

Westchester United Intergroup's

Serenity Times

4th Quarter 2023

Peak Moments:
Experiences filled with ecstasy, joy, and wonder.



Table of Contents

News, Meetings, & Events

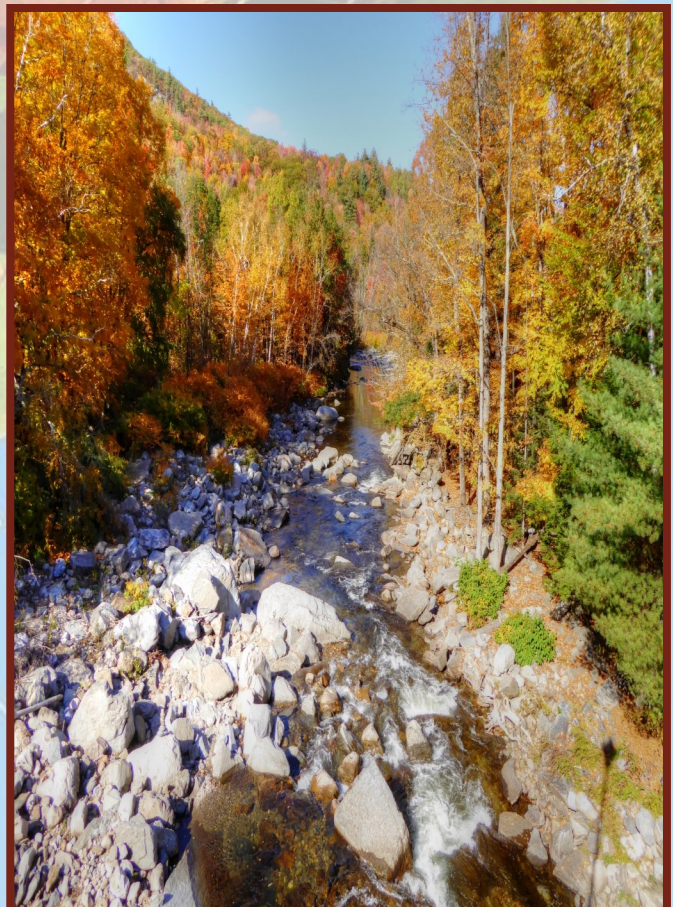
Region 6 Convention.....	4-5
OA Birthday Party.....	6
Dublin Big Book.....	7
Recovery From Relapse.....	7
New Sugar Addiction Meeting.....	8
Gratitude Circle.....	12
The Bridge.....	13
Daily Reprieve.....	14
Men's Hybrid Retreat.....	14
A Step Ahead News.....	16
100 Pounder Focus Meeting.....	17
Family Share.....	20
Freedom From Anorexia.....	21

Articles

Gratitude in Recovery.....	9
The War Has Ended.....	11
Lifeline.....	12
OA Changed My Life.....	18
Five Years in OA.....	22
Blissful Moments.....	26
Robin, Like a Bird.....	28
Shared His Struggles.....	30
Animal Kingdom.....	32
An Unusual Peak Experience.....	33

Odds & Ends

Unity with Diversity.....	10
OA Virtual Region.....	10
Responsibility Pledge.....	15
OA Virtual Region Intergroups.....	27
OA Flyer for Public Distribution.....	35
Printable bookmarks.....	25, 29, 31, 34
Strong Abstinence.....	36
WhatsApp Groups.....	37
7th Tradition & Contact Info.....	38



Westchester United Intergroup News and Events:

Help carry the message of recovery:

Join our monthly intergroup meeting

on the first Thursday of each month, at 7pm ET:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/668275613>

Meeting ID: 668 275 613

Passcode:121212

Meeting ID: 668275613

Letter From the Editor:

It's been an incredibly fulfilling, five-year journey as editor of the Serenity Times. Thank you for indulging me and joining in on the burgeoning adventure of experience, strength, and hope of Overeaters Anonymous around the world, through articles, news, special events, and calls for service. It's been an honor and a privilege.

Thank you, Mary T, for persevering in guiding me true North. Carol G, you have been my second set of eyes, editing snafus I was too bleary eyed to see, and I thank you profusely.

In service and love,

Diane T

WELCOME home

WHITE PLAINS NY

Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous
invites you to attend the
2023 Region 6 Convention
JOIN US IN PERSON

<https://oaregion6.org/2023-convention-welcome-home/>

TENTATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Friday, October 13

3:00 pm Registration opens
4:00 pm Workshops begin
6:00 pm Buffet
8:00 pm Grand opening/keynote speaker

Saturday, October 14

8:30 am Workshops continue throughout day
6:30 pm Banquet
8:00 pm Keynote speaker

Sunday, October 15

9:00 am Workshops begin
10:30 am Closing session

General Service Opportunities

We need your help with service
Email will arrive in late-summer
with all the service options

Workshop Speakers

Information to follow in late summer

For additional information, please contact:

r6conventionchair@oaregion6.org

For registration information, please contact:

r6conventionregistrar@gmail.com

2023 REGION 6 CONVENTION WELCOME HOME

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Registration is online only to Sept 28th:

Credit Card/PayPal accepted

****No refunds or transfers****

- \$55 USD to August 15
- \$65 USD - August 16 - Sept 28
- \$75 USD - Registration at the door
- \$45 USD - Friday Night Buffet Dinner
- \$60 USD - Saturday Night Banquet Dinner

HOTEL INFORMATION

Sonesta Hotel

66 Hale Ave., White Plains, NY, 10601

Hotel Occupancy Rates

- King/Double Room \$179 US + tax/night
- Triple Room \$189 US + tax/night
- Quad Room \$199 US + tax/night

Room Reservation Information

- Hotel reservations must be made by September 12 to guarantee the R6 Convention rate
- Cancellation Policy:** Cancel by 3pm 48 hours prior to arrival to avoid charges

Additional Hotel Information

- Self Parking is \$10 per car per day

2 Ways to Register for the Hotel

1. OA Region 6 website:

[Click Here](#)

2. Phone reservations 1-866-594-6747

OA Region 6 Convention — 2023

Talent Show

Friday Evening 10/13/2023

9:30-11:00



The convention's entertainment committee needs performers and others to do service!

