



The Sunshiner Newsletter

February
2023

Travel-Sized Abstinence

I just got back from a work trip to Connecticut. My work requires 30 to 50 percent travel, and for several years, eating while traveling has been very problematic for me. A plethora of foods at airports, restaurant choices with trigger foods, and being alone with a company paid per diem have proven to be a destructive combination.

Recently, my prayer for willingness was answered, and I embarked on abstinence with the support and guidance of a sponsor and food plan. My abstinence began during a season when I did not have to travel, which helped me establish rhythms of recovery before I had to return to a regular travel schedule. Connecticut was my first work trip since becoming abstinent that required my traveling through airports.

At the airport, I encountered familiar smells, an overwhelming number of restaurant choices, and food memories that seemed to infiltrate my being. I was reminded of the multitude of lies that had seemingly permitted my past eating behaviors: “I deserve this” and “I’m tired” and “I’ve worked very hard.” The easiest to give in to had been “I am alone, and no one will know.”

This trip was different because I was equipped with new Tools. When I landed, I reached out to my sponsor and shared the challenge of getting through the airport unscathed. I admitted my battle with feelings of entitlement: “I deserve a treat because the travel can be so hard.” At a restaurant, connecting with my sponsor by phone helped. At the hotel, I listened to an OA podcast before I went to bed.

In the morning, I got on my knees and asked God for the gift of abstinence and continued willingness. I read briefly from OA literature and sent my food and list of gratitudes to my sponsor. I had an abstinent breakfast and went on to my work meeting.

When I got to the airport to return home, I changed from my dress shoes to a pair of athletic shoes so I could walk in the concourse. On the plane, I wrote in my journal about all

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the feelings this trip stirred up in me. When I got home, I went to a meeting.

This first abstinent work trip was hard. I felt the pull and battled many lies. Today, I am grateful for how the Tools empowered me and protected me. I took the Tools with me when I traveled, and today I am abstinent.

— Virginia W., Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio USA

Reprinted from [Travel-Sized Abstinence - Lifeline \(oalifeline.org\)](https://www.oalifeline.org)



Caring For My Abstinence Like A New Puppy

I've never had to take care of puppy day after day, so I sincerely apologize if this analogy is completely whacked. But based on casual observation, there seems to be some similarity between caring for a puppy and protecting ones abstinence.

For starters, both take planning and forethought: if you have a puppy waiting for you at home, you're probably not going to skip town for the weekend and just assume the puppy will fend for itself. (Again, no firsthand experience, but I expect this would result in a serious mess and a deeply traumatized dog.) Same holds true for my abstinence.

I love to travel, but I can't afford to be spontaneous. Before I leave town, I pack all my meals I'll need for the road or the flight—plus one more in case we're delayed. I also bring dry foods, like nuts, dried fruit, powdered milk, protein powder, oats, shelf-stable packets of chicken or tuna, and minideli packets of real mayonnaise and mustard. In addition to my food scale and extra batteries, I bring a back-up scale. (I've had scales die on me at the most inconvenient times...)

According to those who know, puppies are happier and better behaved when their needs are met in a timely manner. Ditto for me in recovery. Even if the car breaks down or the plane is stuck on the tarmac, if I've planned ahead, I can take care of myself and my abstinence. Without barking, shredding my Nikes, or peeing on the rug.

– *Anonymous* (for obvious reasons)



Is 2023 Your Year To Do Service At Intergroup?

Ottawa District Intergroup needs your help to continue providing the services members and newcomers have come to rely on. It's been proven that doing service strengthens an OA member's recovery in the program and helps prevent relapse. Here is a great opportunity to provide service above the group level. Be part of the team!

We have a number of open positions and are looking for members to fill these roles:

- Secretary
- Region 6 Representative
- Publications Chair
- Public Information/Professional Outreach Chair

For more information on the duties of the position, click [here](#). To apply to a position, members must first be nominated by their group and complete the nomination form. You can download the [PDF](#) version, or the fillable [MSWord](#) version. Send your completed form to: chair@oa-ottawa.ca

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

More On Travel Planning

Traveling to the OA Region One Assembly was a perfect opportunity for me to practice navigating an airport without compulsively wanting to eat. I am really glad I had my plan of eating in place. Arriving at the airport two hours early sometimes leaves me with time on my hands. The smells of airport foods can arouse compulsiveness out of the blue! But this time it was not a problem. I had my meditation book and a copy of pages 83–88 from the Big Book, and I had extra time to browse the bookstore, which is always fun.



