

November 2022 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.

Family discord...the single biggest challenge to working my program of recovery from compulsive overeating.

I want the perfect family, living in complete serenity and unity. This fantastical thinking is not truth with my family. The **AA 12&12** tells us the "first fruit" of Step 11 is emotional balance. In my recent experience with family turmoil, emotional balance was thrown off, discordance running through all of us. My brain immediately leapt into fault finding, blaming, self-pity, selfishness, and fear.

Program and my spiritual experience led me to prayer. Prayer was centered around
(continued on page two)



Are the High Holy Days of Food Insanity Rocking Your World? Check Out OA!

October, November, and December are often times of crisis for persons with compulsive eating issues. So many holidays and events in these months revolve around food!

Overeaters Anonymous has a proven, workable way to recover from addictive food behaviors. Is OA right for you? Take the OA Quiz to gain insight:

- Do I eat when I'm not hungry, or not eat when my body needs nourishment?
- Do I go on eating binges for no apparent reason, sometimes eating until I'm stuffed or even feel sick?
- Do I have feelings of guilt, shame or embarrassment about my weight or the way I eat?
- Do I eat sensibly in front of others and then make up for it when I am alone?
- Is my eating affecting my health or the way I live my life?

For the rest of the Quiz and more resources, go to OA.org.

(continued from page one)

enlightenment of what words to use, when do I talk to them, who do I approach first, etc. After a couple days of this turmoil and unrest, I was told “No” by a small yet authoritative voice. God was telling me to stay still; do not act, do not speak. God told me to wait.

When the family trouble began, I was sure I needed to forge forward and straighten things out. Wasn't I doing it the Program way by praying first, right? Wrong. My spiritual malady immediately set in motion the wheels of destructive thinking as to how I was to solve this problem. I prayed, yes, but I was asking for God to co-sign on my idea of fixing the situation. I was not asking for God's will for me, but how to go about implementing my will in the situation.

Gratitude for this spiritual awareness upends me still today. Waiting. What do we do while waiting for the answer to God's will for us? We do what waiters do...serve. (I borrowed this from an unknown source.) In my waiting, excruciating waiting, I began serving others. I woke each morning, placed myself in the humble position of not knowing what was “the next right thing” and asked to be shown. I sought to be useful each day to those willing to accept help. I served my recovery community. I served those in need of caretaking where I was skilled. I asked my spouse how I can help lighten their load. I visited family in need of uplifting. I stayed the course.

Usefulness during the waiting is wisdom learned from AA: “Possibly today will see a continuation of a serious and as yet unresolved problem left over from yesterday. Our immediate temptation will be to ask for specific solutions to specific problems, and for the ability to help other people as we have already thought they should be helped. In that case, we are asking God to do it **our** way. Therefore, we ought to consider each request carefully to see what its real merit is. Add to each one of them

this qualification: if it be Thy will.” Page 102 **AA 12&12**

The OA **12&12** further teaches: “After prayer...we stop worrying about making a decision right now and we wait while keeping our mind, eyes, and ears open.” How do we know if a thought is God's will versus our own rationalizations? My experience is that if the thought or intuition is accompanied by clarity, peace, calm, and ease, it is more than likely from God. Ideas/resolutions fraught with confusion, anxiety, and distress are of my disease. When I have a sense of calmness, God is working to resolve what I cannot.

Our Higher Power's answers are not always easy to take, but Step 11 instructs us to ask for the power to carry that out. I am powerless over food, my feelings, current events, loved ones, and a host of many other situations. Step 11 brings me to the position of humility where I acknowledge that I cannot change much of the World around me.

Before OA, I lived in ignorance. Today, I'm grateful for being brought out of ignorance through the willingness to learn a new approach to my difficulties. I continue to learn and grow spiritually and emotionally through the practice of 12-Step recovery.

