



# OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

OA INTERGROUP NOVA SCOTIA #09262 NEWSLETTER – REGION 6  
AUGUST 2021



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

*-OA Promise*



## August

Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 **OA NS Intergroup Meeting (Virtual).**

## October

October 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 **OA NS Intergroup Fall Retreat in Debert.**

## November

Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 **Newsletter submission deadline for November edition.**

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 fellow Mel B.

## A word from your Editor

*My name is Tobi, and I am a compulsive overeater. Of at least that one thing, I am sure.*

*I am grateful to be your Newsletter Editor for this August issue and am willing to continue to be for as long as I am needed.*

*A lot of things have happened since our April issue. COVID-19 reared its ugly head for yet another wave of lockdown. It felt so weird to have family in both Bedford and Truro, but to not be able to see them. As the reopening phases happened it feels as though we've seen ONLY family and A LOT of them LOL.*

*But seriously though, I had two important family events, in July, in Newfoundland that were exactly two weeks apart. Newfoundland has historically been a difficult place for my food in the past as eating seems extra important there. I knew I couldn't stay the whole two weeks, so I chose to go to Newfoundland and back twice in two weeks. It was a very hectic couple of weeks with a lot of driving and ferry rides.*

*I also knew I needed a plan for success while I was there, so I didn't leave feeling gross like I have in the past. I tend to eat all yellow foods when I am in Newfoundland. I called my grandmother a couple of weeks in advance and asked her not to make anything just for me. I called my cousin (with whom I stay) and asked her not to buy any groceries for me for my visit. I told them both I planned to bring most of my own food and make a trip to the grocery store for a few final items when I got there. Knowing my family there was a distinct possibility they would ignore my wishes and do it anyway. The difference is that that would be on them, not me. If I politely, and humbly, ask them in advance not to do something for me, and they choose to do it anyway, I would have no problem telling them no. If I had not done that, it would have been much harder to do. I wanted*

*to eat mostly green foods, do a little walking and leave feeling good for a change!*

*I typically dread going to Newfoundland, I love my family, but they are crazy. Food is everything. I have to sleep on an air mattress, and I hate the ferry. I wanted to be at these events, and I love the people they were for, so I tried my very best to do things differently this time. For the first time in my life, I left Newfoundland (twice!!) with no food regrets. It was truly a gift from this program & my higher power and I am so grateful.*

*Dealing with family can truly be hard, especially if you have 'food is love' family like I do. At the end of the day, eating things to please other people only hurts me. These trips to Newfoundland taught me I can survive family without eating too many yellow foods – I just need an action plan! This program truly does work IF I work it.*

*Thanks for listening.*

*Big Hugs & Love,*

*Tobi M., Thursday Halifax Group*

**Please join in submitting your ESH for November's Intergroup Newsletter by November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

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

**Email : [newsletter@oaigns.org](mailto:newsletter@oaigns.org)**

## Ask-It Basket - Young People in OA

*I am a mother of a 14-year-old boy who I think may be a food addict. In going through the questions on your website, he answered yes to twelve of the Fifteen Questions. I would really appreciate if you could send me more information about the meetings you hold, and whether you think they will be suitable for us.*

Overeaters Anonymous is a Twelve-Step program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. For OA members, our problem substance is food, and the behavior is compulsive eating. The only requirement for membership in OA is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

You can find information on our website at [oa.org/young-people](http://oa.org/young-people). We also have a pamphlet about how you can support your son called *To the Family of the Compulsive Eater* (#240), available from the OA bookstore at [bookstore.oa.org](http://bookstore.oa.org). Additionally, we have a young persons' social media page at [facebook.com/OAinfo](https://facebook.com/OAinfo) and a young persons' phone meeting.

In most OA meetings you will find a room of adults. There are very few meetings designed especially for teens. In meetings, members will share about their disease and the solution they have found in OA. You will be welcomed regardless of your age. We suggest that anyone under 18 be accompanied by a parent or other adult. Parent or guardian attendance in the meeting room itself is not necessary. We do suggest that online meetings are available. You can find meetings by going to [oa.org](http://oa.org) and clicking "Find a Meeting".

