

# August 2021 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA  
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## SELF discipline



### STEP EIGHT

**Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**



What a journey I had with Step 8! Parts of it were easy and parts were hard. But somehow it was also a big relief. I am very grateful that I could walk through my fear and work this Step.

#### **Making a List**

For my first Step 8, my list included everyone I ever knew. Surely, I had somehow harmed them all.

#### **Checking it Twice**

My sponsor looked at the list and asked me to answer some questions. **Did I really harm them?** If I just spoke my truth or set a boundary and they had hurt feelings about it, that was not harm. **Did I really have a part in the situation?** I was abused as a child, and as an adult too, and I had the typical feeling that I was somehow guilty for it. I came to see that in both cases, I did not have any part in the

situation. I was not guilty of anything. I could take those people off my list. (This was an enormous relief, a huge burden of guilt lifted from my shoulders!)

#### **Being kind to myself**

There were plenty of cases left on the list, cases where I really did do something wrong. I began to have a morbid feeling that I was the worst person in the world. It was the way I felt with my first Step 4. Actually, it was the way I felt most of my life before OA. My sponsor helped me see that everyone makes mistakes, and that I could be just as tolerant and kind to myself as I was to other people.

#### **Willingness**

Next, I was supposed to be willing to make amends to them all. Some of them I was quite willing, even eager, to do. But some of the people had hurt me much more than I had hurt them. I certainly didn't want to be the one to apologize! So, I was told I had to forgive them first.

#### **Forgiving**

In fact, I was told I had to forgive all the people who had harmed me, even the ones I was not going to make amends to because they had hurt me, and I had no part in it. I said no way on earth! What they did was unforgivable!

I had to learn that forgiving them is not condoning their behavior. It is not dismissing the harm they did me or saying that it was OK. It wasn't OK, and it never would be. But it also wasn't OK for me to be carrying around so much resentment. That was letting the past continue to harm me in the present. I was now harming myself by living in resentment about

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having been harmed in the past. For my own sake, I had to let the resentment go.

This was not easy. It took a long time and a lot of work. But until then, I could not be kind to myself, or stay on my own side of the street when making amends. When I was finally free of the resentments, I was able to move on to a healthy and effective Step 9.

Elizabeth



### TRADITION EIGHT

**Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.**



Tradition 8 reminds me that I'm just one of many trying to survive the disease of compulsive eating. The longer I'm in, the less I know about what will work for anyone other than myself. I practice the principle of fellowship, giving of my time and energy to help others who share my disease. I do this out of gratitude to my Higher Power and the other members who gave me the love and respect I needed to find my way out of the despair of food addiction.

In order to grow in OA, I need to work with other compulsive overeaters as an equal, not

an expert. I share my experience - the ideas that worked for me over the years – like:

- how I use the tools
- what happened when I worked the Steps
- what my disease was like
- how my life is different now because of what I've learned in living the program

I am not in charge of how others work their programs or define their abstinence nor am I responsible for their success in the program. They must identify for themselves the path they take and how their HP works in their lives.

It's not always easy to remember that each of us arrives at recovery through our own efforts. I get out what I put in. The more I participate in the fellowship of the program, sharing at meetings, sponsoring others who want what I have to offer and giving service to my group and Intergroup, the more I am doing my part to carry the message and to reach out to those who need to feel loved and supported in order to find their way.

When I speak my opinion rather than my experience, I'm taking on a role that does not serve me well. Any such motive is connected to my ego; my need for validation or recognition which then gives me something to work on with my sponsor. As I continue to reach out to others, I continue to have success in all parts of my recovery; spiritual, emotional, and physical. My HP shows me ways to strengthen my faith, improve my relationships, and continue to experience life as a normal sized person. Abstinence is my goal; working with others helps me achieve that goal.

Tradition 8 also reminds me that there is work connected with the organization of Overeaters Anonymous. If there are enough volunteers to share this work so no one person has to do more than is reasonable and those tasks are  
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being accomplished satisfactorily, great! However, if there is work that requires expertise that doesn't exist among our members, or perhaps takes more time that members are willing to give, it is appropriate to hire someone to do and be accountable for that work. Employees should be treated with respect and compensated for their skills in a fair and appropriate manner.