As I practice Step 11 in my life, I learn the humility necessary to lead an authentic spiritual life where God is my author and I merely serve to perform His will. In God's timing, I receive guidance on when, where, and how to deal with others (even family members). I receive wisdom beyond my thinking and ability beyond my power.


When we give ourselves completely to spiritual journeying, we soon realize that God always invites us beyond where we are. I have learned that to pray “thy will be done” means that I must be willing, if the answer requires it, that my own will be undone.

Anonymous



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.



When I first heard this tradition, I confused public relations and promoting. I thought having advertisements or billboards was promotion. Then, I started to understand that getting the word out was public relations, provided that no names or images of people were used. I thought about nationwide diet programs that used celebrities to promote their cause. I thought about all of the times those celebrities fell from their positions when they gave up the program or did something to cause negative publicity.

I started to understand that no one person or group of people should be the focus. I had a sponsor, but they were part of my program, not “the” program. When my first sponsor left the program, I got a new sponsor and became stronger. I knew that my program was rooted in my Higher Power.

Anonymity was another thing I learned more about. I talked to a fellow member and often asked how he worked his program. He made a point of always answering that he was just a bite away from being right back in the disease. He did not want me to put him on a pedestal. I realized that the fall off that pedestal could hurt his program and mine.

When people outside of the OA rooms ask me about what I did to lose weight, I share that I don’t eat sugar. The majority of the time, that stops them. If they continue to ask, I tell them that I have an eating disorder. Then, I explain that I have a binge eating disorder and that I abstain from sugar and other binge foods. If

they persist, I decide if I feel safe to explain about OA and give up that small piece of anonymity. Very few people get that far. Most people have to be as desperate as I was to finally hear my story and enter the rooms of OA. I hope some of them will be ready to surrender the food and work the steps. I have peace with food one day at a time, because I came and stayed and continue to work the steps.

Tami H.

12 Steps to a Slip: Every Slip Has a Beginning

1. Start missing meetings for any reason, real or imaginary.
2. Become critical of the methods used by other members who may not agree with you in everything.
3. Nurse the idea that someday, somehow, you can eat like ‘normal people’ again.
4. Let the other members do the 12th step work in your group. You are too busy.
5. Become conscious of your OA “seniority” and view every member with a skeptical eye.
6. Become so pleased with your own views of the program that you consider yourself an authority.
7. Start a small clique within your own group, composed of only a few members who see eye to eye with you.
8. Tell the new member in confidence that you yourself do not take ALL of the 12 steps seriously.
9. Let your mind dwell more and more on how much you are helping others, rather than on how much the OA program is helping you.
10. If an unfortunate member has a slip, drop them at once.
11. Graduate to the point of no longer needing a sponsor yourself.
12. Look upon a food plan as a vital thing for new members, but not for yourself. You outgrew the need for that.

From Region 4 R4Ward

The Disease Doesn't Take a Holiday: Tips for Staying Abstinent

Metro Memo asked OA fellows to provide tips on how to stay abstinent and connected to God and program during the holidays. Here are some of their responses:

"For the holidays, I find that it's really helpful to plan in advance by asking the follow questions: 'Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?' WHO will I be eating with during the holidays, and will there be there anyone in my company who knows I'm in program? WHO can I text my meal plan to in advance – my sponsor and/or fellows? WHO can I do service for during the holidays? WHAT will I eat for each meal? WHAT foods do I need to bring with me to maintain my abstinence? WHEN will I eat each meal and snack? WHERE will eat- someone's home or restaurant, and how will that affect my food plan? WHY is it important for me to maintain by abstinence? HOW much better will I feel and act if I maintain my abstinence?"
~Sarah S.

"One of the things I practice whenever I see food that is not part of my plan or it is set out in the break room at the office is to say to myself 'That's not my food.' This time of year, I find it becomes especially helpful to keep that in my head lest I start to go down the path of terminal uniqueness, which never ends well." ~Devyn C.

"Make a plan of 'One Plate of Food.'" ~Andy P.

