



# MESSENGER

The Bi-Annual Newsletter of Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous  
Fall 2007

## LIVING THE TWELFTH STEP

Hi, my name is Karin. I am an abstinent compulsive overeater, and I am happy to be serving as the Region 6 Chair. Service is a very important part of my recovery from compulsive overeating. Ever since I came into the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous in May 1989, I have understood the value of service. I can't keep what I have unless I give it away. I feel very passionate about this program that saves my life, one day at a time.

I just returned from my first trip to the World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque, NM. The theme this year was "Living the 12<sup>th</sup> Step". I felt privileged to be at Conference. I have wanted to go for a long time. It was interesting to see how the business of OA is done. I enjoyed the experience very much and learned a lot.

What does "Living the 12<sup>th</sup> Step" mean to me? It means I am willing to help others, to say "Yes" to service. It means also that I am doing my best to live within the guidelines of the 12 Steps. I believe that there are three parts to Step 12, the first part being: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps..." I know that I didn't come to OA for a spiritual awakening. I didn't even know what a spiritual awakening was. I came only to lose weight. But I found that I couldn't lose weight and keep it off without working the Steps, which led me to a spiritual awakening. I needed to have a personality change sufficient to recover from this disease. I didn't get that from just using the tools. This Step says that a spiritual awakening is the result of these Steps, not the tools. I use the tools to work the 12 Steps.

The second part of Step 12, "We tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters..." is all about service. There are many references in our literature about doing service. The principle of Step 12 is service. I believe the message we carry is that recovery is possible, that the Steps work if we work them, that we can stay abstinent, and that things can be different. There is a way out of our misery. We are not alone. The fellowship supports us while the program changes us. There are so many ways to do service and carry the message. Time is the real price of recovery. It takes

time to go to meetings, write, sponsor, and do service; but it is worth it. I don't want to go back to the disease of compulsive overeating. I also have to practice balance in my life. I can't do everything that I would like to. I do less service in my home area since I am involved with service at the Regional level. Service is also an opportunity to grow. It is not always easy, but it is rewarding. I try to do my best and let go of the outcome. In the Big Book on page 77, it says: "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." I know that I receive so much when I do service.

The third part of Step 12 is to "practice these principles in all our affairs". This says to me that I have to work the Steps outside of meetings, to apply them in all areas of my life. Page 83 of the Big Book says, "The spiritual life is not a theory. *We have to live it.*"

I am currently receiving radiation treatment for breast cancer. I was diagnosed in January, had surgery two weeks later, and then waited for treatment. I am glad that my health didn't prevent me from going to WSBC. I started radiation the day after I came home. The timing worked out well. I am also on medication. The main side effect of both is fatigue; but I am doing fine, still going to meetings, doing service, and working my program. I just pace myself, which is hard for me to do. I rely on my Higher Power for guidance, and I am receiving so much support from the fellowship. I am very grateful for the help of the many OA members I met while doing service.

I attended the Region Chairs Committee meetings in Albuquerque, and we next meet in Philadelphia at the World Service Convention (August 30-Sept. 2). The Region 6 Board will meet by teleconference call in June to prepare for the Fall Assembly on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> in Albany. It will be a busy Assembly, as there are many elections.

Thank you for allowing me to do this service.

See you in the fall.

– Karin R. H., Region 6 Chair  
[chair@oaregion6.org](mailto:chair@oaregion6.org)

## REGION SIX CONTACTS

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R6 Treasurer  
P.O. Box 3073  
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Please make checks payable to: **REGION SIX OA**

The following information allows us to properly acknowledge your group's contribution.

WSO Group Number  
Meeting Name  
Meeting Day & Time

Your cancelled check is your receipt. Your intergroup will receive an acknowledgment at either the next R6 Assembly or mailed with the next issue of The Messenger to your intergroup. Please ask your groups to be as generous as possible. Thank you for your support, service and contributions.

**THE MESSENGER is the publication of  
Region 6 Assembly of Overeaters Anonymous  
7 Porter Park  
Cambridge, MA 02140-2107**

## WHAT IS REGION SIX?

Region Six consists of Overeaters Anonymous meetings and intergroups from the following geographical locations: New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, Central and Eastern Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The purpose of Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous is:

- To further the OA program in accordance with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA;
- To maintain a communications center for Region Six. Specifically excluded is the endorsement of any outside enterprise as outlined in Tradition Six;
- To provide a forum for the selection of Regional and General Service Trustee nominees;
- To provide unity of groups and organization of Intergroups within Region Six;
- To host Region Six Marathons and Conventions as deemed necessary by Region Six;
- To work for OA as a whole within the Region or Committees appointed by World Service.

