anonymous*.

*"I True freedom today, for me,  
can be summed up in 3 words;  
"PEACE OF MIND".."*

Pre-OA, I would have said it was an easy topic as I truly felt in the big scheme of things, I already had true freedom. It came in the form of a solid career, a warm loving home, the freedom of living where I lived and the list went on and on. Today, post OA and looking back I cannot dispute anything on the long list for I did indeed have freedom galore.

The difference today, is that after nearly a decade of continuous learning through the 12 steps of OA, I now recognize that what I had, while it was freedom, and I am so grateful for it, it was not necessarily **TRUE** freedom.

True freedom today, for me, can be summed up in 3 words; "*PEACE OF MIND*". You see, while I did possess freedom in so many ways, I did not have Peace of Mind. At anytime while I was enjoying that career, my home, my family, etc. etc., I was also deeply tormented on the inside.

**Physically:** I was overweight and continuously gaining. I was progressing toward my genetic inheritance of Type 2 Diabetes and the myriad of issues that can accompany it.

**Emotionally:** I was losing my self-esteem, and self-respect. I was spending far, far too much precious time obsessing about eating and food, trying in vain to convince myself of everything from "**I got this**" to "**Who cares**" depending on the day. As if that weren't enough, I was under the illusion that I could (and even should) control everything and everyone around me. It's hard for me to write that last sentence today without smiling at my naivety.

**Spiritually:** I was somewhere between numb and confused at best.

In hindsight my pre-OA freedom, while it was real it was a far cry from what I would describe today as my "true freedom". Fast forward nearly 10 years, I have the Peace of Mind

that represents, for me "True Freedom" today. In addition to the original list (minus the career as I'm now happily retired), the picture has changed beyond my wildest dreams!

**Physically:** I have shed pounds and I am at a weight that I am comfortable with, the mirror is a convenience, not a spotlight for my flaws. Only one size clothes in my closet for the past several years. My health has never been better to the point where my family Dr. (2 years ago) said if he didn't know the difference the bloodwork results could be from a 12-year-old.

*"... today I do have the luxury of 12  
step living to guide me step by step"*

**Emotionally:** I have a healthier self esteem (I'm no better or worse than the next person, who knew!) I have a ton of self-respect, not because I'm that good but because I accept who I am, "warts n all". I've gone from the roller coaster of "**I got this to Who cares**" to a place where I know I am a Compulsive Overeater who **one day at a time** has found sweet recovery. I accept that I will never again have the luxury to think "I got this" but that's ok because today I do have the luxury of 12 step living to guide me step by step (pun intended).



**Spiritually:** I have a Higher Power, of my personal understanding, that I lean on daily and in all things. Where there was confusion, I now have faith. I don't have or need clarity in terms of "how it works" or "what it looks like" for me that's the beauty of "Faith". All I know is; I have come to a place where I can ask and receive guidance that opens the door to my mind and lets my own common sense prevail and that, If I allow it faith trumps fear every single time!!

*Continued on pg. 8*

True freedom today comes in more ways than I would have ever thought possible just to list a tiny fraction:

- going to sleep without thinking of food
- enjoying a TV show or road-trip without eating or obsessing about snacks.
- enjoying a holiday, without the pre holiday fear or the post-holiday remorse surrounding eating.
- being able to live and let live, especially where those closest to me are concerned
- being able to set healthy boundaries around relationships
- being able to mind my own business, say I'm sorry, or recognize when I need to far more often.
- accepting that I am and will always be a work in progress, and life is about good days and bad days, it's not an all or nothing journey.

Have a serene day,

-Joyce 🌞🦋🌸

Stepping into Recovery Group, St. John's, NL



*Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues.*

*Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer*  
-OA Preamble



## *Emotional Sobriety*

*"If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling liabilities.*

*Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to twelfth-step ourselves, as well as others, into emotional sobriety."*

-As Bill Sees It, © 1997, 21<sup>st</sup> Edition -pg. 288. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

What blessings occur with a 12 Step life!!!

When I think of how I stuffed my face for over half a century so I wouldn't feel any emotions because things were just too unbearable, it amazes me how things are so different now. In learning that my emotions are just that; emotions. I had nothing to fear, for I have a Power greater than myself that can be with me through anything; what a relief!! I need not fear anything.

In allowing myself to feel any emotion was foreign to me when first becoming abstinent. For a long while I couldn't even name what I felt. In walking with my HP, He showed me what emotions felt like and then taught me how to handle them and then to let them go.

Anger was one emotion that in my past I avoided; I stuffed it, for I felt it was not a good feeling and bad things happened due to it, so I couldn't go there. Anger like any emotion is a normal human happening. It is what I do with that anger that can be problematic; it may be a root to something that can cause me harm. Emotions are my divining rod in all essence. If I feel anger, I now know to allow myself to feel it but then I stop. I ask myself what exactly is it that angers me? Is there some unresolved issue? Is it a resentment or character flaw I need to let go? Is it true? If then immediately can take action if need be. What a program to be able to live by!! I can deal with things asap and not have to linger and maul it over to cause damage to me. What a life change! I do not need to use food to cope and can experience emotional sobriety. Each time in recognizing an emotion for what it is, I don't need to react. It gets easier each time and it's so liberating. Every part of my life has been set free and am able to live and love as the spiritual being, I am meant to be.

