



Experience, Strength, and Love



The principles are the gift of the program and they are there for the taking. As I have worked the steps, I find that they are never completed. I must continue to watch my thought, feelings and actions. I must continue to be aware of the changes in my behavior and the hope that I have to offer to others in the program. I realize that I will attract what I promote. I can choose which way I want my life to go every day. Before getting out of bed, I start my morning with the Third and Seventh Step Prayer. I then read "On Awakening" from the Big Book of AA pages 86-87, which gives me directions for my day. When I started my journey of recovery, I had no idea where it would lead, but I realized that it opened a little ray of hope for me to live a different way of life, that crack in the door has opened so wide because of all

"I must continue to be aware of the changes in my behavior and the hope that I have to offer to others in the program."

the help that is available by those others participating in their own recovery. Even the newcomer has something to offer me and I hope to always remember that they are the most important person in the room. I plan to carry the message of hope to all who enter the rooms as long as I am there because I think that is what keeps me coming back to share my experience, strength and love. It works, it really does!

JR

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter reflect those of the writer and do not represent OA as a whole. Serve your group by sharing your experience, strength and hope in the newsletter. Please submit your article by the **15th** day of the previous month for publication in the next month's newsletter.

Please send to: newsletter@oapinellas.org

Step 2

Came to believe in a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

"Often we caused ourselves problems because we didn't realize that there were some kinds of eating problems we could handle comfortably and some kinds we couldn't."

-OA Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 21

This saying creates an image of the balance between my Higher Power's part and my part in any life situation. And "balance" is the elusive "sanity" referred to in Step Two: "Came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity." So often in my disease I have used "magical thinking," hoping that a situation would resolve itself. Yet other times I have "over-rowed," without benefit or direction from God as a compass.

When it came to physical recovery and adopting a plan of eating, I had always tried what someone else was doing. Experience eventually taught me that other people's food plans did not work for me. The compulsion stayed with me until I prayed to be led to the plan of eating that would work best for me. Then I prayed for the willingness to row the boat, to take action with a plan of eating, one day at a time. As a result, I have been attending OA, free of the compulsion, for almost a year.

-Voices of Recovery, page 203

"Let Go and Let God!"

"... I finally understood that fighting the problem of compulsive overeating would never in this life relieve me of it."

-For Today, page 96

I couldn't understand it! After maintaining a 100-pound weight loss for over two years, I relapsed and continued to relapse for the next seven years. After every regained abstinence, I'd share in meetings that I'd surrendered. Surrender, to me, meant "hitting bottom," praying desperately for help, then trying something different – food plan, sponsor, meetings – ALL external changes.

Today I know that this was not surrendering. I simply did what I needed to do to recover until I was no longer so desperate. A part of me always believed that someday I'd be able to eat normally. I still fought my food problem and other things in my life. Since I stopped fighting my Higher Power's will, one day at a time, I've not relapsed. My life has become more than "manageable." It has become more fulfilling than I could have ever imagined.

Someone once told me, "Life before surrender is a boxing match; after surrender it's surfing." Today, I'm gracefully and joyfully surfing.

-Voices of Recovery, page 186

Tradition 2

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants they do not govern.

“Those of us who lived this program don’t simply carry the message; we are the message. Each day that we live well, we are well, and we embody the joy of recovery.”

-OA Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 106

When I first walked into the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous, I was like the candle whose light is flickering and close to going out. I was sick in mind, body, and spirit; I was hopeless.

Many OA members describe OA as the last house on the block. I do not know if that is true since I do not know where the block begins or ends. I do know that what I found in OA can be found only in the heart and mind of another recovering compulsive overeater. The flickering light that I came in with became stronger, and the hopelessness turned into hopefulness.

I can be a living example or a dying example of how the program works. My courage to recover and my experience in OA serve as an example to those who know me. I represent and carry the message of hope.

