

October 2022 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA
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STEP TEN

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.



Sometimes, I think of the Twelve Steps as a compilation of the verbs they contain. In order, they are: we admitted, came to believe, made a decision, made an inventory, admitted (again), were ready, asked, made a list, made amends, continued, sought, tried to carry, practiced.

For me, it is important not view Step 10 as simple even though it may seem to read that way. It is especially meaningful because it addresses a basic quandary: What must I do to stay abstinent and live in recovery? While the answer is multi-layered, the first part is essential. I must remain part of the “We.”

Why? Because I must persevere, and, to do that, I need my fellows and the fellowship. On my own, I do not change. In addition, I must maintain fit spiritual condition. I must grow emotionally. After Step Nine, I am not finished. In many ways, my work has just begun.

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Is Your Willpower Like a Vampire – Going Up in Flames in Sunlight?

Twelve Octobers ago I attended an OA meeting because a friend who was a member shared a newsletter like this one and a “Where and When” list of meetings with me. Thankfully, I had “**the gift of desperation**” and was willing to try anything to get out of my hopeless spiral of continuous eating.

Oh, I had good intentions to stop my compulsive eating on my own. During the night, I’d pray for help. I’d promise myself that “Tomorrow will be different! I’ll stay on my diet until I’ve lost all this weight!” (I weighed more than 400 pounds, and my clothing seemed to be tighter every day.)

But my resolve was apparently a vampire because it turned to ashes in the light of day. Driving to work, I’d eat my first breakfast, and then have another from goodies that were plentiful in my workplace. Big meal. Snacking. Big meal. Snacking. Endless repetition. Some days I spent \$40 or more on fast food, hoping something would satisfy my endless craving.

Thankfully, OA offered a proven, workable method that had helped many others. I have not binged since November, 2010. OA has literally saved my life. Read this newsletter and see resources at OA.org to learn how our program may help you as well.

Anonymous



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Step Ten begins with the word “continued.” Coming, as I did, from a diet mentality, this notion confused me. I guess I still thought OA was all about weight and food. And after all, diets have beginnings and ends. They have goal weights, set points, finishing lines, and maintenance. Amazingly, some even include scheduled cheating. And, I was pretty attached to those qualities, even though they confused me and had proved over and over again to be erroneous.

So, with no small amount of kicking and screaming, I admitted my powerlessness, came to believe, and made a decision. Then after imperfectly completing the challenges of Steps Four through Nine and experiencing their blessings, I found myself – kerplunk – face to face with the word “continued.”

Continued implied that I would do something again – and not just once, but unceasingly. And what was that thing I had to keep doing? **Taking personal inventory** – and, no, it was not the inventory of others that I used to enjoy so much. It is my inventory, only mine. And I believe that personal inventory must be as searching and fearless as it was in Step Four. On a daily basis, it covers far less ground, but it is no less important. So, I folded a daily inventory into my schedule before I understood the ways in which it would contribute to my recovery.

Thankfully, the directions are deceptively straightforward - **And when we were wrong promptly admitted it.** Over the years, I’ve had a lot of ah-ha moments regarding these words. I used to think “wrong” meant I had hurt another person or an institution by my words or actions. Of course, this can be part of it, but my current understanding has more to do with the reemergence my defects of character and the resulting behaviors.

On page 84, **Alcoholics Anonymous** (aka the **Big Book**) says, “**Continue** to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear.” When (not if, when) these pop up, three actions are prescribed. First, we ask God to remove them. Next, we discuss them with someone else and make any necessary amends. And, finally, we turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Because I am often too eager to move on from my transgressions, it is important that I remember this third instruction. Remarkably, it is in this very place that the **Big Book** drops one of its most glorious pronouncements: “Love and tolerance of others is our code.”

I find great comfort in the **Step 10 promises**, found on pp. 84-85 of the **Big Book**: “And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! This is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality – safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.”

Anonymous



TRADITION TEN

Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

This tradition could not be timelier than right now. Can you imagine with midterm elections in the U.S. scheduled for November what the conversations might look like around our OA tables right now without this Tradition?

