

November 2021 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA
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STEP ELEVEN

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.



I have been in OA for several years and know without a doubt that I am powerless over food. I was in another 12-step program before coming to OA and was intimately familiar with the steps. But knowing did not help me get into recovery and abstinence.

I read lots of self-help books, tried many diets, and sought for answers that would control my eating.....well if I am entirely honest.....I sought to be thin. I struggled in early days in this program searching for a diet, a magic answer. It was hard for me to learn that this is not a diet club, and I was not promised weight loss. I did not want to relinquish the control. But upon entering the program, with support of homegroup and sponsor, I began releasing control to program. In the Big Book, as Step 10 is ending, we are told that food is subtle foe, and we cannot rest on our laurels if we want to stay in recovery. We daily need to attend to our spiritual condition and carry god's will into all our activities. This is both one of my favorite steps and one of the of the most challenging ones for me to work. I have always had a sense of a higher power, and I grew up in a church that I enjoyed and recognized the human side of its limitations. I did not stop and conceive of 'my'

higher power. I accepted other people's ideas of what God was and was not. I generally believed that God was a power of love. I was sure that there was a loving, compassionate god, I was comfortable with prayer and religious practices from a young age and yet I believed that God would help other people, but I was confident he would not help me. I thought God would not take care of me as I was flawed by compulsive overeating. If I better took care of my body I would somehow become 'loveable'. Finding OA, working the steps and an abstinence plan helped me better understand my disease. But in working the steps, in order, with a sponsor I came to find a living definition of abstinence.

(continued on page 2)

**BREAKING**
NEWS! 

Join us on December 11 from the comfort of your home! The Super Saturday Holiday Booster has been changed to Zoom!

We will be **Celebrating Abstinence and Recovery** from 9:30 AM-12:30 PM on December 11. Look forward to five speakers, a workshop, and plenty of sharing. Here's how to join: **Meeting ID: 823 7518 6175, Passcode: 599392** (or to dial in by phone, call 312 626 6799 and follow the prompts). The updated flyer is on the website stlouisoa.org, and it is on page 12 of this newsletter.

See you there, as we boost our recovery for the winter holiday season!

(Step 11, continued) The literature is clear on how to 'work' step 11. We need to pray in the morning and ask God to help us be divorced from dishonesty, self-pity, and self-seeking motives. At night we review our day and seek forgiveness for harms we have done. I am not a person who naturally prays. I began by linking prayer to my daily activities such as making my bed, taking a shower, brushing my teeth. I initially used the words and prayers in the Big Book and over time my prayers became more conversational. I am not good at sitting still and meditating. I have found that taking a walk and observing the beauty around me can be gentle place of meditation. On occasion I also read the daily mediation before I take a walk and think about what it means to me as a way of meditating as well.

We are also told during the day when we are struggling, we ask for inspiration and decision/direction; and we be given whatever we need to face whatever hardship is in front of us. We pause when agitated. I first needed to PAUSE. Restraint of tongue and pen is one of the best tools I can use to maintain my spiritual condition. I initially pray to not react; then I pray for a peace-filled solution. I have greatly improved my peace of mind and my relationship with others.....not perfect but much improved. I find the promise - if I work this step I am in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity or foolish decisions. We are undisciplined so we let God discipline us through participation in prayer and meditation.

Barb Z



TRADITION ELEVEN

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.



I find this one of the easiest traditions to understand. It is a part of my responsibility as a member of OA to carry the message to others who suffer from the disease of compulsive eating. As an individual I do so by sharing that I've found a method that has helped me deal successfully with my compulsion. I do this one-on-one with people who ask me what I'm doing to be successful with weight management, or "dieting" as so many people refer to it.

A question in the chapter on Tradition Eleven asks "*Do we talk about OA so fanatically or so often, that we make it unattractive to the people in our lives?*" When I was new in program, I had to answer YES. I had to learn restraint and patience when it comes to sharing the message to those who are outside the rooms.

When I observe another compulsive eater struggling with their life and food, it is possible to make a suggestion. "There is a program I've heard about, Overeaters Anonymous, that helps people with their behavior around food. You might want to check it out." By doing it this way I have maintained my anonymity. I have the choice to reveal my membership and pass on a "New Prospect" card with a meeting time and location on it or give them the oa.org website address when they ask for more information. If they do not ask, then I drop it as they are not yet ready to give up control. A seed has been planted and they may take a look later and find that our program offers them relief.

(continued on page 3)

I don't overdo the sharing or push the program as that can be a real turn off to people who are not ready for a change, and then I've lost the opportunity to help them at all. I've observed that many people see it as judgment rather than help when I bring up the topic, so I limit my enthusiasm about being a member of OA to those who are open to hearing it.

