

Today

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Tradition 7

“Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

This tradition seems pretty self-explanatory at first glance—put your money in the basket and don’t take handouts from non-OAers. However, I have come to learn a lot about life through this simple statement. In OA meetings, I give of my time and energy through service as well as putting money in the basket. I give a little extra because not everyone gives service or can afford the suggested donation of \$2.00 or more. That way our *group* remains self-supporting. We rely on each other—we are *interdependent*.

I started learning to take this tradition into the world by seeing myself as part of the larger group of humanity. I don’t know when it occurred to me to wipe the sink in public restrooms or pick up trash. HP gave me the humility to understand this is our world. I have a responsibility to help take care of it, even when “it’s not my job.” HP changed my focus from “someone should do something about...” to “what can I do to help?”

Surprisingly, it took longer to apply these lessons at home. Like most addicts, I ran to extremes in life. When I turned 18, I freaked out because I thought I was supposed to be on my own. I didn’t want to drain my parents who were poor but didn’t know how to be an “independent” adult (an island unto

myself). On the flip side, I ignored finances and avoided unpleasant tasks when married (both times) and let my spouses take all the responsibility. Neither extreme was helpful.

Through the 4th step inventory, I admitted I had given up personal responsibility. I was not fully self-supporting. Now, I am. That does not mean I pay for everything. My partner has the larger income. We made our financial arrangements with that in mind. I have areas of responsibility, both financially and physically. I am saving for the future rather than expecting her to take care of me. I accept my role as an adult in this world where I once behaved as if I were still a child.

On the other hand, I quit trying to shoulder the whole load, too. Recently, I found myself trying not to lean on her emotionally because she was stressed. But, when I try being fully self-supporting by not needing any help, I find myself in isolation. Can the call of food be far behind? So, for today, being fully self-supporting also means taking responsibility for asking for the support I need from my friends and partner. I support myself best when I remain *interdependent* (everyone leaning on everyone else) rather than attempting to be *independent* (alone and isolated). By working together, all the groups I belong to can be fully self-supporting. Thanks HP!

In OA love and service,
Ethel

Step 7
“Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

As with all the other steps, I don't get to be in control here, either. In Step 6, my work was figuring out how to become entirely ready to have God remove my character defects. It is STILL not my job to remove them. It is my job to figure out how to let go. With the food, I committed to a food plan. At first, I white knuckled it, but as I worked the steps, the need for the excess food diminished until one day I realized that compulsively overeating was no longer a necessity for me. This is when I realized that I had been granted the gift of abstinence.

The same is true for other defects. The AA literature talks about looking at our GROSSER defects. This says to me that I never have to strive to be perfect. What needs to be eliminated from my life are those attitudes and behaviors that make my life unmanageable, just like the food. These are the defects that, if left unchecked, will eventually send me back into the food. They are probably also the defects that cause me to need to make amends for my behavior. Procrastination, perfectionism, control issues, and lust come to mind here. Just like the food, God can do for me what I cannot do for myself. Each day, I commit to a set of

behaviors (including my food plan) and each day I give God a little more until one day, I realize that other problem behaviors have diminished or been removed, just like the need to kill my body, mind, and spirit with too much food.

Just like the other steps and my food plan, this step is much easier to work on with a sponsor. My sponsor was able to point out issues I hadn't thought of. She was able to help me look at things with a neutral set of eyes (mine only see the defects). She was also able to help me see how many of my defects used to help me protect myself. The issue today is that they now do me more harm than good. I highly recommend reading about step 7 in both the OA and AA 12x12s. Don't just read these chapters, STUDY THEM! More will be revealed.

~Anonymous

From the Editor

For August's newsletter, I invite everyone to share a quote, poem, or article on Step 8 and/or Tradition 8.

We also continue to look for "Meetings of the Month", "Heard Round the Rooms" and other submissions.

If you would like a reminder note one week before the due date, send an email to me at: StlouisOAtoday@hotmail.com

~In service, Dawn S.

Easy Does It
Keep It Simple
Live and Let live
Caring and Sharing
Progress Rather Than Perfection
Alone I Can't, Alone You Can't, But Together We Can!
Life Is Full of First Steps...Take One.
Love Begins with Me
First Things First
Think, Think, Think!
If I Fail to Plan...Am I Planning to Fail.
No One Can Make You Feel Inferior Without Your Consent.

P – Peace is sought everyday.
E – Eyes are opened at OA.
A – Attitude Change
C – Character building by change in attitude.
E – Each day is a new beginning.

