

# A Serving of Hope

Volume 6 Issue 4

Oregon Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

April 2017

## No Ordinary Day

*“Living by the fourth tradition in OA means learning to act autonomously, even as we live in harmony with others. Here, we accept responsibility for ourselves, for our actions and their consequences, and for our own recovery.”*

*~From The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*

OA's traditions hold important ideas for our groups, but they also give us ideas for the way we can live as individuals.

It's important to be harmonious and accepting of other groups, respecting autonomy. And we can learn something about how to live ourselves from this, striving to respect those around us, even if we don't agree. We can “live and let live” so that we avoid unnecessary conflict in life and feel peaceful in our decisions. We don't need another reason to fall back on compulsive behaviors!

***Remember that coming to meetings can teach you so much:***

***You can learn*** more about the traditions that help you work in groups and individually.

***You can hear*** stories of people who have learned to handle conflict without letting it ruin their day—or their food plan.

***You can find*** hope from the experiences of those who are finding a way to stay abstinent from compulsive eating.

*~Ed.*

## The Fourth Step and Me

Hello, my name is Deborah, and I am a recovering compulsive overeater. I am very grateful to have been in this program since 1991 and abstinent since 2004. I believe that the program's fourth step has made this possible.

I have experiences with the fourth step both from the side of someone who is working that step and writing up my inventories (yes, there have been multiple fourth steps in my recovery!) and from the side of someone who is listening to another OA member share their fourth step with me. Both sides have been profound for me.

My very first fourth step was in another program, actually, and it was long and wrenching. I was sure my sponsor was going to run screaming from the room as I admitted out loud the things I was so deeply ashamed of. She didn't. She sat in my rocking chair and listened and nodded, and occasionally said “Yeah, me too,” and I found I was not so ashamed. It was rather a miracle! Then I did several other fourth steps when I got to this program because I needed to look at and acknowledge myself as one of the people I resented and did harm to...and to look honestly at how my food compulsion harmed those around me.

*~Continued on Page 4*

## Upcoming Events

May 6: Monthly speakers meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Contact Mikki at 503-747-7769 or [mikkime@gmail.com](mailto:mikkime@gmail.com).

May 10: Oregon Intergroup Meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

May 13: OA's Toolbox for Recovery Workshop, 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Martha Room in the First Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Ave. Corvallis, OR 97330. Bring a brown bag lunch and a \$5 suggested donation—no one turned away. Contact Amy at 503-851-9323 or [toolboxmay20@yahoo.com](mailto:toolboxmay20@yahoo.com)

May 20: No Shame Workshop, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Salem Hospital, Creekside Room, Building D, \$5 suggested donation. Registration starts at 9:30 AM. Contact Christina at [xabeth@comcast.net](mailto:xabeth@comcast.net) or Pat at 503-580-5738. Wear your favorite team jersey!

June 24: Off The Scale Recovery, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Registration is at 9:00 AM, St. Vincent's Medical Center, 9205 SW Barnes Road, Stanley Family Room 20. Contact Kym at [literature@oregon-oa.org](mailto:literature@oregon-oa.org) or 503-544-5955.

## Everyone Can Be of Service!

When “service” is mentioned, folks say, “I don’t have the time, skills, money, etc. for that.” As the tools pamphlet says, service begins with the basics.

**Meetings** - Just by showing up at a meeting, I am doing service to others as well as to myself. How can there be a meeting if no one comes? How can we share experience, strength and hope without people? So just being at a meeting you are doing service.

Once you are at a meeting, helping with room arrangements before and after the meeting is a very simple but essential service. Putting away literature, helping with readings, and especially sharing your experience, strength, and hope are also very important, but simple and effective ways to give service.

How can others feel the love, support, and acceptance of the group unless others share their struggles and how much this program has helped them? How can one feel accepted without smiles and hugs? How can newcomers learn that they are not unique unless they hear other’s stories? Therefore, talking to others and sharing is an important part of service, too.

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### Young People’s Phone List

Oregon Intergroup is assembling a contact list for young people in OA.

If you came into program at age 30 or younger and would like to offer your experience, strength, and hope to a young person in our program, please send your contact information to [youngpeople@oregon- oa.org](mailto:youngpeople@oregon- oa.org). Include your name, phone number, email address, and the age you were when you came into OA. WSO defines a young person as someone who is 30 years or younger.

If you came into program when you were older than 30 years old and would also like to be a resource to the younger members of our fellowship, you are also welcome to add your name to the young people’s phone list.

How discouraging it can be to come to a meeting afraid of a new experience among strangers and not be acknowledged or spoken to.

**Other simple forms of service** include sending emails and texts to others as well as making phone calls. This is a disease of isolation, and these help us break loose out of our self-imposed prisons.

**Sponsorship** is another form of service. Once you have progressed enough to have some abstinence and have worked through step three, you have something to share with others who suffer from our disease. Abstinence is the best gift you can give yourself, and through sponsorship, it is a gift you can help others obtain. The more you give through sponsorship, more is added to you as you walk hand in hand with your fellows.

Above the group level, the best way to help carry this message to those who still suffer is to attend Intergroup meetings and participate in strengthening of OA groups in the area.

As you start with the simple basics you will be amazed at how easy it is to give service and how much more you feel a part of OA. Together and with our higher power we are doing what none of us has ever been able to do alone.

~Rosanne K.

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The views expressed in the newsletter are of the person who wrote them and do not represent OA as a whole. Take what you like and leave the rest.