Tradition Eleven guides our policy of not revealing the name of the speaker for an upcoming event. It's not healthy for me to be seen as a "guru" or all-knowing member of this fellowship. I would have to have extraordinary humility to keep from basking in the glory of all that admiration. For me it would be risky, and I do not want to lose my abstinence for that brief moment of glory. When I go to events, I practice love and acceptance and I've found a message in each speaker, as HP is always there in the room and guides that speaker's share. Each of us has something to give.

When I want to pass on the information about OA in a more public way, I have a choice to make. Do I want to do so as an OA member, or do I want to do so as a person who has been successful in finding a solution to my weight problems? If I want to represent Overeaters Anonymous, I must ensure the media understand that my face cannot be shown and that my last name cannot be used in any form. It is my responsibility to refuse to do the interview if the media is unable to cooperate with my request.

If I chose to publish a book about my success or share my story and reveal my identity, then I cannot mention Overeaters Anonymous in any way. I am free to say I belong to a support group, but I cannot reveal which one. Members of our fellowship have written books, articles, and done interviews and honored tradition eleven. The risk comes in for both the member and OA when they reveal their membership to the media and then for whatever reason return to their old behaviors. This then damages OA's

credibility as a program that can indeed help people with their food problems.

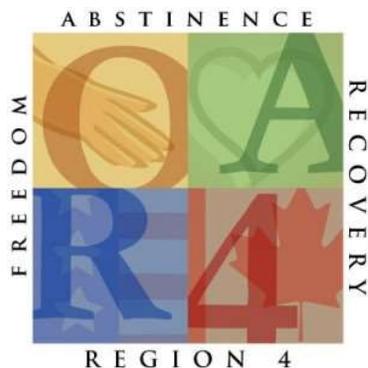
A continuous public awareness campaign about OA is essential. We need to do more than personal sharing as the world is a much larger place than any one of us can reach. An article in the newsletter, a public service announcement on radio or television, or a sign on the back of a bus is always in order. But it's not about showing the results, using people's faces or names to promote the program. The goal is helping people become aware that OA exists and how they can contact us for help.

When giving service beyond the group level, it is my prerogative to reveal my membership by sitting at a booth or speaking in front of a group of people at some public forum. I'm there to share about the way OA has changed my life, so I do not use my last name, and I do not promote myself in any way. I simply speak to what I have found in the fellowship, or I answer questions about the program using the OA approved literature as the resource for the information I share.

Anonymity builds trust among the members so they can share whatever they need to without fear of others finding out. Keeping what is said at a meeting is a sacred trust and we must all honor that. Never revealing another person's membership in our fellowship without their permission is another way we protect that person and the spirit of the fellowship.

Anonymity as a Tradition is to keep us humble and to always keep the focus on OA, never on specific personalities. Keeping our membership private in front of the press or media is different than in a private setting or when giving the service of carrying the message. We become willing to reveal our membership when giving service at some level, but we don't make a big deal about it or present ourselves as some type of program celebrity.

Anonymous



**Region 4 I.D.E.A. Day/Fun Night:
“Fun, Fellowship & Freedom
from Humdrum!”
Get Your Party On!**

Q. What’s ‘more fun’ than a fun night?

A fun night with your Region 4 community.

Q. What is Region 4?

Region 4 is a collection of intergroups from the Midwest area that group together to support one another. The Region 4 Assembly is made up of representatives from these intergroups whose sole purpose is to support all of our intergroups.

Q. Why do you say Region 4 Community?

We want everyone in Region 4 to feel as though they are a part of a wonderful community doing wonderful things for Overeaters Anonymous and for the members of the Region. Remember – ‘together we get better.’

Q. What’s going to happen at this fun night?

We are going to play games – Fun Trivia and Bingo, and of course, we will laugh. Better still, there will be PRIZES! They will be silly prizes, but who doesn’t love to win a prize? I know I do!

Q. Who will be at this event?

Region 4 friends, old and new, and those we have yet to meet. Attending an event

like this is a great opportunity to meet new people from other states and provinces thus, expanding our recovery circles. Please be sure to spread the word to all your OA buddies – the more, the merrier!

Q. What does it cost and how do I register?

This event is **FREE**, and there is no need to register. Simply click on this [LINK](#). The meeting number is 871 7108 6252, and the passcode is 486799.

Q. When is this event?

Our fun night is on I.D.E.A. Day – **November 20th from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

Q. Will you be there?

I know I will – will YOU?

