

# OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

OA INTERGROUP NOVA SCOTIA #09262 NEWSLETTER – REGION 6

NOVEMBER 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 Rm A  
Contact Jane: 902-639-9964

**Tuesday Meeting:** 12:10pm  
Corner of Kent & Hillsboro Streets  
221 Kent St downstairs Charlottetown, PEI  
Contact Morag: 902-367-7084

**Wednesday Meeting:** 8pm  
OA Atlantic Recovery Meeting  
<http://zoom.us/> ID: 622 506 1826 PW:193901  
Contact Mel: 902-986-8636

**Thursday Meeting:** 12pm  
St Augustine's Church, 304 Dominion St. Annex Bld.  
Basement, MONCTON, NB E1C 6H8, PEI  
Contact Sally: 506-204-2828

**Thursday Meeting:** 7am  
Howe Dr, Church Hall  
Armdale Rotary, Halifax, NS  
Contact Tobi: 902-237-9707 **-SEE ZOOM LIST**

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

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

**Saturday Meeting:** 1pm  
521 Main Ave, Halifax, NS  
Contact: Kathleen: 902-877-4498 **-SEE ZOOM LIST**

**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*



**Nov** -Sat Nov 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 **OAIGNS Meeting:** Place TBA

- Nov 21<sup>st</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> **International Day Experiencing Abstinence**

**(IDEA)** Join OA members worldwide as we begin or affirm our abstinence from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors.

**December** -Sat Dec 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **12 Step Within Day** - an annual

event established by the World Service Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous in 2009. Groups and Intergroups around the world are encouraged to plan events to support the still suffering compulsive eater within our fellowship.

**January**-January 16<sup>th</sup> **OA's 61<sup>st</sup> Birthday.**

**Feb** -Sat Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 **Possible Unity Day meeting TBA** This day

recognises the strength of the Fellowship worldwide at 11:30pm

**April** -Sat Nov 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **OAIGNS Meeting:** Place TBA

-Apr 21<sup>st</sup> -24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 **World Service Business Conference**

Theme: "Looking to the Future; One Day at a Time"

-April ? 2021 ? **NB Retreat TBA.**



NS Intergroup #09262

OA REGION SIX - NS INTERGROUP #09262 The OA NS Intergroup serves Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island. We are part of OA Region 6. Opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong to contributors and may not represent Intergroup or OA as a whole. OA Trademark logos are property of oa.org. The vectors pixilation & graphics used on this Newsletter were made by the Editor

## From the Editors Desk

What a whirlwind of happenings and changes in the past few months; a onslaught of learning and blessings. Talk about learning time management and acceptance! I Certainly had to learn to rely on my HP constantly. At times I felt stumped in what direction I was being lead, but as always, when I stop and become still, my HP always shows me. What a process to learn. Learning to trust those instincts that once failed me. My HP and program never fails me.

In coming up on a year in being Newsletter Editor, my goodness time has passed quickly. I know as each submission was sent in, I was given much inspiration from all those who contributed. Every share helped me in my recovery and really brought home how important it is to carry the message. I think of all the ESH in the last 4 editions and think of the potential those shares could do, if others had the opportunity to read them. Imagine what a website would do!! I am reminded of a song when I was a child "this little light of mine, I'm gunna let it shine..." We are those shining stars, that lighthouse that seeks out those in distress, we are that light, if we allow it to shine forth.

Every once in a while, I sit and take one out a newsletter to read and I see something else I never had before. Our message is one that continues, if we provide the ways and means and take action. Yes Action. I know at the Retreat I heard "Do or Do not, there is no try!" A reminder how Action is vital to my program. Then this past weekend at Region 6 Convention, I was reminded again. "If nothing changes, Nothing changes". Bam!! Once again, a reminder how my program is one of ACTION ACTION ACTION. Without it, there is no change. I remember those 57 years nothing changed and my compulsive eating got worse. All that COE enabled a gain of mass proportions that put my life at risk. How much more could my body take?

I am so grateful my HP brought me to a point of desperation to realize how powerless I really am.

In considering the Chair position and the many times I received nudges to do so, I questioned all my service positions and wondered if someone would take the Editor job. At the Retreat I felt

A nudge, so I mentioned how the position of Newsletter Editor would soon be up for any wanting to do service. Within the week, there was an email willing to do service, and willint to take on early. I am so grateful for my HP to provide willing hearts.

So Our New Newsletter Editor will be continuing on with the torch to compile all your wonderful ESH in OAIGNS Newsletters on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

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; Éowyn, Millie, Elsa, Joanie & Cathy W.

Without your contributions, our Newsletter would have very little content. Thank you for your service in sharing.

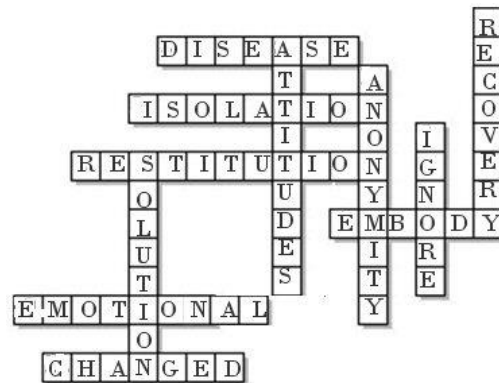
Thank you again, for this opportunity to serve.

**Please join in submitting your ESH for April's Intergroup Newsletter by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.**

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

**Email : OAIGNSNewsletter@gmail.com**

*Answers from Last Newsletters Crossword:*



**Please note:** I made a mistake!! I hope it didn't drive you insane with fitting answers in! There were blocks missing that would have confused #4 down. It had 2 blocks missing. My sincerest apologies - Melanie.



## 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. Wednesday OA Atlantic Recovery Group  
8-9pm Meeting #88979  
Meeting ID: 622 506 1826 PW: 193901
2. Thursday Mission Possible Meeting 7pm  
Meeting ID 868 7927 7231 PW: 292200
3. Saturday Big Book Meeting 1-2pm  
Meeting ID: 833 6123 1491 PW: 512668

ALL MAY CHANGE PENDING ON PANDEMIC

## 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

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

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](#).

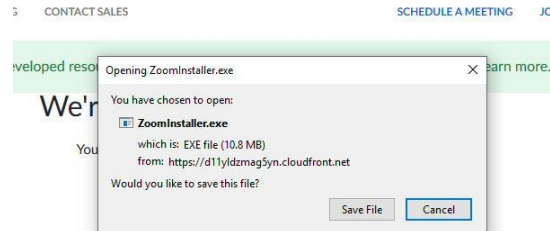


You now have created and account.

## DOWNLOAD ZOOM

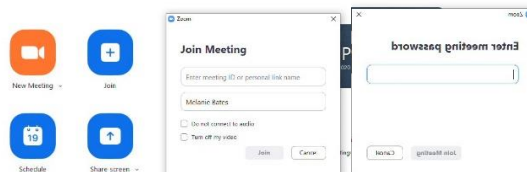
NOW you download ZOOM to your computer/ Laptop/Ipad / tablet etc.

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



Zoom is available on Mobile and Tablet.

