



# Road to Recovery

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

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

July 2009

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# FREEDOM

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

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

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## Step 7 ~ Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

~**Past Perfect**~  
When I wobbled through the doors of Overeaters Anonymous five years ago I thought that, except for "a little weight problem," my life was perfect. I had a perfect marriage, a perfect child, perfect grades & a father who was beyond perfection—he was God. I remember going to the OA meetings & feeling sorry for the people there who had so many problems: compulsive overeating, marriage difficulties, trouble with their children. Me a compulsive overeater? My life unmanageable? Never! Of course, if my life was perfect, how could I have character defects? How could I see them, much less work on them, if I didn't believe I had them? I could only see black or white, right or wrong, good or bad. No in-between and no moderation.

Everything I did had to be perfect. I got straight A's in school. After much procrastination, I finally cleaned house, it had to pass the white glove test. At work, where I was the manager, I drove people crazy demanding that they do everything perfectly—which meant my way. I remember telling myself that I could not work steps 6 & 7 perfectly until I knew the difference between "character defects" and "shortcomings." If I had taken the cotton out of my ears I would have learned that there is no difference; That Bill W., an english major, changed the wording to avoid repetition, not to alter the meaning. I had a rude awakening one day when I looked at the index of "As Bill Sees It" and saw entries such as guilt, envy, procrastination, rationalization and perfectionism. I was all too familiar

with every one of them. God lowered a ton of awareness on me that day. I realized then that I shared the very same character defects I'd heard other OAs talking about at meetings. Now that I have this awareness I am confronted with a choice: I can work the 6th & 7th steps, I sometimes wallow in my defects until I get so miserable that I finally surrender & beg, "Please God, I'll do anything." God smiles, pats me on the head & says, "Go back to step 1." Many of shortcomings have been removed, including my perfectionism. My perfect marriage? Well, now I am divorced, and that's ok. My perfect child? He is sixteen and not so perfect, which makes for a good relationship. My perfect father? I know now that he is not God. I love him, but this program has taught me that I do

not have to like his character defects, and that is ok too. My perfect grades? I still do well in school but I am no longer compulsive about it. I don't have to be an extremist anymore. Through the 12 steps I am finding moderation in every area of my life. I don't have to have a perfect food plan or a perfect program, and that feels good. All I have to have is my Higher Power and the 12 step program. God has turned my character defects into character assets. From guilt has come serenity; from envy, self-acceptance; from procrastination, willingness; from rationalization, honesty; and from perfectionism, moderation. Through practicing the steps of OA I have been shown that all I am is an imperfect compulsive overeater. Thank God for the awareness!  
*from: Lifetime, February 1982*

### The Seventh 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 strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

Freedom Intergroup Agenda – June 13, 2009

Open with Serenity Prayer

Read & accept minutes – Sharon approved as read & Jeannine 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Tradition of the Month – Read by Belinda B.

Treasurer Report – Barbara Joy distributed the June Treasury Report. Income & expenses discussed. The balance is \$1,611.29. Carol will not be attending the Sour 8 Convention; therefore Liz made a motion to return the check to Region 8 so that they can send someone else from another group. Maralyn 2<sup>nd</sup> & all voted in favor.

Region 8 Report – Sour sent out a 49 page report of the up-coming business meeting, to take place at the convention in July. Flyers were distributed to groups.

WSO Report – no report

Committee Reports –1. Retreat committee (November). 2. Rock N Roll Committee to meet directly after this IG meeting. 3. Phone committee going good & strong.

Special Events – All up-coming events were reviewed & no additional information. Florida State Convention Reps will be Sharon & Elizabeth. Fl. State Convention will have a phone meeting which Maralyn has agreed to attend & represent Freedom IG, Saturday at 1:30 pm. Additional information will be passed to Maralyn. Convention will take place on the last week of February in Coco Beach. Barbara Joy made a motion that during the conference call that Freedom IG do not volunteer to take on any additional responsibility, for 2010.

Upcoming Events -July 19<sup>th</sup>, Soar 8 Convention & Business Assembly, Atlanta, GA

Oct. 16-18, Central FL Intergroup, Lake Yale Conference Center, Leesburg, FL

Nov. 6-8, Rockin & Rollin in Recovery, Tampa, FL

Nov. 20-21, OA Retreat Gifts, Giving & Getting Franciscan Center, Tampa, FL

Newsletter – The newsletter is available on line. Julie made a motion to have IG provide 1 black & white copy of newsletter to each group (13), & flyers when appropriate. IG now has sufficient funds to do this. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Maralyn, all voted in favor.

