



# OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

NOVA SCOTIA OA INTERGROUP #09262 NEWSLETTER – REGION 6

AUGUST 2020

MEETINGS of OUR FELLOWS

Monday Meeting: 7pm

Beacon United Church  
25 Beacon St. Truro, NS  
Contact Mary: 902-742-3725

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

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

Tuesday Meeting: 7pm  
Lunenburg  
Contact Rhonda: 902-209-0408

Wednesday Meeting: 8pm  
Loyalist Community Hospital  
Hospital St Classroom 1  
Charlottetown, PEI  
Contact Cheryl: 902-859-3860

Wednesday Meeting: 8pm  
OA Atlantic Recovery Meeting-NEWLY REGISTERED  
http://zoom.us/ ID: 622 506 1826 Email 4 PW  
Contact Mel: 902-986-8636

Thursday Meeting: 7pm  
St James Church  
1003 Joseph Howe Dr, Church Hall  
Armdale-Rotary, Halifax, NS  
Contact Tobie: 902-237-9707

Friday Meeting: 10am  
Cornerstone Wesleyan Church  
1245 Hammonds Plains, NS  
Contact Dianne: 902-835-2718

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

Saturday Meeting: 1pm  
St. James Church  
324 Main Ave, Halifax, NS  
Contact: Kathleen: 902-877-4498

Sunday Meeting: 1pm  
Cornerstone Wesleyan Church  
45 Connelly 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



**August** -Sat Aug 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **OAIGNS Meeting:** Place TBA

-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

- Wed Aug 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **Birthday Speaker Online**

**Meeting.** Wednesday night 8pm Atlantic Recovery Group #88979  
ID:622 506 1826 PW:193901

**September** -Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **WSBC Virtual Component**

**Survey** To be filled out by each service group and sent in by this date. Survey is found [here](#).

**October** -Oct 2<sup>rd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **NS Fall Retreat.** TBA in Sept.

-Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> -25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **Region 6 Convention 2020 - Focus**

**on Recovery** Being held virtually. More Info [here](#) To Register click [here](#)

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



NS Intergroup #09262

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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.

Mid March, my son came home from work distraught. He had lost his job due to the government closing restaurants. It was difficult to watch my 35 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 finally took a step back and decided to go for a walk; a walk with my HP.

My son having Aspergers 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 got 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; what I can do better and take action.

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.

This pandemic certainly has brought about many

Changes. It certainly has reinforced how that in this life anything can happen that we have no control over. It is only in acceptance that there is any kind of peace. Continuing on, relying on my HP, learning, working the steps and taking action to move forward is my only resolution.

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; Elizabeth, Éowyn, Cathy W., Millie, Elsa, Joanie and Claudette. 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.

PS: Congrats to the newly formed Registered Meeting Atlantic Recovery #88979!!!

**Please join in submitting your ESH for November's Intergroup Newsletter by Oct 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.**

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

**Email : 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 Yarmouth Meeting 7-8pm  
Please call contact for ID & Password
  2. Wednesday OA Atlantic Recovery Group  
8-9pm Meeting #88979  
Meeting ID: 622 506 1826 Email 4 PW
  3. Thursday Mission Possible Meeting 7pm  
Meeting ID 868 7927 7231 PW: 292200
  4. Sunday Sackville Meeting 1pm-2pm  
Meeting ID: 861 8671 0202 PW: 714949
  5. 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

**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.

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:

We talked about OA's Structure in our last 2 Newsletters. 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. Each work together and through our 7<sup>th</sup> tradition we



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

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

### What does OA do with your contributions?

#### 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.

**Next time:** *How does all this OA structure help me in my recovery?*

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



## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

### **World Service Business Conference Reflections**

My name is Elizabeth and I am a hardcore compulsive overeater! Seems I was born that way since I have no recollection of any other relationship with food and the first 40 years of my life were spent struggling in many different ways with that reality. Of course, this is hindsight.

As a child I was simply aware that I was much bigger than any of my peers, unable to wear regular clothes, continually made fun of and very unhappy. All I wanted was to be normal like everyone else.

Teen and young adult years saw me trying to diagnose and treat my problem. Initially I saw my problem as a heavy weight of disfiguring fat and I began years of battling my body with every kind of diet imaginable. I also tried to look for a cause and diagnosed myself as being an unwanted child trying to compensate; trying to fill an empty love hole with food. All the while going through university, teaching, marriage and children.

Mercifully, I attended a one-off OA meeting on a military base in Germany in 1984, having no idea that my life was about to take a 180 degree turn toward a healthy body, a healthy mind and a spiritual life I had never known. I just knew that I was home.

Coming back to Canada, on fire to find a meeting and discovering none in Yarmouth, I set about starting one with lots of help and encouragement from the Halifax groups. I have spent the last 35 years immersing myself in the program and the fellowship and finding and following a spiritual life that is categorized in the Big Book as being catapulted into a fourth dimension!

So, we now come to 2020 and although still very active locally, and regularly attending retreats, I have become less inclined to travel to IG meetings thinking the business was safe in younger hands. However, it seems there is no one able to attend the WSBC and I feel a nudge from HP! I first hoped that someone else would step up so I could feel good about being willing without leaving my comfort zone! Nothing happening there, so I start to make plans thinking this would be a wonderful experience and I would have a mentor to hold my hand. I even made arrangements to stay on, rent a car and explore New Mexico .....and then comes Covid 19!

Turns out that making plans is a lot easier than un-making them! I have a lot of respect for those who managed to salvage the essential business of the Conference and for those who are still attempting to do the committee work that is required before the next Conference in 2021. Every delegate is expected to work on a committee at least for a year so I have opted to join the Unity with Diversity Committee. Everything is being done on Zoom or similar platforms and as committee members are from around the world in



virtually every time zone this is a very difficult task! Even this early on, I can see that we are in a bit of a bubble as far as diversity is concerned here in NS and there are many more issues than I had ever given thought to!

I will be preparing a report for IG on the Conference itself. We addressed only Two essential items- election of trustees and new and revised literature - all done via email! Not the Conference experience I envisioned but certainly the kind of radically changing adaptations everyone is faced with this year! How fortunate we are to have a program and a Higher Power that furnishes us with all we need to handle anything with serenity.