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**The next Region 6 Assemblies are scheduled for:  
September 29, 2007  
April 12, 2008  
at the Quality Inn, Albany, NY located Route 9W,  
just south of Exit 23 on the NY State Thruway.**

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### Editorial Policy

The Messenger is the bi-annual newsletter of Region Six of Overeaters Anonymous. The deadline for copy is May 1 for the Fall Edition and November 1 for the Spring Edition. Material cannot be returned nor can payment be made. All submissions to the editor must be signed and when published, will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request. The Messenger reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity. Other OA groups may reprint without permission. We ask that you cite the writer and The Messenger as your source. Courtesy copies of reprinted articles are appreciated. The opinions expressed are those of the writer, not those of Region Six or OA as a whole. Please address all submissions and correspondence to The Messenger via e-mail to: Newsletter@OAregion6.org or via US Postal Service in care of the Region Six Coordinator at the address designated above.

### THE MESSENGER STAFF

The Messenger is produced through the efforts of the members of the Region Six Newsletter Committee. We are:

- Gaston L. . . . . Chair
- Marilyn C. . . . . Editor
- Jean E. . . . . Editor
- Elsa P. . . . . Proofreader
- Diane P. . . . . Proofreader
- Diana G. . . . . Design & Layout
- Jacqueline L. . . . . French Canadian Coordinator
- Sang-Gye B. . . . . Committee Member
- Steve M. . . . . Website & Publications Coordinator

# THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF OA

## SAVING OURSELVES FROM OURSELVES

“In OA we ... find a wide range of opinions about the program itself – about the twelve steps, the twelve traditions, and how best to apply them. Nobody is expelled from OA for not working the steps, not getting a sponsor, not respecting the traditions, or not adopting the tools and practices many of us employ.” *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p.130

“Most of us sense that real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints and a respect for their opinions are attitudes which make us more useful to others. Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs.”

*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p.19

Quite a lot of the calls, emails, and letters that come to the World Service Office ask “What do we do about...” and then go on to describe how some person or group is breaking a Tradition. These calls and letters are from people who care deeply about the health of OA, and who want to ensure that the new comer hears a clear and unified message about our 12-Step program of recovery.

I feel very protective of OA. But protectiveness can very easily become overzealousness. I believe that's what the above quotes are meant to warn us against. The Traditions were developed to save ourselves from ourselves.

For example, Traditions Six (“*An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose*”) and Ten (“*OA has no position on outside issues, hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy*”) exist to protect OA from conflicts of interest and internal strife. In OA rooms, these Traditions are sometimes simplified as “don't bring in outside issues.”

Traditions Eleven (“*Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication*”) and Twelve (“*Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities*”) guard against the hazards of individuals dominating OA through their social status and of the public associating the fellowship with a particular person. This can result in the message becoming confused with the messenger. Our literature cautions us to remember that we are an anonymous fellowship, not a secret society. It is OK to talk about our OA membership with anyone we want to, as long as we are not doing it as public “spokesmen” for OA. Likewise, we don't need to hide our identities within the OA rooms, as long as we are not using our social status to make ourselves into OA “celebrities”.

Many OA members feel that we ought to use as little specific information as possible when we share. For example, some of us avoid mentioning where we work, what we eat, or where we worship. In this way, the focus can remain on what we have in common, and listeners are free of any distraction from the message of our OA recovery.

We are all equally responsible as stewards of the OA Traditions, but I believe this responsibility also has to be balanced against our responsibility to practice love and tolerance for others – our constant thoughts of how we may meet their needs. There is a reason our Traditions are *not* called “laws” or “rules”. Laws and rules are inflexible codes of conduct that carry penalties for those who go against them. In OA, we do not govern. We don't have judges or juries that carry out punishments.

So before we are too quick to cry “Violation!” we need to seek a balance. For example, if someone in a meeting mentions what seems like an “outside issue,” let's go back to the Tradition and examine its purpose. Are they “endorsing” something, or just mentioning it? If someone says, “I heard a great sermon last Sunday on practicing gratitude. It reminded me of how much I have to be grateful for,” is he/she diluting the OA message by using the word “sermon”? Sure, the person could be less specific – “I heard a great speaker on gratitude” – but is there really an issue of “affiliating with” or “endorsing” with a religion?

