

October 2026 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA
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STEP TEN

**Continued to take personal inventory
and when we were wrong,
promptly admitted it.**



Saying the Words

Most days, I take personal inventory at the end of the day. It helps me sleep. I inventory fears, resentments, and stressful thoughts and beliefs. Wrongs seem to stem from those. I also list gratitudes, but not the things I think I should be grateful for. Instead, I list things I actually feel glad about.

Part of Step Ten is admitting when I'm wrong. To my detriment, I don't always do that. The other day at work, I wish I'd said, "I'm sorry. You did say that, and I wasn't listening very well." And another time, "That didn't come out right. Let me try again."

I am grateful for all the times that I have been able to admit a mistake, like today, when my boss suggested doing something a different way, and I agreed that her way was better. I said, "Because I'm new, I'm overly nervous, and I didn't do that well, but I'll get better. I'm more relaxed already."

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NEWCOMER'S CORNER

"What OA Has Done for Me"

One of my trigger foods was sugar, and on January 4, 2016, I surrendered all recreational sugar to my HP. I have remained abstinent. My attitude has changed. I have written my Fourth Step three times and worked my way through the [Twelve Steps](#) three times. I have released almost 100 pounds (45 kg), and my three-legged stool is stable and balanced. My life has changed, and I continue to grow physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This is what OA has done for me.

I entered the rooms via a face-to-face [meeting](#) that I immediately did not like from the moment I saw those people, strangers who had personal stories to tell. I didn't understand why they were willing or wanted to share stories about their compulsions and how they got there. Even though their stories were just like mine, but somehow different, I left and was determined not to return. But I did return, and I kept coming back. I asked someone to [sponsor](#) me. That is how I came to OA.

OA has done for me what I never could have done on my own. I am happier and more confident. I love myself and others. I am not perfect, and I have much work yet to do, but I am so much better in my thinking, my relationships, and my physical needs.

I have changed, and I am living a much fuller life because of OA. I love this program and each of you. Keep coming back! It works!

Mindy, Excerpt from [Lifeline](#)
[November 1, 2020](#)

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She then said, "It's not the end of the world. Nothing is the end of the world." When I let go of my defenses, it frees others to be less fixed in their positions too.

I can only admit I'm wrong if I think I am wrong. I'm sure I've been wrong many times without knowing it. The space of time between being wrong and admitting to another person that I was wrong is sometimes long, like forty years, and sometimes short, like forty seconds or less. In that time, I have to 1) become conscious of what I did; 2) admit to myself I was wrong; and 3) overcome resistance to admitting it to someone else.

Sometimes I might not admit a wrong directly to the person involved "when to do so would injure them" (Step Nine). But I do tell someone else, as a spiritual practice. I believe by doing so I progress in my spiritual development.

Sometimes I don't admit my wrongs, because I'm too busy noticing other people's wrongs. What I can do about this is to continue to notice how well this works for me: whether it brings me the sense of well-being I really want. Sometimes it's hard for me to see myself, and I generally don't like being wrong. I don't like other people to point out when I'm wrong, either.

I've heard the saying "you could be right, dear" promotes marital harmony. The implication of that statement is, of course, "I could be wrong." I can see myself saying this just to keep the peace, without really believing that I'm wrong. Still, just saying the words "you could be right" will open my mind a little. Becoming more open-minded is a gift of working Step Ten.

Elaine
Reprinted from [Lifeline](#)
[October 1, 2018](#)

When Sanity Returns: A Member's Experience, Strength, And Hope in Working Step Ten

Early in the morning, I routinely listen to a **Big Book**-based recording of a daily meditation. The insight of this article came to me one morning when I heard something in the meditation which I had already heard hundreds of times before, but I heard it in a brand-new way. The quote was from page 84: "*And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone - even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned.*" It was hearing these two sentences together, apart from the other promises, that caught my attention.

I've been at war all my life. What have I spent decades (literally!) of my life fighting?