These employees, however, do not do the work that connects us as members of this fellowship. Sharing our recovery is always done without compensation. One compulsive eater helps another with no expectation other than to share what has saved our lives.

Anonymous



## HOW CAN I BE USEFUL TODAY?



- **Get a newcomer started in OA.** Get yourself and the newcomer the pamphlet [Where Do I Start.](#)
- Go to [oa.org](http://oa.org) and download the document [Temporary Sponsors: Newcomers' First Twelve Days.](#) It has day-by-day suggestions for how to help newcomers learn about OA and get started on their recovery journey.

E.C.



## Trusting the Process

I first saw one of my favorite quotes printed on a refrigerator magnet: ***“Leap and the net will appear.”*** I read this as a newcomer in OA and decided that I wanted to apply it to my recovery. Before finding this Fellowship, my spiritual life was incredibly lackluster, but I thought my only problem was my body shape and size. From day one, recovery encouraged me to move from a point of complete spiritual standstill to a vibrant and fulfilling spiritual life. I wondered how that could possibly have anything to do with my physical body. I did not trust that becoming spiritually fit would positively influence the physical aspects of me. However, my Higher Power knew and put that quote in my life through a means that's sort of humorous for a food addict. (A refrigerator magnet? Good one, HP!)

Not long after this quote wound up on my refrigerator, it started to make its way into my heart. I felt as though my Higher Power was asking me to do something very specific; to trust. My HP wanted me to leap into recovery and hold no aspect of my life back from the positive influence that the Fellowship could have on me. I believe the Alcoholics Anonymous book refers to this as it reads on page 58, “With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.”

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Like me, many addicts struggle with the principle of trust. It is not easy to leap into something completely opposite of our addiction. Fortunately, we all have a Higher Power that is consistently able to provide for us that which our spirits so desperately need something reliable, dependable, and never failing. My HP is far greater than my understanding and provides for me a comfort more powerful than the temporary relief given by my compulsive eating. My HP is something trustworthy.

I am so grateful that, for today, I can leap into my recovery. The net of Fellowship is always there to catch me, and Fellowship is my "God with skin on." Thank you for being part of the solution to this progressive and deadly disease. Thank God I am practicing trust, if only for today. Thank God for Overeaters Anonymous.

Anonymous



## World Service Convention 2021 Cancelled Due to COVID-19

On August 3, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, shared the following announcement: "I am sad to report that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees has voted to cancel the 2021 World Service Convention. If you have been following the status of COVID in Florida, and especially in Orlando, you know that the virus is surging there. They are at the highest possible level for community transmission, and, according to the Orlando mayor, there are clear indications that it will get worse in the coming days and weeks."

The next World Service Convention is now planned for 2025. Consider attending to increase the joy of this long-delayed event!

The cancellation also means OA takes "a financial hit." This is a good time to donate to World Service at [THIS LINK](#).

## A TERMINAL CASE OF TERMINAL UNIQUENESS: A Recovery Story featuring Paddie & Ria

Laura had been attending her home meeting for several months and enjoyed knowing most of the people who came regularly. She had a sponsor and, for the most part, her program was going well. However, Laura was very critical of one regular member, whom she nicknamed Mary Motto. In every OA meeting and every conversation, Mary would ALWAYS come up with program mottos:

When Mary had a hard day at work and felt like overeating, Mary said - "***Don't take that first compulsive bite.***"

When she was overwhelmed by family problems - "***Take it one day at a time.***"

When Mary struggled with her daughter's choices - "***Face life on life's terms.***"

When something did not make sense, Mary said: "***More will be revealed.***"

On and on and on...

Laura would internally groan and roll her eyes. "Good Grief. She sounds like a robot. Does she have an original thought in her mind?"



***Paddie (Laura's Progressive and Deadly Disease)*** is thrilled to jump into her vulnerable state. "***You do not need to go as overboard on this program, as Mary Motto does. Some***

***people in program are just too much. There are a lot members who are mental lightweights or emotionally needy people. You are better than her, and, truth be told, more together than most of the members in your group.***"

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Laura felt bad - sort of - for feeling this way. She did not admit this to anyone and, bit by bit, her feelings of superiority and contempt grew toward certain OA members, especially Mary.