“I call my Higher Power Jesus Christ, and I ask the people I sponsor to do the same.” *That* sounds like an endorsement to me, and certainly not in the spirit of our Steps or Traditions. “I work at Such-and-Such Mart, and they're having a great special on digital scales. If you mention my name, you'll get another 10% off!” This clearly sounds like the sort of situation Tradition Six was designed to avoid. As lovingly as possible, I would probably speak to the individual after the meeting and ask if he is familiar with these Traditions. If this was repeated often, I might ask for a group conscience on the matter. I might even suggest a group inventory, or perhaps a monthly Tradition discussion. But first I will seek to identify the disturbance within myself: am I acting from a spirit of love and tolerance, or a desire to control? What is best for OA?

Each group is free to choose the practices it prefers, but let's not confuse *preferences* with *requirements*. There's a reason our predecessors in 12-Step fellowships found it best to keep it simple. Addicts like to control, and when organizations have a lot of rigid rules and structures, it doesn't create a broad, roomy environment where our Higher Powers can be expressed. The books *Beyond Our Wildest Dreams*, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA* and the various AA “history” books (all of which have OA Conference approval) are wonderful resources for understanding the origins and purposes of our Traditions. Your intergroup can also request a Service and Traditions workshop for a day or a weekend. Just contact me, and I travel, fully funded out of my Trustee budget, literature included.

“Love and tolerance of others is our code.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p.84)

Thank you, as always, for allowing me the opportunity to serve in this way. Call or write anytime. Operators standing by.

- Margaret Ann, Region 6 Trustee  
Trustee@OARegion6.org

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - April 14, 2007

## BYLAWS

In attendance: Chair, Bruce R. (Ottawa District IG)  
four delegates; parliamentarian.

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Do we recommend that the new separate manuals for the individual committees use the term "Procedure"?
2. Do we retain "Policies and Procedures" as the title of the R6 Manual?
3. Do we recommend an amendment to the Bylaws which would rule the following?:
  - a. vacant positions are filled by appointment;
  - b. the appointed incumbent holds the position until the next Assembly;
  - c. during the Assembly an election is held to fill the position;
  - d. the elected incumbent holds the position until the end of the term.

### DECISIONS MADE

The answer was "yes" to the above 3 questions.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

Present formal motions for the above recommendations.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

Present motions by the July deadline.

## CONVENTION

In attendance: Chair, Roberta L. (Nassau County IG), ten delegates.

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Convention 2008 (Plymouth-South Coastal Mass IG/Discovery 2008)
2. Convention 2009 (Syracuse-Greater Syracuse IG/Serenity In Syracuse-Willingness Is There)
3. Convention 2010: need volunteer to take on planning
4. Planning Manual: finished by Barbara B. and distributed
5. Convention 2006: wrap-up report distributed and read

### DECISIONS MADE

1. Copies of the Convention Planning Manual were given to all committee members.
2. Future convention planners will receive a copy of the Manual.
3. CDs were given to 2008 and 2009 planners.
4. CDs will be distributed to Website and Publications Coordinator (Steve M.) for publication on the R6 website, and to Convention Committee Chair.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Updates from the 2008 and 2009 Convention planners
2. Corrections made to the Convention Planning Manual
3. Present the Region 6 2008 Convention at World Service Convention in Philadelphia (August 2007)
  - a. distribute registration forms
  - b. sell cranberry fleece vests and baseball caps

### ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

1. In September: elect new Co- Chair (Charlie acting until September)
2. Convention 2010: hosting committee needed or if they need a scholarship. Addresses for these intergroups are available on the World Service website.

## FINANCE

In attendance: Chair, Louise Y. (Greater Syracuse IG), Co-Chair, Ray F. (Greater NY Metro IG), three delegates, R6 Treasurer

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Motions from Finance Committee
2. New 2007-2008 Budget: line items reduced in anticipation of no revenue from Convention in 2007, and new line items
3. Fund-raiser income: assisting intergroups with budget

### DECISIONS MADE

1. A different system of checks and balances needs to be put in place.
2. 2007-2008 Budget was approved as presented.
3. There is no need for new fund-raiser items.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Work out a simple process for a more disciplined checks and balances system (payment of bills/reimbursement checks).
2. Integrate a simple statement about this process in the Bylaws, and describe it in detail in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

1. Zazu and Ray will draft the statement and the process description, and e-mail it to the Finance Committee and Bylaws Committee members for approval.
2. Ideal deadline: June Board meeting  
Ultimate deadline: September Assembly