Annette



HOW CAN I BE USEFUL TODAY?



- Call someone when you need be useful. Give them the blessing of sharing their recovery.
- Have you had some success in OA? Are you abstinent? Working the steps? You already have something that would be useful another person. Offer to become a sponsor. For support get the pamphlet “A Guide for Sponsors” or ask your own sponsor for help.

E.C.



**Twelfth Step Within Day
(December 12)**

The 12th Day of the 12th Month is a perfect time to practice Step 12! Make plans now to celebrate & strengthen the OA Fellowship by reaching out to those still suffering compulsive eaters within our rooms.

Fall Retreat, November 5 and 6! REGISTER NOW!

Here's an event you won't want to miss -- the Fall Retreat: [A Time of Reflection.](#)

There will be three Zoom sessions:
Friday Nov 5, 7-8:30 pm
Saturday Nov 6, 9-11 am, and 1-3 pm

Online registration is available at [THIS LINK.](#)
Suggested donation is \$20, but never let financial hardship keep you away from a recovery event. All are welcome!



THE HOLIDAZE: A GREAT TIME TO "CEASE FIGHTING"

I have enjoyed the literature of the fellowship ever since stepping through the doors of OA 16 years ago, but there is one paragraph in the **Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous** I read that always captures my head and my heart. It is from pages 84 & 85 and begins with "And we have ceased fighting....."

When I first came into the rooms, I did not feel like I was much of a fighter. I felt I had been licked by compulsive eating and was a total loser. It was later that I learned that I fought quite a lot. I fought the idea of a spiritual solution. I fought with my diseased eating instead of turning it over to a power greater than myself. I fought so many people in my life, many indirectly. This passage speaks to me about surrendering these and other behaviors, ultimately to win power over them by trusting in a power greater than myself. The paragraph has come true for me.

These days, I am seldom interested in compulsive eating. Like the paragraph states, I

recoil from my "red foods" as if from a hot flame. And I react sanely and normally around food-focused situations where before I had not. The **Big Book** says that this happens automatically -- but I do not think accidentally. I think it is a direct result of working the program, to the best of my ability, one day at a time.

The **Big Book** speaks of this as a miracle, and for me this is very true. As the holiday season approaches for so many of us, there will inevitably be times and situations that could throw a wrench into our recoveries. However, there is always a source of strength available to us, should we choose to tap into it. We can be "placed in a position of neutrality" which for me is when I am able to shift my focus from food to fellowship. I do not even have to be at an OA event to shift my focus; I can do it any time that the food calls to me, so long as I follow the suggestions of recovery.

I wholeheartedly believe the **Big Book** when it states that the problem "has been removed. It does not exist for us." I have found this to be true countless times in recovery. What a gift!

At the end of the paragraph there is a caution, however. The last sentence reads, "This is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition." Here is where the rubber meets the road. If I want the miracle of recovery, I must not only cease fighting, but also keep in fit spiritual condition.

For me, the miracle here is that "fit spiritual condition" is tailor-made to my experience. We all are trudging the road of happy destiny together, but our footsteps may not always line up. For me, this is another miracle of recovery. To be one among many used to be a curse in my eyes. Now I see it as a blessing to be one among millions of fellow sufferers, reaching for recovery, one day at a time. Join me, and thank you for being a part of this miraculous fellowship.

Anonymous

FROM PAUSE TO PAWS: A Recovery Story Featuring Paddie and Ria

After a long day at work, Katherine is just getting home. She is hungry and looks at the snack foods on top of the refrigerator that her family eats. She is tempted just to have a few chips.

Paddie (Progressive and Deadly Disease) is thrilled at the opportunity to jump into Katherine's vulnerable and tired state of mind.

"Just have a few before dinner. It won't hurt you, It has been soooo long since you have had any, You have been so good with your food."



 The calm and wise voice of **Ria (Recovery in Action)** says: *Remember your "Don't eat anything for the first ten minutes after you get home" rule. Sit on the couch and rest for a few minutes. Just sit down and be comfortable for a few minutes. You can always eat later."*

Mostly out of habit, Katherine walks away from the kitchen and sits in the recliner for a few minutes. Her dog comes up to the chair, pauses, and then jumps on the recliner and snuggles next to Katherine. It is a nice moment that Katherine realizes she would have missed if she had been stuffing her face in the kitchen. As she strokes her dog's neck and closes her eyes, her mind becomes clear of the workday clutter. "If I had eaten those chips, it would have been more than just a few chips. I would have regretted it, as I always have in the past."