I have appreciated seeing different faces at our local Zoom meetings. Thanks to all of you who keep this program and fellowship going. Together we can do what we could never do alone!

-Eliz B.

## **No Struggle in Surrender!**

*STEP ONE: "We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable." Spiritual Principle: HONESTY."*

-OA Twelve & Twelve, pg. 3

Step One. I once heard it said, that Step One is the ONLY step I need to do perfectly. Without it, there is NO foundation to be able to work the other steps.

I know if I am ever, EVER struggling, I need to go back to Step 1 immediately. "Struggle" is my divining rod that tells me I have taken back my own self will. If I am functioning at the core of my own will... nothing will be right with me. NOTHING. When I admit I am powerless, there is no way I can operate with self-will. It would be a pure contradiction. BUT wait, at one point for many years, I felt I was powerless and my life unmanageable due to food; surely knowing was enough? NOPE. Didn't do a damned thing for me and the insanity still ensued. Well what was I missing?

I had an 18-inch BLOCK. The connection between intellect and heart was blocked with dishonesty. Talk about not seeing the forest for the trees. Yup, I lived in dishonesty, not only with others but with myself.

To work the steps, HONESTY is the most important factor required. If I cannot be honest when working the steps, my recovery will be half assed. As the Big Book says, "HALF MEASURES AVAIL ME NOTHING!!" Yup. If I cannot be honest...there will be no recovery.... struggle will be my life. I struggled for nearly 57 years, I had enough of struggling. Where did it get me? Yeah. Up and down the scale to well over 600lbs and back down again, only to regain 169 AGAIN. There was no stopping me. I tried everything. I thought I knew everything and tried controlling everyone else's life but couldn't do anything for my own. I became bitter and resentful. Isolating to hide, but putting on an "OK face", to not show the world I was miserable. I didn't know how to live. Yeah, struggling is friggen torture. Why would I want that?

Why struggle to be a normal eater? Why eat those things that drive me to the brink of insanity? I can't stop eating them; I have tried countless ways to stop but failed, so why do I not want to give them up? I needed to be honest with myself. I am not, nor never will be a normal eater. When I finally accepted that fact... when I finally realized I cannot eat those alcoholic foods that trigger the allergy to my body and drive the compulsion

of my mind.... that mental twist, I finally had to admit I was powerless and there was NOTHING I could do to stop it. "I" knew my whole life was the same. "I" could not do anything. My finances, my relationships, my home, and ME, was totally unmanageable. I knew then, with total honesty, I WAS powerless. I could not do it anymore.

When I finally accepted my powerlessness and unmanageability (step 1), I immediately did step 2; I knew that only a Power greater than myself could help me. I then took step 3; there was no other way but to decide to surrendered my ALL. I had no other alternate but to die in my compulsive overeating for I was an addict and could NOT stop myself.

When I surrendered everything in complete abandon, I was then totally free from the cravings and the desire for the food. My HP has POWER and is able to do ANYTHING...certainly "I" can't. This is what I need to remember ALWAYS or my program will not work.

Working my program, staying connected with my HP is vital for my recovery. BUT it doesn't stop there...I need to reach out to my fellows and share my recovery. There in is the unity and strength I can rely on...together we do get better.

I am so grateful for a fellowship that I can be me. We are all in the same boat...no one is any better. My program works when I work it. How another works theirs, is NONE OF MY BUSINESS. I am only responsible for my own. If ever I feel judgemental...if something bothers me, if ever I struggle...that tells me "GET BACK TO STEP ONE" for my self will ...the ego is rearing its ugly head...and my self-will has no place in my program. As the 3rd step prayer says *"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!!"*

I am so grateful for the 12-step way of living. I need to stay connected, surrendering to my HP's will not mine... Surrendering my powerlessness DAILY. There is no struggle in surrender.

Thank you for my recovery  
-Melanie B., Truro



## *It Takes What It Takes*

It doesn't matter if you live on Park Avenue or on a park bench, we all suffer from the same disease. Some days are harder than others. On those days, I need to practice one meal at a time, rather than one day at a time. The food allergy - the obsessions

*"I Strengthening my resistance muscles cannot be done on my own brawn, but rather in the strength of my Higher power."*

of the mind with specific foods or eating behaviours can be particularly difficult to handle. Strengthening my resistance muscles cannot be done on my own brawn, but rather in the strength of my Higher power.

My HP will often get me to reflect on my emotions during these difficult times, creating an opportunity for insight and growth of maturing in my inner being.

Writing is one of our tools in OA, and I utilize it conscientiously during these trying times.

As one of our motto's states "It takes what it takes." And by golly, it certainly does!

-Thanks,  
Éowyn M.



## *Solidarity*

I so remember the isolation I lived in before OA. Very alone; even when in a crowd. My compulsive eating lead me to a place of loneliness. Due to my character defects of selfishness, dishonesty, self seeking and fear, I didn't know how to react to life; how to react with people, places and things. I ran to food to cope. My allergy clicked in and that continual cycle would not stop no matter what I tried.

I am so grateful for the 12 steps. They taught me how to live finally; a freedom I have never experienced before. Withing the rooms of OA I have found a fellowship that understands my affliction. I am not alone. That solidarity gives me a place I call home, where others understand. It is in that solidarity... that unity, we get better.

During this pandemic, I have seen how that solidarity, that unity, is so needed. Going to any meetings around the world virtually and feeling at home wherever I land, warms my heart. It strengthens my recovery hearing others experience strength and hope. I need not worry of any distractions, I feel safe; no outside interests to distract from our primary purpose. Nothing that can distract my recovery.

Times they are a changing and so grateful in being shown how my HP always provides a way!! Many are suffering. As a recovered woman it is a part of my 12<sup>th</sup> step to spread the message; be that message. The future is bright, no matter what I may be faced with in this life.

I know this world has changed the last few months. I feel that life will never be what it once was and I must change with it. I am grateful I have a fellowship that supports my recovery in this change.

I know without a shadow of a doubt if I wouldn't have had OA and that solidarity during this pandemic, I know I would have been in the food and regaining and alone. I know my health would have been be in serious danger. I am so grateful I am recovered and have a new way to live with the 12 steps.