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!

## From OAIGNS Chair:

Hi, my name is Melanie & I am a Compulsive overeater. I have 18 months of abstinence and 142lbs released.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the opportunity to serve the fellowship as Chair for OAIGNS. So grateful for Megan in aiding me and the support she has given in passing on the torch.



Holding the flame for our area, I know I will only be able to do this, with the support of my fellows and my HP. I am grateful for those serving with me;

### Board of Executive;

Vice Chair, Claudette

Treasurer, Mary

Secretary, Marion

### Board Members (Chairs/Reps);

By-laws: Claire

Retreat Chair: Joanne -> [term up, looking to be filled](#)

Co-Chair -> [new, looking to be filled](#)

Newsletter Editor: Mary Dale Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

PI: Cathy

Region 6 Rep: Claire

WSO Rep: Elizabeth

### All Intergroup Reps;

Atlantic Recovery: Cathy

Charlottetown: Morag

Halifax Sat Morn: JoAnne

Halifax Thurs Eve: Carlita

Hammonds Plains: Dianne

Moncton: ?

Sackville: Claire

Truro: Jane

Wolfville: ?

Yarmouth: ?

I am grateful for the service given to our Intergroup Board. A lot of hard work by many. For the outgoing service workers, an awesome job by all!!

Having those serving for **Retreat, Bylaws** and **Website Committees** too, help get things done which are needed for an Intergroup to function. Our primary purpose is to spread the message to other compulsive overeaters. Without service our existence would end. Where would our meetings be? Where would our recovery be?

How awesome it is to have everyone working together. No matter the job, we all can fit together, to help in ways that help the whole. We all are given a voice and point of view which is invaluable when shared.

Life has certainly been progressing in mass proportions in the past 8 months. Our "normal" was

changed in so many ways. With group facilities being shut down, it definitely threw a monkey wrench into the midst. In seeing each group unite to work at keeping meetings going was awesome to see. What a learning curve!! But isn't that what life is all about? Accepting life on life's terms and taking action?

I know I had to work my program even more to stay recovered this past year. I NEEDED to take action.

Certainly, with all the virtual meetings since f2f meetings closed, it has been a blessing in many ways, where the fellowship, world wide has been united. Being able to attend a meeting anywhere in the world and feel at home...how awesome is that! It was been a reminder that together we do get better. Reaching out through other various means, provided a way to continue in program the only way we could. With some getting back to their face to face meetings, it certainly has been different. What once was, may never be, and accepting the here and now is our only solution. Waiting for something that may never happen, we may lose out on some valuable moments.

The Fall OAIGNS Retreat was wonderful! A weekend of Spirituality in the Steps. In taking the Retreat to a new level of a Hybrid one, it sure was a learning curve but oh how together we did, what we could not do alone! Thanks so much for the Retreat Chair, committee and members who joined together and worked hard to provide a blessed weekend of fellowship.

Having attended the Region 6 Fall Conference was another blessing. So grateful to be a part of the first virtual convention. Meeting many familiar and new fellows and being blessed with the many speakers present certainly drove home the theme of the importance of Focusing on Recovery. It was also exciting to hear/see a sneak peek of what WSO has in store!!

I am excited with all the possibilities of the upcoming months and following year for Nova Scotia Intergroup. Seeing others join in to do service makes my heart sing! I pray that the whole fellowship will be blessed tenfold in their recovery by joining in and taking action to help all those who are struggling in our disease. We need each other, and I definitely know, I need you! My program shows me I cannot do this alone. *"Together we can do, what we cannot do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness. No longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hand for power and strength greater than ours- and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams".*

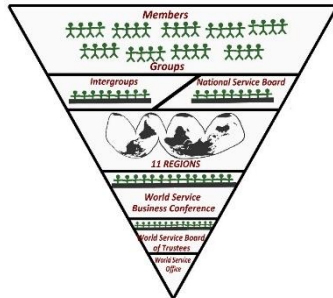
So grateful to be of Service - Melanie



## A Little OA Info *continued*

### Recap of last few times:

In our last 3 Newsletters, we talked about OA's Structure and what each service bodies responsibilities were in that structure. We also discussed what happens with our contributions when we give to our local group. 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



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

by-laws. World Service Office) is run by non-OA members. Each work together and through our 7<sup>th</sup> tradition we function together so all can provide recovery worldwide to all those who have a desire to stop eating compulsively. 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 over-sight of finances at the world service level. *We learned each have their own responsibilities...*

#### Groups

- Provide places to meet & share recovery.
- Purchase supplies to run meetings
- Buy literature & media from WSO
- Support the Intergroup/service board, region and WSO

#### Intergroups and service boards

- Offer local outreach to professional communities, hospitals, schools, and libraries.
- Hold recovery events.
- Maintain Websites

- Keep updated meeting lists
- Provide telephone information and answering services.
- Publish Newsletters.
- Send representatives to Region assemblies and delegates to World Service Business Conference to vote on behalf of the fellowship and contribute to the group conscience of OA as a whole concerning policies and services.

#### Region

- Hold Assemblies & Recovery Events.
- Support Community & Media outreach.
- Maintain websites.
- Publish Newsletters.
- Keep lists of speakers.
- Support officer's expenses.
- Maintain reference & Media libraries.
- Offer support to Intergroups/service boards and unaffiliated groups.

#### World Service Office

- Produces and distributes OA approved literature, media & specialty items.
- Maintains, monitors & updates oa.org.
- Offers worldwide meeting information on-line and by phone, mail, fax, and email.
- Publishes Lifeline magazine, A Step Ahead newsletter, and WSO News Bulletin.
- Sends starter kits for new groups.
- Registers and updates groups, including service bodies.
- Handles OA's media and public relations requests.
- Reaches out to professionals.
- Holds annual World Service Business Conferences.
- Holds World Service Conventions.

#### Special Funds

The Board of Trustees or World Service Business Conference may establish a dedicated or "restrict-ed" fund to which members may make targeted contributions. Members wishing to contribute to these funds may indicate their specific choice. In-formation about any restricted funds can be found on oa.org.

*Some Exerts taken from 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Pamphlet A Board-Approved ©1998, 2004, 2008, 2016 Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. All rights reserved.*

### How does all this OA structure help me in my recovery?

As each Group, Intergroup, Region, and World Service Office hold the necessary structure & responsibilities in their care, the membership can take action by doing service. This provides the growth in fellowship to provide for the still suffering compulsive overeater. This is our primary purpose. As a recovered Compulsive Overeater, I am never cured. I am only recovered for today. Working my 12<sup>th</sup> step and doing service, Spreading the message, being that message, secures my recovery daily. By staying spiritually fit and working my program, I become that message for other fellow sufferers. Together we get better.

**Next time:** *The Inner dynamics of an Intergroup*

## ***From our PI/PO Chair:*** ***-Public Information / Public Outreach***

Hello to our wonderful OA Fellowship!  
I really want to thank you all for allowing me to serve within the position of Public Information and Professional Outreach (PI/PO) for OAIGNS. I've really been blessed by what Overeaters Anonymous has to offer and my hope is that I will be able help pay this forward through the PI/PO role, reaching out to those who still suffer.

