

JANUARY 2017

# OA TODAY

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[www.stlouisoa.org](http://www.stlouisoa.org) (Local Website)  
[www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org) (Region 4 Website)  
[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) (World Service Website)



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](http://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](http://StLouisOA.org))



MEETING CANCELED for Monday, January 16, SL030 @ St. Paul evangelical church 9801 olive Blvd. Creve Coeur mo 63141 will not meet because of holiday.



MEETING DISBANDED: Mondays, 7:00PM, SL410, First Baptist church, 207 east Washington, Kirksville mo 63501



***Do you want to be of service to the OA Program?***

Write for our newsletter! As the newsletter lovers know, we focus on the steps, traditions, and principles of the OA Recovery Program. We would also love to hear your story. The act of writing not only helps us remember where we came from but also allows us to help other compulsive over and under eaters relate to our fellowship.

**REMEMBER:** If it is convenient, it is NOT SERVICE WORK! Send your editor an email today on what is needed in for next issue need!  
(azylka01@yahoo.com)

# STEP One

“We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable. ”

## How Does This Step Work?

I came into Program almost 20 years ago, knowing that my relationship with food was not normal. I didn't know how the Steps worked. As I reflect on Step One, I completely understood the latter part of the Step: our lives had become unmanageable. The New Year's resolutions, to get the weight off, were pointless. Dieting was not the answer.

Finding solutions baffled me. I struggled with the saying, “We admitted that were powerless over food.” I didn't really want to admit defeat/powerlessness over food. Who does?!! It was hard for me to understand or fathom the concept of powerlessness for many years. It was so foreign to me. I thought of all the things people think about someone who couldn't manage their weight. It would boil down to being called weak. However, admitting powerless became a healing process, because it was beyond my control and comprehension. I realized that it was something that I didn't do wrong, because I had the disease of compulsive eating. Furthermore, I am powerless over everything-people, places and things. Step One frees us from the blame and shame of thinking we have to fix this ourselves. It is someone else's job to try and fix it, which comes in Step Two. I am grateful for Step One and the other 11 Steps because it is a “we” program.

-Anonymous



## What Does This Step Mean?

Step one is so important and I have to remind myself of it daily. Within the last couple of months, I have had extreme ups and downs ranging from getting married, to losing loved family members. Within these extremes, whether it be up or down, I have to remember that first and foremost, I am powerless over food.

When things are good, I can forget that I am a COE and become self-reliant. A good example is that I didn't have cake on my wedding day. I felt fine about it. I even felt proud. I was startled when I woke up in the middle of the night, to have dreamed about sweet treats. Reminder! Step One-I am powerless over food, EVEN when I am joyful.

Then there are the lows. Attending four funerals in two months and eyeballing the spread of food on the tables. Reminder! Step One- I am powerless over food ESPECIALLY when I am sad.

Then there was an unexpected surgery. I did not want to eat for several days and it crossed my mind that, maybe, I had been cured. Sure enough, as soon as the healing began, the food thoughts started again. Reminder! Step One-I am powerless over food even when I am sick. Step One is a daily reminder that I am powerless. With reliance upon my HP and the tools of this program, I have made it through these extremes and I just celebrated my first birthday in program. This is nothing short of a miracle.

-Anonymous



# TRADITION One

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity..”

## How Does This Tradition Work?

My home group holds group conscience at the end of the third meeting of every month. It was here that I learned the value of this tradition. Since OA is made up of individuals who I have heard described as “megalomaniacs with inferiority complexes,” this should be a formula for chaos. In fact, the group conscience setup, in my experience, has led to calmness and rationality. Everyone’s point of view is heard, from the newcomer’s to the 20-year veteran’s. An open mind is required, and consensus must be reached. So all these disparate points of view are distilled into a result involving action or inaction, as the group decides.

The leader at my first group conscience taught me the valuable skill of detachment from the result. At the end of a lively discussion that resulted in a change to our meeting format, she said, “Well, if it doesn’t work, we can always change it back.” The fear and resentment that were nibbling at the back of my mind disappeared with that simple statement.

Unity requires us to remember that we have a common purpose based in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. As long as we practice a “we, not me” approach, and consult our individual higher powers for guidance, the stress of discord should not lead us back into the food nor cause our groups to disintegrate.