Life is never perfect but I have a perfect program as I trudge the road to happy destiny.

Program works when I work it, and I am WORTH IT!!  
And SO ARE YOU <3

-Melanie B., Truro



## Change

*"We thought that "conditions" drove us to drink, and when we tried to correct these conditions and found that we couldn't do so to our entire satisfaction, our drinking went out of hand and we became alcoholics. It never occurred to us that we needed to change ourselves to meet conditions, whatever they were."*

-As Bill Sees It, © 1997, 21<sup>st</sup> Edition -pg. 1. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

This single concept helped shift my entire perspective within my journey to recovery. In doing the 12 Steps and taking personal inventory, I recognized patterns appearing. Time and time again, expectations continued to pop up. Why couldn't people just act a certain way? Why did bad things happen? Why couldn't the weather just cooperate? I had so many expectations on how things should go and when they didn't meet my expectations, I would experience the same feelings creep in. Powerless, hopelessness, self-pitying and resentment. And then the cycle of compulsive eating would continue.

Ultimately when this realization struck me, it wasn't long before I began working towards a deep internal



shift. I started to recognize areas within myself that I could change which allowed me to cope in healthier ways when unforeseen situations popped up or when things just didn't go as I had planned. I had my fellowship to turn to, my sponsor, my plan of action, the 12 Steps and most importantly my HP.

I recognized that taking simple daily actions and letting go of expectations allowed me a reprieve from compulsive eating... one day at a time.

All this time, the change I was desperately looking for in my life was right inside of me, desperate yearning to be found!

-Cathy W.



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



## Action, Not Reaction

Through this 12-step life, I've learned to act on life rather than to react to life. Imagine! And I came to OA to lose weight!

Mostly, now a days, I think, think, think and ask God for direction before responding to situations. Is this a response or action right for me? Is this the way a 12-step person should act?

My actions reveal who I am to others as well as to myself.

Asking God takes only a short pause (see bottom of page 87 Big Book) and gives me the necessary courage to behave more like the person God would have me to be.

- Joanie, Truro.





## My New Normal

My name is Millie, I am a recovered compulsive eater, recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body – not cured – yet have a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of my spiritual condition.

Sitting in my home, participating in an online Zoom meeting, I started reflecting on the NEW NORMAL – meaning the changes that are imposed due to pandemic we experience worldwide. Is there really a new normal for an OA member? What is new?

I reflected on the tools and my HP.

- Is my HP available to me now? Yes, still available - always. Here, there, everywhere. No change there. Same always.
- A Plan of Eating – yes, still available. Yes, I might need to decide enjoy the foods that are available with gratitude instead of expecting MY SAFE FOODS to be available – just like a change of season with different food offerings, THE NEW NORMAL might make it a bit more challenging to access them. HP will guide me if I trust – trust that my needs will always be met “we trust infinite God rather than our finite selves” AA Big Book pg. 68
- Sponsorship – yes, still available. Possibly more time available to sponsor – the NEW NORMAL setting boundaries for my social life. “Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.” AA Big Book pg. 89. I might be limited to meeting someone in person, yet the phone, a text message or an online chat or zoom call will give me the same opportunity – reaching out to someone in need or reaching out to my sponsor.
- Meetings – yes, still available. Not face to face, no hugs, no handshakes – yet the ample opportunity to meet by phone, text or via chat rooms or zoom. “sweeping changes in society as a whole are reflected in new customs and practices within the fellowship. Taking advantage of technological advances, for example, AA members with computers can participate in meetings online, sharing with fellow alcoholics across the country or around the world” AA Big Book Foreword to the Fourth Edition. I have the opportunity to participate in meetings with OA friends in many places,

Kingston, ON where I used to live, Florida where I used to spend my winter, NS where I have met people at retreats and many more. MY NORMAL.

- Telephone – yes, still available. “My musing was interrupted by the telephone”. AA Big Book pg 8. No problem “interrupting” someone as they about to have a date with their fridge. MY NORMAL.
- Writing – yes, still available. “In dealing with resentments we set them on paper” - AA BB pg. 64. Yes, I might resent the fact that the NEW NORMAL cancels my local face to face meetings, yet, I have a wonderful opportunity to write these resentments and anything else out. I live in my head – putting stuff on paper in writing clears my head. And my head is my most dangerous space, I never go there without my sponsor. MY NORMAL DAILY
- Literature – yes, still available. The quotes come from the book Alcoholics Anonymous – has been there since 1939 – long before I was born and continues to be available – part of MY NORMAL DAILY routine.
- Action Plan – yes, still available. What attainable actions can I take today? Follow a food plan, make an outreach call, pray, write, meditate, go for a walk? I remind myself that abstinence is defined as “Abstinence: The act of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. “. Compulsive eating AND compulsive food behaviour – no matter what life deals me, I cannot find an answer in food, food does not talk (even if I believe it does), it does not listen, it does not hear – and the fridge has no answers. The NEW NORMAL – NO – MY DAILY NORMAL. Always. “Faith without works is dead” AA Big Book pg. 88.
- Anonymity – yes, still available. Respecting someone’s anonymity in an online meeting has the same role as in a face to face meeting – refraining from cross talk, sharing what was shared, and allowing and respecting each members’ privacy – again. MY NORMAL DAILY. Always. “It is important that we remain anonymous .... We would like it understood that our alcoholic work is an avocation”. AA Big Book Foreword to the first edition.

- Service - yes, still available. I can still give back to OA by writing this article, by making a phone call, by participating o a phone or online.
- meeting. Yes, I might be challenged to come out of my comfort zone – but was I uncomfortable driving to a convenience store 10 km away at 2 am, because it was open? “For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead.” AA Big Book pg. 14/15. I remind myself that it says service to others – not just alcoholics or in my case compulsive eater. Can I offer to run an errand for my elderly neighbour Can I write an email to help resolve an issue for my parents? Can I help someone place an order online who struggles with the computer? Can I send a “thinking about you” text message to a friend in isolation? MY NEW NORMAL – but can it become MY DAILY NORMAL? Yes, I might feel challenged by the NEW NORMAL – but is it really such a new normal in reality? More like Millie resenting changes – oh well, nothing new there – MY DAILY NORMAL?!? Time for Millie to grow up, mature and listen to God.