Oregon Intergroup serves meetings from Longview to Tillamook, Salem to Portland, Silverton to Hood River, and includes Vancouver and the surrounding area. Find us online at [oregon- oa.org](http://oregon- oa.org) or call 971-317-6343.

## Embracing Uncertainty

It was a Saturday at 1:30 AM, when I got a call that every parents fears. A small hospital along the coast called to tell me that my 34-year-old daughter was alive but needed a family member there ASAP. Because of HIPPA privacy laws this was all they could tell me, and it turned out to be the longest 2 and a half hour drive of my life.

Because of my 12 step work, I was able to make the drive, which included a snow storm. When my thoughts would wander to worse case scenarios, I heard my Wise Mind reminding me that God is in charge. It was my HP that kept me doing what I needed to do, which was to drive carefully and arrive in a functional frame of mind. It was my HP that reminded me that trying to guess what was going on would only lead me to insane behaviors.

My daughter was alive, but will require a lot of emotional healing. Because of the series of events, neither she nor I know everything that happened that night, and although what we do know indicates she was a victim, we may never know for sure.

The days since this event have been difficult for me. My feelings contradict each other as I waffle between feelings of disappointment for the behaviors we know she participated in and feelings of anger for what we guess may have been done to her. My logical mind can't make sense of all my feelings, so I've been pushing them down, hoping to find out the truth of that night so I know "what I'm supposed to feel."

Here lies the problem: I may never know the truth, and pushing down feelings takes a toll on my recovery. I have no doubt that without program I'd be purging right now instead of writing this article. I can't afford to challenge my recovery by not addressing my feelings.

The feeling that I know I have right now is uncertainty. Uncertainty is clouding my ability to accept contradicting feelings. Uncertainty causes my logical brain to take charge so an answer can be found....but this time it can't. The first and third steps tell me that I must let God be in charge. Just as God was in charge of the events and my drive that night, so She is in charge with the knowledge of what happened. I must accept that I may never know, and it's not my place to keep guessing or worrying. God will reveal to my daughter and/or me what She feels we need and what She feels we can handle. Trying to take control of that knowledge will only challenge my recovery.

So for today, I accept what I don't know, and I will do what is mine to do....stay in recovery, work my program, and it never hurts to increase my self-care.

~Kym, Beaverton, OR

## Region 1 Needs Virtual Sponsors!

The Virtual Sponsorship Committee is in urgent need of more sponsors. Virtual sponsorship is a great way to get your foot in the door if your sponsor says that you're ready to start sponsoring yourself, but you are a little unsure.

This is a great way to meet people from across the region! Many people still live in areas where OA is new and not well established, so being able to bring your recovery to someone who is struggling is an amazing gift! It will enhance your recovery and strengthen the program as a whole.

Your anonymity will be respected at all times. Please consider virtual sponsorship today! To apply, go to <http://www.oaregion1.org/sponsor-application.html>.

**The joy we receive as we try to carry the message is a positive force in our lives today, sustaining us through good times and hard times, transforming us and our companions in recovery.**

~The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters  
Anonymous, p. 102

## A Meditation

- ❖ What if? What if I am on God's special teams roster? What if I am positioned to do work that no one else is as prepared to do?
- ❖ Recovery is service.
- ❖ What if I am enough, exactly how I am today?
- ❖ God first, recovery second, and everything else will work itself out.
- ❖ What if God's love for me knows no limits? What if all my problems are the most loving way possible for God to grow me up? What if my problems aren't really obstacles, but opportunities? What if every challenge I face is truthfully an asset? What if all my mistakes aren't recorded anywhere? What if they literally do not exist?
- ❖ Let God be the judge.
- ❖ What if today God is closer to me than ever before, if only I will turn to Him, open up, and listen?
- ❖ Fear is the chief activator of my character defects—fear that I will lose something I have or not get something I want.
- ❖ I cannot be close to everything at once. Only God can be all things to all people.
- ❖ Humility accepts its limits. I am finite.
- ❖ Stay open to God and let go. Relinquishment is key.

~Matthew R.

*("The Fourth Step and Me," continued from Page 1)*

It was, again, pretty wrenching to say those things out loud, and yet again, my sponsor nodded and listened and sometimes said "Yeah, me too." What a miracle of relief I found that I was not alone! Even when I didn't want anyone else to know, telling someone was the path to sanity and serenity. And I have found that occasional "catch-up" fourth steps, usually focused on a particular issue or person, have been necessary. All of them have provided relief and often in surprising ways. I've used most of the possible formats over the last 26 years. There is no "one correct way for everyone at every time" in my experience. There is just "this is the one I need, for me, at this time."

As a sponsor, it is my privilege to listen to my sponsees' fourth steps. Sometimes this takes a long time, sometimes it is pretty quick. I've suggested most of the format options and each sponsee has found the method that works for them. I have heard a lot of things, and I have done my best to listen closely, nod, and gently say "Yeah, me too" where appropriate.

We are NOT alone in this program. I did not have to work the steps alone, and I still don't have to. Uncovering the ugly things that my disease would like to keep secret is the way out of this disease and into remission. To me, a fourth step is a lot like chemo is for a cancer patient...it kills the insidious growths (in my brain) that will eventually kill me if I don't get rid of them.

~Deborah R., Tigard

How has OA saved your life? Share your story of recovery. Email your submission to [newsletter@oregon-oa.com](mailto:newsletter@oregon-oa.com)