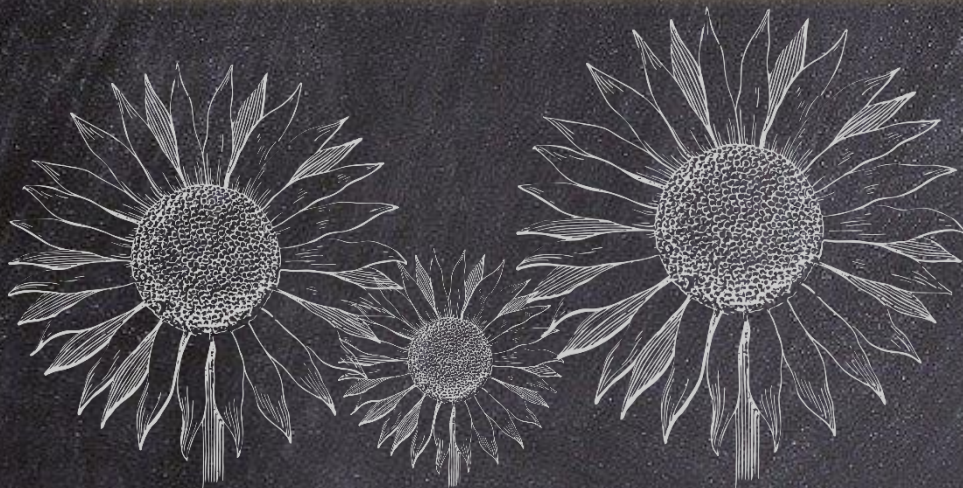
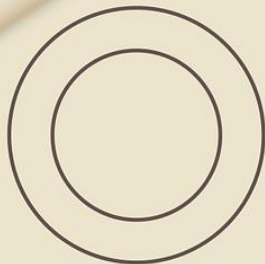




The
Piedmont Intergroup
Journal

*Sharing Recovery &
Carrying the Message*



PIEDMONT INTERGROUP JOURNAL
2021 SUMMER
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April

ORIGINAL ART

This piece represents the hope I feel from the OA program – the possibility of opening to the joys life has to offer.

~ LEIGH P

Perseverance & Faith

Bill W. and Dr. Bob, co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, when it was early in its infancy had to believe in something sight unseen. When sufficient time had passed, recovery and sobriety had been achieved, they could point to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions with the confidence and tell newcomers that the program of Alcoholics Anonymous really worked.

When each of us enters through the doors of Overeaters Anonymous we are operating on faith that the OA program of recovery from food addiction will work for us. Perseverance is the work required each day so our faith can become reality. To a farmer, faith is planting a seed in the ground, and perseverance is the daily nurturing of that seed with enough water and sunlight so the seed can mature and create a harvest.

Perseverance is using as many of the nine tools of the program including working with a sponsor so we can succeed with this OA program of recovery. Faith is believing that the tools of the program will work for us, but perseverance is using these tools despite having missed meetings, despite choosing the wrong foods to eat or thinking that the OA program of recovery won't work for us like we hoped.

~ ANDY S

Why I Do Service

I remember when I was newer, feeling left out, a little like an outsider. Someone shared at a meeting that the "in" crowd were the ones doing service. Most meetings have service positions that anyone can do. Some may require a period of abstinence, like secretary or treasurer, but there are always positions that do not have an abstinence requirement. Service is one thing that keeps me coming back.

I started out small. I would make the coffee (yes, we had coffee in meetings way back when!) or clean up after the meeting.

