



**OVEREATERS  
ANONYMOUS**®

OTTAWA DISTRICT INTERGROUP



April  
2022

# The Sunshiner Newsletter

## The Principle of Courage

When I pray the Serenity Prayer, I ask for serenity, acceptance, courage, and wisdom.

The first word in that prayer is “God.” It is he who grants me these ingredients that lead me to recovery time and time again. For me, the word “serenity” is very important because it tells me I must remain calm in all situations, with everyone, all the time. But it is the word “courage” that gets me to change. Courage doesn’t only change me; people, places, and situations around me change when I become clean and honest. Courage! No more people pleasing to avoid a situation that must instead be let go.

When I become courageous enough to be who I am and say what I mean without saying it meanly, I make a choice to allow God to change things. In the past, I avoided “making waves,” not wanting to damage or end a relationship, but now I often make a courageous choice to speak calmly and lovingly to address a person or situation. At all costs, I cannot be afraid to speak or fear the outcome. I need to be courageous, knowing full well that things are going to

change once I make the decision to pocket my fear and go to it.

This does not mean I do it in a reckless manner. I do it after discussing it with my partner in recovery and asking the God of my understanding to help me.

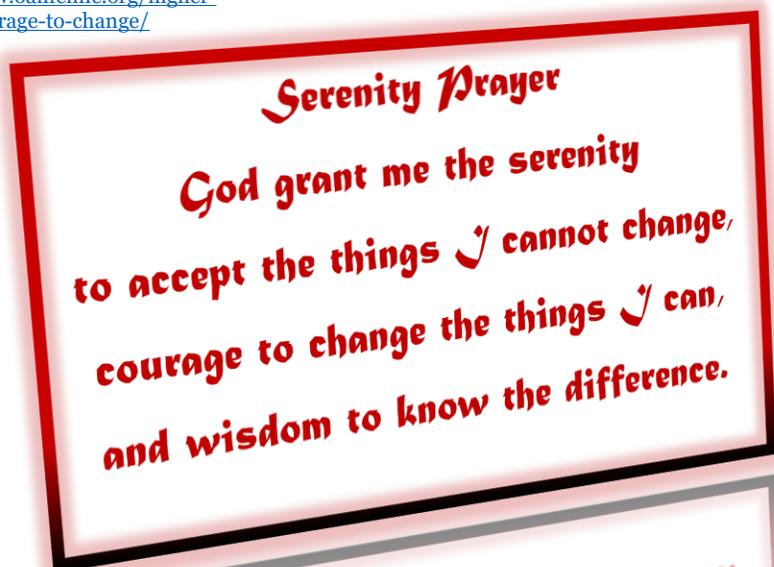
Fear is useless; what I need is faith in God and myself. The Serenity Prayer will, through the grace of God, eventually grant me the wisdom to know I am doing the right thing. For today, I ask God to help me with my imperfections so I become willing to change the things I can and allow the healing to continue.

— *Anonymous*

Reprinted from  
<http://www.oalifeline.org/higher-power/courage-to-change/>

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# Editorial – Introducing...

COURAGE – did you know that the word courage:

- comes from the French word 'coeur', which means heart.
- is the same in both French and English.



So as we reflect on this principle, it is only fitting that *The Sunshiner Newsletter* introduces the inclusion of French language submissions from our recovery partners in the Intergroupe OA Français de l'Outaouais.

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

I look forward to being able to include more French submissions in the future.

– Gabriela, Editor



## *La Prière de la Sérénité*

**Mon Dieu, donnez-moi la sérénité d'accepter les choses que je ne peux changer, le courage de changer les choses que je peux et la sagesse d'en connaître la différence.**