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - April 14, 2007

## IGOR (Intergroup/Outreach)

In attendance: Chair, Lyn (Green Mountain North IG), five delegates, R6 Coordinator

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Do we see value in continuing communication among intergroups?
2. Intergroups have, in the past, worked together to hold functions.
3. Mailing information packages to
  - a. groups not affiliated with an IG
  - b. groups that are not represented at Assembly

### DECISIONS MADE

1. Contents of information packages
  - a. scholarship information
  - b. map/lists of IGs
  - c. application for intergroup formation

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Flyers put together
2. Information packages mailed out
3. Phone calls made to those intergroups not represented
4. Handbook reviewed: all Committee members will review the handbook (available on the R6 web page) prior to the next committee meeting in September.
5. Plans for quilt project was moved forward; re-address in September.
6. Plan to have lap quilt ready to promote for 2009 Convention.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

1. Scott: mail out flyers from Assembly.
2. Susan: scholarship information for September Assembly and World Service.
3. Maura: write letter ("Why I love coming to Region 6 Assembly").
4. Jeffrey: IG registration and starter kits.
5. Lyn: obtain list of IG reps and unaffiliated groups and distributes the information to each Committee member.
6. Each member: make personal contact with 2 intergroups not represented here.

## NEWSLETTER

In attendance: Chair, Gaston (IG OA Français de Montreal), six delegates, R6 Website & Publications Coordinator

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Role of Editor: work with raw material (minutes, Committee reports, etc.). The person editing the writing assignments will also have to come up with titles.
2. Role of Proofreader: review and correct edited texts.
3. Layout: the person doing the layout should already be familiar with word processing.
4. Scope of production: printing and mailing.
5. Solution for production: Boyd's printing (Fulfillment House costs for the last issue: 1,050 copies for \$900.00)
6. Review of the production process of the Spring 2007 issue of *The Messenger /Le Messenger*:
  - a. things went well
  - b. 6 people worked on that issue
  - c. it is important to keep ahead of deadlines
  - d. discussion of the timing and mode of *The Messenger*

### DECISIONS MADE

1. E-mail announcement for *The Messenger* on internet sites.
2. The next issue must be written by the end of June.
3. Request from layout: Before starting to work on the texts, all editors and proofreaders ensure that the settings for language in their word-processing application are set to English (US).
4. Jobs were distributed among committee members.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Newsletter issue Fall 2007 will be produced and distributed.

### ASSIGNMENTS/DEADLINES

1. Proofread version by May 21.
2. Layout will be completed by June 18.
3. Final version due on June 30.

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - April 14, 2007

## PI/HIPM

(Public Information/Hospitals, Institutions, Professional, Military)

In attendance: Chair, Natalie (Ocean and Bay IG), twelve delegates.

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Summaries of PI Blitz:
  - a. Cape Cod
  - b. NYS Capitol District
  - c. Metrowest
2. PI Blitz to new members: "Where have you heard about OA?"
3. Results of new member PI Blitz distributed to R6 intergroups.
4. Go over PI Blitz proposals.
5. Article passed around that mentions OA.

### DECISIONS MADE

1. Results of new member PI Blitz ("Where have you heard about OA?") will be forwarded to intergroups, groups, and published on the R6 website (assigned to 4 members).
2. Distribution of PI Blitz funds: Committee can spend \$1,620.
 

a. Greater Rochester IG:	\$810.00
b. Mass Bay IG:	\$810.00

If fully funded, Rochester: everything, and Mass Bay IG: less \$400.00.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Review status before September committee meeting.

### ASSIGNMENTS/DEADLINES

1. Samantha & Lindsay: develop questions for survey.
2. JoAnne & Natalie: go on website.
3. Steve: set up a website for us.

## TWELFTH STEP WITHIN

In attendance: Chair, Marilyn F. (New Brunswick IG), ten delegates.

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Individual ways for sponsoring - encouraging different ways to sponsor.
2. The "Traveling Hopefuls."

### DECISIONS MADE

1. Finish sponsorship letter and packet.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Subcommittee: letter to intergroups encouraging the development of a workshop on the topic of a personal commitment to abstinence.

### ASSIGNMENTS/DEADLINES

1. Tina: sponsorship packet.
2. Letter to intergroups to promote workshop on commitment to personal recovery; draft letter by next Assembly.

## YOUNG PEOPLE

In attendance: Chair, Karla (Greater NY Metro IG), four delegates, R6 Secretary.