The World Service Office can send you a packet that includes OA information for teens and newcomers. Please provide us with your name and mailing address and we can get that out to

you. You can also buy additional literature online at [bookstore.oa.org](http://bookstore.oa.org) or at OA meetings in your area.

Introductory items particularly helpful for newcomers and teens are:

- *Where Do I Start?* Pamphlet
- *To the Teen* pamphlet
- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*
- *Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition*
- *The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*
- *Alcoholics Anonymous* (commonly called the Big Book)

*-Members of the Board of Trustees provide answers to Ask-It Basket questions.*

*Lifeline, Overeaters Anonymous. (September 2020, pg. 27)*

*Submitted by Joanie M., Truro Group*



## Living in Step 12

Step 12 tells me to practice the principles of the previous 11 steps in all my affairs. For me, I have noticed my life is a 12th step event most of the time.

Right now my world is messy; our home is torn apart, and bills for the renovation need to be paid. I am not concerned about any of these things, they simply exist. Our home will eventually be put back to order in a new way. The bills are being paid on time and my world is just exactly how it should be.

I mentioned to my husband that many people have said that a renovation can cause a lot of friction in a relationship, but it all seems to be going smoothly for us. That is because we made a plan, prepared as much as possible for surprises, and worked the plan. That is one of the tools, a plan of action and it works in more than just the OA program activities.

I love that my life is so much better than it was before program. This experience of living in the moment, accepting what comes my way, is a blessing. My higher power slips in a few roadblocks now and then but I am able to keep going and not eat over situations. It's nice to be calm.

*Carlita H., Thursday Halifax Group*

## FINE

F = feelings

I = inside

N = not

E = expressed

*Joanie M., Truro Group*

*Answers from Last Newsletters Crossword:*



## No Failure

*“Even when we have tried hard and failed, we may chalk that up as one of the greatest credits of all. Under these conditions, the pains of failure are converted into assets. Out of them we receive the stimulation we need to go forward. Someone who knew what he was talking about once remarked that pain was the touchstone of all spiritual progress. How heartily we A.A.’s can agree with him, for we know that the pains of drinking had to come before sobriety, and emotional turmoil before serenity.”*

AA 12 & 12 page 93-94

Failure. I felt it for many years, in many things, especially in trying with my compulsive overeating. I felt HOPELESS. I felt as if the letters were burned into my forehead. Why bother trying for every attempt resorted to the inevitable failure.

I remember as an 8-year-old, looking at all the gold stars everyone had lined up beside mine, and somehow mine fell short. Would I ever get there? It seemed like an impossible feat. Seeing all the little girls get earrings at 10 years old, and me not able to because I, Melanie had to go on a diet because my ears were too thick.

My self truth reinforced again... I am not good enough; I am a failure. I was different. The letters burning into my soul again reinforcing false truths and in feeling pain, continued in eating those emotions so I wouldn't feel. Then I couldn't stop eating those foods, and my pain compounded, and so did my weight. A vicious cycle. Self Pity.

At some point I felt so such a failure I just gave up. "I am just meant to be fat. I was born that way. I will stay at 400 for it's better to stay at one weight instead of dieting and going up and down the scale. It'd be healthier for me to stay at one weight..." , meanwhile, 200 more pounds later. The lies and bullshit I told myself. Dishonesty.

At a young age, seeing my dad excessively drink and act out in rages, the need to be perfect set in. If I wasn't that "good little girl", chaos might ensue and who knows what else. Waking up in the middle of the night to hearing wood splintering cracks that echoed through my soul, the raging screams and crashing of windows, knowing if I was anywhere in sight, I'd be the brunt of it. The next morning, the silence and the hiding of evidence from each other. A secrecy no one spoke of. The need to have my surroundings perfect compounded over the years. The need to control those ideal surroundings grew, but in the secrecy of my own abode, a disaster ensued, complete disorganization was evident... my secret; where I kept people out. In isolation the craziness instilled within me grew and so did I. I wanted things my way and when others didn't comply my rages took hold. Yet as an actor put on a friendly front and seethed on the inside for others not doing or thinking as I felt. Fear & Self-seeking.