-Voices of Recovery, page 16

Concept 2

The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

FAITH
HOPE
LOVE

H = Happy
O = Our
P = Program
E = Exists



Hope: desire, accompanied by expectation; anticipation; confidence; the object of desire

Pinellas Traditions Intergroup - 7th Tradition

- The 7th Tradition states, "Every OA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions."
- Available online, local OA groups and members can send a contribution using a secure site via PTI's PayPal page.
- Please click the PayPal button below or you may visit our website at oapinellas.org/donations.html to send in a donation today.
- Your donation is appreciated!!!



Members are more likely to stay in the fellowship if they see and hear recovery and if they feel welcome and connected to the group.

Some ideas to help with this are:

At meetings:

- be abstinent and when sharing, say that you are abstinent
- take abstinence seriously - life or death
- celebrate your abstinence and recovery by sharing important milestones with the group
- smile and greet all members
- ask someone if they would like a hug
- read OA approved literature
- share on the solution - not the problem
- listen when others are sharing
- identify yourself as a sponsor
- warmly welcome newcomers and offer them a Newcomers' Packet - have group members write their contact information on the packet
- talk to newcomers after the meeting and ask whether they have any questions - offer them your phone number to call during the week if they think of something they would like to ask or if they want support
- offer yourself as a temporary sponsor for the newcomer to get him/her started on working the program
- ask the newcomer whether he/she would like to receive a call during the week and if so, take their phone number and make the call
- offer to give someone a ride to the meeting
- warmly welcome returning members who are struggling and offer them a Welcome Back packet - have group members write their contact information on the packet
- before or after the meeting, introduce yourself to someone you don't know and ask them how they are doing
- offer to do service at the group level - treasurer, secretary, group rep, greeter
- take the key ... set up chairs ... put out literature
- volunteer to lead a meeting
- stay for the business meeting and contribute your thoughts and ideas
- be inclusive
- invite all members for fellowship after the meeting
- offer to put together a contact list for the group
- conduct a Group Inventory to get input from all members as to what things are going well with the meeting and what things could be better. Follow through with suggested changes.
- review the "OA Checklist For A Quality Meeting" to see if changes are needed. Between meetings:
 - be abstinent
 - make a phone call
 - send a love note or e-mail
 - offer support and an encouraging word
 - be a sponsor
 - visit a meeting you wouldn't normally attend
 - call or e-mail your sponsor
 - call someone you haven't seen in a while and ask how they are doing
 - use the tools!
 - work the steps!
 - practice the principles!
 - organize social events for members and their families
 - invite another member to join you for a walk
 - attend marathons, retreats and conventions
 - attend intergroup meetings and report back to the group
 - start a new meeting to focus on relapse
 - offer to share your story at a meeting that is struggling

Resource: OA.org

LET GO: of trying to fix, arrange, and change everything outside of myself -- to suit myself -- so I could feel good inside myself. Quit thinking *"If I could just control the external environment, the internal environment would then become comfortable."*
-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 413

PRACTICE: spiritual principles.

REMEMBER: *"We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free."*
-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 133

Resentment, entitlement, and inordinate expectations can obliterate happiness. Fear in its myriad forms drives depression, despair, misery.

Retelling, replaying, reviving and recalling what we needed to delete, amend, turn over, forgive, or fix keeps happiness at bay.

"What ifs" and "if only's" are re-thought and repeated until they have rained on our parade.

Our old happiness plan was based on getting: approval, getting "more than and better than," control, "stuff," and security (to keep and guard stuff). It had to do with getting what we wanted (with broken wanters) and avoiding what we didn't want (with broken choosers). Fueled by self-centered fear, our quest for happiness failed and left us singing "Is this all there is?" Still, we persisted in being a "taker" instead of a "giver."

