

Lake Country Intergroup

Serving Eastern WA, North ID &
Southern BC Canada

As long as we believe that we already know what is best for us, we cling to our habitual ways of thinking and acting. Yet these ways of thinking and acting got us into the unhealthy, unhappy condition we were in when we came to OA. In step one, we acknowledge this truth about ourselves: our current methods of managing have not been successful, and we need to find a new approach to life. Having acknowledged this truth, we are free to change and to learn.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, 2nd Ed. Pg. 7

Finding My Own Way

Ten years ago, I decided that answers and explanations aren't necessary to recover. I sought sponsors whom I respected and tried to incorporate their suggestions into my program. It was, still is, okay for me not to buy everything I see and hear in OA. I have had to find my own way. This is the greatest lesson I learned in OA: to know myself and my weaknesses, to be honest about myself, and take responsibility for the choices I make.

~D.S., Manchester, NH, reprinted from Lifeline, 11/97

Step 8 and Self-Forgiveness

I have been thinking again about Step 8. I first did Step 8 last year. It was hard to make a list of persons I had harmed, but it is difficult to know that I have acted in a way that was hurtful to others. I followed Step 8 with Step 9 and made amends to those on my list. However, while I have made amends, I still have not let go of the guilt. I still blame myself for the hurtful things I have done, and I still feel responsible for other people's unhappiness. This is a heavy load to live under - it saps my energy and robs me of restful sleep.

This past week at my home meeting, a lot of people talked about the importance of making amends to ourselves. I realize that it is time for me to do another step 8 with myself. I need to forgive myself for the hurtful ways I have treated others and let go of the guilt. I cannot change the past. I can only express my sincere regret and then move on. Living in the past only causes more harm in the future. ~ Anonymous

Merely complying with the Steps because a sponsor says we need a Higher Power just prolongs the issue. Pretending to turn our will and lives over to God doesn't allow the solution to fully take hold. Even if we must "fake it 'til we make it" and "act as if," we find at some point that we've stopped struggling and that even more surprisingly we've started accepting, if not downright believing, that this solution will work for us.

Edited from Seacoast OA Blog article *Reflections from Unity Day*
#2: Surrender Posted on March 8, 2015

To those who have made progress in A.A., it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be.

Step 5; AA 12&12 pg 58

Many of us come to OA carrying the excess baggage of a lot of shame and pride. We are ashamed that we've been unable to control our eating by ourselves, and yet we're too proud to admit that we need help with our eating and our lives. In order to recover, we're going to have to let go of shame and pride so we can actively reach out to others for help. As we practice anonymity, we begin this process of letting go.

Tradition 12. *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*. Pg. 165



We are *not* what our thoughts tell us we are

All those nasty things our minds tell us? All the awful memories they dredge up. All that negativity, the debate club inside us. Not one part of that unmerry melody actually reflects our inner spiritual selves. Just as with feelings, we can observe our thoughts as they go flying through our minds. That's why Steps 10 and 11 are crucial to living the spiritual program of action. Without God's help in settling our thoughts and understanding when we've let our brain get the better of us, we would slide right back into our old behaviors. But once we experience the psychic change that comes from the spiritual experience of the Steps, we suddenly find that there's a distance between the real us and our thoughts. All of our thoughts. When we write inventory, we document our thinking, we observe it. Therefore, the essence of our being cannot be what runs through our craniums at any given moment. If we can observe it, we are not it.

Edited from article *In a Word: Miracles*, Seacoast Blog, NH & ME Posted 9/24/17

Step One ~ Growing Up

Before we came to OA and began discussing our experiences honestly with other compulsive overeaters, we didn't realize how much we had damaged ourselves and others by attempting to manage every detail of life. It was only after we began to recover that we saw the childish self-centeredness of our willful actions. By trying to control others through manipulation and direct force, we had hurt our loved ones. When we tried to control ourselves, we wound up demoralized. Even when we succeeded, it wasn't enough to make us happy. We hid from our pain by eating, so we didn't learn from our mistakes; we never grew up.