### TOPICS ADDRESSED DURING MEETING

1. Young people age groups: guidelines for different ages needed (resources: World Service Young People Committee-resources).
2. How do we reach young people in OA?
3. What do we do once we have them at the meeting?
4. Young people's packets.

### DECISIONS MADE

1. Focus on finding out what World Service resources are available.
2. Display materials at next Assembly.

### GOALS/ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEXT ASSEMBLY

1. Short term goals:
  - a. By May 1: hear back from Jane, then decide what materials to put on a list for a packet for young people.
  - b. By June 1<sup>st</sup>: Young People's Committee will review:
    - 2 tapes: OA 12 Steps For Youth
    - any other resources available
2. Long-term goals: By 2009:
  - a. Have 2 or more 18-to-25-year-old OA members at R6 Assembly (in 2007, we had 1 person!).
  - b. Continue to develop resource packet for young people.
  - c. Dialogue with World Service's Literature Review Committee regarding revision of young people's literature in general, but particularly about the OA booklet, "A Kid's View".
  - d. Dialogue with the same committee about updating the booklet.

### ASSIGNMENTS/DEADLINES

1. May 1: Jane will contact World Service Young People's Committee to find out what they are doing. (Any new materials? Is there a "packet"? What age groups did they define?).
2. June 1: Committee will review 2 tapes and other resources.

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# SUMMARY OF MOTIONS AND VOTES

## BYLAW AMENDMENTS/POLICY MOTIONS

**Motions 7, 11, and 12** were considered in a consent agenda. Motions 3, 4, 5, and 6 would be a second consent agenda. Due to an objection from the floor, Motion 1 cannot be part of the consent agendas. Motions 8, 9, and 10 will be presented individually.

**Motion 8** seeks to amend the name of the PI/HIPM committee to PI/PO (Public Information /Public Outreach) to align R6 committee names with the WS recent name change of the same committee. This was adopted with an amendment, since the WS committee is actually Public Information/Professional Outreach.

**Motions 7, 11, and 12** seek to continue the separation of the policies in our Bylaws /Policies and Procedures Manual. The consent agenda was unanimously approved with a reminder to change the words from "Public Outreach" to "Professional Outreach" where stated.

**Motion 9** contained 2 amendments from the Convention Committee, which gives them greater flexibility in adoption of procedures, in delineating policies, and in clarifying needed statements. Motion 9 was adopted.

**Motion 10** from the Newsletter Committee has the intention of greater flexibility in the distribution of the R6 Newsletter around the choice of language. Motion 10 was adopted unanimously.

**Motion 2** has the intention of saving money for the 2007-2008 budget, due to our lack of a 2007 R6 Convention, by reducing the amount of money for a PI Blitz. The motion was withdrawn by a point of order, as the discussion went over the time limit.

**Motions 3, 4, 5, and 6** were all related to budget allocations and were considered as a consent agenda. They were adopted unanimously.

**Motion 1** was presented on behalf of the Finance Committee for \$586.00, to fulfill our commitment of 10% of Convention profits to WSO. Some cons were presented to keep this money, due to our looming deficit. Some pros suggested that we need to be self supporting, and this money should be sent. It was pointed out by our Parliamentarian that our contributions are outlined in our policies, not our bylaws. Our policies can be suspended for a session. This was done. After some discussion, the motion was voted down.

**Motion** to adopt 2007-2008 budget was adopted as amended after some questions were answered by the Treasurer.

**Motion** to set dates for 2008 Assemblies: April 12, 2008, and September 20, 2008.

**Additional Committee Motion:** There was an emergency motion from the Finance Committee for approval of \$25.00 for insurance expenses. There was some discussion about whether permission of the Assembly was needed, or whether the Chair could approve this without the Assembly. It was decided that the Chair needs the approval of Assembly. The bill must be approved for payment since it is over budget. This was approved unanimously.

# WRITINGS OF THE MEMBERS OF REGION 6

## **TOLD MY ILLNESS TO BE QUIET**

Each step is based on a principle. As I worked the steps and looked at my life and behaviors, I was confronted by powerlessness and unmanageability, centering mostly on my inability – or refusal – to take responsibility for my well-being, my actions, and my side of keeping agreements. My illness mind lied to me continually and told me I could handle food issues. It lied as it told me life worked well when I chose to work at it – in spite of the facts that my daughters left our home as soon as they legally could, my home was in disarray, and I had been fired two times from part-time jobs.

