

September 2022 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

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STEP NINE

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Are These Extravagant Promises? We Think Not!

I've been in OA for over 30 years and have gone through the Steps a few times. Making and receiving amends for past harms of all sizes is one of the gifts of this program for which I'm most grateful. I find it helpful to keep in mind that the purpose of all the Steps and particularly Step Nine is, as stated in the **Big Book** on page 77, "to fit ourselves to be of maximum service".

When I am preoccupied with old guilt or resentments, I continue to create confusion for myself and others. When I am free of these things I can stay in the moment and be present to listen, learn, and love. I can be in right relations with myself and my fellows.

(continued on page 2)

Do You Struggle with Food? There's Help and Hope in OA!!

Have you tried over and over to control your eating and weight, but nothing has worked? Compulsive overeating, under-eating, food addiction, anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, or over exercising ... no matter your challenge with food or body image, you are welcome here.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a community of people who support each other to recover from compulsive eating and food behaviors. We are here for anyone struggling with food or trying to determine if they have food issues.

We believe compulsive eating is a disease like alcoholism is a disease. Our life-changing approach is physical, emotional, and spiritual, and based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). (Thank you, AA!)

If you are wondering if OA might be right for you, click [HERE](#) to take the **OA Quiz**. And check out [What to Expect](#) to find out what happens at a meeting. No matter what country you live in, our meetings will include:

- No weigh-in
- No membership fee
- No judgment
- No religion (we're a spiritual group)
- A safe place for everyone (all genders, races, ages, sexual orientations, sizes)
- A program that works
- Hope
- People who will understand

Reprinted from [And Your Journey Begins](#)
Find local meetings at [THIS LINK](#).

(continued from page 1)

This Step leads us directly to the beloved promises written about in the **Big Book** on pages 83 and 84. Many meetings close with the reading of these promises. When they are read, I like to envision a way each is true in my life.

“We will be amazed before we are halfway through” is not considered one of the promises but I count it. It reminds me of countless Step Two moments so I can see how I’ve been and continue to be restored to sanity.

I’m back from a long relapse. My sponsor was with me before the relapse and has been faithful through my ‘come-back’ journey. When I tell her a story about the week’s progress she will often say, “Sounds like a NEW freedom and a NEW happiness.” These promises keep appearing and delighting me.

Just this past month 33 years after walking into these rooms, at 65 years of age, I’m experiencing new situations where I intuitively know how to handle situations that use to baffle me and seeing how God is doing for me what I could not do for myself. What joy!

At the end of the promise passage is a question, “Are these extravagant promises?” Many people respond aloud, “We think not.” I love looking at the faces of my fellows filled with joy as they affirm these promises are fulfilled when we work for them. The **Big Book** says, “sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly”. I want to add “often continuously”.

Debbie K.



TRADITION NINE

OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.



OA tells us not to be organized, but have service boards or committees, which will focus us to get the work done. In doing this, there needs to be some minimal organization, so the work gets done. But we can all do different parts of the work, then merge the offerings from those on the committee into one product.

Sometimes the bureaucracy can be confusing. Still when we work together or work on different parts, we can choose to work in harmony in how we put the work together.

Service bodies need some organization, so that we don't have duplicate or triplicate presentations. If we recognize that duplication has happened, we can choose to cooperate and merge what we produced into one offering.

It can be daunting when someone asks you to do something. Sometimes when you have finished, you find someone else has done it and has presented a much better job. This can be a moment for humility.

Some basic organization is needed to make the work go more smoothly, but, when our emphasis is on our fellowship, then God's will remains our ultimate authority. Our service bodies need some organization, but OA as such is encouraged to **keep the emphasis on fellowship rather than organization**. When God remains the ultimate authority, no one governs others.