H – Happiness, Having God, Humility, Honesty
O – Only God can help and heal.
P – Peace comes by working the program.
E – Each one has its own job to do.

~Mary F.

What OA Has Taught Me

A best friend (saved my life).

Have a God that is loving not mean (I can yell at God, and it's OK).

I don't have panic attacks anymore (I can drive on the highway or anywhere as long as I put HP in the driver's seat.)

I have been abstinent from recreational sugar since Sept 86.

I can eat 3 meals a day without starving to death in-between.

I have about 2 years of abstinence from salty snacks.

I can leave food on my plate without feeling guilty about the poor starving children anywhere.

I can face one day at a time without worrying about what will happen tomorrow or next year or what happened yesterday.

I can accept imperfection in other people as well as myself.

I have learned that even if I am not perfect you will still love me.

I can admit my mistake and know that I am not a mistake.

I have learned to leave the past where it is; I don't have to carry it with me.

I have learned to say I am sorry and I forgive you.

I have learned that with the help of this fellowship and HP I can even come back from relapse.

I can trust my HP to help me make good choices.

I can decide when I get up in the mornings to love each day because I know it will be a beautiful, wonderful day if I turn it over to HP.

OA has taught me to live with HP and without fear.

~GH

Heard in Omaha At Region IV Convention

I'm too blessed to be stressed.

God employs goofs and screw-ups to do his work.

Hope is the music of the future, and faith is dancing to that music.

You can only coast downhill.

I fired the shitty committee.

If you don't make an effort to connect with people at meetings, it's like riding a bus: you get on, you get off.

When you're a perfectionist you can abuse yourself every waking moment.

What loneliness is worse than distrust.

You know you're a controller if when you're drowning, someone else's like flashes before your eyes.

No one will ever mistake us for a group of underwear models.

Integrity: when your actions match your beliefs.

Perfectionism leads to procrastination, which leads to paralysis.

No matter what step you're on you have eleven more to go.

I never regretted waking up in the morning abstinent.

Discipline is something you do for yourself.

We embody the joy of recovery.

I waited and waited for God to zap my fat ass. He didn't. So I came to OA.

Kicking myself is not a part of the process of change.

Secrecy is my disease. Anonymity is the program.

An OA dance is a room full of people expressing themselves with unfettered joy.

There is a miracle in this program for you.

A carpenter doesn't build stairs by starting on the fourth step.

We are to be physically fit, mentally alert, emotionally balanced, and spiritually aware.

~Linda L.

Service Vacancies

- 2 Trustees
- 2 Region Reps
- 2 World Service Delegates
- Intergroup Secretary
- Retreat Treasurer
- Twelve Step Within

WANTED

Guest Newsletter Editors

The newsletter chair is looking for a committee.

If you are interested in being a guest newsletter editor, please contact Dawn S (see back of Where & When for trusted servant phone numbers) or send an email to the newsletter address.

Writing experience not necessary. Access to a computer is a must!

Reminder

Where & Whens will be published quarterly. Each meeting is responsible for making sure there are enough copies at the meetings. If you need a copy, stop by the office or email the office, & we'll send you one.

New Meetings

No New Meetings

Upcoming Events & Business Info

August (open)

To schedule, call Lisa M or email OA office

September 25

9:00-1:00

"Turning Over a New Leaf"
St. Joseph Health Center
St. Charles, MO
(See flyer)

October 1-3

OA Retreat

More info later

To schedule a Super Saturday or other event, contact Lisa M. Any flyers for OA events submitted for dissemination to meetings or for publication in the newsletter must have received approval by the St. Louis Bi-State Area BOT (ask any BOT member).

Editorial Policy

As suggested by WSO guidelines, newsletters are to be a forum for experience, strength and hope. We encourage and give top priority to original material written by members of this Intergroup.

We reserve the right to edit any and all articles submitted for publication. Submission of article or flyers does not necessarily guarantee publication.

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily that of the St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup or OA as a whole.

Articles must be received by the Newsletter Chairperson by the third week of the month for publication in the following month's newsletter.



Contacting OA Electronically

Bi-State Fax number:

(314) 638-6071

Intergroup Newsletter E-mail:

StlouisOAtoday@hotmail.com

St. Louis Bi-State Website: www.stlouisoa.org

WSO Website: www.overeatersanonymous.org

Region IV website: www.oaregion4.org