

# A Serving of Hope

Volume 4 Issue 10

Oregon Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

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## PROCRASTINATION

*“Courage does not always march to airs blown by a bugle; is not always wrought out of fabric ostentation wears.*

*Frances Rodman*

Courage can be a silent act, a quiet word, a refusal-or an acceptance. Courage has not guarantees, or certain outcomes. It is a risk taken on an unknown path. Courage brings about change.

Growth is dependent on courage. Today I can risk, because I am not afraid to make a mistake. I am ready for change. I can make choices, not out of fear or recklessness, but out of a new willingness to resolve old problems, to rid myself of old ideas.

For today: I procrastinate out of fear of failure. Have I enough courage to examine that fear?

*~For Today, page 180.*

The views expressed in this 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.

## Daily Practice For the Win

Before I came to OA, the idea of practicing something helpful everyday was unheard of. The only things I did every day without fail were overeating, restricting, and obsessing. I would see people that had daily disciplines and wondered, enviously, how they did it day after day. I figured they were just born with that ability and that I would never get there since I wasn't given that ability.

Early on in my OA experience, with the help of Higher Power and my sponsor, I started tracking my food every day. This was the first time that I had ever “seen” what I was eating and I was shocked. All sorts of judgments and guilt came swarming up. With the encouragement and support of my sponsor, I was able to continue to write down everything I was eating, even if I labelled it “bad”, and I was able to begin to release the guilt and appreciate the facts.

This turned into writing in my journal everyday about things that were bothering me throughout the day. The relief and clarity that came from writing it all down helped release a lot of the tension and helped me stay out of the food.

I am now on my 10th step and ready to rework my daily program to help me stay on track going forward. For today, I write my food down, end my day with a mini 4th-9th step, and do some writing on anything that's coming up. These actions help me stay connected with Higher Power and be a more helpful contributor to the world around me.

My recovery so far has been made up of small actions chained together to free me from the obsession of food. I am grateful for the OA program and to be able to practice these actions every day.

*~Joel*

## Upcoming Events

October 31, Halloween Party, 7pm-10pm, West Hill Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson RD Portland, 97223. Contact Jenice 503-705-5599 or Julie 503-857-6207 or email [events@oregon-oa.org](mailto:events@oregon-oa.org).

November 7, Monthly speakers meeting, 7:00PM-8:30PM, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland; contact Ilene 503 268-3064.

November 11, Oregon Intergroup Meeting, 7-8:30pm, at Girl Scouts, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

November 26, 8th Annual Thanksgiving Day Potluck, 1-5pm, OA meeting at 4pm., 4635 NE 33rd Avenue, Portland 97211. Contact MerleAnn, 503-281-8947. Can't make it? Calls are also welcome!

January 23, 2016, Longview, WA. Region 1 Board meeting and marathon. Save the date!

## Keep Coming Back

The principle of Step 10 is perseverance. Perseverance is my program in a nutshell. For almost a decade I've kept coming back. Most of that time, I've been in my disease as much as program - but I kept coming back.

I kept coming back even when my disease told me that this wasn't working; I was too broken to fix.

I kept coming back even when the food spoke louder than my Higher Power's voice could.

I kept coming back even when I gained almost 50 pounds while claiming to be working a good program.

I kept coming back. No matter what - I kept coming back; despite myself, despite my disease.

Why? I'm not sure. It could be because I have found a group of people who finally make sense to me. It could be because I finally found a program that addressed all aspects of my brokenness and not just the physical part. It could be because I know that if I stick around long enough, I will get it. It could be because there is no other place for me but the place I've found in OA.

The truth is, I keep coming back for all of those reasons and dozens more. Because I was told to by people who had recovered and found a new way of life without the compulsions. I want what they have. It's a simple as that.

I went to an event recently where we talked a lot

about why OA isn't growing as much as it should be; why people don't keep coming back. The idea that we don't stress the concept "no matter what you keep coming to meetings" as much as other 12 Step groups was one that I could relate to. Those of us who might be in relapse or haven't "got" the program yet are just as important to OA as the newcomers and we need to make current members feel just as welcomed and loved as we do the newbies in our meetings and in our fellowship!