Entering into this role, I had to explore the ways I could be of service. At this point, my focus has really been on how we can best reach out to Newcomers and build a known presence within our community. In my own experience, when coming into OA, it took me many twists and turns before I had any idea that we had such an amazing fellowship in our own backyard here! I was so amazed at all the wonderful local resources, once I was able to tap into our community. I felt very lucky to have found all of you.

One critical component to public outreach, that I felt was needed, was to find a way to build a website for OAIGNS. This would help us to reach newcomers and also keep our fellowship connected and updated. Personally, I'm not the most tech savvy one for the job but I didn't want that to prevent us from building something that could really serve our community well. Naturally, I turned to our amazing fellowship and put a call out for service members to join together on a website committee.

To my amazement, within such little time, we had a full eager committee of members join in on this wonderful project. Each member brings with them various skills that they are willing to offer to the project. It's truly been wonderful to see this come together.

At this point the members on the website committee are: Melanie, Marion, Tina, Suzanne, Millie, Thane, Elsa and myself. I'm so grateful for their service and the skills they are offering to help make this vision come true. I truly want to thank our Website Committee for offering their service to this important project. Our door is always open for new members to join at anytime! Before we began on the website, I had the pleasure of reaching out to each of our groups within Nova Scotia and speaking to a member directly to hear how things

are going and to gauge how we can best serve and represent each group with this project. I really enjoyed getting to know the many members I spoke with and hearing how each group has managed to weather the storm during this unexpected pandemic. It's truly incredible to see the willingness of our fellowship to learn new ways of coming together to ensure that meetings continued. Some groups used Zoom, others used the telephone and ultimately, in one form or another, everyone was able to connect during these difficult times. Many enjoyed exploring new groups across our province as they went virtual. Many new friendships were formed and whole new levels of connections were made thanks to the ingenuity of our Fellowship!

Moving forward, it is our goal as a Website Committee to continue to assist with these connections while making our presence more widely known to those who are still suffering in our community. We are excited to unveil this new website very soon, so stay tuned! And once this project has been developed, many more new and exciting ways of reaching our community will be explored. The sky is the limit!

Again, thank you to each and every one of you who helped to form this incredible OA Fellowship. We truly do have the most amazing community and I hope many others will find their way into our Fellowship!

With deepest gratitude, Cathy W

### **PASSING OF THE TORCH**

I am so grateful to have served as your Newsletter Editor this last 14 months. What fun it has been!! At the Retreat I felt lead to mention that my term would be over in August 2021. How awesome it was to hear a fellow step up a week later and say they would be willing. SO GRATEFUL!! God is GOOD!! Knowing of the Newsletter deadline in correlation of chair duties, I chose to step down early and that someone agreed to take on the position early. With nomination in, the Executive voted and motion was passed. I am so happy to announce the new Newsletter Editor to be Mary Dale from Yarmouth!! YAY!!! So excited!! I hope everyone continues to support the Newsletter with submissions of ESH.  
Keep the flame burning everyone  
and your light shine!!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

### **Weight Loss: A Spiritual Problem?**

I wish to share my experience, strength, and hope to you dear reader. I have struggled with overeating and weight difficulties since I was eight years old; ever since others and myself were conscience of my weight problem. I started to diet and exercise, utilizing aerobic exercise videos at home. But my efforts were for not. Sabotaged by my father's insecurity of working long hours and feeling guilty, he would often bring home candy – especially chocolate from the local convenience store. As for my mother who was often missing from my early childhood due to being a “frequent flyer” into our local psychiatric hospital for going off her Bipolar I medications (yet again!). When she was stable enough to be home in between admissions, her meals were often high caloric suppers. I stood no chance of losing my “baby fat,” and was often described as “big boned.” The weight gain for the most part was maintained until I was a young adult.

My career of nursing was quite exhausting. I barely had enough energy when I got off in the evening after a very hectic work day of 12 hours or sometimes up to 16 hours of non-stop work. Usually, as a convenient way of feeding myself was to stop on the way home to my local fast-food restaurant. There were many evenings spent eating 3-4 cheeseburgers or large pizzas to cope with all the stress. Feelings of shame and loneliness encompassed me. My weight only crept up the scale.

I started to feel a sense of desperation in the pain of the ongoing weight gain. I would go pharmacy to pharmacy, asking and buying bottles of Ipecac to help me induce vomiting after my “supper binge.”

But I just could not follow through with that plan. I could not see myself ending up like Karen Carpenter, destroying herself. I had enough sense to start looking for a better solution. I ended up enrolling myself into a well-known weight loss program. Boy, was I ever excited to be in attendance!

Thinking at last I would be able to lose the weight and then find happiness within my own skin. I started to obsess about the program's point system and how I could get away with eating (junk) comfort foods, as I felt the diet was a deprivation. My plan for weight

loss was easily sabotaged by my own fears of being thin for the first time in my adult life. Instead of losing weight, I only gained, leading myself further in a place of darkness and shame. Also, financial debt ensued higher and higher as I enrolled in more and more weight loss plans with extraordinarily little to show for it. I always felt “scammed” into believing my weight loss coach's enthusiasm for whatever program was popular at that time. The coach would give me encouragement to join but it was not enough to keep me going on in weight loss.

Years later, with the gratitude for prescribed medication from my doctor, I did lose most of the weight. I was down to my lightest adult weight of



160lbs. I felt amazing for a short-lived time. The thing was, I never learned how to think like a naturally thin person thinks; thus, my insecurity and fears took over. I started gaining back the weight very quickly. Help!

After I regained (and more) of 120lbs, I started again exploring outside support, as my insides were screaming. I finally came into OA unsure if I found the help I needed. I struggled for two years debating with myself if I really do have a compulsive overeating disorder, and whether or not this program could help me. I was not used to a food related program that was not tied in somehow to dieting. I know now that this program sets one free of a lifetime of diet thinking, and that I am powerless over food. I never related my weight problems as being a spiritual problem that needed to be dealt with in spiritual ways. God bless this program!

Now, I find recovery one day at a time.

-Éowyn M. OA member



## ***Pain is Inevitable, Suffering is a Choice***

*"The fat was only the physical manifestation of the cocoon I had built to isolate myself from the pain of living."*

-Voices of Recovery pg. 229

I stuffed to cope and my allergy progressed and took over. I am so glad I found the 12 steps in OA. I have learned a new way to live. When I finally realized I was a compulsive overeater, that I was never going to be a normal eater due to that allergy to my body, that the incessant craving and never-ending eating would ever stop; I knew I needed a Power greater than myself to stop it. Oh, I tried everything imaginable, but I couldn't do a thing to stop me eating those foods. It always got worse...never better. I was so out of control and my life totally unmanageable, I felt hopeless. In desperation I surrendered my all to my HP. I say ALL because it wasn't just the food. It was every part of me in how I reacted to life. Food was just a symptom, but my allergy kept me there. I was self will run riot. Now living a life whereby, I don't need to react to people places or things or situations is so freeing. I can rely on my HP for everything. EVERYTHING.