Selfishness, Dishonesty, Self-seeking & Fear, all 4-character defects were at play. My ego had grown over the years and kicked into gear, smothering the true essence of me. My soul trapped beneath. Self will run riot. The pain I felt and hid compounded over the years to where every inch of my life was totally unmanageable. Food or anything else in the moment that was my feel good from that pain

became my Master. I got worse, never better. I am an addict. I wallowed in failures doing nothing, yes, I did try. "Try" .... a half-hearted attempt; yet still wanting to hold on to the very thing that would destroy me... no willingness there. I wanted to be normal. The pain worsened; the cycle continued until my breaking point where I had had enough. I was beaten and knew in my heart I was totally powerless and my life unmanageable. In complete abandon, I surrendered. A decision finally made, to let go and let God and take action. That pain finally became the catalyst that open the 18-inch block that separated me spiritually from any kind of peace. A peace I now am able to live in, due to the 12 steps and my Higher Power.

There is no failure for me today. That measuring tape is put away. Everything I go though are lessons for me to learn from... IF I am willing to look for them and take action to learn from them and do better. HP "SHOW me the way of Patience, tolerance, kindness and love..." (BB pg 83). What an asset to have; there is no failure.... in everything there is a purpose for nothing happens in HP's world by mistake. I am not a mistake. Anything I face or go though has purpose. An asset my HP can use to help me and help another.

*Melanie B.*





## The Consciousness of My Belief

When I first came to OA, I used to think that once I figured it out, I would do the work. I was so wrong. It was in doing the work that I understood. I had to trust in the process. Then God really came into my heart. I encourage everyone to re-read p.55 Big Book

*Joanie M., Truro Group*

## Getting Weighed

A wise OA friend once told me to only weigh myself once a month. BOA (before O.A.) I weighed myself all the time, it wasn't a healthy behavior. I don't like the power the scales have over me. There have been several occasions where I woke up feeling physically light & good so decided to weigh myself.... But the scales didn't match how I was feeling. I was like a balloon deflating, the scale changed my good mental feelings to bad ones instantly.

Back in 2016 I felt physically great. My food was good, and I was exercising regularly. Like Ross and Rachel, I 'took a break' from the scales. I knew I was very close to and still working towards a healthy body weight, so I decided I wasn't going to give the scales that power anymore. At the time, that was a very healthy gift to give myself.

Fast forward a few years... my food wasn't so good; portions were too big, and I was working towards an unhealthy body weight – in that situation I felt I did need the scale, as a sort of wake-up call. Denial of the truth leads to destruction. (OA 12 & 12) If I denied my weight gain, I wouldn't make the changes necessary to work towards a healthy body weight.

I think everyone should do what feels peaceful and healthy for them.

Today, I weigh myself roughly once a month. That said, I do it as an accountability thing. I focus on how I feel. Today, my food is great, my portions are good, my clothes fit and I'm walking when I can – that is what matters, I truly feel happy, joyous and free! What a gift!

*Tobi M., Thursday Halifax Group*



## Step 3

In my day-to-day life I ask HP for guidance. When I feel overwhelmed by what needs to be done, I pray or journal and then listen for HP's answer. I ask where to begin when my home is a mess! I ask for help with any decision where I am unsure, in restaurants when choosing my meal, when grocery shopping, making a food plan for the day and especially when I am tempted to make a choice that is led by my disease! When my day off is wide open I ask my HP what I should do! I am currently looking for a 'new to me vehicle' and when the initial excitement of test-driving cars triggers an impulsive decision, I try to wait for clear direction! I have been looking for a few weeks and no obvious fit has arrived, so I wait and hope my current vehicle holds out! When obstacles arrive, I wait! If I write a hasty email and it won't send or I am trying to order something and my card won't go through after 2 attempts, I pause and evaluate, often HP has

another plan for me. I know HP's will is kindness and other centred and when I look, ask, and wait for clear direction it comes, and often in unexpected ways and I have experienced much better outcomes than I ever expected or thought possible!

