

FEBRUARY 2023 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA
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Hope

STEP TWO

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

“You know that it is insane to wish for and daydream about being an insulin dependent diabetic - right? And you also know getting diabetes won’t work with your out-of-control eating - right?”

I had finally gotten the courage to talk to someone, my sponsor from another program, about not only my eating, but also the lying and the stealing that went along with it, plus daydreams of how becoming diabetic might help. I told her that yes, I knew that even if I had to give myself four shots a day as I had fantasized that it would not control my eating, but nevertheless the wishful thinking persisted. She continued talking: “I can’t help you; I know nothing about that kind of eating. You’ll have to go to OA for this. The people there can help you.”

This was my intro to Step 2 before I even stepped into my first meeting. She had given the Step to me in its essence. My eating behaviors were insane and the people in OA were a power greater than me that could restore me to sanity.

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Do You Eat Compulsively? Together We Get Better – Join Us!

.....Under the compulsion to overeat, many of us have done things no sane person would think of doing. We have driven miles in the dead of night to satisfy a craving for food. We have eaten food that was frozen, burnt, stale, or even dangerously spoiled. We have eaten food off other people’s plates, off the floor, and off the ground. We have dug food out of the garbage and eaten it.

.....We have stolen food from our friends, families, and employers, as well as from the grocery store. We have also stolen money to buy food. We have eaten beyond the point of being full, beyond the point of being sick of eating. We have continued to overeat, knowing all the while we were disfiguring and maiming our bodies. We have isolated ourselves to eat, damaging our relationships and denying ourselves full social lives....

Then, horrified by what we were doing to ourselves with food, we became obsessed with diets. We spent lots of money on weight-loss schemes; we....joined diet clubs and fitness centers; we had ourselves hypnotized and analyzed; we had major surgery on our digestive systems; we had our ears stapled or our jaws wired shut. All of this we did willingly, hoping we could still eat all we wanted and be free of the compulsion.

From the OA 12&12, 2nd Ed.

If you see yourself in the words above, OA may be for you. Find a list of meetings [HERE](#).

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I would like to say I went to my first meeting the next day, but it took another month of binging, daydreaming, lying, and stealing for me to obtain both the desperation and the courage to make my way to OA.

It was here with all of you that I learned it was my insane beliefs about food that triggered my insane eating. Beliefs such as:

- Love comes from the oven.
- This time will be different. And
- With just the right diet and willpower, I can lose the weight over a weekend.

At some level I knew all these beliefs were insane, but I fed them with fashion magazines and TV commercials.

At meetings, through your stories of finding freedom, I discovered new beliefs and new tools to use before I took that first compulsive bite. In fact, I had copies of the pamphlet “Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite” in the fridge, atop the stove, in each of the cabinets, in my purse, by my bedside, and by the chair where I watched TV.

Yes, your stories of recovery, the steps, a sponsor, and meetings are restoring me to sanity not only with food, but also restoring my spirit ODAT*.

Anonymous

****One Day at a Time***



TRADITION TWO

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.



An Experience in Humility

I left the first group conscience I attended—it was too stressful to encounter what could become conflict. It was some months before I stayed for a complete session, adding my voice and opinion. I left the meeting discontent because I “knew” the matter and they had none the less chosen a different solution than I offered. I considered it was because I was new and not yet important enough or that I had failed to present my case well enough.

Those two occasions nicely mimicked my life experience in relationships up to that point. It took months to learn how to offer an opinion, allow all voices to be heard, accept the group decision. It was yet longer to fully understand that mere majority vote is not true group conscience. There is a way, with patience, pausing, revisiting, and considering more deeply the concerns of others, to come to a mutual understanding. Consent does not always mean agreement—it does always mean acceptance. And acceptance does not bear resentment (that angry tag we take away that says we were wronged).

Acceptance understands that we are living in humility: We are willing to accept the general beliefs and offered actions, having been heard and considered ourselves, knowing that all have acted in good faith (which allows for individual defects rather than perfection),

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and that we may move forward supporting that decision and action with the full understanding that if there is a defect we discover later in time, we will revisit the issue. That humility brings me into full integrated belonging, active listening, and true supportive interaction with my group. Taking that sense of myself, and the manner in which I learn to behave, and then practice over time, in my group allows me to bring this “me” to my life—my relationships that had been burdened with my previous concepts of needing to be valuable and seen as right or live with my resentment.

Today I practice group conscience in all my dealings with family and personal relationships. To the extent I am successful, I find I have happier relationships and the god of my understanding, responsible always for outcomes, has the space to grace my life with gentle interactions and good outcomes!

Christina D.



Healing One Day at A Time

My husband and I both got sick the week before Christmas with the flu and then - to ring in the New Year - we both developed sinus infection. My husband had a very severe case of the flu, making him very ill.

Early in January he was diagnosed with pneumonia. By the third week in January, he was still coughing nonstop and was feeling depressed from being sick for so long. He was not released to go back to work until February.

Throughout all of this I discovered once again my disease of compulsive overeating is powerful, cunning, and baffling.

My husband lost 20 pounds in 20 days, and I was **jealous**.



