

# March 2022 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA  
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## STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

## DECISIONS, DECISIONS

As I work my recovery, Step 3 is involved in every decision I make. Any given action in life takes a determination of the will. Often, I try not to make a decision.....by procrastinating or avoiding or ignoring an issue. But that avoidance itself is a decision. A big part of my recovery is to stop avoiding and deal with life on life's terms.

In my disease I make unwise decisions. I am powerless to do anything else. By dealing with my addictions - admitting my lack of power to do anything about them – I am led past Step one through Step 2 where I discover the power source that's available for the change I need. In Step 3, I plug the plug into the socket and access the power that is greater than myself.

Recently I was at a meeting where they were reading from the **OA 12 and 12**, and it talked about the transformation that is possible

through the Steps. I got to thinking about transformers - the electrical kind. They convert power into a specific calibration to make something work properly. Step 3 helps me convert a power that is out there in the universe to a power that works inside of me - a power that can make my life work as it is intended to work.

In all of life I need to make the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God. In my faith tradition there's a saying: "God is working in you to give you the DESIRE (my will) and the POWER (my life) to do what pleases Him." I believe that my Higher Power wants what is best for me. In almost 32 years in program I have found that every decision that brings me to turn my will and my life over to the care of God takes me through a door that holds my very best on the other side.

**Third Step Prayer:** "God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do thy will always."

For today I choose recovery...it is a decision of my will. Help me Higher Power to make the decision in this moment to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God.

The decision of Step 3 is only the first of many decisions that springboard me into a new life that can be beyond my wildest dreams.

Cindy H.



### TRADITION THREE

**The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.**



This is the Tradition I hear at every meeting. I am a member of OA because I want to be a member of OA. I have the desire to stop eating compulsively or I wouldn't bother to show up. It's that simple. I'm not required to be abstinent to be a member; I just have to want what the program offers and am then free to participate in whatever way I am willing. No one else can decide whether or not I belong.

When I think about that, I realize that OA is the first organization I've ever joined that had no expectation of me. I showed up and I was accepted, welcomed and loved. How powerful it is to realize that the others in the room wanted nothing from me. They offered hope and suggestions on ways to make changes in my behaviors that would greatly improve my sense of self, but they still accepted me even if I chose to work the program in my own way instead. When I was successful, they were happy for me, and when I had problems, they cared.

I am free to choose what Tools I will use, whether to work the steps, whether I share in meetings. The meetings may have suggestions on how to work the program, but

they cannot insist that I follow their suggestions. As a member of OA, I have the right to share at every meeting. Even if there are suggested abstinence requirements that I don't meet, I still have the right to share and be a member of that meeting.

What I learned over time is that I would find my own way in the rooms and that there was always someone in a meeting with whom I could identify. One of the suggestions in OA is to find someone who has what I want and then ask them how they got it. I've tried to focus on what we have in common. I haven't always felt accepted by everyone, but I've also discovered that a lot of the times, that had to do with me.

As I continued to be a part of the meetings, I began to be comfortable and find my place. I eventually found a method that worked for me and now have the freedom I was looking for. I have many people in my life that surprise me. People I would not have expected to be friends with are now a big part of my life. There are people I admire for the way they work their program, but I have no other connection with them. When I see someone stop struggling and recovery take over, I am delighted for their success, even if we are very different in our views on how to work the program.

Unconditional love and acceptance is the basis of Tradition Three. Being human, sometimes I'm sure that I know what's best for everyone else. But there is no requirement in OA that people accept my brilliant suggestions. I must allow others the freedom to find their own way.

When I practice Tradition Three, I am seeing my fellow suffering compulsive eater with HPs eyes. Accepting people just as they are is far more healing that demanding they meet my requirements.

Anonymous

## Practicing the Principles In All of Our Affairs: Faith and Identity

### ***The Spiritual Principle of Step 3 is Faith.***

The dictionary defines faith this way: Complete trust or confidence in someone or something; Strong belief in God or in doctrines of a religion based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof.

The principle of Step One is Honesty. We admit that we are compulsive eaters. The Principle of Step Two is Hope. We came to believe in a power greater than ourselves to restore us to sanity. In Step Three, we became willing to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.

