

Bringing the Steps Home

A yearlong celebration of the OA Steps through the words of our member groups. As we walk this miracle program, let's share our experience, strength, and hope with the Steps in our newsletter. Each month a new article will open our minds and hearts to the wonders of abstinence through the Steps of OA. - Knowing we have more than 12 groups, we will assign special articles throughout the year to enhance our reading enjoyment.



This is compilation of our Abstinence Journey this year and can be a wonderful addition to your meditations and prayer exercises.

This e-book is presented as a gift from your TCI Newsletter Staff. There is no charge for the pdf booklet and you are allowed to freely distribute to your friends who might enjoy these meditations.

If you would like to make a donation to the "Tri-County Intergroup Retreat Fund" to help create scholarships for those in need, please see your TCI Representative and make checks payable to "TCI Intergroup"

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Special Journey - Special Gift

Each Step taken

*Guided by gentle hands ordained
Sows the sober seed
Of miracles obtained*

Each Season passes

*Its course known from birth
Twelve special months
Reflecting God's good earth*

On this special day

*The pain has been stilled
Your journey has been touched
God's year fulfilled*

Know this truth

*For all to see
Twelve Steps fulfilled
Your spirit rises free.*

Bill J.

Your Tri County Intergroup

Where is Tri-County Intergroup

The Tri-county Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous provides support to OA members and groups within the north central Texas area including Fort Worth, Arlington, Euless, North Richland Hills, Grapevine, Granbury, Stephenville and Waco.

What Else Should I Know?

The primary purpose of Tri-County Intergroup is to aid those with the problem of compulsive eating through the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous, and to serve and represent the OA groups from which the Intergroup is formed.

How can I get Involved?

Just come to 3 meetings and see if service through our Tri-County Intergroup should be a part of your 12 Step Journey.

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First Step

I remember...

I remember the work and strain that went into believing that I was alright and the world was broken.

I remember the pain of hiding my own feelings deep inside, lying to myself about what I really was.

I remember the utter destruction at the moment I gave up trying and gave into my disease of compulsive overeating.

I remember, and I smile because it was in this deep and utterly painful self-honesty that I found my way home to OA.

It is easy these days to live one day at a time and work on my abstinence; not perfect, but a wonderful gift of progress rather than perfection. The sense of ease comes from the first gift of the program found in the most unlikely of places - the 1st Step.

***We admitted we were powerless over food
- that our lives had become unmanageable.***

When I first read the words of the 1st Step, I saw only gloom and doom. But that was indeed what filled my heart and soul. I had reached into the depths of the dark abyss called a life and saw only pain. So why not take an onerous step that talked of powerlessness! Just about a perfect reflection of the failure that was me.



Little did I know of the gentle hands guiding me so lovingly to this miracle. My first sponsor helped be beyond any possible repayment when he informed me that I was to read only the first word of the 1st Step. Then, after reflection, I was to attend to my next meeting to be given my next assignment.

As the world fled by and my feelings continued to create whirlwinds in my mind; the word "WE" centered itself in the solid ground before me. I already knew the cataclysmic devastation of "alone". I was given a gift of profound grace. WE are not alone and we do not need to fight the darkness by ourselves.

As the days of my new life continue to fill with grace and joy and even excitement, I fondly look back on that first moment of the miracle and the gifts given so freely by my brothers and sisters on the journey.

The Self-Honesty of the 1st Step continues today in every aspect of my living. I no longer hide in shadows of fear and I remember the first lesson of the guide sent by my Higher Power to watch over me that first meeting. I am not alone and I need not be afraid.

A member of the Daily Reprieve Group

<i>My Meditations on the First Step</i>	
<i>We admitted we were powerless over food - that our lives had become unmanageable.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Second Step

Came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity.

- (1) I came
- (2) I came to
- (3) I came to believe.

I came to OA in 1980. In another 12-step program *I came to* and realized that I can't fix the addicts in my family and that I also am an addict. My substance of choice might be different than theirs, but my compulsion led me to insane behavior. The biggest lesson I learned was the only person I can change is I, and I have to have the willingness to take what it takes to recover from my three—fold disease, physically, mentally and spiritually. But, it took many months in both programs before *I came to believe*. You see I had become an agnostic somewhere between my childhood, when I had faith in God and was active in organized religion, and 33 years ago when I had that belief restored. When the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” occurred in my life, such as the death of a child, I turned away from religion and blamed God for many years (where was he when I needed him?) I had become a very unhappy and bitter person.

All I had to do was to “let go and let God” govern my life again. I had to start praying and meditating. I couldn't do that at first, because I was fearful he might let me down. Then, as God does, he started to prove to me he is always listening to my pleas for help and points me in the right direction.



Cases in Point:

- 1) I lost a job, and was worried about finances. A dear relative was coming to visit from out of state, and we didn't have much food in the house. My son also lost his restaurant job, and brought home an abundance of groceries donated by his former employer.
- 2) A few months later I was elected to be a delegate to the World Service Business Conference in Los Angeles (the first delegate from the then new Palm Beach County Intergroup). I was full of fear and anxiety until everything started falling in place, pushing me like “wind beneath my wings”. I gave my sponsor more excuses why I couldn't go. I didn't have a ride to and from the airport. (Her son would transport

me.) I didn't have a dress for the Saturday night banquet and dance at the hotel. (She let me borrow a beautiful gown of hers that was just my size.) I would be alone for this venture. Wrong. My daughter, that same week, was attending the NA conference in Los Angeles. My son, in the Navy, was being assigned to Hawaii and was flying from Los Angeles to Pearl Harbor that same week. They both wound up sharing my room and we had time together between my business sessions.