12<sup>th</sup> Step Within - Barbara Joy made a motion that newsletter editor & IG chairperson receive one free ink cartridge per year, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Maralyn all voted approved.

Nursing home in NPR is requesting to have a meeting started within their facility. Liz & Beth are interested in this endeavor. Beth will contact the nursing home for further details. This topic will be tabled until Sept. when IG resumes.

Region contacted Barbara Joy suggesting that we start a teen meeting. This item to be tabled until Sept. when IG resumes.

OA post card packs were provided for all 13 groups. These are to be given to individual groups for their members to distribute within their community.

Telephone Hotline – on going

Literature – Provided up-dated literature cost lists. Discussion regarding the purchase of OA books through a vendor in Mexico ensued, because the books are less expensive via Mexico distributors. Jeannine motioned to contact WSO or the business meeting at the Assembly, regarding this matter, Barbara Joy 2<sup>nd</sup>. Beth will seek additional information & provide it to IG in Sept.

Old Business – N/A

New Business – We now have 13 groups therefore we are permitted to have 2 reps. Additional rep. is needed. Jeannine declined the offer. Barbara Joy made a motion to consider additional rep. & 2 alternatives to be tabled until Sept. when IG resumes. Jeannine 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion all voted in favor.

Barbara Joy distributed the job descriptions for the officers, secretary, etc.

Public Information – N/A

Group Reports – N/A

Close with the Lord's Prayer

Standing ovation for all that Barbara Joy has & continues to do for OA.

Submitted by secretary, Belinda B.

Reminder—No July or August Freedom Intergroup meetings.

# WHAT IS ABSTINENCE?

According to the dictionary, the word "abstain" means to refrain from. Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program. Each individual is free to determine his or her own way of achieving abstinence according to personal needs and preferences. Abstaining from compulsive eating, unlike dieting, has a sense of permanence about it. Unlike our dieting days we abstain only one day at a time, not worrying about any ensuing results. Each new day we re-commit to our personal plan of abstinence, without thinking about tomorrow, next month or next year.

from: "tools of recovery" pamphlet

Here are some actions OA members have used to help promote their abstinence. These are suggestions not rules. OA has a saying, "*Take what you like and leave the rest.*"

**Develop a plan of eating.** A plan of eating includes a guide to the food we choose to eat each day. Before choosing a specific plan, we suggest and encourage you to consult a qualified professional.

**Plan your meals in advance.** Pre-planned meals can free you from facing food choices throughout the day.

**Work with a sponsor.** Many OA members find it helpful to commit their plan of eating to a sponsor each day.

**Use the tools.** In addition to plan of eating and sponsorship, OA has six other tools of recovery. It is good advice try to use one or more of them be-

fore you start eating compulsively. They are meetings, telephone, writing, literature, anonymity and service.

**Remember HALT.** This acronym suggests that you not get too hungry, too angry, too lonely, or too tired.

**Enjoy your meals.** Relax. Take the time to enjoy your meals. You deserve it.

**Be conscious of the amount of food you eat.** Some OA members do not take second helpings at meals, since overeating often begins with "just a little bit more."

**Follow a predetermined weighing plan.** Frequent weighing or refusal to weigh can put too much emphasis on physical recovery alone.

One day at a time, it works for us, and it can work for you. This we promise.

from: "A commitment to abstinence" pamphlet



Sponsors are OA members who are living the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to the best of their ability. They are willing to share their recovery with other members of the fellowship and are committed to abstinence. We ask a sponsor to help us through our program of recovery on all three levels: physical, emotional and spiritual. By working with other members of OA and sharing their experience, strength and hope, sponsors continually renew and reaffirm their own recovery. Sponsors share their program up to the level of their own experience. OA is a pro-

gram of attraction; find a sponsor who has what you want, and ask that person how he or she is achieving it. A member may work with more than one sponsor and may change sponsors at will. Serving as a sponsor helps reinforce our physical, emotional and spiritual recovery. It also provides an opportunity to strengthen our relationship skills, both with another individual and our Higher Power. Sponsoring keeps us from isolating and teaches us how to support another human being seeking recovery. Sponsoring keeps us in touch with what brought us to the program and can also remind us where we might return. As we give back what we've been given, we strengthen our group and the fellowship as a whole.

from: "tools of recovery" "guide for sponsors"

