



OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

OTTAWA DISTRICT INTERGROUP



The Sunshiner Newsletter

Winter 2018 Edition, Volume 4

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WORKING THE STEPS

My Way Didn't Work

"Just put down the food and you'll recover"—that simply didn't make sense to me. If I could just do that, I wouldn't be in OA.

I had successfully put down the food before—many times before—but eventually would pick it up again, eating excessively. Food was my enemy and my best friend. Why couldn't I eat moderately? Why was I so weak? What was wrong with me? I didn't understand that I was born with a disease, always wanting more food: sweet, savory, sour . . . it didn't matter. I would stuff myself with anything edible. Restricting, then bingeing, I'd promise myself this would be the last time.

Just being abstinent was not the answer. My self-will would not suffice; it wouldn't last. The conviction that I could do it alone was insane. I had to accept that my problem — excessive, compulsive overeating—started in my head and I had no adequate defense. In fact, it seemed to be getting worse. I was

overeating all day and even all night and I feared it would kill me. I had to accept that I needed help, but a psychologist didn't help. Liquid diets didn't help. Weight-loss programs didn't help. Pills didn't help. I always did things my way, and my way didn't work for long. I was a failure. I was doomed. Then a friend reached out to me and said, "Come to an OA meeting with me." She saved my life! As I went to meetings, lots of meetings, I heard people share their stories and knew I was finally home.

I began to hope. As I read the Big Book, I saw myself in the stories of recovery. As I started to use the Tools and seriously work the Steps, I found even more hope. As I listened to early-morning phone meetings and read the first 164 pages of the Big Book page by page, I found not only hope but also faith in a uni-

versal spirit, a Higher Power that could guide me. But I had work to do.

I had to accept that I had to take action (quite a bit of action) every day, and be willing to listen and take Good Orderly Direction. Perseverance was key. I had to be willing to stop doing it my way and do it the OA way and the way set down in the Big Book. It's been twenty years, and I'm still here, listening and learning, one day at a time. Thank you OA.

Barbara E.,
West Orange, New Jersey
USA

Lifeline



From the Editor

My name is Dawn-Marie M. and I'm compulsive about food. I am now under the direction of the new Publications Chairperson, Bruce R.. As editor, I am looking for submissions for upcoming issues such as themes, special events, personal stories & articles relating to OA. The theme for the upcoming Spring issue is "Tools of Recovery".

You can send submissions to the following address: Sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca

OA Ottawa District Intergroup Board 2018

Officers:	
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Treasurer:	Patricia O.
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Ottawa District Intergroup

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Digital subscriptions to *Lifeline* have grown by 102% since oalifeline.org was launched only one year ago. Thank you to all of our subscribers for making our new website such a success.

...the New Year ... is the time for subscribers to renew their subscriptions. Please log into your account today and make sure your subscription will continue through 2018.

If you are not yet a subscriber, you can [preview the site](#) for free and sign up instantly.

Newcomers' Survey

How did you hear about OA?

An excerpt from a letter to OA members from the PI chairperson on Dec 2, 2017 (edited)

Dear OA Members,

On behalf of the Ottawa District Intergroup, we are asking for your participation in a Newcomers' Survey.

OA has been a well-kept secret. Intergroup is trying to change this. We made an application for funding from Region 6 to do a PI Blitz in the Ottawa area and it was approved. We are in the process of doing a mailing to 200 Medical Centres in the area. A condition of our funding is to track how successful the blitz was. Our way of meeting this condition was to develop a Newcomers' Survey.

This is a brief explanation of how this procedure will work:

1. A survey will be attached to all future Newcomers' Packets.
2. After the Newcomer fills it out, your member will place it in an envelope which is kept in your Meeting Agenda Book.
3. Once each month your Group Rep will bring the surveys to Intergroup and our PI chairperson will log them into a report.

If you or your group have any questions or need further support with this procedure, please feel free to contact public_information@oa-ottawa.ca

Thank you for your support.

Christine C., Public Information Chairperson

OA Newcomers' Survey

How did you hear about OA?

Please all that apply: Date: _____

- ◇ Friend/ family member / co-worker
- ◇ Current OA member
- ◇ Radio / TV / Newspaper
- ◇ Healthcare Professional
- ◇ Internet / OA Website
- ◇ OA Poster
- ◇ Another 12 Step Program
- ◇ OA Public Information Booth
Event: _____
- ◇ Other: _____

First Name (Optional): _____

Would you like an OA member to give you a call?