The only way you can "get" perseverance is to keep coming back. I have to be as stubborn about my recovery as I was about my disease. I went to any length for the compulsions, I must and will go to any length for my recovery.

Perseverance has kept me coming back and I'm grateful for it. I now have a food plan I can live with, I'm working the Steps and using the tools. I've released over 25 pounds and my head has a lot less fat in it than it used to. No, I might not have the recovery I thought I would have by ten years in, but I do have recovery, thanks to my perseverance, the grace of my Higher Power, and the fellowship of this program.

Please, whatever you do, don't stop coming back! You too must have perseverance. You will if you just give it a chance, one day at a time. How do you get to be an "old-timer" in OA? Keep coming back and don't die! It's as simple as that.

~Christina

### 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.

### Got CDs?

Our Intergroup CD library needs your help! A lot of our CDs have been checked out for a long time. We all need a chance to hear the experience, strength and hope found in our CD library.

If you have a CD from our library, please return it so others can strengthen their recovery. You can return a CD by either giving it to your IG Rep or mailing it to the PO Box on the front of the CD package.

Thanks so much for your help. For questions, contact Marie at 503-351-0917.

### Send a Rep to Intergroup!

Do you want to help strengthen OA in your area and throughout Oregon? Make sure your voice is heard by sending an Intergroup Rep to your monthly Oregon Intergroup meeting. Give your members an opportunity to serve and help all of us benefit from a strong and diverse OA organization. OIG meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Girls Scouts building, 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland, OR 97219.

## Twelve Steps to a Slip

The holiday season is upon us! Stay abstinent through the holidays by being aware. Every slip has a beginning. Know your danger signs!

1. Start missing meetings for any reason, real or imaginary.
2. Become critical of the methods used by other members who may not agree with you in everything.
3. Nurse the idea that someday, somehow, you can eat like 'normal people' again.
4. Let the other members do the 12th step work in your group. You are too busy.
5. Become conscious of your OA "seniority" and view every member with a skeptical eye.
6. Become so pleased with your own views of the program that you consider yourself an authority.
7. Start a small clique within your own group, composed of only a few members who see eye to eye with you.
8. Tell the new member in confidence that you yourself do not take ALL of the 12 steps seriously.
9. Let your mind dwell more and more on how much you are helping others, rather than on how much the OA program is helping you.
10. If an unfortunate member has a slip, drop them at once.
11. Graduate to the point of no longer needing a sponsor yourself.
12. Look upon a food plan as a vital thing for new members, but not for yourself. You outgrew the need for that long ago.

~SW Ontario IG, Windsor Ontario Canada, Region 5

## 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>.

## How much is Your Recovery Worth to You?

**Our disease tells us, "There will never be enough."**

Scores of OA members worldwide have discovered that their fears of not having enough food, money, security or love have been lifted by a power greater than themselves. Experience has shown that OA recovery is far stronger than the debilitating disease of compulsive overeating, which also kept us captive to shame and insecurity about the future.

When describing the benefits of recovery, many members point to the promises listed in *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the Big Book), including: "Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us" (p. 84).

To know the true freedom of recovery is to know that we can make sensible and necessary financial contributions to OA at all levels, and that this investment in our Fellowship ensures we can continue to carry the message to the still-suffering compulsive eater.

Our Seventh Tradition states that OA is fully self-supporting, accepting contributions only from OA members. While no fees or dues will ever be required for membership, OA needs help to keep its rooms open, provide opportunities for fellowship and spread its message to still-suffering compulsive overeaters.

~Seventh Tradition of OA pamphlet, page 1.

## Time to Elect a new OIG Chair!

Congratulations to Beverly, who was elected Region 1 Chair at our Assembly in Bend. She plans to resign as OIG chair at the November intergroup meeting.