Ria - *"Look at you! Way to go! Now you can face the rest of your evening in peace and serenity."*

After ten minutes, Katherine gets up and prepares dinner easily and safely, following the food plan she set up and shopped for the weekend before.

Ria - *"You are keeping it simple. No guess work or substituting. Recovery and abstinence grows every time you follow your food plan."*



Dear Editor,

In the October edition there was an excellent article about the need to avoid crosstalk in OA meetings. I would like to add my two cents about that.

One reason I can share deeply in an OA is that I feel safe from any commentary about what I have said. No one criticizes me by saying "You shouldn't feel that way" or "You shouldn't have done that." No one gives me advice by saying "Next time do it this way." No one puts themselves in the story by saying "That happened to me too, let me tell you about it." Those are pretty obvious examples of crosstalk.

There's something less obvious that I especially need to feel safe from: sympathy! No one says "Oh honey, you poor thing." That might be a natural or appropriate thing to say in the outside world, but not in an OA meeting. Here I receive the gift of loving and respectful silence. Here I feel safe.

E.C.

Dear Editor,

It was helpful to read the article, "What's Up with Those Weird Guidelines for Sharing? Hmmmm...." in the St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup OA October 2021 newsletter. The writer noticed an increase in members ignoring the guidelines for sharing in our online meetings.

I have noticed the same happening at our meeting. In the past year, there has been more crosstalk and less attention to following the meeting format. Our meeting has been around for a long time, and most of us know each other very well.

I think, in our case, our problem arose due to having very few newcomers, the loss of some regular members who did not want to go online and becoming too relaxed and familiar during the meeting. "Well, I know this is crosstalk, but..." or "Since there are only us old-timers...." There has been crosstalk during the meeting, less attention to following the meeting script, and announcements that have turned into discussions during our meeting.

After reading the article, I think I will request we discuss this at our next monthly group conscience. To keep our meeting healthy and strong, I can see, especially now, how it is important to keep our meeting on track by shaping a safe, focused, and structured place.

A St. Louis OA Member



INTERGROUP CHAIR'S COLUMN

As the newsletter is posted online, there's still time to register for our **2021 Fall Retreat!** Don't miss this terrific recovery event on November 5 and 6! Register online at www.stlouisoa.org or call our Retreat Treasurer, Marina (815-343-6412 – be sure to leave a message so she knows you're not spam), and she'll get you registered. Any questions, call Elizabeth (314-304-1444).

Our **Farmington, MO meeting** needs your support. It meets at 11:00 a.m. on Mondays. For now, it's a phone meeting dial 1-712-832-8330, password 8130762#. This is a great opportunity to make new OA friends and work on your Twelfth Step.

Region 4 has a new feature on the website www.oaregion4.org – look for the new **Abstinence Kit** tab at the top of the page. It's a resource for all the fellowship, you'll find tips for the upcoming holidays, info about upcoming fellowship events such as the **Fun Upbeat Night on Nov. 20**; see details on page 4! More will be added as this resource develops.

The Annual St. Louis Bi-State Area **Intergroup Business Conference** is Sunday November 12 at 1:30 pm, zoom in and join us 940 5580 8391, password Serenity.

November is Gratitude Month! A great way to express your gratitude is by attending our local **I.D.E.A (International Day of Experiencing Abstinence) Super Saturday** event on Saturday November 20, 9:30 am to noon or so (the committee is hard at work finalizing the details as I write this).

With Gratitude for Service,
Dianne S., Chairperson
St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup
chair@stlouisoa.org

**Is my group meeting
on Thanksgiving Day???**
Five groups have told us Yes or No.

YES, two Zoom meetings are!

1. Thu 7 am (St Charles) always does. **641 012 022 pw 084147.**
2. The 7 am MWF (Clayton) is again offering a special 9 am Gratitude Meeting. **538 040 418 pw 002478.** See the flyer on page 11 in this newsletter.

NO, three meetings have said they will not meet.

1. Thu 10 am (Ferguson) will not meet.
2. Thu 7 pm (Men's meeting) will not meet.
3. Thu 7 pm (Rolla) will not meet.



November 5 and 6 - Fall Retreat – A Time of Reflection (see flyer on page 9)

November 14 – Intergroup Meeting** – This is the meeting where elections are held

November 20-21 – I.D.E.A. Day (International Day of Experiencing Abstinence)

November 20, 9:30 a.m.-Noon – I.D.E.A. Day Recovery Event via Zoom; see flyer on page 10

November 20, 7-8:30 p.m. - Region 4 FUN Night; see article on page 4

JOIN US 4 FUN AND GAMES

Region 4 presents...

