



# The Piedmont Intergroup Journal

Sharing Recovery &  
Carrying the Message



## A TWELVE STEP EXPERIENCE

*Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

About 45 years ago, a lady and I were involved in a charity. We were both always on a diet - up and down 10 pounds - like yoyos. She had just lost weight again and I asked her what diet she was on. She said she went to OA - that was all she said...

Several years later when I couldn't stop eating sugar, my drug of choice, OA popped into my head. I came to the rooms that night, March 1, 1984. I believe there are no coincidences.

I get my hair done at a beauty school and have different hairdressers as they graduate. My latest "student" asked me how my day was. I told her it was great, that I had been to a fabulous 12 step meeting that morning (a Big Book meeting). She said she was very familiar with the 12 Steps as she is a member of 2 fellowships: AA and NA! That began a conversation. She too is a sugar addict! God put us together.

She did my hair again today and asked me more about OA. You never know...but just like a seed was planted for me many years before I was ready to come to the rooms, I may have planted the seed for her. Thank you God for once again giving me the opportunity to carry the message and do service.

In loving service,

~ SUSAN W



## SUMMER SERENITY

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHY

~ LINDSAY F

## A TWO-WAY PRAYER

*Dear God,  
What is your will for me today?*

You do not need to wait for others to support you to start doing what is right. One act, one person is enough to start anything and change everything.

Preach what you practice – not in your words, but in your actions today. Your skills and gifts do not belong to you.

Stop and pray more today. Seek when there is pain and pause when there is peace – I will always give you direction on time. You are never alone.

Bless someone today with your attention and listen. You will be blessed right where you are.

Do not hold your failures or your dreams too tightly, as they take you away from your life today.

Appreciate the blessings in front of you and stop and enjoy today. You are always going to be enough, and more will be revealed every day.

## SOUNDS GOOD

ART

OA sounds good to me. I value my sponsor, my community fellows and my HP. It makes my life fuller, more helpful by working the Steps and giving back to others. OA makes my life sing 🎵 like a song!

~ LYN M

Not knowing everything is a gift, so find time to experience mystery.

Be one with the child you still are- curious and excited to discover.

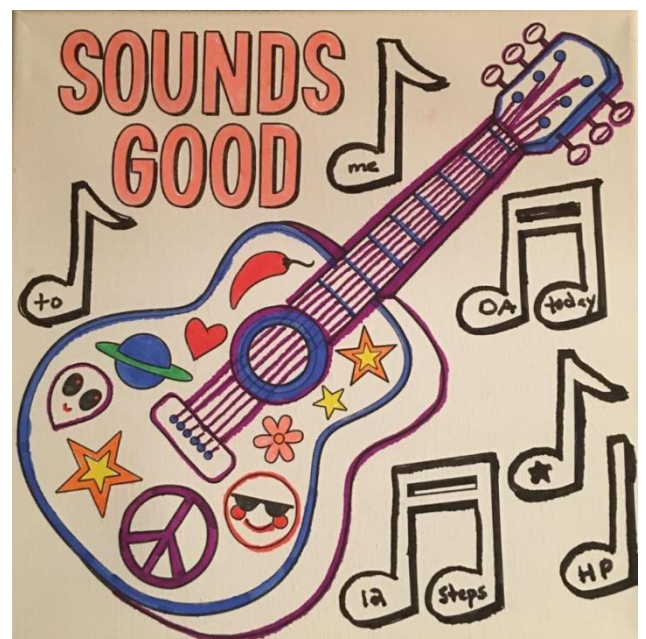
It is human to experience grace, and it is human to ask for help! Keep asking and serving.

Follow your heart where it leads, and I am there.

Failure is your illusion, if you choose it. Continue choosing the present, and choose life. Joy and abundance are reality, so serve others so they may see it through you.

Movement quiets your mind. Do not turn to others for instruction. Trust me and I will speak to you through them. More will always be revealed. Keep loving. Be more kind. Just be yourself and let go of your image and seek my face.

~ KENDALL M



## SMILING...

Smiling as I think about how resistant I was to embracing zoom meetings, now I am gifted with meetings and fellowship beyond my wildest dreams! One of my favorites is a journaling and meditation meeting with breakout rooms.

(Monday 7:00 AM EST  
82374896537 pin: 010248).

Below is my last journal entry.

How will being gentle with my humanness look this day? First thought is balance. Creating joy, fun, laughter and spontaneity. To have a lightness of spirit when I feel held hostage by my to-do list. To feel/stay connected; knowing I am beloved. Pause. Pause. Pause. Be Still. Start Over. Appreciate the sacredness of this day. Gift yourself with transitional breaks. Share. Serve. And, remember where I stumble is where my treasure is. Ask, Dear One, and you will receive.

~ GRACIA L

## THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW THAT I DIDN'T KNOW

I am a recovering bulimic/compulsive overeater and "know it all".