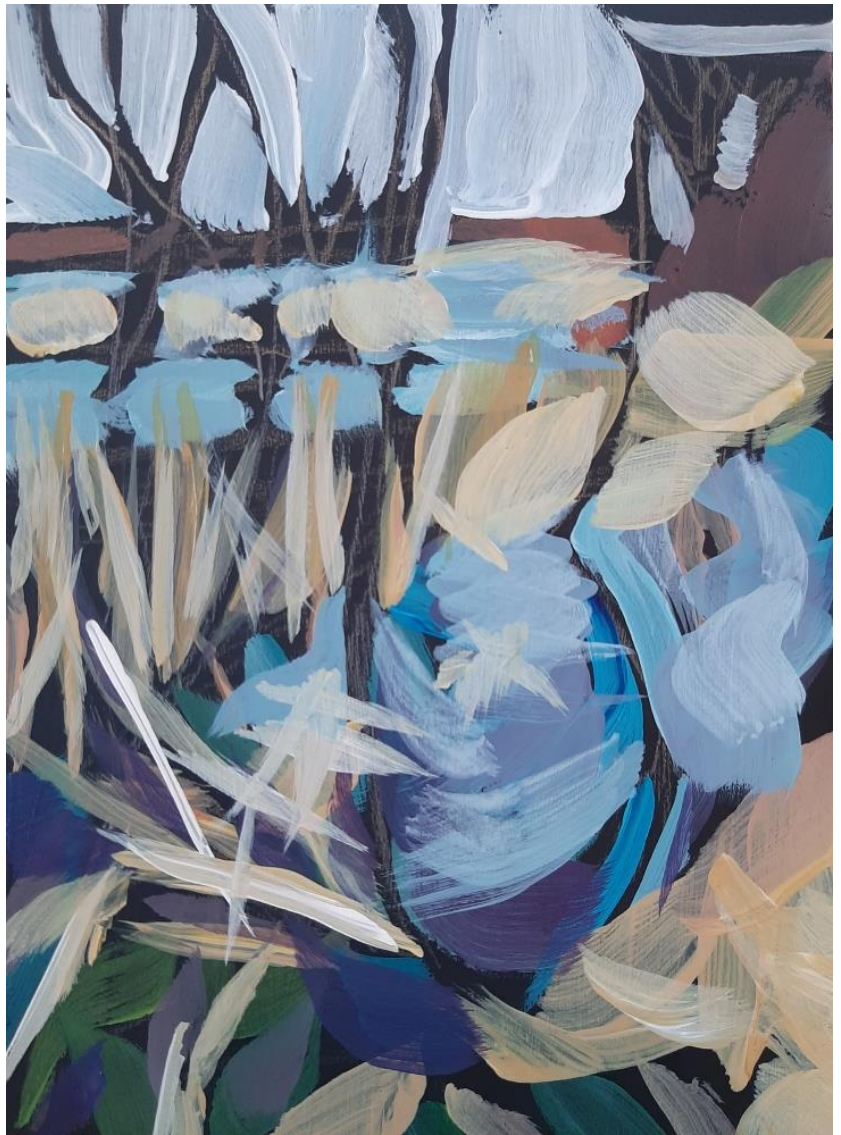
Eventually I became secretary or treasurer. Finally, someone invited me to do service for The OA Birthday party in Los Angeles. I would never have volunteered because I didn't think I was good enough. But he did. He said to me, "We need someone to be program co-chair and you'd be perfect for that position." How could I say no after that! After that, I did many service positions at the Intergroup level in two different intergroups.

I eventually went on to do service at the Region level and World Service. I'd always thought of service as a way of giving back. And it was something I was "supposed" to do. What I learned is that I receive way more than I gave. I learned how to facilitate a meeting. I learned how to mediate a dispute. I learned that my way was not always the best way. I learned how to respect group conscience and trust God.

Often when I shared, whether at a business meeting or one to one with a sponsee, I said just what I needed to hear. I learned how to be a better listener.

I do service because it is a vital part of my recovery. Everyone is "qualified" to do service. All you have to do is raise your hand!

~ SUSAN B



Free From Expectation

I painted this during my first virtual painting class. The instructor provided a photo for us students to sketch and paint with a 10 minute limit. Fear set in, but then a sense of strength and curiosity replaced the fear. This was my internal dialogue, "Just have fun, loosen up, go with it, what do you have to lose? Either you will like it or not, it's okay regardless, nothing is permanent, I can always paint over it and start fresh." That type of inner dialogue is not always present, but when it is I feel grounded and connected with my H.P.

~ SONYA J

Work with what you have, where you are. Use
your bag of tools to help yourself and others.

~ MIONA J



Surrender

When _____ happens, then I can _____. I waited for external things to align perfectly so that I could experience joy and peace internally. I tried many diets to lose weight but I never stuck with it. I can eat what I want, as much as I want, whenever and wherever I want to get the body I want, right? The problem wasn't the diets.

I carried around hopeless emotional baggage for decades. It took a few months for the steps to sink in but I finally admitted my powerlessness over relationships and food. I trusted that God's power is greater than my own. I found sanity and made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. It was only when I addressed my character defects and began making amends to others and myself that I was able to shed emotional baggage and physical pounds.