Misery makers included: inordinate expectations, self-centered perspective, flawed perception, entitlement thinking, selfish wants, impatience and unreasonableness. Ego loves to play "You can get more." Pride likes to point to fresh bruises. Our literature tells us to: let go of the *"deliberate manufacture of misery."* BB p. 133. Let go of the anger, resentment, self-pity, inordinate expectations, self-centeredness, entitlements, and fears that feed misery.

"We re-live past events and re-feel their pain, and we pre-live future disasters and pre-feel their impact."

Danny Penman, Mark Williams, Mindfulness, page 42

So, let's avoid the "wreckage of the future."

Happiness is a direction rather than a destination to be reached.

Happiness comes as we let go of the defects that brought misery and practice the opposite behaviors.

Happiness is more likely a by-product of our focus on helping others. "In about the same degree you are helpful, you will be happy."
-Theodore Reik

Happiness happens -- living in the now rather than the wreckage of the past or future.

Happiness and sadness can co-exist (another paradox; but, true).

Happiness shows in our expressions, demeanor, and in our tones.

Happiness, like misery, is a choice.

Happiness is an inside job--not dependent upon externals.

"We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness."
-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 83

This comes after we mend ways in Steps 6-7 and mend our fences in the amends process of Steps 8-9. It comes in the midst of working with others to be of service in Step 12.

"I was to know happiness, peace, and usefulness, in a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes."

-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 8

"Have a good day" they say. My reply is invariably: "That would be my choice--you too." And, for me, that is a daily choice I make.

Having a good day is always my choice. *"When I focus on what's good today, I have a good day. And when I focus on what's bad, I have a bad day."*

-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 419

Misery is optional - *"We aren't a glum lot."*

-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 132

Gratitude and service are antidotes to misery. Simply generating a gratitude list moves misery off the radar screen. Working with others, being of service turns the focus away from the negative and turns on the positive energy.

Using the "serenity prayer" instead of my timetable and plan helps. Acceptance is the answer: - let go of denial, fantasy, and wishful thinking--play the ball where it is.

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you."

Thess. 5:16-17

It is not so much what happens -- or doesn't happen --as my expectations and reactions to something that determines whether I am happy or miserable. *"I don't think happiness or unhappiness is the point. How do we meet the problems we face? How do learn from them and transmit what we have learned to others, if they would receive the knowledge?"*

-As Bill Sees It p. 306

Misery is contagious, and I elect not to be a carrier, nor a victim of this virus. Likewise, happiness is infectious, and I will seek to spread joy in my rounds today. Smiles and laughs are "preemptive strikes" on the miserables. *"So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness."*

-Alcoholics Anonymous, page 132

"That where there is sadness, I may bring joy." (from prayer of St. Francis)

-Twelve Steps/Twelve Traditions, page 93

If I look for the negatives I will find them. If I choose to replay the upsetting stuff, it will continue to upset me. My "magic magnifying mind" can expand and enlarge the unhappy as well as the happy thoughts, feelings, and events.

LOOK FOR: things for which to be grateful, ways to be of service. Spot and let go of "misery makers" before they can do damage.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

On a 1-10 scale, where am I on happiness?

If less than a 10, what can I do differently to make it a 10?

Hint: check past Step Ten inventories.

Can I help someone else blast some "misery makers" along the way today?

Where and how can I bring joy today?

In what way will I be more aware of my Higher Power today?

In what way will I respond to requested direction?

Ken H.

Unity With Diversity Committee is looking for people who would be willing to be available to help as a reference on their help call line. If you fit one of these categories and are willing to assist, please contact Donna at callortext@gmail.com.