- 1- J'ai eu le courage d'arrêter de manger mes émotions ; de les vivre. Sans avoir peur de mourir.
- 2- J'ai eu le courage à l'Étape 3 de prendre la décision de confier ma volonté et ma vie à une PS qui me convenait. Et de laisser ma PS d'être en charge de ma vie.
- 3- J'ai eu le courage de faire ma 1<sup>ière</sup> 4<sup>e</sup> étape, de découvrir la personne que j'étais et d'être la personne que ma PS voulait que je sois. J'en ai fait plusieurs autres en 41 ans.
- 4- J'ai eu le courage de faire ma 5<sup>e</sup> étape en dévoilant tout sur moi, le bon et le mauvais à un autre être humain.
- 5- J'ai eu le courage de retourner à l'école quand j'avais 2 enfants et que je voulais une meilleure qualité de vie de famille....
- 6- J'ai eu le courage de demander le divorce du père de mes enfants parce que je n'étais pas heureuse dans une relation qui a duré 15 ans....
- 7- J'ai eu le courage de refaire ma vie avec un homme 26 ans plus vieux que moi ; qu'est-ce que les gens vont penser....les défis que cela a représenté et les cadeaux que cette relation m'a apporter.
- 8- J'ai eu le courage de laisser mon mari partir quand son cœur ne fonctionnait plus mais que son mental était très bien.
- 9- Aujourd'hui j'ai le courage de continuer à faire ma vie sans lui ; c'est la première fois de ma vie que je vis seule.
- 10- J'ai le courage de donner du service dans OA à un niveau plus élevé que les groupes.
- 11- J'ai le courage de faire le voyage seule en auto à Moncton au Nouveau-Brunswick pour visiter ma fille et sa famille.
- 12- J'ai le courage de persévérer à vivre ce mode de vie un jour à la fois.

– Carmen - Intergroupe Français de l'Outaouais



## Celebrations

**Laura 1 year on March 2**

# Congratulations!

**Did we miss your celebration notice?**

You deserve to be celebrated too!  
Please let us know by sending your details to  
[sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca](mailto:sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca)

## Step Principle 4 – Courage

Courage involves being totally honest about my failings, and then having hope and faith in a power greater than me to change them. Some days fear can paralyze me in my steps. But I don't pretend I'm not afraid to do things. I know the difference is courage. Doing it anyway, no matter the outcome, that is true courage for me. When I'm afraid of being wrong, making a fool of myself, or losing someone else's confidence in me, I can make the choice to back away, or I can do it anyway with faith, hope, honesty, and courage that HP will determine the outcome. I will either be right and continue in that direction, or wrong and I can learn a lesson for the future.

– *Laura W.*

Reprinted from  
<https://region5oa.org/blog-post/short-descriptions-for-the-twelve-principles-of-the-oa-steps/>

## Courage is already a part of you

When asked, most people deny they possess courage as a character trait.

A dictionary definition of courage includes:

1. the ability to do something that frightens one
2. strength in the face of pain or grief.

Both parts of this apply to all of us in Overeaters Anonymous.

Courage in our recovery also includes pain (physical and emotional), fear, grief from the past, and an immense amount of strength.

When you make the decision to break free of the control that you compulsive eating has over you, you are already showing the amount of courage that you have within you.

Courage is comprised of six different types: emotional, social, physical, moral, spiritual, and lastly, intellectual. In this program the tools we have to help us through times where we can't see our own courage will carry us through. Going to meetings, making calls to fellow OA members, meditation, prayer, journaling, step work, reading all of our amazing OA literature can help us renew our own courage daily.

Our recovery is an ongoing process that will last a lifetime. In the words of Mark Twain,

“Courage is resistance to fear,  
mastery of fear,  
not absence of fear.”

You can, and will still be afraid yet be courageous. You are courageous every day you abstain from compulsive eating, and compulsive food behaviors.

– *Kelly G.*

# For Today – April 8

*To win without risk is to triumph without glory.*

*Pierre Corneille*

Never risking is never growing beyond fear or ridding myself of it. To explore a cave, confront a friend, dial a number, ask for a raise, change jobs or just say No — all of these can be acts of heroism, leaps into freedom. To do what others expect, so they'll love me, is to play it safe. To throw imagination into the ring is an act of courage. It is not easy to risk failure in plain view of those who wait smugly on the sidelines. To be thought foolish or insane could well start an avalanche of negative self-judgments. But as I grow, I become more willing to venture out of my safe cocoon.

**For today:** I have the strength to walk through my fears, to take a chance on a new way of life.

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From: For Today

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## Reflections on Courage and the OA Program

It takes courage to show up as your true self. This is a fact that really struck true for me after working through steps four and five of the OA program. It takes courage to show up honestly with ourselves and our higher power, never mind actually saying our deepest thoughts out loud to another in step five. However, I find that the Principle of Courage takes root in all of our actions while working the program.

OA provided me with the opportunity to take courageous steps and become more comfortable showing up as myself. The version of myself that is connected to my higher power and no longer relies on my perception of reality that was filtered through my fears.

OA gave me the opportunity to find the courage to:

- Admit that I am a compulsive overeater and am powerless over food
- Share in a meeting and be of service in other ways in meetings
- Read OA literature
- Chair a meeting
- Reach out to a Sponsor
- Share with my Sponsor
- Take steps 1-5
- Become a group rep.

