

# FEBRUARY 2024 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 TWO

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

Easy to say, but it took considerable kindness, honesty, and exhaustion for me to realize that I had no idea what it meant. I didn't believe ANYTHING except that I was fundamentally alone and in trouble. Trouble was the Power greater than myself, and Sanity was avoiding it.

My therapist sent me to an OA meeting in 1987 over my strong and logical objections. I did not want to go, but I was so tired. I wanted out of the trap of self-talk and misery. I wanted a hug and a good night's sleep. And honestly, that was my first willingness to change.

But really!! CONCEPTS OF GOD!!??

Seemed a little ostentatious to me. I got a sponsor who stuck to the literature. Across all the literature, the message is consistent: it works when you work it.

*continued on page two*

## Do You Do the Same Thing.... Over and Over Again.... And Expect Different Results?

*This morning, I watched out the window as a bird repeatedly attempted to fly from the ground up into a small artificial tree located just on the other side of the glass inside the building. It continued to do this for more than ten minutes until someone walked up to the glass, and it flew away.*

*This bird reminded me of how I can act in my disease. I can keep doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results. So many times, I think that if I try hard enough, it will eventually work. I am often incapable of recognizing my insane behaviors on my own, and I continue them until someone or something arrests my behavior like the person did for the bird.*

by Chris  
and published in **Lifeline** at [THIS LINK](#)  
along with an illustrative video

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



*continued from page one*

**AA 12 & 12** pages 26-27 - "How DOES a fellow "take it easy?" Here's a summary:

First, AA does not demand that you believe Anything!

Second, to get sober and stay sober you don't have to swallow all of step two right now.

Third, all you really need is a truly open mind.....The minute I STOPPED ARGUING, I could begin to see and feel. RIGHT THERE, Step Two gently and very gradually began to infiltrate my life.

WOW. I had imagined I HAD an open mind! I imagined if everyone defined their own God, there would be no rules!! I had taken Everything so personally! Now that I have a longer perspective, I can report that Not One sponsee has said "I want my God to make me rich, skinny and popular." That old concept got me here; I had to let go of that.

### **OA 12 & 12 page 15**

"We became willing to let go of any concept about God that wasn't helping us recover from compulsive eating....once we became willing (to do it) surprising things began to happen. For ALL OF US, coming to believe was something that happened as we began taking actions that others told us worked for them.....then we tried other suggestions and our lives began to be transformed."

"That is no joke. I still face the fact of my physical addictions and my busy mind, but I face these facts with new ideas, new tools and a new relationship with my HP. In this new and right relationship, a relationship, I am not punished for being me. God says "it's okay, I'm Here, get some rest."

Thanks Everyone, for letting me share.

Andrea  
Overeater, food restrictor, addict



## **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.**



*Note: The principle of Tradition Two is TRUST.*

It has been a couple of years since I read this tradition. I had thought that I would be mostly talking about God. Upon reading, however, this tradition is more about groupwork, than god-work. I will encourage everyone to go to your **12 & 12** and read it before your next group conscience. It is a wonderful primer in how – in my humble opinion – all groups could work, if we only could as a human species, rid ourselves of the “win or lose” mentality. There is so much in there I marked up half the chapter! I will highlight some of the best bits though.

Let's talk a minute about God. I recently had a conversation with an addict – not food – however, the principles are the same. They were asking advice about a work issue, and the overwhelming anxiety they had about 1) having the conversation with their boss, and 2) the probable outcome of that conversation. I shared that while they may not be physically using, there is more to any 12-step program than not using and suggested that finding a meeting or several might be a good next step.

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Not using is the least of what I have been gifted through this program. They responded that “it had too much GOD in it, too religious.” So, I shared about anxiety and about the role of GOD in the program – as I have come to rely on and understand in my own heart. I know to lean in when facing situations that may induce anxiety.

Anxiety can reflect fear that the outcome in the future may not be what we would want it to be. This was such a hard one for me to learn. I have come to TRUST that regardless of any experience I have in the future, HP will be at work in it somehow to produce healing and wisdom. (Read pg. 417 in **The Big Book** – first full paragraph starting with “And acceptance is the answer to ALL my problems today.”) I try to surrender to the knowledge – or act as if – that whatever my circumstances, that is exactly the reality that I am in. Denial gets me no place. HP is at work, even here - to bring me to a better place than I could ever imagine.