- Well, there's no doubt that the number one thing I've fought my entire life has been my weight. I wasn't aware until I came into OA that what I was really fighting was an addiction.
- The next biggest thing I've been fighting has been myself, especially my lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem, and numerous character defects. I have always known I wasn't the person I longed to be, and oh, did I try with all my power to better myself.
- I have a long history of fighting negative emotions, especially fear, anger, and depression.
- I've been fighting social awkwardness and loneliness, never feeling like I belonged or fit in anywhere.
- I've been fighting other people all along the way. People were my biggest enemy because I couldn't control them or change them to be the way I believed they should be, no matter how hard I tried.

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- I've been fighting life with all my expectations and the unexpected losses it has inflicted on me.
- And, last but not least, I've been fighting God who consistently refused to comply with all my wishes and demands.

The **Big Book** says that by the time that I have learned to cease fighting anything or anyone (all those things just mentioned), sanity will have returned to me. Am I accurate to think that a big part of my insanity has been me being at war with myself and everyone and everything throughout all my life?

For my sanity to return, I've got to end this war. Everything the program suggests I do is ultimately with the goal of teaching me how to live without fighting everything all the time. For example, the program shows me how to

- truly learn acceptance;
- make peace with myself and others through working the steps;
- learn humility (that I am neither above nor below others);
- finally stop trying to fix, manage, and control everyone and everything;
- be genuinely content to stay on my side of the street;
- get off the debate team to prove I'm right; and
- stop the self-protection and demand of my rights and learn instead to flow through the day in God's will for my life.

Do I have that sanity yet? I'm afraid not, but it truly is what I desire. I'm moving (slowly as it may be) in that direction by staying abstinent and working this wonderful program of Overeaters Anonymous (especially the 12 steps) while staying in regular fellowship with my sponsor and others in the program. For that, I am truly grateful!

Anonymous

TRADITION TEN

Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

I am thankful for the Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous. They help to create a safe container in which recovering addicts can gather and do the work of recovery. Gathering is essential. As the OA Promise says:

"Together we can do what we could never do alone."

Tradition One sets the tone immediately that we must find a way to co-exist peacefully within OA: **"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity."** Yikes! I know that OA has saved my life, so I feel responsible to do all I can to keep our meetings healthy and strong. If OA falls apart, I'm relatively certain that I will as well.

The importance of Tradition Ten should be self-evident in creating a safe space for our members. Most of us have witnessed or experienced the anger, hurt feelings, and alienation that can arise when people disagree about matters large or small. Whether it's the color of a new carpet or which preschool our children should attend, human beings can become loud and adamant about their preferences and comfort zones.

I have personally been hurt when an OA meeting failed to live up to the standard articulated in Tradition 10. In the 1980's, I was beginning to get desperate about my eating disorder. I had been fasting for over a month on water and diluted fruit juices. I told a friend that I was afraid to start eating solid foods

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again because I always lost control and put on weight quickly. She knew about OA and shared information about when and where a local group met. I was worried enough about my physical and mental health that I went to their next meeting.

I had never been to a 12 Step fellowship meeting of any kind, so the format of OA was new to me. I immediately noticed a lot of male language for God in the meeting, and I was involved in some feminist spirituality activities, so this rubbed me the wrong way. I dared to speak my discomfort aloud: "I'm not comfortable calling God 'He.' If I come to OA, do I have to do that?" I asked.

A woman immediately responded to me with heat in her voice: "Well, my God is the great God Jehovah. If you cannot call God 'He,' then you are just going to die fat!" I had never met this woman. I did not know if she was a newcomer like me or a respected old-timer in the group. I looked around the table, and people mostly kept their eyes down and avoided eye contact. No one offered a gentle word about Tradition 10 calling us to avoid outside issues or quoted from pages 46-47 of the **Big Book**: "To us the realm of the Spirit is broad, roomy, inclusive: never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, [to all.] When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of a Higher Power."

When the meeting was over, no one walked me to my car and said "what happened in the meeting is not typical of general OA thinking; please keep coming back." I was left with the impression that OA was not for people like me who preferred feminine or non-gendered imagery for my spiritual source. I did not attend OA again until late 2010.

The meetings in my Intergroup that I have attended have welcomed me in the fullness of who I am: a person living with a disability; a

lesbian; a gender non-binary person. Still, I have witnessed moments when someone in attendance implied that atheists and agnostics would eventually come to believe in God if they stayed in OA long enough. At such moments, I have spoken up about Tradition 10 because I never want a person to be made to feel unwelcome about the spiritual language they use, given that I had experienced this myself.