I am so thankful for my OA program, the 12 Steps and especially my HP!!

Thank you for my recovery

-Melanie B., Truro



## ***I am Powerless Over Food***

*"Yes, I am Powerless over Food, but I'm not powerless over Footwork." - Voices of Recovery, p. 308, Nov. 3rd*

I couldn't stay on a diet, the first three letters of the word Diet, is also the first clue. I would DIE if I had to give up my trigger foods, heck I'd die if I had to give up any food, I wanted to eat anytime I wanted to eat it. At least that's what I thought.

I had rights, didn't I? If things were goin' on in my life that were beyond stressful, food took the edge off. What's life all about if I can't enjoy treats? The weird thing was it was working less and less as a sedative. While my size on the other hand, was going in the opposite direction. It was expanding and expanding.

OA's door opened, I walked in. I heard my FOOD stories come out of other people's mouths. I felt scared, but I felt at home. When I feel scared, I usually eat. I didn't. I was on a High for 5 months. And then I got cocky and experimented with food again. I played this food off that food, that calorie count off this calorie count and again my weight crept up. It took me years and years of this cat and mouse game to look at my weight. "Obese," the doctor said. "What me?" I said shamefully in my head. 7 years ago, early November I asked an OA member I respect beyond respect to be my sponsor. That was when the tables turned. As it says in today's reading; "I'm not powerless over Footwork." I learned to be willing. committed, and accountable.

*"I learned to be willing,  
committed, and  
accountable."*

Things I KNOW I gotta do to keep Abstinent.

- Send my 10th Step to my sponsor by email DAILY.
- Make a healthy shopping list
- Eat a healthy meal if possible before I go to the supermarket.
- Ask HP to help me GET just what's on my list
- Make homemade EVERYTHING when possible
- Put what I'm grateful for that one day, on the top of my 10th Step, to my sponsor that night.
- And connecting with other OAers LIKE

♥YOU♥

I say gratefully to my sponsor, "I got through it and I didn't DIE," when I survive a stressful day, or a tricky food situation. I am involved in my recovery now in a very proactive, productive way. Life is better when I do my part.

For Today

Barb W.

Stepping into Recovery Group  
Newfoundland and Labrador



## ***Step 12***

My name is Elizabeth and I am a compulsive overeater - always have been and always will be. Fortunately, I am also gratefully recovering. I don't expect I will ever stop. This is a journey for life. I can only share my experience, strength and hope and trust that it might help someone in some small way.

I was compulsively overeating from my very first recollection of childhood - sitting on the back step beside a huge box of cookies. Later on, when we had a store, I stole a chocolate bar pretty much every time I passed through and had my stash hidden in my room. I was an obese child and went to food, almost always high sugar food, for comfort.

Obesity is everywhere these days but way back in postwar England it was very rare and I was the only obese child I ever saw. I was inevitably made fun of and I vividly remember wanting nothing more than to be normal.

In university, I made an attempt to end my life. After that came years of dieting with all the usual roller coaster results.

Fast forward to coming to Canada, being married, having a great job and leading a "successful" life - which was resting on a foundation of endless food restriction, weird and wacky diets, diet clubs, laxatives, diuretics and constant self-hate.

Finally, living outside Halifax, I saw a small classified ad for OA in the paper. Unfortunately, it meant going to a church which I was not willing to do. I did not

*-continued on pg. 10*

believe in God but if there was one, I felt sure he hated me! I had to struggle for a few more years until I attended a meeting on a Canadian Forces Base in Germany arranged to help alcoholics who had switched addictions and were failing fitness tests. The lady who chaired the meeting was from California and she was just passing through. It was a one-off meeting and it changed my life.

For the first time I was hearing my story - not in the details - but in the despair and misery that she was calling the disease of compulsive overeating. She had also found a solution. She was a normal sized calm and confident woman, totally comfortable in her skin, and I certainly wanted what she had!

Eventually, back in Canada, now living in Yarmouth, I was upset to find no OA meetings so, after a year of sulking, I started one!

*“It’s I am deeply grateful for a healthy body, mobility, clothes I can buy anywhere, a program that has seen me through every one of life’s ups and downs, a fellowship of amazing people and most surprising and life-changing of all - unshakable belief in a Higher Power.”*

That was 1986 and I have been imperfectly abstinent ever since. I can never fully explain what a miracle I have found in this program. I am deeply grateful for a healthy body, mobility, clothes I can buy anywhere, a program that has seen me through every one of life’s ups and downs, a fellowship of amazing people and most surprising and life-changing of all - unshakable belief in a Higher Power.

It is old but true - the very worst days in recovery are infinitely better than the very best days in the disease.

Thank you for listening and for being there for me and for all those others who suffer. Together, we really can get better!

Wishing everyone the joy and peace of recovery,  
-Elizabeth

## *Birthday Meetings*

*TBA: Once Face to Face meetings start up, Joanie will be celebrating 27 years of Abstinence and Melanie will be celebrating 1 year of abstinence  
Dates yet to be announced 😊*



## *Step Six:*

*“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”*

Spiritual principle: Willingness

*"Every character defect we have today has been useful to us at some point in our lives, and we need to recognize that fact."*

**-The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous (2nd edition) pg. 48**

Hello! My name is Cathy and I am a compulsive overeater. I've spent a lifetime defending my character defects and holding them close to me as though they were a sacred part of my identity. Working through Steps Four and Five allowed me to really explore these character defects on a deeper level. Before joining OA, I actually believed that some of these defects were my biggest character assets! They defined who I was on many levels.