Step One, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* Pg 6

DECEMBER 2 “I can hold onto fear that serves the purpose of keeping compulsion alive, or I can turn my life—one moment at a time—over to my Higher Power.” — For Today, p. 104

Fear and anxiety have haunted my entire life. They have also been a constant challenge in my recovery from compulsive overeating. Forming a relationship with a Higher Power, whom I call God, has resulted in several years of abstinence and an ability to walk through fearful situations. In order to grow emotionally and spiritually, I need to take risks; that brings up fear. But I have learned that it does not matter how afraid I am. I can show up anyway. I pray and ask God to help me, and I've never been disappointed. Each time I conquer something that I am afraid to do, it boosts my self-esteem and enables me to take the next risk. The combination of abstinence and a reliance on God has given me courage. I will never be without fear, but with God's help, I have been able to face my fears abstainently and accomplish things I never thought possible.

Voices of Recovery Pg 337

Something about becoming willing to own up to my part melts away unforgiveness and helps me let go of demands that others be and do what I want them to be and do. I begin to see that another person can't threaten my worth, value and well-being unless I let them. I can now see that self-defense and attempts to control or retaliate are not necessary. I can work the steps, and take constructive loving action to take care of myself and set boundaries. More and more I'm able to think before I react and avoid the old patterns that triggered me and led to harmful actions. And if I do fall back into old patterns, there's always step 10. God forgives seventy times seven... His grace is always sufficient. This program isn't for perfect people, it's for willing, humble people who want and need God. Anonymous



RUN IT AND RUIN IT

While reading *Living Sober*, I came across a sentence containing the words “run” and “ruin.” Click! – “run” is “ruin” with “I” in it. When I try to run something – anything – my life or someone else's – instead of letting God be in control, “ruin” is sure to be the outcome. Not my will, but thine be done – is my prayer each morning. When I deviate from that, and attempt to control the situation, ruin will result. Also, when I allow others to run my life or affect my emotions in a negative way, it guarantees that my day will be ruined. Trish, West Jersey IG

ACCEPTANCE IS THE KEY TO MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD TODAY. I NEVER JUST SIT AND DO NOTHING WHILE WAITING FOR HIM TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO.

RATHER, I DO WHATEVER IS IN FRONT OF ME TO BE DONE, AND I LEAVE THE RESULTS UP TO HIM: HOWEVER IT TURNS OUT, THAT'S GOD'S WILL

FOR ME. Edited from *Acceptance Was the Answer* Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition

(p. 420) Kindle Edition.

OA Recovery and What it Means to Me

I've been coming to OA since December of 2008. Through the years my recovery has been anywhere from stellar clean to somewhat iffy. This being said, the only thing I've done right is to "Not Leave". The rooms, my fellows, and my personal program have evolved into this delightful way of life. I use meetings to interact and share my experiences. Listening to other members at meetings gives me fresh insight and ideas that help my recovery. While the lack of face-to-face meetings during this past year has been quite a change, I have been enjoying the flexibility of Zoom meetings. As meetings begin to open up I look so forward to exchanging hugs and giving out those coins, in lieu of virtual hugs. Overeaters Anonymous is weaved into my life. I am grateful for all I've gotten and continue to gain. Thank you, Higher Power, for guiding me to the door. ~ Robin A.

I no longer seek approval from other OA members. My lesson was to learn not to be so susceptible to what others think of me and, in turn, not to judge what other people are doing. They, too, need to find their own way.

Service is not
an option,
it is the price of
freedom.

I have always liked the quote by Lao Tzu—"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." You don't run a marathon all at once. It starts with the single step, and then the next step, and the next. After being in OA, I have learned that this saying applies to life as well as long walks. Instead of making grandiose plans that I think I can achieve overnight, I have learned to take a single step and then to have patience to wait on God to show me the next step. Sometimes I am more patient than others, but I have come to understand that the journey is more important than the destination (another of my favorite quotes).