I’ve used similar practices at work and home. Life is more enjoyable when connected people work together to get things done. When disagreements arise, as long as everyone is heard and there is an overall sense of a common purpose, things usually work out if, as we come to learn in Step 12, we “practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Jane C.

## What Does This Tradition Mean?

I love how our Twelve and Twelve reflects on this Tradition. It talks about our isolation in the disease. Almost 8 years ago, I remember being surrounded by my loving friends and family but was completely miserable. I was a social butterfly but always looking for an escape. Isolation was my end goal. All I wanted to do was to be by myself and eat.

This tradition shows us that, above all else, we get our abstinence and peace when we surround ourselves with our people. I remember coming into the rooms and wishing that I could get the peace and happiness that others seemed to have. I finally found myself in a safe spot, where others told me their experience with isolation. They spoke my language and were just like me. It was a relief, and terrifying at the same time. The jig was up. I felt I could finally change.

This was all made possible because of our Traditions. I was able to see the program and the recovery because the meeting was structured and focused on the solution. There were guidelines for sharing and the topics of the meeting. If there was a problem with format or anything else with the group, it was brought up at the group business meeting. These factors allowed me to feel comfortable and share openly. Recovery was easier with the guidelines that were set in place. Thank God that I was lucky enough to get into this program with everything in place for me to succeed. Now, all that was left was for me to fully surrender and work the steps with my sponsor. I have been doing just that, successfully (thanks to HP) for 8 years.

Thank you OA.

-Anonymous



# **A Step One Story**

On December 30, 1985, I attended my first OA meeting, and have kept coming back. I knew of OA from another fellowship, that I had been recovering in for 5 years, and had done a 5th Step with my sponsor in that program. I had told her all my secret shames, except those that had to do with my eating behaviors. I did not tell her that I stole desserts off of patient trays, or that I had stolen food from my daughter (food that she had bought out of her very first paycheck) and then made her feel like she was at fault for not offering it to me.

I am a nurse, and most nights I went to sleep fantasizing about being diagnosed with either gall bladder disease or diabetes. In my illusions, should I be lucky enough to get either of these, that would be the one thing that would make me wake up and change. I knew how incredibly painful gall bladder attacks were, and should I be fortunate enough to be an insulin dependent diabetic, I would need shots several times a day (I don't like shots). So if I got either of these, I would turn the corner on this eating disorder. Because I was an addiction nurse, I knew even as I daydreamed, that this was crazy, and I was powerless to stop either the stealing, eating or fantasizing.

My first baby step into sanity came when I became willing to tell my sponsor. Her response was simple. I can't help you with your eating because I've never done anything crazy like that with food. You need to go to OA. That's where you will have the lies you believe about food confronted, and also receive the support you need to recover from this too.

I did not want to go to OA! If I attended more of these meetings (my other program), that should be enough, and of course, it wasn't. I knew someone in OA, and called her to ask about her meetings. She agreed to meet me at that first meeting and told me we could go out for coffee after. That night she became my OA sponsor. After the meeting, she explained the OA concepts to me. Like many newcomers, the concept of abstinence confused me. It took me a long time to see how it was different than a food plan! At the end of the evening, I had a plan--write down all the foods I binged on, and for one day, refrain from eating them. I would eat three meals and nothing in between and call her everyday for 6 weeks. One day at a time, I was able to do that. Soon, the visions of diabetes and gall bladder disease disappeared.

And I was nuts! My eating was different, and it was still crazy! I now became vigilant about my food at work,.I ate with my head down and my arm held around my plate to protect it from anyone who might be tempted to grab a carrot stick. After all, when this plate was done, there would be no more for several hours. In the beginning, I believed that weight loss was the old standard of recovery, so I went on an intense losing abstinence--better known as a diet. My weight, then and now, are about the same, but in order to be an OA star, I lost about 30 pounds. When I stopped the unsustainable eating, the weight gradually came back to my normal. So for today, I am at ease with my body and my food. And for me, this is one of the miracles of this program.

I look different than I did 31 years ago. I've gone from age 40 to 71, and my body has gone through a healthy aging process, thanks to all of you. I am stronger physically, mentally and spiritually than I was on that December evening. My favorite quote in OA is, "every day we live well, we are well". Your fellowship, meetings, steps and traditions have given me a life beyond my wildest dreams-- so I'll keep coming back. And Thank You.

-Anonymous