God wanted me to have that first Conference experience. It changed my life. ***I came to believe*** that God does indeed direct my life if I ask him to.

A member of OA Step & Tradition Group

<i>My Meditations on the Second Step</i>	
<i>Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Third Step

Rebel without a Cause

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him...

I find it ironic that I volunteered to write about Step 3. Despite all my years in program I struggle with this step. I keep taking back my will especially in regards to my food. The literature tells me that I have to surrender my will to the God of my choice. I don't know why it is so hard for me since I have a loving Higher Power that thinks I am worthwhile and important. Nevertheless, I continue to play God even though it has not worked for me. So today I am looking for a new beginning – that decision that God is going to direct my life instead of me directing it.

I don't wish to lose control any longer through bingeing because that act separates me from my Higher Power and places me in a living hell where that old enjoyment over food eludes me. I have a spiritual sickness which blocks me off from God through the fear, resentment, guilt and remorse caused by self will. Self will run riot has made me miserable and the cure is the spiritual principle of surrender, which means I have to give up fighting. Deciding to trust God instead of food is a complete turnaround in attitude because I am changing from a material orientation to a spiritual one.

I guess I am a rebel at heart since compulsive overeating is a classic form of rebellion, but I am not happy in the role of rebel. And I know that whatever plan HP has for me in life does not include compulsive overeating. Today I need to act out of faith rather than rebellion because my recovery depends upon my releasing fear and trusting God. I need to decide that I want

God to direct my life and that I want those things (like rebellion) to be removed that are blocking me from my Higher Power. Freedom from the bondage of self is what I am asking for in Step 3 so that I can begin to live my life on a spiritual basis.



Living in Step 3, means learning to live spiritually one day at a time. Turning my will over to God is a way out of my day-to-day misery. It means that if I have the faith to turn over what I want to God, I will be given what I need. If I have faith in HP, I can turn my weight over to that Power as well. I can take action – by abstaining and taking the steps – and leave the results to my HP. For today, HP is my source from which I seek the knowledge of what's best for me. I seek true wisdom in following God's will for me in every aspect of my life. May I find freedom and exuberance as I follow God's path.

A member of Richland Hills Group

In what tangible ways can I communicate with God?



I talk to God, I think and write to God, I sing to Him, I dream to Him, I pray to God, I cry to God, I laugh to God and sometimes I scream. There are times I dance and rejoice with God and other times when I sit, open a book and read to Him, and even other times when I

curl up in a ball to be silent with Him.

I constantly communicate with Him. That is why I know He is closer than a brother to me. He knows my thoughts before I do. That comforts me because He completely accepts me; the real me. I believe he loves me for me.

I also believe God communicates with me. He talks to me when I take the time to meditate. He sings to my heart when I take walks outside, or sit on my porch and listen to the birds and the wind in the trees. God's smile fills my heart and communicates His

love whenever I feel the sun's gentle rays on my face. I also believe He talks to me through other people and everyday life situations.

God is always here for me. Ever ready, ever willing to share Himself and His perfect will with me. I just have to keep looking up and honestly share the most genuine parts of myself with Him and those I come in contact with.

Emerald C. - South Hills, Saturday - Writing, Steps and Literature

<i>My Meditations on the Third Step</i>	
<i>Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Fourth Step

The weight of a lead pencil

I felt the sweet bead up on my upper lip. In the darkness I searched for the reason for the terrible anxiety. The nightmare, still festering in the back of my mind but lost to reality, had stolen slumber and the lingering fright tightened my muscles and bade me to scream out at the terror.

There on the night's stand, lumenated by the green digital numbers of the clock was my white "OA For Today" book. Its soft reflection in the darkness gave pause to my fear as I realized I was not lost but still held gently in the arms of my Creator.

I cannot say all dread left me in that moment but it is not necessary to make up stories. I still trembled when I picked up the yellow pad and pencil. Following my sponsor's advice I wrote out the 3rd Step Prayer and then, with an abandon only the first three steps could miraculously engineer, I laid out my painful past between the lines of the tear soaked paper.



My past did not go away. It did not change. But it no longer wakes me in the darkest parts of the night to torment me. My wholeness was not yet complete and there was more to do, but the pages of yellow paper now held the painful burdens that my Creator never wanted me to carry by myself. If someone asks me about the 4th step I see now only the

miracle of God's forgiveness in the actions taken.

So search deep and leave no stone unturned. Fearlessly plod through the painful memories and see them for what they are. The past.

Many years later I spoke with an interesting soul on this journey of life. They listened to my journey and spoke of how they dealt with life each day. They had never carried the past and you could see in their joyful eyes that they had been spared the dark miseries of the nightmares I suffered. Having found recovery through the Steps I did not feel jealous but a wonderment of how God looks after every one of His loving creatures. For me He

created a program of recovery and abstinence so that I could find the joy that is waiting for each of us who chooses.

It is nice to know that I have a special place in the loving arms of my Higher Power. I am special and He has provided a special program to bring me true joy. Still not too sure as you look out into the darkness? Pick up a pencil and follow the 4th Step. I could be the best action you have ever taken.

A member of Stephenville - Cross Timbers

<i>My Meditations on the Fourth Step</i>	
<i>Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Fifth Step

The weight of the world had been lifted

Tell someone about all my misdeeds from the past? You can't be serious. That's what I thought when I first read Step 5. No one wants to hear about the horrible things I've done. They won't be able to stand it. I can barely tolerate remembering them. Many have haunted me for decades.

