

JANUARY 2025 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA
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STEP ONE

We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.



I came into OA totally hopeless. I thought in Step One being hopeless was the same as being powerless, but it's not.

What makes me powerless over food? In and of myself, within my own willpower alone, I have a mental malady that makes it impossible for me to successfully ward off the first bite which my body literally drives me to eat. Because I have an allergy to that first eaten bite, cravings within me then drive me to want more and more. Meanwhile, beyond my choice and control, a hateful voice chatters lies to me about my illness. It is my ineffective willpower to control all this that makes me hopeless. Without a power greater than myself, I am doomed.

(continued on page 2)

Newcomer's Corner The Power of NOT Part 10

Editor's Note: For the next several issues, the newcomer's corner will include excerpts from a long article by an anonymous contributor who has lost several hundred pounds — and found a new way to live — since coming to OA.

Step 9 – Love. Do Not Hate. I assume there is a place for hate; there is a reason for it – like with fear. We can learn something from this feeling.

I did hate. I hated everything and everybody, starting with myself. I was miserable to be around. I truly have no idea why anyone stuck with me. Few knew the depth of my hatred – unless I was in a really good gossip session with friends. Then I would really hold forth.

A study group I attended during the COVID-19 pandemic helped me make progress in releasing hatred. We read so many of our OA-approved books, plus others. I wrote this note and continue to read it each day, but I cannot remember the source. It says:

Self-love means:

- *Trust myself*
- *Treat myself with respect*
- *Be kind to myself*
- *Be affectionate with myself*

My self-acceptance is my shield against toxic people. Spirituality adds fierceness to my shield.

Kindness and love. Throw that everywhere.

(continued from page 1)

What makes me allergic to these foods? My body reacts differently than a normal person's body. These allergic foods literally are like poison to my body while "normal" people can eat the very same foods without ill effect to them.

How do I know which foods these are? If they call out my name when I think or am around them, pulling me into them, and/or if, when I eat them, they start cravings in me to eat more and more, they are my allergic foods.

And what about the second half of Step One? Sure, I was unmanageable with food. After all, I have unsuccessfully attempted my whole life to control my yo-yo weight. But is my **entire** life unmanageable?

Except for not making a living, this **Big Book** quote (4th ed., p. 52) perfectly describes my unmanageable life: "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people ..." Using my willpower alone, I unsuccessfully tried my entire life to fix and/or control these. Thus, my life itself was unmanageable.

Besides being powerless over food, I have an emotional and spiritual illness. OA offers me physical, emotional, and most importantly, spiritual recovery.

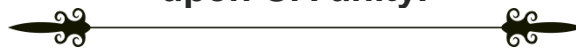
I ground myself in reality by intentionally and adamantly admitting Step One on a daily basis. Staying well protected within the reality of Step One is the absolutely necessary foundation for me to work all the remaining steps of the program.

Anonymous



TRADITION ONE

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.



My Part of Together

OA's Twelve Traditions offer guidelines on how we can all get along. Simply put, we come into OA from diverse cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, personalities, and defects, so these guidelines are necessary for our survival as an organization. It is no surprise, then, that unity should be our First Tradition. This Tradition forms the cornerstone of our organization; it's how we continue to prosper and help those still hurting from our common disease.

The best word that describes me when I'm in my disease is "alone"; therefore, the solution involves connection. The support I get from my friends in OA is priceless. This is where I find my recovery. We come together, supporting each other as we abstain from compulsive eating.

It is even more important that we come together to get the business of OA done: we must be a strong and united organization to attract and help those who need our help most. This, in turn, affects my own ability to stay strong in program. So, I give service and work to bring us together.

Groups are people coming together to be strong together. Intergroups are groups coming together to be strong together. Regions are intergroups coming together to be strong together. What we do together affects every person in our region. To be strong together, we need to work together.