Acceptance that we have a disease and that we cannot do it alone points to the need to rely on a Higher Power to lead us. Sometimes that help comes from other compulsive eaters who have recovered through the 12 Steps and the Tools of the program. (The Tools are: a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature, action plan, anonymity and service.) On page 23, the **OA 12 & 12** tells us that "Once we take the third step, we cannot fail to recover."

### ***The Spiritual Principle of Tradition Three is Identity.***

Identity is defined in the dictionary as: The distinguishing characteristics or personality of an individual. Sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing: Oneness.

If we are compulsive eaters, we belong to each other. "The purpose of Tradition Three is to ensure that the road will always be

accessible to all who wish to travel it." Page 108, **OA 12x12**

As tradition three implies, a desire to abstain - to refrain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors - is the heart of OA membership. **OA 12x12**, page 108

We don't want to exclude any of our fellow sufferers or create barriers to their recovery. Many of us come to OA feeling like the rest of the world misunderstands compulsive overeaters and our problems. For us OA is the only place where we truly feel we belong. Page 111, **OA 12x12**

Anonymous



### **Send Your Story of Recovery: *Lifeline* Blog Launches March 20!**

It won't be long! **Lifeline** will soon be back in our pockets and purses, this time as a blog on [oa.org](http://oa.org). As we look forward to the return of **Lifeline** on March 20, we invite you to share your recovery by sending in a submission. Send us your recovery-focused story, digital painting, song, video, or any other type of digital media, and we will put it in the queue for eventual publication. Read the new [Contributor Guidelines](#) for suggestions and use our [temporary form](#), found at [oa.org/lifeline](http://oa.org/lifeline) to send us your submission.

Let's share the miracles of our individual recoveries through this Twelve Step program! Let's make the new **Lifeline** blog a great resource for the Fellowship and for those who are just discovering OA online. Thank you for your service!

## **OA ACRONYM FOCUS: FAITH - FIND ANSWERS IN THE HEART**

The first two acronyms I learned in OA were FAITH and PAUSE (Pray And Use Spiritual Energy). I really thought they were dorky in the extreme, as a newbie sitting in the back of the room, not wanting or willing to even be in the room, but desperate for any answers that might get me to a healthy body weight. So, I wrote them down, and a dozen years later, they are firmly in my toolbox, tattooed on my brain.

Faith is defined as *complete trust or confidence in someone or something*. Phew, that is a tall order – COMPLETE TRUST. As an addict I never committed to anything completely, I always, always, always had one foot out the door to make sure I could make a quick get-away if life got too real. And I had no concept of trust; I didn't trust myself, nor any other person or system. How, then, could I find something that I could stand fully inside, and be willingly vulnerable to at the same time?

I made a decision. And then, I acted as if. Simple, yes. Easy, NO. I found I had to make this decision over and over – I WILL trust this program. It has helped thousands and thousands of people; it can help me as well. With every decision point in my day – trust the program; what does the program say to do next? Like following a recipe with a million ingredients, some of which I wasn't even sure I could find, I marched to that drumbeat: trust the program, trust the program. Do not listen to the addict in my head; trust the program. On days when that felt unattainable – and I still have those days - I would get out my **Big Book** and read page 417.

“And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation – some fact of my life –

unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.”

I would sit with the book, and read that, and meditate on what was disturbing me. Invariably it would be some long held stubborn belief that I had relied on to get me through the decades that I hid away from life, and thought I had all the answers for everything. My beliefs disturbed me. The lessons I had convinced myself were true disturbed me. Anything that did not conform to my set-in-stone preconceived notion of what or how it should be, disturbed me. It used to take me a long time to get back to living in the space where I trust that HP knows what is best, not me, and I must trust that whatever it is that life throws in my path is for the best. I may not see it today. I may never see it. It doesn't matter. My day-to-day experience in choosing to have faith has given me ample proof that when I live the principles of this program, life is better.

I don't need proof, though, my faith will hold me up.

Anonymous



## THE JOURNEY FROM STRESS TO FEEL, DEAL, AND HEAL: A Recovery Story Featuring Paddie & Ria

Sarah had been in OA for over a year and had made a lot of progress. She did not eat her binge foods, had lost weight, had done all the steps, attended her home meeting weekly, called her sponsor, worked with two sponsees, read literature, had a food plan, and did service as her home group treasurer.

