

DECEMBER 2018 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

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The office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

HOW TO SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS IN OA

*“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times
...it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...we
had everything before us, we had nothing before us.”*

Some may recognize the above lines from a famous Dickens novel. It is also an apt description of the many difficult challenges facing compulsive eaters during the holiday season. The time from Thanksgiving to New Year’s Day are weeks that may include bad weather, lack of sleep, impossibly long to-do lists, schedule changes, family tensions and loss, financial issues, traveling, and, of course, family and office events and parties brimming with food you shouldn’t eat. Here are 12 specific ideas get through the holiday season:

12. Use Step One: Remind yourself that you are powerless over food, of the pain, suffering, and unmanageability of your life when you eat compulsively. Abstinence is sweeter than any holiday confection.

11. Live One Day at a Time! Don’t think about getting through the entire holiday season, instead focus on staying abstinent until you go to sleep tonight.

10. Sponsor and Be Sponsored: Turn to your sponsor for support and then check in with any sponsees to see how *they* are doing.

9. Check out the Twelfth Step Within link on the OA website - <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/resources/twelfth-step-within/>. Twelfth Step Within does not focus on attracting new members; it explicitly supports the ones we already have and reaches out to those OA members who still suffer and address the relapse and recovery of existing members. Do some Twelfth Step Within service by calling someone you haven’t seen at a meeting lately.

Are you struggling with the food over this holiday season? You’re not alone; use the phone.

If you want to make an OA call, but don’t know whom to call, here are a couple numbers of local OA members:

Marie W. at 217-416-1648, Lev 636—752-2669

Also - our OA office (314-638-6070) can provide a list of OA members who would be glad to talk to you.

8. Assess Your Abstinence: If you’re worried about whether you can make it through the season, take a look at OA’s Strong Abstinence Checklist - by going to oa.org and use the keyword “strong abstinence checklist.”

7. Inventory Any Slips: If you do stray from your plan, go to the OA website at oa.org and read the Been Slipping and Sliding article and learn how you can avoid a future slip.

6. Ask Other Members for Help: If you don’t have a sponsor, get one. Even if you do, ask other OA members how they cope with the holidays.

5. Don’t Forget Service: At your meetings, raise your hand for any service opportunities available and do them cheerfully. Read the Promises, put away chairs, and order the literature: It’s a holiday gift that you’ll want to keep on giving.

4. Take Some Quiet Time: Whether as part of your daily spiritual activities or right before a holiday get-together, take some quiet time, relax, read some program literature, and get into a frame of mind where your Higher Power can help you.

3. Make Meetings: Don’t let them slip away. If the holiday season is messing up your meeting schedule, supplement with phone meetings or online meetings. A list of meetings can be found on line at oa.org/find-a-meeting/.

2. Talk to the Newcomer: Nothing so ensures immunity from compulsive eating as working with newcomers. Greet them warmly, make them feel welcome, and give them a buzz during the week. And the most important support for abstinence during the holidays or anytime:

1. Trust and Rely on God: As powerless people, we must seek the power to abstain from a source greater than ourselves. Ask your Higher Power, however you define It, for ease and comfort, the willingness to avoid compulsive eating, and to focus your attention on how you can bring others good cheer during this season.