The honesty I began to learn with Step One told my illness to be quiet so I could begin to listen to my sponsor and also begin to absorb the wisdom in the OA literature. With Steps Two and Three I re-worked my relationship with my Higher Power and surrendered to the mess that was my life.

Step Four inventory opened my eyes and my mind further to my total lack of responsibility. It showed me why I was always hungry, angry, lonely, and tired. I experienced love and acceptance as I admitted to my sponsor what life in my skin was really like. I began healing and letting go of all that had made my life a mess. It took a mountain of trust, but I walked from her house unburdened, sensing a new freedom.

My sponsor wisely encouraged me to begin a life of service in OA early on, to extend my hand and heart to all those who still suffer. Today I can give love and acceptance to all who cross my pathway. I can really let go of people and situations that my Higher Power can handle so much better.

– Louise Y.  
Greater Syracuse IG

## **OUR REAL PURPOSE**

My name is Helen, and I am a grateful compulsive eater. I am grateful for this 12-Step way of life and the new principles that I am learning, one day at a time. Before doing OA service work, I pray and ask my Higher Power for help, and I tell myself that doing service is about being helpful, about staying abstinent, and not about getting my own way. Page 77 in the AA Big Book says: “Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.”

When my instincts get blown out of proportion at work, as they so often do, my Higher Power reminds me of my real purpose at work, and everywhere else in my life, which is to be helpful. Also the principle of anonymity, being one among many and no better and no worse than anyone else, has proven to be invaluable at work, at home, and in all of my affairs.

– Helen F.  
New Brunswick IG

## **MAKE AMENDS, HAVE RESPECT**

The most important thing that I do is to make amends when I have offended someone. Not gossiping is probably the most difficult principle I have to live. I catch myself more often than I would like, but OA principles keep me aware of what I am doing. Respecting those who have different opinions from what I believe is also something I have learned because of being around here.

– Anonymous

## **SEEK HELP**

I am not perfect. I don't remember to apply all the principles of the program every day. But when I need a tool or Higher Power, I seek out the program to help me and to give me the sanity I need to keep food out as a solution to my problems in life.

– Jeffrey A.  
Western Mass IG

## **HOW FREEING**

Let Go and Let God has been the most valuable principle I use daily. Before program I spent a lot of time and energy on situations out of my control. My sponsor always says: “Do what you can and let go of the results.” It is amazing how freeing it is to let go. Guilt, fear, and anxiety are no longer the majority of my feelings on a daily basis. For this I am grateful.

– Anonymous

## **TAKE ACTION**

I attempt to practice OA principles in my daily life by:

1. Acknowledging my powerlessness over those things that are in the realm of control by others;

# WRITINGS OF THE MEMBERS OF REGION 6

2. Seeking help from my Higher Power when presented with challenges for which I cannot see a clear solution;
3. Practicing willingness and integrity at every opportunity--work, family, friends;
4. Trying to remember that it is better to be of service to others than have others be of service to me;
5. Saying the Serenity Prayer instead of cursing when stuck in rush hour traffic.

– *Anonymous*

## **THAT'S THE GOAL!**

Let's put it this way: if I weren't practicing them (the principles), I'd say, What a dumb question! I do my best in every situation every day – from my food, to my work, to my moment-to-moment relationships with each person I meet; to use honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, self-discipline, love, perseverance, spiritual awareness, and service. In short, I do not lie, express negativity, try to control, run away in fear, act sleazily, say NO-Never, eat, or act just because I feel that way, hate anyone (including difficult people), behave inconsiderately, or make decisions based on me-first needs.

And that's how I practice the principles in all my affairs. At least that's the goal; and when I fall short, I have the amends process to guide me towards righting any wrongs I have committed.

– *Gil  
South Coastal Mass. IG*

## **HONESTY, LOVE, AND PERSEVERANCE**

How do I apply the principle of our program in my daily affairs? Through working the steps and acquiring their principles, I have become honest in dealing with myself and others. I now have hope that things will work out the way they are supposed to, and I have enough faith to Let Go and Let God. I have become more sociable and less isolated through working the steps, and I have courage to approach life with a positive attitude and to take risks, such as going to college. All of the above contributed to my integrity and made me a more approachable, trustworthy person. I have willingness to take suggestions, and to do service in and out of OA. I have learned about humility by accepting that I am exactly where I am suppose to be,

and I can accept myself exactly as I am. Following my plan of eating and turning over my food every day has taught me self-discipline. That principle got me through school and a new career. I take responsibility to fulfill my commitments. I have learned to love myself and others, and extend my emotional feelings towards all, in and out of OA. My perseverance is what gets me up each morning, to do again today what worked to keep me in recovery yesterday. Spiritual awareness appears in my morning prayers, as well as my entire decision-making throughout the day. I do service to myself and others, whether in OA, at work, or at leisure. Those are the 12 principles.