It wasn't until working through the steps with my sponsor that I began to uncover my many character defects and the reasons why they showed up in my life. As Step Six explains, each of those defects were useful to me at certain points in my life. They allowed me to survive through hard times. They helped me to advocate during times I was dismissed. They kept me going each day, even if I ultimately began going down the wrong path. Those defects did not show up by accident. They  
*-Continued on pg. 11*

had a purpose but they outlived their welcome once their purpose was served. I held on to my character defects long past their usefulness. And many still linger... but I see them and I'm working on them too! Step Six helps me to understand this and also allows me the willingness to surrender these character defects to my Higher Power. I do not need to hold on to unnecessary defects that no longer serve a purpose. Forgiving myself and acknowledging why these defects showed up let's me move forward towards a healthier way of living.

*"Today, with the help of our incredible Overeaters Anonymous community, I choose to be a healed person. Every day, one day at a time, I make this choice. It's saving my life and adding purpose beyond imagination!"*

I notice now that I am beginning to evolve in many ways far beyond abstinence. I am healing internally and externally. I often take a pause or respond in ways I never could have imagined in the past. I try to view others and treat them with the same level of forgiveness and empathy that I'm practicing with myself.

If I have my own character defects that were built throughout my life due to circumstances and conditions, others in our society must also have the same situation with their characters defects that have hung on past their expiration date.

I keep this quote from an unknown source very close to my heart now because it really summarizes so much for me: "An unhealed person can find offense in pretty much anything someone does.

A healed person understands that the actions of others have nothing to do with them.

Each day you get to decide which one you will be."

Today, with the help of our incredible Overeaters Anonymous community, I choose to be a healed person. Every day, one day at a time, I make this choice. It's saving my life and adding purpose beyond imagination!

-Cathy W.



## *Suit Up & Show Up*

*"In AA we aim not only for sobriety – we try again to become citizens of the world that we rejected, and of the world that once rejected us. That is the ultimate demonstration toward which twelfth Step work is the first but not the final step."*

**-As Bill Sees It p21 © 1967 by Alcoholics Anonymous, World Services Inc. All rights reserved, printed with permission.**

The greatest service I can ever give an OA meeting is to suit up and show up and show up and be abstinent. Showing up started me toward being a part of the meeting. I can talk with newcomers, share my experience. Now I am real, by the grace of God and these 12 steps, I am genuinely credible, honest and courteous.

-Joanie, Truro



## *The Struggle in Dishonesty*

Hi my name is Melanie and I am a compulsive overeater with 299 days of abstinence and 100 lb weight loss. I struggled in the food for almost 57 years. 3 of those years were in a 12-step program, only having a taste of abstinence for a few months.

My self did play a huge role in those years, which resulted in struggling 100%. Somehow, I felt there was something "I" could do, but like the insane woman I was, I kept repeating the same thing over and over expecting different results. Last April in seeing a regain of 169 lbs, I felt defeated. For two days, "I" still tried to get back on track and both days by lunch everything was blown all to hell. I was hopeless.

*"Letting go is something when in dishonesty, I thought I did, but I didn't.... not fully. I was still holding on to my way.."*

My mind wondered back to the many, many diets, of losses and regains. How I ate myself to well over 600lbs. How in losing over 400 in a fit of compulsive exercising and restriction, to then have Weight loss surgery, still...it didn't take my compulsion away. I was miserable. It got worse never better.

When I finally conceded that I would never ever be a normal eater and I let go absolutely...all the alcoholic foods...every character defect...my very own self will; did things begin to change. I was beat and I knew I needed to surrender everything to my HP.

-Continued on pg. 12

Letting go is something when in dishonesty, I thought I did, but I didn't.... not fully. I was still holding on to my way. The twelve steps do not work that way...the big book says in total honesty one must let go absolutely with complete abandon. I got that verse finally. When I surrendered my all...my cravings and desire for food left. I believed my HP would take them from me. I had even written down "Please take my cravings and desire for food" and placed it in my God box. I wanted to train this stubborn brain to LET GO AND LET GOD. It



worked... man did it work. and I am so grateful. I know if ever I am struggling, I know i need to get on my knees...get closer to my HP and rely on him for EVERYTHING. if I am relying on my HP as I should, then struggle won't be in the equation because He is doing for me what I can not possibly do. I dig into my program from the moment I get up and talk to my HP, I write, I do conference calls, i do meetings I serve. I had enough of the insanity and I know I need to immerse myself in a 12-step life with my HP, IF NOT, my disease will rear its ugly head and that self-will slip back into play and struggle will ensue. I am grateful for all the miracles. I can be around my alcoholic foods and be untouched...I have no desire for them. When my sponsor asks, me how's my food, I say huh? food? I don't think of it...its only fuel for my body I eat my meals n I'm done. I even cook for my son things I no longer eat...I even bake...I do not want them nor long for them. Amongst a crowd that is eating, I can chat and converse and have learned to socialize without taking part in the food (I don't eat in the evening) and am fine with it. Oh, I remember that obsessive thinking on food 24-7...omg it was the worse. I will do anything to never go there again and I know I

need to keep spiritually fit with my HP every moment of the day. He is my buddy and beside me every minute guiding me. That food neutrality I know has been given to me by my HP. I surrender to him daily and ask for his awareness to do his will. What an awesome freedom. I need protect it with my life...for I know without my program and 12 steps I will be doomed. Program works, when I work it and I am so worth it and so are you.