Unfortunately, not all of our meetings hold closely to the guidance of Tradition 10. In July, 2023, the OA Board of Trustees and Unity with Diversity Conference Committee [published a letter](#) to our membership that stated in part: "A subcommittee of the Unity with Diversity Conference Committee has been in contact with some members of specific-focus groups, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; LGBTQ+; and Health Issues, and has found that, despite all previous statements on inclusivity, there are still members who don't feel safe or included. The subcommittee was distressed to hear that some OA members, when sharing their life realities, were told that their life experiences were considered outside issues and were shut down."

Reading this made my heart hurt. As a person living with a disability, as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and as an ardent anti-racist, I am troubled to think that any OA member would be told that they cannot be 100 percent honest about their life experiences when sharing.

The letter went on to say: "The Unity with Diversity Committee's primary concern is that all OA members, in all meetings, feel safe while sharing their experience, strength, and hope and are not told that their share is an outside issue. Everyone needs to be able to share at meetings about factors in their lives that could cause them to act out with food." And "It is an urgent matter that people are not silenced at OA meetings."

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It is indeed urgent. As Tradition Three reads: "The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively."

Compulsive eaters of all sexual orientations and gender identities must be made welcome. Overeaters, restrictors, and bulimics of all religions must be welcome members of our fellowship, as well as agnostics and atheists. Compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors are present in people of every ethnicity and national origin, skin color, and eye shape. Our fellowship is richer and stronger when we offer a genuine, heartfelt welcome to every person who walks through our door.

Please join me in lovingly speaking up whenever opinions are expressed about outside issues or when OA fellows are incorrectly told that they must censor what they share about their life realities. When we have the courage to do this, we help ensure that OA will be there to meet our needs for the long haul.

Anonymous
St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup



Intergroup Updates For October 2026

Public Information and Outreach: For the fourth year a team of volunteers from Intergroup and the Saturday 10 a.m. Webster Groves Step and Tradition Study meeting staffed the Overeaters Anonymous Public Information Booth at Recovery Fest 2026 in Kirkwood Park, Kirkwood, Missouri. Many people stopped by to inquire about our program and take brochures. We appreciate the service of every volunteer.

PLEASE NOTE: The Annual Bi-State Intergroup Business Conference, usually held in November, has been postponed to January

10. We will consider motions to add/change Bylaws, as well as revisions to the Policy & Procedure Manual. If you or your meeting wish to submit a motion for the Business Conference, it is due by November 10 and should be sent to info@stlouisoa.org. Forms to use for bylaw changes and a variety of other Intergroup business needs may be found at [THIS LINK](#). For clarity sake, the November 15 meeting will still take place; only the business conference is postponed.

Your Intergroup Needs You: Our Board of Trustees continues to need a Vice Chair. This position is critical to the operation of our Intergroup. As always in OA, the incoming trusted servant is never alone; our board will be available to mentor.

Intergroup is seeking trusted servants for Newsletter Committee Chair and Twelfth Step Within Committee Chair. We also have openings for Region Representatives (2) and World Service Business Conference Delegates (2). The deadline for submitting nomination forms is Friday, December 11. Nomination forms are available [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, I will be happy to talk with you so please reach out to me at info@stlouisoa.org or via text or call at 314-570-9333.

In grateful service
Eileen M., Chair



Thanks to All Who Gave Service To Make Our Fall Retreat a Reality

As we go to press for the October **OA Today** newsletter, the Intergroup's fall retreat has just concluded at Toddhall Retreat Center near Columbia, IL. We give thanks to the committee members who planned this retreat, and our November newsletter will welcome stories and reflections from all who attended. Send your insights, highlights, new commitments, and more to newsletter@stlouisoa.org by October 20.

"Rooted in Spiritual Principles" was the theme of the retreat. Participants made use of a large visual aid, a cardboard tree with the spiritual principle associated with each of the Twelve Steps emerging as the tree roots.



