

Together We Can



A Publication of the Metro DC Overeaters Anonymous Intergroup

April 2014

ATTENTION, ATTENTION, ATTENTION!

ARE YOU AN ODE-STER? Have you been inspired by some part of Overeaters Anonymous to write poetically? The next issue will feature a collection of our poems. If you have previously sent a **poem**, look for it in that issue. Please send your words, by May 15 to newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org. Thanks.

NEW! FOR TODAY AND VOICES OF RECOVERY WORKBOOKS

WSO recently published attractive workbooks to complement both the *For Today* and *Voices of Recovery* daily meditation books. The workbooks provide one thought-provoking question for each day's reading, with space for writing, two days per page. If you use one of OA's daily meditation books on a regular basis, consider taking this practice to a deeper level with a few minutes of related writing. The workbooks are \$11 each; also available as downloadable PDFs for \$7.50.

PLEASE HAVE GROUP CONSCIENCE(S) NOT GROUP "CONSCIOUS"

con·science *noun* \kän(t)-shən(t)s\ : the part of the mind that makes you aware of your actions as being either morally right or wrong;; a feeling that something you have done is morally wrong.

con·scious *adjective* \kän(t)-shəs\ : awake and able to understand what is happening around you; aware of something (such as a fact or feeling) ; knowing that something exists or is happening;; known or felt by yourself.

When I am conscious of the steps, traditions, and concepts of Overeaters Anonymous, I can fully participate in our group conscience.

Definitions from Merriam-Webster Dictionary

WHO OR WHAT IS GOD?

Recently, at my home meeting, we read step 2, and there are two questions in it I realized I have never answered--not in words, anyway. Those questions are:

What do I need from a higher power?

What would I like such a power to be and do in my life?

My understanding of God has changed radically in the last 20 years or so and has led me to a de-anthropomorphizing of "It." For practical purposes, I still usually refer to It as God or sometimes Mother/Father God. This God of my understanding is like an energy stream that we are all created out of and in which all our good exists. Our job is to stay connected to the Divine Flow.

I was definitely one who wanted God to make the compulsion go away while letting me keep eating whatever I wanted, wishing I could pig out with my friends and not have it mean anything or have any further consequences. Obviously, this is not the way it works for me. If it did, I wouldn't need OA. Also, deep down, I knew that this was not really God's job, so I usually gave God very little thought.

For me, the answer to the above questions started with redefining God, and the answer is to stay connected to the Divine Flow of life—that energy stream that is God. Everything I need, require, and desire exists in that energy stream.

Sounds easy, and it ought to be, but for me it takes constant work and constant reminders. The reminder part is where OA and my church fellowship enter in. Some days, though, everyone I run into is a reminder, letting me know that I'm in the Divine Flow of life. And that's as it should be, because the miracle of life is that we're all Divine--no exceptions!

Cheryl W.-C.

**THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE:
OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE**

What's up on the IG's Outreach Committee; how you can give service to carry the message:

Is your face-to-face meeting interested in giving service and further strengthening its fellowship by doing an outreach activity? The Outreach Committee now has funding available for face-to-face meetings to do just that! Examples of activities that a face-to-face meeting could request funding for include (but certainly aren't limited to) adopting high schools and providing OA literature to school nurses and guidance counselors; purchasing "Is Food a Problem for You?" Post-Its from oa.org and sticking them in visible locations (elevators, bathrooms, the mirror at your health club); or distributing OA literature to health professionals or at a health fair or at a women's or men's shelter. Just propose an outreach service that speaks to your heart. Up to \$100 can be requested from the Outreach Committee for an activity. More information on how to propose an activity can be obtained directly from the Outreach Committee (email address below.)

A few years ago a member of our DC Metro Intergroup Outreach Committee came up with the idea for a Poster Plastering contest that worked step 12, and was fun, too. Now Region 7 (which includes 6 states and the District of Columbia) is replicating that successful outreach challenge throughout the local Intergroups. The **Overeaters Anonymous Region 7 Poster Challenge** will determine which Intergroup can post the most flyers between now and the end of June. Information on obtaining the posters (*hmmm, do you have any leftover ones at your face-to-face meeting?*), "rewards", directions, and contact information will be forthcoming.

Lastly, if you are looking for a way to give service at the Intergroup level--consider joining us on the Outreach Committee! You do not have to attend the monthly Intergroup meetings to participate. We do our committee work between the Intergroup meetings by email and by phone. We have big projects (the DC and PG County library literature distribution

project) and small ones (research to find out just what it takes to get a local paper to run an OA ad). If you have a particular interest, or an idea, for an outreach activity--contact us. We'd love to hear from you. For more information and details on any of the above, please email us at: outreach@oa-dcmetro.org.

