



# The Sunshiner Newsletter

August  
2022

## Discipline for the Day

With enormous gratitude, I celebrate nineteen years of OA recovery this month. However, it is not the number of days abstinent that defines me today. What matters most is taking actions to manifest outwardly the changes inside me.

This does not simply come about by following a food plan. It is also not enough to say, “God, do your thing.” It takes action on my part and a self-discipline that is gentle, loving, and kind. This is why Step Eleven is a daily action for me. At 5 a.m., when my alarm rings, I commit the first part of my day to the God of my understanding by following this rhythm:

I get on my knees. I pray to God, sharing my concerns and reciting the first three Steps, the Third Step Prayer, and the Seventh Step Prayer.

God speaks to me. This is my meditative time, when I listen to what God is trying to tell me. I pray for the willingness to listen more and speak less!

I read from the Big Book, including from pages 24–25, 68, 84–88, and 100.

I read from three recovery-based daily readers (not all are OA-approved), including For Today. I choose a different OA daily reader each year.



I write in my journal, first about areas in my life under review and then brief comments under these four headings:

Surrender. What do I need to surrender to today?

Outstanding. What do I aim to be outstanding at today (acceptance, patience, tolerance, etc.)?

Grateful. What am I grateful for today? Abstinence is always first on my list. Pray for. I list the people uppermost in my mind. Sometimes, I add details about their situation.

I finish with positive affirmations, and then I choose an OA saying from a collection of laminated cards I’ve made.

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My Step Eleven lasts around thirty minutes and is a discipline that sets me up for the day. I am so grateful for the willingness to do this. Spending this time connecting each day is so precious to me because it enables me to live a full life, one guided by spiritual principles and a God of my understanding who never, ever—not even momentarily—leaves me.

While that alarm clock is not the most welcome noise in my day, Step Eleven is a daily practice that I would not want to be without. As our simple direction says, “It works if we work it!”

— Heather E., Wellington, New Zealand

Reprinted from [OA Lifeline](#)

# Step Principle 8 – Self-Discipline

Self-Discipline is my ability to pursue what I think is right in spite of my feelings and weaknesses. I continue in the same vain despite temptations to abandon all and go back to what I know, what is comfortable.

– Laura W.

Reprinted from [OA Region 5 Blog](#)



Twelfth Step Within Committee  
presents

## *OA Picnic... in person!*

Sat., August 27, 2022, 1 to 4 p.m.  
Hampton Park  
512 Island Park Drive, Ottawa  
(Parking lot off of Island Park Drive)

- Bring your own lunch and a chair or blanket for a time of fellowship
- There will be a meeting on-site after lunch

Sign up for the Ottawa District Intergroup email updates at [oa-ottawa.ca](http://oa-ottawa.ca)

**For more information, contact Shirley B at 613-697-6075.**



# Body by Willingness, Jeans by HP

In August 2008, several of us were sitting in the proverbial OA circle before a discussion was to begin and joking about the way we fit on our chairs. My comment was, “My thighs always hang over the edge.” The man next to me noted he didn’t have that problem and mentioned he could “help me with my food.”

My response was one of anger. At the time, I had eight years of abstinence. My plan of eating included no sugar, no wheat, no sweeteners, no snack foods, no trigger foods, and three meals with nothing in between. My meals were balanced, and my portions were reasonable. Over the eighteen years I’d been in program, I had accepted gradual changes to my plan of eating from my HP, and while I was not at my goal weight of 150 pounds (68 kg), I had gotten used to the fact that, for the past eight years, I weighed 170 pounds (77 kg), down from 203 pounds (92 kg). I wasn’t having food cravings or obsessive thoughts. I want to stress that I was working the Steps, working with a sponsor, giving service, and had a relationship with my HP because I could not have maintained my weight had that not been the case. I was comfortable with my food, but I wondered if I was working my program correctly since my weight was not where I thought it should be. I practiced acceptance because it seemed my weight was where my HP wanted it to be at the time.

Now, back to the anger—I thanked the man for his concern and told him that I ate between 1,500 and 1,800 calories a day and didn’t need any help with my food. But the seed of doubt that already existed got a little room to grow. Later, I wondered, “How do I know what I’m actually eating? I don’t weigh or measure my food; I just eyeball it and do my best.”

