



A Monthly Newsletter serving the Citrus, Hernando, and Pasco counties  
January 2010

[www.oafreedom.org](http://www.oafreedom.org)  
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**powerless**

The opinions expressed reflect those of the writer and do not represent OA as a whole.

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Serve your group by sharing your experience, strength and hope in this newsletter. Please submit your article by the 20th of the month for publication in the next month's newsletter.

**Send to Editor:**

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**TAKING THAT FIRST STEP**



The first step was such a struggle for me. To admit that I was powerless over food & that my life was unmanageable. I know that my life was unmanageable. What I had a difficult time admitting was the powerless over the food—any food—that was on my plate. After I was in program for awhile & was gaining the weight back that I had lost, my new sponsor said to me that she wanted me to admit my powerlessness over food. I couldn't do it. She had me reading about the first step & powerlessness, writing about it, & listening to tapes. Finally, I was able to admit to her that I was powerless over whatever food entered my mouth. This was really the beginning of recovery for me. I am so grateful to her & my Higher Power that she kept pushing me because without the first step I would never have been able to go on to work the rest of the steps.

The first part of Step One is admitting my powerless

**Step One: Two Parts**

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

over food. I've had twenty-five years of compulsive overeating history. I didn't have to look too far back in time to be reminded of all the crazy things I did with food: all the diets I was on or off, growing in & out of clothes, constant up & down the scale, & all of the wasted time, energy, & money spent on food. I am very grateful for this program. My compulsive overeating has been arrested with abstinence & a plan of eating. With the help of my Higher Power, food no longer rules my life. I refrain from binge foods one day at a time. I try to seek help with uncomfortable feelings rather than running to the comfort of food. I can't be in touch with God & be compulsively overeating. When I'm in the clutches of my disease, food becomes my god. Only by putting the fork down do I have a shot at life. The second part of Step One is about recognizing my life as being unmanageable. I can easily admit life was unman-

ageable before program, but even today? Yes! Living life on life's terms is still difficult no matter how long I've been in program. But, I learn from others how to live life in a sane & abstinent way. I'm reminded what works for others can work for me. I become more aware when those character defects rear their ugly heads. I am honest about who I really am today. I try to be gentle with myself, especially when I make mistakes. I try to acknowledge my assets. I like myself more since program. I try to replace negative voices in my head with positive affirmations about myself. I try to make time daily for my Higher Power. OA is my classroom. I continually learn about others, my HP & myself. The steps are my daily lesson plan. Step One is my first class by thinking I am not powerless over food & forgetting my life is unmanageable, I will only fail miserably. *both articles from: greater cleveland newsletter, summer 2006*

**unmanageable**

## Freedom Intergroup Minutes December 12, 2009

Opened with the Serenity Prayer

Attendees: Barbara Joy, treasurer; Sharon T. Fri. morning Zephyrhills; Nancy Page, Mon. Zephyrhills; Juliana A., Fri. Spring Hill; Jeannine, Chair; Elizabeth V. Sat. New Port Richey; Grace M. Vice Chair.

Minutes read – BJ made motion to accept as corrected, Nancy 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed

Treasurer Report- There were 5 ½ scholarships given for Dec. Retreat (the Franciscan Center picked up 2 ½) Income: from retreat \$483; 2 groups (Monday-Calvary, NPR & Sat. Pioneers) gave 7<sup>th</sup> tradition totaling \$58.80; Pinellas Traditions I/G \$16.00 for share in \$800; Literature \$43; Special Events \$90. - Expenses: 7<sup>th</sup> tradition to WSO \$60, Region 8 #78.00; Pinellas Traditions Website \$30.(quarterly) Verizon \$26.72; Com Tech \$5.70; postage \$17.60; Region 8 rep. expenses Nov. Assembly \$266.56; Yearly donation to Unity for use of I/G room 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of each month \$100.00. Check book balance \$1,531.84 – General fund \$288.49; Literature \$514.60; Special Events \$90; Retreat Scholarship fund \$127.25; Reg. 8 scholarship fund \$11.50; Prudent Reserve \$500.