Drilling Down to the Principles of the Program: Step Nine/Tradition Nine

Spiritual Principle of Step Nine: Love

Definition: strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties; affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests; warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion

Synonyms: affection, attachment, devotedness, devotion, fondness, passion

Antonyms : abomination, hate, hatred, loathing, rancor

“Love from others in OA and from my Higher Power have healed me. I have learned to accept myself without judgment, as others in OA accept and love me. I, too, can reach out in Overeaters Anonymous and let love pass through me to heal others. To every newcomer I say ‘We will love you until you can love yourself.’” (**For Today**, 1st Edition, page 51)

“...As I have learned my own real needs, I have been able to enter into true, sharing relationships. By developing a mature love with my Higher Power and becoming a friend to myself, I can distinguish the boundaries between my will and God’s will.” (**For Today** 1st Edition, page 334)

Spiritual principle of Tradition Nine: Structure

Definition: the action of building; organization of parts as dominated by the general character of the whole; coherent form or organization

“In Overeaters Anonymous, we have experienced how things work out for the best when organization is kept at a minimum. The order we once sought in rules and power

structures, we have found in freedom instead. Trusting our Higher Power rather than any organizational structure, we can now take responsibility for our shared lives and for the OA Fellowship in which we are recovering together.” (**OA 12&12**, Second Edition, page 150)

One of the questions on page 149 in the **OA 12&12** is: “Are we mature enough to take personal responsibility for the well-being of OA and for our own recovery?” My Higher Power has never said “It’s someone else’s job, just take what you need.” It’s always been, “Give back so you can get more.” Participating in the service structure of OA has taught me a lot about my character defects and assets and for that I am grateful. (from page three of the September 2021 **OA Today** St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup newsletter)

Anonymous

Voices of Recovery, Second Edition Arrives in Print and Digital Formats

The long-awaited second edition of OA's beloved daily reader **Voices of Recovery** is finally available, both in our OA bookstore and online digital platforms. The second edition has been attentively reviewed and edited to bring its daily meditations—sourced directly from the testimonials of OA members—into alignment with OA’s currently available literature and policies. Physical copies can be obtained in our bookstore at [THIS LINK](#) or on the following platforms:

- Amazon
Kindle: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0B99L2RTS>
- Barnes and Noble
Nook: <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/voices-of-recovery-overeaters-anonymous/1141991658?ean=2940186594079>
- Apple Books: *coming soon*

The Stinkin' Thinkin' Page

You can't expect to eat junk food, never work out, and get abs.



Well, first of all, through

God all things are possible..... so jot that down

Oops, I Did It Again: Isn't There an OA Word for That?

Oops! I did it again. When will I learn? Have you caught yourself doing the same thing over and over expecting different results, but it didn't work out...again. So much wasted time, excitable, anxious energy, and obsessive thinking goes into each ordeal, and I fail once again, miserably.

These are just a few of the times I got stuck in the "oops, I did it again" cycle:

- 1) I was overeating and did not let my sponsor know I needed help. Then I let it slide for days, weeks, months as I tried to control it myself. I was stuck in the shame/guilt/self-loathing cycle, not a

good place to be. I finally called my sponsor to share honestly and get some good orderly direction (G-O-D).

- 2) I promised myself I would get up and exercise four mornings a week, but I stayed up late every night and slept in every morning, baffled by my inability to start my exercise program.
- 3) I asked my husband to do a task, but it didn't get done in my timeframe, so I resentfully did the task myself, while in my thoughts I was taking his inventory.
- 4) I was writing the same resentment over and over, complaining to my sponsor who gently, but directly, reminded me that once I let go of the outcome, it's no longer a resentment.

My ability to do the same things over and over again and expect different results seems to be bottomless. It's exhausting, frustrating, maddening (and called "insanity" in OA)!!

Today I'm grateful that I don't get caught up on this merry-go-round as often as I used to. My behaviors are slowly evolving. Progress, not perfection!

I'm a controlling person. I want to direct myself and everyone else, but I know that's not helpful today. Through my recovery, I'm practicing boundaries to keep myself safe so I can have healthy relationships with myself and others. I struggle with co-dependency, so boundaries are important for me.