100 lb & up	Double hatter-AA	Meals small/tiny many	Senior Citizen
African American	Exercise bulimic	Male	Sexually Abused
Agnostic/Atheist	Food Rehab Experience	Mental Health Problems	Single Parent
Anorexic/Bulimic	Food Service/near food	Native American	Sleep walker
Asian Pacific Islander	Grief and Loss	Night binger	Sponsorless
Bereaved	Hospitalized	Non-English Speaker	Teenager
Bilingual	Ill/Sick	Orthoanlexia	Traveler
Bored	Incarcerated	Over exerciser	Treatment graduate
Camper	Jewish	Parent of small children	Vegetarian/Vegan
Cancer Patient	Kosher eater	Personality disorder	Visitor/traveler
Child	Latino	Pregnant	Visual Problems
Chronic Illness	Live alone	Professional	Widow/widower
Clergy	Live with normal eater	Restrictor	Young person
Cultural food needed	LGBTQ	Runner	
Dating	Low income		

MEETING CHANGES

The Pinellas Park (Library) Saturday 9AM meeting moved on **January 6th** to a new time and location.

NEW TIME: 7:00 A.M.

NEW LOCATION:

St. Giles Episcopal Church
8271 52nd St. N.
Pinellas Park, FL 33781

Be a reflection of what you'd like to see in others. If you want love, give love. If you want honesty, give honesty. If you want respect, give respect. You get in return what you give!

-Unknown

MONTHLY INTERGROUP

Pinellas Traditions Intergroup (PTI) meets every third Friday of the month.

EVERYONE is welcome to attend!!!

The next meeting will be held:
Friday, February 16th at 6:30 P.M.

Morton Plant Hospital
1st Floor – Tuttle D Auditorium
300 Pinellas St. / Off Harrison
Clearwater, FL 33756

CALLING ALL NIGHT OWLS!!!



Southeast Overeaters Anonymous Region 8's ...

Twelfth Step Within (TSW) Committee **NEEDS YOUR HELP!!!**

Our literature states:

"We worked hard during the day and ate hard at night."

- OA Twelve Steps & 12 Traditions

Night time is the hardest for many compulsive eaters. We are looking for OA'ers who are willing to take calls late at night. We would also like to use the advantage of different time zones.

Are you an OA'er in the Pacific Time zone who is willing to take calls till 11PM (PST)? This allows someone from Eastern Time zone the ability to call till 2AM (EST).

If you are open to taking calls from fellow OA'ers, please send:

1. Your first name, last initial
2. Phone number (with area code)
3. What time you are willing to take calls until
4. Your time zone
5. Email to: marcialorilevine@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

♥♥♥ Abstinence in Action "Adventure" Fellowship ♥♥♥

Please join us for another ...

Abstinence OA Workshop



Saturday, February 3rd
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Christ the King
3809 West Morrison Avenue
Tampa, FL 33692

corner of South Dale Mabry & Henderson in South Tampa

Mary Martha Center • Rooms 204 & 205

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

\$6.00 suggested donation

Got Questions?

Call JC (813) 240-8572
or
Jim (727) 424-7075

February 14th Fellowship

"Game Night"

♥♥♥ Wednesday ♥ February 14th ♥ 6:00PM ♥♥♥



ADDRESS:

2650 Countryside Blvd. C-204
Clearwater FL 33761

♥♥♥ ALL ARE WELCOME!!! ♥♥♥

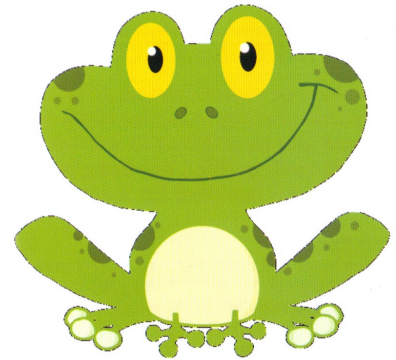
\$6.00 suggested donation

Got Questions???

♥♥♥ Call JC (813) 240-8572 ♥♥♥

28th Annual Florida State
Convention of Overeaters
Anonymous

"Together We Can...
**Fully Rely on
God* (FROG)"**
(*of our own understanding)



Feb 23-25, 2018

Holiday Inn Tampa– Westshore
700 N. Westshore Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33609
866-941-4919 (Reservations)
813-289-8200 (Hotel Direct)

♥♥♥ Looking for PTI Members to share their Experience, Strength and Hope... ♥♥♥

PTI is looking for newsletter entries on the topic of "Faith" for the month of **March**. The deadline is **February 15th**.