Region 8 report – none

WSO report – none

Special Events-Retreat raffles & items sold brought in \$90

Newsletter – will be available online (oafreedom.org)

12<sup>th</sup> Step Within – Barbara Joy resigned as Chairman. The discussion: looking for someone to Chair – 3 or 4 willing to help plan public information and maybe combine it with a boxed lunch reunion social in Spring Hill

Telephone Hotline – Carole still receiving many calls and listens to answer machine making a call back to ones leaving a phone number. (Thank you Carole for this service and having the phone in your house these past years)

Literature - Contact Nancy P. 813-715-4512 for literature for your groups.

Upcoming events: January 16, 2010 PTI presents The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party of OA.

February 20, 2010 PTI presents OA Tools Workshop with 3 out of town speakers

February 26-28, 2010 Florida State Convention Cocoa Beach

March 19-21, 2010 Region 8 Assembly/Convention Memphis, TN

April 30, May 1&2, 2010 Freedom's Big Book Retreat-Franciscan Center, Tampa

April 26, May 1, 2010 World Service Conference– Theme “Half Century –On world of Growth

Old Business: Jan. Elections – BJ read off the current board members and listed length of terms. Elections are scheduled for January.

New Business: Motion made to encourage IG minutes to be read at all meetings. Second, discussion, vote - passed

Group reports – Zephyrhills meetings going very well by stressing food plans and sponsors. Good recovery NPR Sat. & Wed. growing. Spring Hill/Brooksville meeting struggling – much discussion and suggestions given.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Joy



# The Greater Whole



What's the purpose of going to intergroup meetings? I asked myself this question when I received the intergroup's monthly minutes & newsletter. I wondered why we needed an intergroup rep. to travel an hour one way just to bring back information we received via email & snail mail. I thought the people at intergroup knew what was going on & would do everything to keep OA going & to plan our conventions & retreats. What did I have to offer? Plus, if these people went to intergroup meetings every month, they must have plenty of time to give service. Right? We were a new group, & no one complained about not having an active intergroup rep. Besides, I thought going to meetings & setting out OA literature were service. Wasn't that enough? Yes, going to meetings, sponsoring, & setting out the OA literature were enough for awhile. But OA had given me so much: a closer relationship with my HP, a strong support network, & freedom from compulsive eating. Plus, I realized I was living the promises. I knew that to keep what I had, I had to give it away. I was doing that at group level, but my HP was nudging me to give service at the next level. This meant I would have to face some of my biggest fears. I would have to be around the “big” people, the ones who counted & kept OA going. Within the first five minutes of my first intergroup meeting, I realized my disease had been talking. All of us are important in OA, & we keep it alive through service. I had nothing to fear. Everyone at intergroup was loving & accepting as they are in regular OA meetings. The invitation is open for everyone to attend intergroup. It's a good place to feel like part of a greater whole. It's a wonderful feeling to be part of OA: a recovering compulsive overeater taking it one day at a time.

*from: lifeline, november 2003*

# The Twelve Traditions & Concepts of Overeaters Anonymous

When we first come to Overeaters Anonymous, we are preoccupied with our own recovery & weight loss. It is not long, however, before we realize this is not a diet club, as we may have expected or perhaps experienced before. We hear the Twelve Steps read many times, & we begin to understand that OA presents a new way of living, rather than just a way to lose weight. Another thing we often hear read at meetings is a set of Twelve Traditions. We may wonder at this repetition until we realize the Twelve Steps & the Twelve Traditions have become familiar to us—have become part of our understanding. Why are the Twelve Traditions so important to us? In general, the Twelve Steps guide the individual to recovery, & the Twelve Traditions ensure the well-being of the groups. Although the Traditions were developed to prevent group problems, individual members can also practice the principles of the twelve Traditions in personal relationships. The Steps & Traditions have been hammered out by hard experience. We find them vital to the growth & life of OA.