Contact Cathy C, NY: clcprogram14@gmail.com



At the Sonesta Hotel in White Plains, NY. [2023 Convention - Welcome Home - Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous](#)
oa-region6.org

THE LOS ANGELES INTERGROUP PROUDLY PRESENTS

THE 64TH ANNUAL

OA BIRTHDAY PARTY

JANUARY 12 - JANUARY 14, 2024

SAVE THE DATE!

OA's biggest bash is back, and you're invited!

The 64th OA Birthday Party

Friday, January 12th – Sunday, January 14th 2024

at the LAX Hilton – 5711 W Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Registration opens October 15th. Check back then to secure your spot! In the meantime, book your hotel room at the LAX Hilton.

<https://www.oalaig.org/oa-birthday-party/>

Book your room at the LAX Hilton:

<https://book.passkey.com/event/50646784/owner/50954/landing>

THERE IS A SOLUTION

DUBLIN
VIRTUAL OA BIG BOOK
MEETING

EVERY TUESDAY 8PM IRISH TIME
EVERYONE WELCOME

ZOOM MEETING ID:
81100686378
PASSWORD
dY7H7G

ALL
WELCOME!



↓
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
ALL WELCOME

*Recovery from Relapse
speaker meeting*

EVERY TUESDAY
2PM UK
6AM PST
8AM CST
9AM EST

ZOOM ID: 893 4509 3034
PASSWORD: 1212





New OA LA Intergroup Meeting
Focus on Sugar Addiction

Saturdays 4pm PT = 7pm ET

Zoom ID: 83878933060. Passcode: 874921

Be there or be square.

A splendid time is guaranteed for all!

For more information and/or to help serve,
contact JoJo at (818) 326-9003



What Part Does Gratitude Play in my Recovery? 9

I have a three-fold disease. It is physical, mental, and spiritual, and five years ago it almost killed me. Physically, I weighed almost three hundred pounds and was very sick from four serious medical conditions caused by my life-long cycle of dieting and overeating compulsively. Mentally, I felt that I was going insane, because I was always in distress, and to soothe myself I thought about food ALL THE TIME.... my life felt completely out of control. And spiritually, I lived in a reality of constant fear and self-hatred. A therapist who knew me thirteen years ago said, last week, that she had never met someone who hated themselves as much as I did.

By working the Steps, described in the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, I now have a daily reprieve from my misery. Physically, I am maintaining a loss of 150 pounds, and no longer suffer from the four conditions that threatened my life. Mentally, I feel sane and use my clear-thinking to take care of myself and to be of service to others. Spiritually, I choose to live in a reality where a Power greater than myself loves and protects me, and I am safe. I have become empowered by my connection to this Higher Power and now feel like a worthy and powerful person.

The promises described in the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* are all coming true for me. I say that I am “recovered,” because I have had a spiritual awakening and have food neutrality, which basically means that I enjoy my food more than I ever did when I ate compulsively; but once my meal is done I don’t think about it again. And I NEVER need to soothe myself with food anymore.

I no longer multiply my miseries, so I am happy. The truth is that I am happy even when things don’t go my way, even when something “bad” happens. The reason for this state of happiness is that I am now ACUTELY AWARE OF MY BLESSINGS, and every moment of the day, I am GRATEFUL for them.

I am very grateful for this program that has given me the tools to recover my sanity. I am incredibly grateful for my connection with a Power that I can’t explain or understand, but believe is there, loving and protecting me every moment of the day. I am grateful for all the love in my life that I give freely and I freely receive.

Here’s an example of how it works: a few months ago I suffered from such a bad migraine that I ended up in the hospital emergency room twice in one week. As expected, the wait was long (twelve hours the first day and seven the second day), and I was very ill, yet I was so happy, that my friend who accompanied me was taken aback. She said, “Dorit, why are you so happy? You’re ill. You’re sitting in a crowded ER with stupid babies crying and people coughing. The triage nurse didn’t even give you a quiet/dark room to wait in....” and she went on and on.

I looked at her with genuine surprise. I KNEW that there was a Power greater than myself that loved and protected me, and so while everything she was mentioning was true, it REALLY didn’t matter! What I was aware of (and was ever so grateful for) was the fact that I lived in Canada and had access to medical help when I needed it, that I had brought all the abstinent food I needed with me, that I had a friend who cared enough about me to spend hours in a place that clearly distressed her and that there were other friends and family keeping in touch with me through phone and so on and so forth. The fact that I was in more pain than I had ever been in, even while birthing my daughter, did not affect my happiness and my ability to be grateful for all the many blessings in my life. I’m not suggesting that my life is perfect, but when I do fall back into fear, anger, or hatred MY RECOVERY GIVES ME THE SKILLS, THE DAILY PRACTICE, TO COME BACK INTO GRATITUDE AND AWARENESS OF MY MANY BLESSINGS. That is what working the Steps has done for me. That is what it can do for you, too.

Dorit P, Canada

Unity With Diversity Policy

THE FELLOWSHIP of Overeaters Anonymous encourages and promotes acceptance and inclusivity. All are welcome to join OA and are not excluded because of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other attribute. We welcome all who share our compulsion. Everyone with the desire to stop eating compulsively is welcome in Overeaters Anonymous.

<https://oa.org/group-resources-list/unity-with-diversity-policy-statements/>



Visit the OA Virtual Region



Home of twenty-one intergroups and fellowship meetings around the world including meetings in English, Spanish, French, and Greek.

<http://www.oavirtualregion.org>



The War has Ended



Like a magnet to iron was sugar to my mouth. It used to be a war, one that I was losing daily. Red licorice, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and cheesecake were just a few of my enemies. "But I have so much willpower," I protested to my scale. A disinterested silence followed as I stepped off that battlefield.

So, I became up close and personal with the 'pay and weigh' business and was feuding with a smaller scale, one that judged the protein, fruits, and grains that fueled this soldier. The problem was, like any con artist, I snuck the cookies and ate them away from prying eyes. And the scale? I didn't weigh the Hagen-Dazs either.