## ~Focus on Sponsorship~

In thinking about using the tools sponsorship was the first one that came to mind for me. Isolation has been a huge part of my disease. Reaching out and allowing myself to be reached out to are important contradictions to my disease and they are critical to my recovery. Without the sponsors I have had, I would not have worked the steps or grown up. Without my sponsees, I would not have the perfect reflection of the places my disease can so easily take me. I see myself in their eyes, and hear myself in their struggles. I am amazed by how often the issues they bring up are what I need to be reminded about in my own recovery. I often talk with OA members who are afraid to sponsor, because

they aren't far enough along, or are worried they will do something wrong. But I try to remember what my sponsor has told me many times - I cannot say or do anything that will keep a sponsee who really wants recovery away from it, and I cannot make someone recover, if he or she isn't ready yet.

Whether my sponsees get well is ultimately between them, and their Higher Power. I also try to remember that I sponsor because it is a tool for my own recovery - that may seem selfish, but I'm not a therapist or guru, I'm just another very sick compulsive overeater doing what I'm told to do to recover, and that includes being a sponsor who is amazed at all the gifts that comes my way. *anonymous*

## Sponsorship

# Happy Independence Day!

Soar 8  
 Recovery Convention &  
 Business Assembly  
 IT WORKS (it really does)  
 July 17-19, 2009  
 Atlanta, GA

October 16-18, 2009  
 Central Florida  
 Intergroup  
 Fall Retreat  
 "Gratitude  
 in Action"  
 Leesburg, FL

No Intergroup meeting  
 July or August

November 20-21, 2009  
 Freedom Intergroup  
 One night Retreat  
 "Gifts, Giving & Getting"  
 Franciscan Center  
 Tampa, FL

NEW MEETING  
 Wednesdays 10:30 am  
 St. Anne's Episcopal Church  
 9870 W. Fort Island Trail  
 (Mary Chapel)  
 Crystal River, FL  
 contact  
 Peg 352-447-5080

Suncoast Intergroup  
 Soar Region 8  
 Recovery Convention &  
 Business Assembly  
 "Rockin' N Rollin'  
 in Recovery"  
 November 6-8, 2009  
 Tampa, FL

HEY LIGHTEN UP!  
 An OA Merry-thon  
 Sat. July 25, 2009  
 9am to 4pm  
 Altamonte Springs, FL

The "Bridge to Serenity" group will  
 not be meeting at the library on July  
 14th; instead will be meeting in the  
 "A" building on County-line Road. It  
 is where the AA groups meet. Contact  
 Madeline & Richard M. for directions.



## 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**

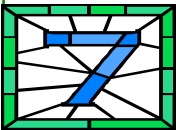
July's Topic: Is your food plan defined?  
Use "Dignity of Choice" pamphlet or consult your health-care professional.

**Do:** Have clear boundaries for your food plan & share the plan with your sponsor or other recovering OA member.

**Don't:** Try to make a food plan alone with just you & the disease.

from: [www.oaregon8.org](http://www.oaregon8.org) 12th Step Within Calendar of Topics for Discussion

### Tradition



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

Our OA program is our life line, our escape from our compulsion. It is very precious to us. Money is needed to keep it alive. Each group has expenses - the meeting room, the books and literature, the coffee and tea. When groups become numerous and strong enough, there is the need to support an intergroup office, as well as the World Service Office. How are we to finance our needs? They must be met by our own contributions. We may not accept donations from non-members; in fact there is a limit of \$500 on the amount that may be given by one member in a year to our World Service Office. The reasons for this are clear. If we accept "free" gifts from outsiders, or too much from one member, we become less than free ourselves. If someone is paying our way, he will naturally come to expect to have a voice in our decisions. The heavy contributor in a group might develop a desire to dominate the group. This we cannot allow, for "Our ultimate Authority is a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience." Our groups are urged not to hoard large sums of money, but to keep only a small reserve above running expenses. We are not profit-making, and money is not our goal. As long as we pay our way from our own pockets, we will have public respect, and our own. We will be free.

from: "12 Traditions of OA" pamphlet

I did not deliberately choose my faults, but neither do I have to be afraid of letting them go. I can establish what they are (I have many more faults than I am aware of) by taking steps 4 & 5, and I can abandon them in steps 6 & 7. What would any thinking person give for such simple, direct therapy? And it doesn't cost a dime. Do my faults include any of these: sloth, bad temper, promiscuity, rudeness, dishonesty, child abuse, violence? God, who loves me and wants me to be free, will accept them all.

