



FREEDOM INTERGROUP'S ROAD TO RECOVERY MARCH 2009

STEP THREE

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

Turning it over and looking for the gift.

Before being in a Twelve-Step program, I turned over nothing to no one! My family of origin taught me that if I wanted something done and done right, I had better get busy and do it myself. Busy I was -- becoming a "human doing" instead of a "human being."

If "turning it over" did not work out my way, I just worked harder, cursed my unfair luck and/or ranted and raved like a lunatic.

Then program entered my life in 1988. Gradually I found a Higher Power plus the Twelve Steps to take toward a saner more serene life. What I learned was that I only have to do the footwork toward a goal. The results are in HP's hands. My Higher Power helps me find a gift in whatever events unfold, even if they are the exact opposite of my hopes, dreams or plans.

I have quit hitting things with a bigger hammer to ensure that "MY will be done." Even if I am disappointed with Higher Power's results, I ask, "What would you have me learn from this, God?" Without fail, when I look for the gift, I find one. My life has repeatedly been enriched by moments that were not even close to MY will being done. For example, the divorce that devastated me turned out to be the force that catapulted me into recovery.

"Turning it over" is a leap of faith -- but taken after I have done as much as I reasonably can toward the goal. "Turning it over" makes me search for the positive significance or gift in the HP-directed results.

When I "turn it over," I am relieved of the needless fear, worry and frantic pushing that otherwise characterized my pre-program life. I still have to do my part, but I am relieved of the stress over consequences. "Turning it over" works like a miracle.

-C.O., Camillus, New York, USA - Lifeline March 1995

Tradition Three

The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Most organizations have rules for membership. We have only one: a desire to stop eating compulsively.

A person cannot be barred from OA because he differs from others in race, political views, religion, economic status, interpretation of the program, or food plan. Weight is not a criterion for membership. A person is a member if he has a desire to overcome his compulsion. There is a place in OA for each of us. Here we are free to be ourselves and be accepted.

Some groups have been troubled by members who were emotionally disturbed and tended to disrupt the harmony of the meetings. Yet they were not ousted from the group and were not denied the chance of recovery. They had the one requirement for membership: a desire to stop overeating. Troublesome personal problems can be dealt with on a one-to-one basis through sponsorship. In time these groups were seen to survive, stronger than ever.

Note, too, that desire is required--not success. Many people keep coming back even though they feel they have failed. The door never closes. As long as they keep coming back, they have chance.



A reminder!

Freedom I/G made the decision.

at the Feb. 14, 2009 meeting,

to no longer print the newsletter for distribution to our groups, due to the cost of printing and postage.

It was suggested that the groups have one of their members go to oafreedom.org to print off copies for their individual group. It was also suggested that each member could print off their own and only making copies to have at meeting for newcomers or members without a computer.

I asked and you answered. Thank you!

Which of the tools do you use the most and which the least and why?

I use "writing" the most. I get more of my feelings out. I get clarity and get to know myself better when I write.

What step are you working on?

4th step

Are you working with a sponsor and are you sponsoring?

Yes, I have a sponsor. Not sponsoring now.

Are you willing to go to any lengths to have recovery?

YES.

Write on any topic that means a lot to you, like gratitude, acceptance, fear, life on life's terms. etc.

ACCEPTANCE

Please share your recovery with us.

I joined OA back in '82. I do not know why I left. I remember feeling uncomfortable with the anonymity, that may be why I left. My leaving OA was the worst thing I did for myself. I eventually resigned myself to living as an obese woman after repeated failures with diets, diet groups, hypnotherapy, injections, amphetamines, and stomach surgery. Obviously the stomach surgery did not work, but I did develop Barrettes Sundrome (a pre-cancerous conditions). If I had only stayed in OA I probably would not have this medical condition nor all this weight to loose. I felt like a failure and did not like myself and felt my future was dim as for any sense of happiness. I can say this because I was normal weight, briefly, during my high school years, yet I still felt fat and ugly, wishing I was popular and pretty, like the popular girls. I have deep feelings of low self worth which the OA program is helping me to deal with it with the help of my HP, sponsor and the OA fellowship. Today I am happy, with myself, my life and I am working on accepting that my HP has been and is working for me. Since returning to OA after 24 years, I feel fortunate. There are those who never know the success of the OA program. It is hard work and a process that I have found to be an expose of my true self. I have realized that what once was a defense mechanism for survival, during my childhood and growing up, is now a defeat that is killing me, spiritually, emotionally and physically. I can not dismiss this defect, but I can now learn to use other means to which I can socialize and interact (not react) to the challenges life is and will continue to place before me. This is the reality, I will be coping in a healthy, not destructive way as long as I remain in OA.

Belinda COE, FA



continued from column one.

focused on my recovery, I never will. If I obsessed about my recovery as much as I've obsessed about my weight, I'd be in darn good shape!