- Seacoast OA / Portsmouth, NH



*It’s not denial.
I’m just very
selective about
the reality I
accept.*

NOVEMBER 11, 2018 INTERGROUP MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The Sept. and Oct. meeting minutes were approved.
- Most groups reported sending the 7th tradition basket around one or two extra times around during November meetings to support Intergroup during Gratitude month.
- Intergroup voted in favor of hosting Unity Day on February 23, 2019.
- The Ways and Means committee continues to meet and is presently narrowing their focus, organizing information, asking other Intergroups for information.
- The 2018 retreat, though not a fund raising events, did take in between \$500-600 over expenses. People were very generous to the We Care Fund, which was able to pay for anyone who requested financial assistance to go to the retreat, with \$99 left over. \$121 for was also collected in gratitude donations and \$25 from oasis.
- The 2019 retreat needs a retreat co-chair to work with Bernice.
- 2019 Convention is well on its way – there is a contract with the Westport Sheraton and several people have volunteered to do service, and the registration flyer will be available at the December 1 holiday booster event.
- The following people were approved for the following service positions:
Convention co-chairs – Dianne S. and Elizabeth S.
Convention registrar – Susan T.
Public Information – Melanie
Treasurer – Pat M.
Website manager – Colleen C.
- We do not have applications for Vice Chair of Office Administrator, so we are again in the position of only having three Board of Trustees (BOT) members.
- Bob L.'s request for that Intergroup do a group inventory was discussed. His reasons included the need for Intergroup to stay relevant, it is good to do an inventory on periodic basis, and to do one now is especially timely since Intergroup finances have been studied by the Ad Hoc committee over the past few months. Questions were asked, which included: 1) whether to have an outsider facilitate conversation and 2) since there is an ad hoc committee looking at finances – what would be the purpose of group inventory and would it usurp or complement the working being done by the ad hoc committee. Bob L. said an outside facilitator could look at our situation with fresh eyes and the inventory would support and inform the ad hoc committee. After pros and cons were discussed, the decision to have a group inventory passed with 10 yes votes and 9 no votes.
- The annual business meeting followed, during which items are voted on by the members of our Intergroups. Proposals 2,3,4,5 and 6 were placed on a "consent agenda" as non-controversial and passed unanimously. For details on these approved measures, go to the Intergroup tab on the stillouisoa.org website.
- \$136 was collected by IG during this meeting.

INTERGROUP MEETING INFO

Our next Intergroup meeting is **Sunday, January 13, 2019** at 1:30 – 3:00 at Missouri Baptist Medical Center, building D, auditorium rooms section. Please send a representative from your group to this important monthly meeting.

NOTES FROM JMO – INTERGROUP CHAIR

1) On Sunday, November 11, our Intergroup (IG) voted to change our bylaws in order to allow our meetings to happen by telephone- or video-conference and/or a hybrid of face-to-face and telephone/video. An Ad Hoc Virtual Meetings Committee has been formed that will dissolve once we have accomplished the task for selecting technology and training the fellowship to use it. If you have expertise in this area or an interest in working hard for a brief amount of time to complete this important decision, please let me know by email at chair@stlouisoa.org or calling/texting 314-775-3261.

2) That same day we also approved conducting an Intergroup Inventory event of at least three hours, and that vote was almost equally divided. There is always a danger to an organization when an action is taken without substantial agreement, but I believe we all agree that taking a Step Four inventory as individuals has been essential to our recovery. An IG Inventory can be done in a way that builds our health and unity. We know that Tradition 1 tells us that "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity." So let us put on a well-attended and spirited IG Inventory event that will help us learn what we need to learn for the sake of being strong enough to reach still suffering compulsive eaters.

Bob Linsey and I lead planning on this, and the first meeting of the planning team will be during work groups time at our January 13 Intergroup Meeting at Missouri Baptist Hospital near Ballas and Highway 40. The meeting begins at 1:30 p.m., and work groups should begin at about 2:15 p.m. If you would like to serve on the planning team, please let me know by email at chair@stlouisoa.org or calling/texting 314-775-3261.

2019 BUDGET INFORMATION

The Board of Trustees met on Saturday, December 8, to set our budget for 2019. This is done studying income and expenses for 2018 and reflecting prayerfully on priorities we have already set for the coming year (having a convention and a retreat, holding an Intergroup Inventory event, increasing public outreach, etc.) This is meeting open to all who wish to attend. The approved 2019 budget will be available in January 2019.