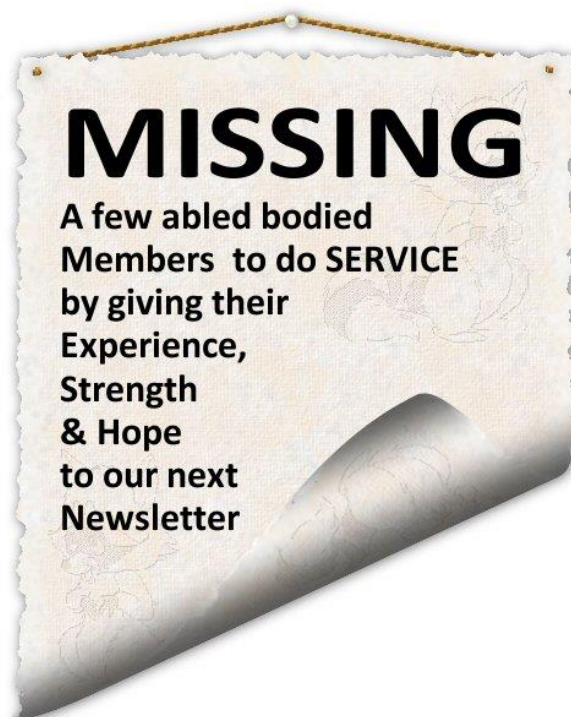
-Melanie B., Truro



### Serenity:

In these uncertain times, I often reflect on a definition of serenity I had learned at an OA retreat some years ago. When I am serene, I have these four things. If I do not have all four, I need to do whatever I need to in order to once again be spiritually fit (pg. 85 Big Book)

- 1) Am I physically relapsed?
- 2) Am I mentally focused?
- 3) Am I emotionally calm?
- 4) Am I spiritually connected?



If you have any article submissions, questions or answers for the Ask It Basket, please forward to the email below.

Email : [OAGNSNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:OAGNSNewsletter@gmail.com)

## The Gift

I procrastinate when it comes to writing for the newsletter (well for most things outside of my daily commitments). I put it off in the back of my mind as something I need to do.

Today Higher Power has urged me to do it!! It is very cold and windy outside; a very grey and dreary day. I am blessed to be sitting in my living room (which I had energy enough today to clean and tidy). My wood stove is blazing, I have a coffee and am cozy and comfortable. Last weekend I was feeling physically unwell and emotionally drained. I did very little last weekend. Today I reflect on how I am abstinent through each of these scenarios. I often take my current state of spiritual fitness for

“I often take my current state of spiritual fitness for granted. I must remember I am able to sit here feeling content today only by the grace of my Higher Power, the 12 steps and my willingness to follow through with my daily footwork.”

granted. I must remember I am able to sit here feeling content today only by the grace of my Higher Power, the 12 steps and my willingness to follow through with my daily footwork.

My plan of eating is the most important tool; I sometimes eat more quantity than my plan is based on but I have the ability by God's grace to re-evaluate that and reign things in when necessary.

I don't make many outreach calls; actually, very few- but I speak to my sponsor weekly as well as chat with 3 sponsees each week which benefits my own recovery more than I can express. I do receive calls and texts with much gratitude.

My daily footwork in the form of prayer, readings, writing a gratitude list and asking my HP to comfort and guide others in need helps me get out of my own self absorption.

I had been exercising which is such an amazing lift to my physical and emotional health but, I have let that go for the time being for a couple of reasons too irrelevant to share. I tend to be better at this in the summer months. I need to pray for HP to help me find a solution to my issue of balancing my weekdays with long commutes, a busy work schedule and home life; it's a work in progress. My HP has the solution, I just need to be willing to ask, listen and follow direction.

This way of life takes commitment and discipline (our disease of compulsive eating abhors these qualities). It requires me to work the steps in every part of my life. Most days I am able to do this but I admit some days I act like I never walked into the rooms of OA!! Thankfully these days are rare but when they happen, I have to analyse them and do the work to see why I acted or reacted the way I did and do the step work which helps me do better next time.

Where would I be without OA? I don't even want to imagine! I remember how I felt before OA and I hazard to guess if I had carried on in the food and in my defects of character it would have to be exponentially worse. So, today as I enjoy my coffee in my tidy living room in front of a warm soothing fire I am filled with peace, serenity and gratitude for OA and all of the people who laid the foundation, who trudged the path to happy destiny, who walk alongside me in their own beautiful journey's. What a gift this way of life is!!!

Claudette,  
Truro Group



“God,  
I offer myself to Thee –  
to build with me and do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.  
Take away my difficulties,  
that victory over them  
may bear witness to those I would help,  
of Thy Power, Thy love  
and Thy Way of life.  
May I do Thy will always!!”  
-3<sup>rd</sup> Step Prayer-



## Overwhelmed?

When I begin to feel overwhelmed, I know I am not following God's will for me. Choosing love, I focus on God, on God's power and wisdom rather than what I think I lack. Choosing fear, I focus on chaos, the situation, the circumstances, the impending doom. What's my choice? Love of course – God's way. I choose to have my mind blown by a miracle! Whatever I focus on expands.