## ~ ~ Tradition One ~ ~

*Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.*

This is the First Tradition: unity. The reason for this Tradition is clear enough when you consider the consequences of OA fragmentation. If we split up into little argumentative groups, where is the strength we need? Growth depends on strength—both personal growth & group effectiveness. Our recovery is not usually something we can do by ourselves. We need the loving support of our peers. We cannot afford to let disagreements deprive us of our unity. But does this mean we must always be in sheep-like agreement? That is not possible, even if it were desirable. What it does mean is that discussion & differences of opinion must be resolved, in the end, by consideration of the welfare of the group as a whole. Not all groups follow the same eating plan or use the same meeting format. Some of our members must follow special diets for medical reasons. These differences are not important. Out common ground & our one source of unity is that we are all working the Twelve Steps of recovery.

*from: the 12 traditions of overeaters anonymous pamphlet*

The 12 Concepts of OA Service, adopted by the World Service Business Conference in 1994, help us apply the Steps & Traditions in our service work, which is an important part of the OA program. The Concepts define & guide the practices

of the service structures that conduct the business of OA. The Concepts depict the chain of delegated responsibility we use to provide service throughout the world. Although they focus on OA world services, the Concepts direct all OA's trusted servants to well-considered actions for groups participation, decision making, voting, and the expression of minority opinions. The 12 Concepts support our primary purpose of carrying OA's message of recovery to the still suffering compulsive overeater. The Concepts are rooted in our experience that we are best served when we trust in a power greater than ourselves. To trust means that we do not try to "run the show." Rather, we work in fellowship with other recovering compulsive overeaters & our HP to carry OA's message effectively.

## Concept One - Unity

*The ultimate responsibility & authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.* Individual members have the final say for world services & exercise this right through their participation, in the decisions reached by their local groups, intergroups, service boards, regions, & world service. The fellowship of OA is based on the fundamental belief that God *as we understand Him* is expressed in the decisions made by the representative

our membership as a whole. We participate individually at the group level or through delegated participation at the intergroup, service board, region, & world service levels through the process of group conscience decisions. Members listen to all points of view on a particular issue, including minority opinions. Voting members then decide, according to their conscience & in keeping with the 12 Traditions, on what they believe to be the best choice for OA as a whole. In the 12 Steps & 12 Traditions of OA, we learn that "the group conscience is not the same as majority rule. This conscience is an expression of the group unity spoken of in the 1st Tradition, a common bond that grows among us as we each let go of self-will. Rather than being guided by individual self-interest, we seek as a group to apply the principles embodied in OA's Steps & Traditions to the decision at hand". For instance, group members may request that people refrain from wearing perfumes at a meeting because it bothers one or more group members. The group might decide to adopt this restriction because it would probably not deter members from attending meetings. This autonomous group decision would not affect the fellowship as a whole. The "12 & 12" further tells us, "in order to reach an informed group conscience, we affirm each group member's right to take part in the discussions,

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## INTERGROUP WISH LIST FOR FLORIDA STATE OA CONVENTION

First a bit of history.

Freedom Intergroup was instrumental in starting our Fl. State Convention. This year we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary February 26-28, 2010. The first convention we had 80 attendees and now it brings in over 200. There are now 12 or 13 intergroups that participate, each taking a job (Freedom's is raffles and love notes this year) and then sharing in any profits. Last year our share was \$400. And now for our wish list:

**Baskets for raffles (all intergroups and their meetings bring in baskets for the raffles which are our biggest money maker/ funds used to carry the message of recovery.**

We are asking each of our meetings to donate a basket of new or regifted items & if your meetings are very small you could join with other groups in your area to make one or you could bring donated items to intergroup meeting Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> and baskets will be made after that meeting.

When making a basket, you can use a theme such as Pets, Kitchen, Literature, Garden, Auto, For Men Only (lotions, car items, shaving creams, etc.) or any theme that you have items for.

Make a list of items in basket and attach it to basket.