Surrender is a willful acceptance, a choice we make to choose life, to choose not to fight anymore. To relax into the program and realize that, between our actions and the support of your HP, we will make good progress.

In OA, we define our own Higher Power. I had a real barrier up to certain religious tones or “churchiness” when I first walked in the door. This came from many life experiences with the humans that represent those institutions, not the ideals of the religion, but I knew that finding an HP that would work for me in that area would likely be a non-starter. A fellow traveler explained that HP is just a concept that is BIGGER THAN ME. Okay, that is a good place to start. I started off with the program, and my HP has morphed into a Program/Nature/Universal Energy being that I talk to every single day. Multiple times a day.

There is gratitude and Serenity in the space where we commune.

G.O.D can be many things: Good Orderly Direction, Gift of Desperation, Grow Or Die, (in AA) Group Of Drunks, (in NA) Getting Off Drugs, Great Omnipotent Designer or Great OutDoors. There are as many different HPs as there are people in our program and all our 12-step fellowships.

To end the anecdote, the person still wants to believe in control and is not ready to let go of the boomerang of anxiety and depression. I hope I was able to plant a seed. The outcome is up to that individual and HP.

Now, groupwork! Here are some highlights.

- Each group decides how often they hold a group conscience and how it is conducted.
- Group conscience is not majority rule. Everyone is allowed to speak and express their views on the issue and strive to be guided by the principles of the program, rather than self-interest. We put the wellbeing of all above any “win” we may feel if our proposal is accepted. We all win when everyone is heard with respect and when we place the wellbeing of the group before our pride. Remember, none of us knows everything, there is always something to be learned listening openly to our fellows.
- We make mistakes. That is okay. We can have the discussion again. What a beautiful human thing that is. We make mistakes, and we can learn and grow, and change our direction! We get to practice letting go of perfectionism!

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- We rotate service. This is important so that each member can practice, in the safety of the rooms, how to give service and learn to place others and the group before self. Service is a place where we can get out of our head - which is often not the safest place for any addict. I know mine isn't. Think you don't have anything to give? I did. Guess what – we are each a unique human with a whole life's worth of experience. Share yourself. This is a great place to come out of hiding.

For me, this tradition has served as a jumping off point in my own family and I have taught my family members about “everyone speaks, we all listen, questions are encouraged, then we all make a decision”. I truly wish I had known about this before my children were grown. However, my grown children now use this technique themselves. Program is best when shared, the recovery just grows so beautifully.

Melanie T.



## **Feb. 11 Intergroup Meeting Includes Two Important Topics**

In the January 2024 **OA Today** newsletter, the St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup (IG) announced that home meetings should have a group conscience about what new Region our Intergroup IG should join since Region 4 is dissolving. This was to prepare IG Representatives to vote at the March Intergroup meeting, but now Region 4 has moved up the decision date. This means Intergroup will be voting on this important matter on February 11.

Home meetings are encouraged to have a group conscience on this matter as soon as possible. Your Intergroup Representative or an alternate will have the opportunity to share

the leaning of your meeting and vote on the consensus proposal. To find a chart comparing what Regions 1, 3, 5, and 6 can offer to our IG, go to **page 8** of the [January newsletter](#).

In addition, feedback on the World Service Business Conference [Agenda Questionnaire Summary](#) is due from Intergroups by March 7, so this will also be discussed and voted upon on February 11. Often our IG's Board of Trustees offers a “consent agenda” on some items that do not seem controversial, with a chance for pro and con voices to be heard on a few items where a strong diversity of opinions may be present.

Decisions on these issues are one of the ways Overeaters Anonymous practices “bottom-up” decision making instead of utilizing a “top-down” hierarchy. When home meetings send a representative to Intergroup to help make decisions that go beyond our home meetings for the sake of reaching still suffering compulsive eaters, we are practicing Tradition Seven. We are part of the group processes that are necessary to allow OA to be “self-supporting.”

Materials are sent out to IG Representatives (IR) and elected trusted servants before each Intergroup meeting. If you want to know more, speak with your meeting's IR or a member of the [IG Board of Trustees](#).

Editor





## Tool of the Month: Sponsorship

According to [a helpful factsheet](#) on the OA.org website, as we work the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program of recovery from compulsive eating, we have a number of Tools to assist us. We use these Tools—a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature, action plan, anonymity, and service—on a regular basis, to help us achieve and maintain abstinence and recovery from our disease. This month we highlight Sponsorship.