Yes ___ Phone _____ Not now thanks: ___

Newcomers' Survey Procedure

Group Chairperson

Each group will be supplied with an envelope to be kept with their Meeting Agenda Book. When a Newcomers' Welcome Package is given out they will encourage the newcomer to fill out the survey immediately. The member or chairperson will put the completed survey in the Meeting Book envelope.

Group Reps

Will collect the envelope contents and bring them to the monthly Intergroup meeting and give them to the Public Information Officer. Envelop remains in group binder for continued use.



DAVE'S STORY

My name is Dave MacD. and I am a compulsive overeater, abstinent since February 12, 2013 by the grace of God, the 12 steps of recovery, Sponsorship, meetings and many good members, who are my friends.

After years of trying many different diets, exercise, trying to control what I eat and how much, I finally surrendered and came to Overeaters Anonymous and joined a group. I admitted I was powerless over food and that my life was unmanageable. The weight was one problem, however the mental obsession had become emotionally and mentally too much.

I knew a couple of OA members and I called one and asked if he would be my sponsor. He agreed

and we met at a meeting the following day. He had me call him for the first 21 days with my food plan. He explained that we ask our Higher Power each morning for a day's abstinence and that we thank God after a day of abstinence. I was to eat three meals a day and have a plate, not a platter of food. Also, no food with sugar and no junk food. I started on this program of action and most importantly my sponsor took me through the 12 Steps of recovery which allowed me to have a spiritual awakening. The Steps are the program of recovery in its entirety; everything else supports that process. I have also had the opportunity to sponsor a couple of guys in OA which helps me stay abstinent.

What does a spiritual awakening feel like? I would say it is the feeling of freedom from the mental obsession, feeling

good about losing weight and maintaining my goal weight. I have a sponsor and many good friends that help me keep my spirit alive and a Higher Power that loves me and keeps me abstinent.

"we have a plate, not a platter of food."

Feedback for the OA Website

The Ottawa District Intergroup website is being updated with a new look! We are looking for suggestions as to what kind of information members would like to see there. Send your input to oaweb@ottawa-oa.ca





Using the Twelve Steps

When people use that amorphous word “program”, as in “I work my program”, “the program says to do ...” or “I’m not very happy with my program these days”, all of these references are really to the Twelve Steps because the “program” IS the steps. Sure, there is the fellowship and there are the tools, and they supplement the Steps and are part of our program. But when it comes to working in OA, the Steps are where the work is and where the results are.

How do I work them? The source of the Steps is the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, our text book which came to us from AA. It is simple to work the First Step. Read the Big Book from the Doctor’s Opinion to page 43. Slowly. Pay attention to what you are reading. Read it again. This is Step 1. After reading those pages, hopefully it is possible to identify our own version of the disease, how it has made us powerless and the subsequent unmanageability of our lives due to our disease of compulsive eating.

Step Two does get touched on in those first 43 pages too, but the chapter “To the Agnostics”, pp 44-57, is about Step Two.

Once I know that I have a disease and that I am powerless, it is imperative that I get some power because I certainly can’t do anything to help myself. Step Two is about this power. It’s simple, really. Hopefully, I either already believe or I’m willing to believe in something outside of myself that can restore me to sanity where my disease is concerned. I can start with willingness – that’s all that I need. That is Step Two.

Step Three is described in pp. 58-63. This passage describes well how my life was when I thought I was the higher power. It describes in simple terms how my life can look now if I turn to a power greater than myself, which is not me. And this is not just where my disease is concerned. I can get help with everything. I just need to ask. And keep asking.

Steps Four to Nine are about cleaning up the past. The resentments, fears and harms from our past have been causing us anger, fear, guilt, shame and remorse which cause us to eat. Pages 64-84 describe in detail how to do the inventories of resentments, fears and harms (Step 4), how to share them with another human being (Step 5), how to ask for help from our Higher Power to change (Steps 6 and 7) and how to list the people we’ve harmed (Step 8) and make amends to them (Step 9). When we do these Steps, we get rid of the garbage from the past that makes us eat.

Step Ten, described on pages 84-85, is about keeping the day free of resentment, fear and harm so that we end the day

clean, the way it is after we’ve finished Steps Four to Nine. Ideally, no garbage will build up, so we won’t need to turn to food.

