

Serenity Times

Westchester United Intergroup
www.oawestchesterny.org

What does courage mean to me

Michelle B.

Courage is when I am afraid and frozen, and my fear makes me want to do nothing or do the wrong thing. Courage steers me to do the right things instead, by God's grace.

Since fear had me:

- Living with food as my higher power
- Avoiding life
- Blaming everything and everyone for reality
- Denying my pain
- Not wanting to do what I was told
- Rejecting all directions

Courage helped me:

- Walk into OA, despite my fear
- Tell a person I was stumped about how to stop eating despite my superiority
- Listen to the instructions to get a sponsor, despite my perfectionism
- Follow the guidelines my sponsor laid out, despite my cynicism, fear, and doubt
- Consider what my ideal Higher Power would be, despite my mistrust and skepticism
- Admit my powerlessness and unmanageability, despite my pride
- Share in meetings, despite my embarrassment and self-consciousness
- Hope the program would work as I saw it work for others
- Keep going and persisting, despite my impatience
- Let go of foods I clung to, despite my desperation, overwhelming emotions, and cravings.

Courage is a gift from my Higher Power. Courage is an aspect of my Higher Power. Without God, as I built a relationship within OA, I would have inadequate courage. God helps me do what I could never do alone.

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ONE
day
at a
time



Hi, I'm Robin, like a bird, and I'm a compulsive overeater.

The beginning of the chapter of the "Big Book" (To Employers) was hard for me to read. Thinking of the suicide of any person always makes me sad. I've only seriously considered taking my own life once. I was 5 or 6 years old and didn't want to be abused anymore by my father and brothers. I was just going to take a running leap down the long wooden staircase in our house. I thought that would do the trick. But knowing that someone would have to clean up the mess I would have made, actually stopped me from doing it. (I guess it was very ingrained in me to be a people pleaser, even back then.)

Twenty-two years ago, my older brother DID succeed in taking his own life, and it really was a mess. Not just cleaning up how he had taken his own life, but also the aftermath of how his death shattered the lives of everyone in the family. He didn't leave a note, so we will never know what pushed him to do it. He didn't realize how his actions would affect other people. His two daughters are still trying to come to terms with it.

Then there is the issue of how our disease can affect the work part of our lives. If your work has a uniform code or a size requirement for you to be able to do your job, then it might make a difference.

All this aside, I feel since this book was written, that the world, as a whole, is more understanding and accepting of people who have an addiction with drugs or alcohol. Employers might actually listen and try to be understanding of these addicts.

BUT, I don't think overeaters are given the same understanding. Yes, we probably are not going to be too impaired to do our job. The food might impair our judgment a little, but we will probably be clear-headed enough to perform our work tasks. Most people who don't have a problem with food do think that we are just weak, stupid, spineless, lazy...the list goes on and on. "Why can't you just eat more responsibly? It's just food, anyone can put it down and eat correctly! Just exercise more!"

I don't know what the solution is to help non-overeaters understand our problems with food. Until then, I'm just so grateful that there is a place where I can come to where I can be myself, where I'm understood and not belittled because of my addiction.



Co, co, co, courage!!

Diane T.

The Cowardly Lion, from the Wizard of Oz, so clearly exemplifies what courage means to me: acting in the face of fear.

The 4th Step states that we, “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves,” and that the Principle associated with this Step is courage

Courageously, not fearlessly, is how I have gone about my 4th Step. If I had waited then, or now, until I was fearless in order to cast the light of day on my wrongs, I don’t think I would have gotten very far. Six and a half years ago, when I came into program and fervently worked the Steps, and, until this day, working daily Tenth Steps, I need to keep my eye on the prize—union with God—in order to courageously acknowledge my defects of character that become activated when my basic instincts are affected.

I don’t want to acknowledge my deep-seated fear of being a subpar human which causes me to act out in prideful ways, triggered by the social instinct, by doing things like letting people know about my accomplishments. It’s the ‘Maybe, just maybe, you’ll think I’m good enough if I can dazzle you.’

The character defect of being self-seeking has run rampant in me when I’ve tried to get others to follow my script: rush, hurry, perform, do what you said, pronto, move it! I tend to be in wayyyy too much of a hurry, and I expect others to follow my tune, regardless of how unhealthy it is for me or for anyone else. That self-seeking behavior, rushing myself and others, all stems from the fear of not being good enough for God, (I suppose it’s a social instinct of the highest order coupled with the emotional security instinct.), as though my every moment must be filled with accomplishments for Him and my fellows. Page 77 of the Big Book, line three, states, “Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and our fellows.” I’m more than a little warped this way. God doesn’t want me moving at the speed of light, but fear and self-seeking often get the better of me. It doesn’t serve me, nor can I hear God’s voice when I am run amok.