Also, the topic for **April** is "Courage" that must be submitted by **March 15th**.

Save the dates and please consider on sharing your experience, strength and hope in our monthly newsletter. If you're not sure of what to share on the monthly topic, please feel free to send in an article of any "recovery" topic that inspires you.

Please, please, please consider sharing your written thoughts. We all have them ... this is a thinking disease!

PTI is also looking for a new newsletter editor. If you're interested, please email Joan: newsletter@oapinellas.org

PINELLAS COUNTY MEETING LIST

February 2018

DAY	TIME	MEETING NAME	MEETING TYPE / NOTES	LOCATION	CONTACT
Mon	10:15 AM OA#46182	Just For Today **	1-Step/ 2-Lifeline/ 3-Lit/4-BB/5-Speaker	Lutheran Church of the Resurrection 1555 Windmill Pt Rd., Palm Harbor	Mary Ellen (727) 781-2597 Joan (727) 785-9208
Mon	12:00 PM OA#48303	Voices of Recovery (Candlelight Meeting)	Voices of Recovery Discussion	Unity of St. Petersburg 6168 First Ave. N, St. Pete	Ann G. (212) 399-7099
Mon	7:00 PM OA#47788	Focus on Abstinence **	Speaker Meeting Speaker Abstinent 90+ Days	Central Church of Christ 1454 Belleair Rd., Clearwater (NW of Belleair Rd. & Highland - entrance on Belleair)	Mary T. (727) 593-4758 Mardie (727) 501-3949
Mon	7:00 PM OA#01530	Search Out Serenity "SOS"	Leader / Discussion Jackson Street entrance	St. Anthony's Hospital, Classroom D 1200 7th Ave. N., St. Petersburg (Jackson Street entrance)	Cynthia (561) 254-3642
Tues	7:00 AM #56126	Fresh Start	Voices of Recovery For Today	Central Church of Christ 1454 Belleair Rd., Clearwater (NW of Belleair Rd. & Highland - entrance on Belleair)	Phil L. (727) 754-0131
Tues	10:00 AM OA#54726	Abstinence NEEDS SUPPORT	Daily Readings Open Discussion	REBOS Center MOVED - New Location: 5639 54th Ave. N., Kenneth City	Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Tues	7:00 PM OA#54697	Living In Today	Step/Lifeline/Daily Reader/ BB/Leader's Choice	Northwood Presbyterian Church - Rm #4 2875 State Road 580, Clearwater	Lee (727) 480-4821
Tues	7:00 PM OA#54346	The Mile Stretch Meeting NEEDS SUPPORT	Literature Meeting	St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church 4843 Mile Stretch Rd., Holiday	Chris (727) 688-9823 Judy L. (727) 457-1053 Jeanne A. (727) 494-7994
Wed	12:30 PM OA#52863	Message Carriers	Open Discussion	Metro Center 3251 Third Ave. N., St. Petersburg	Ellen L. (727) 381-8043
Wed	6:45 PM OA#10359	Madeira Beach Beach Bunch NEEDS SUPPORT	Open Discussion	On the beach in front of the snack shack 15100 Gulf Blvd., Madeira Beach (Bring a chair)	Linda H. (727) 647-8280 Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Wed	7:00 PM OA#54502	You Are Not Alone NEEDS SUPPORT	12 & 12 Study	Terra Nova (Small room with green door) 7550 40th St. N., Pinellas Park	Cynthia (561) 254-3642
Thur	10:30 AM OA#53015	Hope NEEDS SUPPORT	All Literature	Aldersgate Methodist Church 9501 Starkey Rd., Seminole (Back of church near the office)	Lynn E. (901) 830-1092
