

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

OTTAWA DISTRICT INTERGROUP

The Sunshiner Newsletter

Principle Focus



January
2022

The last line of our Twelfth Step reads, “to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Twenty years ago, when I first came to OA, this part of the Twelfth Step seemed a lofty goal. What were these Principles? And what a tall order, to practice them in all my affairs!

To do as instructed, I first had to become familiar with the Principles; only then could I practice them. I knew I would need the help and guidance of my sponsor, OA friends, and my Higher Power. Today, the Principles of the Steps enrich my life and enable me to live it sanely. At last, I have a guide for living that shows me the route to becoming the person my Higher Power’s love would like me to be.

The Step Principles are so beautiful in their simplicity: Step One, honesty; Step Two, hope; Step Three, faith; Step Four, courage; Step Five, integrity; Step Six, willingness; Step Seven, humility; Step Eight, self-discipline; Step Nine, love; Step Ten, perseverance; Step Eleven, spiritual awareness; Step Twelve, service.

To live a life grounded in these Principles, what works for me is to continually study them. Every month I focus on one Principle; I reflect, write, and read about it, and discuss it with my sponsor and OA friends. For example, since September is the ninth month of the year, I focus on love, the Principle of Step Nine. I do the same thing for all the other Step Principles every month of the year. This way, their meanings continue to evolve for me.

There have been times in my life when one Principle would stand out, seeming to be just the one I needed most or the one that would help me through a difficult time. Courage has been key for me, and I like to think of it as Confronting Our Unfortunate Realities Aware of God’s Embrace. Other times, I have needed hope: Hold Onto Positive Energy. Integrity speaks to me daily: Intuitively Nurturing Truthfulness, Embracing Goodness and Rightness In all That You do.

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Another favorite is humility, which I like to think of as Honestly Understanding My Instincts, Limits, Insecurities, Triumphs, and Yearnings. Of course, faith keeps me centered daily, For Always I Trust Him.

These Principles of the Twelve Steps now guide me every day, lighting the way to peace and serenity.

— Elaine Z.

Reprinted from
<http://www.oalifeline.org/steps/principle-focus/>

For Today – January 21

Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise.

Sigmund Freud

Turning things around is the primary function of the twelve-step program. Where once my inclination was to sweep everything under the rug, to avert my gaze from reality, today I find relief from much resentment and anger by looking honestly at myself. Where once I was quick to blame anyone and anything for my troubles, today it is my own motives and actions that get my attention. Self-honesty is an excellent treatment for what ails me, especially for the destructive emotions of anger and resentment.

For today: Self-honesty makes me feel good about myself.

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From: For Today

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I always thought of myself as an honest person – “honest as the day is long” as the old adage says. I always return what I borrow; if a sales clerk gives the wrong change I make it right; if asked to keep a confidence I honestly do!

However, prior to coming to OA I was dishonest about food and lied to my Higher Power by giving food more power than my Higher Power. I lied to myself and gave food so much power over me- eating more and more and needing more and more, and not seeing all the damage that was resulting. Prior to OA I led a dishonest life and am pleased now to be honest as the day is long, one day at a time. Now I can honestly declare that following the OA program gives serenity, peace, hope and a full life. The fellowship of meetings through Zoom and telephone continue to offer an honest approach to living and to battling compulsive overeating. This is my first attempt at service so thanks for inviting me into your lives through this newsletter.

–Jean B., Ontario

The Healing Begins with HONESTY

If the road to addiction is paved with lies, then surely honesty is the path to recovery.

As addicts, we lie to others but sadly, more importantly, we lie to ourselves. If we were honest, we would have been able to see that there was a problem causing our food addiction.

Denial and dishonesty work hand-in-glove against our self-interest to disconnect us from ourselves, and our higher power. It robs us of the ability to ask for help.