Controversy? That's putting it mildly. Where would our recovery be? How would we feel leaving the meetings? Would we have shared and received "experience, strength and hope" or frustration, fear, even anger? Would we leave with a new resolve for recovery and abstinence, or would we want to forget and dismiss what we so earnestly desire? Might we be tempted to stop at the nearest fast-food place to binge out of negative emotions instead of having a renewed sense of hope and commitment to our recovery?

Tradition 10 ensures that we have every chance at recovery from compulsive overeating. There is no OA without each of us. All of us that are a part of OA are there for one sole purpose: to help the compulsive eater who still suffers.

If OA was connected to a particular political party, ideology, or opinion, many would be turned off and never come into the rooms. OA is about recovery, getting into it and staying in it. Period. And for this, I am very thankful.

(An edited reprint from our 2016 newsletter)



SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS: OA CHANGES LIVES

The Autumn and Winter Holidays No Longer Focus on Baking & Shopping

As autumn is upon us, the days grow shorter and the sun sneaks away and darkness surrounds me. I'm taken back to the days before OA was ever a part of me. I would be giddy with excitement, planning my isolation as I thought of the numerous holidays from October to March and what candies I would buy for my children (me), deciding what goodies I would begin baking for my family (me), and relishing the relief of being indoors and hibernating from people so I wouldn't have to feel their eyes scanning me, judging me, pitying me with utter disgust.

I had my husband and four children convinced I was a martyr as I did all the junk food mania holiday shopping and the frenzied hours baking for them. There was a large discrepancy between the volume of food I consumed secretly, and the meager amounts that was left for my family.

Being a grateful member of OA for 13 years, I no longer have the desire to isolate and feed my food addiction. Today I am committed to being connected to my OA community, and I live in the solution today. I never felt I fit in anywhere. Being connected to fellow compulsive overeaters who understand my disease of compulsive overeating is a miracle!

Staying connected to the OA fellowship, I discovered so many of us had a lot of similar character traits. Among these are fear of abandonment, fear of rejection, fear of failure, harshly judging myself and others, black and white thinking, perfectionism.

Today I share a common problem with so many others: I am a compulsive overeater. But I no longer live in self-imposed isolation.

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Occasionally I have had fleeting thoughts of reclaiming my isolation. That happens when I don't want to be honest with my sponsor, when I'm in denial about intense emotions, and when my pride says I'm fine and dodges suggestions for help.

I have a HP who accepts me just as I am. My HP is a loving and forgiving counselor, who guides me on the right path, further and further from isolation, and to the solution.

The solution is for me to connect me with fellow compulsive overeaters in meetings, in committees I serve on, when I reach out to others with a phone call or text, when I share at a meeting, when I speak at a meeting, when I greet the newcomers, when I share in the OA newsletter. Today I get many opportunities to connect with my brothers and sisters in recovery. Together "we" support one another. I belong and am equal in OA. Being part of the group allows me to slowly open up, trust, and accept help. I find my HP and my recovery. Together we can do what we could never do alone. Welcome home!

Sue S.



No Russian Roulette: Just for Today

Today. A new hello. A new opportunity to be free and to grow and be well and abstinent.

Today. I stumbled upon this goodie I found in a non-OA book. Paraphrasing in my own words, it said that if one is addicted or obsessed, to press aggressively in the opposite direction, detaching from that which harms. I thought to myself, that's what Program has been and is teaching me to do, to press aggressively into "the next right thing", to not play the game of Russian Roulette with the food and emotions, addiction and obsession.

Today. I can pause, I can reach out, I can keep it simple; by doing that next right thing, leaning into the saving graces that are always available. I can be willing to be led. That kind of leading never leads me to use or abuse food or others, myself included. It leads only to the light, to the right.

Today. I remember the phrase I heard at a meeting some time ago: "I don't do that anymore." This is a relief. It means acceptance. It is pressing aggressively in the opposite direction away from addictive behavior and obsession, into wellness, wholeness, peace, harmony and serenity. Into life. It is letting go. It is realizing I don't have to sweat the small stuff and it's all small stuff in the grand scheme of things.

Today. I detach from the darkness that blocks me from the will of my Higher Power, from the sunlight of the spirit.