However, sometimes Sarah could not sleep and she did not know why. And when she could not sleep, she wanted to eat. It did not happen all the time, but it happened enough and it was a puzzle. So to avoid eating, she would watch movies or online videos, sometimes all night, often eating a bag of snack. When she did this, she was overtired at work and made mistakes, including forgetting some very important deadlines.

This February night, Sarah had come home late. She was anxious and tired. The cold, gray, cloudy rainy day was depressing. It also was Valentine's Day, but she was very single and avoided the office with all its flower deliveries. She could feel that it was going to be another one of these sleepless nights.



**Ria - the calm, quiet voice of Recovery In Action** – urged Sarah to reach out: "You need to call someone."

**Paddie- Progressive And Deady Disease** – was quick to try to drown out Ria's voice: "Don't call. Just watch videos. It is relaxing. Don't worry about tomorrow. You can call in sick."



**Ria** - "You will be overtired at work tomorrow. You will be letting down your work clients,

and your sponsees and sponsors. But most of all, you will be hurting yourself."

**Paddie** - "*Who cares? Just stay up, veg out, and eat.*"

Sarah was scheduled to talk to her new sponsee, Aurelia, and listen to her writing on the next question on the OA 30 and 30. "I will take her call and then will decide whether to call or watch videos.

Right on time, Aurelia called and started reading her answer to question 23) - Discuss the idea of calling a "H.A.L.T." when your life gets unmanageable. (Do not allow yourself to get hungry, angry, lonely or tired.)

Aurelia enthusiastically read the answer to this question. Learning about HALT moments was a lightbulb moment for her. After so many years of overeating, she now could see that HALT moments - feeling hungry, angry, lonely, and tired - were indicators of stress that was fueling her desire to eat compulsively. "I never noticed until now that I rarely wanted to overeat when I am calm, loved, and rested. "But when I was stressed today after getting off work, I wanted to eat. But I didn't because I had a food plan and realized this was a HALT moment. This is great!"

Sarah had to smile. She loved it when her new sponsees or new OA members at meetings made connections that helped break down their compulsive food behaviors. Program was all so new and great for them. To hear their newfound hope was always so worthwhile.

Then Sarah said what she always said when the issues of HALT and feelings came up. "In my experience, there are often unresolved feelings under our desire to eat compulsively. Do you know what might have fueled tonight's desire to eat?"

*(continued on page 6)*

Aurelia paused. "Well, I don't really like my job or my boss. I can't wait to leave work everyday." Sarah listened as Aurelia talked about her career regrets and her feelings of anger and jealousy when she saw other people her age in better jobs and making so much more money.

"Feel, deal, and heal. Acknowledge the feeling, deal with it by writing about it or talking with someone - or better yet - do both writing and calling. As you share and process the feelings and the event, then you can heal from it. When you are able to identify what is really bothering you, rather than denying it, you can deal with life on life's terms. And instead of eating over it, you can do the next right thing. Does that make sense?"

"It really does! Thank so much, Sarah!"

After their call, Sarah wondered who had been helped more by this call.

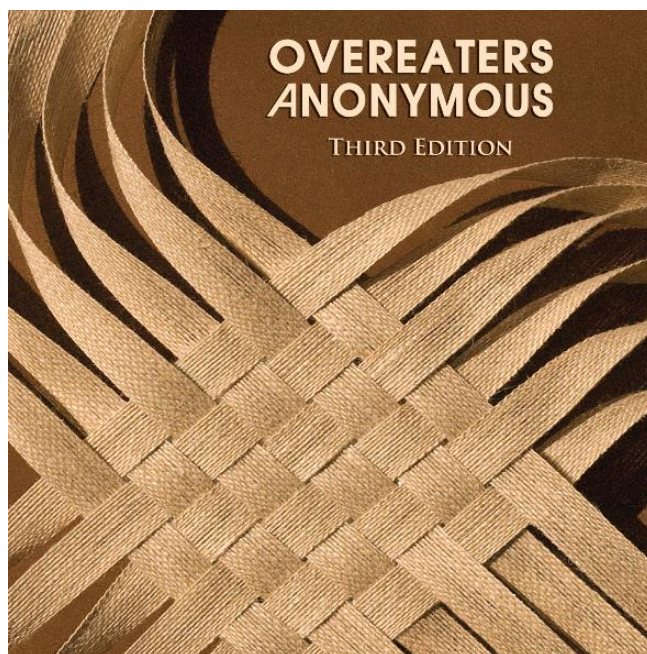
**Ria** - *"Listen to what you told Aurelia. You need to do this for yourself."*

Buoyed by Aurelia's hope and determination, Sarah started to write and write and write.