**RIA Recovery - the calm voice**



**of Recovery in Action –**

*tried to remind Laura -*

*"Everyone is equal at OA*

*meetings. There are no*

*superstars, no official*

*spokespeople. Everyone is*

*both leader and servant. Remember - the only requirement for membership is a desire not to be compulsive with food."*

Laura stopped losing weight and started gaining some back. She was frustrated and angry. Seeing thin people upset her. She kept going to meetings but was losing her enthusiasm. But if she skipped a meeting, afterwards she felt as though she missed something needlessly.

Her sponsor said, "What's going on?" Laura said she could not believe she was relapsing. "That happens to other people, not me!"

Her sponsor paused, and then said, "What makes you more special than anyone else?"

Laura was almost shocked at how her sponsor called her out on her secret. Laura had no answer.

Both Paddie and Ria weighed in though.

**PADDIE** - *"Don't let anyone see your secrets, your weakness, your fear. Pull back now."*

**RIA** - *"Look at the love, the recovery, the sanity in the meetings, the literature, and the Steps, and the Tools. You can trust this program with your secrets and your weakness and your fear."*

At the next meeting, Mary was the speaker. "When I first came to OA, I think I needed to feel that I wasn't as messed up as some of the other people at the meeting. But that pride really got in the way of my recovery. It was a breakthrough when I finally accepted that I am just like everyone in OA, a food addict who is battling against a baffling, cunning, and often fatal disease. In order to recover, I had to let go of pride and reach out to others for help. My life is still hard, but I don't have to overeat because of it. I keep OA mottos with me everywhere I go because they help me stay abstinent."

No longer irritated, Laura had a new respect for Mary and was grateful for what Mary shared, even when she closed with, of course (!), three of her favorite OA mottos:

- **"I never have it made."**
- **"Abstinence is the most important thing without exception."**
- **"Meeting makers make it."**

Laura smiled and wrote down all three.



**STEP 8** **Make List of Amends**

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all

## Intergroup Calendar of Events

**August 21 – Sponsorship Day** – hosted by Thursday Morning Meeting # 53332; 9 a.m.- Noon; [see flyer on page 9](#)

**September 12 – Intergroup Meeting\*\***

**September 25 - 2021 Virtual Iowa State Convention:** “Body Image, Relationships and Sexuality”; Saturday September 25, 9AM – 4PM Central Time; Hosted by Iowa IGs

**September 25 – [Kansas Day 2021](#)**

**October 2** – “Masks Off to Compulsion,” Drury Inn at the Airport, St. Louis County – **Super Saturday** in conjunction with the Region 4 Fall Assembly – see page 10 or [THIS LINK](#)

**October 10 – Intergroup Meeting\*\***

**Virtual Fall Retreat** – plans are underway; see Intergroup Chair’s column (which begins on this page) for more details

**November 14 – Intergroup Meeting\*\*** – This is the meeting where elections are held for service positions; see IG Chair’s column (starting on this page) for details

**November 20-21 – IDEA Day** (International Day of Experiencing Abstinence; no home meeting has volunteered to host a recovery date on this theme as we go to print)

**December 4 – Holiday Booster Recovery Event** – time and location to be announced

**\*\*Note:** *Each Intergroup Meeting is 1:30-3 p.m. via Zoom. **The meeting number is 940 5580 8391. The password is: Serenity.** Those in elected service positions and Intergroup Representatives are expected to attend. All other fellows are welcome.*

## WHAT’S HAPPENING AT OUR INTERGROUP – AUGUST 2021

On Sunday July 11 we had our Intergroup (IG) Business Meeting. We were excited to welcome two new IG Reps, Gloria from the Herculaneum Friday 6 pm group and Kelly from the Ferguson Tuesday 6 pm group.