Twenty years I weighed, measured, and paid for someone to tell me that my weight was up or down, depending on my emotional state that week. That seesaw continued until I realized that no matter how much I tried to control my food, I couldn't stop eating sugar. The only solution was to stop cold turkey. So, like an alcoholic with liquor, I learned to abstain from my drug of choice.

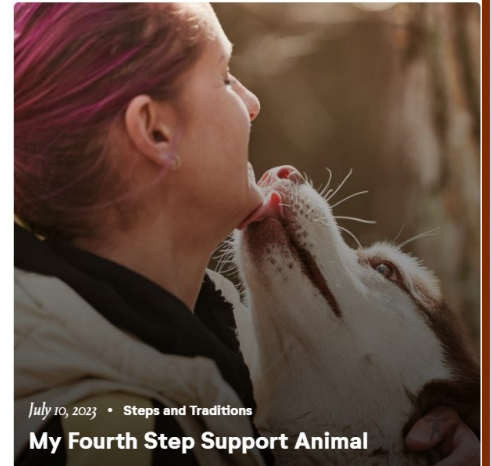
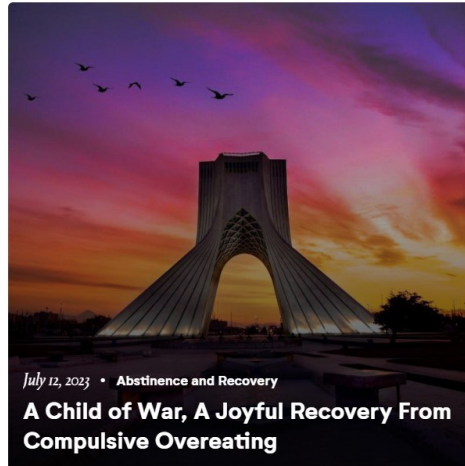
How did I stop? I let a power greater than myself have control of my eating. The cake has been defeated.

Sue E, NY

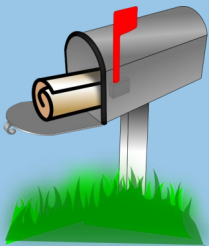
Lifeline

Stories of Recovery

<https://lifeline.oa.org/>



E-subscribe to the *Serenity Times*!



Email : wuigwebsite@gmail.com

Write: E-subscribe to *Serenity Times*
in the subject header.

You are warmly invited
to take a moment of pause
and connection in your day today by connecting with yourself, each other, and your HP through prayer, meditation, breath work, and gratitude.

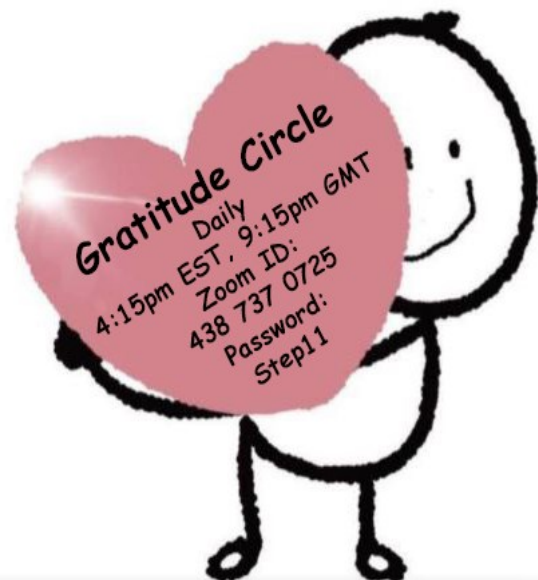
Zoom: Gratitude Circle 4:15PM EDT

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/4387370725?pwd=V21MVVRVQIA3UmZ1VGxOVnY4b0lzd09>

Meeting ID: 438 737 0725

Passcode: Step11



The Bridge Intergroup

At Bridge meetings, compulsive eaters who are also recovering from other addictions are free to discuss the whole of their experience as it pertains to their recovery from compulsive eating. Bridge meetings honor the traditions of Overeaters Anonymous and are open to anyone with a desire to stop eating compulsively.



Our Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday: 8:00pm – 9:00pm ET (5:00pm -6:00pm PT) – Sharing

Thursday: 8:00pm – 9:00pm ET (5:00pm -6:00pm PT) – Sharing

Saturday: 1:00pm – 2:00pm ET (10:00am -11:00am PT) – Focus on Program Basics

Sunday: 8:00pm – 9:00pm ET (5:00pm – 6:00pm PT) – Step Study using the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

Meeting ID: 892 3750 0498 | **Passcode:** bridge

<https://oabridge.org/>

**Daily Reprieve
Speaker Meeting Every Thursday
5 am est
Meeting ID: 293 355 222
Passcode: 1212**

**We meet 7 days a week
with a different focus each day**

<https://zoom.us/j/293355222?pwd=K0hsdTQ3UVc3dXA3bExwdE9lYURadz09>

Welcome to Old Mission San Luis Rey

A ministry of the Franciscan Friars Province of Saint Barbara



Friday, November 10

**36th OA Men's Retreat in
Oceanside CA , November 10-
12, 2023**



\$25 - \$325

Get tickets

Hybrid Event

Questions and Answers:

By Gene K 760-859-7400 / Dave B 619-787-2937

28 followers

Follow



Responsibility Pledge:
Always to extend the
Heart and hand to all who
Share my compulsion;
For this I am responsible.

A Step Ahead News

<https://oa.org/news/?news-category=0>

We've made a change! A Step Ahead newsletter is now A Step Ahead news blog. Find all world service news here and get notified of new posts via our email newsletter and social media!



International WSBC Delegates Can Get More from the Delegate Support Fund



Upcoming Deadline Dates: World Service Business Conference 2024



New Managing Director Hired to Lead OA World Service Office



Now Accepting 2024 Delegate Support Fund Applications



New Video Simplifies OA Service and Bylaws



Update: OA Board of Trustees



What Is an Outside Issue: Are We Being Open-Minded in Our Meetings?



