

DECEMBER 2016

OA TODAY

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**St. Louis Bi-State
Area Intergroup**

OA INTERGROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS:



The St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup is anxious to offer recovery events in 2017 that serve the needs of our fellowship. Please complete a simple ten question survey at this address: www.surveymonkey.com/r/6K3MNC9 . Once at the site, the password is **bistate**. The survey will be open until January 31. (This survey is also available on the OA Intergroup home page: StLouisOA.org)



There is no December Intergroup meeting. The next Intergroup meeting is Sunday, January 8, at Missouri Baptist Hospital, Highway 40 and Ballas Road, at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Updates for December

The following meetings will be meeting at their usual time on December 25, 2016:

*10:45AM meeting at St. Mary's Hospital

*4:00PM meeting at the PNC Bank in Kirkwood

STEP Twelve

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

How Does This Step Work?

Step 12 -- Tried to carry this message; that's sponsorship. My sponsor shared their example over many, many hours. This example was offered freely for me to consider and question, am I like this? What does abstinence mean? How do I practice this and why? How do I work these steps? Am I like Bill W. from the Big Book? We discussed eating and weight histories, trigger foods, eating plans, action plans. We read the Big Book together, the first 164 pages, slowly discussing many things related to a better understanding of my disease.

We met face to face to get through the work, sometimes speaking over the phone, sometimes email. We went to meetings together, we got involved. You see, I was willing to go to any length. I did what I was told. I was ready. My sponsor was freely giving of their time. My sponsor tried to carry their message of recovery. I am fortunate. My sponsor had experience and a message of depth and weight that I could relate to. I made significant progress. Spiritual growth, emotional and physical. Now, my turn, I am responsible. My responsibility is simply to try and carry my message of recovery to others up to the level of my experience. Try and share my example of the work. I now focus on sponsoring sponsors.

We need sponsors. It's what we do. None of us are good at it. We become more effective as we practice this sharing of our example. It's work. I go to meetings and always raise my hand. I am responsible. I can't keep this recovery gift unless I try and give it away. It took me a long time to get to where I am. Practicing this aspect of our recovery process has made a huge difference in my life.

Sponsees and I work together, gathering together, sharing experiences with one another so that we may become more effective at carrying our message. Together we learn, together we get better. Each one of us has someone that we can help out there. In our own way each one of us is uniquely qualified to decode the message of recovery in our work so that they may find this design for living. I must live it in order to receive it. I could go on and on. Grateful.

Anonymous

What Does This Step Mean?

Step 12 speaks of our spiritual awakening and carrying the message to the compulsive overeater through service. This can be done! I have acquired a sponsee and have shared my experiences. When I work with her, I make sure to stress that I receive my strength through my higher power. I offer guidance through working the steps. I find leading by example can be nothing but positive. It is freeing to share my successes; showing how far I have come from the insanity of my compulsive overeating.

Knowing we are all in this together, helps bind us to each other. We are on a level playing field. I want everyone to be a success in this program: sharing with not only my sponsee, but also my sponsor, those attending weekly meetings, and sometimes other meetings within the space of a week. I receive inspiration from hearing other folk's experiences in recovery. I hope that I do the same for others. We do not have to be perfect, but honesty is an important virtue.

Giving ourselves over to our Higher Power, keeps us honest and willing to do "what we can, when we can and keep ourselves on the path of spiritual progress" (pg. 103; The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.)

Service does not mean I am the expert on all aspects of recovery in OA. Service miraculously brings me joy, knowing that my example has helped or inspired someone else. Step 12 is the last step in this 12-step program, but it does not end there; just as our journey through recovery doesn't end there. It is one day at a time; calling upon our Higher Power to keep us on the right path with our spiritual growth. Moving forward on this path helps us not turn back to our old ways and old compulsive food behaviors. If we are thinking about and sharing our successes, there will be no room in our thoughts for the negative.

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TRADITION Twelve

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

What Does This Tradition Mean and How does it work?

The 12th Tradition is one of the most important traditions in our program. I always heard that the steps were there to prevent suicide and that the traditions were to prevent homicide. This is the truth for the 12th Tradition because it reminds us that we are just addicts and need to put the program before our feelings towards one another. We do not turn anyone away.