Step Eleven is described in detail in pages 85 to 88. Our program is a spiritually-based program. That is what sets OA apart from any diet. If we work on the spiritual aspect of OA’s program, we will grow spiritually and further develop our connection with our Higher Power. Better contact with that Power helps keep us from the food.

Step Twelve is described in the chapter “Working With Others”. But note that Step Twelve reads: “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps...” Here is the reason we work the Steps – it is to have a spiritual awakening, which is described in Appendix II The Spiritual Experience, as “a personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism” or, in our case, from compulsive overeating. The Steps help change us so we can recover from our addiction. This is the biggest consequence of doing the work in the Steps – we don’t need to be in our addiction anymore to function.

If we live the Steps, continuing to use them in our lives on a daily basis, there is less trouble in dealing with life. The connection with our HP gets better and better. Life improves more and more. We get to be happy, joyous and free, as promised. It’s pretty inviting. Speaking from personal experience, it’s worth the effort.

Anonymous

“Discipline:
Acting like a
love myself
enough to be
healthy.”

OA Retreat



June 22-
24, 2018

Mark
your
calendar!



Providence House,
Kingston, Ontario

Stay tuned for
more information!

**We remember "that, as we
join hands, we find love and
understanding beyond our
wildest dreams!"**

NEW YEAR NEW OA

March 3, 2018 10 am - 3:30 pm

Crossroads United Church

690 Sir John A. MacDonald Blvd, Kingston, Ontario

Topics: Abstinence vs Plan of Eating, Sponsorship

Suggested 7th tradition donation \$5



kingstonareaoa@gmail.com

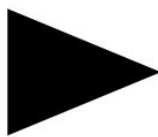
The Sunshiner—Deadline for submissions for the Spring Edition on "Tools of Recovery" is April 6, 2018.



PORTLAND, MAINE 2018
WE LIGHT THE WAY
REGION 6 CONVENTION

Keynote speakers
will receive a free
hotel room during
the convention!

Keynote Speakers Wanted!



Four keynotes
will be selected!

Submit your recording for consideration.

In order to be considered, candidates must:

1. Be an OA member with a minimum of 3 years current, continuous abstinence
2. Submit in MP3 digital format a talk recorded at an OA event/registered meeting
3. Register for the 2018 Convention prior to recording submission

How to Submit:

Include your full name, address, telephone, email address, abstinence date, and length of time in OA.

- Email to R6ConventionChair@oaregion6.org
- Mail to R6 Convention Chair
1229 Winding Trail
Mississauga, ON, L4Y 2T6
Canada
- Submit directly to the Region 6 Coordinator at the Region 6 Spring Assembly in Albany on April 14, 2018.

Keynote submission recordings will be reviewed by a preselected committee.

Deadline: April 29, 2018



PORTLAND, MAINE 2018
WE LIGHT THE WAY
REGION 6 CONVENTION

Join us in Portland,
Maine for the Region 6
Convention!

October 26—28, 2018

Meal Plan & Hotel Reservations Now Open!

Hotel: single room \$150, double \$150, triple \$160, quad \$170 (US\$ plus applicable taxes). To book a reservation go to: www.oaregion6.org/2018 or call 1-800-345-5050. Book by Oct 4, 2018 to guarantee the hotel's convention rate.

Meal Plan: \$180 (5 meals including the Saturday banquet)

Banquet only \$55 (both include taxes & service charges)

Go to www.oaregion6.org/2018 to purchase.

Registration*: Early bird—\$50 until August 15, 2018, \$60 from August 16 to October 12, 2018, \$75 at the door. Go to www.oaregion6.org/2018 to register.

*Registration fee is non-refundable.

We remember “that, as
we join hands, we find
love and understanding
beyond our wildest
dreams!”

Stepping up for Recovery

Stepping up for Recovery means that I concede I have a disease called compulsive eating. It takes many forms, but however it manifests itself, I am powerless and my life can be unmanageable.

Stepping up for Recovery means I recognize the irrationality of my behaviors, and I realize that only a Power greater than myself can rebuild my life and return me to a state of reasonableness.

Stepping up for Recovery means I trust God. I turn my will and my life—that is, my thoughts and actions—over to the care of a loving Higher Power regardless of how elusive, subtle, abstract, mysterious, or indescribable that Power may be.

