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OASE England Newsletter

Steps of Recovery

February/March 2017

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Welcome



Welcome to Steps of Recovery!

Thank you for making OA South and East England Intergroup part of your day. We're so happy you've found us. Our latest newsletter is filled with the best OA stories, events, experience, strength and hope - delivered to your inbox. Visit us anytime at www.oasouthandeastengland.org.uk we're open 24/7.

Newcomers - Setting Limits



Setting Limits

I have been in the OA program four months, with three months of abstinence. My self-defined abstinence is three moderate meals a day, one snack if I am hungry and no sugar. One miracle that occurred as a result of not eating sugar was my "fall" from perfection. I had gone out of town with my partner. While she participated in an OA assembly, I enjoyed a break from life. Then life happened: income taxes, property taxes and the need to shuffle money around to cover them.

Those were already there when I agreed to go out of town; I just didn't think about them. In addition, two tenants had given notice for that same month. Still, I gave no thought to handling all this while I was out of town taking a break from life. At the hotel, I purchased a device and service to connect to the Internet. I thought I could take a break from life and continue my work at the same time. But I could not send email, print or look at faxes that were coming in at home. And I had filled my schedule for Monday with showing the house and getting bids from lawn and construction workers.

Usually in these situations, I would buy a large bag of sweet stuff and push through what I thought I needed to handle while stuffing sugar in my mouth and body. The rush would give me an invincible feeling, a driven energy. My body would run at full throttle with no driver. But there was no sugar in the hotel room, and a miracle occurred. I paused, I

thought, I reflected. I realized I couldn't do everything at once. I have limits. Sitting in a hotel room was not serving me. I had put everything in motion, and I needed to change it. I decided to go home to work. I told my partner when I saw her that I needed to go.

Once home, I called and cancelled the appointments I had made to show the house on Monday and heard disappointment in people's voices. I received feedback from the reality of disappointing others, of changing their schedules and possibilities. I sat with my participation in reality, hoping to do better next time. Wonderful, life-giving breath returned.

The next morning life seemed lighter. My actions the day before had put me at the same level that I put everyone else on my priority list. I realize I can't do it all. I can set limits on what I accept and learn to be mindful of what I set up for myself. I am now more gentle and accepting of myself and others. Life is good. Life is actually sweet most of the time.

Beth M.
- *Lifeline*, July 2014

Step Two - Finding my Sanity



Step Two

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, pg 9.

Finding my Sanity

It was the word 'sanity' in step 2 that really changed everything for me. I would say that one of my biggest fallbacks in life is my head and the obsessive, completely bonkers thoughts that would fill it. I obsessively thought about food and weight, I felt more comfortable with popcorn than with my closest friends, and I constantly assured myself that I'd be able to keep the weight off this time. All that thinking had to go.

If I still believed the insanity of my thoughts, I knew I'd never be able to escape from the prison of my disease. But how could I change my thoughts? That seemed like an impossible task, but working step 2 with my sponsor gave me hope.

It was painful recalling how my insane behavior around food had affected the quality of my life, but it was that pain that gave me the willingness to put my faith in a higher power - I'd never had any faith in anything before. My sponsor got me to think about everything I'd like my higher power to be (I had to really use my imagination here). I decided it would be an all-loving, all-knowing, force of nature. Yes, I thought. I could get behind that.

But next I had to actually BELIEVE in it. How could I believe in something that I'd just imagined up? Through prayer, meditation, and the willingness to go to any lengths to recover, my sponsor responded. Through putting my faith in my 'imagined' higher power, and working this program on a daily basis, I have the gift of over 2 years of abstinence. Believing in this program, no matter how crazy it may seem, is the sanest thing I have ever done.

Emma

There are three of us in this marriage



"There are three of us in this marriage..."

Words so famously uttered by Princess Diana whilst being interviewed by Martin Bashir in 1995. I have recently married for the first time in recovery, and gratefully recognise that this time there are three of us in my marriage too - myself, my husband and my Higher Power.

Taking Steps 2 and 3 put my feet firmly on the path that enabled me to let go of so many of the thoughts and behaviours that contributed to the breakdown of previous relationships, all of which were embarked upon for entirely the wrong reasons.

Emotional and spiritual recovery lets me communicate with my husband honestly. I can put his needs high on my list of priorities without ignoring my own. In stark contrast, I used to continually attempt to be somebody I was not and pander to every whim of my partners in an attempt to please, feel needed (and therefore better about myself), and avoid conflict. That denial of who I was led to resentment, unhappiness and a total lack of self-respect and self-esteem. The relationships were inherently based on a fundamental lie as I was not being true to myself.

Physical recovery and a loving relationship with myself as a woman has given me the joy of genuine, fulfilling intimacy. No longer is my body something to be constantly starved, punished, berated or ashamed of. Instead I see it as a gift that I can bring to my marriage.

I have lovingly made a lifelong commitment to my husband from a place of happy serenity and in the light of what I have learnt from working our 12 wonderful Steps. As the Step 9 Promises say, 'God is doing for me what I could not do for myself'. My gratitude knows no bounds.

Rachael

Step Three - Enjoying meals and life



Step Three

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him?"
- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, pg19.

Enjoying meals and life

At one point, when I had been keeping to 3 meals a-day and sometimes a snack, I told my sponsor I wanted to change it to just 3 meals a day "because everyone else seems to do that and they're really at peace because of it". My sponsor, however, suggested, due to the way things were in my life at that time, that I include a snack in my food plan each day to bring some consistency into my life. After much rationalisation and justification (half an hour according to my sponsor!) I politely declined. Thanks, but No, Thanks.