Sponsors work one-on-one with another compulsive eater sharing what works for them, walking alongside their sponsees. They use and share OA [Tools](#) and slogans, study, work and apply the [Twelve Steps](#) and [Twelve Traditions](#), and offer support when it's needed. This connection—to Higher Power, to spiritual Principles and practices, and to other recovering OA members—is a crucial part to recovery.

An anonymous OA shared this story in *Lifeline*, and it is available on the OA website at [THIS LINK](#):

I have been abstinent fifty-seven days and am currently working on Step Three. Having a sponsor has been a vital part of working my program.

For me, being sponsored was the critical element...in my starting the [Steps](#). I would

not be able to work the Steps without my sponsor giving me questions to work on and apply to me personally. I would not be able to open my mind without my sponsor challenging my answers or sharing theirs. Without their guidance, I would not know what or how to prioritize.

Between sponsor and sponsee there exists a unique relationship. I talk daily with my sponsor, which I do with no one else. I am completely honest with my sponsor, without fear of judgement, in a way I can be with few other people.

A sponsor is responsible for their own recovery. To help them solidify and grow their experience, they can choose to share with a sponsee their experience of successfully working and implementing the program. They are not responsible for the willingness of a sponsee. They are not responsible for making judgements or advising on a sponsee's personal life. They are not responsible for a sponsee's actions, nor for that sponsee's implementation of the program.

I like it that sponsor-sponsee relationships require a great level of openness and trust and can last for long periods of time. They are two-way channels that benefit both parties, and these relationships can develop into "families" as the sponsee, in turn, becomes a sponsor.

Sponsors are a critical part of continuing to carry the OA program to the still suffering and into the future.

*Did you know that OA celebrates a Sponsorship Day? It is observed the third full weekend (Friday included) of August, and is set aside to acknowledge the importance of sponsoring in our Fellowship. If you have questions about sponsorship, consult this [nine-part podcast](#).*

Compiled by newsletter editor





## Surviving Valentine’s Day

Here we are!! It’s February! The month of LOVE!

Valentine’s Day is coming. The stores are full of “goodies” just waiting for us to give them to our loved ones - partners, friends, children, co-workers and even our pets!

This year I am going to do something really special for the one I’m learning to love the most...ME!! This year I made a list of things I can do to “love” myself. Here goes!!

1. Eat nourishing food
2. Watch a good movie
3. Read
4. Invite a friend for coffee
5. Take a walk
6. Sing - listen to music
7. Laugh
8. Treat myself to some good lotion
9. Stretch/Yoga
10. Go to a recovery meeting or event

What can **YOU** do to show yourself some love this Valentine’s Day? If you can’t think of anything, feel free to borrow some of mine!!

Love, Anonymous

## Intergroup Chair’s Column

This space reserved for the column from the Intergroup chair.

The chair position is **VACANT**.

**There is no column.**

**To apply to serve, go to the Intergroup website:**

<https://stlouisoa.org/>

*Select Member & Intergroup Information.*

*Then select “Click Here for Documents and Forms.”*

*The Board of Trustees form is third from the bottom.*





**February 11 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\* - This is a very important meeting. See details on page 4.**

**February 24 – noon-2:30 p.m. – Unity Day Recovery Event via Zoom – see flyer on page 8**

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

**April 20 – Recovery Event hosted by New Me and New Horizons at Concord Trinity United Methodist Church, 5275 Lindbergh Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63126. Registration starts at 9:00 am, with program from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Theme: "Refresh, Renew, Recover." (Note: This was announced for April 13 in the January newsletter so be sure to correct your personal calendars if you had already saved the date.)**

**May 5 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

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

**June 14-15 – Final Region 4 Convention St. Paul, MN – watch for details at [THIS LINK](#)**

**July 14 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

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

**October 13 – 1:30 p.m. - Intergroup meeting\*\***

**Note: There will be a Fall Retreat; details to be announced**

**November 10 – 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 February 20, 2024.** 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.

St. Louis Bi-State Area  
Overeaters Anonymous

# unity day celebration

Saturday, February 24, 2024  
12:00 - 2:30 PM (CST)



Zoom (CST)  
ID: 538 040 418  
PW: 002478



suggested donation \$6

\*Never stay away from OA due  
to financial reasons.



Host: St. Louis Early Bird Meetings

Contact: Eileen 314-570-9333