– *Anonymous*

## **INSURE IMMUNITY TO THIS DISEASE**

I get on my knees in the morning and totally surrender my compulsive overeating disease over to my HP, which I choose to call God. I ask God to direct my thoughts, and I surrender all areas of my life over to my HP.

Then I review my day. When I am undecided about anything, I ask God to inspire me, and then I relax. Throughout the day I ask God what the next right step is. I take quiet time and meditate. I pray with another person. It's sometimes the 3<sup>rd</sup> Step prayer, the 7<sup>th</sup> Step prayer, or Acceptance, or Serenity Prayer.

When agitated, I pause and ask God what the next right thing is to do. Then many times during the day I say: "Thy will be done." In order to insure immunity from this disease, I work with newcomers and other fellow members and do service in and out of the program.

– *Anonymous*

## **GOD'S WILL FOR ME**

I must admit I don't specifically think of applying the principles in my daily affairs. However, my personal lifestyle gels with the principles. I am a religious person living my life as I see God's will for me.

– *Anonymous*

## **PAUSE, PRAY, AND BE GRATEFUL**

Program is teaching me to pause when agitated and consult my HP. This stops me from escalating into arguments and starts me working on the solution. My office mate has a noisy foot rest that was

## WRITINGS OF THE MEMBERS OF REGION 6

frustrating me until I started saying a prayer each time I heard it. Now I'm grateful for the foot rest's reminder to have conscious contact with HP. Now HP is also my office mate.

That pause is also waylaid new resentments. When I go to bed, I no longer replay the problems of the day. I now review the times I had to pause and look for my negative characteristics that were in play. They get added to my next morning's Seventh Step prayer. My day is much more fun, and I show a lot more love to people around me.

– Lyn H.  
Green Mtn. North IG (Vermont)

### FOLLOW - ENCOURAGE -- SHARE

**H**ow do I apply the principles of our program in my daily affairs?

1. Share my events of the day and how they relate to OA, the Steps, and the meditation readings with sponsees and other OA members.
2. Share my prayer and meditations with my spouse.
3. Encourage my spouse to attend AI-Anon.
4. Remind myself of the importance of a 10<sup>th</sup> Step each day, and share this with a sponsor.
5. Say YES to service even if I do not know how to do it. I'll learn something.
6. Follow suggestions. Follow a food plan.

– Eileen B.  
New Hampshire IG

### TURN TO GOD 24/7

**C**onnecting with God, my HP, I am able to work my program and apply my OA principles daily. Prayer helps me to keep humble, and is also helping me to value myself and others as God values all of us. Now I can see my character defects and the addictive personality that leads me to do and say things that are not positive. I can see these things appearing in my life, and ask for help. In most cases I get the help before small conflicts turn into large resentments or harms. I turn to God, my sponsor, my family, and my friends. I work out my part in everything I do and say. It keeps me sane and humble and connected. I am able to see daily

the three areas of my life as a person and as compulsive overeater that I need to value and take care of. They are of course spiritual, physical, and emotional/mental. When I work on all three of these areas, I care for myself, and I am able to reach out and care for others.

– Ileana L.  
Ottawa, ON

### BEAUTIFUL WAY TO LIVE

**O**ne day in my exhilaration I cried out, Higher Power, how can I show you how much I love you? The answer came: By being the best you that you can be. Today I try to be the best sister, the best mother, the best grandmother, the best friend, the best OA member that I can be--the best Marilyn that I can be. This means that I have learned in this program to do this. For most of my life I had very high ideals and principles, but I didn't have the discipline to carry them out. I hated myself and you, and I ate and drank in order to live inside my skin. I was given a spiritual experience that now allows me to have the power to do what I couldn't do before. It allows me to see where I am doing wrong and not to do these things anymore.

The big things I always knew, but the little things always got me -- like saying things to make people blush, the little white lie, the mouthful of stolen food in the grocery store, not loving myself as the Creator loves me. All these things made me not able to stand myself, and I had to numb myself in order not to kill myself. Today I am free of these actions, and I get high by using this program instead of food. What a beautiful way to live.