And lastly, this program empowers me with the courage to turn my will and life over to a power greater than myself. I did not have the courage to rely on my faith before.

At one point all of these things were scary, I was afraid of judgment, commitment, and change. After doing these things and seeing the results of the steps I became more courageous and I began to have more courage to show up in situations outside of OA. I began to have the courage to admit when I was wrong or insensitive, to share my struggles and shortcomings and to be hopeful and faithful in any situation. It takes courage to show up as your true self. I am grateful to my fellows and this program for helping me show up as my true self, unencumbered by my obsession with food, one day at a time.

– Sarah G.

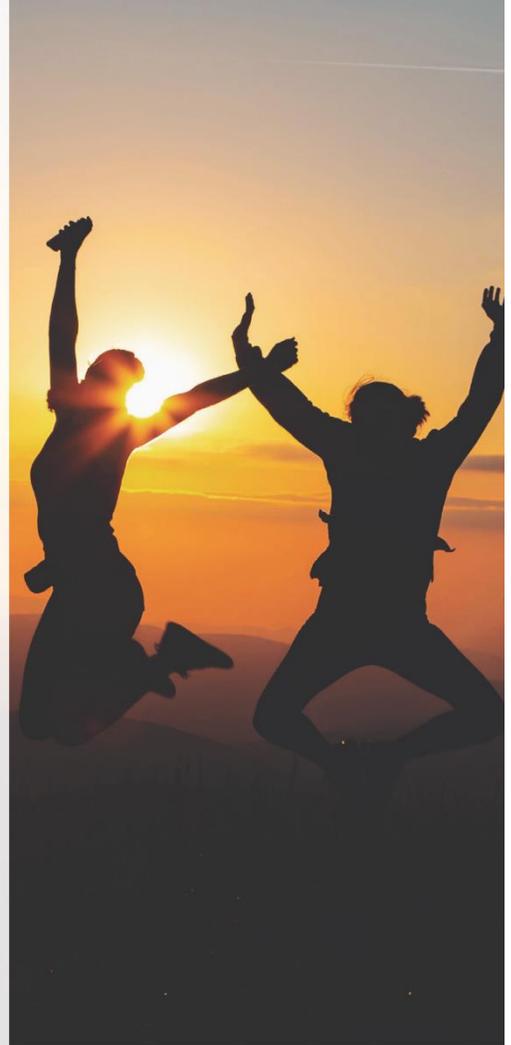


Twelfth Step Within Committee  
presents

# Spring into Action

Rejuvenating your program  
using the tools to work the steps

**Saturday, April 9, 2022**  
**1 to 3 p.m. EDT on Zoom**



- Three speakers
- Q&A and sharing time
- 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition will be collected electronically

Zoom meeting ID and password will be emailed out one day prior to the event. To receive this information sign up for the Ottawa District Intergroup email updates at [oa-ottawa.ca](mailto:oa-ottawa.ca)

**For more information, contact Susan P.: 613-803-5591**

## "Courage"

Courage – the bravery to start and to run with the OA program – is a spiritual principle I've summoned up more and more since beginning OA in October of 2021. I learned courage from my

Dad, a World War II Veteran who rarely talked of war, but when asked, would say he got very courageous in the trenches when the bombs and shells flew overhead.

"Be courageous –  
don't be afraid"

was his advice in life and what good spiritual principles he taught us over the years.

I've taken those spiritual principles and adapted them in my "war" against binge eating, and compulsive overeating.

Continued from previous page

Courage allowed me to start the OA program, to reach out for a sponsor, attend meetings and even dust off writing skills for this newsletter. It hasn't always been easy, but the challenges offered strength to persevere in this "war", and to depend fully on my Higher Power whom I call God. My Dad had always said that when the bombs and shells flew overhead that

everyone believed in Something!

That courageous belief in a Holy Other to me is the universal attraction to OA offering courage to all faiths, traditions, including atheism and agnosticism. There is hope and courage for one and all.

May our Holy Other give us the courage to keep tying and to

persevere by practicing the 12 steps/traditions and the ideas and ideals of OA. I have courage that is stronger than any layers of fat, deeper than any false ideas that binge eating would solve anything, and more re-assuring than any other ideas I know.