Today. I say I don't do that anymore!

Today. I am willing. I'm out of the painful game. I'm no longer in the driver's seat.

Today. I'm grateful for having been taught about progress not perfection, for knowing exactly what to do when I miss-step, become imbalanced, disordered, whether physically, emotionally, or spiritually. Grab a tool and do the next right thing.

Today.

Anonymous



Service at Region and World Levels - A Way to “Put My Hand in Yours”

We have some important service roles open for the upcoming year. They are the roles that bring us into our larger community and then link that community to us. When we connect with our OA region and world, we allow them to understand our experience, hope and strength. We share in theirs. We raise our voices and tune our ears so that the consensus of group consciousness can happen throughout the world! It is an awesome and extraordinary opportunity! Service allows the group to enlarge its own sense of community and to share in the recovery of a world of people. It is simple. The details of service are outlined in OA online and in our bylaws. But, to understand the value of what service means, a small explanation is listed below.

World Delegate: World is the level at which OA creates all of its literature, structure, policies and codifies its beliefs into bylaws. It is the nuts and bolts and the broad concept all in one. It doesn't speak to the daily life of the OA culture—it is where we basically create the world of OA. Anyone restricting it to boring rules misses that here is where the organic heart of us is given a body we can see, rely on, and then change as needed.

Region IV Representative: Here is the place where large sections of the OA Intergroup communities (in our case, from a section of Canada through MO) gather to support our commonalities. Here we connect in workshopping new ideas as to what it means to carry the mission, problem solve old problems like keeping newcomers and inspiring our community. We talk of how to take inventories to ensure the health of our Intergroups, how to create vibrant, attractive websites, and how to connect better with one another to help one another out. This is a 12th Step within collaborative effort.

The time and effort spent in this service are for our own personal recovery. And this service makes recovery for so many others more possible. Please consider service for yourself and for our OA fellowship!

Christina D.



Annual Appeal Letter From World Service

It is suggested that our home groups read this letter in three consecutive meetings.

To: Groups and Members of Overeaters Anonymous:

In 2018 the Executive Committee began the process of an annual appeal in order to improve our financial position after a very difficult budget year. 2021 brought us to our highest historical level of contributions ever! These funds are being used to fulfill our primary purpose of reaching the still-suffering compulsive eater through increased availability of our literature in languages other than English and a revitalized public awareness presence. We thank you for all that you are doing for OA.

We anticipate that 2022 will be another sound financial year. However, we are asking that you still consider an extra contribution to continue to help our World Service Office do its best to continue this work. The WSO uses our additional funds to update oa.org, improve Find a Meeting functionality, and establish a Lifeline blog to allow members to share their recovery in a wide variety of formats. This coming year, our Where Do I Start? pamphlet will be available as a free downloadable pdf. All these projects are focused on getting the word out about OA and growing our Fellowship. The WSO and Board of Trustees continue, with

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your help, to keep reaching out to the compulsive overeater/eater.

Your contribution continues to make a difference for Overeaters Anonymous. So, in 2022, we are again sending out the "Annual Appeal Letter." Members may want to donate directly online, oa.org/contribute, remembering to include their meeting number. Any amount will be appreciated, and if you cannot contribute now, we know that you are continuing to support OA in many different ways.

On behalf of your World Service Office and your Board of Trustees, our sincere thanks to each of you for the help in carrying this message, and for responding in such a caring way.

In loving service and gratitude, Board of Trustees Treasurer

After reading at three consecutive meetings, please forward the collective contribution, including your group number to: Overeaters Anonymous World Service Office/Appeal to Groups PO Box 44727 Rio Rancho NM, 87174-4727.

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Intergroup Chair's Column: Sept. Recap; Nov. Preview

Welcome Fall! An exciting change of seasons brings exciting announcements from our Intergroup (IG). OA in the St. Louis IG area will be **celebrating our 50th Anniversary in 2023!** At our September IG meeting, Cyndy L began forming a committee to have a special recovery event to mark this important milestone. This event will provide many service opportunities for our community. Begin talking to your OA friends about how to get involved. Contact Cyndy at cyndydaybyday@gmail.com.