Always remembering: “Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man (one) that he can get well regardless of anyone. The only condition is that he trusts in God and clean house.” AA Big Book pg. 98

- Millie



### **Act as If**

*If my daily behavior changes, my life changes*”. This is the motto I live by. Each morning I wake up and begin my day in the same way, with my daily Plan of Action front and center. Each evening I end my day with a daily review to make sure I remain on the right path.

My Plan of Action encompasses the OA way of life. It involves living in a way that keeps me free from the bondage of compulsive eating. I know that by following this method, I remain on the healing path my HP has set in place for me.

It gives me a sense of calm unlike any food in this world has ever offered!

Eternally Grateful!

- Cathy W.



“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-



### **Dealing with Disturbances**

I struggled in the food for almost 57 years. Was my problem solely just food? No. In working the 12 Steps, I soon learned that food wasn’t my primary problem; I was. I didn’t know how to react to life. I didn’t know how to handle my emotions and in avoiding, I stuffed them with the one thing that gave me comfort...food. When the allergy to my body clicked in, the continuous cycle continued and the build up of all those things I was avoiding got so much to bear, I went straight to food to escape...that only felt good for a moment then that “feel good” turned to pitiful and complete demoralization, for I was totally powerless to stop.

I am grateful that in working the 12 steps like my life depended upon it, I found a way to stay away from the foods, and deal with all those emotions. My emotions are basically a divining rod of what is happening inside, and it’s OK...but it is how I cope to want to avoid dealing with them. My character defects are linked to them. In my steps 4-9 I learned the process in how to clear away that debris so I wouldn’t have that build up, to have to resort to food. Steps 10-12 are what I live now, to keep that debris clear so I can keep sane and not go back. The moment I feel anxiety, fear etc. all are connected to my defects and if I do not do a step 10, I know that build up will send me to the crazies and then, directly to the food. I never want to go back to that insanity, so I must take heed at the least little disturbance.

Life will always be filled with so many things to disrupt life. I am an emotional gal, and now have a 12-step plan to be able to deal with all those emotions.

- Mel



-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*



## **Surrender**

Wow! What a simple solution. I gave up the fight. The food was no longer a problem when I quit struggling against it. I truly accepted my powerlessness over food. I had no choice. I was so restless, irritable

*“As page 30 in the Big Book says, “No real alcoholic ever recovers control” Serenity and struggle is not compatible.”*

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and discontented when I was trying to control the food. As page 30 in the Big Book says, “No real alcoholic ever recovers control”.

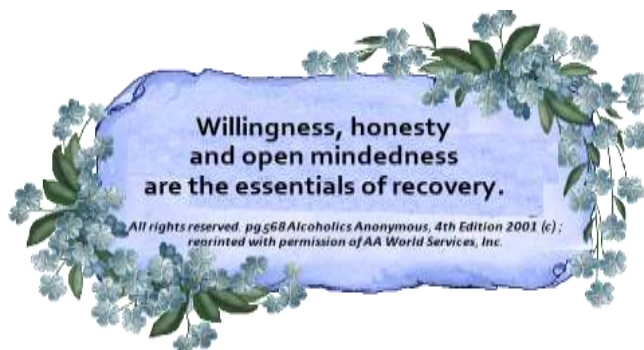
Serenity and struggle are not compatible. Surrender was the only requirement for me to take Step 1.

– Joanie

## **Dancing Around the Fact**

I heard a few politicians on the news saying that the United States has the lowest coronavirus rate in the world. They want it to be true, but that doesn't make it so. I shake my head and wonder, “how can they think like that when the facts tell us the opposite?” But when I read FOR TODAY, July 15<sup>th</sup>, that “an addiction is a fact,” I understood exactly how it can happen.

I had to admit that I myself have danced my way around this truth for years: “An Addiction is a fact”.



Step One tells me I am powerless over certain foods and behaviors. For many years I thought, “Sure, I'm powerless, but when the family comes for Chinese food, I can have some.” Therefore, my Step One was admitting powerlessness – EXCEPT on January 1<sup>st</sup>, OR at the church bake sales, OR at birthday parties and restaurants, OR at times I felt the need to use up leftovers and eat between meals. I told myself I could handle these situations. I made excuses.

My wishful thinking took over. I invented my own facts, making them up as I went along. I convinced myself I was “almost abstinent” and had been pretty good for a day or two. “This time it doesn't matter. I'll get back on track right away.” I wanted my made-up ideas to be true. When I talked to people about OA, I told them I was powerless, at the same time, shrugging off the exceptions. I was like those politicians.

Step One, when it finally became a FACT for me that I believed unreservedly, it led me to the simple acceptance of the truth of my addiction. Now I don't have to try to figure out ways around it. I can no longer tell myself that I am less addicted than anyone else. This is the real freedom that the program promises. I can say with humble gratitude that today the dancing is over. Thanks for listening.

– Elsa P.

## **Service is a MUST**

*“Overeater Anonymous is built on a foundation of sharing our experience Strength, and hope, one member to another. As OA members, we may serve each other by sponsoring, speaking at meetings, and doing many necessary committees and other service work. For this, none of us receive payment in money. Our reward is something money can’t buy – our own personal recovery.”*

*-The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 139  
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Hi My name is Melanie. I am a compulsive overeater with 15 months abstinence and a 130lb weight release.

When first entering OA, in hearing the term “service”, fear coursed through me. Feelings of inadequacy ruled; my perfection trait soon took hold. I sought out the easier jobs, like setting up chairs or putting out literature. Something not too difficult and not much effort. I lacked the confidence.

It was a nice start but I soon realized, doing the least wouldn’t propel me in my recovery as I had heard action and willingness was a necessity for my program to work. I knew if I wanted change, I would have to step out of my comfort zone and face my fears. If I didn’t take action, I would never have the benefit of program at all, for I had heard in others shares how that the 12 steps are a program of action.