Apply for Professional Exhibits Funds

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
100 LBER FOCUS
SPEAKER MEETING

ALL WELCOME

EVERY WEDNESDAY

4 P M U K

8 A M P S T

10 A M C S T

11 A M E S T

ZOOM ID : 893 4509 3034

PASSWORD:1212

OA Changed My Life



Holy Moments

“That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed., p. 84). A couple of months ago, I woke up on a Saturday morning feeling different: lighter and more open-minded. I pondered on the feeling and realized that I had been waking up like this for many months, but the change had been so gradual I hadn't noticed the lessening of my mental burden.

It wasn't that way three years ago. Then I woke up every day knowing I was already a failure and would probably fail again. I knew the day would hold no wonder for me. I did that to myself. All day I worried about food.

I compared the two feelings that morning a couple of months ago and realized for the first time how far I have come in this program. I have had physical recovery and have maintained my body size for more than two years. I am wearing the same clothes this year that I wore last year and the year before. Is it a miracle? Yes, because I have never been able to do that. Is it the most miraculous thing that has happened to me? No.

The most miraculous thing is the burden my mind has lost: the burden of judging myself and others. The desire to judge still pops up and probably always will, but my Higher Power's will does not allow me to follow through on it. What a lesson learned and a load removed.

I have lost the capacity to inhibit myself from experiencing the moment. I used to be caught up in tomorrow or yesterday, focusing on future possibilities or past pitfalls. Now I attend to reality, which is what I have right here, right now. Even if all I notice are the bubbles in my mop bucket, that is how I make every minute holy.

The feelings of uselessness and self-pity have not disappeared forever. They are lurking in my recovering psyche, ready to pounce if I give them a chance. Sometimes that happens, and when it does, it's time to do more work on myself and for myself.

I have to be as rigorously honest about my emotional health as I have been about my physical health. Sometimes I get sloppy, and a loosening tape measure tells me so. Instead of getting caught up in denial, I honestly evaluate my food plan. When I trust my Higher Power and am honest with myself, the tape measure tightens.

.The same is true of my emotions. This is the area where my most honest work is done because if it's not done, then I lose my physical recovery as well.

Anger is my underlying theme whenever I get depressed and start a downward spiral. I am basically a proud person, and it's a false pride based on an overloaded sense of entitlement. I have been good, so I deserve no less than whatever it is I desire. I have come to expect my Higher Power to deliver, and when he doesn't, I feel angry, hurt, rejected, depressed and unholy. By analyzing my anger through an anger workbook, I have learned to be assertive with my Higher Power instead of whining and waiting for him to do all the work.

By working with my sponsor, I have learned to experience my deepest, darkest, saddest sense of self. Those emotions that I tried to stuff with food now have their days or even weeks to work themselves out and become fully experienced. It helps me to draw word pictures about these feelings and describe them to God assertively.

My sponsor also helped me develop a series of affirmations that I use to pick myself up when I am healing from the emotional colds I get.

- I radiate beauty.
- I am strong and courageous, and God is in control.
- I am patient and persistent, and life is good to me.
- I play an important role in the universe, and so do you!
- I am learning to forgive.
- I am a humble servant of the Lord.

That last one, along with others, has helped me with my inflated ego and false pride. It has dissolved the anger that flares up when I think I've been slighted. When I say it to myself, I immediately feel a sense of relief, clarity and complete submission to the will of my Higher Power. It puts my life in perspective and my mind at ease, and it diverts the feelings of uselessness and self-pity that can destroy my sanity . . . if I allow it.

— Reprinted from *Lifeline* magazine

Overeaters Anonymous Memphis

<http://www.oamemphis.com/about-aa/changed-my-life/>



You're Invited to Our

FRAMILY SHARE

Framily: Friends
Who Feel Like
Family

EVERY MONTH,
JOIN US FOR A
CREATIVELY
INSPIRED
FELLOWSHIP EVENT

Topics vary but may include:

- Sharing personal artwork
- Art tutorials
- Speakers
- Interactive activities

Every Month
on the 2nd Saturday
6 PM EST

<https://zoom.us/j/81738885598>
{password: 1212}

Hosted by OA Creative Reprieve



Freedom From Anorexia

Recovering Anorexics in OA



We are a community of people
recovering together from anorexia....

Meetings

All meetings are listed in PACIFIC STANDARD TIME (PST):

Monday 7:30 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81995750262?pwd=dDZOWVZ5OWtQVjU3aU5zSVNBU0JyZz09>

Meeting ID: 819 9575 0262

Passcode: 997487

Tuesday 9:00 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87820786006?pwd=UGJpQkV5d1lrM0lmOEJtRzdxSm45dz09>

Meeting ID: 878 2078 6006

Passcode: 435469

Thursday 9:00 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87601662556?pwd=dHI1MGdpczZUK1JTR0NGZTY1c1NOdz09>

Meeting ID: 876 0166 2556

Passcode: 660729

Freedom From Anorexia is an Intergroup of the Virtual Region of OA

info@FreedomFromAnorexia.org

Looking Back at Five Years in OA



When I entered the rooms of OA, in September 2018, I was obsessed with food and fighting the urge to eat every minute of every waking hour. Utter madness is how I can best define the torment of struggling with this disease, begging it to stop asking me to eat, demanding that I eat. I often gave in just hoping the torturing demands and conflict would end.

After a health debacle, due to disordered eating, I spent two months in a hospital and a nursing home. I came home gaunt, less than 100lbs, and weak as a newborn kitten. I'd been through hell, pain beyond anything I thought was humanly possible, and thought I'd never ever want to eat compulsively again. I was wrong.

Within two weeks of coming home, my disease was very happy to let me know it hadn't gone anywhere and had just been waiting for me to get my sea legs back, so it could rumble with me. I was devastated. How could I possibly want to do that to myself after all I'd been through? And yet, there it was, full on obsession and compulsion. I felt like I was behind the wheel of a car that someone else was driving, and who was driving it was my disease. I was tired of fighting. If I didn't cave to the compulsion, it only grew stronger. If I did cave to the compulsion, I was filled with remorse, self-loathing, and depression. It was a lose-lose situation.