For 45 years I avoided dentists due to experiencing pain. I also, in fear avoided doctors, until pain got so bad I would either end up in emergency or near death. Not the best to be at all. With that fear, I grew. (to 600lbs at one point 10 years ago) Pain became my norm and stuffing, an automatic reflex but it only added to my pain. Last fall as I sat in a dental chair

*"Pain became my norm and stuffing, an automatic reflex but it only added to my pain."*

waiting to get 22 teeth pulled, I laid there... meditating and conversing with my HP. Asking for him to take on my fears, my pain. I felt relaxed as I had never been. I trusted my HP, for He had shown so many miracles thus far; I believed he could and can do anything. I had all those needles and teeth pulled and experienced no pain. It blew me away. Totally blew me away. Another confirmation how that my HP can and will take care of me. I know my tolerance level is high due to the many years of sucking up the pain.... I know since in recovery allowing myself to feel the pain has become really odd. I know that I will experience pain in this life...it is a part of life. I need to recognize and know what it feels like so if I need to take action... ex: see a doctor, take a pill.

I have also learned that my suffering due to that pain, can make that pain 10-fold. That suffering is caused by me dwelling on that pain whereby any pill will not help, for in my suffering, my body needs more relief than the pill can do. I remember one time when in a hospital after a surgery where I was near death and the enormous amount of pain I felt when they got me up to use the washroom. As I sat on the toilet near out of my head in wailing and moving like a crazy woman the nurse took a hold of my head firmly to look me in the face to tell me..."Melanie you need to stop or that



medication will get used up fast and you will not have any relief." Shocked by her words yet understanding somehow my suffering was only increasing the pain in the moment, I fell quiet and endured what I needed until the med kicked in. It was one lesson that has stuck with me. I know I need to let go and let God, or I will suffer.... as it is with every single aspect in my life. Transferring to something else to make me feel good is very real for me, why my plan of action is much needed so in those times, so I know what to do. I am an addict and will try to find release by any means I find. I know if ever in pain, speaking to my family doctor is needed to find the right medication to work with me, whether it be by pharmaceutical or by natural means. The relationship between my doc and I, I needed to nurture and build so a trust be formed, so her knowledge can help me. My program has taught me to be proactive in my health, to have a voice. Pain is inevitable in life, what I do with it will determine my sanity. My program has helped me to do this; I matter and need to take action. I have a voice and can speak up; ask for and do what I need for my health. Faith in my HP has really changed my life in so many ways. So grateful for my HP and my 12-step program.

-Melanie -Truro Group

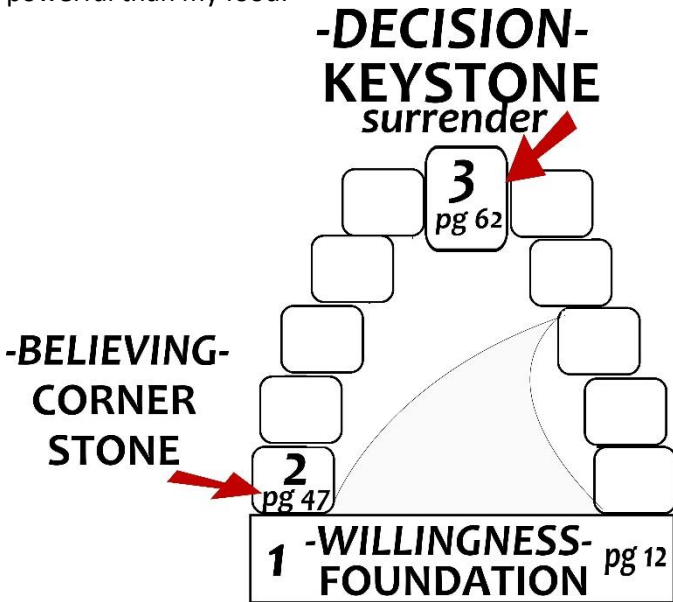


**Spiritual Kindergarten**

When I came to OA 27 years ago, I mistakenly thought I knew all there was to know about God. As far as I knew, I carried out my religious duties and believed I had a God personal to me. I did not!!! I had religion confused with spirituality.

I said I believed in God – trouble was, I did not believe God! How could I say these words and act altogether differently? What I espoused to believe and my actions did not match up at all. I did not see how God could be interested in me nor in my food. I thought I had to look after that myself. Self sufficiency was nor an asset but a liability. God dependency had to be the way for me. Rather than trying to reconcile my old ideas of God that did not work, I began following the Big Book directions, I had to surrender, surrender, surrender. Not only surrendering my food, but everything. I was beat and I knew it; I accepted the fact I am a compulsive overeater and became willing.

Willingness was the foundation stone of that triumphant arch to freedom. (see page 12 Big Book) I was willing to believe in God as I'd never before experienced - a God who was all powerful, even more powerful than my food.



**FREEDOM ARCH**  
are all the stones in place? pg 75

I turned to God rather than the food. Since then, my conception of God has grown and changed into a God more powerful, more loving, more accessible than I ever, ever dared dream was possible. I was “possessed



“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-



of a new sense of power and direction” (pg. 46 Big Book) So belief was the cornerstone of my freedom arch. Having been convinced of steps one and two, I had to proceed with the remaining Ten. I had to change; my old ways and ideas did not serve me well at all. Change, change, change! That meant growth and vice – versa. To grow and change, I had to start someplace than where I was?! To quote step 1, “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps...” It is not one result or a result, it is the result.

– Joanie

**Birthdays Celebrations**

**Monday Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Claudette will be celebrating 12 years of abstinence. Hope you join in on the celebrations on Monday Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, at 7:25pm, Truro Meeting, Douglas Street Recreation Center 40 Douglas Street Truro NS. All must wear a mask and sign in (initial) upon arrival in building.

**Nov/December:** Carlita will be celebrating 11 years of abstinence on November 11<sup>th</sup>. B-Day Meeting TBA



Be sure not to miss out on any IG items. If you haven't already, email Marion at [oaigns@gmail.com](mailto:oaigns@gmail.com) to be added in on their mailing list today!

## Reaching the Still Suffering

*TRADITION FIVE: Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers."*

-OA Twelve & Twelve, pg. 119

ME a MEMBER to carry the message? I am too busy! I am not experienced enough! I don't have time! Hmmm. What is the end result of that? OA will cease to exist.

My name is Millie, and I am a recovered compulsive eater.

How can I/WE carry the message? I heard a speaker once say that I maybe the only piece of OA literature someone will ever read. Meaning as a recovered compulsive eater, I can serve to be a power of example that this program works.

- Do I walk the walk AND talk the talk?
- Am I willing to give service?
- Am I willing to enlarge my spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others? Questions that only I can answer – Answers between myself, my sponsor and my Higher Power.
- How do I reach the still suffering compulsive eater? Am I willing to share my experience, strength and hope with a stranger at an event, i.e. concert, party, grocery store or gathering?
- Am I willing to greet the newcomer or returner to OA, say HI, offer an open mind and ear? The greatest gift is listening – not sharing.

US the GROUP to carry the message?