For Today: I need not be afraid to admit anything to God and to another person, under God's guidance.

from: For Today - November 3

### REMEMBER... "SERVICE IS SLIMING!"

Please share your experience, strength and hope by writing an article for our newsletter. Some topics: promises, 3 fold recovery, your sponsor, gratitude, H.P., working the program.

Email to: [bam.oe@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bam.oe@tampabay.rr.com)



"We all get heavier as we get older because there's a lot more information in our heads. So I'm not fat, I'm just really intelligent and my head couldn't hold any more so it started filling up the rest of me!"

\*\*\*\*\*

"That's my story and I'm sticking to it!"

### ~Laughing at Myself~

When I have the ability to laugh at myself, it's a good indication that my humility is where it should be. When I take myself, and everyone and everything around me, too seriously, I fall flat into a big lack of humility. There have been days when I'm so busy controlling and manipulating and people-pleasing and lying that I couldn't

possibly laugh. But when I'm abstinent, I'm more than halfway there, and when I pray and ask my Higher Power to remove my defects, I'm already on my way to being able to laugh at myself. And it's important to note that it's not self-deprecating laughter, but rather a clear view of a less-than-perfect me. I'm human and fallible and full of faults—and full of love for myself.

from: *Lifeline*, January 1998

## FREEDOM INTERGROUP MEETING LIST

| <u>GROUP #</u>           | <u>DAY</u> | <u>TIME</u> | <u>GROUP NAME</u>  | <u>ADDRESS</u>                                                                                | <u>CONTACT #</u>               |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>CITRUS</b><br>00114   | Monday     | 3:00 pm     | Voices of Recovery | Central Citrus Community Center<br>2808 Marknighton Court<br>Lecanto, FL                      | Delores D.<br>352-746-5019     |
| 45245                    | Tuesday    | 3:00 pm     | Solutions          | Inverness Lakes Regional Public Library<br>1511 Druid Road<br>Inverness, FL                   | Maralyn B.<br>352-726-9112     |
| 50475                    | Wednesday  | 10:30 am    |                    | St. Anne's Episcopal Church (Mary Chapel)<br>9870 West Fort Island Trail<br>Crystal River, FL | Peg D.<br>352-447-5080         |
| 29089                    | Thursday   | 1:00 pm     |                    | Our Lady of Grace Church<br>6 Roosevelt Blvd.<br>Beverly Hills, FL                            | Francisca B.<br>352-746-7749   |
| 40614                    | Friday     | 7:00 pm     |                    | Our Lady of Grace Church<br>6 Roosevelt Blvd.<br>Beverly Hills, FL                            | Carolyn R.<br>352-341-0777     |
| <b>HERNANDO</b><br>50348 | Tuesday    | 1:00pm      | Bridge to Serenity | West Hernando Branch Library<br>6335 Blackbird Ave.<br>Brooksville, FL                        | Belinda B.<br>352-293-3455     |
| 50203                    | Thursday   | 7:00 pm     | Road to Recovery   | Dayspring Presbyterian (Fellowship Hall)<br>6000 Mariner Blvd.<br>Spring Hill, FL             | Karen<br>352-200-8433          |
| 08937                    | Friday     | 1:00 pm     |                    | St. Andrews Episcopal Church<br>corner of Deltona & Fulton<br>Spring Hill, FL                 | Betty<br>352-666-1710          |
| <b>PASCO</b><br>27737    | Monday     | 7:00 pm     |                    | Calvary Chapel Worship Center (room 110)<br>6825 Trouble Creek Road<br>New Port Richey, FL    | Barbara Joy L.<br>727-937-1964 |
| 50159                    | Monday     | 5:30 pm     | Big Book meeting   | Florida Hospital of Pasco County<br>7050 Gall Blvd.<br>Zephyrhills, FL                        | Sue<br>813-788-6479            |
| 20719                    | Wednesday  | 10:00 am    | Winners            | Unity Church<br>5844 Pine Hill Road<br>Port Richey, FL                                        | Peggy D.<br>727-817-0017       |
| 45421                    | Friday     | 11:30 am    |                    | Florida Hospital of Pasco County<br>7050 Gall Blvd.<br>Zephyrhills, FL                        | Sharon T.<br>813-782-6005      |
| 17950                    | Saturday   | 10:00 am    | Pasco Pioneers     | Unity Church<br>5844 Pine Hill Road<br>Port Richey, FL                                        | 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, FL