1 to 2 representatives to attend intergroup and be a part of carrying the message to other compulsive overeaters; some new and many who have been a part of our fellowship in the past. This comes under Public Information and 12<sup>th</sup> Step-Within Committees.

Chairman for the 12<sup>th</sup> Step-Within committee. We have members willing to work on the committee, however, we need someone willing to Chair this committee.

What is 12 Step Within? It is carrying the message to past members, letting them know that we are still here and that we care and miss them.

How do we do that? We plan marathons, boxed lunch socials, etc. and reach out to our past member by phone inviting them to these functions. Past reunions have had members who have not attended meetings in as many as 20 yrs. The fun and fellowship was great as well and some returned to meetings and may still be attending meetings.

Intergroup elections will be Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> and we are looking for participation from our 13 groups. If each meeting sends the one or two reps. that they are allowed, we would have 26 and more at each months meeting. We all need to step up and do service beyond our home meetings.

Well, I am sure that there are many other things that we need to address at intergroup and I hope you each look at your recovery, do a gratitude list of what OA has given to you and your life and how you may give back what you have been so freely given.

May God Bless you as you walk the road to freedom from the compulsive behaviors of eating.

Hugs, Barbara Joy

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

PROUDLY PRESENTS

**THE FLORIDA STATE  
CONVENTION**



TOGETHER WE CAN

SURRENDER TO WIN IN 2010

**20TH ANNIVERSARY**



**February 26-28, 2010**

Cocoa Beach Hilton Oceanfront

1550 N. Atlantic Ave

Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

1-800-445-8667 (reservations only)

For more information & Event Flyer:

<http://oaregion8.org/recent-news/>

**STAYING IN RECOVERY**  
**WITH THE HELP OF 12TH STEP WITHIN**

**USING THE WELCOME BACK, WE CARE PACKAGE FOR  
 THOSE IN DANGER OF GOING INTO RELAPSE  
 OR ARE RETURNING FROM RELAPSE**

**For January:**

- Topic:** How can I be of service on an individual level? On a group level? On an intergroup level?
- Do:** Commit to going to your local intergroup meeting, going to an OA re treat or Region convention.
- Don't:** Get caught up in those new years resolutions, **ACTION** is the magic word.

**From: [www.oaregion8.org](http://www.oaregion8.org) 12th Step Within Calendar of Topics for Discussion**

*Continued from page 3*  
 and we listen to everyone attentively with open minds. The purpose of our discussions is to make sure that the decision reached by the group takes into account all pertinent information". Following a group conscience decision, individual members are expected to comply with the collective conscience of the group, acknowledging that God is the ultimate authority as expressed through the group conscience. Continued bickering over a personal opinion is unhealthy both for individual members & for OA as a whole. A member who wants an issue reconsidered should follow the process outlined in Concept five. *last 2 articles from the "The 12 concepts of OA Service" pamphlet*



*First Step Prayer*

*I admit that I am powerless over my addiction. I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my addiction.*

**Important Dates to Remember!**

- 2010 Freedom Intergroup Dates:** 1/9, 2/13, 3/13, 4/10, 5/8, 6/12, 7/10, 8/14, 9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11—@ 9am, Unity Church, 5844 Pine Hill Road, Port Richey, All are Welcome! Come Join Us!!
- January 16, 2010:** 50th Anniversary Party of OA, 1 to 4pm, Friendship United Methodist Church, 2039 E. Druid, Clwtr, FL
- February 20, 2010:** OA Tools Workshop, 9:30am-2:30 pm, Friendship United Methodist Church, 2039 E. Druid, Clwtr, FL more info call Stephanie @ 727-443-9855
- February 26-28, 2010:** Florida State Convention, 20th Anniversary, "Together We Can Surrender To Win", Cocoa Beach Hilton Oceanfront, Cocoa Beach, FL (<http://oaregion8.org>)
- March 19-21, 2010:** Soar 8 Recovery Convention & Business Assembly, "Walking in Memphis: 12 Stepping away the Blues", Holiday Inn Select, Memphis, TN (<http://oaregion8.org>)
- April 29 - May 2, 2010:** Annual Big Book Retreat, "The Promises", Franciscan Center, Tampa, FL, more info call Jeannine 727-849-3048 or Barbara Joy 727-937-1964