Thur	11:00 AM OA#40873	Key to Freedom	Big Book Meeting	First Presbyterian Church 455 Scotland St., Dunedin (Downtown Dunedin)	Tamar (727) 796-5878 Laurie (727) 517-4137
Thur	5:30 PM OA#49784	Steps to Freedom **	Focusing on Recovery through the Steps and Traditions - 90 Days	St. Cecelia's Church, Room A 820 Jasmine Way, Clearwater	Mary Mc (727) 319-4321
Thur	7:00 PM OA#46183	First Fellowship	1-Step/ 2-Speaker/ 3-Lit/ 4-Big Book/5-Lifeline	Palm Harbor Presbyterian Church 2021 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor	Beth P. (813) 486-9324
Fri	6:45 AM OA#54674	Fresh Start	Voices of Recovery For Today	Central Church of Christ 1454 Belleair Rd., Clearwater (NW of Belleair Rd. & Highland - entrance on Belleair)	Phil L. (727) 754-0131
Fri	6:00 PM OA#49602	Nitty Gritty	Big Book	Unity of St. Petersburg 6168 First Ave. N, St. Pete	Cora (813) 956-4642
Fri	6:30 PM Pending	NEW Meeting <i>Starts 1/5/18</i>	Big Book / 12 & 12	Northwood Presbyterian Church 2875 State Road 580, Clearwater	Sarah B. (860) 796-6333
Fri	6:30 PM OA#09412	Pinellas Tradition Intergroup Meeting	Third Friday Only All OA's welcome	Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor Tuttle D Auditorium, Clearwater	Joan R. (727) 785-9208
Sat	NEW TIME 7:00 AM OA#36776	Great Reality NEEDS SUPPORT	Beginners	NEW LOCATION: As of 1/6/18 St. Giles Episcopal Church 8271 52nd St. N., Pinellas Park	Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Sat	10:00 AM OA#45426	First Fellowship	Step/Tradition Meeting	Palm Harbor Presbyterian Church 2021 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor	Pat (727) 784-3375
Sat	10:30 AM OA#27235	Saturday Serenity **	Big Book	First Lutheran Church 1644 Nursery Rd, Clearwater	Betsey (727) 466-9277 Judy (727) 442-9234
Sat	10:30 AM OA#17950	Pasco Pioneers	1-Step/ 2-Big Book/ 3-Leader's Choice/ 4-Traditions/5-Brown	Unity of Port Richey 5844 Pine Hill Rd., Port Richey	Betty N. (727) 505-4562
Sat	12:30 PM OA#52497	Oldsmar Men's Group **	Men's Meeting	Community United Methodist Church 207 Buckingham Ave., Oldsmar	Lee (727) 480-4821
Sun	6:00 PM OA#32923	Clearwater Oasis **	Big Book (90 Days)	Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor Tuttle A Auditorium, Clearwater	Chrissy (813) 377-5332 Michelle (314) 378-9391
Sun	6:30 PM OA#49012	Beginner's Meeting Step Study	Beginners/Step Study	Gulfport Neighborhood Center 1617 49th St. S., Gulfport	Judy C. (201) 259-3924

PLEASE NOTE: All meetings are open meetings unless indicated otherwise. **Closed Meetings (OA members only) ^^Children welcome

If this is your first time attending a meeting listed, please be sure to call to clarify directions and meeting specifics.

Pinellas Traditions Intergroup meets the 3rd Friday of each month: 6:30PM - Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor - Tuttle Auditorium

OA World Service Telephone: 505-891-2664 Website: <http://www.oa.org> To find telephone or online meetings,

please go to: <https://www.oa.org/find-a-meeting> Pinellas Traditions Intergroup Website: <http://oapinellas.org>

Hotline #'s - Hillsborough & Pinellas: (813) 254-4190

REVISED: January 2018