~ Anonymous

SPONSORS

Name	Phone	Type
Carrie	509-747-3117	F/P
Carol	510-390-4555	P
Colleen R	208-59-5728	P/F
Debbie	509-455-4455	P
Debbie P	208-755-4774 Lionlady1956@gmail.com	P
Donna	509-999-5326	F
Elizabeth C.	509-216-2894	P
Gary	208-298-9044	P
Jackie M	509-570-8292 jackiemcwilliams@comcast.net	Bariatric Surgery
Jacqui	509-844-4780	P
Janelle	509-483-6937	F/P/M
Jean	509-939-4333	P
Jessie W	509-953-0202 Jwaters1982@aol.com	P
John B	509-475-4718 meanspeed13@yahoo.com	P
Katherine B	206-335-9726 (Seattle)	HOW - F/P
Larissa W.	509-701-4341	
Marcia Kay	509-879-8233	F/P
Marla	509-992-3182 *NEW PHONE NUMBER*	F/P
Mollie R.	208-819-1828 irreverentf@gmail.com	P
Nicole	509-413-2961	P
Paula	208-618-9297 GNNDNIT@aol.com	P/F/M
Robyn B.	509-280-5705	P
Ruth D.	208-659-9606	P
Sharen	509-483-2171 509-688-5706 (cell)	F/P/M
Sharon	208-691-3702	P/F

ANY CHANGES - please contact: Katy B. Katyblue.oa@gmail.com
or 509-270-1965

LEGEND: P Program F Food M Maintenance

Body Image

The best thing I've ever heard about this topic is to treat obsessive body image thoughts as a character defect because they are! How self-centered of me to sit around and think about me and my body over and over and over. *Body Image and Recovery* Annapolis Area Newsletter, Summer 2021 ed.

Being a sponsor is paradoxical. The idea of sponsoring is that since I have done it, I can guide another person to it. But If I try to teach someone, they will most likely not receive it. I cannot fix anyone, and they must want the solution to receive the solution. People are very resistant to change. They typically do not want to be told what to do. Yet, as a sponsor, I am supposed to help someone. But how can I do that if I cannot teach them? I discovered that all I can ever really do is share myself with someone. A better term than sponsor is a sharing partner. I can share my journey and what I have done to get recovery with another person. It is up to the other person to decide what to do with that. In fact, it is none of my business if they actually do it. I am only responsible for my own thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Joel I. Recovery is Alive in Region 5 Blog article www.region5oa.org/blog-post

"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

- Albert Schweitzer

Lake Country IG Quarterly Business Zoom Meeting

Saturday, September 12, 2020

9:00 AM – 12 Noon

Zoom Meeting
Meeting # Forthcoming
Pin # Forthcoming

There are open positions for those who wish to do service.
See box to the right

Everyone is welcome

Service = Recovery!

A LITTLE STORY This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

Are you a Somebody or a Nobody? Service to and for others is an important part of everyone's program, it takes one out of themselves and gives a sense of accomplishment, vital to self-esteem. Give yourself a boost and consider volunteering for one of the IG positions below:

Open IG Positions

Chair
Treasurer
Special Events
PIPO Chair



Please Remember

Our 7th Tradition is an important part of keeping our local and national organization going! Don't deny others of our great Fellowship of Freedom because we think our contribution is unimportant. No matter how small, your 'bucks in the basket' still counts. Luckily, we now have a *PayPal link* for Lake Country IG to accept 7th tradition contributions.

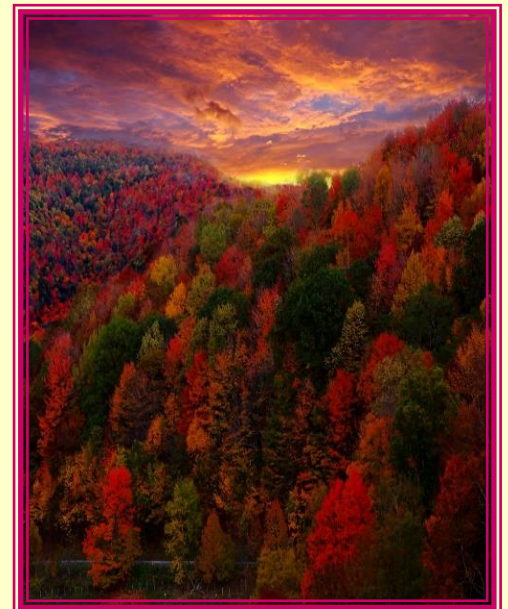
If the contribution is coming from a group meeting, then the group name and/or number must be included in the "Add a note" section.