We had two New Business items of interest: **To Zoom or Not to Zoom?** We currently meet via Zoom, and, like all meetings in this time of changing pandemic protocols, we needed to discuss whether or not to continue with Zoom. The Board of Trustees recommended meetings continue on Zoom. A discussion followed where many points of view were offered: the need to meet in person to combat the isolation component of our disease, the pros and cons of hybrid meetings, Zoom has not resulted in more meetings having IG Reps attend, Zoom is convenient (no travel time) and efficient, and some liking to receive hard copies of information to take back to meetings. No clear consensus emerged so the issue was tabled pending further consideration. Our Vice Chair (who could not attend this meeting) later reported that Missouri Baptist is not offering its Conference Rooms to outside organizations at this time.

**Immediate Service Opening!** One of our three Region 4 Reps has resigned; so, we have an opportunity for a member of our community to fill this position until the term of service is up at our November 14 Annual Business Conference. Do you have six months of abstinence and at least one year in OA? Have you been attending IG meetings? Perhaps the reports from R4 assemblies have interested you. With The Region 4 Fall Assembly meeting in St. Louis, it would be very helpful to have three voting Reps. Please submit your nomination by Aug 30, to allow a special election at our September 12 IG Meeting.

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## Highlights of Old Business:

- We are forming a committee for a **Virtual Fall Retreat**. Elizabeth C and Dianne S will serve as co-chairs, and we need helpers to brainstorm themes and program. Please contact us, and we'll set up a Zoom committee meeting in August to get plans in motion. Our emails are [info@stlouisoa.org](mailto:info@stlouisoa.org) or [chair@stlouisoa.org](mailto:chair@stlouisoa.org).
- In May, June and July, we brainstormed how our IG can more effectively carry the message and help meetings and individual OAs to do the same. Our PI Officer (Chair) has created a great master plan, but we need volunteers to step up to make the plan a reality. Some of the following ideas would make for great discussions at your meeting's next group conscience. Ask your IG Rep for more information:
  - Refresh meeting formats – look for ideas at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)
  - Members like to get their questions answered (use an Ask It Basket)
  - More **Recovery from Relapse/Been Slipping and Sliding** meetings are needed (recall that 60% of our members have been abstinent one year or less according to the St. Louis Bi-State Survey of Summer 2019)
  - Reach out to small groups - Zoom offers the perfect venue to invite others to attend your meeting
  - Reformat/refresh the Hand in Hand Outreach Directory/Speaker/Sponsor list and make it available upon request and offer it at your meeting
  - Highlight 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within material in the Newsletter
  - How can we turn these ideas/discussions into reality? Into an Action Plan? We need you!

The WSO Convention is happening THIS MONTH - AUGUST 26-28, information is available at [THIS LINK](#).

Our Board of Trustees will be meeting Tuesday August 3 at 1:30 pm to review the Bylaws and Policy and Procedure Manual. All are invited via **Zoom ID 940 5580 8391, password Serenity**.

It's not too early to start thinking about how **you can join our Intergroup service team**.

We all are responsible to carry the message, service helps us bring the Twelfth Step into action. Plus, we have fun and enrich our fellowship experience and expand our RECOVERY working together!

- We will be accepting nomination forms for service board positions – chairperson, secretary, and operations administrator. Familiarity with Intergroup and one year of abstinence are the requirements.
- Region 4 reps - we are allowed five spots. Requirements: at least one year in Overeaters Anonymous and six months current abstinence.
- WSBC delegates - we are allowed three spots, two of which will be open for nominations this year. Requirements: at least two years of service beyond the group level and active at the group and Intergroup service levels for the preceding year; at least one year of current abstinence.

### **Region 4 2022 Convention** (July 15-17, 2022)

- Bob S from Unity Intergroup in Minneapolis is the point person for the Program Committee. He needs our help and wants to have a good cross-section of volunteers and speakers from around our Region. Please contact him if you are interested – Bob S 763-229-6196 or [bonasachs@gmail.com](mailto:bonasachs@gmail.com).

Our next IG meeting is Sunday, **September 12**. See calendar of events (p. 6) for details.