People are likely familiar with the Big Book story p.407-420. (4<sup>th</sup> edition) (see especially paragraph 2, pg. 419) I am told the author of the story, Dr Paul O. said there are only two emotions; fear and love.

-Joanie, Truro



## Brutal Honesty is a MUST

Hi my name is Melanie and I am a compulsive overeater with 341 days abstinence and a 112 lbs weight release.

I can remember when I read the Big book, I finally understood that I was different than any "normal" eater. I was like the alcoholic; I could not stop at one drink/bite. I felt that overwhelming want to stop as I bawled and roared in desperation....while still shoving those things into me, I was totally powerless to stop. In the big Book it states, my overeating career has been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove I could eat like other people. The idea that someday I would control and enjoy my eating was the great obsession of this compulsive overeater. The delusion that I am like other people or presently may be, had to be smashed." Pg 30 BB.

I read in the doctor's opinion that a compulsive eater has two factors that sets them apart from being a normal eater. What makes me a true compulsive overeater? It is the Allergy to the body (which is once I take one bite I can't stop and if I do put down, I will eventually pick it back up again) AND the compulsion of the mind. Those two things TOGETHER, make me a true compulsive overeater. I will NEVER be a normal eater due to that allergy.

When needing to list my alcoholic foods, I told myself well hell, I was into food for nearly 57 years and man, near the end I could overeat on just about everything, how in the world do I pick those allergy foods? I have to eat!!

Well, in asking my HP for guidance, in the stillness I

began to see, that my compulsive eating had progressed so much, anything I ate of my alcoholic foods was not sating the pain I was feeling and since food was my go-to, my coping mechanism, my hands went to anything and everything I could find in the house to sate the pain I had inside. I had a compulsion of the mind too. I then knew, I wasn't being honest with myself. I knew exactly what were my alcoholic foods. I was reminded how my program needs brutal honesty... amazing how I could lie to myself and believe it.

*"my overeating career has been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove I could eat like other people. The idea that someday I would control and enjoy my eating was the great obsession of this compulsive overeater. The delusion that I am like other people or presently may be, had to be smashed."*

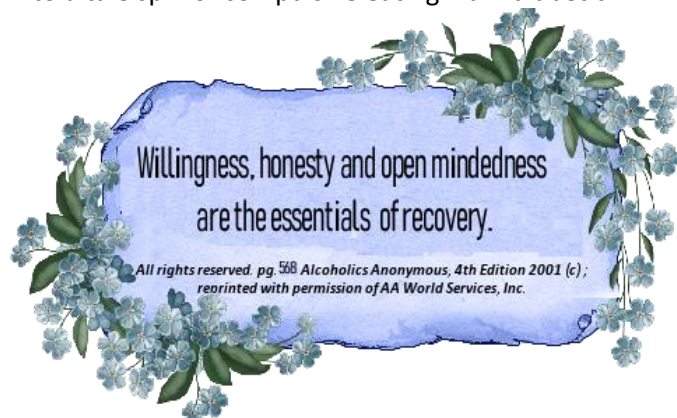
It's interesting though how my disease is cunning. It tries it's damndest to tell me lies and loopholes so I can still have the foods that drove me insane for so many years. This is why I know I need to stay connected and, in my program, because that voice will be there always trying to weasel its deception into my thinking. I must guard my abstinence daily.

When I first became abstinent, I listed my alcoholic foods. I wondered about a few. You could say the ones I questioned were my "yellow" foods. I also listed my compulsive food behaviors. I knew I had to sit at the table to eat...undistracted and train my body the cues it needed on what "full" meant. Sitting in front of a TV or computer let me eat mindlessly and that fill mark never registered for me. As I ate, I kept in tune with what each food felt like. I know when first in abstinence emotions and sensitivity was high so I felt like a radar detector...I wanted to see if there were any other foods, I was missing off my list. If in one bite I felt "mmmm more" I would know. Sure, enough as I ate my supper the first day...I knew bread immediately needed to be put on my list of alcoholic foods. After a month, with much reflection more foods were put on my list without even having to reach my mouth. The food fog was clearing and in complete honesty I knew I needed to give those foods up. My disease is cunning and, in my dishonesty, can believe every thought it tells me. Only by staying

-Continued on pg. 15

connected with my HP can I battle these voices

I know when others ask what foods do, I no longer eat? They immediately say...oh...your allergy is sugar and flour basically. I say no, my foods may have those components in them but never did I sit down with a bag of sugar and flour and eat hand over fist. I knew if I listed that as my food alcohol, my disease would be telling me lies as to what I could have and would set me into a tale spin of compulsive eating. I am diabetic. If I



were to say I was to eat no sugar...I would be eating sugar free pies, candy and desserts and I KNOW that would be a lie for me because even when I ate sugar free candy and sugar free things, I could never just have one bite...it was the whole bag or piece afterpiece of something. NO, I had to be exact on what my alcoholic foods were.