AN END OF YEAR REFLECTION ON INTERGROUP SERVICE - It has been a hardworking, fruitful and thoughtful year. We have tackled issues, looked into problems, answered the call to our Region & World Service groups, and considered, with dedication and care, the concerns brought before us. Our outcomes will reveal themselves, in the care of our HP, as we always practice. Our hard work in using the tools, steps, traditions and concepts will be our focus, as it has been for all of these years. I look forward to the teachable opportunities, the revelation of the promises, and the good hard work, with you as my companions that 2019 will certainly entail. – Christina D., Secretary, IG BOT



Featured Meeting of the Month

Any Length Big Book Study Meeting
Thursday, 7 a.m. at St. John's UCC Church
Welcome Hall
501 S. 5th St. / St. Charles, M) 63301

The first thing we often hear, when discussing the Any Lengths Big Book Study Meeting is "St. Charles!?! You want me to drive **ALL THE WAY** to St. Charles!?!?!" We want to carry the message that we are only 9 minutes from the Airport and once you have crossed the Blanchette Bridge, you are exactly 4 minutes from the meeting.

The second thing we often hear is "7 am?!?! **In the morning!**!?!?" But we have found that a meeting is a fantastic way to start the day!

Our meeting is a Big Book Study meeting. We read a paragraph or two and then share on what was read. We are a group of friendly people, sharing our experience, strength and hope as we trudge the road of happy destiny towards recovery.

As the beautiful sun comes up, we are **NOT** in the middle of nowhere! :) All are welcomed. Hope to see you there!

- Shannon G. 314 346 0015

Food is Fuel

Food is fuel; it is not for fodder
Eat what you need, leave all the other.

Food is fuel
Vegetables, proteins, and fruit are some,
Sweets and snacks just don't bring home.

Food is fuel,
What more can be said.
So follow your food plan;
Keep it straight in your head!
- Respectfully submitted, Marilyn F.

ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 25, 2018.

Please send your submissions to the OA TODAY Editorial Staff at newsletter@stlouisoa.org or mail to OA, 9907 Gravois, Suite E, St. Louis, MO 63123. Personal stories express the experience, strength, and hope of individual members and not of OA as a whole. Other OA groups and service boards may reprint articles from this newsletter without requesting permission.

EASIER ISN'T THE WAY

I'm working on a resentment I've been struggling with on making room in my mind and my life for a difficult person that I have to interact with. Thinking about why I resent having to do this and some thoughts started to surface.

I'm resentful because...

It requires extra effort on my part and it's easier to be selfish.

It requires vulnerability and transparency and it's easier to be isolated.

It requires me to compromise and it's easier to be stubborn.

It requires me to not always be right and it's easier to be prideful.

It requires me to take the high road and it's easier to stay low.

It requires me to not say everything I think and it's easier to be impulsive.

It requires me to change, mature and evolve.

It's easier to stay stuck, childish and unraveled.

Easier feels better. Easier doesn't require anything from me but easier also doesn't give anything either.

Am I looking to just maintain where I'm at in life? Have I arrived? Am I done learning?

If the answer is yes, then bring on easier.

If the answer is no, then hard work is in store.

Harder doesn't feel good but produces good things.

Harder takes from me but also gives. Harder requires me to acknowledge, trust, surrender. (Steps 1-3)

I can't. God can. So I'll let Him.

One day at a time.

- Emily G.



Thanks, but no thanks. As much as I like going to being bed sick from overeating or having my head in a toilet, I'm going to have to pass on the relapse offer. Thanks though, I'm good.

BIG BOOK QUIZ

ANSWER FROM LAST MONTH – What is the root of our problems? Selfishness – self-centeredness – p.62

BIG BOOK QUIZ QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH:

What is the cause of our troubles? – p. 62

UPCOMING EVENTS –

Due to the Christmas and New Years holidays, the following meetings have announced:

CHRISTMAS EVE, Monday 12/24

Groups that are meeting:

7 am, Clayton (SL421)
5:30 pm, Springfield IL (SL353)

Groups not meeting:

6 pm, OA Office (SL408)
6:15 pm, Waterloo IL (SL275)
7 pm, St. Paul, Creve Coeur (SL030)

CHRISTMAS DAY, Tuesday 12/25

Groups that are meeting: none responded

Groups not meeting:

9:30 am, Ballwin (SL013)
1 pm, Concord on S. Lindbergh (SL003)
6 pm, Ferguson (SL033)
6:30 pm, Alton IL (SL393)
7 pm, Columbia MO (SL386)

NEW YEARS' EVE, Monday 12/31

Groups that are meeting:

7 am, Clayton (SL421)
5:30 pm, Springfield IL (SL353)
7 pm, Webster Groves (SL044)

Groups not meeting:

6 pm, OA Office (SL408)
6:15 pm, Waterloo IL (SL275)
7 pm, St. Paul, Creve Coeur (SL030)

NEW YEARS' DAY, Tuesday 01/01

Groups that are meeting:

1 pm, Concord on S. Lindbergh (SL003) ** but at different location – the OA office at 9907 Gravois, 63123.
6:30 pm, Alton IL (SL393)

Groups not Meeting:

9:30 am Ballwin (SL013)
6 pm, Ferguson (SL033)

Dec. 27/Thursday 7am St. Charles meeting will be meeting..

Dec. 27/Thursday 7 p.m. at the St. Louis OA office will not meet on Dec. 27.

COUNTDOWN TO CONVENTION

It's **THREE MONTHS** 'til March 2019 Convention!

- **Date: March 29-31, 2019**

- **Place: Sheraton Westport Plaza Hotel, St. Louis MO**

- **Theme: Sunlight of the Spirit**

See the golden flyers at your meetings!

Online registration will be on our website soon (stlouisoa.org), along with a link to our convention's special online hotel room reservation site.

What's needed this month: We need people to help with planning. Our committee is light-hearted and enthusiastic, with a good mixture of new and experienced people. There are about 10 of us so far, which is not very many for a big event like this, so we would really appreciate your help. For more information, please call Dianne 314-238-4052 or Elizabeth 314-304-1444.

EFFINGHAM NOV. 10 SUPER SATURDAY

Over 35 people attended the Super Saturday held in Effingham, IL, the first such event held outside the St. Louis area in many years. It was hosted by the Mattoon and Effingham OA groups. Over half of those attending drove 1 ½ hours to attend the half day event which featured two speakers and an ask-it basket. Comments from the day included:

- *The speakers were really good and had good recovery.*
- *There was so much love and warmth available from the group and program.*
- *I was skeptical at first. I couldn't believe that so many would come. But that taught me some humility.*

DEC. 1 HOLIDAY BOOSTER INSPIRES

On Saturday, December 1, forty-plus OA members gathered in Maplewood for the annual Holiday Booster, sponsored by the Sunday Morning St. Mary's group. Our two speakers shared their personal experiences and reminded us that 1) connectedness, not isolation, is what we seek, and 2) expectations (of others and of ourselves) are resentments under construction. Then a three-member panel addressed over 20 questions with answers were uniformly humble, honest, and inspiring.

The Holiday Booster ended with members examining their expectations for the holiday season by answering three questions individually, then sharing their answers. The three questions were, 1) What is my dream for the holidays this year? 2) What would HP like to bless me with this season? 3) What gifts have I already received during this year?

You've been thinking about it - MAKE A DATE FOR A SUPER SATURDAY/SUNDAY FOR 2019

To set a date and get support and guidance on how to host a weekend event, please contact Susan T. at stowns@sbcglobal.net/314-775-3261.

JANUARY - Still Open – Let us know if your group can do this important post-holiday event.

FEBRUARY – Reserved

MARCH – Open

APRIL – Open

MAY – Open

JUNE – Open

JULY – Open

AUGUST 11 – PNC Bank, Kirkwood, MO

SEPTEMBER – Open

OCTOBER – Open

NOVEMBER – Open

DECEMBER - Open

JEFFERSON CITY MEETING IS MOVING

The Welcome Home OA Group that meets at the Community of Christ Church in Jefferson City, MO on Sunday afternoons at 4:00 p.m. will be relocating to a new venue beginning Sunday, January 6. Our new location is Community Christian Church, 409 Ellis Blvd, Jefferson City, MO 65101. Please enter through the double door 4 from the parking lot. For more information, contact Lois T. at 573-230-1001.