Today I surrender, asking my Higher Power to release me of my bondage to self so that I can take action directed by my loving HP. Today I trust and rely on my HP to help me through every part of my day. I have the awareness to catch myself today when I try stepping on the merry-go-round of doing the same thing over and over but expecting different results. I can but the brakes on and ask my HP for help and the action I need to take.

Sue S

OA Has Taken Me Back to School – In More Ways Than One

I find, of late, I am in a nostalgia loop. Imagining rosy memories of back-to-school shopping with my boys: new backpacks, pencils, crayons, notebooks, clothes, shoes... Shoes, it is always the shoes that trip me right out of that daydream. I was so anxious and worried from about age 11 to about 16 – would we be able to afford the shoes??

They grew so much it felt like we had to replace them every three months. And I had this thing in my head that they needed all the milk they could drink. We would go to the store two times a week and buy four gallons of milk each time. And I worried about the money. I was right to be worried. During the time my boys were in school, I was very much fully in my addiction. While it looked like, on paper, we had a good budget and could meet our obligations every month, in truth we did not. And I have to own that. I spent money on food: sneaky food, replacement food, reward food, anxiety food and all that spending meant we were never on firm financial ground.

Of all the behaviors surrounding my mental obsession with food as my savior, this was the most damaging to my life, my marriage, our family. Of all of the changes I have embraced over the 12 years I have been in OA, this has been the hardest, and one of the most fulfilling once I had settled into a budget as I had been “promising” to do for 30 years.

As with every change I have made, it took me a long time, and many - too many to count - baby steps forward, giant steps back, baby steps forward again. Recovery is an ongoing onslaught of changes, and I all I ever wanted, as an addict, was a safe place to hide, to not feel, to ride out life without much of it touching me. At the same time I fought daily to have everything I wanted to happen – and happen

on my timeline. I wanted everything and nothing. The tension was unmanageable.

What did I change? I was finally completely honest with my trusted husband. The relief I feel having no secrets, no place to practice my skills at hiding, keeping just enough back that if I need to go “there”, I have the money to do so. The feeling of complete honesty is better than anything I have ever put in my mouth and chewed. I accepted that I could not, and should not, do this alone. If what I wanted was a strong relationship with my life partner, then I had to give it my all – no half measures.

OA gave me all I needed to succeed – a “backpack” full of supplies so that I can be successful.

I had **hope** that I could lean on my **persistence** and follow through – one year and counting! It feels so good to have given my word and have the **integrity** to keep it.

I had **faith** that the principles I have learned, and practice daily (oh so imperfectly) would work, if I asked for help from HP daily.

I **accepted** that I have a problem! And I have enough **humility** to admit that I need help.

I have **courage** to learn new ways and to be **honest** about my struggles around this issue.

I have **patience** with the doubts I had about my ability to stay the course.

I am **willing** to change and take the steps I could take while leaving the outcome alone. It was never mine to control.

I have recently learned that we go through anywhere from 62 to 74 transitions in life. We are always changing; life is ever changing. As an addict, change was to be avoided because if anything changed that “I Was Not In Control Of”, then I may not be able to feed my addiction.

(continued on page 6)

(That's a truth I may have kinda known but I never came right out and said it before!! Maybe this article came my way because it was a truth I needed to say out loud.)

OA taught me a new way of living, gave me the tools I needed to navigate changes – big and small. I will continue to work the steps, learning new things, embracing change, and using all the tools in my backpack to navigate life.

Anonymous



Multiple Service Positions Are Open; Some Applications Due October 30

We have several open service positions within our Intergroup. We are in desperate need to fill these positions to keep our Intergroup running smoothly and to be represented at the Region and World Service organization levels. The following positions are available to serve your recovery community. **Applications must be submitted to our Chair by October 30 at chair@stlouisoa.org**

1. **Board of Trustee Openings** (requires one year of service in Intergroup and one year of current abstinence).