*Claire J., NS*

## *Get Out of My Own Way*

My mind kept me stuck in self destructive behaviours, including overeating, for many years. I had enough courses in self understanding – the “why” of things. I would not let go and get out of my way. I did not know I was protecting myself from the risk of change, I didn't even realize I could change. The steps brought me that spiritual awakening – a faith in my ability to grow and change. Before the 12-step life, I did not realize I could actually change my thinking by altering my thinking. By working the steps, my heart and mind healed.

*Joanie M., Truro Group*

## *The Seventh Step Prayer Reflection*

For me, the Seventh Step Prayer appears to be a simple prayer. After a lot of reflection, I know there is so much more to it than the mere words and can really put my heart into

*“My Creator”*

I have a higher power, thanks to the program. My HP directs everything in the universe; I have no control over anything other than me and my

thoughts. In addressing my Creator or Higher Power, I know who I am talking to and give my prayers over to – if it is in HP's will.

*“I am now willing”*

This is my reminder that I have to do my part and that's what I commit to at the beginning of this prayer, willingness. I am not looking to ask the world to behave the way I want it to be because I am not in charge. I am willing to listen, talk, act and react. I am not asking for anything but allowing myself to be open.

*“that you should have all of me”*

I am surrendering to my HP, all of me. No qualifications, no backing out of the surrender if I don't like what happens. All of me.

*“good and bad”*

I am acknowledging that I can, at times, be good or be bad. I am teachable and by working my program, I accept I can be bad. However, working the program frees my mind from living a bad life and that leads to live in the good – progress not perfection.

*‘I pray’*

I am living spiritually and recognize prayer is necessary. It allows me to pray for a spiritual life and usually I pray for the ability to cope with whatever HP sends my way.

*“that you now remove from me”*

I can't do this alone. I need my Higher Power, the program, my sponsor and the entire fellowship.

*“every single defect of character”*

I am not perfect; I do have defects. Working the program and humbly admitting to my faults is the way to be free of the burden of acting on my faults – if that is HP's will.

*“which stands in the way”*

I have to clean up my house and get rid of old ideas. Too much clutter in my thoughts prevents me from working the program and practicing the program in all my affairs. I need to clean up my mess and make a place for a new way of living.

*“of my usefulness to you and my fellows.”*

My HP has a plan for me but has not revealed what that plan is specifically. Living in the program, being a better person, is a way of a spiritual existence. I want to live spiritually and share my program with others.

*“Grant me strength”*

That is my most used prayer. Allow me strength to live in the program, allow me to cope with whatever comes my way.

*“as I go out from here, to do your bidding.”*

Your will not my will be done.

*Carlita H., Thursday Halifax Group*



## Ask-It Basket - Posting Local Podcasts

*The German Language Service Board would like to upload audio recordings of meeting speakers to our homepage. I know such podcasts already exist on oa.org, so we wanted to learn the procedure. I'm especially interested in whether the contributions are reviewed beforehand and whether any violations of Tradition are removed. I would also like to know if the people who recorded the audio files have given their written consent to the recording and publishing as well as how long the audio files will remain the homepage.*

I am excited to hear about your new podcasts! Thank you for your service!

We have some guidelines for podcasts at OA websites in *Guidelines for Anonymity in the Digital World*, available at [oa.org/guidelines](http://oa.org/guidelines) (use drop-down menu). It states, “When podcasts of speakers are posted on OA websites, it is important to practice the Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions. To protect the anonymity of the speaker and keep the level of celebrity in check, it is suggested that fictitious names be used, reminding us to place principles before personalities. When posting recordings, list by topic rather than by speaker. If speaker names are listed, do not use full names; use only first names or first names with last initials. Before posting a taped speaker, review the recording for Tradition breaks, especially anonymity. If an issue arises consulting with the speaker may allow for the recording to be edited and the share posted.”