**Ria** - *"I know it will be hard, but tell your sponsor what is really going on. Your secrets are slowly killing you."*

Then she picked up the phone and called her sponsor.

- TO BE CONTINUED -



### **LISTEN UP! OA'S "BROWN BOOK" NOW AVAILABLE AS AUDIOBOOK**

OA's beloved "Brown Book" is now an audiobook! Using readings by OA members for the book's CD set, our first audiobook includes the entire text of ***Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition***—from the forewords to the appendices. During daily activities or when you need a recovery boost, listen to more than forty stories by OA members sharing their experience, strength, and hope, including our founder's share: "Keep Coming Back: Rozanne's Story."

OA receives a royalty share for audiobook purchases made through these third-party vendors (links open to external websites):

- Audible: <https://adbl.co/34hIF25>
- Amazon: <https://amzn.to/3ooLR1e>
- Apple Books: <https://apple.co/33k5SPi>

Will there be more OA audiobooks? Yes! OA has already started our next one: *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*.



## IDEAS FROM THE ROAD

I have had the privilege to speak at a few meetings on the west coast over the past couple of months. I love to go to new meetings. I invariably discover some aspect of the program I did not know about. I find some new innovative way that the fellows in that specific group have found to reach out to each other that I had not seen before. Two of these ideas are “The Parking Lot” and “The 12th Step Within Service position”.

One of the very best things about this program was always being in the rooms with our fellows and the before and after times when we could mill about and chat with each other. As grateful as I have been the last couple of pandemic years for Zoom, we didn't ever get the “after party”. Well, folks out in the San Francisco area have found a way to bring that back. Each month the group has a service position for “Parking Lot attendant”. That person is made a cohost and stays on after the closing of the meeting to allow group members to socialize with each other, to form and strengthen those bonds of friendship with the friends we never knew we needed. One of our area groups is trying this out for six weeks to see how it works. If your group would like to try this, please do! Feel free to contact me with any questions about how to do this.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Service position is designed to be the hand that reaches out when someone stops coming to the meeting.

This group had two people; one to take attendance each week, and the second to make an outreach call if someone hadn't been seen in two consecutive meetings. I was so touched by this tangible action that embodies our Responsibility Pledge, “Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.” I feel this is a lovely way to strengthen our fellowship. If your group would like help in starting this practice, feel free to contact me, I have an attendance sheet that will help you implement this.

Melanie T, Public Information Chair  
[piofficer@stlouisoa.org](mailto:piofficer@stlouisoa.org)



## BULLETIN HELPS US STAY CONNECTED TO OUR OA FELLOWSHIP WORLDWIDE

The Quarter 2022 issue of *A Step Ahead* is now available from World Service Organization (WSO). In this issue:

- Detailed news about World Service Business Conference (WSBC) 2022, including all New Business Motions and Bylaw Amendments
- More about the return of **Lifeline!**
- Messages from our Chair and Treasurer
- An inside look at how the pandemic inspired OA to overcome the language barrier to WSBC
- A letter to the Fellowship from OA young people
- What's New from WSO
- and more!

You may read *A Step Ahead* at [THIS LINK](#) or download a PDF [HERE](#).

## INTERGROUP CHAIR COLUMN FOR MARCH 2022

At Intergroup we have two meetings where our time is devoted to considering OA business motions. At our February meeting we considered 24 motions that were submitted to **the World Service Business Conference WSBC (April 25-30)** by members, meetings, intergroups, regions and WSO Trustees. **One of our St. Louis Bi-State members brought a proposed motion about the OA Responsibility Pledge to us and we voted to submit it to WSBC. It was accepted and was sent out to Intergroups worldwide for their consideration. It is Proposal A!**

Our diligent WSO Delegates had categorized the motions so we could evaluate them as consent agendas. Our job was to vote that a motion/category be discussed at the WSBC in April or not be discussed. You may read the full list of motions at [THIS LINK](#). We voted that WSBC discuss Proposals (A, B, H) and Proposals (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15). We voted that WSBC not discuss Proposal (C, E, G, I) and Proposals (1, 2, 14). Our IG wanted to discuss 2 motions in depth, so they were removed from the consent agenda. All opinions and viewpoints were heard and we voted that WSBC discuss Proposal D and not discuss Proposal F. Thank you to the sixteen voting members and one guest who participated in this important service. We look forward to our two Delegates to WSBC sharing the outcomes from the April Conference which will be on Zoom again this year.