- **Vice Chair**
- **Treasurer**

2. **Region 4 Representative** (requires one year OA membership, six months current abstinence, and regular attendance at group and Intergroup level).

Four positions to be filled.

3. **World Service Delegate** (requires one year of current abstinence, two years service beyond the group level, and active in group and Intergroup for the preceding year).

One position to be filled.

4. **Committee Chair for Fall Retreat 2022** (requires six months current abstinence). **Apply now and start forming your committee.**

5. **Committee Chair for Spring Convention 2023 Celebrating 50 Years in St. Louis** (requires six months current abstinence).

Application forms can be found at our Intergroup website under [Documents and Forms](#).

“We gratefully follow in the footsteps of many others who have walked this way before us, and we’re gratified to be making footprints of our own for others to follow. Those of us who live this program don’t simply carry the message; *we are the message.*” - Step 12: **Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Overeaters Anonymous**

“Just as the aim of each AA member is personal sobriety; the aim of our services is to bring sobriety within reach of all who want it.” - Tradition Nine: **Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Alcoholic Anonymous**



New Intergroup Formed In Region 4 Through Merger

Quad Cities and Heart of Illinois Intergroups have merged and are now known as “Two Rivers Intergroup”. The two rivers are the Mississippi and the Illinois, inspiring the name of the new entity. Our Region 4 leaders say, “They did marvelous work in discussions, merging ideas and combining communities.” Congratulations, Two Rivers Intergroup!



Region 4 Fall 2022 Assembly Convenes Virtually 10/30-11/01

2022 Fall Assembly: September 30 – October 1, 2022 – Virtual (information coming soon)

- REPS: Reach out to admin@oaregion4.org if you aren't getting the Assembly Planning emails. Please sign up online at www.oaregion4.org
- GUESTS: We welcome all curious members, abstinent or not to join our assembly as our guest. There is no cost, no fuss, no travel. You can join in on the fun and sit in on our committees: Campvention, Intergroup Outreach, and the Finance committee.
- Join us for our Friday night icebreaker (aka: FUN) and to hear what's going on in Region 4
- Sit in on our elections and affirmations for the following:
 - Region Chair
 - Region Secretary
 - Region Trustee Liaison
- WINNERS: Winners of our Region 4 Language contest will be chosen. Come and find out what our cool new words and Region 4 slogan will be.



September 9-10 – Two-Day “Festival of Creativity” – virtual – details [HERE](#)

September 11 – Intergroup Meeting**

September 16-18 – Region 5 Convention – “Letting Our Light Shine” - sponsored by Chicago Area Intergroups and held virtually – details [HERE](#)

September 30-October 1 – Region 4 Fall Assembly (virtual – see article on this page)

October 2 – Gratitude Workshop – virtual – sponsored by OA Foot Steps Virtual Intergroup - details [HERE](#)

October 9 – Intergroup Meeting**

November 13 – Intergroup Meeting**

No Intergroup meeting in December

****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.

For more **events** happening throughout the worldwide Fellowship, click [HERE](#).

ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY SEPTEMBER 20, 2022. 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.

The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous with Synonyms

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

9. Made direct

straightforward	forthright	open	honest
candid	sincere	straight	unconcealed
undisguised	unreserved		

amends

apology	compensation	restoration	redress
reparation	restitution	atonement	recompense
expiation			

to such people wherever possible,

doable	feasible	viable	workable
achievable	practicable	attainable	realizable
attainable	viable	workable	practical
reasonable	sensible	plausible	actionable

except

apart from	barring	excepting	other than
excluding	omitting	aside from	with the exception of
not counting	exclusive of	besides	exclusive of

when to do so would injure

hurt	wound	harm	break
damage	smash	crush	disable
shatter	impair	damage	ruin
wreck	weaken	spoil	impair
undermine	break	grieve	torment

them or others.