Yet, I was determined to stay abstinent. That was the driving force behind my becoming willing to speak to another human being. Being abstinent had become the most important thing in my life since I found OA. So far, I had sincerely admitted how powerless I was. It took two seconds to assess my life as unmanageable. I definitely wanted sanity. I knew I was a



control freak and now had to let God have control. I had no problem writing down my history in spite of the fact that my list was long and detailed. But, but, but...to let the words be verbalized? I had procrastinated on this Step for months.

I called my sponsor. I took baby steps by telling her the "not so bad" stuff first. She just listened and listened as my view of the gravity of my wrongs took on larger proportions. This person was not gasping in disbelief. She did not confirm what I viewed as the severity of my wrongdoings. She just calmly conveyed that she heard what I said.

Little by little I started to feel liberated. Finally, I knew I had to tell her the worst thing I ever did. The thing only 2 other people in the world knew about and the thing that had tormented me for 30 years. I did it. I verbalized this "atrociousness". She said,

“God has already forgiven you for that.” I couldn’t stop crying because I believed her. The weight of the world had been lifted from my shoulders. I actually could accept and move on from my past. What a gift! My Step 5 fears had been eliminated.

*A member of South Hills Saturday
Writing, Steps and Literature*

<i>My Meditations on the Fifth Step</i>	
<i>Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Sixth Step

Entirely is the real way to joy

Entirely ready to have a defect removed means that I'm sick to death of myself and my behavior. Until I am that sick of a defect, so sick that it feels like death, I keep using it, not really realizing how much it is hurting me or others because I am usually in a state of denial. My defects have unfortunately killed relationships, killed love, killed hopes and dreams. The Step doesn't say "wished to" or "wanted to" or "asked to." For me, those are half-measures. The Step says, "were entirely ready." The moment I become entirely ready is the same moment that the defect is removed because it is at that moment that I have finally let go. It's been my experience that when I truly let go, then there is no place else for a defect, or anything else, to go except to God.

One example that haunts me has to do with my children. I used to yell at my children a lot. I was so frustrated all the time. I hated myself; I felt trapped; I had no love, tolerance or kindness for anyone, not even my children. One day, my son looked at me and asked, "Mom, why are you so mean?" When I saw the look on his face and heard the sweet sad tone of his question that was it. That was the moment I let go; I became entirely ready for God to change me because I could not do it myself.



Another character defect that was removed was feeling superior, or self-righteousness. The first time I became aware of this problem was in high school because I lost some very good friends because of it. I couldn't help myself though. I kept on practicing it. I was always right. I really thought I was smarter than most people and that my being right was just common sense. Everyone should realize it. It wasn't until I was in my 40s that I saw what my judgment did to someone. I saw the crushed look on her face when I condemned her through scorn. I saw that I had hurt her and the crush of all the people I had hurt over the years came down on me hard. It was at that moment that I let go; that I became entirely ready to be different.

Step 6

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

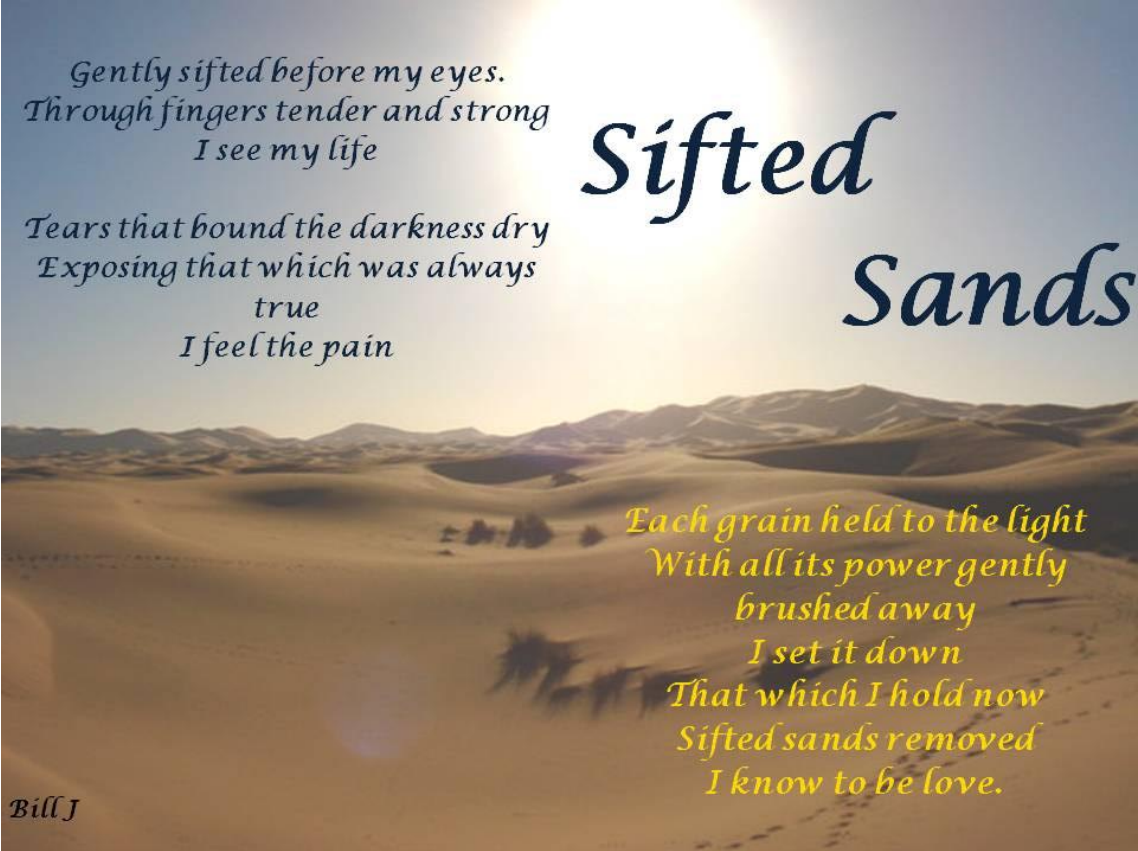
The same was true with my overeating. I kept practicing it, knowing it was hurting me, was going to kill me if I didn't change, but I could not change through my own will

alone. I kept eating until I hurt myself so badly that I gave up the struggle to change. I let go of the idea that I had the answers. I fell, literally, and at the same moment reached for the hand of my higher power to save me.