- What can a group do to carry the message?
- What can we do to reach the still suffering Compulsive Eater – newcomer or returner?
- Do we welcome newcomers and OA members visiting with open arms and a smile?
- Do we introduce the newcomer greeters?
- Do we have newcomer greeters?
- Are we willing to stay a bit after the meeting is over to share and talk?
- Do we honor the Traditions – especially Tradition 3 – The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively?

These questions can be answered in a group conscience meeting and a group inventory (information is available on [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)).

- US the INTERGROUP to carry the message?
- What can an Intergroup do to carry the message?
- Do we have and support a Public Information committee?
- Are we blessed to have an Outreach to the Professional Community (in some IG's this is incorporated in one committee)?
- How do we reach the still suffering?

The internet offers a new opportunity – A WEBSITE FOR OUR LOCAL INTERGROUP. A way to let newcomers, visitors and returners find out where our local meetings are and how to get in touch with members (an anonymous email address like [ogasunshinegroup@xxxxxxxxmail.com](mailto:ogasunshinegroup@xxxxxxxxmail.com)) to connect a newcomer. Visitor or returner to the local groups. A way to inform about special events, OA celebrations, special speaker meetings, retreats or workshops.

A website offers many new opportunities to reach out



but also new opportunities to be of service all year long. The website works for an IG 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year – snowstorm, bad weather, roads.... no limits here.

Our NS Intergroup currently has a working sub-committee to propose and design a website for our Intergroup. A survey conducted by the PI Chair has shown support and need for the IG website.

- How can YOU support it? Do you have any ideas to share? Do you have any experience in web design? Would you be willing to learn?
- How can EACH OA GROUP support it? Is the.

-Continued on page 11

group able to contribute funds via direct funding or IG? Can the group secretary keep the website administrator informed about meeting changes and/or special events?

- How can NS INTERGROUP support it? Can funds be allocated for creation and maintenance? Can the board members commit to answer email requests? Can IG provide information about links to OA world service, the OA region corresponding or neighboring Intergroups? Can we be reachable for the still suffering compulsive eater – newcomer or returner?

YES, WE CAN. LET'S DO IT! Any feedback or contribution is greatly appreciated.

YES, WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FROM Y.O.U.

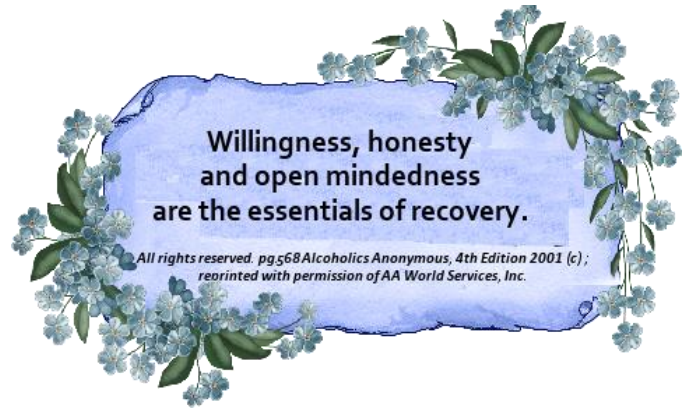
*Millie L. -Recovered in N.B*



*-OA Preamble*

*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*



### **HONESTY IN RECOVERY**

**Me:** "I can't find my keys."

**Hubby:** "Have you checked your purse?"

**Me:** "Yes. They're not there."

**Hubby:** "Empty your purse so you're sure."

In my disease, I never would empty my purse in front of another human being, and my husband was no exception. What freedom there is these days in being able to turn my purse upside down and empty the contents without fear of candy bar wrappers and cookie crumbs and empty Tim Horton bags tumbling onto the table. Gone are the days of hiding and lying to everyone about something as basic as eating. I had turned eating into a degrading act that made me feel ashamed. No wonder my self-esteem was lower than ditch water.

This morning I read in *Voices of Recovery*: "*Being secretive about eating is a symptom of our disease.*" Being secretive about many things was central to much of my disease. I lied about the food, and dishonesty seeped into other areas of my life. I turned myself inside out trying to be whatever I thought would make me likeable. I pretended to agree when I disagreed. I pretended I wanted to help out, even when I knew I was being used. I hid my anger, my sadness, and my self-pity behind a fake smile, under a mountain of food that I ate alone in the car, in the bathroom, in the dark—you name it.

Thank God, these days I don't live in constant fear of being discovered. Through the 12 Steps, I have learned to recognize my emotions for what they are, and I can be honest with myself, and open with others. Today I don't have the need to bury wrappers and receipts, because I have nothing to hide. If you want to see what's in my purse, go for it. I am in love with this program.

-Elsa





#### 4<sup>th</sup> Step Revelations

I remember when doing my 4<sup>th</sup> step and facing many childhood traumas and abuse. The anger, the resentments, the fear, all came to a surface. How am I to let go of something done to me as a child? I was helpless, I didn't cause this! I didn't deserve this!! How would I have any part in this that was done to me!! I knew holding on to all of this would destroy me and always be that deep seeded pain and resentment. That hurt I knew would keep me wanting to cope with food. Was my step 4 going to clear away that wreckage? How was I to clear away this? I asked my HP for guidance. Who would He have me to be? I asked for the awareness I needed to be able to live free of this.

When I really looked deep, with a different set of lenses, not through the lens of that hurt child, I could see how that what was done to me, even though wrong, nothing was going to change the past. But I definitely could learn from it and change whatever needed, so it doesn't destroy me any further. Living with it for almost 57 years was enough. It was a deep heavy weight to carry and something that seeped into every bit of my life making my life unmanageable.

In seeing my step 4 laid out in front of me. I remember the big book said, “for when harboring such feelings, we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity.... returns” Hell I was tired of feeling this way. I grew angry. Here in my addiction, and all these feelings this atrocity done to me!!

Then I remembered on pg. 417 on acceptance, “Nothing

absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake..... unless I accept life on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.” I then sighed and became willing to look deep at me.

My character defects definitely were at play to keep me in this hurt and pain. The 4 main defects of character; selfishness, dishonesty, self-seeking and fear, all played a part.

I was a victim of my circumstances that I had no fault in. But remaining a victim from a past experience, that was! Hanging on to that hurt and anger like I had a right to because it was wrong, I was making myself remain a victim and it was only hurting me. I wasn't healing from a past; I was wallowing in it.

Self-pity. Wow how humbling to see that...my part. Dishonesty...yes, I was dishonest with self, believing I was right in my anger and rage. Fear, in that fear, was it hindering other relationships, me? How was this helping me? how was it working for me? NOT.

When I began to take a look through those different lenses, I began to feel that my abuser didn't know better either. Whatever issues they may have had experienced, perhaps led them to that point. I know I kept hearing in my head, “A person can't do better until they know better”. This began the possibility for forgiveness. Forgiving doesn't mean I forget, just that I am letting it go and moving on. Letting go of something that would only hurt me. I began to feel that load I carried for so long, lift.

I seen how forgiveness could change my attitude towards what was done and would be able to be who my HP wants of me. A person showing patience, tolerance kindness and love.