"I plan on continuing my daily recovery routine that I have in place, during the holidays. The disease doesn't take a holiday!" ~Marcia L.

"Do service. As much as possible, whatever comes your way." ~Emily E.

"Focus on the true meaning of the holiday rather than the food. Prepare! Call the host ahead of time and find out what food is being

served. Even people without our disease have food restrictions. Volunteer to bring something that is good for us. Focus on the people rather than the food. Engage in 'real' conversation. Ask them about themselves, their lives and their work ... and really listen." ~Judith K.

"Say the serenity prayer before each meal. Ask HP to guard your abstinence FOR TODAY!!! Use the time between meals to make one call to a fellow OA'er" ~Sarah

"I make sure I email my sponsor daily and call my sponsor often. I do an 11th step daily and really keep my food plan squeaky clean."
~Valia P.

"This last Thanksgiving, I and a group of about 4 to 5 fellows texted gratefuls to each other throughout the day, especially when we were having difficult moments. It helped me to stay connected with fellows, to feel connected to meaning, and to stay focused on positive thoughts without really trying hard. It was a service to each other, and it was wonderful to hear others' real time gratefuls." ~Lorna D

**Published in the Metro Memo – Dec. 2014
(newsletter of Greater New York OA)**

Humor Corner



*(Don't forget: If you spot it,
could be that you've got it.)*

Taking a Deeper Dive into the Steps: Spiritual Principles and the Program

Step 10: Spiritual Principal - Perseverance

Perseverance: Doing something despite difficulty or delays in achieving success. Being persistent despite the difficulty or delays.

“Repetition is the only form of permanence that nature can achieve.” If we are to achieve permanent recovery from compulsive overeating, we will have to repeat, day after day, the actions that have already brought us so much healing. **OA 12&12**, page 69

As we repeatedly act on Step Ten, we begin to see the remarkable way the Steps can, from now on, continue to remove unnecessary turmoil and pain from our lives. **OA 12& 12**, page 74

Step Eleven: Spiritual Principal - Spiritual Awareness

Awareness: Knowledge or perception of a situation or fact; concern about and well-informed interest in a particular situation or development. Awareness is the state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects, or sensory patterns. In this level of consciousness, sense data can be confirmed by an observer without necessarily employing understanding.

Prayer and meditation are our links to this unfailing source. Practiced regularly, they open our lives to the comfort we sought in food but could never find. Through prayer and meditation, we align ourselves with a spiritual Power that gives us everything we need to live to our fullest potential. **OA 12&12**, page 80

Tradition 10: Spiritual Principal - Neutrality

Neutrality: The state of not supporting or helping either side in a conflict, disagreement etc.; impartiality

Many of us suffer from the habit of negative thinking and speaking. We desperately need a positive atmosphere in our OA groups if we are to recover. Thus, we see the wisdom of keeping silent about outside issues in OA meetings. **OA 12&12**, page 153

OA has excitement enough to offer, as we compulsive overeaters recover through the miracle of the 12 steps. This could not happen if we allowed outside issues to turn our fellowship into a platform of debate. For this reason, the Tenth Tradition of having no opinion on outside issues is one of the most carefully guarded practices in OA. **OA 12&12**, page 155

Tradition 11: Spiritual Principal – Anonymity

Anonymity: The condition of being anonymous. Lacking individuality, distinction, or recognizability. The quality or state of being unknown to most people.

“Attraction rather than promotion” is good for us and essential to the OA fellowship. Our individual recovery as well as group unity and effectiveness depend on the unusual type of public relations. The Eleventh Tradition is based on faith in our program and that Power greater than ourselves that guides compulsive eaters to our doors. All we do is let facts about OA and its principles be known. We can depend on our Higher Power and this program to attract those who can benefit by what OA has to offer. When we maintain our Tradition of anonymity, we ensure that OA remains a spiritual fellowship, supporting all of us in our recovery. **OA 12&12**, page 163 (all **12&12** quotes from 1st edition)

Respectfully submitted,
Anne H.