SERVICE SAVES US!

DC Metro Area IG Outreach

TRADITION 4

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole."

I recently undertook a study of the 4th Tradition, and not only did I read our OA 12&12 several times, I read the AA12&12 and another program's version. Through most of the readings, I reflected upon how Tradition 4 encourages our groups to be autonomous, except in matters that affect OA as a whole, and not to have any other affiliation. Each group is encouraged to be independent, unique and creative, and to have its own flavor, so to speak. In fact, the more varied our meetings are, the more people we can attract into the program.

Tradition 4 is packed full of so many concepts that guide the development and life of our meetings, yet upon my last reading I heard loudly, "Practice these principles in all our affairs." I took that to mean all of the principles in Tradition 4 could be applied to my own individual recovery as well. Some of the principles are:

I am to be guided by the traditions and the steps.

There are no musts in this program.

I have the right and the responsibility to develop a program as I see fit.

No one can tell me I am not doing my program right.

I need to trust God to guide me.

I need to be self-supporting.

I need not believe I know what is best for others.

I have a right and a responsibility to speak up when the traditions are not being followed.

I will get into trouble if I don't live by the principles of the program.

I need to be open to the wisdom, experience, strength and hope of others.

I can't do program alone.

I need to stay focused and keep things simple.

It is important for me to embrace my uniqueness and my unique needs as well as my unique program.

I have the freedom to find my own way and learn from my own experiences.

It is important for me to learn to act autonomously as well as live in harmony with others.

It is important and necessary for me to set boundaries to protect myself.

I shall not insist on others to meet my needs. Sometimes being a member of a larger group means being a replica of the parent group, yet in OA it is anything but. Thank God being a member in OA means our uniqueness is encouraged and highly valued!

Katrina B.

***A*W*E**

Sometimes as I set up an action plan for the day or week or longer, I use a word or acronym as a way to help me remember what I am aiming for. Today I will write about using *A*W*E as a reminder. What does it remind me of?

*A is for acceptance--or alternatively for awareness--or even for action plan, the newest of OA's nine tools.

I ACCEPT that I have a disease that is an addiction and that, as such; it requires treatment on a daily basis.

To have AWARENESS of what I must do for my disease, I must have a clear head, not one fogged by excess foods.

I need to do -- and redo -- an ACTION PLAN frequently to help keep me on the right path.

*W is willingness. I must be WILLING to take action, to use the tools, and to take my treatment, which is the OA program rather than a specific medication.

*E is for effort. We say that we have a program that is simple but not easy. If I do not accept and have the willingness to give EFFORT to make this program work, it will not just arrive at my doorstep on a silver platter.

If I keep *A*W*E in mind, then I can be in awe at the results that abstinence and our three-legged stool, supported by physical, emotional, and spiritual efforts, can bring me.

Linda S.

SEXUALITY, COMPULSIVE EATING AND RECOVERY WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP

This recent workshop (March 8), created by the Monday night 7:30 meeting in Greenbelt, was profound for many of the attendees. People voiced positive feelings about having a place where they could talk about the intersection of their food behavior and their sexuality, as well as their feelings about their own body image, weight, and desirability. For many, just hearing about others recovering from sexually traumatic childhoods was powerful.

Here are some outcomes from that evening:

1. Participants requested that this workshop be a yearly event.
2. More than 20% of the attendees reported anonymously (on paper) a history of sexual abuse.
3. Many individuals asked for a longer workshop, perhaps taking up a full afternoon.
4. At least half of the attendees were from outside the DC Metro OA area.
5. The space was a wonderful blend of safety, accessibility, and spiritual intention.

Sealani W.

COMBINE LITERATURE AND WRITING TOOLS WITH COMPANION BOOKS

I imagine that most OA members use one of our daily meditation books on a regular basis to reinforce program concepts. It's a great practice that takes only a few minutes. Now we're invited to take this practice to a deeper

level with a few minutes of related writing. WSO recently published attractive workbooks to complement *For Today* and *Voices of Recovery* daily meditation books. These companion workbooks provide one thought-provoking question for each day's reading, with space for writing, two days per page. I attempted to contact some members who had purchased these workbooks to find out how they liked them and how they were using them, either in their personal programs or as part of a writing meeting. Meanwhile I decided to try out the *For Today Workbook* and share my own experience with it.

March 27 – “What childish or dishonest behaviors am I still making excuses for today?”