I grow at the speed of pain and the pain of practicing my character defects is what leads me to my higher power in a state of total willingness.

AS member of Bethel UMC HOW

<i>My Meditations on the Sixth Step</i>	
<i>Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>



*Gently sifted before my eyes.
Through fingers tender and strong
I see my life*

*Tears that bound the darkness dry
Exposing that which was always
true
I feel the pain*

Sifted Sands

*Each grain held to the light
With all its power gently
brushed away
I set it down
That which I hold now
Sifted sands removed
I know to be love.*

Bill J

Seventh Step

Finding I am a blessing

As blessings go, this Spiritual Gift of Humility was not what I expected or could even comprehend when I first began this journey with faltering steps.

It was there to behold in the 7th Step Prayer but my hardened eyes and broken spirit could not see its beauty.

7th Step Prayer

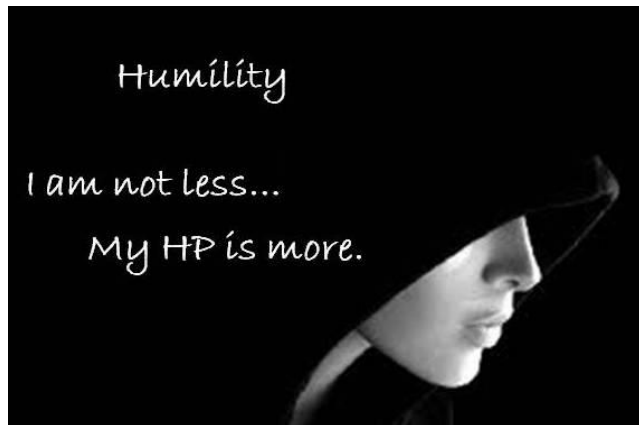
My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me the strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 76

When seeking miracles very few would seek out humility and fewer still would attempt to build their life on its principle. The fact is I am a wonderful gift of my Higher Power and He rejoices in my being. The power I gave up in attempting to control my disease is now put to bringing the beautiful massage of my Higher Power's love to the world and that in doing this I fulfill who I am and ever wanted to be.

Who knew Humility was so cool!

My search began when my sponsor put me on the 6th Step and told me to rebuild my life the way I wanted it to be with my Higher Power's guidance. Tall order and truly the beginning of the hard work in the program. No more looking back and sweeping up the past. It was now time to build a life worth living.



So gently and lovingly we are guided in this program... Step 7 comes when we are ready. Each morning I realize that my Higher Power moves the entire universe to meet my little needs...

When seeking miracles, very few would seek out humility and fewer still would attempt to build their life on its principle. The fact is I am a wonderful gift of my Higher Power and He rejoices in my being. The power I gave up in attempting to control my disease is now put to bringing the beautiful massage of my Higher Power's love to the world and that in doing this I fulfill who I am and whom I ever wanted to be.

I am loved by my Higher Power and that love is there for me to share with others. I have both purpose and value and my gift to my Higher Power is to be a messenger of His great love. All of the past pains of humiliation are sifted away like sands in the hourglass and a new more wonderful me emerges filled with the joy of being needed.

Of course you already see I am still the child and you know that there are many steps to go before I am there, but now I have something to offer and that is what has sparked the completeness of me. I stand before you humble knowing that what I offer is a gift from my Higher Power and it is good.

A member of South Hills OA Workbook Meeting

<i>My Meditations on the Seventh Step</i>	
<i>Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Eight Step

I have a Friend - The reality of Step 8

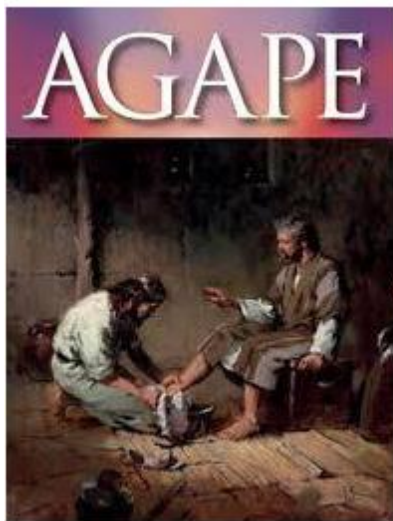
This list was very fresh in my mind the day I walked into the rooms. It was in fact branded on my conscience and it continued to burn fiercely allowing my shame to surface, especially when I was forced to encounter one of the 'harmed'. I lived a life of bondage and if these Spiritual Steps required sackcloth and ashes - so be it. The pain of continuing on in misery was beyond my tolerance.

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.


The first miracle was that God put this "List" way down in the Steps so I had time to realize exactly what He meant for me to do.


Yes I was a normal compulsive and attempted my first amends even before reading the 1st Step. You can


imagine the comical tragedy that provide my sponsor as I came back weeping and bewildered. He taught me a wonderful lesson that evening - you have two choices you can follow the Steps and find recovery or you can go back out and do it on your own - either way I will continue to love you. I chose the Steps and started the 1st Step in earnest. The List would have to wait.



