

AUTUMN 2022

STEPS OF RECOVERY

OA SOUTH AND EAST ENGLAND INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER



USING THE TOOLS A DAY AT A TIME

WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN 2022 ISSUE
OF THE
OA SOUTH AND EAST ENGLAND
INTERGROUP
NEWSLETTER!

WE ARE NOW HEADING FOR SEVERAL
HOLIDAYS,
IN THIS EDITION WE WILL BE LOOKING
AT

'USING THE TOOLS, A DAY AT A TIME'.

WE ARE
ALSO GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AT STEPS
6 & 7.

THERE'S LOTS OF WAY FOR YOU TO GET
INVOLVED -

KEEP READING TO FIND OUT MORE!

Please note that the opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual OA members and do not represent the views of OA South and East England Intergroup or OA as a whole



WHAT IS ABSTINENCE?

Abstinence means refraining from compulsive eating. For me, that means pre-determining the food I will eat including the quantity, timing, and number of meals a day. It means following through on that pre-determined decision, regardless of how I feel in the moment. I don't make any decisions regarding food on the fly.

I have to measure and portion my meals, because otherwise I know I will always have a tendency to be heavy handed. I don't consume anything caloric between mealtimes. When I am not eating at home and preparing my own food, I make a decision before going out around what I'm going to eat. Abstinence means not diverting from this decision or changing my mind at will.

This means I am able to have three nutritious meals a day. I am not hungry generally. I sometimes look forward to mealtimes, and other times I forget and have to remind myself to eat before my window ends. Either way, no matter how I am feeling, I stick to whatever I had planned at the correct time.

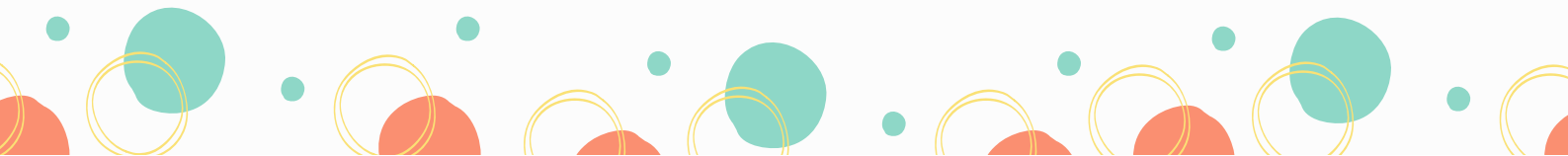
Abstinence is the most important thing in my life. Without abstinence, I cannot function, my compulsive behaviour around food takes hold and the rest of my life becomes unmanageable. It is truly exhausting having to scheme and plan, let alone the financial impact of doing so.


When I binge, the rest of my day is written off. My body feels under attack, and I feel generally unwell. The physical sickness as well as the shame

**"When I binge, the
rest of my day is
written off"**

made me want to isolate. It destroys my confidence and makes me feel like a fraud in most other aspects of my life.

I cannot live my life in that way. I deserve more than that. I can't be a good friend, sister, daughter, grand daughter when I am in the food.





Abstinence means for me that I can nourish myself appropriately, despite my disordered thinking about food. I have found in 5 weeks of abstinence that I am more organised and certainly my life had become more manageable. I no longer feel weighed down by large binges.

My brain is also less full of thoughts about food - I don't have to debate myself or make promises or rationalise and justify what I am eating. I am financially in a better and more secure position.

My abstinence has also given me confidence that I was not expecting. I thought my lack of confidence was around my weight, and, whilst I am still self-conscious, this feeling has been hugely alleviated. I am feeling able to introduce activities back into my life that have long seemed impossible.

All of this begins and ends with my abstinence. If I am abstinent I have a chance to work on and improve other areas of my character and my life. Without it, for me, there is no hope of improving these things. I have to put my abstinence first always.

Rebbeca C CoE

STEP SIX AND STEP SEVEN

SIX

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

SEVEN

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Not signed up yet to receive our newsletter directly? [Click here to subscribe!](#)





YOUR NEW INTERGROUP BOARD!