Well, funny you should ask... Just this morning I did some shopping for my mother, who has dementia. I purchased six items priced at \$2.19 each. At checkout, however, they rang up \$2.38. When I pointed this out to the cashier, she was quite pleasant and quickly voided the transaction and rung up the items again at \$2.19. It wasn't until I got home that I saw only five items on the receipt, not six. My first reaction was “bonus!” and next, “my mother won't know the difference.” But one of the most important things I've learned from working the OA program is the importance of the principle of honesty and practicing honesty in all my affairs. Sometimes this requires me to speak truthfully; other times it requires me to take an action to set things right. Before program, I could have easily rationalized my way out of a \$2 moral dilemma. But today I want to practice the principles of the program in all my affairs, even in matters that seem trivial.

I resolved to return to the store to note the error and pay for the sixth item. Fortunately, the same cashier was still there. She thanked me for coming back and told me it was the new manager's policy not to take payment for an item in such cases where a cashier had made an error. She went on to say that the previous manager had an opposite policy and was quite strict about it and didn't sound pleasant

at all. So she thanked me again, I thanked her, we both smiled and wished each other a good afternoon. As I walked out of the store, I thought, “Wow! That's how program works!”

And I might not have paused to reflect so much had I not taken the time to try out this new workbook!

(The workbooks are \$11 each; also available as downloadable PDFs for \$7.50.)

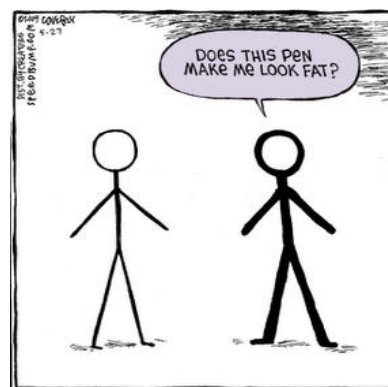
Monica H.

STRONG ABSTINENCE CHECKLIST

Use this valuable tool every day to support you in keeping your abstinence strong and intact. You may also use it as the focus for meetings and workshops.

- 1) Have I been abstinent today?
- 2) Did I pray and meditate today?
- 3) Am I maintaining or working towards a healthy body weight?
- 4) Did I rely on my Higher Power to get or stay abstinent today?
- 5) Is what I am currently doing working for me to remain abstinent?
- 6) If I am having problems have I asked someone else what they are doing?
- 7) Have I made an OA call today?
- 8) Did I have an attitude of gratitude today?
- 9) Did I plan my food today?
- 10) Have I helped someone else today?
- 11) Did I have an action plan in place to stay abstinent today?
- 12) Do I have a sponsor and am I working the Steps with that person?

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**OA DC Metro Area IG
NEWSLETTER EVENTS CALENDAR
Revised March 18, 2014**

IG=INTERGROUP

DATES (times EST)	DAYS	ACTIVITY	WHERE	SPONSORED BY (IG=IG)	MORE INFO
April 25-27	Fri-Sun	Big Book Study Weekend	Lancaster, PA	South Central Pennsylvania IG	http://www.scpoai.org/
May 2-4	Fri-Sun	United We Recover	Mendham, NJ	West Jersey IG	http://www.wjioa.org/
May 11, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: A Common Solution and Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
May 16-18	Fri-Sun	A Step Study Weekend: There Is a Solution	Voorhees Township, NJ	South Jersey IG	http://oa-southjersey.org/
May 18, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
May 18, 3:00-4:00 p.m.	Sun	Virtual Workshop: Sponsorship: How to Pick One and Why Have One		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
May 26, 8 a.m.-midnight	Mon	Memorial Day Telephone Marathon: Remembering Where We Came From		6:45 a.m. Sunrise Meeting	Phone: 1-712-432-5200 Access code 4285115#;
June 1, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: Tools of Recovery and OA Members Come in All Sizes		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
June 8, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
June 8, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: How to Sponsor		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
July 6, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: Sponsoring Through the 12 Steps		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
July 13, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
July 13, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: How to Use the 12 Steps Through Life Problems		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
July 15	Tues.	Newsletter Deadline	Metro DC	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/intergroup/
August 3, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: Members in Relapse and Welcome Back		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#

**OA DC Metro Area IG
NEWSLETTER EVENTS CALENDAR
Revised March 18, 2014**

August 10, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
August 10, 3:00-4:00	Sun	Virtual Workshop: Principles		OA Board of Trustees	Phone: 1-424-203-8405 Access code 925619#
Sept. 7, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
Oct 12, 12:30-2:30	Sun	DC Metro IG Meeting	DC Metro IG Meeting, Silver Spring, MD	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/
Nov. 7-9	Fri-Sun	OA Region Seven Convention	Gettysburg, PA	Region 7	http://oaregion7.org/events/2014-04/ , then .Region 7 Events
November 15	Sat.	Newsletter Deadline	Metro DC	DC Metro IG	http://www.oa-dcmetro.org/intergroup/