Positive reviews like this one are already coming in: "What a delight to be honest and close with others who share my own condition! What a joy to find recovery breakthroughs in and between such well-planned and meaningful activities! What a great blessing to witness the joy and excitement of others at their own bursts of recovery! The OA fall retreat? Sign me up for next year!"

From a 2026 Fall Retreat Attendee

Overeaters Anonymous: Region 5 Convention

FLUTTER INTO FREEDOM



September 4-6, 2026

Region Five Convention Held In Indianapolis, Indiana

About 160 OA members gathered at a hotel near the airport in Indianapolis, IN, during the Labor Day weekend. The planning committee did a wonderful job setting up a convention that was diverse and compact, with good accessibility and a variety of recovery topics and activities from which to choose.

Heard at the Region 5 Convention:

- Steps 4 & 5 are about emptying and exposure, shedding the armor, disbursing the fog, lifting the veil.
- A Fourth Step inventory allows me to be specific, not vague, in seeing my part.
- My Fourth Step was like looking for the pea under all those mattresses!
- I no longer need to project, protect, prevent, prove, or perfect.
- The lotus flower grows from the muck.
- I may have sobriety in another 12 Step Fellowship, but I still must do the OA footwork; credits do not transfer.
- I can use my 10th Step time to recover from grief. It's a good time to offer gratitudes, name resentments, etc.

R5 Convention Attendee

Survival Guide for the Holidays; Keep Literature in Your Pocket

During holidays, I can almost feel the frenzy in the air: my fellow compulsive eaters' worry. Holidays can bring stress, require travel, demand hosting duties, or carry us to strange kitchens and dining tables. Holidays confront us with our love-hate relationship with food and may require stocking up for family feasts at unfamiliar grocery stores. Great anticipation about being with loved ones mingles with dread about the raw emotions and dysfunctional behavior that such propinquity can provoke. Holidays disrupt familiar and trusted routines.

No more.

I am so grateful for a program that teaches me how to live abstinely with serenity and clarity of mind, using [Tools](#), working spiritual [Steps](#), and tapping into a Power greater than mine that sustains me. If I take certain actions daily, I can trust my Higher Power to reward my actions with "a life of sane and happy usefulness" ([Alcoholics Anonymous](#), 4th ed, p. 130). Program teaches me to look at any holiday as just another day: a day to plan my food, eat what I commit, talk with my sponsor, pray and meditate, make outreach calls, attend a meeting, read program literature, write, and be of service. All I have to do is stick to my plan of abstinence, work my Steps, and use my Tools, and I will be okay—as okay as I've been all this time, doing these same things daily! So, no shaking; holiday or not, it's just another program day....

For me, the Just for Today wallet card is an extended [Serenity Prayer](#) that reassures me I can be abstinent by the grace of God, just for today, one day at a time. I have other favorites among our literature, but in a pinch, I'll take that pocket-sized *Just for Today* to live holidays as joyously as I've lived other abstinent days. I know our OA program works

if you work it. I've heard stories of miraculous recoveries. I am living one! No shaking, I say, a holiday is just another day—and we have the perfect plan for it.

— [Edited and reprinted from SGVIE Briefs newsletter, San Gabriel Valley Inland Empire Intergroup, November/ December 2016](#)



October 11 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting**

November 15 – 1:30 p.m. – Intergroup meeting** (The business conference is postponed until January; see Intergroup Chair's column on page 5.)

November 21 – 7-9 p.m. – **International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA Day)** – online recovery event; see flyer on page 8

****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 OCTOBER 20, 2026. 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.

IDEA DAY

International Day Experiencing Abstinence

Join us for IDEA Day! Abstinence can be a deeply personal journey. We invite you to join us to hear from three speakers offering valuable insights and strategies rooted in the OA 12 Step program of recovery that help them embrace and maintain abstinence. Each speaker will be followed by a short writing exercise and open sharing.



Saturday, November 21st

7-9 am Central Time

Zoom ID: 940 5580 8391

Password: Serenity

Call In: 312-626-6799;94055808391#;75183374#



Hosted by the St. Louis Early Birds
& Any Lengths Big Book Study Groups

Questions? Contact Tracy V. 843-810-0645



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