I even researched hypnosis, thinking I had nothing to lose. I'd tried everything else, including transferring my addiction to boyfriends, thrill seeking, adventure travel, shamanic rituals in the Amazon, taking loads of herbal appetite suppressants, fasting, praying, dieting, and of course, beating myself up with mental flagellation, to get myself in line.

Five years ago, if I ate an extra serving, or three, of corn chips at a Mexican restaurant, like I did today, I would have felt defeated, beaten myself up, made myself get on and off the scale numerous times a day, thereby punishing myself with, "Look what you've done! You are pathetic. Look how big you are. Look, just look at that number on the scale!" I would have become instantly depressed by the torrent of self-flagellation, and hidden deep within myself, willing it to go away while I disappeared.



Today, I enjoyed the chips, wished I hadn't eaten as much as I had, but laughed at how I realized if I went in front of a mirror, I'd think I was a hundred pounds heavier than I am. I was also at peace with knowing I wasn't going to go home and do the scale dance and that the chips were a blip, and tomorrow was a new day. I was also kind to myself, reminding myself that I ate next to nothing the day before, because I had ulcers flaring. My recovery grows, but it isn't perfect. That's okay now. I used to think that abstinence meant I had to always color within the lines of the perfect meal plan. That doesn't work for me.

For that reason, I don't like weighing and measuring my food. Having done so, I ended up under-eating and then feeling guilty when I needed to add more food. I get that it works for a lot of fellows in program, but not for me, not for right now.

When I came into program, I weighed myself at least once a day. I've since gone from weighing biweekly to monthly to quarterly to semiannually. In fact, I weighed myself today for the first time in about six months. It was fine. FINE? Wow! Who knew I could be okay with my weight... at least sort of? Of course, I am an anorexic at heart, and when I was sick in the hospital, there was part of me that wanted to see if I could lose more weight, even though I was weak, could barely stand, and had lost an obvious amount of bone and muscle. Now, instead of doing the scale-dance, when I'm in the crux of the fun-house mirror of body distortion, I measure my hips and my waist. Bang, like a gunshot, it sets me right as rain, and I'm able to come off the ledge.

In the last few months, I am thrilled to say I've gone from eating until I am bloated-full, to eating enough to feel satiated. Thank you, God. I hope I can continue this way, with His grace.

When I came into program, if my disease was in full swing, I'd renege on get togethers, appointments, or even fun things like going kayaking. I'd go into my hidey-hole of depression and self-loathing, after whatever garbage I had consumed, whether it was half a dozen cookies or three dozen donuts. Now, with a day like today, when I had extra corn chips, yeah, the peaceful buzz became a bit neutralized, but I was still in my happy place and taking care of the stuff of life, going to appointments and the like.

I know there are some people in program who think there are no yellow-list foods, and hey, I wish I could one day join their ranks, but goodies like those hot, salty, Mexican, corn chips are still on my yellow-list radar, just like popcorn. I have a history of eating a bit more of them than I should, but I don't go full out into a feeding frenzy. I'd love it if God were to remove the desire from me to eat those things, but for now, I'm content and incredibly grateful he has thoroughly planted an invisible sheath of yellow, caution tape between me and all the high-sugar foods that crippled my existence. What a joy! Each day is a gift, and I don't forget that, because it's certainly not anything I was able to change on my own. I did the footwork, and God provided the miracle. I pray the miracle stays and flourishes.



Other than the food stuff that has changed, the biggest change I feel is how I feel moored in the moment and realize every day is a gift. Especially with my medical history, I know I could go anytime, and I am totally at peace with that. I constantly remind myself to have no word left unsaid and no deed left undone. I live to do God's will and to walk in the light of His grace, and I can only do so by remaining abstinent and working on evolving in recovery. All I ever wanted to do was God's will, but I didn't know how until OA introduced me to the 12 Steps. Like it says on page 77 in the Big Book, "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." (Can I complain and say I wish Bill W had written "all those about us" instead of people? I mean, what about cats, for crying out loud? I see God through their eyes: wisdom, grace, independence, patience, beauty, intelligence, and ballet-like fluidity of movement. They are beacons of all that is beautiful and perfect in nature.)

When I came into program, I felt victimized by childhood trauma and that I had an eating disorder because of the abuse. I learned that I would have had this eating disorder, this uninvited guest, even if I had grown up in the perfect home. I have an allergy of the body, just like someone with a peanut allergy. I have that allergy with sugar, and I have a twist of the mind that never ceases to tell me that food will fix whatever emotion I may be uncomfortable feeling, whether it be good, bad, or ugly. Yes, even joyful emotions have given my disease a crevice to chisel at, like, "Hey, wouldn't it be nice to celebrate with a simple, vanilla ice cream?"

Now, I check in constantly, with 10th Step inventories and with avoiding people, places, and things that may threaten my recovery and abstinence. I quit the "suck up and deal" Marine Drill Sergeant role I used to play. I'd rather not suck up and deal with something I'm not comfortable with, even if it's "the right thing," if I'm going to feel uncomfortable, resentful, fearful, etc. I didn't go see my surrogate mom several months ago, because I was filled with anxiety and fear. In the past, I would have sucked up and dealt, because it was the right thing to do. This time, I allowed myself the grace not to go and to go another time when I felt at peace. I did, and it worked out great. It was a spectacular visit.

Resentments and fears I'd carried around since childhood have been dealt with, and I am no longer imprisoned by those cancerous atrocities. Hey, even my eldest brother, who abused me repeatedly when I was a little kid, is now one of my best friends! How dat' hapin'?! So cool, right?! God is good, and this is what he wants for us. He tells us that if we were to come to his home/church, but harbor ill will against our neighbor, we are to leave the church and square away our business before returning. God asks that we love one another and see Him in our fellows. I know I cannot be close to God without following this command.