Also, Jeremy C is forming a committee to have a **Retreat in the 2nd half of 2023.** More information about how to get involved will be coming soon.

Both the events will be on the agenda for the upcoming October 9th 1:30 pm Intergroup Meeting and we welcome all visitors. See the calendar of events for the login/dial in info!

We only have two IG meetings left for 2022. How did that happen??!! I guess time flies when you're giving service.

In November, we have our **Annual Business Conference.** We will be electing or re-electing two trusted servants to our Service Board of Trustees, Treasurer and Vice Chairperson. We also need trusted servants for four Region 4 Representatives and two World Service Delegates. Nominations will be accepted until October 30.

A reminder: if you or your meeting wish to submit a Motion for the Business Conference, it is due by October 14. Send to chair@stlouisoa.org. Forms to use for bylaws changes and a variety of other Intergroup business needs may be found at [THIS LINK](#).

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Our Google Ad* Committee reported that between June 16 and September 5 our “ad”* about St. Louis OA was shown over 13,000 times! 755 people went to our webpage to get more information! Of those, 183 went to the meeting information page! Great job, Google Ad* Committee. In October we will be voting on spending additional funds to continue this “ad” during the Holiday Season. (*Note: Google calls them “ads” but we consider use of this tool to be creating awareness about OA, attraction, not promotion.)

Jeremy C chairs an outreach committee. They are visiting meetings to create awareness of what’s happening in our IG. Thanks so much for this important Twelfth Step Within service.

Cyndy L. is interested in starting a new Face-to-Face meeting in the St. Louis Area, since many of our meetings are choosing to stay on Zoom. Anyone interested contact her at cyndydaybyday@gmail.com.

With Gratitude for Service,
Dianne S., Intergroup Chairperson



October 9 – Intergroup Meeting**

October 16 – 2 p.m. - [Holiday Challenges Workshop Series](#), Part 1 – “Scared or Prepared” – hosted by Houston Intergroup virtually

October 23 – 3 p.m. – [“Carrying the Message Workshop”](#) – virtual – hosted by South Sound Intergroup

November 5 – I.D.E.A. Day Recovery Event – 9:30-11:30 a.m. by Zoom (see flyer on page 8)

November 13 – Intergroup Meeting**

November 13 – 2 p.m. – [Holiday Challenges Workshop Series](#), Part 2 – “WE Are Family!”

December 3 – 9 a.m.-Noon – Holiday Booster Recovery Event – “Experience, Strength, and Hope Through the Holidays” – by Zoom (see flyer on page 9)

December 4 – 2 p.m. - [Holiday Challenges Workshop Series](#), Part 3 – “Celebrate or Commiserate?”

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.** It’s also possible to join by telephone: Dial-in: 312-626-6799, meeting ID 940 5580 8391, and password 75183374. 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 OCTOBER 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.

International Day Experiencing Abstinence DAY (just a few weeks early)



St. Louis Bi-State
Area Intergroup



HOSTED BY THE CLAYTON EARLY BIRD GROUP

Questions? Call Christina @ (314) 954-1944

NOVEMBER 5, 2022

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Zoom Meeting ID: 538 040 418

Passcode: 002478

Dial In: 1 (312) 626-6799 (use same ID & passcode)

Come join us to hear a panel of four OA fellows offering their experience, strength, and hope in their journey with abstinence, followed by a Q&A.

\$6 SUGGESTED DONATION

*please never stay away from an OA event for financial reasons
use group number 52794 when submitting 7th tradition donation
<https://stlouisoa.org>*

ST. LOUIS BI-STATE AREA INTERGROUP
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS



Hosted by Sunday Morning Group (St. Mary's)
Questions? Call Cyndy L. 636-538-1331

GET READY FOR GREAT
SHARES AND FUN

December 3 | 9 AM to 12 PM

Zoom Meeting ID: 829 6922 6331

Passcode: 865711

Dial-in: 312-626-6799 use same ID and passcode

\$6 SUGGESTED DONATION
PLEASE NEVER STAY AWAY FROM AN
OA EVENT FOR FINANCIAL REASONS

Step 10. Continued

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inventory

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promptly

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it.