Attitude of Gratitude

I love looking up definitions of words even if I know the basic definition. I'm always looking to see if there's more to be understood.

Gratitude: appreciation, awareness and thankfulness.

Grateful: thankful/appreciative of benefits received; showing or feeling pleasure for comfort supplied or discomfort lessened; pleased.

Several months ago I took a risk and joined a small gratitude group of other compulsive overeaters. The women are from all over, and I only know one of the women personally. Our only interaction is the sharing of our gratitude list daily, and it must have a minimum of five gratitudes. I pushed my fears aside and joined with an attitude of gratitude!

In no time, my daily gratitude list has become a natural habit that I look forward to doing. The other women in the group have no idea how much they have helped me. Today I look forward to the act of recognizing the good things that happen and take the time to appreciate them. It has really changed how I look at life. My outlook is much more positive, and it affects my entire day for the better.

Want to see how it works? Let's get started! I'll list some prompts and what comes to mind for me just now. Consider giving your own answers to these prompts. Some people write in a gratitude journal. (Mine is on my phone.)

***What's gone right, how things have gone better than they could.**

(My husband got a raise. The doctor's office contacted me that I had a credit and sent me a check.)

***Stay in the present moment; don't dwell on thoughts that lead to worrying because that steals your joy.**

(My husband gets my granddaughter 90% ready for preschool so I can attend an early morning OA Zoom meeting four days a week.)

***Take time to notice the little things. Sometimes it's those little things that may impact us the most.**

(The sun is shining brightly on a cool day. I got a great night of sleep. I got a text message from a fellow OA member that they were thinking of me.)

***Be of help to others. Your contribution to be of service to another could completely change another person's day.**

(I sent an outreach text to a fellow member from another state because I hadn't seen her for a couple weeks at our Zoom meeting. She had fallen, was healing, was feeling isolated and lonely, and she didn't know anyone had missed her. I was at the store and a mom was trying to finish her shopping with her children when one of them dropped their stuffed toy by accident. I picked it up and gave it to the mom who told me her child would have been devastated had it gotten lost.)

***Life on life's terms. Life has its ups and downs. It isn't perfect. Things don't go as planned. Slips, relapses, fender benders, missing connecting flights, or a flight is cancelled. Accept them. If we learn from the challenges, then it was worth it.**

(One day I was working, then I went on spring break from the school where I worked food service. COVID-19 was rampant, and I wasn't allowed to return to work the remainder of the school year. During this time, I started babysitting my barely two-year-old granddaughter more and more until she was living with us full time. I took early retirement and went into a two-year relapse because I was in complete denial while my sponsor kept repeating "put the oxygen mask on you first." Two years later I asked and accepted help from my God and sponsor.)

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***Forgive yourself and others.**

(I was abstinent today, but I didn't do my exercise. Awesome! I was abstinent!)

***Do something that makes you happy.**

(I worked on refinishing an oak antique table today. During the winters I am grateful when I can work on sewing a quilt. In the evenings I'm grateful to spend time doing a crossword puzzle. Before bed it's fun to sit with my husband and watch a brief amount of TV and chat.)

November is a great time to begin a daily practice of expressing gratitude. If you are grateful to be on a road to recovery, then it's less likely you will relapse because you are empowered to move forward.

With gratitude,
Sue

**The Journey of the Twelve Steps:
Keep Coming Back!
It Works When You Work It!**

Admitting that we had no ability on our own to stop from returning to behaviors and/or foods that caused us uncontrollable cravings. (Step One)

Having some (maybe a little glimmer, maybe a lot, of) hope that following the path of other recovered compulsive eaters who found the ability to stop from returning to those behaviors and/or foods might give us what they had. Accepting that we all had deep fundamental beliefs that we wanted to live according to, but that in our addiction we had become blocked off from those beliefs. (Step Two)