I have had food neutrality for almost 10 months. It has been a miracle from working the 12 steps. My HP is awesome!! He is doing for me what I could not do myself. My disease whispers..." well you're cured now...you can have some of those alcoholic foods now". NO, I will NEVER be cured. I have a predisposition, and allergy that I will always have and a disease that will always be in the wings waiting to tell me lies to take me back. I was born this way. Just as a person has an allergy to shellfish, I have an allergy to certain foods. If I eat them, I will be doomed, my life and my health will land me in the grave. I know it will. I AM a true COMPULSIVE OVEREATER. There is no graduation for me. Only solution is ABSTAINING and sticking close to my HP and living a 12-step life. My program works when I work it. I am so grateful for a serene and peaceful life that I am able to face anything that comes my way living the 12-step way. So grateful.

-Melanie B., Truro



## Whiskey in My Milk

*"Suddenly the thought crossed my mind that if I were to put an ounce of whiskey in my milk it couldn't hurt me on a full stomach. I ordered a whiskey and poured into my milk. I vaguely sensed I was not being any too smart, but felt reassured as I was taking the whiskey on a full stomach. The experiment went so well that I ordered another whiskey and poured it into more milk. That didn't seem to bother me so I tried another."*

-Alcoholics Anonymous (Big book) pg. 36

Hi! I'm Cathy, compulsive overeater and candy/chocolate addict. I had a lovely meeting with some of my OA pals and we happened to read this above section of the big book. It really resonated with me because the other evening in the midst of all this global uncertainty and the isolation from all the things I've substituted in my life to replace compulsive overeating, I made a comment to my husband about how I'm beginning to recognize that maybe I haven't truly healed fully inside of me and had replaced food in my life with healthy social activities and physical fitness classes, etc.

And now that these things are taken from me, my yearning for my addictive foods began creeping back. Because in my mind those foods still held many memories of joy and comfort. The government and the news reports keep assuring people that it's ok not to do things like we would normally do at this time. It's ok to slack off or sleep in or eat that chocolate. All these words out there and images on social media of people using this event as justification to throw things by the wayside had my emotions bubbling to the surface.

My husband has been very supportive and he has been following along side of me but he too seemed to be waiting for a moment of weakness to jump back into old ways.

He looked at me as I pondered out loud all my thoughts and said "well you don't have to have chocolate/candy, I can go get some ice cream because that's not on your red list of foods"

Suddenly I felt like the man with the milk and whiskey. If I had caved into my temptation and just substituted ice cream instead of candy/chocolate then would I be ok? No, I'd still be consuming empty calories and I may even risk the creation of new addictive foods using that method.

Instead, I journaled my feelings and sat with them for a while and tried to understand where they are coming  
-continued on page 16

from and what needs to be done to remove these emotions towards food.

It's so easy to be the man with the milk and whiskey. Substituting and justifying doesn't work in the long run.

*“Even during troubled times like these, I have any reason to turn to food for comfort. There are much better places to turn. I have to keep mindful of this every day. One day at a time.”*

Even during troubled times like these, I have any reason to turn to food for comfort. There are much better places to turn. I have to keep mindful of this every day. One day at a time.

For now, I will find new healthy substitutions that bring me joy as I continue to work the steps. Food will not be my avenue of choice.

Cathy W



### ***Surrender, Accountability & Responsibility***

Am I becoming the person God intends me to be?

Yes, I am growing towards that person through the 12-step life. Being aware and conscience of the fact that I am a compulsive overeater, I surrendered my life to God's care. I continue to be careful to stay accountable.

I guard my recovery; it is a precious gift.

I am powerless over people, places, and things, but I'm not powerless over unnecessary hassles in my life. Asking God for direction and grace (bottom 87 Big book) I still have accountability and the ability to change.

How I act is, in the end, my choice, and knowing my problem, recovery is my responsibility.

-Joanie, Truro

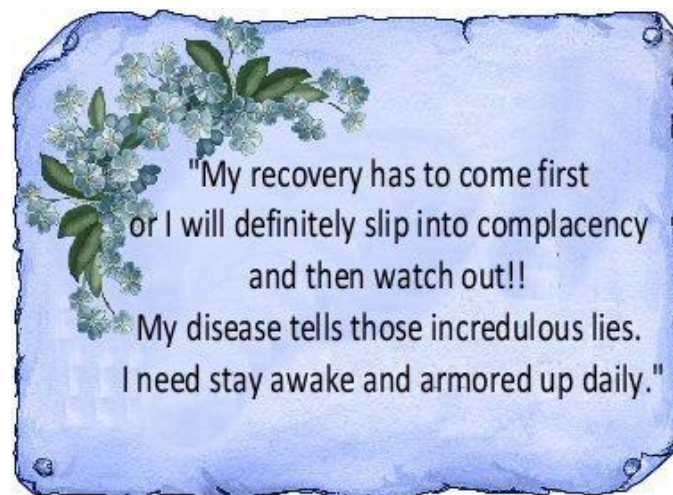
### ***STAY AWAKE***

Hi my name is Melanie and I am a compulsive overeater with 343 days of abstinence with a 112 lb weight release.

I once heard it said, "when I don't feel like going, it IS the EXACT place I need to be". It has stuck with me.

Those nights when I get a case of drop ass, I push it out the door. Those days when I just want to do nothing and the phone rings. When I want to cancel taking part in a phone meeting because the day has just felt so much... oh boy can I find reasons not to do anything.

Knowing I am a compulsive overeater and always will be, I can so easily make excuses... and BELIEVE them with such conviction but yet they can be in dishonesty.



My character defects are like a volume control, I need to keep the volume down, so I can hear my HP's will not mine. It can be easy to get unbalanced and not hear.