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

Tradition One teaches that we are all dependent on each other for our shared welfare. I used to pride myself on being independent, believing I was able to take care of myself. The lie in that belief was proven by the weight I carried and the insanity in my head. Only after I accepted that I was powerless over my food behaviors did I become ready to ask for help. And when I did, you came with a commitment to love me until I learned to love myself. I still count on that commitment twenty-two years later. Because I owe you for that love and acceptance, I get the work done that needs to be done. If I'm not giving my experience, strength, and hope to others, then I won't be able to keep what I have received.

But that doesn't end with just sponsoring, making calls, and attending meetings—I'd be forgetting the bigger picture, all the other OA members who put on events, gathered in intergroups, and gave service at the region and world levels. For our common unity, I have to do my part to create a strong, thriving organization, so we can help those in need.

Anonymous
Reprinted from **Lifeline**, January 1, 2020



OA Literature Is Powerful! Please Consider Submitting Reviews

Literature is one of OA's powerful nine Tools of recovery. In 2025, your Newsletter Team would like to help more of our OA fellows discover the rich and varied resources available to us as approved OA literature.

Can you help? Do you have a favorite OA book or website resource? Can you write a review of about 400 words and submit it to the OA newsletter? Feel free to send your literature review to info@stlouisoa.org.

A First Step Prayer

Dear Lord,
I admit that I am powerless over my addiction.
I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it.
Help me this day to understand
The true meaning of powerlessness.
Remove from me all denial of my addiction.

[Reprinted](#) from a recovery website

Want to Study the 12 Steps?

The Recovery from Relapse Writing Meeting will be hosting a Twelve Step Workshop. The group will meet for 15 weeks from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons. Participants will work OA's Twelve Steps by using the ***Participant Guide for Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide, Second Edition*** ([SKU 965](#)).

The group meets at:
Gethsemane Lutheran Church
3600 Hampton Ave
2nd Floor, Conference Room
St. Louis, MO 63109

The start date is still to be determined. If you are interested in participating, please contact Bonnie at 314-601-3692 or bonitalinss@peoplepc.com.

From a group member

Intergroup Chair's Column

Happy New Year!

Greetings to all as we enter together into another year of fellowship and recovery. We are grateful for the service of groups and individuals who created a number of wonderful recovery events in 2024. These included multiple Super Saturdays – virtual, hybrid and in person – and our annual fall retreat.

The good news is that you can already mark your calendar NOW for the 2025 fall retreat on the weekend of October 24-26. AND the 2025 calendar has LOTS of space in it for more events!

Here are some possibilities, and if your home meeting or a group of OA friends wants to plan a special event for these months, you may choose whether to go with these themes or offer another HP-inspired idea:

- January – OA Birthday (since 1960) – third weekend in January
- February – Unity Day – the last Saturday in February in even years and the last Sunday in February in odd years at 11:30 a.m. local time around the world
- August – Sponsorship Day – 3rd weekend in August
- November – IDEA Day – 3rd weekend in November, the International Day of Experiencing Abstinence
- December – Twelfth Step Within Day – December 12 (12/12)

Please talk with your group(s) so we can continue to fill the year with support for recovery. Intergroup has a Zoom account available, and technical assistance is also available. Find guidance on hosting a recovery event on our website [HERE](#).

For more information or to list your event, please contact our Vice Chair, Amy G. at info@stlouisoa.org.

Finally, don't forget there's an open invitation to attend Intergroup which meets virtually and is announced in the Calendar of Events in each **OA Today** newsletter. Our next meeting is Sunday, January 12, 1:30-3:00 PM. The Zoom login information and passcode and phone number are also in the Calendar section.

In grateful service,
Eileen M.
St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup Chair



Happy Birthday to OA!

OA's 64th birthday is celebrated on the third week in January, 2025. Did you know that historic recordings of Rozanne S., founder of OA, are available at <https://oa.org/founder-recordings/>?

In the 1999 recording, "**Reflections: A Visit with OA's Founder,**" Rozanne recounts her lengthy journey of compulsive eating and how she became the founder of OA. She chronicles the early days of the program which has now grown into a worldwide fellowship.