Accepting the possibility that our real problem was that we wanted everything to go the way we thought it should go, rather than the way it did go or the way it might go, and that we could no longer try to be in charge, because that

simply created more problems than it solved. Committing ourselves to follow a path in which we tried to give up trying to be in control. (Step Three)

Going through a process during which we discovered that our knowledge that the past didn't go our way and the future would probably not go our way (resentments and fears, respectively) created conflicts with others and an inability to live according to our deepest values. This process involved:

- Doing our own self-analysis that revealed our defects of character (Step Four);
- Sharing that analysis with another human being in order to get helpful feedback and a sense of validation (Step Five);
- Accepting that if we continue to live with our defects of character we could not be connected to our deepest beliefs, and therefore being willing to have those defects of character removed (Step Six);
- Committing ourselves to our deepest beliefs so that those defects of character would be removed (Step Seven); and
- Cleaning up, as much as practicable and without harming others, the harms done to other people as the result of those defects of character so that we could dedicate our lives to our deepest beliefs (Steps Eight and Nine).

Realizing that the process of Steps Four through Nine have, at least for the moment, taken away the blockage between us and our deepest beliefs, have removed our defects of character, and that miraculously we are no longer tempted, for the moment, to return to the behaviors and/or foods that caused us uncontrollable cravings.

Keeping our connection with our deepest beliefs by: ***(continued on page 8)***

(continued from page 7)

- Continuing our process of self-analysis and cleaning up any problems we continue to create (Step Ten).
- Dedicating ourselves each day to doing better the next day by reviewing the day that has passed, planning the day that is ahead, giving up control to have things go our way, reminding ourselves whenever we need to that we are not in charge, and realizing that we can trust our intuition to make good decisions (Step Eleven).
- Helping others who share our compulsive eating addiction to journey on the same path that we embarked on in Step One, with passion, commitment, and gratitude (Step Twelve).

Anonymous, a long-time member of OA



Dear Editor,

Recently I was in a meeting where they read Step 11 out of the **AA 12&12**... it contains the 11th Step Prayer.... that prayer has been very complicated for me because part of my dysfunction has been my tendency to take care of everyone else and ignore my own needs ... for the first time I heard something new in the prayer... instead of just looking for hate and despair etc in the world that first of all we need

to look inside for where we carry all of those things in ourselves... so I rewrote the prayer a little... when I read it to someone they suggested I send it to the newsletter...

Step 11 Prayer Revised

“Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace! That where there is hatred, I may seek love. That where there is wrong, I may seek the spirit of forgiveness. That where there is discord, I may seek harmony. That where there is error, I may seek truth. That where there is doubt, I may seek faith. That where there is despair, I may seek hope. That where there are shadows, I may seek light. That where there is sadness, I may seek joy.

Lord, grant that I may bring comfort, because I am comforted. I might understand others, as you have given me understanding. I want to love others, as you have loved me. For it is by seeking you that one finds. I can be forgiving because I'm forgiven. When I die to my own will, I can arise to a new life in You. Amen.”

For today I pray that my life might reflect the heart of my higher power.

Cindy H



Recovery Venn Diagram



Send your Story of Recovery To the New Lifeline Blog!

We are thirsting and hungering for your recovery story. Have you had by-pass surgery? Relapse (maybe more than once)? Abstinent for more than 35 years? Work other recovery programs, but this one really pushed you into the fourth dimension?

How many of us sit in the rooms and are entranced when a newcomer tells their story for the first time – how awe inspiring their courage and vulnerability is? Or the person who had many life twists and turns, plummets and roller coaster climbs - and yet they pushed through their harrowing experience by living the program?

Guess what – that is your story. We want to hear it. Can you sketch it, sing it, mime it, create a dance to it, show a photo montage? Here is another avenue to express the beauty, pain and experience of putting the food down and living our wildest dreams. Send your story in today.

For contributor guidelines and forms to use, go to [THIS LINK](#).

