

# March 2023 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA  
P.O. Box 28882, St. Louis, MO 63123  
info@stlouisoa.org, www.stlouisoa.org  
Phone: 314-638-6070



---

## STEP THREE

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

---

On the surface Step Three might appear to simply make a declaration; however, when breaking the step down, it becomes a very necessary aspect of our recovery. Step Three basically requires a mental response.

To make a decision there has to be deliberation in one's mind to resolve a particular dilemma. We have deliberations in our minds often to resolve various matters at hand. It can be as mundane as, "Should I go to the cleaners before work or after?" or the more serious, "Should I have this surgical procedure now or wait until a couple of months?"

In Step Three, the deliberation is: Should I turn my will and life over to the care of God or not? How this deliberation plays out in one's program of recovery varies, but at the crux of the matter is "Will I have the faith that this

*(continued on page two)*

## NEWCOMERS CORNER: IS OA RIGHT FOR YOU?

### ***What does OA offer?***

A way out of misery, guilt, and shame around food. You no longer have to carry the burden alone. Society may say that if you had a little more willpower, you could do this on your own. But compulsive eaters react differently than normal eaters to food. For us, there is no such thing as just one bite. If that feels like the way you interact with food, learn more about the OA way.

### ***How is OA different from other weight control/weight loss/eating disorder programs?***

We offer unconditional acceptance and support through OA meetings. We in OA believe we have a threefold illness—physical, emotional, and spiritual. Tens of thousands have found that OA's Twelve Step program affects recovery on all three levels.

The Twelve Steps embody a set of principles which, when followed, promote inner change. Sponsors help us understand and apply these principles. As old attitudes are discarded, we often find there is no longer a need for excess food.

Those of us who choose to recover one day at a time, practice the Twelve Steps. In doing so, we achieve a new way of life and a lasting freedom from our food obsession.

[From Frequently Asked Questions](#), OA.org

*(continued from page one)*

higher power will direct my life in a manner that is better than how I have managed it, and will I be satisfied with the outcome?"

In a real sense the deliberation has been settled when we are ready to take Step Three. We have made the decision in an affirmative that "Yes! My Higher Power can do a better job in directing my life!"

Let's describe another part of Step Three: Our will and life. This can be expressed as how we wish to operate, what we want to accomplish on a daily basis, and how we construct our plans for the present and the future.

It is easy to think of "turning our will and life over" as it relates to food. We want our higher power to direct what we eat, how much we eat and repel us from food that is not on our food plan. However, think of your will as your personal cultural context or, in other words, your values, belief system, and attitudes that define who you are. From this perspective it is much more than food; it's how you interact with your world.

I made a decision to turn over all these areas over to the care of God (care defined as to look after and to provide for one's needs). The beautiful aspect of Step Three is that you can simply come as you understand your higher power.

Dwayne S.



## TRADITION THREE

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



I attend a home meeting where a speaker offers their experience, strength, and hope each week regarding one of the Steps and one of the Traditions. I always get excited when it's time for Tradition Three. When "The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively" is read, I want to stand up, pump my fist in the air, and yell "I'm in!"

For much of my life, being "in" – belonging – has felt like an impossible dream. Like so many others in the program, I often felt lonely as a child, like an outsider. I sometimes felt awkwardly different from my parents, that they embarrassed me and that I embarrassed them. At school, I was never popular, and there were kids who felt free to tease me as "Fatso" during physical education or recess.

Discovering that I am of a minority sexual orientation as a teenager increased the feeling of being an "oddball." I'd heard the insulting words that classmates said about my best friend, an effeminate skinny boy (who came out to me recently as a transwoman in her senior years). It didn't seem safe to share my sexual orientation with anyone in my high school, even that persecuted best friend – until years later.

But within the OA fellowship, I receive assurance during each meeting that I am as welcome as any other person in the room. (I also am reminded that I am not more welcome than any other person in the room, but that's not the focus here.) I hear the

***(continued on page three)***

*(continued from page two)*

enthusiastic reception immediately in “Our Invitation to You” which ends with:

***“If you decide you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms. Whatever your circumstances, we offer you the gift of acceptance. You are not alone anymore. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home!”***

But I especially hear that I belong when Tradition Three is read. Compulsive eating has been a living hell for me, and I do indeed desire to stop. Therefore, I am in! I don't have to pay a membership fee. I don't have to have a food plan that has received the stamp of approval of the Intergroup Board of Trustees. I am even welcome if I relapse and am struggling to regain abstinence. There is no minimum or maximum weight requirement or pecking order among our eating disorders.