Our Twelve and Twelve talks about how we come into program as sick individuals. We do not come into the meetings as healthy people. (Why would we need a meeting if we were cured?) We bring in our own pride and shame of our disease. Once in the rooms, we meet with others who have their own baggage that may block recovery or may rub us the wrong way. The purpose of the 12th Tradition is that we stick to the principles of the program and not whether we like another person or not.

For example, I went to one of my meetings this week and there was a person who was very angry and rude. Well, of course, that made me mad. My first reaction was ‘wow, go talk to your sponsor about that’. Thankfully, my judgmental thought did not come out. Instead, I was given the opportunity to practice love and tolerance. My HP gifted me with silence, and we were both able to go into the meeting. The meeting followed the format of abstinence and the focus was our OA program. We were both able to share on topic and leave our personalities at the door. Now, I may still be a little annoyed with her, however, the focus of the meeting was OA recovery. That is the most important thing and the reason why our program survives.

Thank God wiser people than I put these twelve traditions together! If it were up to me, I know I would be unable to keep my recovery program.

Anonymous.

OA FOR THE BEAUTY OF IT:

START where you are ... **SPONSOR**
USE what you have ... **BIG BOOK**
DO what you can ... **HELP OTHERS**
IT WILL BE ENOUGH...

You will know a new Freedom and a New Happiness
(Big Book pg 83)

WORK SCRAMBLE... BEAUTY

1. GBIOKBO
2. VREEYRNYE
3. DADCTIINO
4. RUDERTNADS
5. DTAIRION
6. ONY - T

TRIVIA:

1. Year Big Book was first published...
2. What book has become our basic text...
3. Where is the MAIN PROBLEM of the alcoholic located?
4. Who wrote the Doctor's Opinion?

-Step One for Everyone Meeting

Continued from Page 2:

Spiritual growth is always positive! I prayed the "Serenity Prayer" three or four times a day in the beginning. I asked for strength from my Higher Power to become abstinent and follow the program. God has listened. I am going through this journey, keeping the faith, keeping a food plan, and I keep coming back to meetings: to share, to listen to "shares" and to receive more joy through the positivity of the OA program.

M.F.

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

Surviving the Holidays.....

The holidays....before I joined OA, when I heard this phrase, I translated it into “lots of food and an excuse to eat it all.” I always volunteered to bring cookies and pies everywhere and made about twice as much as was needed to make sure there would be plenty of leftovers for me. As a general rule, I would eat so much at every gathering I would feel sick, only to come home and eat more after the event. I always told my husband that I did not really enjoy eating in the group so I was still hungry.

I am so happy to be able to say I am heading into my fourth abstinent holiday season. This is nothing short of miraculous. I enjoy the holiday season so much more, now, than I ever used to. I am able to commit my food to my sponsor before I go, enjoy one plate and then move on. I enjoy visiting with friends and family; not only can I focus on them without the food obsession, I am comfortable and not physically ill from stuffing myself!

For those of you entering your first abstinent holiday season, here are a few tips and tricks I have learned along the way:

- Don't skip your meetings due to the craziness of the season. If you cannot get to a face to face, dial into a phone meeting or listen online.
- Stay in close touch with your sponsor. The beauty of modern technology is that your sponsor can be just a text away. If I get to a gathering and my food plan needs to change for some reason, I text it in. I stay accountable that way and it keeps me on the right path.
- Focus on being of service at your holiday gatherings. We all have those obligatory gatherings that are less than enjoyable. The way I used to cope with these was to focus on the food. Early on in my abstinence, I was not sure what to do when I could not put food in my mouth to avoid talking to others. Then, I started focusing on how I could be of service to those around me. It took the focus off the food and onto the people.
- Consider eating before you go and going later just to visit. Sometimes there are situations where no abstinent food is being served. If that is the case, consider eating your abstinent meal before the gathering and going just to visit and have a coffee or tea. I have done this and found that no one really cares that much if I am eating or not.

Above all, ask your Higher Power for help – everyday! And remember....together we can do what we could never do alone.

Tina W.

OA FOR THE BEAUTY OF IT KEY:

Word Scramble:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Big Book | 4. Understand |
| 2. Everyone | 5. Tradition |
| 3. Addiction | 6. Y-Not |

Trivia Answers:

1. 1939
2. Big Book
3. In the MIND (pg 23)
4. William D. Silkworth, MD