– Marilyn F.,  
New Brunswick IG

### A GRATEFUL HEART NEVER OVEREATS

**O**n a daily basis I try to embody the principles of the program in all my daily affairs. At work I try to look for the good in my fellow co-workers, and to act from a place of understanding and love instead of pride and ego. I pray for everyone I have trouble with, including me. I get on my knees throughout the day. I try to be honest in all my interactions with people, and I ask God for help to put me in the right frame of mind. I also remember that my food problem is my biggest issue, and everything else is secondary. And of course I practice gratitude, even

when things are not going the way I want them to, because I know A grateful heart never eats.

– Lisa F.  
Mass. Bay IG

### **OA 12+ 12= TRUE LIVING**

**T**his program is dangerous – dangerous to the food addict that I have been. It threatens to turn everything around. Common sense becomes uncommon sense. Very often, practicing principles like honesty, trust, faith, courage, and humility will hurt ME. My feelings are threatened. I intellectualize why this situation is different and deserves an exemption from the rule. For me the practice consists of continuously asking for the willingness, for the patience and the courage to do the next right thing, to keep reminding myself that God is doing for me what I cannot do for myself. Take away the fear that goes with the profound changes that I am experiencing as a result of working the program. Joy is the absence of fear, the joyousness that the program promises (Happy, joyous, and free). That's what I am after. It seems that going where my ego is causes fear to set off the alarm. My alarm sounds like this: You will have nothing left; This is too much; This is not necessary; It's not important; I need a softer way. A lot of my Step 12 is also acknowledging and forgiving myself when I fall short of my ideals. These I don't have to give up. There is no race to win. OA gave me back my life. I am a winner already. Thank you for having made my life possible. May my aspirations increase, my awareness flow, and my actions become more and more in tune with those precious principles, so that I truly carry the message by being it. For this I pray.

– Sang-Gye

### **CLARITY**

**H**ow do I apply the principles of our program in my daily affairs? *H.O.W.*

**HONESTY** – This begins with my food and bedtime. Accountability continues from this starting point. Am I truthful with my son? If I don't follow through on a commitment, do I tell a white lie to look good? Do I admit I made a mistake when I got a ticket for making a right turn on red when I wasn't supposed to, paying the ticket instead of fighting it? This was a huge breakthrough for me. I had to make many telephone calls and pray a lot about that one.

**OPEN-MINDEDNESS** – It begins with listening to my sponsor and paying attention to what I read in the literature. That is to say I surrender to the reality that although I desperately want to know it all, I don't. This spreads into every area of my life, in every business

meeting, every discussion with my 17-year-old son. It's hard to admit I might not have really listened to my teenager and his concerns, or admitted to my son that I jumped to conclusions by assuming his chores weren't done before checking, or giving him enough time. This exemplifies the principle of progress, not perfection.

**WILLINGNESS** – My disease doesn't take vacations or take breaks from my sometimes challenging daily program disciplines. If I am willing to weigh and measure my food, call my sponsor on time, make my hook-up calls, read, write, and pray, I find that (as if by magic) I am willing to pay my bills on time, be on time to places, and not disappoint people when I have agreed to do something.

How I work my program on a daily basis determines not only the level of my spiritual fitness, but also affects the clarity with which I can bring program principles into my everyday activities.

– Samantha

### **GREAT INFORMATION**

**I** have been coming to the Region 6 Assembly for six years as a Rep and Alternate. This is my last Assembly as a Rep. I have met several people from all over the Region, got some great information of events, and saw how Region 6 conducts its business.

– Mary S.  
NYS Capital District IG

### **AS BEST I CAN**

**I** take time to read the literature and take quiet time daily. I practice acceptance of life's problems and issues by remembering to Let go and Let God, and if I'm really troubled, I make an effort to write the feelings out. I continue to weigh and measure my food and do the drill. I go to three meetings a week, and do service.

I try to be cognizant of my character defects and correct them as I become aware of them, forgiving myself for the transgressions. I practice patience and tolerance of others with different struggles as best I can (imperfectly).

– Anonymous

### **GIFTS OF THE PROGRAM**

**I**t starts in the A.M., when I get on my knees to ask my Higher Power for the willingness not to eat one more day. I start my busy day and ask God for help: Thy will be done, not mine. Every day I receive gifts from my HP, and using the gratitude and acceptance that I learn in OA keeps me spiritually fit. I use the tools of OA not only to keep from overeating, but to do service for anyone who crosses my path during the day.

– Anonymous