Much suffering followed that. I started the 3-0-1 plan and it didn't work. I would come home at 9, not having eaten since 1, starving and crazy. One weekend though when I was on the way up to Leeds to see my family I was listening to an OA speaker on YouTube. After listening to him speaking about Step 3 I came to the conclusion that I would follow my sponsor's suggestion, although I felt absolutely sure that she didn't know what was best for me.

It felt painful when I made the decision, as if was losing a part of me, and it's hard to describe fully how I felt. But the pain, if I remember correctly, was followed by a touch of a sense of relief and, I suppose, a vague sense that it was the right thing. Ironically, due to an unwise food decision when out for lunch with my family, I relapsed the next day. I remember the desperation which I felt following the binges that night and the absolute conviction that for me, there were going to be no half measures from then on.

I woke up in the morning and texted my sponsor with my fears for the day ahead and told her how I was worried about lunch in particular. "Ask God to give you abstinent and healthy meals and then trust that He will do it" was her reply. I did that and I would not hesitate to call the results miraculous. I went down for breakfast and my aunt kindly offered to prepare my breakfast for me. She prepared a lovely breakfast of toast and scrambled eggs and I actually enjoyed it.

God did also provide a scrumptious lunch that day I'm pleased to report and He has provided many scrumptious lunches, dinners, breakfasts, and snacks since then. Of course it hasn't been all plain sailing since that day at all... but I have found that if I set aside a good couple of hours at the weekend to work whatever Step I'm on (I'm at Step 9 for the first time at the moment), go to my four meetings a week as a general rule, follow my sponsor's suggestions and trust that God is looking after me, I do enjoy my meals... and more than that, I am, little by little, starting to enjoy life.

- Peter

Sponsorship - All Together We Are Reaching Out Our Hands



Concept Three

"The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible."

- Concept Three

The principle of Tradition Three is identity and Concept Three is trust

The workshop speakers share their individual stories of recovery and how identity and trust are important in both their service work and in their lives. For additional study, review The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous and The Twelve Concepts of OA Service. The Lifeline Sampler is referenced by one of the speakers as a resource on this topic as well.

- Reproduced from <https://oa.org/podcasts/> - All together now we are reaching out our hands.

New sponsor language

As a result of our recent reminder to the fellowship to join our sponsors list, we are excited to announce the 64th sponsor on our list, and she speaks a language not represented on the R9 list previously, Sepedi (North Sotho)! So, if your first language is Sepedi (or any of the other 21 languages), and you're looking for a sponsor, please contact our Sponsors Coordinators at sponsors@oaregion9.org

- Reproduced from the Region 9 Communications Weekly Announcement email, 06/02/2017

What's On



- Meeting lists by day is available [here](#).
- Next Intergroup meeting is 04/03/2017, 2pm-5pm, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. For info click [here](#)
- Unity Day Workshop, OA Huntingdon - "Experience Strength and Hope", 25/02/2017, 10.30am-3.30 pm. For more info click [here](#)
- Eltham Workshop - "Road of Happy Destiny", 12/03/2017, 10am-3pm. For info click [here](#)
- Pleshey OA Retreat - "Carrying the Message", 31/03/2017 to 02/04/2017. For info click [here](#)
- Heart of England Intergroup's OA Convention, 30/06/2017 to 02/07/2017. For details click [here](#)

Meeting updates



Website meeting updates

- Has your meeting changed? If so, please [update your meeting](#) so that other OA members can find your new meeting details quickly and easily.
- Watch a [video](#) on how to update your meeting list.

Tradition Three - Unity with Diversity

service bodies on behalf of your local OA meeting/group.

- Simply send instructions of amounts to send to each service body by email to SEEIG (treasurer@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk). State whether you wish to use the suggested percentage allocations or an alternative.
- The quickest method to send funds is by bank transfer (Account No - 73049400, Sort code - 090151, Account name - OASE England Intergroup).
- Cheques may also be posted to OA South & East England Intergroup, BM Box 6367, London. WC1N 3XX.
- On any email, letter or bank transfer, please use your WSO registration number so we can recognize your transaction. This is a five digit number found on the meetings list on the oa.org website.

New suggested contribution allocations

Intergroup (SEEIG) 42%

National Service Board (OAGB) 22%

Region (Region Nine) 11%

World Service Office (WSO) 25%

This guidance is suggested only. As per Tradition Four, each group is autonomous, and therefore can decide what level of contributions to send. These are suggested minimum contributions based on current budgets and needs. For further information please contact SEEIG (South and East England Intergroup) by email treasurer@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk or by phone 07583 533090.

- Mayu

Comments



Dear Newsletter Officer,
I just received and read this issue of our SEEIG newsletter.
It was a joy to read, well laid out, and inspiring.
Thanks so much for your service.
Francene, R9 Chair, December 2016

Newsletter

Guidelines and Subscription

- Email newsletter@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk with your comments.
- Please note that due to the size of this newsletter, comments are limited to **75** words.
- Traditions Six and Ten guide us to select only material from within the OA Fellowship.
- If you have received this email from a friend, please consider subscribing by clicking on the **Join Our Mailing List** link in the contents section above.
- If your email address has changed, then please [subscribe](#) to the Newsletter with your new details, or click on the **Update Profile/Email Address** link at the bottom of this newsletter.
- Personal stories express the experience of the individual member and not of OA as a whole.



Step Three Prayer

"God I offer myself to Thee - to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, New York, 2001, pg 63.