From early childhood on I wasn't aware of how much misery and depression I was creating in my life. My dad had a photographic memory, Phi Beta Kappa at an ivy league college, my mom 133 IQ. My need for acceptance came through this family lineage, even if I'm damaged at least I am smarter than you. Eventually I realized smart people are just as troubled as anyone else. I was the kid the teachers pulled aside with concern trying to figure out why I was failing. I did feel like a failure. Being sent to therapists, shutting down, overwhelmed and depressed...that was my life. Spending months in my bedroom or on a couch. Sugar was my drug of choice to cope.

I dropped out of high school the last quarter. No one could make me go. Later I would take psych classes in junior college and ace them all. Married and divorced three times by the age of thirty one, I decided I don't know how to do marriage and stopped having relationships. I felt like a hopeless failure, fooling everyone at my job as well because, after all, I was a high school dropout. If only they find out I am an impostor. This impostor syndrome spilled over into many areas of my life.

Eventually the things I didn't know came to the surface as I worked the 12 steps. I gained insights of what I thought I knew that weren't true – about myself and others. What was true that I didn't know, changed my life. With awareness, clarity, the love of my OA tribe and an unconditional loving HP, life has gotten much better. I can accept myself without eating over it. The bridges I burned with family have been slowly restored. I am no longer a victim of life, I have choices. I create a better life with the support of my HP and all of you!

~ ANONYMOUS



# A LITTLE LAUGHTER...

JOKES

OA and kleptomaniacs or pickpockets Anonymous have a lot in common. Both help you stay out of the clutches of a dangerous illness.

We take no position on outside issues, unless we are working in a high-rise washing windows.

When auditors have breakfast, it's called number crunching. If they are hungry, it's called a serial thriller.

~ ANDY S

## MY GRANDCAT

ORIGINAL ART

Sketching has taught me to focus on my talents and other activities that doesn't require focus on food as I did in the past. Recovery looks good on me as I continue to put God first and Trust my OA journey.

~ GWENDOLYN G



## MY MOUNTAIN – OA RETREAT

ORIGINAL ART

Spending time in nature, in fellowship with others, and focusing exclusively on recovery has been a life changing experience. Everyday, one day at a time, the mountain of life is in front of me. The OA tools of the program are my roadmap, and the retreat is my mountain top refreshment.

~ ANONYMOUS



# A MORE LOVING ROAD

OA Recovery has been a long and winding road. It has had many twists and turns which I am grateful for. My recovery actually started in another program about 21 years ago. What I appreciated in that program was the discipline I developed over time. I needed discipline desperately and I still do. I learned to meditate and pray and not depend on my own will (this still takes practice). With the help of HP I learned to eat three meals a day, I gave up sugar and flour, I gave up foods that, although on my food plan, caused me cravings and the desire for more. I gave up processed foods, I got into the habit of reading program material, and talking to fellows about situations that I would want to eat over. I embraced the idea of doing first things first. What a concept! It can still be a challenge to know what I need to do and when. I got into the habit of going to bed at a reasonable time (7 to 8 hours of sleep) and waking up early to call my sponsor. Back then I did things haphazardly and needed the structure to be able to calm my nervous system so I could take on the food changes that were necessary to achieve my goal weight and not eat over my feelings. I lost between 43 and 45 pounds and have kept it off with the help of HP. My weight can vary up and down 2 to 3 pounds. I am satisfied with these long term benefits.

The twists and turns showed up after I developed my spiritual growth and realized that perfection and control were the very reason I turned to food for comfort. It wasn't that I was perfect, not at all. It was more the desire and the striving for perfection that left me feeling deflated and never feeling good enough. I felt controlled by the program and the many sponsors I had because I continued to break my abstinence with minor infractions and they would tell me they couldn't continue sponsoring me. Shame has been a big part of my story.

I never gave up and kept coming back. Persistence has been the key to my success. This program for many years felt like a comfortable glove because control, perfection and shame were part of my DNA. My brain told me "If I can only be better and do better then I would be happy and gain the love and attention that I craved for so long." My Higher Power took my hand and gently brought me down a more loving, softer, gentler road. I landed in an OA meeting and absorbed the spirituality that I heard in the rooms. This program is not about perfection!! I love the honesty and dedication of my sponsor. I never feel "bad" for being honest when I report eating something that I probably would have been better off not eating. I start over immediately, otherwise, if I don't I could find my way back to total compulsiveness.

My relationship with my Higher Power has been awesome! I keep leaning into HP who is my teacher. I have grown exponentially working this program. HP works through my sponsor, my fellows, the literature I read and the love that I give to others. I have tried many new things since I have become an OA member. My confidence has increased by letting go and letting HP guide me to surrender perfection and shame. Through OA I have tried on leadership roles in other parts of my life. It's never easy but I keep practicing and I have been filling my soul with creativity and spreading the love of this program out into the world. Thank you OA and HP for everything.

I love the last paragraph in the Big Book page 164. "Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and Keep you—until then. "

~ SHELLEY F



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 2022 Winter issue, email articles, art, or other expressions of your experience, strength, and hope to [journal@piedmontintergroup.org](mailto:journal@piedmontintergroup.org) by 11/11/22. Thank you for helping OA Members & Piedmont Intergroup share recovery and carry the message!



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