I decided I would measure a couple of items to see how truthful I was being. I measured milk and salad dressing and quickly discerned that I was eating twice the recommended amount, which means I was eating more than I thought. I challenged my HP to remove my desire to use too much of these foods, and I became willing to measure them as a part of my plan of eating. I also asked to be shown if there was something else I was to do.

A month later, I received a call from a program friend (also my massage therapist) who was trying a new food plan, one that I had always thought of as rigid and a little crazy. Just talking with her stirred up my anxiety, and I was not very supportive. We had an appointment scheduled a few days later, and that morning, when I got dressed, my jeans were really tight. I had noticed before that they’d been a little snug, but that morning, they were uncomfortably tight, almost couldn’t-get-them-zipped tight. “Wow,” I wondered, “Did I gain 10 pounds (5 kg) overnight?”



I reminded myself that my mind could play tricks on me and that this was just “one of those fat days.” I went to my friend’s home, and after my massage, she invited me to stay for lunch.

“Oh, here we go,” I thought. “She’s trying to show me how great her new food plan is.” But since it was lunchtime and whatever she was cooking smelled good, I accepted.

The lunch was nutritious, well balanced, and filling, and we enjoyed talking about program and our lives. I left in my tight jeans thinking how much I valued this person in my life.

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**Please note that the Sunday morning OA meeting at the Bells Corners Legion has been changed from 11am to 10am effective immediately.**

**Sunday 10am  
Bells Corners Legion  
4026 Old Richmond Road**

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As I lay watching TV that night with my thighs begging for release from the restrictive denim, I decided I could do that food plan for one day. I called my sponsor and committed to giving it a try. Then, I called my friend and got the information on what to do. Turns out, it is one of the food plans now listed in the Where Do I Start? pamphlet, one I had looked at before but was unwilling to consider.

“Okay, HP, I will do this with some modifications because I am not willing to give up certain items not allowed on this plan. But I will weigh and measure and reduce their frequency of use.” Higher Power and my sponsor said okay, and the commitment was made. For the first time since joining OA, I bought a food scale and began measuring my food at home. The content of my meals changed, the amounts of some foods increased and others decreased, but I was always satisfied when I finished my meals. Each morning, I committed to doing this for one more day. It was easier than I ever would have thought, and within a year, my weight had dropped from 170 pounds (77 kg) to 140 pounds (64 kg). It has remained stable at that number for years.

My recovery has continued to grow in so many ways, but I enjoy the freedoms of being in a physically healthy body and not having to wonder if I could be doing more to achieve abstinence and recovery.



## OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS<sup>®</sup> VIRTUAL REGION

**2022 Marathons**  
**Sponsored by Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous**

**Sunday August 21, 2022**  
**Sponsorship Day**

**712-432-5200**  
**Conference ID 4285115#**  
**Meetings every hour from 8:00 AM to 12 midnight EST (UTC-5) with regular scheduled meetings**

<https://oavirtualregion.org/marathons-2022/>



INTRODUCING  
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*Everything a Newcomer  
Needs to Know*

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Physical recovery is of equal importance to emotional and spiritual recovery, and I have a threefold illness with a threefold solution. I could not have accepted and stuck to this food plan had I not done the foundational work over the years. HP had a plan, and it came to pass in just the right sequence.

I am grateful for every experience I've had in this journey and look forward to what is ahead. One day at a time, I can commit to a structured food plan that nourishes me in all ways. And the items I was not willing to let go of are no longer a part of my food plan. They have just slipped away as I realized I no longer needed them.

One last thing, the tight jeans belonged to my husband! My Higher Power will do anything to get my attention.

— *Cyndy L.*

Reprinted from OA Lifeline



# Before and After

Before OA, I lived a life based on self-centered fear. I was always concerned with what you thought of me: Was I too fat? Too incompetent? Too uninteresting? Too shy? I avoided social situations, stayed home, and numbed out with TV, alcohol, and food. Now, I work daily to outgrow my fears. I face them with courage and ask God to remove them—I no longer say “no” just because I’m scared. Today, I can speak to large groups, teach at my church, sponsor people, and even ice skate. I feel so free and capable.