I.D.E.A. DAY 'Fun Upbeat Night'
Saturday, November 20, 2021
7:00 – 8:30 PM Central Time

Meet us on Zoom
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87171086252?pwd=QEpjYjZPQ2NQOVdJamhGQmF4djdUZZ09>
Meeting ID: 871 7108 6252
Passcode: 486799

Fellowship
Get your party on!
Freedom from humdrum

November 25, 9-10 a.m. – Thanksgiving Day Gratitude Meeting – see flyer on page 11

December 11 – Holiday Booster Recovery Event – see flyer on page 12

December 12 – Twelfth Step Within Day (see page 4)

****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.

ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 20, 2021. Please send your submissions to the **OA TODAY** editor and Newsletter Team at 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 permission.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
ST. LOUIS BI-STATE AREA INTERGROUP

2021 VIRTUAL FALL RETREAT A TIME OF REFLECTION

FRI. NOV. 5: 7-8:30 PM

SAT. NOV. 6: 9-11 AM

SAT. NOV. 6: 1-3 PM

THREE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- SUGGESTED DONATION \$20
- PLEASE REGISTER IN ADVANCE
- NO REFUNDS
- WE CARE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE - NEVER STAY AWAY FOR FINANCIAL REASONS

GENERAL QUESTIONS? ELIZABETH C. (314)304-1444

SCHOLARSHIP REQUESTS: MARINA F. (815)343-6412
MARINAFRUTH53@GMAIL.COM

ZOOM INFORMATION EMAILED AFTER OCT. 29

ONLINE REGISTRATION AT
STLOUISOA.ORG
OR MAIL-IN SEE BELOW

MAIL IN REGISTRATION TO:
MARINA FRUTH, 14644 N COURT 6, EFFINGHAM, IL 62401

FIRST NAME: _____ LAST NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE NUMBER:(_____) _____

ENCLOSED REGISTRATION \$ _____ WE CARE DONATION:\$ _____ TOTAL \$ _____

WRITE "RETREAT" IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR CHECK_

I.D.E.A. Day

International Day of Experiencing Abstinence

November 20, 2021

9:30-12:00

A Focus on Tools to Find Abstinence Again: Slipping and Sliding

9:30-9:40 Welcome

*

9:40-10:10 Panel # 1

Why we Came to the Group.

*

10:10-10:20 Open Sharing

10:20 - 10:25 Break

*

10:25-10:55 Panel #2

What was our experience
working with this tool?

*

10:55-11:05 Open sharing

11:05-11:10 Break

*

11:10-11:40 Panel #3

How things are now for us.

*

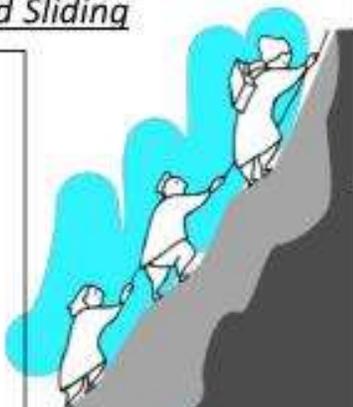
11:40-11:55 Ask It Basket

*Please send your questions to
the*

"Chat" feature on Zoom.

*

11:55-12:00 Closing



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82279241485?pwd=dzUrTWJDOWVRRHZXQlhZmNRWTV5UT09>

Meeting ID: 822 7924 1485

Passcode: 095247

To phone in contact

Zoom Host Jennifer L at
nupaige97@gmail.com..

Suggested donation \$6

Please never stay away from an OA
meeting or recovery event for
financial reasons!

Go to stlouisoa.org to donate

Contact Eileen M.

mangogeorge2@gmail.com



 **OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS®**
ST. LOUIS BI-STATE INTERGROUP



READY TO FALL INTO RECOVERY?

**ST. LOUIS METRO AREA OA
ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DAY
GRATITUDE MEETING**

**Thursday, November 25, 2021
9:00-10:00 AM**

**Hosted by the Early Bird Meetings
Contact: Debbie K. 636-634-6201
Topic: Focus on Gratitude**

Zoom ID: 538 040 418

Password: 002478



Overeaters Anonymous • St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup

Holiday Booster

CELEBRATING ABSTINENCE AND RECOVERY

Saturday, Dec 11, 2021

VIA ZOOM!

Meeting ID: 823 7518 6175

Passcode: 599392

To dial in by phone, call: 312-626-6799
and follow the prompts

Program 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Suggested donation \$6

Please never stay away from an OA meeting or recovery event for financial reasons!

HOSTED BY THE SUNDAY MORNING ST. MARY'S GROUP
QUESTIONS? CALL ELLEN 314-603-3712