With Gratitude for Service,  
Dianne S. St. Louis Bi-State Chairperson  
For more info: [chair@stlouisoa.org](mailto:chair@stlouisoa.org)

## A LITTLE OA Humor

Note: The Abstinence and Recovery Policy adopted at the 2021 World Business Conference is – ***“Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery is the result of living and working the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program on a daily basis.”*** In reading the following, please keep in mind that we are each the sole judge of our abstinence.

Reprinted from **OA Lifeline**, 09/2019

### You know you're abstinent when . . .

You no longer get bagged meals through a window.

You name your disease (mine is named Hopper).

Your trash can has a one-way entry - things only go in, not out.

Your family and friends all know you will not share your meals, which are weighed and measured! You want it all.

You splurge on butter lettuce.

You make a to-do list and actually DO it.

You find yourself admiring other people's pretty food containers and lunch bags.

You break out a scale at a restaurant.

You find yourself saying things like, "I just love my measuring cups."

If you feel stuff a lot . . . you might be abstinent.

If you realize there's more than one color of apple, and berry isn't just a flavor of candy . . . you might be abstinent.

If you brush your teeth at night (because you actually stop eating before you fall asleep) . . . you could very well be abstinent.

There's a good chance you're abstinent if: you have a new passion for life; you are present in each moment; you say, "I'm sorry," and mean it; you ask, "How are you?" and care.

If you're grateful, if you have dates with friends instead of food, if you're open to growth and change, well . . . you just might be abstinent.

Fill in your own!

Q: How many sponsors does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Only one, but the bulb has to really want to change.



Q: What is the difference between your therapist and your sponsor?

A: The only time your sponsor says the word "closure", it is immediately followed by "your mouth".

**ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY AUGUST 20, 2021.** Please send your submissions to the **OA TODAY** editor and Newsletter Team at [newsletter@stlouisoa.org](mailto:newsletter@stlouisoa.org) or mail to 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



The Thursday morning meeting (#53332) of Overeaters Anonymous presents  
A Super Saturday event **\*\* In celebration of OA's sponsorship day \*\***

# Stepping Up to Sponsorship

August 21, 2021, 9 am to noon

Zoom ID 948 6533 5065, password 53332

Or dial 312 626 6799 and follow prompts.

## Featuring:

### Out of town speakers

**Plus a workshop on how to get a newcomer started with just two documents, which you can obtain in advance for best results:**

1. **The newcomer pamphlet Where Do I Start** (\$1 plus shipping at [oa.org/bookstore](http://oa.org/bookstore), or get one free in the mail: text/call your mailing address by August 7 to Elizabeth C at 314-304-1444).
2. **Temporary Sponsors: Newcomers' First Twelve Days**, downloadable free at [oa.org](http://oa.org) – search for Temporary Sponsors and click the View PDF button.

### Suggested donation \$6.00 or more

[on [stlouisoa.org/products-page/](http://stlouisoa.org/products-page/), marking Super Saturdays and entering group 53332 at checkout,  
or by check to St Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup, PO Box 28882, St. Louis MO 63123,  
with “Super Sat: group 53332” in the comment line ]

**\*\* But please never stay away from an OA recovery event for financial reasons! \*\***



For more information, text/call Susan T 314-283-0204

# SUPER SATURDAY!!

## MASKS OFF TO Our Compulsions



### Meeting Format:

**Focus on Steps 4, 5, and 10**

**Out-of-Town Speakers  
Sharing and Questions after  
each speaker**

**Fifteen minute break after the second speaker.**

Contact Person  
Marilyn F. - 314-401-2552

### WHERE:

**Drury Inn Airport  
10490 Natural Bridge Rd,  
St. Louis, MO 63134**

### WHEN:

**October 2, 2021  
9:30-12:30  
Registration begins at 9:00**

Suggested Donation: **\$6**

Don't let financial reasons stop you from coming to the Super Saturday!  
Give what you can,  
when you can.

This is an in person event.  
All attendees not fully vaccinated are required to wear a face covering.

Meeting in Room 208  
Free parking in front and gated side.  
**MUST USE FRONT ENTRANCE.**  
(Buzz to get in and leave - Mention OA)  
Handicap Accessible

**Sponsored By:**