– Jean B, Ontario



**Great for  
Newcomers or  
LongTimers!**



OA Central Ontario Intergroup  
Presents a:

## Quick Step Study

- SUNDAYS (Four sessions)  
May 15, (skip May 22), May 29, Jun 5,  
and Jun 12  
10:30am – 12pm Noon ET.
- By Zoom or phone
- Free - 7th Tradition
- Session Format: Write on the step, share on the step. (Read the step ahead of time.)
- Registration is limited:
  - Please do so early to receive the handouts and zoom details.
  - Registration required 24 hours ahead of the start time.
  - Register by emailing:  
[coquicksteps@oaontario.org](mailto:coquicksteps@oaontario.org) and include in your email the start date of the study you would like to attend. You don't have to attend all the sessions.

**"This workshop has been  
all and more than I could  
have hoped for."**

~former workshop participant

# ANSWER THE SECOND CALL FOR DIVERSE VOICES

OA is updating the existing publication *A Common Solution* and expanding the representation of OA's diverse membership. All are welcome to submit stories that express your experience, strength, and hope. **We are hoping to specifically hear from those who identify as a member of one or more of these under-represented groups within OA:**

**Asian/Pacific Islander • Latinx • Indigenous • Members who have had or considered a surgical solution • Transgender • Non-binary • Muslim • Buddhist**

You can help under-represented members identify with other OA members by sharing what brought you to OA, what you found here, and what keeps you coming back. Please include which diverse group(s) you identify with and how our common solution (i.e., the Twelve Steps of OA, the nine Tools of Recovery, and reliance on a Higher Power) has led to your abstinence and recovery.

## *We need your unique story!*

1. *How do you celebrate your diversity as a recovering member of OA? How have you used your diversity to support your physical, emotional, and spiritual recovery?*
2. *Did you ever feel misunderstood or unwelcomed by other OA members because of your diversity? What kept you coming back?*
3. *What would you like other OA members to better understand about your diversity as it relates to your disease and recovery?*
4. *How has racism, prejudice, bigotry, or marginalization affected your disease of compulsive eating?*
5. *As a bulimic, anorexic, or bariatric surgery patient, have you felt welcomed?*
6. *As an atheist or agnostic, how were you able to come to believe that a power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity without becoming religious?*
7. *As a trans person, how has your recovery and membership in OA challenged or supported your transition?*
8. *Do you have a physical or mental disability that requires accommodations in order to participate in OA? Do you have a health condition that you would like other OA members to understand?*
9. *Has living in a country outside of North America challenged or supported your recovery from compulsive eating?*
10. *How have you welcomed, reached out to, or sponsored newcomers who belong to a race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age group, or nationality different from your own? What have you learned from them?*

### **Important Rules**

1. Submissions are assumed intended for publication, are subject to editing, and become the property of OA, Inc.
2. Submissions are not returned.
3. All submissions must contain the author's full name and address. You may request anonymity with publication. Your state, province, or country may remain anonymous if you so indicate.
4. Submissions must be submitted with a signed release form.
5. Submissions of approximately 500-800 words are preferred.

**Due by April 29, 2022**



**Email your story to  
info@oa.org with subject  
line "Common Solution."**

## COURAGE

**C**onviction – We are passionate about our belief in OA, and our program of recovery.

**O**bjectivity – We make decisions when presented with what it takes to face our recovery.

**U**nderstanding – Ourselves, and the process of our recovery.

**R**emoval of Fear – We let go, and let God.

**A**ction - We don't just talk about it; we work the OA 12 Steps.

**G**rowth - We accept new opportunities for growth.

**E**mbrace the unknown - We surrender our will to our higher power.

– Kelly G.

## Bits n' Bites

Stop a relapse or reach out to a struggling fellow or "missing face" with the OA pamphlet *Welcome Back: Suggestions for Members in Relapse and for Those Who Care*. Combined from two former OA pamphlets (Welcome Back and Members in Relapse), this comprehensive, Conference-approved pamphlet covers "Suggestions for Members in Relapse," "Suggestions for Those Who Care," and "What Helped - In Their Own Voices" and includes a resource list, space for phone numbers, and more.

### WORKING THE PROGRAM

#### Welcome Back

*Suggestions for Members in Relapse  
and for Those Who Care*



OA members who came to the program not necessarily overweight, including anorexics and bulimics, share their unique challenges and stories of recovery.

Pamphlets available for purchase at

<https://bookstore.oa.org/pamphlets.asp>



### WORKING THE PROGRAM

#### OA Members Come in All Sizes

*Welcome,  
Whatever Your  
Problem with Food*



### 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](mailto: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