We lie for many reasons. We may not want to look at, or face, our own personal demons that prevent us from recognizing what is wrong with us and why we are hurting inside so badly that we hurt ourselves with our addiction. Hiding our truth allows our disease to flourish.

If our addiction is based on lies, then our abstinence and healing must be based on truth and rigorous honesty. The truth is what will reconnect us with ourselves, the parts of ourselves we lost. Finding our truth behind our misuse of food will help us to find balance and harmony. It will help us restore lost relationships and find peace with our Higher Power.

In searching for truth and healing we are fortunate to find others on the same journey. We take comfort in the companionship we have

at meetings where we can share openly our challenges on the path to our truth. We have finally found a safe place to be ourselves. In letting go, and practicing honesty, transparency and authenticity we are taking on the task of reaching for our recovery, one day at a time.

Creating a strong support network of trusted people who have been where we are helps us gain strength and stay true to ourselves. In turn, we can then give to others the support so many have given to us. Helping others is a gift this program shows us that strengthens our own abstinence and brings us healing.

Honesty is not comfortable. It is particularly difficult in the early days of recovery. However, the healing it brings and the relationships we build as we work on the 12 steps is the foundation for a better tomorrow.

–Kelly G.



Celebrations

Celebrant

Abstinence

**Anniversary or
Celebration date**

Meaghan H

15 years

December 17

Ottawa District Intergroup



Sign-up for Ottawa District Intergroup Email Updates

We're on the Web!

<https://oa-ottawa.ca/>

Below is the outcome of the ODIG Elections that took place at the December Intergroup meeting. Anyone interested in a vacant position can be elected at a later ODIG meeting.

Officers

Chair - Luci S.
Vice-Chair - Juli D.
Treasurer - Debbie P.
Secretary - Susan P.
WSBC Delegate - Bruce R.
Region 6 Representative - Danielle G.
(incumbent)

Committee Chairs

Literature - VACANT
Publications - VACANT
Public Information/Professional Outreach - VACANT
Special Events - VACANT
Twelfth Step Within - Karin H.
Ad-hoc Pioneer/Long timer - Juli D. (incumbent)

Intergroup Liaisons

Intergrupe Français de l'Outaouais - Carmen D.
(incumbent)



Twelfth Step Within Committee
presents

Overeaters Anonymous Workshop on the Twelve Steps

*A 15-session workshop designed to help participants
achieve and maintain abstinence through working all Twelve Steps.*

January 11 – April 19, 2022

Tuesdays, 7 – 9 p.m.

January 11 is the Introductory Session

The following OA-approved literature will be used in the workshop sessions and homework assignments:

- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*
- *Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition* (the Big Book)
- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* by Alcoholic Anonymous
- *Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition*
- *Voices of Recovery*
- *For Today*

Participants need their own copies.

Workshop location: Zoom (Link will be emailed to participants)

**Any questions, or to register, please contact Susan P. at 613-803-5591
or susan.ont.canada@gmail.com**

This is a closed workshop for up to 12 participants. No new members may join after the Introductory Session. Participants commit to attend and fully participate in all sessions.

More on Honesty

Round 2, 3, 4, whatever...

Starting over. Taking that first step back to OA after falling off the track and losing your abstinence may be one of the hardest, most humbling things you may have to face since you decided to join OA. That was the time you finally admitted you were powerless over food, and your life had become unmanageable.

We are all too intimately familiar with the ins and outs of the latest diet clubs, fads and various other measures we tried to help us control our eating. It became a never ending battle that too often resulted in failure. We were left feeling hopeless because we once again slipped up.

We all know the fear and despair we face when we start taking that one, then two bites too many. The number of days abstinent makes no difference. We are back to the same place where we began.

It takes strength to admit we need help and to then take action to get help. So we go back to OA where we are welcomed with open arms and by fellow members in OA.

The support, love, understanding and compassion we are shown no matter how many times we need to walk back in the door is the hallmark of our program. If you want help, we have a spot for you, and you will always be welcome.