Stepping up for Recovery means I take an honest look at myself. I am aware this disease can bring out the worst in me, so I thoroughly inventory my liabilities along with my assets.

Stepping up for Recovery means I do not isolate, and I am no longer alone with my disease. I own up to my selfishness, dishonesty, self-seeking, and fear—knowing my secrets are safe when I share it with God and confide in trusted members of this Fellowship.

Stepping up for Recovery means I am prepared to have my Higher Power change me, refine me, and give me a sense of usefulness.

Stepping up for Recovery means I allow God to remove my character defects and transform me into the person I am meant to be. I must humbly accept this to happen in God's time, not mine.

Stepping up for Recovery means I make note of where I was at fault and am willing to make restitution.

Stepping up for Recovery means I go beyond a meager apology when I have wronged someone. With God's help, I continue to change my behaviors, aligning my thoughts and actions with my Higher Power's will.

Stepping up for Recovery means I persevere on my journey. I keep doing the footwork in this Program, in order to maintain physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Stepping up for Recovery means I communicate openly with my Higher Power. I call upon, ask, urge, and summon God to hear my prayers. I also have to sit quietly and sometimes wait patiently for an answer.

Stepping up for Recovery means I acknowledge something has changed within me—a spiritual awakening, perhaps—and I am no longer the person I once was. (Thank you, God!) I want to give back what I have so richly been given, and I practice certain values including integrity, faith, courage, hope and love.

12 Step Meditation

I follow the 12 Steps as a base for my meditation. I find that I don't "leave the building" as it were, if I do this.

Say the following:

Step 1 – I'm a success today if I don't eat compulsively. Today – there is absolutely nothing more important to me than my keeping this compulsive overeater abstinent. Not taking that first compulsive bite is by far the most important thing I do each day.

Step 2 – Read pg.86, 87 and 88. Read about acceptance (pg.417 of BB).

Step 3 – Say the Third Step Prayer (pg.63 of BB).

Step 4 – Anger, resentment, jealousy, envy, as Bill W. states in the Big Book, "are dubious luxuries of normal men". For me, a compulsive overeater, they are poison. For today: I am ready to change – to be rid of the faults that are hampering my recovery (For Today pg.69).

Step 5 – God...here I am and here are all my troubles. I've made a mess of things and I can't do anything about it. You take me and all my troubles and do anything you want with me.

Step 6 – Say: "We are powerless over each of our defects of character, just as we are powerless over food. It will be up to a Power greater than ourselves to remove them from us; we can't do it alone" (pg. 55 OA, 12 & 12).

Step 7 – Say the 7th Step Prayer (pg.76 BB).

Step 8 – Step 4 – Read pg.66, 67 and 68 of BB. Pray for others to whom you may have a resentment, praying that they have everything that you want, including health, happiness and prosperity. Also read about resentment and fear.

Step 9 – Read the Promises (pg.83-84 BB)

Step 10 – Read the other Promises at the bottom of pg.84 BB
"And we have ceased fighting..."

Step 11 – Say the St. Francis of Assisi Prayer (AA 12 & 12, pg. 99).
Read the last 2 paragraphs on pg.164 BB.

Step 12 – Read the last 2 paragraphs pg.420 of BB



Twelve Step Podcast Series

In this series of workshops, members share on the importance of working ALL Twelve Steps and how working the Steps changed their lives physically, emotionally and spiritually.

To listen to these podcasts go to oa.org.

The Sunshiner—Deadline for submissions for the Spring Edition on "Tools of Recovery" is April 6, 2018.



The Ottawa District Intergroup Business meeting is held on the 4th Saturday of each month at McNabb Community Centre @ 10:15 AM. All members are welcome.

OA RESPONSIBILITY PLEDGE

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

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Sunshiner is the newsletter of Overeaters Anonymous Ottawa District Intergroup. All submissions to the publication chair must be signed and when published will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request.

Describe your OA experience. The focus should be on OA. References to other Twelve Step programs and outside support are considered outside issues and cannot be published.

The opinions expressed are those of the writer, not those of Ottawa District Intergroup or OA as a whole. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Please address all submissions and correspondence via email to:
Sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca

Dawn-Marie M., Editor

Bruce R. Chair of the Publications Committee

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