The day came when my sponsor requested I find pencil and paper for my List. By this time a good deal (not all) of my ego had been purged and I picked up a small scrap and wrote down the names. I did not need the reason next to the name and I listened carefully now to my sponsor to make sure this part of my recovery went well. Here is his advice and words of wisdom.




 ***Amends is not saying you're sorry.*** It is rebuilding a bridge of love between two very special people in God's kingdom. The essence of this wonderful program is to make me a part of the world my Higher Power created and I cannot be involved in His world without connecting (or re-connecting) with the ones He sent into His world with me.

 ***Time now truly belongs to God.*** It is not ours to force the issue it is ours to be prepared when God puts the individual in front of us.

 ***The essence of Step 8 is Brotherly Love.*** It is not built for guilt removal but for offering ourselves to those we love.

It is here that my sponsor guided my thoughts and meditations. He brought me to a place of availability where I could be present for those who are part of my life's journey. What a beautiful gift. Sack cloth and ashes were cast aside for open arms, and I was fully free to be the "me" I always wanted to be.

Now I had a lot of mending of the past to do and indeed there is a real need to come clean with those we reconnect with, but something special happens when you await the miracle of Step 8 - when you become willing.

-  First and foremost you offer the new you to the person standing there - not the broken wretch they lived with for so long. This transformation (Steps 1-7) builds a person that someone can choose to connect with and that you can be proud of.
-  Yes, it continues to be important to sweep away the pain of the past but now it has reason - to build a better more loving relationship.
-  Even in cases where direct amends are not possible you can remain at rest in the gentle arms of the Lord knowing that He guides you now and will provide everything you need to be whole and alive in His kingdom.

I found my list many years later and looked on it with tear soaked eyes. Each name no longer held the pains of the past but the joy of today and the gift of Brotherly Love. Thank you, Dear Lord, for the gift of Step 8. Oh and thank you sponsor for guiding me to this wonderful garden of love.

A member of OA Men's Group

<i>My Meditations on the Eight Step</i>	
<i>Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

A Gift to My Children of Love

I have for you something very special.
A gift of rare beauty and great value.

It is not something that the world can find.
It is too special for those who can not understand.

This is a gift that will fill your hearts.
A gift made to expand your soul,
and touch the very essence of *My Kingdom*.

And you, my child of love, are special enough
to make this gift shine with *My Peace*.

Seek this gift I have for you.
You will find all the joy you seek.

My gift to you is a soul in need of *My Love*

Bill J

Ninth Step

The Miracle - Allowing Step 9 to Free Me

When I first came to OA, I read the Steps and said I can do all of these except Step 9. There's no way I can make amends to my ex-husband after all he put me through. But I was desperate so I started working the steps anyway. I was willing to get what 1-8 and 10-12 offered me but I would do without Step 9.

Then my life began to change. God gave me the gift of abstinence and I started to lose weight. I stopped eating my binge foods and as a result I recognized that miracles happen in this program. I prayed and felt connected to God like never before. After Steps 4,5,6, and 7 I felt more emotionally healthy than I felt after all the therapy I had every had up until then.

Now I was getting closer to Step 9. Still not willing to do it in spite of all the miracles I had witnessed in my OA life. I made my list for Step 8 and acted as if I were willing. That Step lasted for months. After I realized that I selfishly wanted the promises that come after working Step 9, I became honestly willing.

Now the actual amends had to happen. I wrote out every word I wanted to say to all the people I was going to make amends to including my ex. I read it all to my sponsor and she gave me thumbs up.

I started making what I considered the "easiest" amends with the kindest people on my list. Then more miracles started to happen. For example, after hearing my amends, my oldest son told me that those actions I regretted were actually things that made him stronger and that he held no ill will toward me about them. I was floored. I reminded myself, however, that all the people I would talk to would not necessarily have that reaction and I needed to prepare myself for that possibility. My amends continued with everyone appreciating me being honest with them and showing me great acceptance and love. I still couldn't see myself talking to my ex. I must point out that during this time I was drawing out my amends over a period of a few months. I think this was part of avoiding the scariest amends I had to make.



Finally I got the nerve up to talk to my former husband. I knew I needed to start the sharing with intelligent wording or he would blow me off as saying something stupid. I didn't know what to say so I asked God to tell me exactly what to say. I didn't really ask. I demanded it from God so that I could go through with this. As I was driving to his house, God answered me and gave me the exact words to get me started. I told my ex everything I regretted and he kindly told me that he could tell I put a lot of effort into it. He didn't respond with anger or say that there was a lot more I needed to be sorry about. He remained calm and respectful.

After I left I felt the weight of the world lifted from my shoulders. The promises were starting to come true. This program really worked. I hope others will work Step 9 with an optimism that I lacked at first. Miracles do happen.

*A Member of South Hills South Hills
OA 12X12 writing / AA Big Book*

The Promises from pages 83-84 of the Big Book,

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through . . .