In March we will have a breakout workgroup to discuss how we can use \$3,000 of your generous 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition donations to help carry our OA message of Recovery. Your meetings' IG reps have asked for your input. Please remember that **each of you IS Intergroup**. Those of us on the service board

and who attend the IG meetings are your trusted servants; we do not govern. We operate like a giant Bi-State Intergroup group conscience. We need your ideas and for you to help develop the plan and do the service to make the plan actionable. Please take 1 ½ hours of your valuable time to attend this meeting, Sunday March 13, 1:30-3:00pm Zoom ID: 940 5580 8391, Password: Serenity, or call phone 312-626-6799, password 75183374.

Registration is open for the **Region 4 Bi-annual Convention July 15-17<sup>th</sup>**. This year it will be in Omaha, Nebraska, only a 6+ hour drive away. It's not too early to get a carpool organized! Two of our Intergroup members need your support as they give service as Hospitality Chair and Ways & Means. [HERE](#) is the link for more information and registration.

With Gratitude for Service,  
Dianne S.  
IG Chairperson, [chair@stlouisoa.org](mailto:chair@stlouisoa.org)



**ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY March 20, 2022.** Please send your submissions to the OA TODAY Editorial Staff [newsletter@stlouisoa.org](mailto:newsletter@stlouisoa.org) or mail to St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup, PO Box 28882, STL, 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.



## SOME THOUGHTS ON ABSTINENCE FROM SILICON VALLEY INTERGROUP

Abstinence is a gift from God, but I'm the one who gets to keep it or throw it away.  
Abstinence is the gateway to recovery.  
Abstinence is the most important thing in my life.  
Abstinence needs to be strong, but not brittle.

Abstinence: I abstain from starting over. I abstain from negativity. I abstain from perfectionism. I abstain from ever leaving OA.

Anything I put before my abstinence, I lose.  
As a compulsive overeater, if I make food an option, it will always be the only option.  
Awareness and knowledge is discovery, but discovery is not recovery.

Do you want the food more than serenity?  
Don't take that first bite!  
Food is not my problem and Food is not my solution.  
From a speaker with 30+ years of abstinence to OA as a whole: "Your abstinence is important to me."

I have a love/hate relationship with food, but normal people don't even have relationships with food.

I haven't really lost the weight – I know exactly where to find it – I just stopped looking for it.  
If I ask myself whether or not the item is a dessert – that means it is.  
If I have a problem and I eat, I then have two problems.  
If you can take it or leave it, you can have it.  
If you don't want to have to turn it over, don't pick it up.  
If you want to find out what you're eating over, try not eating.

Nothing tastes as good as abstinence feels in the morning!  
One bite is too many and a thousand is not enough.

Relapse is NOT a requirement.

The tongue is the wrong organ to make food choices – that is why God gave us a brain.  
The world record for abstinence is 24 hours.  
Thoughts of food are not commands.

When I stay abstinent, I am making amends to myself.  
With this program I never have to overeat again if I don't want to – or even if I do want to...

Zero is easier than one.

Nothing tastes as good as abstinence feels!