Abstinence came with Step 4 and I haven't had a perfect program of recovery. I sometimes think I can eat like a normal person. When I stop surrendering my will to God's, I also sacrifice my recovery. I lost 50+ pounds in the first six months of recovery and shed the diagnosis of diabetes within 1 year. Though, the biggest success is my newfound freedom to love and accept myself.

~ TINA B

Acronyms, Slogans & Encouragements

- FEAR – Fear is faith that has said its prayers
- FEAR – Face (Feel) Everything And Recover
- FEAR – F-word And Run
- My food plan is simple-food I eat and food I don't eat.
- In grief, look at the good times I had with the people who died.
- God does not call the equipped. He equips the unequipped.
- Tools are the handrails to keep us on the steps.
- Just for today I will let go of all the sick illusions I have about myself and realize I'm a beautiful person and a child of God.
- I don't need to re-invent the wheel, but I have to be prepared for a flat.

~ compiled by SUSAN W

Why I Meditate

Meditation can be elusive if I have expectations about how it "should" be. If I think it will take away my problems, make me stop eating compulsively, make me feel like I have reached nirvana, then I am setting myself up for disappointment. Then why do I meditate?

Meditation is a tool, it helps me to become more aware of what thoughts and feelings flow in and out of my mind. In recovery language, it helps me to see the character traits arise and fall when I am still and listening. It's not just noise in my head. I find it useful to notice my thoughts and then come back to an anchor.

For me, the anchor is my breath. Noticing how the breath feels in my nostrils and how my chest and belly rise and fall with the breath takes me back to just being and not do anything. I start with an intention that there is nowhere to go and nothing to do for the 10 to 30 minutes I set a side. If I am fortunate enough for my mind to finally settle down then I will achieve relaxation and calm. This method assists me in life. When unpleasant thoughts and feelings arise I am more likely to think of my breath so the feelings don't hijack me into a downward spiral of negativity. The breath serves as the pause we speak about.

Visualization meditation is another method that I find helpful. Listening to someone else talk can take me out of my head. Whatever method you choose, the important thing is to just do it. The results are evident when you least expect it.

~ SHELLEY F



In The Safety Of The Rooms

I.
The light of sunrise
Shines through the trees.

The portion size
Is no longer a tease .

The shame of old
Gives way to trust.

The sharings told
Inspire just

What I need,
In the safety of the rooms.

II.
Tired eyes smiled
Through tears and rain.

The scared little child
Peers through the pain.

The heart opens slowly
In faith and love.

All twelve steps wholly
Give gifts of being free of

What I cannot control,
In the safety of the rooms.

III.
The wildest dreams come true
When willingness soars high.

The patient breakthroughs
Come in both valley and sky.

The people often serve.
The tools often teach.

The newcomer will observe
The recovery of each

Who trusts a Higher Power,
In the safety of the rooms.

~ LINDSAY F



What does your Higher Power mean to you?

ORIGINAL ART

In step one we admitted we were powerless over food - that our lives had become unmanageable. In step two we came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. In step three we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

When I first came into OA, I struggled to reconcile the God from my religious upbringing, a God that allowed great pain and suffering, with the concept of a God that I was supposed to turn my will and my life over to. During one particular conversation with a fellow I have grown to trust and admire, I walked away fundamentally and forever changed.

I did not have to reconcile the God from my youth with my Higher Power because they were not the same entity. That day, I could feel a small piece of my hurt and anger lift. I continued working the twelve steps with a sponsor, attending meetings, speaking with my fellows and employing any and all tools of recovery that were at my disposal.

From there, this idea kept growing inside me until I could no longer deny its truth. My Higher Power loves me, even if I cannot love myself. My Higher Power wants peace and tranquillity for me, even though I cannot feel peace or tranquillity by myself. My Higher Power wants me to be happy, joyous and free! My Higher Power can and will do for me what I cannot do for myself.

I continue to ask myself, what else does my Higher Power mean to me? This vision board was inspired by the God of my understanding that I met in OA

~ LINDSAY L





The opinions expressed herein are those of individual OA members and do not represent Piedmont Intergroup or OA as a whole.



To contribute to the 2021 Winter issue, email articles, art, or other expressions of your experience, strength, and hope to secretary@piedmontintergroup.org by 11/11/21. Thank you for helping OA Members & Piedmont Intergroup share recovery and carry the message!



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message.