In addition, we should always ask permission of the speaker to record, reproduce, or change their share. Contributions are reviewed by a committee before posting, and we keep audio files on the website for as long as we consider



them to be useful. At the start of the recording it is useful to remind speakers to stay in harmony with Traditions Six and Ten by only mentioning OA-approved literature.

Our *Guidelines for Public Information Events* states, "Speakers should be chosen carefully; they'll be representing the OA program and should demonstrate recovery on all three levels: emotional, spiritual, and physical. You may wish to have abstinence requirements. It is highly recommended that speakers have at least one year of current abstinence and are maintaining a healthy body weight. Look for members who have suffered from different symptoms of the disease."

"Speaking to young people and teens: Two speakers are preferred, since two stories provide more diversity. Two people can also answer questions more effectively. Each should share for fifteen minutes. Speakers should be the same age or just slightly older than those in the audience; one might be a bulimic. They should focus on their teenage or younger years and share personal problems and health risks of compulsive overeating."

Generally at events, we agree to record only the main speakers, not all members or participants. However, it is also useful to say something like, "After each speaker there will be time for sharing. This workshop is being recorded and will be posted on our website as well as other podcast feeds. If you speak, it is considered implied consent to have your voice and share recorded and posted. Please use only your first name or a fictitious name to preserve your anonymity."

Some public information committees find it efficient to upload OA stories that have been published by local radio, television, and other media sources. Usually, interviewers for these stories ask questions that those outside of OA

would ask and package the story in an attractive and objective fashion.

*-Members of the Board of Trustees provide answers to Ask-It Basket questions.*

*Lifeline, Overeaters Anonymous.  
(November/December 2020, pg. 20-21)*

*Submitted by Joanie M., Truro Group*

## *The Willingness to Listen*

If you are lucky, at least once in your life you will meet someone filled with *magic*. It's hard to describe but if you've experienced it, you'll know. Personally, I have been blessed to meet a couple of these magical people in my 42 years.

In early June of this year, I looked in the mirror and noticed my face didn't even look like my face anymore. I am a sweller and a bloater. My face looked puffy and swollen. My food at the time was the absolute bare minimum I could possibly call abstinent, and I was working toward an unhealthy body weight.

This mirror reflection was an eye opener. I knew a change was necessary or relapse was coming, food had become important again. Something told me to reach out to a specific OA friend, one of my life's magical people.

Of course, that something was my higher power and thankfully I decided to listen. Within moments, maybe even seconds, of talking with her I felt better. I became willing to take some actions I knew would make me feel better.

For me, the number one action I can take for my physical, mental, and spiritual health is to walk. I can't explain what happens or why, but it just changes me for the better.

One of my biggest challenges/character defects is my all or nothing attitude. If I can't walk an hour a day, 7 days a week, why bother. This attitude has never served me well and must go. With my shiftwork job there are just days I cannot walk. This is a plain and simple fact. (One of the serenity prayer's things I cannot change) So, if accept that - I have two choices; 1) walk when I can or 2) walk never. Which choice would serve me better? What choice would be my higher power's will for me? Number one, of course.

Another one of my biggest challenges/character defects is I have a bad case of the "shoulds". Oh, it's nice out, I *should* go outside. Oh, I *should* walk. Etc, etc, etc. This automatically puts a negative spin on these activities. What if I said to myself, it's nice out, I would love to go outside and soak some of it up! Or yay, I have the time I would love to use it to go for a walk. Automatically, the same event shifts to a positive one.

Anyway, I digress. My point is, I felt like crap, my higher power sent me a message about what to do, I did it and voila!! I INSTANTLY felt better. Imagine that - it DOES work.

So, I start walking when I can (imperfectly – progress!). Everything improves (my mood, energy, sleep, etc, etc). Before you know it, I became willing to remove some things from my food plan. It's like the snowball effect but this time it's all good things that are happening. Next, I remove some yellow foods, that cause bloating & swelling, and focus on portions. Again, everything improves.

I only weigh myself once a month, but I am now working towards a healthy body weight again. The best part? Although, I am not at a healthy body weight yet, my face looks like my face again and food has gone back to not being important.