As members, we know the depths of darkness and solitude our disease can bring. We know what rejection, shame and embarrassment feel like. We tend to be the hardest on ourselves and we battle our own pride every time we feel we have failed. However, our

strength is in not surrendering. Our strength is our willingness to pick ourselves up and start over again.

At our meetings we find people who are like family. We feel safe to share our struggles and our tribulations. Through our experiences we offer hope to others in OA who need to hear about our successes and failures, our joys, fears, struggles and everything in between. We are able to offer each other hope and the most genuine understanding of anyone in our lives. You will never know when your story influences someone else's life.

Don't fear starting over. This time you are not starting from scratch, you are starting from experience. Our abstinence is a foundation for our lives and our program is the bridge to get there. Your fellow OA members will always welcome you home.

–Kelly G.



Region 6

Abstinence Literature: Resource Guide

What is abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous? How can you use the tools of the program to achieve and maintain abstinence?

As part of OA's strategic plan, the Region Chairs Committee has created this [Abstinence PowerPoint presentation](#) to assist your group or service body in exploring the concept of abstinence.

As you prepare to present it, you may find the following literature helpful:

- [A Commitment to Abstinence](#)
- [A Plan of Eating](#)
- [Dignity of Choice](#)
- ["The Doctor's Opinion" from Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th edition](#) (PDF opens in new tab)

Reprinted from <https://oaregion6.org/>

Virtual Region

The Virtual Region is a service body that supports Overeaters Anonymous (OA) Virtual Meetings (telephone, online and non-real-time meetings).

It was in existence before virtual meetings became a necessity.

<https://oavirtualregion.org/>

January 22 – One Day Virtual Retreat – The God of Our Understanding

[RetreatFlyer Final 121821.docx.pdf \(oavirtualregion.org\)](#)

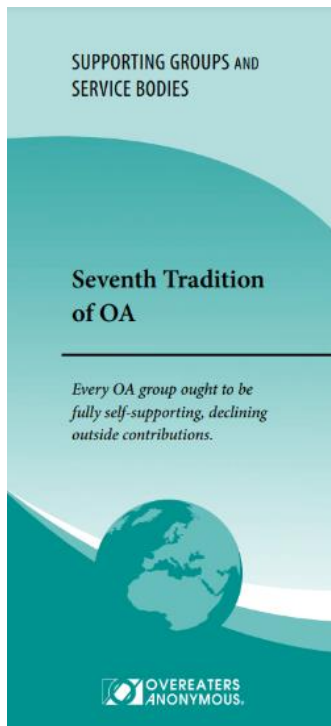


World Service

The introduction to OA's keystone book, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*, is now available as a **free download** on oa.org.

This brief passage explains that OA uses the terms “compulsive overeating” and “compulsive eating” interchangeably to recognize all forms of compulsive food behaviors. Key differences between the OA program and a typical diet are also included, as well as a heartfelt welcome to compulsive eaters everywhere.

Find the Introduction to the Twelve Steps on the “And your journey begins” page for newcomers, the Twelve Steps page, and in the Document Library under “New to OA.”



Bits n' Bites

Seventh Tradition of OA

Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Pamphlet #802 is available for download to learn more about how your contributions benefit OA.

<https://oa.org/app/uploads/2021/08/seventh-tradition-of-oa-every-oa-group-ought-to-be-fully-self-supporting-declining-outside-contributions-802.pdf>

Editorial Policy

The Ottawa District Sunshiner Newsletter publications committee welcomes your comments and suggestions. The opinions published in the newsletter are those of the writer, not those of Ottawa District Intergroup or OA as a whole. Please address all submissions and correspondence via email to: Sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca. We request that submissions be signed, but names will be withheld from publication upon request. Please limit the scope to your OA experience noting that references to other Twelve Step programs cannot be published.

Gabriela B., Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter
Vacant Position, Chairperson of the Publications Committee