Every November, we elect officers to our Intergroup Board for the following year. Fellows can take on the same officer position for up to 3 years in a row, so some of our officers are new to their roles, and some are carrying on with their existing roles.

Thank you so much to all the outgoing officers who have served on the Board this last year - your time, efforts and dedication are very much appreciated by us all!

All our officers can be contacted by email - visit the Officers page on our website for details

Chair: Sarah P

Vice Chair: *Vacant*

Executive Secretary: Pam

Treasurer: Hannah

Recording Secretary: Pam

Website Officer: Vacant

Social Media Officer: Vacant

Newsletter Officer: John
(Temporary)

Telephone Officer: Mandy

Professional Outreach Officer:
Jacqueline

Public Information Officer: *Vacant*

Virtual Space Officer: Jen

Intergroup greeter: Vacant

Group Support Officer: Natalie

Region Nine Rep: Natasha

**Could you give service at Intergroup?
Please take a look at our vacant roles!**





USING THE TOOLS

I must admit, some of the tools I am drawn to rather more than others.

My favourite is meetings, I love people and being in a room with them, and them being like me is the best feeling. We share the same problems and do not judge each other. Our live meeting is finding its way back after Covid, although small it has determination and newcomers who have sadly discovered this disease in lockdown are finding their way to us. We do not know our exact future but there will always be groups of us in various village halls and communal spaces offering a solution to those who want it.

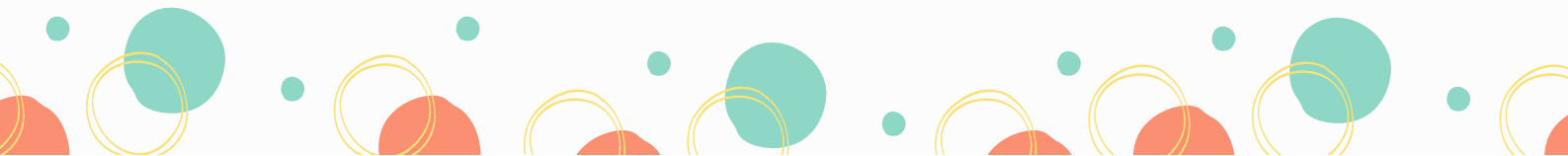
Service and sponsorship are at play in our meetings, with me opening as our venue is a short distance from my home and we are fortunate to have a supportive church that wants us to be there. I love the fact that the smallest gesture is service, from bringing the milk to locking up after and fellows choose the thing that works for them. Sponsoring always terrifies me, feeding nicely into my low self-esteem, what can I, disaster I have been offer another person, only my experience, nothing professional just my journey and an ongoing one at that.

When I started out in this programme my sponsor told me to eat three healthy meals a day with nothing in between and that is what I did. There were not so many options but now there is a great selection.

I wrote lists of the foods that did not work for me, and I still have that list and it can change. I do a food plan in my head each day depending on what I am doing. Food sponsors are a good idea for really focusing one's attention on that area of the disease.

"Service has strengthened, challenged, widened, and deepened my recovery"

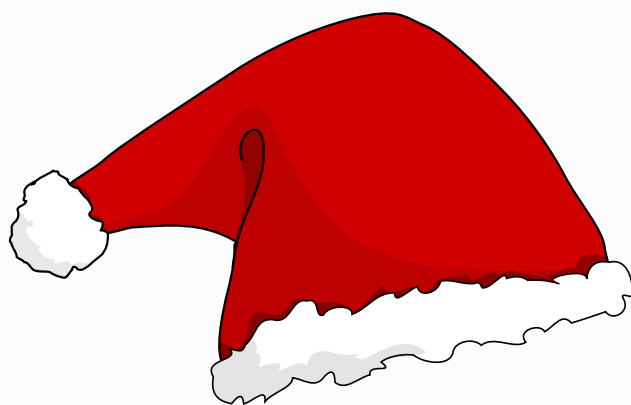
I use my phone in different ways through the day messaging by text a few fellows to start the day with my plans and fears. Connecting with others is very important as my disease is one of isolation and hiding my thoughts from people. Making outreach calls is very helpful and I have a list of numbers I can call for help and support. I can also see how others are doing to take my mind away from my issues.