A compilation of five of Rozanne's keynote speeches at World Service Business Conferences is also available at the link.

Newsletter Editor

New Year's Resolutions Versus Food Plan

It's that time of year again. Many of us start thinking about what we want to "resolve" to finally get started with – or finish – or get real with – in the New Year. Resolutions are great, sometimes easy to make; but ask yourself: "How many have I actually kept?"

For me, the OA Tool of "food plan" gives me a chance to have all the fun of "resolving" but does not depend on my willpower. A plan of eating helps me practice Integrity (the spiritual principle of Step Five) – by keeping my word to myself – which leads to progress in keeping my word to others, too. Whenever we make a promise and keep it, it builds our integrity muscle.

Most of us know how it feels to not eat what we had planned and feel bad about it afterwards. That is what lack of integrity to ourselves feels like – bad, crummy, discontented, and likely to continue veering off our plan. As we keep our promise to take care of our bodies, it becomes easier to stick to the plan. Our bodies feel better, our minds quiet, and our souls are serene.

We have lots of good pamphlets and material at OA.org on developing a food plan. I have found it helpful to use the acronym S.M.A.R.T. to think about my own food plan. This moves me from "resolution thinking" to action steps that have moved me steadily toward a healthy body weight. I focus on how to make my food plan:

- **Specific** – I state the shape of the food plan clearly – in my case, three meals and one snack if needed.
- **Measurable** – I choose how to measure progress and set up a way to track it.
- **Achievable** – I set an objective that is realistic and challenging, but reasonable.

Old habits develop over many years, so I cannot expect to change them overnight.

- **Relevant** – The objective makes sense and fits the purpose of the goal.
- **Time-bound** – The objective has a clear timeline.

When I started using this, my plan looked like this.

- Follow my food plan each day, as written.
- Write down the plan, commit it to a food sponsor, and report any discrepancies.
- Follow the food plan exactly for three months. That was challenging, yet achievable.
- Stick to my relevant central goal – to feed my body healthy food.
- Complete the three-month timeline, then evaluate my progress.

Now my plans revolve around deliberate movement and strengthening my body. I did the above program with my food plan until it became my habit. I haven't deviated from my food plan in many years. To contemplate eating OFF plan now causes me to feel anxious. It feels good to feel good about my food plan!

If you are a person who enjoys making New Year's resolutions, go ahead. *Resolve* to take care of your body. Making the plan your own, as I did with S.M.A.R.T. guidelines, can help you make those small incremental changes that lead to new habits.

But if you do not find resolutions helpful, you're still set! ***What deserves the attention of the still-suffering compulsive overeater is this: There is a proven, workable method by which we can arrest our illness.*** (paragraph two, ["Our Invitation to You."](#))

Melanie T.

Hand in Hand Directory

The Hand-in-Hand Directory will be updated by a committee of volunteers during the first quarter of 2025.

A committee member will call each group contact assigned to them. They will ask each contact to poll their members to determine if they are willing to speak, sponsor, temporarily sponsor, receive calls, or receive texts.

Group contacts, please watch for calls and respond in a timely manner.

Thank you all for helping us update this valuable recovery resource!

Ad Hoc Hand in Hand Directory Committee

July 19 – Region 5 Summer Online Conference

August 21-23 – World Service Convention, Orlando, FL

September 14 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

October 12 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

October 24-26 – Fall Retreat, Toddhall Retreat Center, Columbia, IL

November 9 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

****Note:** Each Intergroup Meeting is 1:30-3:00 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 are welcome.

For more **events** happening throughout the worldwide Fellowship, click [HERE](#).

ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY JANUARY 20, 2025. Please send your submissions to the **OA TODAY** editor and Newsletter Team at info@stlouisoa.org or mail them 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.



January 12 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

February 9 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

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

March 7-9 – Region 5 Spring Assembly, Hilton Garden Inn, Chesterton, IN

May 4 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

May 23, 24, and 25 – Region 5 Convention, Milwaukee, WI

June 8 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

July 13 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**