Chris-Saturday morning Unity group

Twenty five years ago I came into OA under duress. My therapist and I had a deal that if I couldn't lose 20 lbs. by a certain date, I would have to go to OA. HP, in his infinite wisdom saw to it that I was one pound shy and I found myself at my first OA meeting. I couldn't control my eating for any length of time, would sneak eat candy bars and then cry because I couldn't stop and I hated myself for it. I didn't want to be intimate with my husband because the sight of my own body repulsed me. On top of that, the rest of the world was not dancing to the tune I played for it and people just would not do what I "knew" they should. I was a mess, angry at God (thanks for nothing), angry at everyone because I hated myself for being so weak.

Fast forward 25 years. Well, I am abstinent, I'm on a food plan which is supervised by my doctor. I have had great difficulty losing weight because my metabolism was off. Happy to say I have lost some weight but even happier that I am no longer looking for the world to make me happy. Finding out that my happiness was my responsibility made my life easier. I had to learn acceptance of the fact that the world did not revolve around me; that people had the right to be who they wanted to be; I rediscovered my High Power and have a wonderful relationship with Him. I am in good hands with my sponsor who keeps me honest and calls me on "my stuff". I give service whenever I can and I'm so grateful for the wonderful friends I have made in program who have reaffirmed me on so many levels. I'm grateful for my life. --J,Port Richey

GOD GIVES THE MILK
BUT NOT THE PAIL...



THIS IS A GOD GIVEN
PROGRAM...

BUT YOU HAVE TO PICK UP THE TOOLS!

I don't have much to give you, but I do have my favorite quote, "Focus on Recovery and lose weight, Focus on weight and lose Recovery." It's so easy to get those two ideas reversed. Taking a moment to stop and say that really helps to put things in perspective for me. As much as I want to lose weight, if I'm not continued next column...

Which of the tools do you use the most and which the least and why?

Tools I use least, having a sponsor-am embarrassed about certain eating disorders (getting rid of food), coming to meetings, sharing deep issues, keeping information a secret.

What step are you working on?

Step 8, having trouble forgiving people who hurt me.

Are you willing to go to any lengths to have recovery?

Yes!

Any topic that means a lot to you...

Gratitude-not alone anymore! Fear-I have a lot of hidden fear-co-dependant

Please share your recovery with us.

I no longer get rid of food everyday, I still do if I overeat, like eat at a buffet. I don't weigh myself everyday. I try to eat when I'm hungry only, not just bored!

At least I now realize why I eat the way I do, when I'm stressed out I eat, when I'm happy I can eat! I no longer closet eat. I use to hide trigger foods from my husband. Keeping busy and keeping in touch with my Higher Power helps me too!

-Stacy, New Port Richey



Upcoming Events

March 21-Sat. Spring is Here

Candlelighting Ceremony

Speakers Contact: Linda 727-647-8280

Unity Christ Church or Ellen L. 727-345-0101

6168 First Ave. N

St. Petersburg.

Mar. 27-29, 2009 SOAR 8 Recovery Convention & Assembly

Hilton Little Rock Metro Center

Little Rock, AK (contact: Cindy 501-804-9272)

April 18, 2009 Mini Summit - Speaker Marathon

Friendship United Methodist Church

Clearwater, FL (contact: Stephanie 727-442-9855)

May 1-3, 2009 Freedom I/G - Big Book Retreat

Franciscan Retreat Center

Tampa FL (contact: Jeannine 727-849-3048

ja@tampabay.rr.com)



Ask it Basket

(from Lifeline March 1995)

The OA tools help me work the Steps, achieve recovery and create a better me! Where did the "tools" of our beloved OA program come from? I cannot seem to find information anywhere

The tools were developed within OA! The "creation" of the tools was actually an evolutionary process. There are no easy answers. However, here's what has been surmised with the help of the OA archives; the publications manager, Sandra Herzog; and OA co-founder, Rozanne S.:

Around 1963, a piece of OA literature was available entitled "Questions & Answers about the OA Program." It first mentions several of the tools, but doesn't recognize them as tools. In 1966, within the first "To the Newcomer" pamphlet, again several tools were mentioned.

As time went on, a pattern was being developed and noticed within the Fellowship. Thus, in 1973, the first "Tools of Recovery" pamphlet featured six of the now eight tools: Abstinence, Sponsorship, Meetings, Literature, Telephone and Anonymity.

In the 1981 "Tools of Recovery" pamphlet, all of the current eight tools were featured; Writing and Service were added!

This evolutionary process seems to keep going based on current or future needs of the Fellowship. Changes, additions or deletions can occur during the World Service Business Conference where delegates representing the grassroots of OA the world over vote on a variety of motions, ones which could include the tools.

We hope this helps, and thanks for the question!

SIDE SISHES

"How many sponsors does it take to change a light bulb?" asks a member from Washington, D.C. "Just one. But first, the light bulb has to be willing to change!"

Lifeline/March 1991



"Our group had to move from our old meeting place," shares C.W., a member from Texas, "so we took turns having the meeting in our homes.

"One night, after a bad storm had cut off electricity to hundreds of people, I came home to a phone message taken by my non-member husband: 'D, says you can't have the meeting : her house tonight because she's still powerless."