I know I need to stay awake and aware so I can hear what I need to hear. When undecided, I trust my HP will show me what I need to do. Have patience to wait, and willing to listen, to hear, and do.

I am only abstinent in this moment... only one bite away... for I am a compulsive over eater. Never cured, only recovered one day at a time. It is only by relying on a Power greater than me that I can; definitely not in any way of my own doing.

My recovery has to come first or I will definitely slip into complacency and then watch out!! My disease tells those incredulous lies. I need stay awake and armored up daily.

-Melanie B., Truro



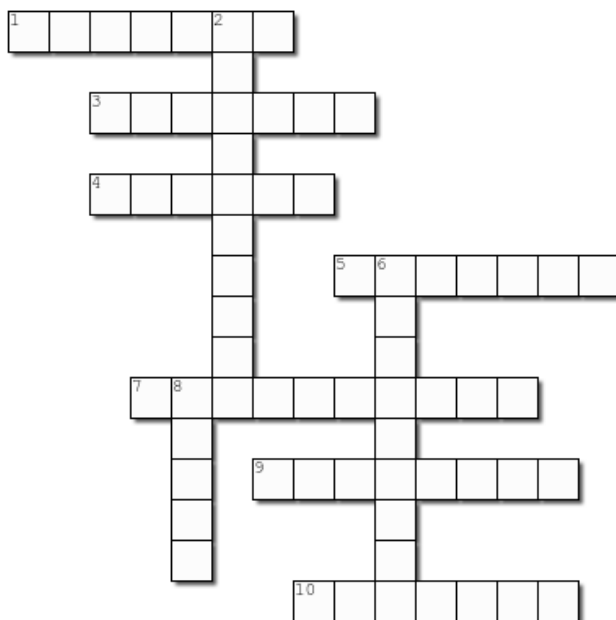
## An OA Literature Crossword Puzzle

Along with working the Steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance and manageability into our lives. – The Tools of Recovery, pg. 5

Literature is one of our Tools of Recovery.

Here is a crossword puzzle to help us dig into our literature. Each excerpt given is a line from our literature. One word will be missing; fill that word into the crossword puzzle. A hint is given as to what book the answer is found.

Have fun finding OA's truths.



### Across

1. "They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous \_\_\_\_\_." Big Book -How it Works pg.58)
3. "Came to believe that a Power \_\_\_\_\_ than ourselves could restore us to sanity" (OA 12 & 12 -back pg.169)
4. "As Tradition Three implies, a \_\_\_\_\_ to abstain – to refrain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors -is at the heart of OA membership." (OA 12 & 12 - Tradition 3 pg.108)
5. "We then saw calmly accept impossible situations, \_\_\_\_\_ neither to run nor to incriminate." (AA 1d2 & 12 -Step Two, pg.31)
7. "A spiritual experience, he conceded, was \_\_\_\_\_ necessary...." (Big Book -A Vision For You, pg. 155)
9. "He may say almost anything, if he has accepted our solution which as you know

### Across

- demands \_\_\_\_\_ honesty." (Big Book -To Employers pg. 145)
10. "Mental obsession plus physical \_\_\_\_\_." (AA 12 & 12, Step One, pg.5)

### Down

2. "Those who have studied them carefully have found that these \_\_\_\_\_ be applied effectively to..." (OA 12 & 12 -Intro, pg. 89)
6. Our \_\_\_\_\_ and spiritual health depends on the health of our relationships." (OA 12 & 12 - Trad One, pg. 97)
8. "...ceaselessly devour the foundations of whatever sort of life we try to \_\_\_\_\_." (AA 12 & 12 4 -pg. 49)

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-Submitted by Melanie B



## ASK IT BASKET

*If you have a question for the Ask it Basket, please send to the Editor and in the next issue it will be answered. If you would like to answer one of the questions published, please send your reply to the Editor. Please be mindful of the 12 Traditions & the OA way. Your reply will be published in the next Newsletter Publication. All questions or replies are anonymous unless otherwise stated.*

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong to contributors and may not represent Intergroup or OA as a whole.

### **Q: How did you that have lost weight do it?**

**A:** Hi my name is Melanie and I am a compulsive overeater. I am 336 days abstinent with a 112 lb weight release. I once heard from another fellow; "Focus on the weight, lose your program, focus on your program, the weight will come off" So that is what I did. When I finally admitted my powerlessness and life unmanageable things changed. Oh, for years I believed I was powerless but..."I" still kept trying to do what "I" thought I had to, but "I" did not get it. "I" thought I understood...but head knowledge has nothing to do with it. I was working from my character defects...dishonesty, self-seeking, selfishness and fear. I was working from the ego. I had an 18-inch block. I totally was beat. When I finally understood that I would NEVER be a normal eater, I knew there was absolutely NOTHING "I: could do to stop" I knew I was beat. I needed a power greater than myself to do what I could not do. When I totally surrendered, that block opened and life changed. I dug into the steps and worked them like my hair was on fire. I experienced miracle after miracle by working the steps. My relationship with my HP grew. I work my program daily asking my HP for awareness and guidance every minute. When someone asks me how I lost the weight. I say I

don't eat the foods that are my alcoholic foods and I follow a healthy plan of eating. It is not a diet, there is no restriction. I eat what I would eat as if I was in maintenance...as what was given to me by a nutritionist. AND I WORK THE STEP 12 STEPS. I focus on my program and weight comes off. I do not know where my HP will take me. I have no idea. When people ask how much more do, I have to lose? I reply I dunno...that's up to my HP. He is in control not me. I have no say in it. I am not dieting. I am living. Living the 12 steps. and what an awesome way to live!! It took desperation for me to be willing and able to surrender my ALL; EVERYTHING. SO grateful. My program works when I work it, and I am worth it...and...so are you!