I am re-reading the big book at the moment and rediscovering the amazing story of how this programme of recovery came about. We use lots of literature in our meetings to begin our oa conversations. We have a stash of books from our literature table which were for sale but are rather more a lending library now.

So finally, my action plan for each day to use the tools, and make them into habits, any, or all of the ones I need that day to stay connected to this programme. I must keep what I have and never go back, to the sad and destructive, and rather lonely place I came from. Using these tools a daily basis, keeps me recovered.

**Using the Tools helps me
pay into my
"Individual
Recovery
Account"**



Decemeber Events to Celebrate

Christmas
Bodhi Day
Ashura
Solstice
Hanukkah
Zarathosht Diso
Darsha Amavasya

On December 22nd, National Mathematics Day is celebrated.

Our problem as Compulsive Overeaters is that we can use any excuse to indulge our addiction.

With the program, we learn to enjoy the time, without the need to indulge.

**Our next Intergroup meeting is on 14th
January 20213– all are welcome to attend!**



CHRISTMAS FOOD QUIZ

1. The most popular Christmas dinner main is turkey, but what is the most popular vegetarian alternative?
2. In 'The Christmas Song' what was 'roasting on an open fire'?
3. Which way do you stir a Christmas pudding mixture for good luck?
4. In Tudor times, they roasted a bird before putting it back together (including the feathers) and served it to impress guests at a Christmas banquet. Which bird was it?
5. In Japan, which famous fast food restaurant brand is a traditional Christmas treat?
6. How many mince pies does the average Brit eat over Christmas? a) 6 b) 11 c) 21 d) 27
7. In the old days, women in England who wanted to find a husband ate what at Christmas for good luck?
8. What is the meal consisting of leftover vegetables served on 26th December?
9. What is the name of the traditional Italian cake eaten at Christmas?
10. What would you stick into an onion when following a traditional bread sauce recipe?
11. Which fruit was often found in children's Christmas stockings in the UK and considered to be a luxury?
12. Which English monarch was affectionately known as the 'Pudding King' because he requested plum pudding for his first Christmas dinner in England?

Answers on the back page!



TRADITION SIX

Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to O.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An O.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to O.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups.

Hence such facilities ought not to use the O.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, O.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside O.A.—and medically supervised. While an O.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never to go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An O.A. group can bind itself to no one. Adapted from AA 12

Adapted from AA 12 & 12

12 Days of Sponsorship

Based on a OA pamphlet, “Where Do I Start”, a new person calls a temporary sponsor for 12 days to talk about the basics of Overeaters Anonymous. (A ‘sponsee’ is someone who has a sponsor.) Then the newcomer can decide if OA is right for them. Also, perfectionists who want to find the ‘perfect’ sponsor can get out of the perfectionism procrastination trap. Action feels good!

INSERT LINK

- To help newcomers, returning OA members, and other members learn about the OA Twelve Step recovery program by using this personal, short-term introduction to Overeaters Anonymous.
- To help sponsees learn how the OA recovery program might help them to stop hurting themselves with food.
- To help members who may be ready to sponsor but are reluctant to do so. This is an opportunity for a member to help a newcomer in a very structured way and to experience what it might be like to be a regular sponsor

SUGGESTIONS FOR SURVIVING THE FESTIVE PERIOD

- Christmas is about giving, not receiving.
- Christmas is “just another day.”
- Spend some “me” time on the day; check in with your Higher Power through prayer and meditation.
- Be kind to yourself, pamper yourself in non-food ways; a bubble bath, watch a favourite film, read a book, go for a walk, etc.
- Read OA or AA related literature. Listen to podcasts or recordings.
- Keep in touch / Check in with your Higher Power during the day.
- Check in with your sponsor / sponsees / other members who are available; Text, phone or WhatsApp.
- Get to a meeting (online or in person).
- Try and “Keep it in the Day” (One day at a time, one hour at a time, etc). Use the “Just for Today” leaflet.
- Remember you do not have to try or eat everything that is offered. Decline firmly and thank the person for making such items.
- Say no to second helpings

·Receive all gifts with gratitude and re-home unwanted gifts of food and / or alcohol.