- 1. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.*
- 2. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*
- 3. We will comprehend the word serenity.*
- 4. We will know peace.*
- 5. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.*
- 6. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.*
- 7. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.*
- 8. Self-seeking will slip away.*
- 9. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*
- 10. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.*
- 11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.*
- 12. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among

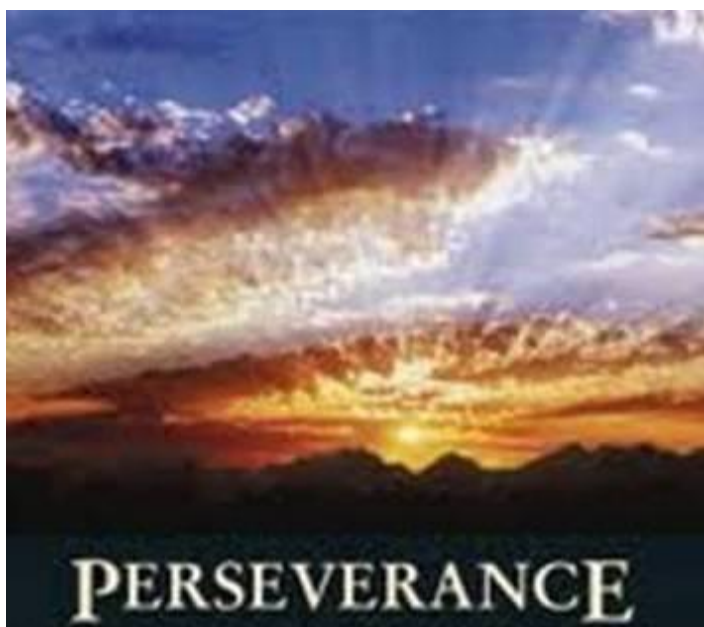
<i>My Meditations on the Eight Step</i>	
<i>Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Tenth Step

Step 10 - Living Beyond Guilt

Step Ten is like enjoying a spiritual shower every day. As I take a personal inventory throughout the day, I'm mindful that I'm seeking to reach a balance that aligns me with God's will. Seeing the good and the bad in my actions gives me a more accurate picture of where I am and, therefore, allows me to be at my best to serve. For many, making amends promptly keeps them from going over and over the situation until they are tempted to rationalize their bad behavior. It helps to check out your thinking with another person if in doubt. Bottom line: assessing oneself requires perseverance, that steady persistence, which is the principle behind Step Ten.

The issue we face is identifying those actions that require amends and those that don't. Having bad feelings about someone is not a wrong that needs an amends. Acting on those feelings is a different matter, however. Feeling angry can cross the



line into Step Ten when actions are based on that anger. Try looking at your actions from your personal point of view. If someone did that to you would you hope to receive an expression of regret and/or an intention to change from the person who did it?

Some compulsive overeaters have said "I'm sorry," about everything all their lives. Step Ten's "I'm sorry" looks different. It's the

communication that you intend to change your behavior and regret what you've done. There's a difference. It's a meaningful difference. Often people are quick to say sorry in the hope that the issue will disappear and the other person will get over it just as quickly. Saying "I'm sorry" too many times makes the action lose meaning and effect. Your credibility evaporates. Amends on the other hand are not made loosely. They are sincere and heartfelt. The listener hears a description of the wrong that convinces him/her of the veracity of the amends.

No room for guilt with this step because we are expressing our regrets promptly throughout the day as they arise. Feeling guilty denies God's power of mercy and forgiveness. In my opinion, however, there is nothing wrong with shame. Shame is the immediate reaction to sensing that we've done something we regret. Guilt is the depressive state we linger in after shame. From my understanding, Step Ten is to be done before the guilt sets in.

Anonymous
South Hills Voices of Recovery / OA 12X12

<i>My Meditations on the Tenth Step</i>	
<i>Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

The Day Awakens

*The day awakens
All the possibilities come alive
Softly now - almost a whisper
You fill the center of my heart.*

*Time Begins -
Life reshapes its reality.
You are there
And I fit Your shape.*

*The voice cries out,
And the wilderness speaks
The day is now real -
This is the day of the Lord.*

Eleventh Step

Living a New Kind of Life with Step Eleven

Through the steps of Overeaters Anonymous, especially Step Eleven, I have learned to live a new kind of life, one free of obsessions about overeating food and other harmful behaviors. When I stopped listening to the advice of friends, family members, and weight-loss gurus and turned to my Higher Power for guidance, I not only lost weight but also resentments I held toward those who offered solutions to my dilemma and also toward myself for my lack of self-control over food consumption.

Through practicing daily prayer, meditation, reading program literature, and journaling as well as attending



meetings and maintaining contact with other program members, I am better able to hear the message I searched for all my life in all the wrong places. The time I spend with my Higher Power each morning is a vital part of my everyday life. When one of those days comes along and I rush about, forgetting to take this time for myself, I quickly notice a difference in how I feel and remediate the omission as soon as possible. I love knowing that I can always restart my day.

Equally important is the time I devote to reconnecting with my Higher Power at the end of the day. I try to recognize any “slips” I have made in my behavior for the day and attempt to make amends to myself or others for them. As I retire for the night I go over my gratitude list; this practice works better than counting sheep or sleeping pills.

Today I believe that although I am not perfect, I am a worthwhile and lovable person. The daily moments of solitude with my Higher Power have enriched my life beyond measure and enabled me to become the happy, confident person my Higher Power always wanted me to be.

Gail K. - Beth El HOW Group

Seeking His Guidance - Empowerment of the 11th Step

In the chapter “Into Action” in the Big Book, it talks about how vital maintaining a fit spiritual condition is to our recovery. It reminds us that alcohol, and for me food, is a subtle foe. I am not cured but have a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. Then it says, “Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration, and direction from Him who has all knowledge and power. If we have carefully followed directions, we have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. To some extent we have become God-conscious. We have begun to develop this vital sixth sense. But we must go further and that means more action. Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation.” WHAT???? What about all the times I have been directed to pray in the previous steps? Doesn’t that count? To me, the fact that prayer and meditation are separate from several other steps asking us to pray, means that this step involves something different.