Before OA, I lacked purpose, direction, perspective, and gratitude. Now, amazed to be sitting in this miracle of recovery, I can see my blessings and count them. I learned I have a part in my own unhappiness. When I fall into self-pity, now I know I need an attitude adjustment. I used to talk endlessly about my problems, but now I talk about the solutions OA offers: Steps to take and Tools to use to overcome any difficulty. I’ve become willing to take suggestions and follow directions.

Before OA, I had false pride: I presented a certain image to the outside world and kept my struggles secret. Now, I am more honest with people, and maybe I can help others be real too. When my disease was at its worst, I wasn’t working, just rapidly gaining weight by

overeating, playing video games, and watching television all day. After OA, I let go of these behaviors, and now I’m not tied to the TV—a mini-miracle!

I used to be so addicted to food that I couldn’t even diet. Because of OA, I have maintained a weight loss of 87 pounds (39 kg) for over nine years. Today, I have a consistent food plan. I have regular mealtimes, I pray before my meals, and I tell my

sponsor what I am eating. I abstain from sweets comfortably. Because I have worked the Twelve Steps, I have been relieved of food obsession, and I am a free woman today.

Before OA, I was lazy, and my physical state was deteriorating. I suffered from high cholesterol, acid reflux, lethargy, and mild depression; I was inactive and morbidly obese. After OA, my body mass index and cholesterol numbers



2022

## 2nd Sunday of the Month Workshop Topics

Overeaters Anonymous Virtual Region is hosting  
The WORKSHOP series: 2nd Sunday of the Month

8:00 - 9:30 PM London (UTC)

3:00 - 4:30 PM New York (UTC -5)

- January 9th - Surrender: Deciding to Cooperate
- February 13th - Spiritual Connection
- March 13th - The Next Right Thought or Action
- April 10th - Service Keeps Us in Program
- May 8th - Dealing with Guilt & Shame
- June 12th - Gratitude as an Action Word
- July 10th - Steps 10 - 12: Continue, Improve & Practice
- August 14th - Practicing these Principles in all our Affairs
- September 11th - Being Entirely Ready for HP to Change Us
- October 9th - How to Twelve Step a Problem
- November 13th - Step 11: Prayer & Meditation
- December 11th - Sponsorship

## Come Join Us!

For Virtual Region Workshop Room Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 891 6554 0024

Password: 120912

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89165540024?pwd=eXZWSUNNdVhIZ3hHZHZJY2RRejkdz09>

For United States or International numbers <https://zoom.us/zoomconference>

Suggested workshop contribution \$5

<http://oavirtualregion.org/region/seventh-tradition/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://oavirtualregion.org>

[info.workshop@oavirtualregion.org](mailto:info.workshop@oavirtualregion.org) or [chair.workshop@oavirtualregion.org](mailto:chair.workshop@oavirtualregion.org)

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moved into normal ranges. I'm more fit to perform my job, and I also work harder around the house and yard. I have done hot yoga, and recently, I ran a 12-kilometer (7-mile) race.

I start my day on my knees in surrender. Before OA, I used prayer for emergencies only; now, I rely on my HP's strength throughout the day. When I answer the phone, I ask HP to join us. Before meetings, I ask that I hear and share what's needed. I ask for God's will to be done, not mine.

After OA, I've learned I do not know what's best for me or others. I see I've caused harm and I make amends. I still make mistakes, but I am asking God to remove those shortcomings and show me what to do and be. To stay in fit spiritual condition and abstain from compulsive overeating a day at a time, I work the Steps and Tools to the best of my ability.

It's really God-discipline, not self-discipline. God is truly doing for me what I could never do for myself. Thank you, OA.

— Heather S., Renton,  
Washington USA

Reprinted from [OA Lifeline](#)

## Bits 'n Bites



### [OA Sponsorship Kit](#)

Packet of inspiring and helpful information for sponsors includes:

- The Tools of Recovery #160
- A Guide for Sponsors #200
- Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps #220
- Excerpts from *Lifeline* magazine featuring stories about sponsorship
- Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise wallet card #415
- Twelve Stepping a Problem wallet card #420
- Abstinance Literature Resource Guide

### 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