My favorite line in the Tradition Three chapter of **The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous** (Second Edition) is: “The purpose of Tradition Three is to ensure that the road will always be accessible to all who wish to travel it.”

If there were hoops to jump through to belong to OA, it could have deadly consequences. We must remember that many find OA at a time when they are contemplating suicide because their eating disorder has so thoroughly crushed them. An OA meeting is a matter of life or death. It is a lifeboat for all of us because our addiction is so powerful, cunning, and baffling.

So let us celebrate the wisdom of Tradition Three. There is only one requirement for membership in the fellowship. I have no doubt that I belong.

Anonymous



## **New Meeting Announcement: Coming to Wentzville on March 17**

A new OA meeting is starting in our St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup! The first meeting is March 17, and it will repeat weekly on Friday evenings at 7 p.m.

The location is the larger room downstairs at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 405 S. Church Street. For more information, contact Elizabeth C. at 215-932-0951.



## **Announcements from World Service**

A list of interesting and new resources can be found at [News & Events - Overeaters Anonymous \(oa.org\)](#) Examples include (among many others) the new “Twelve Traditions Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous”, a new ‘To the Man E-book’, and a downloadable document that may be of interest to those attending meetings on Zoom. (See below)

New from World Service: [Videoconference Meeting Training and Security/Preventive Measures](#) This document includes suggestions for volunteer roles, platform-specific features, training, and security. Click on the link or find it from the Document Library under “Meeting Resources” and start sharing it with your virtual groups. Let's give members and newcomers a place to find recovery through the OA Twelve Step problems.

## The Flowers Are Waking Up – And So Am I!

Spring is upon us. All my spring flowers are awakening. They are pushing their way through the soil to blanket my flower gardens with their beautiful array of colors.

I've had a spiritual awakening as a result of the OA recovery program. I used to believe that I was very different from everyone. As a child growing up, I felt so strangely different from my siblings and parents. I remember once telling a friend I was adopted.

At the time I truly felt like an outsider looking in at my family. I was sure my metabolism didn't work like everyone else's. I absolutely knew God was punishing me for being a glutton, a horrible daughter, selfish wife, and mother.

What I discovered: I am a compulsive overeater, and I didn't have to eat compulsively.

Early on I also learned compulsive overeating is an equal opportunity illness. It does not discriminate – is not restricted to race, creed, or geography. Thus, this released me from the bondage of my uniqueness.

I have no excuses to stay stuck in my disease. No matter what's going on in my life, even:

- my own son's struggle with drug addiction and the toll it's taking on his life
- raising our almost 5-year-old granddaughter for the past three years
- being in mediation with our granddaughter's mother who is mentally ill and an addict
- accepting we will most likely be raising our granddaughter as retired older adults

All of those things and feelings happening in my life; the joys, heartache, day-to-day life events are calling, beckoning, pleading, begging, coaxing me to pick up the food. If I pick up the food, I may plunge down that rabbit hole never to dig my way out. No matter what is or isn't happening in my life today, I must focus on not picking up the food and connecting with my HP. There will always be an ebb and flow of life, but my reaction to it does not require me to pick up food to put in my mouth today.

My abstinence isn't contingent on how my day is going. My disease will always invite me to eat. I am not my disease. My disease is relentless. The only way out of it is through my HP.



I am not God. I have proved to myself time and time again that my way doesn't work. "My way" meant me going it alone, keeping secrets, denying my feelings, isolation, resentments, fears.

My journey in OA has been a process of one step forward, two steps back. I've come to realize this past year, as I have emerged from a two-year relapse, that I must embrace the "we program". To protect my abstinence, there are some things I must do today – with others, because this disease is cunning, powerful, baffling.

I attend meetings. I listen to the shares of others and what has helped them in their recovery. I reach out to other members with a text or phone call. I do that because it is easy for me to get focused only on me and my life.

***(continued on page five)***

*(continued from page four)*

My HP pushes me, an introvert, to connect with others. I still struggle to give service, but it's happening more often in little ways.

My HP is hard at work with me, and I am grateful to be here today. Today there is no limit what my HP and I can do together. May I bloom where I am planted. Today my God provides me with everything I need for this day. Today I can be honest, open, and willing.