Pay Pal Link <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/lakecountryoa>

By check: make checks payable to **Lake Country Intergroup** and mail to:

Lake Country Intergroup
PO Box 9327

Spokane, WA 99209 Questions? Email OALCI.treasurer@gmail.com



To Dogs and Cats: A Proposed Big Book Chapter

Inspired by Michael O, written by "Fido" (pen name, aka Joan S)

At a recent OA Zoom meeting, we read the A.A. Big Book Chapter *To Wives*. As we read *To Wives* it became obvious that people in the meeting were having difficulty relating to the text. During our Zoom meeting, my dog barked. I was not on mute. Shortly after, I saw a chat box pop up that said: "To Dogs". I found this incredibly funny, it made me laugh out loud in fact. I started thinking, why not a chapter "To Dogs"? I decided to write to both cats and dogs in the spirit of diversity and inclusion. After all, this is the spirit of the Big Book that many of us cherish, is it not? That no matter who we are or what our beliefs are, we are welcome and can recover. As long as we are willing to work for it, and trust in something greater than ourselves.

Aren't animals an important part of the life we live? What would their perspective be I wondered? Maybe we could learn from them. So with that in mind, the following words seemed to pen themselves ;).

To Dogs and Cats:

"As dogs and cats with owners who are alcoholics and food addicts we think we are uniquely qualified to help you cope with the seemingly tragic illness and symptoms of your owners. With undying loyalty, tolerance, and unconditional love you alone are the most qualified to live with the distressing symptoms of this disease. Perhaps it is because no matter what happens, we as dogs and cats love and stay loyal. We don't criticize or bark. When our alcoholic/addict is being a total sh**, when they are in the throws of the illness and spiritual malady, we know what they need most - love. Sadly, perhaps they themselves don't believe they deserve the love and presence we offer. We recommend in those times, you lick their face, purr, or climb on their lap. Bring them your favorite toy and remind them life can be fun too. Perhaps carry their newspaper or slippers to them.

Give them a reason to get up every day, if only to care for you, to feed you. Take them for long walks in the fresh air. If they leave you, even if only to go outside for a minute, when they come back, greet them with the utmost of joy, buoyancy, and happiness as if you haven't seen them in years. When they are really down and out, lay down next to them. Just be with them.

You can also show them what to do when they are overpowered. Demonstrate how they can simply roll over and go belly up, thereby submitting to the Higher Dog or Higher Cat the very thing that has overpowered them. "Lack of Power is their (our) Dilemma". You may have to demonstrate this lesson repeatedly and loyally for years. You can also show them some dreams are worth chasing with everything you have

As I was wrapping this up, I looked over at my dog who was waiting patiently for a walk. I was reminded that dogs forgive easily. The old expression, "let sleeping dogs lie" reminds me that sometimes it's best to move on and let things in the past go. If I met Bill today, I decided I would like to greet him and his humanity with honesty, love, and tolerance in dog and cat-like fashion. With joy and unconditional love. In thinking of doing so, somehow makes it a little easier for me to love and accept my own imperfections and humanity.

Footnote:

*A statement from the Alcoholic/Food Addict to Dogs and Cats:

First of all, we want to thank you cats and dogs for your unconditional love and loyal support. As this chapter is being written To Dogs and Cats, we want to admit to you we were overcome by a personality changing and life-threatening illness. You loved us when we couldn't love ourselves. You were always patient with us. We are eternally grateful to you for this. You reminded us that we are loved and cherished. The love you give so freely awakens us to the love of our HP. We commit to working hard on our recovery day by day so we can provide the love and attention you have so freely given us, back to you. You certainly deserve it! We will also be better prepared to provide the dog and cat food, treats, and toys you so look forward to. Thank you again for your love and tolerance.