**March 5** – 8:45 a.m.-3 p.m. - **Intergroup Renewal Session** - Kansas City, MO – contact Mary C for more info, [flow2growr4@gmail.com](mailto:flow2growr4@gmail.com)

**March 13** – **Intergroup Meeting\*\***

**March 19** – **Unity Day Super Saturday** – see flyer on page 10

**\*\*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.

# SUPER SATURDAY!!

## UNITY DAY



### Meeting Format:

**3 Panels of 3 Speakers**

**Sharing after each panel.**

**One 15 Minute Break**

Contact Person  
Daniel M. - 314-803-2754

**WHERE:**  
Zoom  
Meeting ID: 834 2408 7205  
Password: 711697

**WHEN:**  
March 19, 2022  
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.



**Sponsored By:**



**Step 3. Made a decision**

conclusion	deliverance	determination	diagnosis
judgment	choice	selection	resolution
verdict	decree	directive	edict
mandate	ruling	resolve	resolution
agreement	declaration		

**to turn**

pivot	revolve	rotate	spin
swing	swirl	swivel	twirl
circulate	switch	bend	veer
move	angle	shift	about-face
turnabout	change about	right about	

**our will**

desire	commitment	determination	resolve
testament	intention	fancy	might
wanting	inclination	aspiration	willpower
readiness	intent	urge	appetite
craving	interest	choice	option
mind	resolution	aim	purpose
decision	tenacity	attitude	self-command
character	discipline	intention	passion
power	wish	resolution	conviction
decisiveness	hankering	longing	pinning
preference	self-control	temperament	self-discipline
urge	wishes	self-restraint	yearning

**and our lives over to the care**

safekeeping	concern	attention	custody
caring	guardianship	aid	protection
charge	keeping	consideration	responsibility

**of God**

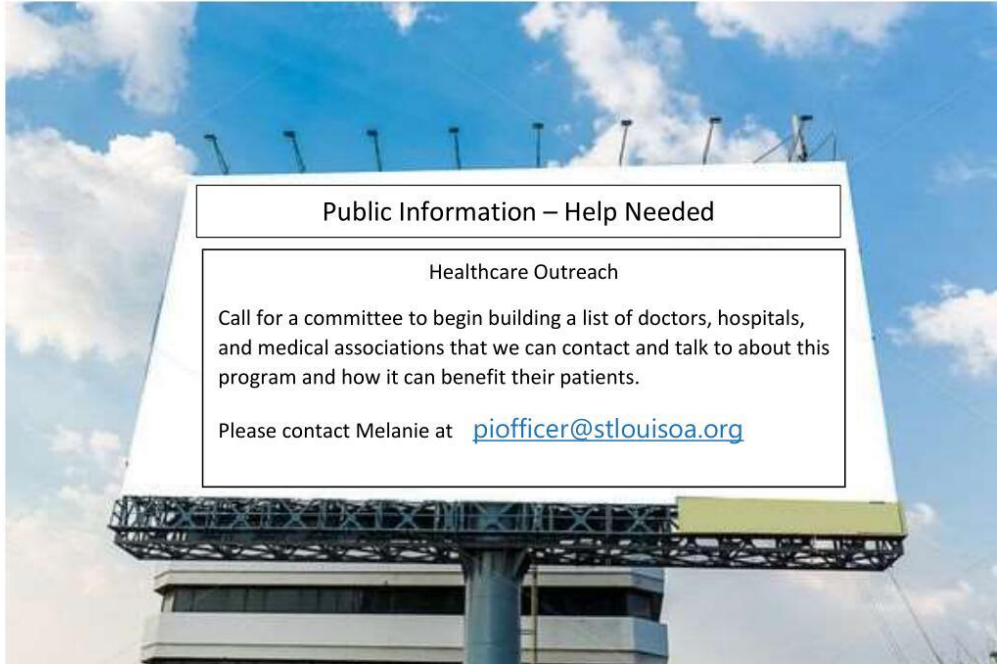
divine being	supreme being	deity	divinity
spirit	almighty	idol	universal life force
supernatural	creator	icon	maker
absolute being	infinite spirit		

**as we understood**

interpreted	concluded	decided	deduced
derived	inferred	judged	made out
reasoned	supposed	conjectured	speculated
surmised	construed	interpreted	thought
ascertained	found out		

**Him.**

Ann B.



## **2 Other Positions still available! Bonuses Guaranteed!**

Sign of the times, not enough people for the work to be done. The bonuses for these positions are, however, so awesome.

"...We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves."

Big Book, pgs. 83-84.

### **Hand in Hand Directory Update**

We need a committee of 2-3 people to update our Hand in Hand directory. This service will involve phone work and entering data into a spreadsheet.

### **Social Media Committee**

We need to expand the committee by a few people to implement our new Social Media strategy. This service will involve phone work, an occasional committee meeting, and an interest in carrying the message!