From Region 4 R4Ward



November 5 – I.D.E.A. Day Recovery Event – 9:30-11:30 a.m. by Zoom (see flyer on page 10)

November 13 – Intergroup Meeting**

November 24 – Gratitude Meeting – by Zoom (see flyer on page 11)

December 3 – 9 a.m.-Noon – Holiday Booster Recovery Event – “Experience, Strength, and Hope Through the Holidays” – by Zoom (see flyer on page 12)

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 NOVEMBER 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>*



OA Gratitude Meeting

*Annual Thanksgiving Day
Overeaters Anonymous Meeting
Hosted by the St. Louis Early Bird Group*

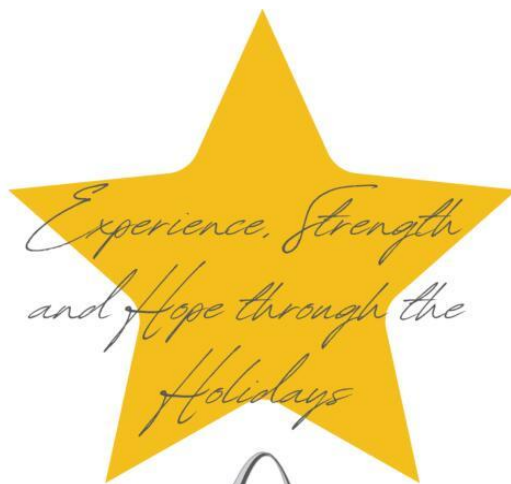
Thursday, November 24, 2022
9:00 - 10:00 AM (Central Time)
Contact: Ruth H. (314) 368-1942
Topic: *Focus on Gratitude*

See you there!

Zoom ID: 538 040 418
Password: 002478



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

The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous with Synonyms

11. 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.

11. Sought

desired	wanted	request	solicit
strive	aim	pursue	go after
seek	chase	quest	search

through prayer

orison	appeal	plea	entreaty
petition	solicitation	supplication	request
invocation	benediction	communion	devotion
imprecation	beseeking	imploration	request for help

and meditation

contemplation	thought	thinking	musings
pondering	consideration	reflection	deliberation
rumination	quiet time		

to improve

ameliorate	better	enrich	help
meliorate	perfect	refine	upgrade
amend	upgrade	enhance	boost
build on	help	raise	revamp
tweak	aid	advance	straighten out
progress			

our conscious

aware	awake	alert	responsive
reactive	alive to	awake to	alert to
sensitive	cognizant	attentive	mindful

contact

proximity	exposure	contiguity	junction
union	tangency	association	connection
communication	intercourse	relations	dealings
connection	correspondence	touch	association

with

beside	amidst	among	alongside
accompanied by	escorted by	in the company of	

God

divine being
spirit
supernatural
absolute being

supreme being
almighty
creator
infinite spirit

deity
idol
icon

divinity
universal life force
maker

**as we understood
comprehend**

discern
decipher
gathered

apprehend
fathom
concluded
made out

grasp
divine
deduced
reasoned

see
interpret
derived
known

Him, praying

asking
requesting
soliciting
adjuring

pleading
begging
imploring
supplicating

petitioning
invoking
beseeching

urging
calling upon
entreating

only for knowledge

understanding
mastery
expertness
information

comprehension
expertise
accomplishment
learning

grasp
skill
adeptness
education

command
proficiency
capability
intelligence

of His will

desire
testament
wanting
readiness
craving
mind
decision
character
power
decisiveness
preference
urge

commitment
intention
inclination
intent
interest
resolution
tenacity
discipline
wish
hankering
self-control
wishes

determination
fancy
aspiration
urge
choice
aim
attitude
intention
resolution
longing
temperament
self-restraint

resolve
might
willpower
appetite
option
purpose
self-command
passion
conviction
pining
self-discipline

for us and the power to carry

convey
bring
move

take
transport
handle

transfer
convey
deliver

move
transmit
give

that out.