## FREEDOM INTERGROUP MEETING LIST

| <u>GROUP #</u>           | <u>DAY</u> | <u>TIME</u> | <u>GROUP NAME</u>  | <u>ADDRESS</u>                                                                                       | <u>CONTACT #</u>             |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>CITRUS</u><br>00114   | Monday     | 1:00 pm     | Voices of Recovery | Central Citrus Community Center<br>2808 W. Marc Knighton Court<br>Lecanto, FL 34461                  | Delores D.<br>352-746-5019   |
| 45245                    | Tuesday    | 3:00 pm     | Solutions          | Inverness Lakes Regional Public Library<br>1511 Druid Road<br>Inverness, FL 34452                    | Maralyn B.<br>352-726-9112   |
| 50475                    | Wednesday  | 10:30 am    |                    | St. Anne's Episcopal Church<br>9870 West Fort Island Trail<br>Crystal River, FL 34429 (mary chapel)  | Peg D.<br>352-447-5080       |
| 29089                    | Thursday   | 1:00 pm     |                    | Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church<br>6 Roosevelt Blvd.<br>Beverly Hills, FL 34465                    | Francisca B.<br>352-746-7749 |
| 40614                    | Friday     | 7:00 pm     |                    | Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church<br>6 Roosevelt Blvd.<br>Beverly Hills, FL 34465                    | Carolyn R.<br>352-341-0777   |
| <u>HERNANDO</u><br>50348 | Tuesday    | 1:00pm      | Bridge to Serenity | West Hernando Branch Library<br>6335 Blackbird Ave.<br>Brooksville, FL 34613                         | Belinda B.<br>352-293-3455   |
| 50203                    | Thursday   | 7:00 pm     | Road to Recovery   | Day Spring Presbyterian Church<br>6000 Mariner Blvd.<br>Spring Hill, FL 34609 (fellowship hall)      | Karen H<br>352-200-8433      |
| 08937                    | Friday     | 1:00 pm     |                    | St. Andrews Episcopal Church<br>2301 Deltona Blvd.<br>Spring Hill, FL 34606                          | Betty<br>352-666-1710        |
| <u>PASCO</u><br>27737    | Monday     | 7:00 pm     |                    | Calvary Chapel Worship Center<br>6825 Trouble Creek Road<br>New Port Richey, FL 34653                | Carole G.<br>813-920-2001    |
| 50159                    | Monday     | 5:30 pm     | Big Book meeting   | Florida Hospital - Zephyrhills<br>7050 Gall Blvd.<br>Zephyrhills, FL 33541                           | Sue<br>813-788-6479          |
| 20719                    | Wednesday  | 10:00 am    | Winners            | Unity Church<br>5844 Pine Hill Road<br>Port Richey, FL 34668                                         | Peggy D.<br>727-817-0017     |
| 45421                    | Friday     | 11:30 am    |                    | Florida Hospital - Zephyrhills<br>7050 Gall Blvd. (wellness conference ctr)<br>Zephyrhills, FL 33541 | Sharon T.<br>813-782-6005    |
| 17950                    | Saturday   | 10:00 am    | Pasco Pioneers     | Unity Church<br>5844 Pine Hill Road<br>Port Richey, FL 34668                                         | Jeannine A.<br>727-817-0017  |

Online & Telephone Meetings: The most current meeting lists can be found on the OA website @ [www.oa.org/online\\_meetings.html](http://www.oa.org/online_meetings.html).

Online meetings are held 24 hours, 7 days a week. ~ ~ ~ Hot Line Number: 1-800-544-6353

Freedom Intergroup Meeting: 2nd Saturday of each month ~ 9:00 am @ Unity Church, 5844 Pine Hill Road, Port Richey, FL34668