Yes, I can make boundaries with some, I need to so to protect myself. Fear I can either live in it and let it control me or leave it in God's hands and take action. If any fear pops up, I can spot check...and know what to do by using the 12 steps.

With guidance from my HP I knew I would be able to. It was humbling and freeing to be able to see my part.

Long after doing my 4<sup>th</sup> I was conversing with a family member and something emotionally was



triggered again from something someone said. I felt disturbed. I cried out to my HP...I thought I dealt with all this in my 4<sup>th</sup> and here I go again!!! Father please show me!!! I left it in his care, I prayed for healing. I prayed to be filled with this love. The feelings were real and so overwhelming.

Within a few days while at a conference, I was face to choose between 2 studies. One on grief and the other a big book study. I chose big book study for I felt I had dealt with enough grief in my past so I went into the room for the big book study and sat down.

*“My HP can show me the way of patience tolerance kindness and love. I need not be afraid; He will show me the next right thing.”*

When meeting started, they said...big book study has been cancelled and this is the grief session. Immediately I said...oh Father what do you want me to hear? The second share I began to cry. I knew the exact why from a few days previous.

That little girl inside me was grieving. Grieving for a life that she didn't get. A life she deserved and needed as a child. The protection and love, the nurturing she deserved but didn't get. That loss was real. A loss never dealt with. A grief she was feeling. WOW. I then knew I needed to take care of me, tend to that little girl inside and protect and nurture her...tend to her, allowing her to heal.

I have learned there may be times old traumas can reappear. Like an imprint they have been put upon me due to the severity as well as living in them for so long. Healing is a process. I am grateful that I have the 12 steps to live by and a HP that can direct and give comfort in every situation that may arise. My HP can show me the way of patience tolerance kindness and love. I need not be afraid; He will show me the next right thing. <3

So grateful how the 12 steps have freed me from a past that once controlled me. A life of coping with food that drove me insane. A new way to live. A new way of life that I can be OK no matter what transpires. For I have a Power greater than me to do for me what I can't do.

-Melanie B., Truro

## Carrying the Message

*“Those of us who live this program don't simply carry the message; we are the message...”*

-OA Twelve & Twelve, pg. 86-87

Newcomers as well as suffering long timers, need to see recovery when they come into the rooms. At my first meeting, just one person had what I wanted; otherwise, I'd have never come back.

I've heard the saying, “Carry the message not the mess”. Only through the 12 steps life have I learned self-respect. I have come to accept myself as I am and let this be the same me in public and in private. This means rigorous honesty, not just the cash register kind!

I have the willingness to go to any lengths to do whatever is necessary to stay abstinent. Mostly, I have the open-mindedness to hear, think, and feel. Food is no longer my answer. Whether I am sad, mad, glad. (msg!) I no longer engage with the “rids” (Restless, Irritable, Discontented)

What does someone see? Recovery? What kind of example am I personally?

- Joanie



## **Thy Will not Mine Be Done**

*"I pray for willingness to get on with the twelve steps of recovery. That is the only way I know to replace my fears and insecurities with confidence and courage. When I am willing, there is no void and all things are possible."*

-For Today, pg. 21

What an awesome weekend I had at the OAIGNS Fall Retreat. The theme, "Spirituality in the Steps" certainly resonated with me and in me the whole weekend. I believe I could write many articles on the things I learned that weekend.

I know if my character defects are forefront, the sunlight of the Spirit in no way can come through. If I am blocking what needs to be cleared away to allow that sunlight shine, struggle will be present. Working the 12 steps is so needed for me. When being asked if I would bring my guitar, for the Speaker had requested one be present, I gladly brought it. I was excited and looking forward to hearing someone else play.

During opening meeting Friday evening, the speaker shared a recording of a song. The words touched me. In gratitude, tears fell from a place deep from my soul. Later, that evening, the speaker approached me and asked if I would play and lead the group on Sunday's close with him, in singing that song. For a split second, I felt fear, but immediately said I would see what I could do to learn the song. I immediately was given the chords.

In getting back to my room late that evening, I wondered if I should work on the song, or visit with fellows in the common room. I took the latter which shortened the time I could go over the song before bed. Facing an early rise, I played the song while going to sleep as if it would seep into my subconscious or something.

Saturday morning, I rose early to go out for my morning stroll while listening to the song and taking in nature's beauty feeling the presence of my HP. I prayed he would supply the time I needed to learn the song.

The day was so filled with wonderful moments with no time alone to work on the song. Getting back to my room that evening, I pulled out my guitar and attempted to learn the tune and chords. Somehow my fingers and ears wouldn't

match. I felt that fear once again. A disturbance. I began to question if I'd "get it". Feelings of uncomfortableness came over me. A knock came at the door. Playing stopped. What would I do? I shared with another of what I was feeling. Yes, I knew I could speak up and say "No" I didn't feel comfortable in doing this. Yes, I can place boundaries. For a split second I felt relieved but soon, there was an uneasiness on my heart. In getting ready for bed, I heard the words from the night before in my head; "DO or DO not there is No Try" Action. Yes, action in the steps is what recovered me. Action is what will keep me there. This service does not do me harm. I knew what I needed to do.

*"If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes."*

Before I retired, I did an inventory. What was going on here Melanie? Do I say "No? In my heart of hearts, I felt that not an option. Me singing was not going to cause me harm, so to place a boundary on this service? Nahh that wouldn't cause me harm. What was at play here? Fear, yes, fear of? Ahhh my perfectionism was rearing its face; some invisible standard that if not perfectly orchestrated I would look bad. WOW. Not to do service for a fellow, for my HP ...all due to being embarrassed of not being perfect? WOW how humbling it was.

My fear, my dishonesty in trying to wangle my way out of it by not facing that fear and placing an easier softer way? Facing fear is difficult...but action always takes courage and hard work. My selfishness... thinking about me and not the speaker who thought I was to sing with him. All I was worried about was me, not the bigger picture. My self seeking .... all at play... there not wanting to do service with a gift God himself had given me... ready to hide behind me.... not feeling good enough.... yet justified in thinking I knew best ...wow, playing God again to please just ...me....boy what a Hodge Podge of destruction at play. I Heard, "Father take away my difficulties that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help, of thy Power, they love and the way of

*-continued on page 15*

life...may I do thy will ALWAYS.” Oh man I had taken back my will.

The next morning, I spoke with the speaker and let him know that I may not know it perfectly but will do it in Spirit. I faced that fear with my HP and took action. OH BOY what a revelation while everyone sang. Yes, the song was differently played and sung differently from the original, but OMG when I heard everyone singing out in unison, singing the words like we all knew it, my spirit was so touch. What an awesome sound!! Thank you, HP. Thy will, not mine be done!!