Boarding the plane and getting settled went well. Then we had a delay of one hour and forty-five minutes sitting on the runway. Lunchtime came, and I was glad I had brought my own healthy meal with veggies and fruit (no more greasy airplane food for me). I was grateful to have a plan of eating and Higher Power with me; I could sit back and enjoy a leisurely lunch.

At last we were airborne. Arriving in Seattle two hours late, I discovered my bus had already ended service for the

night; there was not another until morning. In the past, this situation would have given me license to eat everything in sight. Again Higher Power came to the rescue. I had my plan of eating with me, and time to ask God for help with this dilemma.

I made many phone calls and talked to a kind soul who suggested another transit option that would get me close to my destination later that evening. After some gratitude prayers, I figured it would be best to find something to eat so I wouldn't arrive at 10 p.m. starving. Of course the airport had all that "quick food," which used to be appealing, but I had my plan of eating. I was able to find something abstinent and sit quietly to wait until I could catch that ride. God really does take care of things if I just let him.

In the past, I would have scoured the airport for all the foods it offered. Going on a trip or vacation used to be an excuse to eat all my forbidden foods. I would diet right up until I went and then "treat" myself after being so good with my diet. Today I know that is not the way to treat myself. Today, using the plan of eating Tool, I treat myself with respect, taking care to put healthy food into my body.

Thank you, OA and Higher Power, for showing me a new way of living and traveling.

— *Edited and reprinted from The Heartbeat of Recovery newsletter, Region One, Winter 2006*

OA Unity Day

Unity Day is a day to celebrate the connection of all members and groups of OA to one another.

It occurs the last Saturday in February in even years and the last Sunday in February in odd years at 11:30 a.m. local time. It is encouraged that all members of OA take a moment of silence to express their gratitude for the OA Program.



Enjoy your Unity Day!

BIG BOOK WORKSHOP

- Learn how to apply the 12 Steps in your life -
- Extended Column work -
- Community of Recovery -

OPEN OA

Weekly workshop starting:

New York

February

6

2.30pm - 4pm
Monday

London

February

6

7.30pm - 9pm
Monday

Melbourne

February

7

6.30am - 8am
Tuesday

NOTE: Times do change with Daylight Savings

ZOOM ID: 820 0012 9994

(Passcode: 820077)

It is our group conscience that all who attend have their cameras turned on and be visible. If this is not possible, for any reason, please consider dialing in using your local Zoom number.

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AD4L Speaker Series

“There is a Solution”

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New York
Time

11th February
3:30pm - 5:00pm

London
Time

11th February
8:30pm - 10:00pm

Melbourne
Time

12th February
7:30am - 9:00am

ZOOM ID: 200 540 624
(no password)



The hopeful message of *To the Man Who Wants to Stop Compulsive Overeating, Welcome* is that OA works for men. It has already given men in OA a means of recovering from a guilt-ridden and demoralizing life of compulsive eating, and these men now enjoy the freedom and satisfaction of a productive and rewarding life lived one day at a time.

The stories shared by Ray, Jim, and Mike speak to the experiences of how compulsive eating can completely sabotage a career or sneak up as a deadly disease after quitting tobacco or alcohol.

Spread the word among those you know!

To the Man is available for US\$2 on:

[Amazon Kindle](#)

[Apple Books](#)

[Barnes and Noble Nook](#)

Print copies are also available at bookstore.oa.org.

The Sunshiner in 2023

As I leave the role of Editor of the *Sunshiner*, I am so happy to let you know that the newsletter will be continuing in 2023 with Meaghan H. at the helm. Meaghan will redirect the publication to a quarterly publication cycle, beginning in the Spring. I have enjoyed the last 2 years of working on the newsletter for the contribution to this program in the form of service and for a bit of a creative outlet. I hope you enjoyed it.

If you are not already receiving the Ottawa District Intergroup Bulletins via email, I would encourage you to sign up on the [Ottawa District Intergroup \(oa-ottawa.ca\)](http://oa-ottawa.ca). This bulletin is sent out monthly and has updates that may be of interest to you about local meetings and workshops. As we continue to straddle the in person and virtual world of meetings, you may also want to consider signing up for updates from the OA Virtual Region that also promote workshops and events of interest. [Virtual Region Email List \(oavirtualregion.org\)](http://oavirtualregion.org)

Welcome to Meaghan H. as the incoming *Sunshiner* Editor.

Gabriela B., Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter

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., Outgoing Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter
Meaghan H., Incoming Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter
Vacant Position, Chairperson of the Publications Committee