When I came into program, I was still plagued with financial insecurity. I lived with someone whom I despised, (she was like an aunt to me, and as much as I loved her, she was a sick and suffering human being who made my life miserable.) I lived with her for thirty-three years! Ugh, I'm choking on those words. Although I paid the lion's share of the rent and expenses, I was scared to death to move out, fearing I wouldn't be able to afford living by myself. Several months into program, I moved out and bought an apartment in the same building with the same, beautiful layout: 2 beds, 2 baths, a large living room, dining room, cute kitchen, and a terrace. I could never have cats when I lived with her, because she hated them, and I'm allergic. Now, I have three and take meds to keep the asthma at bay. It's a price I am more than happy to pay. I have all that I need now and then some. God is good.

When I first came into program, I thought about what OA said about us having character defects. Okay, I admitted, maybe I was a bit impatient at times, but that was about it. Ha! I can be rude, resentful, fearful, anxious, prideful, arrogant, vain, dishonest, judgmental, a hypocrite, and a host of other baddies. I'm a work in progress. Because I keep my eye on the prize, union with God, I am more aware of when these character weaknesses pop up and have the conscious choice to work with them accordingly.

Self-seeking, wow, here we go now. I was clueless how self-seeking I was in trying to get people to do what I wanted. I'd do things like smother clients with gifts to get them to work more with me or to like me. (Note to self: I've learned not everyone has to like me.) I'd beat the crap out of people emotionally to "show them how wrong they were." Every time one of my brothers would get on the phone with me, he'd plead for me to come out to his summer house. I would get furious with him and tell him to quit asking, that he was a broken record, and that I wasn't interested. He didn't stop, hasn't stopped. Now, I kinda giggle when he asks, because I know he can't help himself. These days *I need to concentrate not so much about what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes*, as the Acceptance Prayer, from p417 in the Big Book tells us.

Diane T, NY



Blissful Moments



Tossing my godson and nephew, my Bubba Nicholas up in the air, his head tossed back in gleeful laughter.

My father's spirit visiting me a few days after he died. His joy and excitement beyond any height I'd witnessed him experience while on Earth.

My grandmother's gentle hand stroking my head and feeling her healing love transform me.

The giddy joy of having finished writing a book about my adventures in the Amazon and Andes, searching for and apprenticing with shamans.

Praying with a sponsee, and feeling God's hand touch my heart and soul for an instant that felt like eternity.

My nephew, Michael, at six months old, his hair a novel mess of cockatoo proportions, his eyes alight with mischief and joy. I picked him up and he pulled on my nose. A perfect moment, eye to eye, basking in the joy of one another's spirit. The photo in my wallet for years, a stark contrast to the young man now off to college, bearded and too big to play hide-and-seek, but still resident of soft, magical eyes.

These are the sacred moments I visit in times of fear and distress. The remnants of their rapture reverberate through every cell of my being, transforming me back onto the beam of God's Grace.

Diane T



Did you know that the Virtual Region has 21 intergroups, including those with meetings in Spanish, French, and in Greek?!

Check out the region that encompasses the world:

<https://oavirtualregion.org/vr-intergroups/>

#09659 – 12 Steps 4 COE's Virtual Intergroup
#09669 – 90 Day Phone Meeting Virtual Intergroup

#09678 – A Design For Living Virtual Intergroup

#09681 – Better Together Virtual Intergroup (BTVIG)

#09674 – BIPOC Virtual Intergroup

#09665 – Despertar Abstinente Virtual Intergroup

#09662 – Ebony Overeaters Anonymous Virtual Intergroup

- **#09698 – Freedom from Anorexia Intergroup**

#09687 - Hay Una Solucion Virtual Intergroup

#09675 – La Brigade du Rétablissement Virtual Intergroup

#09672 – Men's Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

#09670 – OA Foot Steps Virtual Intergroup

#09660 – OA HOW Two-Hour Format Phone Meeting Virtual Intergroup

#09676 – OA United Kingdom (UK), Europe, and Beyond (OAUKEB)

- **#09658 – Perseverancia Virtual Intergroup**

- **#09668 – R9 WhatsApp Group Conscience Committee (GCC) Virtual Intergroup**

#09990 - Secular Special-Focus Service Board (SFSB) of Overeaters Anonymous

#09682 – Syndesis/Ανώνυμοι Υπερφάγοι ομάδα Σύνδεσης (Greek Intergroup)

#09696 - The Bridge Intergroup

- **#09693 - Valor Para Cambiar Virtual Intergroup**

#09661 – Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

#09677 – Young People Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

Hi, my name is Robin, Like a Bird, and I'm a compulsive overeater.



Chapter 12 from the brown book of *Overeaters Anonymous*, "The Hiking Trail Meeting," really spoke to me. When I saw the title to the chapter, it made me laugh. Last week while in Maine, at my husband's family reunion, I went on a two and a half hour, three-mile hike through the woods, up and down a mountain. My nephew called it a "Death March." (I couldn't have done that six months ago.)

Anyway, like the woman who wrote this chapter, I also come from an alcoholic family. We never spoke about our feelings while I was growing up, so I buried them by over-eating. If I had food in my mouth, I couldn't talk about my feelings, or say something that might upset anyone else, right?

Also, like the author, I was unknowingly bingeing and purging from an early age. I had bad, acid reflux and was eating all the wrong foods, so my stomach was constantly rebelling. It wasn't until I was in my thirties that I realized that not everyone had the same stomach issues I had. I learned to avoid most of the foods that were causing the acid reflux, but not all.

The last four years have been the most challenging of my life: My husband (of almost thirty-five years) was diagnosed with a terminal, lung disease that gave him possibly about two and a half years to live. With Covid going on, he couldn't do anything on his bucket list, so we tried to plan for our limited future together: fix up our home, sell the home, buy a smaller place closer to the transplant center in New York City, and try to make the most of what time we had left together. To say this was stressful for both of us is an understatement.

While all this was going on, I let my health slide and started really overeating A LOT. I was eating my feelings and still trying to stay positive for him. In the nick of time, a miracle happened and he received a double lung transplant on August 1st, 2022. Today is actually the one-year anniversary of when we met with the new transplant team that was able to help him get the transplant.

For almost a year now, he has been recovering from the transplant and he's doing really well. It's been a long road of recovery, but I feel like I've been recovering with him. I knew that I had let myself "go" while I was focusing so much on him, but I didn't think it was fair for me to worry about what I was going through while he was getting sicker and sicker.