I took it personally that he was trying to punish me, so he remained sick.

I was angry my husband got sick and then made me sick so I couldn't enjoy the holidays with our family.

The past five years my husband has done 95% of the grocery shopping. I kept trying to will him to get better so I didn't have to grocery shop. I get tempted and triggered shopping for groceries, and I felt I was being punished for my deplorable attitude.

I believed my husband was trying to show me how easy it is to lose weight, and I wasn't exerting enough will power.

I told myself my he didn't like conversing with me anymore, so remained sick.

I told myself I needed my husband's time and attention to be worthy.

I made my husband's favorite meals and then acted sorry for myself when he only ate a few bites.

I blamed my husband for my fear when things didn't go my way and he continued to be sick. I couldn't control my husband's illness,

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recovery, weight loss so I would ignore him hiding out in my work room with my granddaughter doing activities with her.

My husband's coughing fits made me have horrible thoughts of wanting to end the cough for him.

All of the crazy, insane thinking was my intense fear and it put me in panic mode. I was petrified of losing my husband. It brought up childhood issues of abandonment; the fear of losing a loved one, and who would take care of me. I had food obsessions and cravings night and day. Thank goodness we had little food in the house because I was constantly standing in my kitchen looking. My fear caused me to try to force him to get up and move his body, caused me to be angry that he wasn't getting better, and I kept searching the kitchen for food, knowing that only exacerbated the problem and put a wedge between me and my HP.

The solution for me is in the OA 12 steps and 12 traditions. Thank goodness for sponsors, meetings, literature, outreach calls and texts, and meditation. There are many more tools, but these were my life line to keep me on the right path. I had a few slips, but it did not send me into battle with myself, torturing myself with shame and guilt. My HP heard my simple prayer many times throughout a day calling out, "help me". I always got exactly what I needed from my loving parent. Sometimes in the moment I didn't think it was what I needed. As I reflected back each evening my HP was with me every step, and loves me beyond my wildest dreams even when I don't feel worthy.

My sponsor kept telling me to call her as often as I needed with my wild and crazy thoughts, to give them to her so I wasn't giving in to food. Recently I heard in a meeting that when I give away those thoughts I'm taking away their power. I may

have heard that before, but at that moment it was an "aha" moment and one I will more readily do because it feels so powerful and cleansing to release crazy thoughts and feelings that don't serve me today. They are not my reality today. My reality today is I'm living in recovery one day at a time.

Sue S.



News from Region 4 And OA World Service

Virtual Region is providing a **Social Media Training** event on Sunday, February 5. This training will focus on creating pages, post, paid posts, ads, reels, and messaging newcomers. Want to sharpen your skill set, click on the link for more info. Two times (9:30-11:30 a.m. Central or 2-4 p.m. Central). To sign up, go to [THIS LINK](#).

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There is a quarterly Service Body bulletin posted at WSO for your service body. To subscribe, go to [OA.org](#) and tab down to "**Let's Keep in Touch**" on the main page. Thanks! If you are no longer the contact, please update this information with the World Service Office or email Lorie, group registration coordinator, for help at [llaurence@oa.org](mailto:llaurence@oa.org).

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"Where Do I Start?" - This is our fabulous Newcomer pamphlet. Please have some on hand for your newcomers for your Face-to-Face meetings. Another great option is to order one online for your virtual newcomers. It's easy, and it's available in 20 languages!! Please follow this link for all of the options: [Where Do I Start](#).

CELEBRATE – GOOD TIMES - COME ON!! IT'S A CELEBRATION

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup is celebrating 50 years of Overeaters Anonymous in the St. Louis area. Please come join your OA family and share gratitude and recovery with us.

Some things are just too important to let go by without notice. Fifty years of OA is one of them. We have members who went to those early meetings, and they are still around to tell about it. There are new members who need to hear that recovery becomes a part of your life and that it works as long as you keep coming back. There are also those of us who need to meet some newcomers to help us remember why we came in the first place.

All of these are reasons to join us on March 18th at the Maryland Heights Recreation Center for up to twelve hours of fun and frivolity as well as deep sharing and reconnection. We'll offer real live hugs if you want them. We'll have the opportunity to laugh and cry together in the same space – such a gift! We all need to be with others sometime. Make this date one of those times on your calendar.

Lunch and dinner are included with the registration fee of \$60 (and We Care funds are available for those with financial challenges; never let money keep you away from a recovery event). There will be an out-of-town speaker to share their story as well as many hours of program with our local members catching us up on the past couple of years. The day will end with a couple of hours for dancing and conversations with old friends.

We all share the same disease. What better way to reignite our desire for recovery than a day with those with whom we have trudged the road of happy destiny over the years?

From the 50th Celebration Committee



February 12 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting**

February 26 – Unity Day Recovery Event – virtual – see flyer on page 6

March 12 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting**

March 18 - 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. - 50th Anniversary Celebration - Maryland Heights Community Center, 2300 McKelvey Road 63043 (see flyer on page 7 & 8)

October 27-29 – Fall Retreat - Toddhall Retreat Center, Columbia, IL (see flyer on page 9)

****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 February 20, 2023. Please send your submissions to the OA TODAY Editorial Staff 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.