For most of my life, I always seemed to follow the path of least resistance. The easiest path is the one I pursued. No wonder my life was a life of sloth and unmanageability. I always made some shitting excuse not to do, and it resulted in what effort I had put in; nothing. Well, except to grow myself to well over 600 lbs; my compulsive eating was my focus. It consumed me and ruled me and damned near destroyed me.

Nothing from nothing leaves nothing. If nothing changes, nothing changes. I knew I needed to push myself and take action to do the very thing I didn’t want to do or I’d remain the same. I didn’t want to live in that insanity anymore. I had enough of it!! I wanted recovery!! ...but it came with a price. Hard work and ACTION.

Well now, for this sloth, that felt like an impossible feat. How in the world can I, Melanie do that? Well “I” couldn’t, for I am powerless to do anything to change me. For 57 years I had tried numerous ways, but nothing worked. I finally realized when reading the

Doctor’s opinion in the Big Book of AA that I had a two-fold condition. An allergy to the body and a compulsion of the mind. I would NEVER be a normal eater. When I finally conceded that I was a true compulsive overeater and that I would never be normal, I then knew I was desperate...I needed to surrender my all to a Power greater than myself. Allow my Higher Power do for me what I could not possibly do. So, in finally working the 12 steps like my life depended on it, I finished them in less than a month and recovered.

I took part in meetings through sharing. Man, those butterflies were overwhelming in pushing myself to share. This in itself was a learning curve. Getting rid of that idea of perfection was an on going process early in abstinence. Would what I have to say be right? Would I be able to get words out of me to be understood? What do I have to say of any importance? In listening to others and in proceeding through the steps I started to get to know myself and knew I needed to share. I soon learned I had nothing to fear. In putting myself out there, listening to my heart, allowing myself to be vulnerable enough to share, getting rid of the ego, my recovery began to go forward.

I also took my turn in weekly positions of leading and secretary. I was nervous (that perfection ran high; I had years of experience), but soon, I learned the fear was unwarranted. I was with a group that understood. That there is no perfection and it’s all a part of learning. Acceptance is definitely the answer to all of my problems today. All of this was a progression. A Much need part of my old self, that needed to be gone. That old “idea” was smothered in selfishness, dishonesty, self seeking and fear. My Higher Power was teaching me what I needed to do so He could remove from me what was getting in the way of my recovery.

I soon took on other service positions; my home meeting IG rep, email person, a service member at a virtual non real time registered OA meeting, with NS Intergroup as their Newsletter Editor, service in a virtual Group, as well as many other tasks and sponsoring too; many who my HP sent to me. Doing service has strengthened my recovery 10-fold. I have learned so much in working with others. I have learned about myself...and how the traditions can be upheld in all my affairs. Without doing service, I know my recovery wouldn’t be where it is at today. I MUST continue with service daily. Service is a necessity for me so that I remain spiritually fit and stay recovered. You see I am a compulsive overeater. Never cured only recovered for today.

*-Mel, Atlantic Recovery Group*



## Total Reliance

Yesterday, I woke to my 15th month of abstinence. Weigh day. I woke, went and peed and stripped off and jumped on the scale. Nothing. Changed batteries, still nothing. Scale was kaput. "Oh well," I said. "Father what are you telling me?" I didn't get scared of not weighing, I didn't think the world came to an end. I know if this would have happened before OA, I would have been on my way to the store asap, not eating, to get a scale so I could weigh as I normally do, but there, I just went, sat down and wrote my morning papers like I always do every morning.

I wrote to my HP asking what He was trying to show me. I wrote how I wondered if He was showing me not to weigh anymore... I said I would be willing... but deep within I was reminded how I stayed away from my scale for 8 years and ate as I did. "Father are you telling me to trust that I can? I dunno. I really can't afford a scale right now...but is this..." as soon as I wrote the words I stopped. "OMG Father... what did I just say? You supply all my need! I know I have money put aside for my teeth but I have no appointment and only You know when it will be needed. I need to rely on you for every thing in my life! I do have the money. That prudent reserve can be used and I know when my teeth are ready that too shall be supplied." Wow. How humbling. My character defect of self seeking at play... "I need to rely on you Father."

So, I went out later in the day and bought a new scale. When I came home, I heard "weigh now...it's the 24th", So I jumped on with clothes and all...a new one for me... and seen 245. I stepped off and jumped back on; maybe my eyes were out of focus and I got it wrong. Nope, 245. Six more pounds gone! A total now of 130 lbs. "OMG Father...6 pounds? I have clothes on! "

He never ceases to amaze me. There eating 1600 calories for 15 months and lost weight. Totally the opposite of what this restrictor knew of weight loss. This is NO diet!! This is LIVING!!

So grateful for my program. My HP is doing for me what I can't possibly do. Showing me how I can rely on him for every single thing in my life. When I give up the reigns and let go of that control, He works miracles.

– Melanie

## Step 7 Principle Humility

I often say the Step 7 prayer on pg. 76 of the Big Book, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.

God removes the character defects, not me.

Unless I am spiritually fit, they will come back (see page 85, Big Book) This re-emergence of character defects would be a slide into losing recovery.

I need to recognize what is happening – I can only coast one way downwards. Having recognized the come back of my character defects, I pray for the willingness to have them removed. Then immediately I take action. I have to cooperate.

As our Big Book says on page 88 "There is action and more action.". Spot check inventories are helpful, or I may need a more involved inventory.

Above all, I need to follow up by reaching out to others, and commit what I am doing. Committing strengthens commitment.

Am I building my character or am I tearing it down? (see AA 12 & 12 pg.71)

– Joanie



### Birthday Meetings

**TBA:** When Social Distancing ends, Joanie will be celebrating 27 years of Abstinence and Melanie will be celebrating 1 year of abstinence  
Dates yet to be announced



**Monday August 13<sup>th</sup>:** Millie will be celebrating 15 years of abstinence. Hope you join in on the celebrations on Wednesday August 19<sup>th</sup> 2020, at OA Atlantic Recovery Group Online meeting.



## Fear

*"We cultivate the willingness to have any newly discovered fears, resentments, and other shortcomings removed. Then, as a part of our daily prayer and meditation, we hold these defects up to the light of God's love and humbly ask God to remove them from us, being willing to take action our Higher Power would have us take."*

*-The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 55  
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Fear. My how it can slither its way back into my life so easily. That doubt of what I can or I can't do, and fear grabs hold, and immobilizes. Puts me right into the inaction that my disease loves. Where my disease breeds. Fear. A breeding ground.