I

I've loved to exercise and stay active my whole life. That's why, when my knees started to hurt so badly, two years ago, I felt like my body was betraying me. I knew I had to lose weight to help take the pressure off my now arthritic knees, but everything I tried didn't seem to work. Physical therapy and water aerobics had helped, but I knew it wasn't the long-term solution.

For the last six months, so many different things have been happening to point me in the direction of OA. I was reading a series of books where the main character was slowly coming to realize that he was an alcoholic and needed AA to help him turn his life around. Then there was a Bible study that we do each year during the season of Lent. This year it was a video/workbook study called *Churches that Heal*, lead by Dr. Henry Cloud, and it was about how God can help you heal, especially if you have some kind of addiction. Then one of my dear friends suggested that I try talking to a therapist to help me deal with some of the emotional issues I'd been grappling during the last few years. My therapist is the one who suggested OA to me, and here I am.

This has been the most welcoming, healing process of my entire life. I truly feel like a completely different person. One of the biggest pieces of the puzzle for me has been the idea that I can ask God (my Higher Power) to help me with this disease. I never thought to "bother" Him with this problem. I always thought I just didn't have enough willpower. The final piece to this crazy, life puzzle was asking for help and support from other people. Being so welcomed into the program by everyone has made me feel like I'm not alone in this struggle. I couldn't have achieved what I have without all of you. Thank you.

Robin L, NY



Gratitude

He Shared His Struggles with Another Man



This chapter, from the brown book of *Overeaters Anonymous*, is about the companionship and encouragement offered by fellow OA members to everyone who walks in the door. No matter if you are new to 12-Step programs and OA, or coming back into the OA rooms after being away for a while, everyone is welcomed and encouraged to keep trying and to keep coming back.

My first real-life encounter with a 12-Step program was when my older brother told me that he was going to AA meetings and trying to get “cured” from his drinking problem. I had known for a long time that he was a closet drinker, as our father had been, but in our family we never spoke about uncomfortable problems or situations. He didn’t really want to talk about his experience with AA, but I congratulated him on taking the first step and going to the meetings.

A few months later, he told me that he had finished all 12 Steps, had “graduated” from AA and was never going back. Not knowing much about any 12-Step program, I said to him that I thought that once you were in AA, it was healthier to stay with the program and try to do it for the rest of your life. He told me, “Nope, I’m cured!” He never went to another meeting nor reached out to anyone else about his drinking.

One year later, he had taken his own life after drinking almost a gallon of vodka and slitting his wrists. When I helped his wife clean out their basement, we found all the empty bottles that he had hidden over that last year.

That was a wakeup call for me. It made me realize that I was also hiding an addiction of overeating. I decided that I wasn’t going to hide my eating anymore or binge in isolation. If I wanted to eat something, I would do it in front of my family and friends. This worked for me for a while, but then I slowly started to isolate myself by hiding my overeating and bingeing again.

It wasn't until I heard about OA in April of this year, that I finally had a glimmer of hope for my addiction. Once I joined the program, and was welcomed so completely into this community, I was able to realize that I'm not alone. I don't have to do this alone. I've learned so much from everyone in the program and have found a trusted sponsor who is guiding me along my OA journey.

Having completely given my trust up to my Higher Power (God), I know that He will guide me to do and say the right things in all aspects of my life. God guided me to find my sponsor in the program, and I feel so safe with her. I can discuss anything with her, and that allows me to be open to any new insights or ideas that come to me through God's love and guidance. Just having the freedom to be my authentic self is wonderful. I now know that I can reach out for help at any time, and someone will be there lending me a hand and encouraging me to keep coming back to my new home.

Robin, Like a Bird, NY



Grateful for God's Gift of the Animal Kingdom



God has given me many tools to help us navigate the path he has laid in front of me. He does not ask for approval of His plan, but He does bless me with the strength to follow His guidance to a place of joy beyond my wildest dreams.

One of the treasures God has given me throughout my life is the blessing of the animal kingdom. The beauty and wonder of the vast array of different species, including those I have encountered and those I would like to have a chance to encounter.

My pets, both past and present, have loved me and have given me comfort like no human can. Stroking their soft coats reminds me of how calm and soft our world can be. Their unique and comical personalities suggest happy thoughts and joy. They provide the perfect diversion to the complicated world that surrounds me.

Animals teach me about myself and others. Even the less attractive and less popular animals have shown me better ways to live in my surroundings, and make me a more loving and understanding human.

My pets have always been by my side, providing comfort like no other. Wiping my tears and laughing with me, always with complete understanding and without judgment. They have strengthened me along life's path, giving me reason to live during the darkest of times.

My heart is filled with gratitude for the beauty and wonder of the animal kingdom.

V, Alabama, USA

An Unusual “Peak” Experience



When thinking back over peak experiences in OA, none stood out so strongly as what happened when I was abstinent for almost ten years, just one month shy. Now, I recognize that most people wouldn't consider a slip as a peak experience. However, for me, it's all about what I learned as a result, and I learned a lot.

My first two slips were a week apart, about two years ago. The first was relatively small, tasting a sweet food that I was cooking. I didn't think this was anything to be concerned about, because it didn't cause any cravings. The second slip was bigger, eating one handful after another out of a jar (of a food from my 'yellow' list) that I had brought to the table. Several lessons were learned right there. Lesson 1. If I do nothing about the first slip, the second slip is considerably worse. Lesson 2. Only bring a pre-measured amount of a 'yellow' food to the table. Lesson 3. I didn't think these slips were a big deal at the time. That should have been a huge red flag. Later, I came to realize they were a very big deal and potentially the road leading down a very slippery slope into relapse. I should also mention that prior to my almost ten years of abstinence, I had spent about fourteen years in and out of relapse. I knew where this could lead.