-Melanie B., Truro

**Tolerance**

*"Love and tolerance is our code."*

Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous © 1939, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition -pg. 84. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

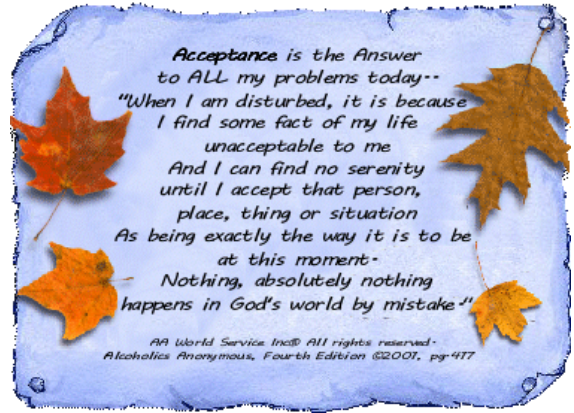
I always say, "It's easier to love people than it is to tolerate them."  
 So often when people's words or actions bother me, it's because I have those same character defects. Mostly I can now thank God for blessing me with these people rather than growling at God for bothering me with these people. With this attitude, I can accept people as they are.

**"When do I not accept the return of character defects, I am arrogant and unable to accept my own humanity."**

What about me? What about my tolerance toward myself? I used to call myself names for any mistake. Mostly today, I am doing better and treat myself as well as I treat other people. It's pointless to become angry with myself. I am still suffering from growing up pains at the age of 75!

When do I not accept the return of character defects, I am arrogant and unable to accept my own humanity. Arrogance is a killer for me; I need God more than ever.

- Joanie



In MEMORY OF A FELLOW

*Suddenly you were gone,  
 No warning to be had.  
 Your presence will be missed;  
 My heart it just feels sad.*

*I will not eat due to sorrow  
 It's OK to shed a tear  
 I know this too shall pass  
 The steps I have them near.*

*My memories I hold close,  
 Your outreach calls and shares.  
 I smile & feel your Spirit,  
 As you smile down  
 from up there.*

*I will Take it one day at a time;  
 keep on trudging the road each day.  
 I will reach out to others & share;  
 Work my program, I'll be OK.*



*For there is no mistake we met,  
 One day I may know why.  
 There's no need to understand;  
 With acceptance, I will get by.*

Love you xox <3



-Melanie, Truro Group

## SERVICE

*"I need to be aware, however, that fear may be at the root of my inability to do something. Doing involves risk and chance of failure. But it also presents a chance for growth, which in the long run may risk failure more beneficial than success..... I do not need to fear failure. I need, rather, the peace of mind that comes with taking the action I have been putting off.*

-For Today, pg. 168

I spent years in fear. Afraid I wouldn't be good enough. Not smart enough. I tried over and over again to lose weight and keep it off. It didn't work. Cementing my truth. I was not good enough. I can't do it. Why bother? Sitting and yearning for a life I felt I never would have. Wishing, hoping, yet powerless; stuffing my face in misery and pain, feeling hopeless. I was meant to be fat! I was a self fulfilled prophecy. I wasn't ready to change. I was dishonest. I wanted to be free of this craziness, I tried various ways.... Yes ways. The easier softer ways. The ways that I didn't really have to take much action. I wanted the quick and easy and wanted my own way in doing it. Self willed run riot, going in circles getting no where and thinking I just need to figure this out! I just got more resentful, bitter and depressed; bigger and my health deteriorated. What a vortex I lived in. I was aware I was needing a change. I tried. See what I said? Tried. I didn't DO, I tried. I was not ready. That mentality of TRY I wasn't ready. I wasn't desperate. A half assed attempt. Never give up...keep trying I heard. It didn't work. When it didn't work, I felt a complete failure. Even when losing 400 lbs and then slip into a massive binge where I gained 20 lbs and felt a total failure. An extremist. All or nothing mentality that sabotaged everything I did. Why couldn't I have just a little like everyone else?

When I finally became aware ...really aware that I was different. That I would never ever be a normal eater. I knew was an addict with an allergy to my body and in eating certain foods, the more I ate them. I couldn't literally stop. If I didn't stop, I'd be doomed. I would forever be a slave to them. I needed help. I tried years to stop eating them. I knew I could NOT do it. I knew only a Power greater than myself could. I was absolutely powerless. I knew I needed to surrender my all to that Higher Power.

It took a long while to come to this decision. When I got to this point, I was absolutely READY. I made the decision to DO IT!! READY, SET, GO!!! I took Action!! That was over 18 months ago. My program is a program of action. My recovery only remains because of ACTION. It was hard work, and still is hard work. I am not perfect. I have lots more to learn and when I am

willing to learn through taking action...there is where my recovery progresses.

I was a master of procrastination. I still have to watch myself with this. I have years of experience... these habits were ingrained into me, so I know I had to accept that my step 6 & 7 were not the end al cure all. I had to be willing.... willing to let my HP take them. You see I take them back...my will at times...and my HP keeps me in check and the steps bring me back into balance. I am never cured. I need to work hard to keep me balanced with the steps. The easiest path is the one I took. I remember in learning to take action, to reach out my first week in program...OMG it was hard. I had to make a plan of action to help me.

So how do I keep spiritually fit? I need to keep close to the very one who can do what I can't do and I need to lean on his guidance always. Service is crucial in working my 12<sup>th</sup> step. Without it my recovery suffers. Working with others is where my growth happens. How else do I learn about myself and what needs to change in me?

Fear of doing service will stagnate me. Can I afford that as a Compulsive overeater who is never cured; No. I learned early when offering service that I was in good company. If I made any mistakes, there was someone else who knew what I felt. There are no mistakes, only opportunities to learn and grow. I love this kind of growth. This kind of growth is better than eating and growing to 600 lbs again. I know that's where I'd be, for I am a compulsive overeater.

-Mel, *Atlantic Recovery*

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

OAIGNS has the following service positions open, needing to be filled. An opportunity for growth in your recovery.

### RETREAT CHAIR:

### RETREAT CO CHAIR:

### WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR:

OAIGNS has several committees needing members to serve. We all have abilities that help in service, we just need take action and find them!

### BYLAWS COMMITTEE:

### RETREAT COMMITTEE

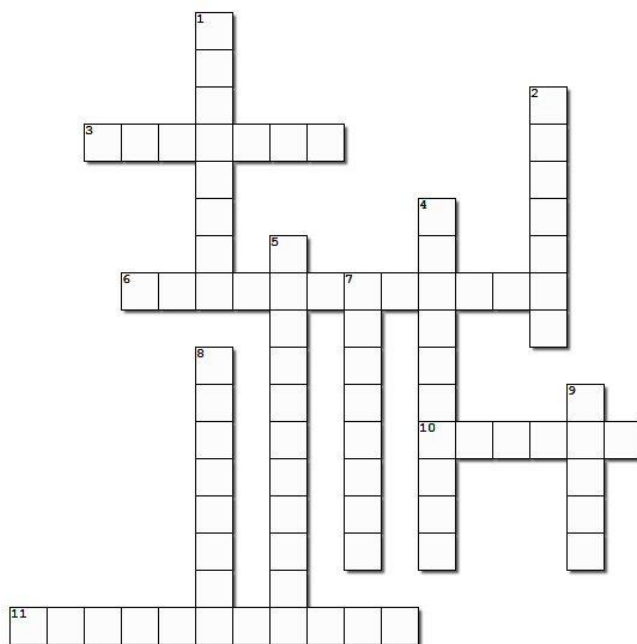
### WEBSITE COMMITTEE:

Please email OAIGNS@ gmail.com for further information or to offer service for these positions today! We need service workers to keep our program alive. Everyone is of value! Through service we fulfill our primary purpose.