Fear. It certainly can freeze me up; make me want to run for the hills, and my dishonesty jumps in to reinforce the lies, to hold me there. I know when this pandemic started and my face to face meeting was cancelled. The uncertainty of "Now

what" left me reeling. I needed my meetings, so what do I do now? Change was never a good feeling for me. Changing from what I had grown comfortable in doing has always been hard. I was sloth. I didn't want to change. The easiest path is the one I pursued, but look where it got me!

Being in program this past year, my HP is teaching me that it's only with action, change can occur. My HP can change me, change my attitudes and teach me, IF I am willing to do what He shows me to do. Complacency will only destroy my recovery and I must always be open and willing for change. If nothing changes, nothing changes. The past year my HP has shown me this over and over. I am a repeat customer at times for He is driving home an important fact for me. Without ACTION there is no recovery. I am so glad He never gives up on me and when I see how much my life has changed, I know it has only been possible by taking the actions required of me through my program.

20 years ago, in having difficulty in moving due to my size, in desperation, I learned how to turn on a computer for the first time. In fear I pushed myself and

learned so much. I wondered if I could train for a new job behind a computer. I was looking for a way out of working 12 hours on my feet, to maintain my eating and my sedentary ways. I pushed myself and learned how to web page. A gal who never knew how to turn a computer on, was now web paging. I remembered how others had patience and helped me. My HP reminded me of this. I knew I could push to learn zoom, take that action. He also showed me that I am to pass on what I have learned, so others who are willing to learn, can too. Amazing how my HP reminds me of a past so I can learn how I need to take action in the present.

In stepping out of my comfort zone, learning the how to do zoom meetings, so many wonderful things occurred. My recovery strengthened and I seen how others in recovery grew too. Reaching out to others is my 12<sup>th</sup> step; a step that will keep me recovered and spiritually fit. To ignore it would be to my demise.

Learning new technology is intimidating. A part of me thought, well there are other meetings I can go to...and I heard a voice, *"this is YOUR responsibility... to share the message."* I bit the bullet and pushed forward. I was totally overwhelmed in facing so many new things. I hate that feeling...my head felt full, I felt like I was blocked in understanding, I struggled. I then thought..." omg, *there is no struggle when totally relying on my HP! My ego is at play here!*" I then asked my HP to show me.

Like a cloud disappearing, the struggle ended. Do I fully understand zoom? no. But I have to become

**"I have to become willing to let my HP show me each step of the way. When I put my fear and my ego aside, He can work miracles!"**

willing to let my HP show me each step of the way. When I put my fear and my ego aside, He can work miracles!

There is no fear when totally relying on my HP and taking action. What wondrous things change in taking action!!

I pray my HP keeps cultivating that willingness to face all my fears and defects so I remain recovered and doing His will and not mine.

*-Melanie, Truro Group*

## Expectations and Procrastination

Two days before the deadline for the newsletter; I feel I had better get at this. I am a terrible procrastinator. I often tell myself I procrastinate due to the fact there is too little time and too much to accomplish. That is sometimes the case. Life is hard to balance for sure some of the time but one of my character defects is putting off so I can just get through today. This has served me quite well. It helps me not to sweat the small stuff and stay focussed on what is at hand today. However, it also has me eventually putting off other things to finally take care of what I need to, and the cycle continues. This may be normal I guess but I know if I seek HP's guidance properly everyday, He will help me manage better.

"Voices of Recovery", June 3rd has helpful information on dealing with procrastination. It tells me any action, no matter how small will help overcome it. Procrastination is the result of me thinking I need to do "x" number of tasks before I can feel satisfied with myself. Well it is impossible to accomplish everything my crazy mind tells me to do so I am always left feeling inadequate. The June 3rd passage suggests we pray for the willingness to do one small thing. So today this article is one small thing HP has given me the willingness to do and go visit my grandmother for the day. The rest of the tasks will be here waiting but no one will die if they do not get finished.

Expectation is the other side of the "procrastination coin". My disease of compulsive overeating/ addiction has created expectations for myself and others which are often unattainable. December 10th in "Voices of Recovery" reads 'I was imprisoned by unrealistic expectations of people, bitterly resenting their imperfections. I also hated myself because I couldn't stop eating. Negativity breeds hopelessness, and I was trapped. Recovery teaches me that my gratitude and serenity snowball, just like my negative attitudes did'. In recovery I am not imprisoned by food anymore; I practice gratitude most of the time and am kinder to myself when I don't fulfil all that I feel I should. However, those expectations creep in subtly and my disease starts telling me "I should do ..." and "if I could do ...then I'd be better". It's times like this when I must stop and "PAUSE" (Pray always until Serenity Enters) and take time to see what HP thinks on the situation at hand.

I am on vacation this week and had expectations of what that would look like to give me a rest and enjoy



time to myself. It is not turning out as I had wanted in that I am not doing what I had expected, however it is happening in a way HP has divined perhaps. I am responsible to do the footwork of recovery, I am responsible to organize my time to allow time for things I would like to do, and I must be accepting if it changes course.

Today, writing this article is helping me to keep my sights on HP and their plans for me. Visiting my grandmother will mean so much to her and I will enjoy that time. She has been such a blessing in my life and that of my family. My alone time will still happen, and I should pray for the willingness to put my phone down and focus on what is around me, nature, a home, family, and freedom from compulsive overeating. Spending time in meditation with God is always a good start.

Page 420 in the Big Book reads something like this, *"Perhaps the best thing of all for me is to remember that my serenity is inversely proportional to my expectations. The higher my expectations of 'myself' and other people the lower is my serenity. I can watch my serenity level rise when I discard my expectations."*

So now I will carry on with the next thing in front of me to do!

-Claudette, Truro Group

## ***I AM an Addict***

Hi my name is Melanie & I AM a Compulsive Overeater. I AM an addict.

