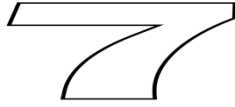


# JULY 2020 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup  
PO Box 28882 Saint Louis, MO 63123-0082



## STEP SEVEN

Humbly asked him to remove our short comings  
-OA.org



### **No Human Power Could Have Relieved my Obsession**

There were so many caring people who tried their hardest to get me to stop overeating!

My mother came to stay once and saw all the fatty foods I cooked. She gently tried to suggest lighter meals, like fish. I was very offended because I saw it as criticism and judgment, when really she was just trying to help out of love.

My brother, when I visited him after I gained nearly 100 pounds in a year, confronted me directly and angrily. “How could you let this happen?” “How could you do this to yourself?” “How could you let yourself go like this?” I had no answer.

All my therapists did their very best, but nothing helped. I remembered happily telling one how I was eating as much as I could while staying within the outer limits of a new diet. His comment was “To lose weight you should be eating as little as you can, not as much.” I was stunned. The idea was so foreign to me that I couldn’t relate to it at all.

A coworker was distressed when I kept staying home to overeat instead of working on the project she led. She came to me in tears and pleaded with me to stop. My heart was hardened. I knew I couldn’t stop, no

matter how much I wanted to, so I couldn’t bear to let in her love and concern.

And I tried constantly to use my own will power to stop.

None of it worked. No human power could relieve me. Not until I walked into a group of strangers in a church basement!

-Elizabeth C



## TRADITION SEVEN

OA’s Seventh Tradition reminds us of our responsibility to support our fellowship both through contributions and service work whenever we can. With the current conversion of meetings to virtual formats and the discovery that we can now attend meetings and events outside of our local area with just the flip of a switch, I have heard from many friends they are enjoying additional meetings and seeking out such events. What a wonderful discovery during a time that might otherwise be really difficult for those of us who suffer from isolation. While participating at these extra meetings we want to remember that there is still a need to honor the Seventh Tradition.

Our Intergroup continues to need our financial contributions to carry the message to those who are looking for a way to deal with their compulsive eating. The contributions help cover the expenses, and the expenses do not stop just because the meetings have moved to a virtual format. The fact that our local events are not being held at the usual pace this year means that source of income is also lost.

In addition to remembering to give what you can, when you can, financially, remember to step up and offer to give service at your meetings. Any form of service, no matter how small is a way of giving back to OA and that’s what the Seventh Tradition is all (continued page 2)

about. Without the support of the members, there just wouldn't be an organization to support the needs of the individuals.

The Seventh Tradition is discussed in the Twelve Traditions pamphlet, in the OA Twelve and Twelve and there is a separate [Seventh Tradition](#) pamphlet available on oa.org that gives more details on how the contributions help OA. I hope you will take a few minutes and review this important tradition. There is freedom in being self-supporting as an individual and as an organization. – Cyndy L.

### **Tips for Sponsors**

These ideas were gathered at the May 22, 2020, Super Friday hosted by the Thursday Morning St. Charles Group:

- I do not have to be perfect. No one is perfect, not even (gasp!) my own sponsor. That's OK. Here in OA I can be my own imperfect self.
- People are not more qualified or expert because of length of time in OA. As soon as I was abstinent I had something to offer.
- It's in Tradition Seven – OA can only be self-supporting if people are willing to sponsor.
- I am not responsible for a sponsee's success or failure. I am a successful sponsor if I stay abstinent myself.
- Some sponsees need strong structure, and to be called on their denial. Some need to be gently helped to find the way that works for their own recovery.
- I expect my sponsees to work the steps, go to meetings and give service.
- Sometimes I have to remember to be a good listener and let the sponsee do most of the talking.

- I can set boundaries and still be a good sponsor.
- Sometimes I get a call from a sponsee just when I am having cravings myself.
- I find myself telling sponsees exactly what I need to hear for myself that day.
- Sponsoring keeps me focused on recovery.
- I was scared to start sponsoring, but now I am scared to stop.

### **Seventh Step Prayer**

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad.

I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and to my fellows. Grant me the strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. – *Alcoholics Anonymous*



### **Step Seven: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings**

When I work this step, I remember that there is specific instruction laid out in the OA 12 & 12 chapter on Step Seven. I think the chapter gives great parameters for how to work the step, but there are two quotes that jump out at me at my current stage of development. The first is: “we name each shortcoming individually and ask God to deal with it whenever and however God wants.”• I like this because it reminds me who is in charge! But what are my shortcomings, exactly?

There are seven basic categories of character defects that I've experienced in recovery; many people know of them as the seven deadly sins. Pride, wrath, envy, sloth, lust, greed, and gluttony (continued page 3)

are things that present themselves to me almost every day and have the capacity to block my relationship with God. I remember that the key to my recovery is to have a relationship with a power greater than myself. Step Seven gives me yet another opportunity to strengthen that relationship. God knows that I have these character defects; it is my responsibility to ask God to deal with them however and whenever God wants. As prior steps in the program have taught me; I must do the footwork but leave the results up to God. After all, I am not God!

Later in the Step Seven chapter it states: "We express our desire to become more effective in serving and helping others as our shortcomings are transformed into assets."

The opposites of each of the seven character defects are the assets of humility, patience, kindness, diligence, chastity, charity, and temperance. When all my seven character defects are dealt with by God, I am gifted the freedom to focus on the character assets that replace them.

Recently, feelings of intense anger (wrath) have been difficult for me to experience. I don't like the visceral sensation anger puts in my body and the thoughts that accompany it in my mind. But I must remember there is always hope. Wrath's corresponding character asset is patience. When I practice patience with others and myself, the results are truly miraculous. With practice, I move more quickly from a space of intense emotional discomfort to a place of emotional acceptance. "God's will, in God's time, be done, not mine." I remember again that I am not God. I am a human being, and it's okay to feel anger. It might even be a common part of my human experience - now that I'm not eating compulsively!