I see the other steps focusing on powerlessness, surrender, facing reality in my life, cleaning up my past and making things right. It is as if a bulldozer has come plowing through the dump of my life. Prayer was a part of the process but in Step 10 a daily inventory and the making of prompt amends have set me on a path for daily living that doesn’t require a bulldozer. Instead I need a guide for the new road ahead. This is a place I have never been before but God knows the way.

By daily prayer – speaking to God, acknowledging His authority over me in this new life and my willingness to follow Him – and by meditation – listening to God, simply placing myself in His presence for the assurance of His love and care for me – I am going beyond the “Help me!” prayers I used so often when plowing through the emotional, physical, and spiritual dump my life had become when eating compulsively. Now I am seeking His guidance, direction and presence as His servant; ready, in my own small way, to bring His presence into the world that I come in contact with on a daily basis. I am going to the living food and water to eat and drink and be refreshed and to pass that on to those I will rub shoulders with in the next 24 hours. This not only keeps my “dump” cleaned out, it is life-giving to a hurting world, especially to my fellow compulsive eaters. The pain of continuing on in misery was beyond my tolerance.

Kathy W. - Beth El HOW Group

Looking Up Nov 2013

<i>My Meditations on the Eleventh Step</i>	
<i>Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Twelfth Step

Keys to the Kingdom Finding Miracles in the 12th Step

The 12th Step reminds me I have to have something in order to give it away. If I don't have a spiritual awakening I can't guide someone else towards recovery. How do I get the spiritual awakening? For me it is the process of working through the steps with another person as a guide. As much as I want to do it by myself I can't. I lack the ability to be honest with myself.

I don't like to ask for help but the 12 Step process requires me to be different, to get out of my comfort zone, to take actions that are uncomfortable and work against my nature. It starts when I acknowledge I am powerless and that I must find a Power that can help me. Daily contact with that Power is essential.



The wonderful thing is I get to decide what my Higher Power is. Learning to pause, to think' and invite my Higher Power into everything, my food, my thoughts, my actions, and my relationships - all of my life. A willingness to be and do differently.

I have learned, if I turn to food to fix me instead of my Higher Power, I will get another opportunity to go through that situation again and again until I learn. Learning that it is easier to be abstinent and trust my Higher Power, than to try to control and fight my food obsession. To let go and let my Higher Power. I have found that my Higher Power is always with me and that something can be learned from any situation if I look for it.

Learning to reach out and help others and guide them through the steps. I stopped watching soap operas a long time ago. Real life is some much more interesting and rewarding. To watch people change and grow spiritually and to see the miracles that take place as they move through the process of the 12 Steps. To know we are never alone if we are willing to pray and to reach out to others.

This program is so much more than getting my food under control and having a thin body. It's about facing daily living problems with sanity, grace, peace and serenity. It's being there for others and encouraging them. It's about an attitude change: instead of what can I get out of it, what can I give and how can I be of help to God and others. It is being available to others. It's about being committed and giving away what I have been given. It starts with taking small steps, going to meetings, sharing making calls, leading

a meeting and encouraging other to do the same. It's about being a part of a fellowship where we all want the best for each other.

*Anonymous - South Hills Group Sunday
Writing, Steps and Literature*

He gave me my soul back

In reading, "The Keys of the Kingdom" in the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book, I came across a section that really caused me to stop and think. This alcoholic had been told by her doctor that her case was hopeless and then gave her a copy of the then brand new Alcoholics Anonymous book to read. Upon reading it she says,

"Here was hope. Maybe I could find my way out of this agonizing existence. Perhaps I could find freedom and peace and be able once again to call my soul my own."

This was and is what OA still offers me. There is a way out of that agonizing existence of compulsive

overeating. I do not have to be trapped in it one moment longer. That freedom, that peace that I so desperately longed for can be mine - is mine - when I accept the truth about myself and this disease and turn to God in my helplessness. Then I can call my soul my own.

The subject of Service brings to my mind a story of a little boy whose mother was tucking him in bed one night. He was afraid of the dark and begged her to stay there with him.

The mother said, "Don't be afraid. You know God is right here with you."

The child replied, "Yes, but I need someone with skin on."

When we do service, we are being someone "with skin on" to act as tangible representation of that Higher Power helping us one day at a time.

Diane B.

Many people do not know what it is like to truly not be able to live with yourself because you see yourself as totally untrustworthy. I don't think we consciously think about the need to trust ourselves. We know that in order to have a relationship with others we must trust them. Well, we also have a relationship with ourselves. And if I let myself down time and time again, that is what the Big Book calls demoralization and it eats at the very core of who I am.

So, I am untrustworthy because I am suffering from a disease that is cunning, baffling, and powerful. It is too much for me. BUT - and this is the turning point - there is one who has

ALL power. That one is God. Only in finding God and developing my relationship with Him and living according to His directions (the principles of the program) can I begin to trust myself because only then do I become trustworthy.

He takes my helplessness, my powerlessness and gives me back my 'self' - my soul. With God and my soul, I am able to walk in that freedom and that peace I so desperately yearned for and could never reach.

Thanks and have an abstinent day!







Kathy W.

<i>My Meditations on the Twelfth Step</i>	
<i>Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive eaters, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.</i>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Meditation</i>

Mediation Tools and Cutouts

*Join us at TCI as we make 2013 the year for
Spiritual Awareness in OA*








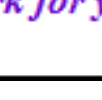




The Principles in the Twelve Steps	
<i>(as listed in Step Twelve of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous)</i>	
Step One:	Honesty
Step Two:	Hope
Step Three:	Faith
Step Four:	Courage
Step Five:	Integrity
Step Six:	Willingness
Step Seven:	Humility
Step Eight:	Self Discipline
Step Nine:	Love for others
Step Ten:	Perseverance
Step Eleven:	Spiritual Awareness
Step Twelve:	Service

My Commitment to Program	
<i>To live my life fully, I will commit to the Spiritual Principles of the Steps...</i>	
	
	
	
	
	
	

Cut out and make it your bookmark for your Spiritual readings...