For so many years I struggled in the food. I tried diet after diet to control my weight, always losing, vowing this time I AM changing, and once again, I would regain what I lost and then some. I felt hopeless. I would hear from many, even professionals, tell me how that all I needed to do was to eat moderately and exercise, change my lifestyle. Each time I would try, I'd have a small window of success and bam back into it again. Shame, guilt and complete demoralization and the cycle continued over and over. I had eaten myself to well over 600lbs at one point. Progressively it got worse, never better. My life, my health was hanging by a thread.



I felt there was no help for me. I tried every program, read every self-help book I could find, went to therapists and psychologists. Nothing helped. In a fit of transference my addiction swung into an extreme of restriction and excessive exercise. After losing over 400 lbs, I even had weight loss surgery. I wanted to secure it with a kiss so to speak. Did that secure my success? No. Outside everybody cheered me on but inside I was miserable. I started nibbling, after 18 months of restriction, the nibbles got to be more frequent then I went into a massive binge that scared the hell out of me. I can remember standing at the kitchen counter shoving cookie after cooking into my face, bawling and roaring because I wanted to STOP but I couldn't. Like a force that had taken over my body, that I had no control of... I was an addict. I could not stop. Complete and utter shame filled me. I wanted to die. I even had needle and insulin in hand debating how much I'd need to take to end it, but the thought of my son finding me; I couldn't do that to him.

Crawling out of that hole, I fought hard. Self help groups helped some, but still, I struggled with the food. I went to an OA program once 8 years ago. But in hearing of abstinence and having to give up those foods, I ran. Eight years later, I became desperate. Seeing a 169lb regain, I knew my health was breaking down. I knew something had to change or I'd be soon dead. I finally conceded to my innermost self that I was a true compulsive overeater. In reading the Doctor's opinion in the Big Book, I finally understood that due to the allergy to my body with some foods, is why I could not

stop. As long as I kept eating them, I knew the cycle would never stop. But wait! I tried that with numerous diets before and always went back to them! I WAS powerless! I then knew I needed a Power greater than myself to do for me what I knew I could not do. I finally surrendered and worked the steps like my life depended on it and I recovered.

I will never be cured. I am an addict, and am only recovered for today. My recovery is contingent upon me working my program daily and keeping spiritually fit.

I know many do not look at my addiction as one. Their "ideas" are different. That's OK by me. I can not control what another thinks or says. All I know is I AM an addict. I will continue in my program and stay recovered. I will Trust God, Clean House, and Tell Others. I will work my program and be the message. Others have not lived my life and all that I have experienced. I know how my addiction near killed me and how it grabbed a hold of me where I felt totally powerless to stop. My disease is a progressive one; slow and painful and debilitating; deadly in many ways. It may not be an addiction that is as progressive, but a killer non the less. An addiction that grabs a hold of a person where the insanity drives them to do things that no normal person does... that was me. My substance may look different than others and may not be accepted or viewed as a "substance" worthy to be labeled as addiction, but my body tells me different. I lived it.

I see the numbers of those around me growing. Obesity is on the rise. Health is being affected by many who too have lost power to stop the compulsive eating. Just as my addiction is slowly progressive, perhaps this slow progression will soon be to the point of exploding where professionals will finally have to take a hard look at it and label it for what it is; an addiction to certain foods.

In no way can I wait for a society to understand my slow progressive disease. I have a text, an instruction book to address my addiction. I have the 12 steps to show me how to live. Freedom finally from my compulsive overeating. Freedom from the addiction that once kept me in its grip and near destroyed me.

Hi my name is Melanie, and I am an addict. For today, I am a gratefully recovered compulsive overeater in N.S.  
-Mel, Atlantic Recovery Group



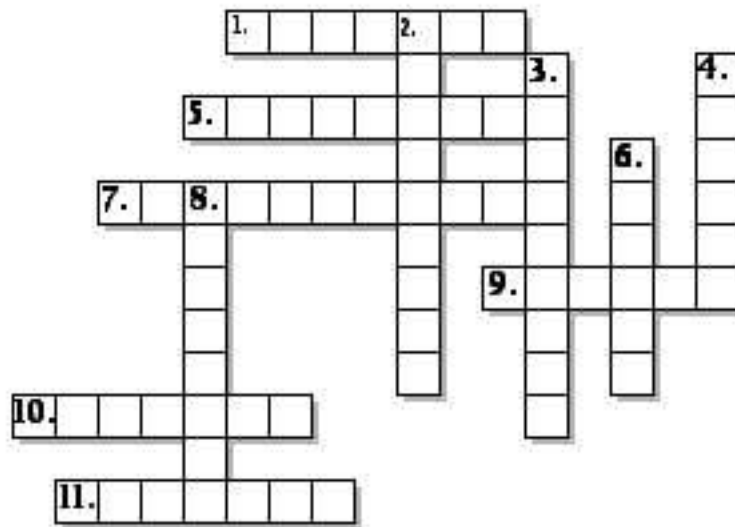
## An OA Literature Crossword Puzzle

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. "We hope in this way to provide help for those who still suffer from our \_\_\_\_\_." (OA 12 & 12 pg.1)
5. "at the Fifth step, we see something we can do – a positive action that we can take – to end our \_\_\_\_\_." (OA 12 & 12 pg.39)
7. "the purpose of making \_\_\_\_\_ to others is paramount" (AA 12 & 12 -Step 8 pg.80)
9. "Each day that we live well, we are well, and we \_\_\_\_\_ the joy of recovery." (OA 12 & 12 -Step Twelve, pg.87)
10. "the self-destructive things we have done to avoid \_\_\_\_\_ ...." (OA 12 & 12 -Step One, pg.3)
11. "It is an attitude which can only be \_\_\_\_\_ by a deep honest search of our motives and actions." (AA 12 & 12, Step Eight, pg.79)

### Down

2. "These were the new \_\_\_\_\_ that finally brought many of us an inner strength and peace..." (AA 12 & 12, Step Twelve, pg.116)

### Down continued

3. "\_\_\_\_\_ is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." (OA 12 & 12 – Step 12, pg.163)
4. Our \_\_\_\_\_ and spiritual health depends on the health of our relationships." (OA 12 & 12 - Trad One, pg. 97)
6. "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 Step Ten, pp. 92-93)
8. "The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common \_\_\_\_\_." (AA BB There is a Solution, pp. 17)

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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: My question is based on page 15, 1st paragraph in Bills Story where he was plagued by self pity and resentment for a year and a half and in Dr Bobs nightmare he states “ Unlike most of our crowd I struggled with abstinence for 2.5 years but never yielding or succumbing to the first drink . Did they work the 10th step with the frequency as we do today?**

**A:** In a study I took part in, I learned that when Ebby told Bill of his recovery it was the Oxford groups 6 Steps he followed. (Later to be made into the 12 steps we have to day) The Oxford steps listed as this; (I placed our step # in correlation to them.)