This was meant to be a part of my journey and has taught me that if I ask for help from my higher power, and TRULY listen to the response but then ALSO follow the instructions I am given my life can and WILL change. Thank you, HP, for the knowledge of your will but also the willingness to listen!

*Tobi M., Thursday Halifax Group*

## Reminders

Recently, an OA friend relapsed after 7 months abstinence. What has this shown me?

- 1) I can never take the gift of recovery for granted.
- 2) I have only a daily reprieve from this fatal illness as long as I am spiritually fit.
- 3) Daily disciplines are essential!
  - a) Ask for abstinence every morning and say thank you at night
  - b) Reach out to other OA fellows
  - c) Read some 12-step literature
  - d) Use some of our nine tools
- 4) I have learned the skill from Steps 4 through 9 and I am carrying through with this via Steps 10 and 11.
- 5) I am practicing this skill set when I need to do Step 10. I cannot/dare not let resentment, fear or any other problem sabotage my recovery.
- 6) I enlarge my spiritual life, especially via p. 86 Big Book. Constantly, I need to be aware of God's will, not mine.

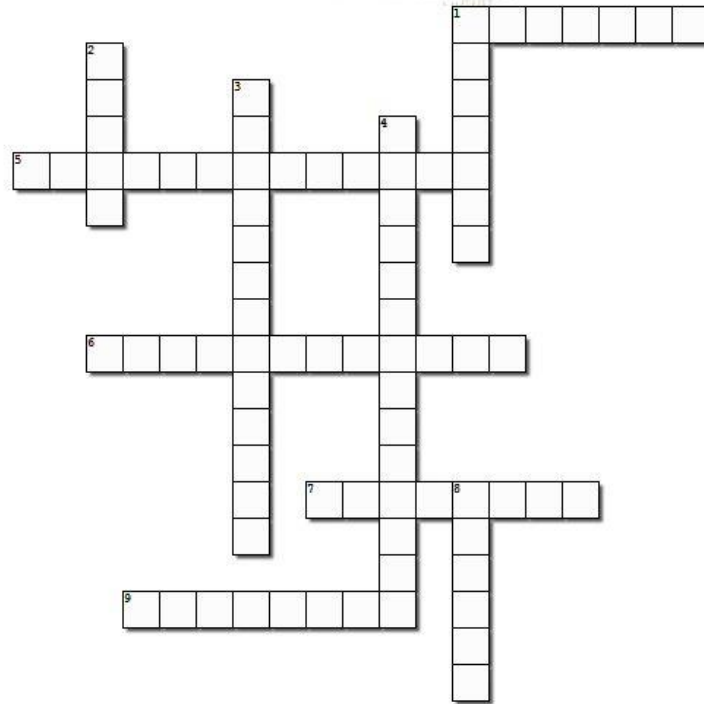
*Joanie M., Truro Group*

## 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. 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

2. " \_\_\_\_\_ proves conclusively that my drinking was "a symptom of a deeper trouble..." (AA BB p.544)
5. "Burn the idea into the \_\_\_\_\_ of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone." (AA BB pg.98)
6. "In OA, we share a belief that we can each recover through a spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ with a Power that is greater than ourselves alone." (OA 12 & 12 p. 75)
9. "I cannot allow my \_\_\_\_\_ to become dependant on those ups and downs of living...." (AA BB pg.451)

3.

### Down continued

1. "Willingness, \_\_\_\_\_ and open mindedness are essentials of recovery." AA BB pg.158)
3. "I \_\_\_\_\_ out of fear of failure." (For Today pg.180)
4. "We also accept \_\_\_\_\_ for our actions, looking at our own fault..." (OA 12 & 12 pg. 168)
8. "Life \_\_\_\_\_ began to change." (AA BB pg.499)

All rights reserved, Twelve & Twelve of OA, 2ndEdition pgs.; 65, 75, 168. ©2018; property of oa.org Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. All rights reserved. For Today, pg.; 180. ©1982; property of oa.org Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. All rights reserved. All rights reserved, Reprinted from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition ©2001, pp. 98, 158, 451, 499, 544. Reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

-Submitted by Melanie B