Minutes - Freedom Intergroup meeting February 14, 2009

Freedom Intergroup Chairperson, Jeannine opened meeting with Serenity Prayer.

Those present were: Nancy(Z'hills) Literature-Jeannine (NPR) Chair , Carole (Odessa)Treas., Barbara Joy (Holiday) Newsletter/12th step within, Felicia NPR Sat. AM, Elizabeth NPR Sat., Beth NPR Mon PM, Grace NPR Vice Chair/temp. secretary, Maralyn Inverness Tues., Peggy NPR, Dolores Lecanto Mon, Juliana Spring Hill Fri.pm, Francisca Beverly Hills Thurs/Fri, Belinda Hernando County.

Tradition 2 - Read out of tradition Pamphlet

Minutes were accepted as written in Feb. 09 Newsletter

Treasurers' report given by Carole \$305.35 balance. Motion made by Maralyn and second by Nancy to accept report as given. Motion accepted.

WSO Report - Questionnaire handed out by Barbara Joy RE: whether the items to be presented for votes at the WSO should be presented. A copy was given to representatives to take back to their meetings for discussion and then voted on by the meeting members. These are to be returned to Barbara Joy.

Region 8 report - Carole will be attending the assembly/convention in Little Rock, March 27th-29th. Region has offered the \$ for one night and transportation for our Region 8 rep., Carole to attend.

A new printing of 7th Tradition Pamphlet given to each attendee. These can be attained free of charge from World Service.

We were also notified that there will not be any more literature catalogs mailed out. They can be obtained on line only.

Retreat Committee Report - May 1st-3rd at Franciscan Retreat Center. \$140 for private room - \$110 for shared. Franciscan center left our retreat out of their mailing. Will mail out a separate mailing because of this omission. The November Mini retreat will be Fri nite 11-20 thru Sat. afternoon 11/21.

Newsletter - motion made that I/G no longer print newsletter - up to each group. Motion made by Barbara Joy. Motion seconded. Discussed and passed. Website for newsletter - oafreedom.org
Barbara Joy retiring as newsletter editor June 30th. Beth volunteered to take over.

Telephone Hotline - Carole G. going good. Have purchase new answer machine that has longer outgoing message.

Literature - Nancy P. - She handed out price list and phone number, orders can be done by email; 813-715-4512

Email; nancyrickpage@aol.com

By-laws have been corrected and accepted by Region and WSO. Copies given to each group.

Old Business - Baskets to be raffled at FSC 2/20-22nd were collected from groups and given to Carole to take to Cocoa Beach. Thank to each group. They were very nice. Attractive and much appreciated.

New Business- T-shirts as fundraiser to be sold at May retreat. Motion made, 2nd and passed to start with 25. They will sell for \$12 - catalog passed around so colors could be viewed.

Prayers requested by Morris' wife Sue. He attends mon night meetings in New Port Richey. He is in Hospital and quite ill.

Meeting closed with Lord's Prayer submitted by Grace

CITRUS COUNTY

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|-------|--------|--------|--|---------------------------|
| 00114 | Mon. | 3:00pm | Voices of Recovery
Central Citrus Community Center
2808 Marknighton Ct.
Lecanto, FL | Delores
352-746-5019 |
| 45245 | Tues. | 3:00pm | Solutions
Inverness Lakes Regional Public Library
1511 Druid Rd.
Inverness, FL | Maralyn 352-726-9112 |
| 29089 | Thurs. | 1:00pm | Our Lady of Grace Church
6 Roosevelt Blvd.
Beverly Hills | Francisca
352-746-7749 |
| 40614 | Fri. | 7:00pm | Our Lady of Grace Church
6 Roosevelt Blvd.
Beverly Hills | Carolyn
352-341-0777 |

HERNANDO COUNTY

- | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|--|-----------------------|
| 50203 | Thurs. | 7:00pm | Road to Recovery Meeting
Dayspring Presbyterian Church
Fellowship Hall
6000 Mariner Blvd
Spring Hill, FL 34609 | Karen
352-200-8433 |
| 08937 | Fri. | 1:00pm | Saint Andrews Episcopal Church
Spring Hill/corner Deltona & Fulton | Betty
352-666-1710 |

PASCO COUNTY

- | | | | | |
|-------|------|---------|--|-------------------------|
| 27737 | Mon. | 7:00pm | Calvary Chapel (room 110)
6825 Trouble Creek Rd
New Port Richey | Barbara
727-937-1964 |
| 50159 | Mon. | 5:30pm | Florida Hospital of Pasco County
Big Book meeting
7050 Gall Blvd., Zephyrhills | Sue
813-788-6479 |
| 20719 | Wed. | 10:00am | Unity Church
5844 Pine Hill Rd.
Port Richey | Peggy
727-817-0017 |
| 45421 | Fri. | 11:30am | Florida Hospital of Pasco County
7050 Gall Blvd
Zephyrhills | Sharon
813-782-6005 |
| 17950 | Sat. | 10:00am | Unity Church
5844 Pine Hill Dr.
Port Richey | Jeannine
727849-3048 |