You can find a list of the Chair responsibilities and an application at <http://oregon-oa.org/what-is-oregon-intergroup/intergroupdocuments/>.

If you are interested in running for the position, please contact Martha at [johansenmarthar@gmail.com](mailto:johansenmarthar@gmail.com). The election for a new Chair will be held on Nov. 11, at the regular OIG meeting.

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

– Thomas A. Edison

**Don't leave before the miracle happens!**

## A Zest for Living

A new day was beginning. The early morning sky was blue; the breeze fresh and crisp. Suddenly my phone rang.

"Oh, Rozanne!" the caller cried. "What shall I do? I've been in and out of OA for twelve years, but I only have one foot in the OA door. Meetings are so boring; eating plans are confusing. I still have to lose twenty pounds, but I don't seem to be able to do it. I'm not really happy inside. How do you maintain your enthusiasm about OA the the program?"

How indeed. This was a serious, thought-provoking question. What happens to us after we've been in OA for a period of time? Is inventory-taking becoming too much trouble? Does or prayer and meditation time grow stale? Is our carefully crafted food plan turning into the same old thing each day? Is it easier to go to a movie than to a meeting? Do the speakers all begin to sound alike?

Sometimes we find ourselves resting on our laurels. Maybe we've been at a normal weight for quite awhile. Family relations may be smoother. Our job situation is finally stable. The threat to our health from overweight is diminishing. We no longer overreact to every little thing. OA becomes one same old happening after another.

What happened to that pink cloud feeling we had as newcomers? It was so exciting; everything was new and hopeful. REcovery could be ours! Where did that euphoria go?

Perhaps we can't maintain that ecstatic newness forever, but we can find something better - a joyous appreciation of life without excess food.

What steps can we take to maintain a zest for living no matter how long we've been in OA, no matter what life throws at us?

First, we must remember what it was like during the depths of our overeating. Hopelessness and despair were our constant companions. Frustration and rage overwhelmed us. Life scarcely seemed worth living.

Next we must realize that, with God's help, our dark past is our greatest possession - the key to maintaining our own happiness while bringing joy and peace of mind to others. We must share our

experience and talk about our recovery honestly. Let's give other overeaters helps that, if recovery happened to us, it can happen to them.

Each day we make an effort to "act as if." As we go about our daily activities, we smile. When someone asks, "How are you?" we answer, "Fine." This is not intended as a denial of our feelings. Rather, the very act of affirming we are ok banishes self-pity and makes us feel better. A positive life becomes reality.

This doesn't eliminate the need for inventories, for clearing away the wreckage of the past and sweeping up the emotional debris of the present. What the attitude does engender is the feeling of "my glass is half-full" instead of "What's the use—my glass is "half-empty."

Most important of all, before rushing into each new day, let's center ourselves with the Higher Power of our choice. According to the Third Step, we make a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God as we understand God. What a relief!

Now I can relax and enjoy life.

In the end, that attitude is what this program is all about. During my initial recovery thirty-one years ago, two later relapses and my current recovery in OA, I learned that life doesn't have to be full of tears. I don't have to be a victim of my past. I can take responsibility for my present and approach my future with anticipation and excitement.

I can be gentle with myself where my feelings are concerned and firm with myself when it come to my daily food intake. Being at a normal weight is terrific; enjoying life each day is a positive challenge.

Recovery is a journey, not a destination. Let us take that trip together. The "Road of Happy Destiny" mentioned in the "Big Book" can be trudges, but it can also be walked, skipped and run.

How do you want to life the rest of your life? The choice is your.

*-Rozanne S., A New Beginning, page 1.*

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### Why Do I Sponsor?

I shudder when I think about how my life would be today if I had not found a hand to hold when I desperately wanted recovery. This reason alone is enough to get me to raise my hand when a meeting asks for available sponsors. I also want to keep my abstinence. I know I can never go back to my old ways - it will mean death for me. So, sponsoring is a gift I give freely - to the fellowship, and to myself.

~Anonymous