Join us at TCI as we make 2013 the year for







Spiritual Awareness in OA

The Principles in the Twelve Traditions		My Commitment to Program	
<i>(as listed in the Service, Traditions and Concepts Workshop Manual)</i>		<i>To live my life fully, I will commit to the Spiritual Principles of the Steps...</i>	
Tradition 1:	Unity		
Tradition 2:	Trust		
Tradition 3:	Identity		
Tradition 4:	Autonomy		
Tradition 5:	Purpose		
Tradition 6:	Solidarity		
Tradition 7:	Responsibility		
Tradition 8:	Fellowship		
Tradition 9:	Structure		
Tradition 10:	Neutrality		
Tradition 11:	Anonymity		
Tradition 12:	Spirituality		

Cut out and make it your bookmark for your Spiritual readings...

Join us at TCI as we make 2013 the year for

Spiritual Awareness in OA

The Principles in the Twelve Concepts of OA Service		My Commitment to Program	
<i>(as listed in The Twelve Concepts of OA Service pamphlet)</i>		<i>To live my life fully, I will commit to the Spiritual Principles of the Steps...</i>	
Concept 1:	Unity		
Concept 2:	Conscience		
Concept 3:	Trust		
Concept 4:	Equality		
Concept 5:	Consideration		
Concept 6:	Responsibility		
Concept 7:	Balance		
Concept 8:	Delegation		
Concept 9:	Ability		
Concept 10:	Clarity		
Concept 11:	Humility		
Concept 12:	Guidelines		
(a) Selflessness; (b) Realism; (c) Representation; (d) Dialogue; (e) Compassion; (f) Respect		<i>In fulfillment of my program I offer my hands to the rest OA in need of abstinence...</i>	

Cut out and make it your bookmark for your Spiritual readings...

*References to topics found in the first
164 pages of the book, Alcoholics
Anonymous*

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Looking Up Clip and Pray!

Meeting Schedule for Tri County OA

Tri-County Intergroup OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS			
Day & Time		City-Group Name - Address	Subject
MONDAY	6:00 PM	Waco - DePaul Center 301 Londonderry, Waco	Big Book Study
MONDAY	7:00 PM	Arlington - Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive, Arlington, TX 76013	Abstinence
MONDAY	7:30 PM	Fort Worth - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road, Fort Worth, TX 76133	Literature: Step / Tradition of the Month
TUESDAY	Noon	Fort Worth - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road, Fort Worth, TX 76133	OA 12X12 writing / AA Big Book
TUESDAY	6:00 PM	Stephenville - Cross Timbers - First Presbyterian Church 1302 N Harbin Drive, Stephenville, TX 76401	Literature / Topic
TUESDAY	7:00 PM	Richland Hills - United Methodist Church 7301 Glenview Drive, North Richland Hills 76180 Room #110	Big Book Study
WEDNESDAY	1:30 PM	OA Step & Tradition - New World United Methodist Church, Room 28, 2201 N. Davis Dr., Arlington	OA Literature
WEDNESDAY	6:00 PM	Waco - DePaul Center 301 Londonderry, Waco	Big Book Study
WEDNESDAY	7:45 PM	Arlington - Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive, Arlington, TX 76013	HOW <i>Closed</i> <i>Meeting</i>
THURSDAY	6:45 PM	Fort Worth - Bethel HOW - Bethel Methodist Church (corner of Southwest Blvd. & Vickery) RING DOORBELL ON DOOR TO THE RIGHT OF THE SANCTUARY 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76116	HOW
THURSDAY	7:30 PM	Fort Worth - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road, Fort Worth, TX 76133	Voices of Recovery / OA 12X12
SATURDAY	9:00 AM	Fort Worth - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road, Fort Worth, TX 76133	OA Workbook
SATURDAY	Noon	Arlington - Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive, Arlington, TX 76013	Literature
SATURDAY	Noon	Daily Reprieve, Euless - United Memorial Christian Church 1401 N. Main Street, Euless, TX 76039	Step Study / Big Book
SUNDAY	4:30 PM	Fort Worth - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road, Fort Worth, TX 76133	Writing, Steps and Literature
CLOSED MEETINGS - Meeting marked "Closed Meeting" are for OA Members only.			
Tri-County Intergroup meets at 10:30 am the first Saturday of every month at the Wesley House, 3321 West Park Row Dr.,			
last change 11/15/2013			

Please feel free to pick up the phone and call our TCI Hotline at 817-303-2888 anytime. We can also be reached via e-mail at newsletter@oa-tricounty.org.

Other resources to help you on your journey towards abstinence

Websites

Tri County - <http://www.aa-tricounty.org/>

OA Website - <http://www.aa.org/>

Region III - <http://www.aa-region3.org/>

Other Texas Intergroup Websites

- [Big Country Intergroup](#)
- Coastal Bend Intergroup
- [Dallas Metroplex OA Intergroup](#)
- [El Paso Serenity Intergroup](#)
- [Galveston / Bay Area Intergroup](#)
- [Golden Crescent Intergroup](#)
- [Heart of Texas OA Intergroup](#)
- [Houston HOW OA Intergroup](#)
- [Houston Metro Intergroup](#)
- [O.A. San Antonio Area Intergroup](#)
- Rio Grande Valley Intergroup
- West Texas HOW Intergroup