And so, I courageously look at the nitty gritty, humbly acknowledging and then atoning for my human flaws, all in efforts to become closer to God. In this life, I am first and foremost recovering from separation from God, and I can only do it with courage.

“...we learned courage and integrity as we faced the truth about our defects of character.”

*The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of OA,
2nd ed, P. 85*





Share your experience, strength and hope in the 3rd quarter Serenity Times

Theme: Self-discipline

Send your submissions to:
wuignewsletter@gmail.com

Deadline: June 20th

Looking for meetings?



Find a meeting

Face-To-Face Online Telephone Non-Real-Time

Find a face-to-face meeting

You do not have to register to attend an OA meeting. It is a good idea to reach out to the contact person to make sure the meeting information on this list is current. We want to make sure that someone is there to welcome you when you arrive at a meeting that you have never visited before.

Go to: <https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/>

Courage in my life

Dawn P.

To me courage has been facing my demons, the shame, struggle, and embarrassing moments that made me turn to food or another substance to hide from the pain. Sometimes I didn't even know that I was doing that though, even when the pain of addiction was too much.

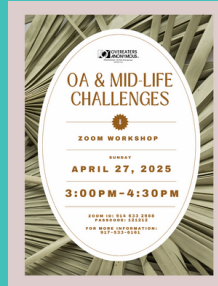
Today, courage is looking at my past, looking at my behaviors, and forgiving myself for blunders or unkind words. Courage was waking up and going on, after being diagnosed with cancer, or after my husband died. It is pausing to give up control of a situation, person or place. It is stepping up to share at a meeting, or do service, knowing that I may make a mistake and doing it anyway. It is laughing at myself without ridiculing myself or calling myself negative things. It is accepting people around me for who they are, and taking a step back if needed, to create a boundary of self care.

BE
COURAGEOUS

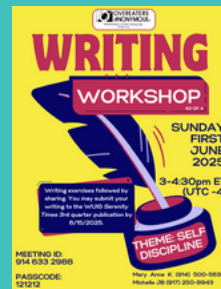


News and Events

April 27th OA & Mid-Life Challenges Workshop on Zoom 3-4:30 pm ET ([Link to Flyer](#))



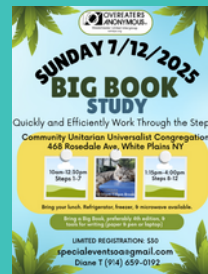
June 1st Writing Workshop - The theme for the upcoming newsletter is Self-Discipline 3-4:30 pm ET on Zoom. ([Link to Flyer](#))



June 28th A Healing Workshop Grieving in Recovery 2-4 pm ET on Zoom ([Link to Flyer](#))



July 12th Big Book Study. Quickly and efficiently work through the steps. In-person only - Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation in White Plains, NY. 10 am - 4:00 pm ([Link to Flyer](#))



Important Links

- About meetings: www.oawestchesterny.org/meetings.html
- 7th Tradition: www.oawestchesterny.org/7th-step-tradition.html
- Contact WUIG: www.oawestchesterny.org/contact.html
- Overeaters Anonymous: www.aa.org

Courage

Jeanette R.

Courage is the grace that enables me to move forward and choose the next right action. It becomes available when I choose God's will over my will. God's will inspires and directs my actions and gives me the inner strength (grace) to take action. That inner strength is courage.

Courage needs to be nourished by trust. Trust increases every time I choose God's will over my will and leave the results to God. "Thy will be done" is my willingness prayer. Now I can surrender to God's inspiration and direction, because I have the courage to act. My experience is that I am becoming more confident and less afraid as I continue in this process.



OA Responsibility Pledge

Always extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.

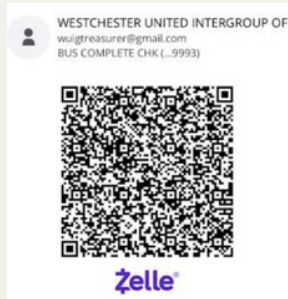
Sponsorship

Need a sponsor? Are you an available sponsor? Email: sponsorwuig@gmail.com

Seventh Tradition Contributions

We are fully self-supporting through our own contributions. Send your check to: Westchester United Intergroup of OA, PO Box 125, White Plains, NY 10603. wuigtreasurer@gmail.com. State your contribution distribution in the MEMO section. [PayPal Link](#)

Please contribute what you can, we need you more than your money. OA World Service suggests \$5 for your meeting.



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 texts from.



WUIG Trusted Servants

- Chair: Diane T.: wuigchair@gmail.com
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- Newsletter Editor: Cindy A. wuignewsletter@gmail.com
- World Service Business Conference Delegates: Cathy C.

What we do have to offer is far greater... a Fellowship in which we find and share the healing power of love.

The 12 Steps & 12 Traditions OA, 2nd ed, p1



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/



Westchester United Intergroup
oahelps.org