Sue S.



## **Recovery and Diversity Displayed At February 26 Unity Day Event**

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup hosted a Unity Day recovery event on Sunday, February 26 using an online platform. Nearly 40 OA's from across the U.S. (CT, MO, CA, TX, etc.) and Canada (Toronto) came to all or part of it, with the top attendance at any one time being around 30.

The format for the event was three panels of two speakers that demonstrated some of OA's broad diversity:

- A person who had grown up in/still participates in a community of faith and an atheist who prefers to attend "secular OA meetings"
- A heterosexual woman whose husband is also a member of the fellowship and a member of the LGBTQ community
- Two men, one European American and one African American, both of whom have often found themselves the only males in our OA rooms

Each panel was followed by shares by attendees and the opportunity to ask

questions of the speakers. A diversity of compulsive eating disorders and food behaviors was also illustrated in what was shared: binge eating, bulimia, restricting, exercise addiction, and more.

Remarkable physical recovery was reported. Some speakers had lost more than 100 pounds. Some stopped taking or reduced their blood pressure medicines or changed their health status related to diabetes.

One of the takeaways from all six speakers was how important it is for our members to be able to tell the truth about their own lives with their sponsors and when sharing in meetings. Several of the members had attended special focus meetings (meetings for men, for the LGBTQ community, etc.) where they found it easier to discuss some topics.

Speaker after speaker noted: "I always felt like an outsider." The OA welcome was a new experience for some. Some also noted they had formed friendships with people who were quite different from them due to the bonds forged by addiction and recovery.

As the event ended, we committed to continue to "put my hand in yours" by reciting the words of the OA Promise.

**Heard at the Unity Day event:**

***I could relate to every one of the speakers in some way.***

***I needed to get well. I couldn't get well when I was putting parameters on that healing.***

***As a man, I'm thankful for what I've learned from women in my OA meetings. In my experience, women share at the basement level; men are on the third floor.***

***This was truly an event that touched my spirit.***

Editor





**March 3-5 - Virtual Region Convention** - a huge virtual event, with multiple tracks and multiple languages, with interpreters. For more information and the [flyer](#) see [oavirtualregion.org](http://oavirtualregion.org).

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

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

**March 24-26 - Region 4 Spring Assembly**, in person. Johnston, Iowa. Hosted by Central Iowa Intergroup. For more information and the [flyer](#) see [oaregion4.org](http://oaregion4.org), R4 Business, Assembly.

**May 7 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

**June 11 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

**July 9 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

**September 10 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

**October 8 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

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

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

**\*\*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 March 20, 2023.** 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.

*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](http://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.*

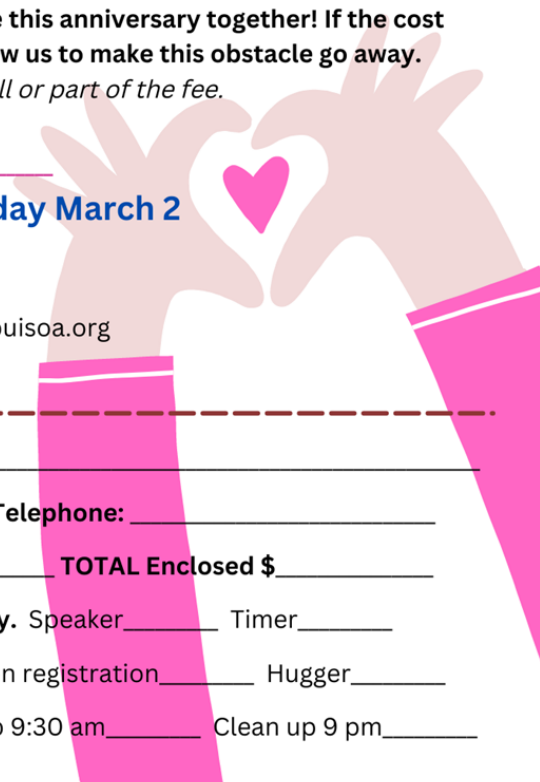
**Contact Marina F. 815-343-6412**

### Registration deadline: Midnight Thursday March 2

**No refunds will be available**

**General Questions?**

Call Debbie K. 636-634-6201 or email: [info@stlouisoa.org](mailto: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**