1. Complete deflation. We admitted that we were licked, that we were powerless over alcohol.
4. Moral inventory. We made a moral inventory of our defects or sins.
5. Confession. We confessed or shared our shortcomings with another person in confidence.
9. Restitution. We made restitution to all those we had harmed by our drinking.
11. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power. We prayed to whatever God we thought there was for power to practice these precepts.
12. Continued work with other alcoholics. We tried to help other alcoholics, with no thought of reward in money or prestige. Perhaps the

question may be answered as is in what one perceives as “recovered” when used in the Big Book.

I am reminded of someone sharing with me that the term “recovering” was not used in the Big Book when a person was referring to themselves... only the term “recovered” was used. “Recovered” in the Big Book, I am told is a “change” from what they used to be. If they stopped drinking, they deemed themselves “recovered” for they no longer drank. I believe that many today use the term “recovered” a bit differently.

I know in feeling a total change in being relieved from cravings and desire for food once I took step 1-3, I felt recovered, yet I didn’t verbally say that I was recovered until I completed the 12 steps and living them... but wasn’t I living them the moment I took step 1? According to the Big Book, the fact I was changed in taking steps 1-3, I was recovered. My thoughts of perfection prevented me from claiming to be recovered at that time.

Hearing Bill talk about those who struggled yet did not drink for a year and a half, and how was plagued by self pity and resentment, it certainly sends home to me how that there is no perfection in recovery.... Only progression. Honesty and humility with perseverance is so needed every day. A 12-step way of living is a continually working of the 12 steps for me, staying connected to my HP so I keep that slate cleared so I can stay spiritually fit and remain recovered and abstinent. So wonderful to see Bill’s humanity, his imperfection and how his HP progressively changed him. In his honesty, shared his imperfections in his recovery. Love reading Bill’s various writings on “Spot checking” in “As Bill Sees It.

Was Bill and others doing step 10 like people do today? I imagine they did. The Oxford group in which the 12 steps were derived from, where totally immersed in inventories constantly. I have learned that no one may practice their program like me, and how they work their program is none of my business. Bless them, change me. I am so grateful for all who I come in contact with for my HP teaches me so much from everyone; no matter where on the scale of

recovery they may be. I do know, the evidence of how I work my program will be evident in my life.

The very things that Bill speaks of many years ago, I see the same today too, although I believe the term "recovered" has changed these days, for many do not say "recovered" unless they see more than just being abstinence.... I know my "idea" of perfection had to be smashed. I am never cured. Only recovered for today and that is contingent on my spiritual fitness.

**Q: Someone mentioned alcoholic foods and I want to know what they are for sure. think I know but would like some insight. How they are like alcohol?**

**A:** In OA we follow the 12 steps for recovery. Those 12 steps were derived from the 12 steps of Alcoholic Anonymous.

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous is the text that shows the plan on how to work those 12 steps. Every time I read alcohol in the Big Book, I think food and when I see alcoholism, I think Compulsive Overeating.

An alcoholic must refrain from alcohol to be sober. I must refrain from whatever foods that create that craving (the allergy as mentioned in the big book) that sets me apart from a normal eater (a normal drinker in big book).

An alcoholic just because they refrain from alcohol doesn't mean the no longer drink anything, they still drink milk, coffee, pop, water etc. etc. As a Compulsive overeater, I have some foods I need to stay away from (like the alcoholic refraining from alcohol) the foods that create that craving. I call those foods, my "alcoholic foods" I sometimes call them my "red light foods" or my "no " list.

Each COE is different for one thing that gives me that craving, another COE may have no problem with. I have certain listed foods that I cannot eat due to them triggering in me that MORE feeling where I incessantly crave and can't stop. Some foods are a combo trigger for me. I can eat 4 soda crackers and not want any more...put butter on that soda cracker n I am off to the races wanting

the whole box. Butter on a soda cracker is a combo on my list. Others on my list are defined such as bread, flavored crackers, potatoes chips chocolate, candy, choc bars, desserts, cake etc. etc. I do not list as no sugar or flour for my disease for I can find loopholes and I knew I needed to be defined in exacts.

I am diabetic. If I say sugar is my alcoholic food, well my disease would say... "you can have sugar free candy or sugar free pie!". NO! I can't, for those sugar free items too, I cannot stop eating either. I needed to be exact in each food that I needed to refrain from.

Today I look at my alcoholic foods as poison. If I eat them, I will die. I will NOT take that first bite.... They will kill me.

I also made a list of my compulsive food behaviors. My restricting or my over doing portions can be to my detriment. Eating at the table with a small plate, eating slowly, listening to my body as I eat each bite, so I can immediately be aware if any other foods create that feeling of "more", so I can add them to my list is necessary.

**Q: Do you keep sponsees that you feel you are not a good match with?**

**A:** I have always felt due to having been rejected myself so many times in my life, I felt rejecting a sick person may do harm, so I always prayed that my HP show me how to handle every situation. Not what "I" want but seek God's will.

Sponsorship for me is not only spreading the message, but more a learning how to work with others...in essence to learn about me. If I don't work with others...I never will learn who I am and what I need to learn. If I react (and that was my old knee jerk reactions ) to things "I" didn't like, then how am I to change? How would I learn anything in avoiding a person that my HP has sent me? So, I knew there was some valuable things I needed to learn in sponsoring. I am always learning. When I became irritated by a sponsee, I did a step 10. I realized then what character defects were at play .... it was very humbling. My heart softened. Patience began. I knew what action I needed to take. I set boundaries and in patience, tolerance, kindness and love did God's will not mine.