## 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. 50



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

3. "we are empowered to use our \_\_\_\_\_ in ways that are truly useful to others. (OA 12 & 12 pp. 123)
6. "\_\_\_\_\_ is surrender to my Higher Power and faith-based." (VOR pg.98)
10. "The idea that we can be possessively loving of a few, can \_\_\_\_\_ the many, and can continue to fear or hate anybody, has to be abandoned, if only a little at a time." (AA 12 & 12 pp. 92-93)
11. "There is only one key, and it is called \_\_\_\_\_." (AA 12 & 12 pg.34)

### Down

1. "...we thought we were helping others to understand him, when in actuality our true motive was to feel \_\_\_\_\_ by pulling him down." (AA 12 & 12 pg.94)
2. "Nothing in us can be \_\_\_\_\_ until we first accept it." VOR pg.122

### Down continued

4. "We speak in favor of the \_\_\_\_\_ as best we can..." OA 12 & 12 pg.147)
5. "We avoid \_\_\_\_\_ or argument." (AA BB. pg.67)
7. "Are we willing to speak up for the \_\_\_\_\_ Tradition whenever we see it being ignored?" (OA 12 & 12 pg.161)
8. "The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common \_\_\_\_\_." (AA BB pp. 17)
9. "I am free to laugh all of my laughter, free to \_\_\_\_\_ and be trusted..." (AA BB pg.543)

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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: In an OA meeting, when reading the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous can we substitute “Alcohol” to “food” and “Alcoholic” to “Compulsive eating”?**

**A:** OA’s group conscience has decided we should read aloud only OA-approved literature at OA meetings. This includes OA Conference-and Board-approved Literature and AA Conference-approved Literature. Although OA has not reviewed and approved AA literature, we deem that their group conscience approved its contents. When we read AA literature and change the words, neither OA nor AA has approved that literature.

At OA’s founding, members asked permission from AA to modify its Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for use in OA. AA graciously granted that permission. Those are the only things we have the authority to change. At OA’s inception, no OA literature existed, so the Fellowship used AA’s Big Book and the AA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. To better understand how AA concepts could apply to compulsive eating, members would often change the words when reading aloud from AA literature during meetings. Today, AA World Service asks that we respect their literature and group conscience by reading their literature, such as the Big Book, as written, without changing the words. AA also

asks that we read excerpts from their literature in context, which means that we read it from the actual literature as printed, not from a typed sheet of paper. Of course, when we share in meetings about the passages we read, we are free to share our experience, strength, and hope in our own terms related to compulsive eating. If we want to read only literature that uses terms related to food and compulsive eating, we have a wealth of OA literature from which to choose that doesn’t require changing the words. It is also common practice in some OA meetings to change the words of OA’s Twelve Steps when reading them aloud. People replace “God” with “Higher Power” and “Him” with a gender-neutral term, and they add “we” at the beginning of all the Steps. When we make those changes, we are amending the Steps. Our OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1 clearly spells out the amendment process. Amendments to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions must be adopted by two-thirds of the delegates at the WSBC, and that vote must be ratified by three-fourths of the registered Overeaters Anonymous groups responding within six months of notification, provided at least 55 percent of the registered groups have responded. Clearly, no individual member, group, or OA service body can amend the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions by themselves because the Steps and Traditions belong to all of us. One could argue that Tradition Four allows each group to do what it wants, as long as it doesn’t affect other groups or OA as a whole. True, but we also have Tradition One: “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.” We have Tradition Two: “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” Concept Two states, in part, “World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority, and effective conscience of OA as a whole.” If I insist upon changing the wording of OA or AA literature to suit myself, I am displaying the same selfishness and self-will that landed me in OA in the first place! As one trustee wrote, “From my vantage point and experience, there is a tendency to mold the OA program of recovery to the molds of individual members and their ways of doing things. I am reminded: if my way

*-continued on page 19*

worked, I would not be in OA or need to be. Obviously, my way did not work. So, I am quite willing to work on changing me, which is a challenge, and not try to revamp OA or AA to suit me. When a physician gives me a prescription for treatment of an illness, I am well advised not to make any attempts to rewrite it." If I believe OA's literature needs to be amended, I am encouraged to participate in our collective group conscience by serving as a delegate to the WSBC. Failing that, I am committed to respecting the group conscience of both OA and AA by reading the literature as it is written, from the original source, without any creative editing on my part.

*Taken from [Ask it Basket Archive on oa.org](#) — March/April 2012*

**Q: Does Cross Talk jeopardize safety in sharing?**

**A:** "Hi, I'm Wendy, a compulsive overeater Thank you for sharing, Carolyn. It was great to hear how you worked the steps on the job and were able to ask for a raise. You've really made progress since you joined OA. I took a similar action yesterday."

Many OA members would not regard a comment like this as cross talk, and there is no precise definition in OA literature In the *Suggested Meeting Format*, however, it's associated with giving a response or recommendation to another member while sharing. "We share our experience, strength, and hope in OA, feedback, crosstalk and advice giving are discouraged here." The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous elaborates on this idea: "We may feel that we are 'just have to share' our advice with someone in a meeting. Tradition One tells us to curb those impulses for the sake of the group... ideally, OA is a place where... we don't try to confront or fix each other in the groups." Sharing anything other than one's own experience, therefore could be considered cross talk.

"But comparing my situation to another member's is the way I reaffirm I am a compulsive overeater and no different than anyone else in the room!", Wendy might say.

" It's difficult not to respond to a member who shares emotionally. Part of helping a compulsive overeater is extending my heart."

Undoubtably, these two beneficial elements of OA meetings – welcome to participate in the camaraderie and sense of family that exists among members.

At the same time, however, we cherish an OA meeting room as one place where we can safely express ourselves without the hazard of judgement from others. Commenting on a member's pitch jeopardizes this freedom, since you can't predict how that member will interpret your comment. Instead, why not offer a hug or a pat on the shoulder or talk with the person after meeting? All these are equally effective and more personal ways to communicate your compassion. By focusing on your experience strength and hope while sharing you'll help another member feel more comfortable doing the same.

*Taken from [Ask it Basket Archive on oa.org](#) — March/April 2012*

**Q: Why does OA have bylaws since AA and other Twelve Step programs do not?**

**A:** Every fellowship has its own structure and rules. AA has bylaws for its general service board. Compulsive Eaters Anonymous–HOW also has bylaws. OA is incorporated (OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart A) and, as such, has corporate bylaws. The collective group conscience of OA at the WSBC has determined that bylaws should be in place to help carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous (OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V, Section 1). There are also countries that require service bodies to have bylaws. —WSBC 2014

*Taken from [Ask it Basket Archive on oa.org](#) — March/April 2012*

For more informative [Questions and Answers](#), please see OA's archive on an **ASK it Basket** from March/April 2012.



**OAIGNS #09262**

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