**Q: "In the podcast I listen to, I often hear long time abstinent fellows say they follow a no sugar, no flour meal plan. Sounds good to me. But I'm now caught up in does that mean other starches are fair game? Rice, potatoes, corn? I've looked at them as "bad foods" for so long that I'm feeling strangely hesitant and it's creating all new head games to go ahead and partake. ???? Anyone else following no sugar/no flour and not getting caught up in keto-ism?"**

**A.** I don't follow any kind of set plan of others; I follow a plan that is for me... one that has been talked over by a nutritionist and doctor and confirmed by my HP. I eat all healthy foods that are balanced to maintain health and my diabetes. Yes, due to my alcoholic foods, my plan may have very little sugar but to say I eat no sugar and flour? Only my alcoholic foods are exempt from my eating plan. Never did I sit down and binge on bag of sugar or a bag of flour. I knew I had to define my alcoholic foods not group them into a category.... but my alcoholic foods may have included those ingredients. My alcoholic foods are; potato chips, any snack chips cheezies, doritos, etc., all snack crackers, butter on soda crackers, bread, rolls, buns, wraps, tortillas, cookies, squares, cakes, snack breads, all desserts pies, cheesecakes etc., frozen yogurt ice-cream,& novelties, tail mix, bars nuts cashews etc. chocolate, candy whether sugary or sugar free items all are a no for me. I eat very little pasta, rice, and potato but that is due to my stomach more than anything for my tolerance for them isn't good. My plan is my plan and for me...and in

-Continued on pg. 19

no way is a diet...it is a plan of eating for life and there is no restrictive means of calories to lose weight. It is healthy and balance 3 meals a day for me, no in between eating or evening eating. When deciding on a plan I took info from "dignity of choice" and the information I was given by professionals. I spent almost 57 years in the food; dieting and eating my way to well over 600 lbs... then in a fit lost 400 lbs in a transference, getting too low and even had WLS BUT it didn't fix my compulsive eating. With a regain of 169 lbs in the spring of 2019, I finally entered OA and found recovery. That was 337 days ago and have 112 lbs gone. OA is not about diet and losing weight but when I focus on the 12 steps and my program, the weight comes off. NO MORE DIETING YAY!! FREE from the slavery of food. and so much more!! Program works when I work it and I am worth it... and so are you.

**Q: Please let me know what methods you have used successfully, to NOT react? I've been told to STOP, BREATHE, PRAY before answering or reacting to a person.**

**Two instances this week.**

**1. I was trying to pick up cheques from my ex, and had stated clearly, I was not coming in the house. He started acting so dramatic, and waving around the envelope and not letting me get a hold of it. Ugh.**

**My son was waiting in the truck and said later "you continue to let him push your buttons. Don't react."**

**Incident #2**

**My son was on the phone, telling me about his finances. I did not agree with something he said (I was afraid he would lose the deal; the old control issues rose up) & again, I reacted. My son shouted at me, "Mom, DONT tell me what to do!"**

**Please shake HOW, you breathe, relax, pray, and NOT react?**

**A: The only thing that has taught me how to not react is by working the 12 steps and staying**

spiritually fit. It has been the ONLY thing that has worked for me. If I ever struggle...I know I have to go back to step one because the only way for the 12 steps to work is not doing my will but that of my HPs. If I struggle it means I am taking back my self will... and the 12 steps can not work that way. It works when I am totally powerless and relying on my HP to do for me what I can't do. That is basically everything for not only am I powerless but my life is unmanageable.

As I worked the steps...I built a relationship with my HP. Like all relationships it takes work and commitment. A commitment to do my HPs will NOT mine.

Yes during times of chaos...my self will can be drawn out and react...I am human.... but with awareness daily. My HP shows me n I can nip it in the butt because I have the 12 steps to live by. The more I keep spiritually fit...the easier it is. My defects are on a volume control. If they get turned up, I will not hear my HPs guidance. My HP teaches me balance when I am willing to learn n take action.

**Q: What exactly is meant by the "Honeymoon" being over?**

**A: When I first became abstinent and I surrendered my All to my HP, I was over the moon in feeling such freedom from the food. That "feel good" was tremendous. But just as in any marriage, when the honeymoon is over, and life begins to happen and the "feel good" dissipates, the hard work in that relationship begins.**

For this compulsive overeater, I knew I had to work hard on my relationship with my HP to stay spiritually fit so that miracle of abstinence and food neutrality would continue. When that "feel good" dissipated, it felt weird. I wasn't unhappy, yet ...not overjoyed, I thought...what am I feeling?? Oh...this is what the hum drum of life feels like...I'm ok with that!!

I knew in getting to know how each emotion felt would help me down the road to be a divining rod of what was happening inside me.

In working on my relationship with my HP, that honeymoon feeling changes into a richer grateful feel good. A 12-step life is awesome way to live!!