Overeaters Anonymous Unity Day 2023

“Unity in Diversity”

Hosted by Trusted Servants from the St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup

Sunday, February 26, 2023 – 2-3:30 p.m Central Time

Zoom Meeting #: 814 3323 2892 | Passcode: 482966 | [LINK](#)

One OA perspective: “No matter how separate I feel, no matter that I think no one will really understand my special circumstances. I'm too young, too old, too straight, complicated, smart, shy, foreign, or just a guy... It's this very variety of our membership which enriches us all. Just as it is weakness, not strength, which binds us together, so it is diversity, not uniformity, which expands our understanding and compassion for everyone in the rooms of OA. I thank my Higher Power that this is so, or I might not find the courage to share and to reach out to newcomers. Listening is a skill I have not perfected, and so the opportunity to listen across a wide range of perspectives offers just the practice I might need.” (From an anonymous OA member)



Suggested Donation: \$6, but no one should stay away for financial reasons. All are welcome. To donate online, go to <https://stlouisoa.org/?product=7th-tradition/>. Or mail checks to: St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup, P.O. Box 28882, St. Louis, MO 63123-0082. For more information, contact Debbie K at 636-634-6201. (Unity Day is officially at 11:30 a.m. local time on the last Sunday of February in odd numbered years. Please pause at 11:30 to feel your connection to the worldwide fellowship.)

Maryanne S. held the first OA meeting in the St. Louis Bi-State area in 1973!

50 Years!

We're Celebrating Together

SATURDAY MARCH 18, 2023

9:30 am to 9:30 pm

Maryland Heights Community Ctr.
2300 McKelvey Road 63043
Handicap accessible

Together we get better!



**OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS**
St. Louis Bi-State Area
Intergroup

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT:

- Face to Face Fellowship
- Reunite with Good Friends
- Out of Town Speaker
- Full Day Recovery Program
- Literature Sales
- Abstinent Lunch & Dinner Included
- Evening Dance
- Optional Hugs & Hand Holding

The Details!

ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Full package including two meals* **\$60**

Everything but the meals **\$35**

**Catered buffet lunch: Variety of salads; proteins, dressing and starch served separately; coffee, tea, water*

**Catered buffet dinner: Two protein choices, plenty of vegetables, salad, fruit, starch; coffee, tea, water*

Choose One of Three Ways to Register



1 ONLINE: Register and pay at: stlouisoa.org

2 By CHECK: Send completed registration form and check to:

Marina Fruth, 14644 N. Court #6, Effingham, IL 62401

(make check payable to St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup)

3 With SUPPORT: Please call to make arrangements

We really want you come so we can celebrate this anniversary together! If the cost of the event doesn't work for you, please allow us to make this obstacle go away.

The We Care Fund will anonymously pick up all or part of the fee.

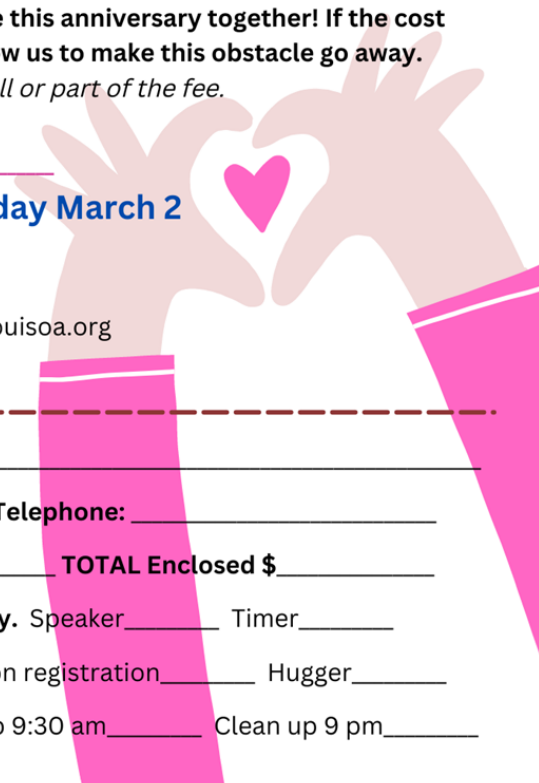
Contact Marina F. 815-343-6412

Registration deadline: Midnight Thursday March 2

No refunds will be available

General Questions?

Call Debbie K. 636-634-6201 or email: info@stlouisoa.org



First name: _____ Last name: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Registration: \$ _____ We Care Donation: \$ _____ TOTAL Enclosed \$ _____

WILLING TO GIVE SERVICE? Please check all that apply. Speaker _____ Timer _____

Hospitality _____ A.M. registration _____ Afternoon registration _____ Hugger _____

Literature sales _____ Where needed _____ Set-up 9:30 am _____ Clean up 9 pm _____

Save the Date
October 27-29, 2023

EMBRACE THE
"SPIRIT OF RECOVERY"
FALL RETREAT

TODDHALL RETREAT CENTER
COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS

MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW
WWW.STLOUISOA.ORG



**St. Louis Bi-State
Area Intergroup**