When I practice patience (and the six other corresponding assets), I become more

effective in serving and helping others. The positive benefit of feeling the true satisfaction of helping and serving others far outweighs the physical feelings that I used to get from compulsive eating. My history includes the behavior of eating beyond satisfaction and eventually to an extreme that resulted in physical discomfort. I know now that my behavior took me to the extremes of pain in every way; not just physically, but also emotionally and spiritually. Compulsive eating no longer "works" for me - it works against me! The pain from eating compulsively now outweighs the payoff of dampening my feelings. When the payoff isn't worth it, why should I engage in the pain? Or the senseless behavior of compulsive eating? I don't think that is what God wants for me.

The peace and freedom I find in a life without the extreme of compulsive eating IS what I think God wants for me. So, I keep coming back!

*-Anonymous, Missouri*



*"I ate all the wrong things today."*

Dear Fellow OAs,  
It's officially summer! Our Intergroup is sizzling. We've successfully adapted to new and exciting ways of attending meetings, Super Saturday/Sunday/Friday Evening Events, Workshops, small group studies, Intergroup (IG), Region (continued page 4)

4 and WSO business functions, and yes, even Conventions!

At our June Zoom IG meeting, after feedback from your IG Reps and input from the Retreat Chair, we voted to hold a Virtual Annual Fall Retreat. Arrangements at King's House Retreat and Renewal Center, Belleville cannot be determined due to Covid-19. Planning time is getting short; the committee needs to finalize the flyer, program and speakers. More information will be forthcoming in July from Cyndy L, our 2020 Retreat Chair.

Need a Temporary Sponsor? Should you be a Temporary Sponsor? Cyndy L announced that there is a new document available at [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org). Look for Resources, Document Library, Search for Temporary Sponsor and select Temporary Sponsors: Newcomers' First Twelve Days.

We also reviewed The Member Survey results from Q4 through Q9. A few highlights: Q4, Personal Recovery Priority Rating for IG Events/Services – roughly 25% of our members do not or will not attend or use these events/services; workshops for Sponsorship (69%), Plan of Eating (68%) or Carrying the Message (66%) got top priority (High or Medium) ratings. For events, Super Saturdays/Sundays were rated highest priority (66% High or Medium), Holiday Marathon Meetings were rated lowest (40% High or Medium). For services, Outreach to small/new Groups was rated highest (62% High or Medium).

Q5, For an Annual Convention (56% High or Medium priority), members were strongly in favor of a One Day Saturday (42%) or Friday Evening & Saturday format (31%).

Q6 & Q7, About 50% of members have attended a Super Event in the past year; those who did not usually attend said it wasn't a convenient location or convenient time. Most interest (definitely would go)

was expressed for topics -Working the Steps, Spirituality and Abstinence. When definitely would go and Might go were combined interest was expressed for Big Book Study Topics and Sponsorship. Q8, most members indicated that Saturday 9:00 am – noon (55%) and Saturday noon – 3:00 pm (48%) were the best event times. If your meeting is planning to host a Super Event these findings might be helpful.

Q9, Results from an office's role in supporting recovery and groups have been previously discussed in January and March, here's a quick overview. More members (47%) favored having a phone staffed 24 hours day by a volunteer through call forwarding. Most (61%) members have never visited the office for any reason. Among the 39%, 73 members who have visited the office, 55 reported they attended a meeting there. Most members (47%) think buying literature at the WSO bookstore is a good alternative. Only 10% of members borrow a CD from our library. In July we will report Q10 – Q25.

Our meeting wrapped up with an update on closing the office, and reminders of events and future meetings.

With Gratitude for today and in service,  
*Dianne S., Chairperson St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup*

**See Retreat details on page 5 or [website!!!](#)**



**AUGUST ARTICLES DUE BY July 20, 2020.** Please send your submissions to the OA TODAY Editorial Staff at [newsletter@stlouisoa.org](mailto:newsletter@stlouisoa.org) or mail to (NOTE NEW ADDRESS) St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup, PO Box 28882, St. Louis, MO 63123-0082. 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.

# Virtual Fall Retreat

## September 11 & 12, 2020

Limited to first 100 registrants



ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

### \$25 registration

Register online at: [stlouisoa.org](http://stlouisoa.org)

*Please never stay away from an OA event for financial reasons. We Care Funds are available to help with all or part of fee.*

**To arrange We Care assistance, please call Pat M. 314.581.9960**

**To register by check, mail this form to:**

Carol H., Registrar  
510 Florence Ave., St. Louis, MO 63119  
*(please make check payable to St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup)*

*tentative program*

### friday

- 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. opening / introductions
- 7:15 to 8 p.m. keynote speaker
- 8 to 8:30 p.m. sharing
- 8:30 to 9 p.m. fellowship (unmuted)

### saturday

- 9 a.m. welcome / introductions
- 9:15 to 9:45 a.m. guided meditation
- 9:45 to 10 a.m. break
- 10 to 11 a.m. keynote speaker
- 11 to 11:30 a.m. activity
- 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. sharing
- 12:15 to 1 p.m. lunch break / (can stay online for fellowship)
- 1 to 1:05 p.m. welcome back
- 1:05 to 1:50 p.m. keynote speaker
- 1:50 to 2:05 p.m. turning it over
- 2:05 to 2:45 p.m. sharing
- 3:00 p.m. closing

**Registration deadline:**

### Midnight Tues. Sept 8

- Meeting number, password and finalized schedule emailed to you during the week before the event.
- No refunds will be available
- **General Questions?**
- **Call Carol H. 314.775.4764**

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENCLOSED** Registration: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ We Care Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL** Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_