Thankfully, I had the good sense to tell my sponsor about my slips. She sounded alarmed. That was my first indication that these were serious. (I was in denial.) I knew that, "the food is the last thing to go," which meant that my spiritual and emotional recovery were on the skids before my food was. My sponsor helped me look into what was going on. I admitted huge relief over having given up a big service position a few weeks earlier. Then I realized that I no longer had to adhere to the abstinence requirement of that position. I had not previously been conscious of this. But I think that my unconscious (and my disease) knew darn well that I no longer "had" to be abstinent in order to do service for others. Lesson 4. I had been staying abstinent to do service for others. I had not been consciously staying abstinent for myself. While I love to do service, my sponsor encouraged me to give up all service, unless it involved directly carrying the message of OA to others, especially newcomers or returnees. Lesson 5. There's nothing as powerful for keeping me abstinent as carrying the message to others. Of course, this is all over the Big Book, the Steps, and the Traditions. Needless to say, I am hopeful that this article can help someone else.

Lesson 6. What you do next matters. My sponsor encouraged me to attend 90 meetings in 90 days and to email my food to her. I did both. My sponsor also asked about my spiritual program, and I recognized that it had fallen off. I began praying and meditating regularly again. I wrote letters to my Higher Power, and I read OA and AA literature. I also needed to give up sponsoring for at least 90 days, and I was very grateful to begin again with the same sponsees. Lesson 7. Focus on self-care and my own recovery. I need to put on my oxygen mask before I can help someone else. I can't give away what I don't have.

Lesson 8. Humility. When I had close to ten years of abstinence, I thought I was hot stuff. I didn't say that to anyone, but that's what I thought. Then I realized that my Higher Power had gifted me those years to help other people, not to aggrandize myself -- a very humbling realization. Oh, so it's not all about me.

Lesson 9. It can happen again, and it did. Fourteen months after my second slip, I had another one. I didn't even know why, until I meditated and asked my Higher Power for guidance. My ex-husband had died a few months earlier, and I had been sorting through old photos of us and our families that day. I hadn't realized how grief-stricken I was until I was in the food late at night, eating one of my red foods. I felt so conflicted about my grief, now being happily remarried for fourteen years, and having such mixed feelings about my previous marriage and my ex's passing.

Lesson 10. Do my very best to stay in touch with my feelings. I hadn't even known I was sad that day. I'm still sad, now eight months later, but at least I know it. Lesson 11. I have a little post-it note that I keep near me during the day and evening: "Abstinence is the most important thing in my life today without exception." Without abstinence, I lose everything else. Lesson 12. My day count doesn't matter. The number of days or years of abstinence I have doesn't make me any better or any worse than anyone else. One of my long-timer friends in OA used to say, "The person with the most abstinence is the one who got up the earliest this morning." How right she was. All that matters is that I am abstinent today. And thanks to my Higher Power and to all of you in OA, I am.

Carol G, NY

Seventh Step Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 76



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Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise

Use this valuable tool every day to support you in keeping your abstinence strong and intact. You may also use it as the focus for meetings and workshops.

CHECKLIST

- 1) Have I been abstinent today?
- 2) Did I pray and meditate today?
- 3) Am I maintaining or working towards a healthy body weight?
- 4) Did I rely on my Higher Power to get or stay abstinent today?
- 5) Is what I am currently doing working for me to remain abstinent?
- 6) If I am having problems have I asked someone else what they are doing?
- 7) Have I made an OA call today?
- 8) Did I have an attitude of gratitude today?
- 9) Did I plan my food today?
- 10) Have I helped someone else today?
- 11) Did I have an action plan in place to stay abstinent today?
- 12) Do I have a sponsor and am I working the Steps with that person?

WRITING EXERCISE

- 1) What is compulsive eating for me?
- 2) What are the foods and food behaviors that trigger me to eat compulsively?
- 3) Am I afraid to get abstinent and if yes, why?
- 4) Why do I think abstinence is important?
- 5) What do I do to stop eating compulsively?
- 6) What Steps do I take to remain abstinent in all circumstances?
- 7) What is the difference between abstinence and a plan of eating?
- 8) What actions do I take to maintain my abstinence and achieve or maintain a healthy body weight?
- 9) How do I begin my day in order to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors?
- 10) What tools do I regularly use?
- 11) How does remaining abstinent improve the quality of my life?
- 12) What place does food have in my life today?

Stay connected between meetings.



WhatsApp

Share your Experience, Strength, and Hope. Reach out and give service to fellows in need of support.



Book Club Fellowship



To join any of these WhatsApp groups, email or text Diane T. at wuignewsletter@gmail.com or (914) 659-0192. Let her know which group/s you'd like to join, your first name, last initial, and your cell phone number.



Food Forum Fellowship

A place to commit a daily plan of eating, find a food buddy to share daily plans with, share recipes, issues, and, most importantly, a place to share experience, strength, and hope. No food pictures please other than raw vegetables.



Westchester Fellowship

We share our experience, strength, and hope with other OA Westchester fellows. The opinions expressed here do not reflect OA as a whole, nor is this an WSO sanctioned site. OA members are admitted upon invitation request. Any inappropriate

Please note that the WhatsApp groups are not OA approved.

WUIG TEXT MESSAGES:

If you'd like to receive text updates about events, meeting closures, intergroup key points, news, etc., text @OAWUIG to 81010. To stop receiving WUIG texts, reply @LEAVE to the number you are receiving messages from.



Instagram

Overeaters Anonymous has expanded its social media presence. Get a bit of OA inspiration or program wisdom—follow us at https://www.instagram.com/overeatersanonymous_official/.

Sponsorship:

Need a sponsor? Are you an available sponsor?

Email Barb,

Sponsor Bank Coordinator:

servicewuig@gmail.com



Intergroup Trusted Servants:



CHAIR: DEBORAH S. WUIGCHAIR@GMAIL.COM

VICE CHAIR: JANICE K. WUIGVICECHAIR@GMAIL.COM

TREASURER: ANNE B. WUIGTREASURER@GMAIL.COM

RECORDING SECRETARY: MICHELLE JB. WUIGSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: WUIGMEETINGLIST@GMAIL.COM

WORLD SERVICE DELEGATES: MARY T & CATHY C. **REGION 6 REPS:** MARY T, DAWN P, & ROB M

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