·If you are visiting friends or family (you should be so lucky) and are driving, park so that the car so you cannot be blocked in, ready for a swift get-away if needs be. Also take “time-out” in the car if you need a break.

Be Prepared:

Find out the timings for the day

Make a plan for the day (Action Planning)

Talk about your fears in advance

Be honest about your needs in advance, if possible

Say no, and mean it, even if it offends others!

Bookend events by talking to a trusted fellow before and after

Find a safe space.... even if its the bathroom ...for time out

Have a non-food room or space to retreat to

Arrive late, leave early - limit exposure to pressured situations

Plead a headache or illness if necessary

·And as one wise person said:

“Doing nothing, saying no, is far LESS PAINFUL than LOSING MY ABSTINENCE!”

Stay Safe. Stay well. Stay Abstinent. Stay in the Programme.



Your newsletter – How to get involved!

Deadline: 14th Feb 2023

Write an article

In our next newsletter, we are looking for articles on Steps Eight & Nine - could you write on this topic? Alternatively, you could interview another fellow, asking them three or four related questions.

Also, we are going to look at tradition 7.

Or send in a contribution for our Newcomer's Corner!

Get creative!

We also welcome other contributions such as poems, art work, games etc that are related to recovery - we'd love to see what you can come up with!

Make suggestions for future newsletters

Do you have any ideas for improving the newsletter? Or ideas for future topics? Please get in touch!

Get in touch at
newsletter@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk

Please note: Contributions may be edited for length or for adherence to the Traditions. Depending on how many contributions are received, it may not be possible to publish them all.



TWELVE STEPS TO A BETTER HOLIDAY

1. WE ADMITTED THE HOLIDAY SEASON HAS A DEEPER MEANING THAN DEVOURING FOOD.
2. WE CAME TO BELIEVE A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD HELP US SEE AND CELEBRATE THE TRUE MEANING OF THE SEASON.
3. WE CAME TO BELIEVE OUR HIGHER POWER COULD HELP US APPRECIATE THE JOYFULNESS OF THE SEASON AS WE UNDERSTAND IT.
4. WE MADE A SEARCHING AND THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD DURING THE HOLIDAYS AND OTHER THINGS WE ENJOY ABOUT THE SEASON.
5. WE ADMITTED TO OUR HIGHER POWER THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR FOOD HABITS DURING HOLIDAY SEASONS PAST.
6. WE BECAME ENTIRELY READY TO ALLOW OUR HIGHER POWER TO REMOVE OUR ATTACHMENTS TO FOOD AS A NECESSITY OF THE HOLIDAYS.
7. WE HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE OUR DESIRE TO PARTAKE OF HOLIDAY TREATS.
8. WE MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WHOSE PRESENCE MAKES THE HOLIDAY SEASON JOYFUL FOR US AND WITH WHOM WE WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OUR JOY.
9. WE MADE PLANS TO SPEND TIME WITH THOSE PEOPLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE, EXPECT WHEN TO DO SO, WOULD REMOVE US FROM OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE OF ABSTINENCE.
10. WE CONTINUED TO ENJOY THE COMPANY OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY AND OTHER NON-FOOD ASPECTS OF THE SEASON.
11. WE SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR APPRECIATION OF THE SEASON, PRAYING FOR KNOWLEDGE OF ITS MEANING AND THE JOY WE FEEL AT THIS TIME.
12. HAVING REALISED THAT SHARING THE JOY OF THE SEASON WITH OTHERS FAR OUTLASTS THE FLEETING PLEASURE OF FOOD, WE GAVE OURSELVES THE GIFT OF ABSTINENCE THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS AND GAVE OTHERS THE GIFT OF OUR FULL ATTENTION AND APPRECIATION.



CHRISTMAS FOOD QUIZ **ANSWERS**

1.
Nut-roast
2. Chestnuts
3. Clockwise
4. Peacock
5. KFC
6. b) 27
7. Gingerbread men
8. Bubble and Squeak
9. Panettone
10. Cloves
11. An orange
12. King George 1st

How many letters are there in the Christmas Alphabet - 25 - there is no L

One Snowman said to the other "Can you smell carrots?"

