

JOURNAL

2023



**WINTER
ISSUE NO 6
FREE**

RECOVERY

**SHARING &
CARRYING
THE MESSAGE**

EXPERIENCE

**PRACTICING THE
PRINCIPLES IN
ALL OUR AFFAIRS**

FELLOWSHIP

**OUR COMMON BOND
IS WHAT UNITES US**

IMAGINE...

Imagine a sailboat, big enough to have a cabin where you can go to be out of the weather. Imagine the sailboat floating in the water, part of the weight of the boat displaces the water and the deck of the boat is above the water. It has enough space for you to walk around. The sails can be furled or open to catch the wind. Sometimes the boat moves quickly through the water and sometimes there is little movement because there is no wind.



Addiction is like being locked in the cabin of the boat, below decks, avoiding the weather and shooting holes in the flooring. Some shots create large holes that allow a lot of water to enter the boat quickly and sink it. Some shots create small leaks, perhaps many small leaks that will over time sink the ship. Being a compulsive eater on the boat of life is me either shooting holes or baling water trying to undo the damage or often both at the same time.



Recovery is being on the deck, experiencing all the weather – the calm times, the storms, the blustery days, the heat, the cold times, always trusting the stars to guide and being ok with making progress to destinations in straight lines, or with lots of tacking, enjoying the times of rapid progress and accepting the times of slow progress. Recovery is enjoying the sunrise, the daytime, the sunset and the phases of the night, the high tides and the low tides. Recovery is having the tools to gauge depth to avoid getting stuck on a sandbar and the patience to wait for the tides to get unstuck, tools to repair damage from storms. Recovery is being able to link up with other boats traveling the same way to celebrate the journey and share stories.

ANONYMOUS

TOOL OF SERVICE

When I came into program back in the 80's, I was blessed to have as my first sponsor someone who was a role model when it came to service. She chaired the Intergroup, spoke at many meetings, and was the secretary for my Monday night meeting. Because of her, I learned that: service helps me keep my seat at my OA meetings; the only reason for saying "no" when asked to speak is because of a conflict with some other commitment; and doing service means not only doing that which is easy, but also doing that which may take you out of your comfort zone. She also taught me to speak when there was opportunity for open sharing, or as she put it, "if you don't share, it's like you weren't there". Over the years I have done much service at all levels of our Fellowship, each having their own importance to the well-being of OA. I have seen meetings that thrive because many pitch in to do their part. Likewise, I have seen meetings (and an Intergroup) struggle and close because the members wait for "someone else" to do the service. For me, I will continue to do service because I want to be part of someone's future recovery.

ANONYMOUS



TOOLS

OF RECOVERY

A Plan of Eating
Sponsorship
Meetings
Telephone
Writing
Literature
Action Plan
Anonymity
Service

PHOTO
Delphi, Greece

JULIE B

TRADITIONS

WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW DO THEY KEEP US IN UNITY WITH OUR FELLOWS AND THE OA ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE?

The Twelve Traditions embody spiritual Principles for living. OA 12&12, pg. 89

A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the Fellowship itself. They outline the means by which A.A. maintains unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows. AA 12&12, preamble

The Twelve Traditions of OA provide a safety net for individuals, groups, intergroups, and the World Services as a safeguard against any one individual or group taking 'control' of the fellowship. They are the stepping stones towards freedom from our isolation and addiction; freedom to become usefully whole to our fellows; and loving towards others; though most of all, they provide the guidelines to live in harmony with our fellows and our groups.

My obsession is food -- recovery is simple, all I have to do is live the Twelve Steps, right? Well, not really. My food addiction encompasses all that goes with it too: wanting to control, managing others' actions, controlling outcomes, doing things 'my' way and the list goes on and on and on. The steps help me clear away the wreckage of the past, and teach me the future is of no consequence. They teach me to live in the present moment, just for today.

The traditions teach me that I am no longer running the show, I don't have to live in isolation, and more importantly, I don't have to dominate any outcomes. 'My job', being guided by my Higher Power, is to participate to keep O.A.'s singleness of purpose alive and well. They show me that with my Higher Power, I can become useful to others, I can become open-minded and honest, and practice humility. I know this because the traditions are passed down from those who came before me. They have been proven to work, and, hopefully, they will continue to work for those that come after me.

I have something to live for, something to be grateful for -- helping others, and it is truly a miracle. I can be a 'part of' something greater in my life instead of just 'me'. I can participate at the group, intergroup, region, or World Service level. I can help the newcomer, listen to the 'old-timer', and love you at the same time.

Traditions, often overlooked, are the lifeline of our fellowship. The unity, understanding, and love resulting from them can be used everywhere in our lives.

KELLY P

EVENTS CORNER

Looking back over 2023 as Event Chair for Piedmont Intergroup, a heart-warming smile and feelings of gratitude come over me as I picture the collaborative efforts given by my friends in the fellowship who made these events possible.... Unity Day, the Summer Social, Sponsorship Day & IDEA Day (Intl Day of Experiencing Abstinence). Whether you lent a hand to help out at the event or simply attended one of them, you were appreciated!

Thank you, OA Fam!

BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE!!!....

Coming up on the 12th month of the year, on the 12th of the month and at 12-noon (on Tues, Dec 12th at 12:00), everyone is invited to attend a special one-hour meeting dedicated to support OA's "12th Step Within." Let's gather and reach out to and pray for our OA fellows who we haven't seen in a meeting for a while. We'll take time during our meeting to make some phone calls and/or send texts to remind them that we care, and then we will share about our experience in doing so. Feel free to bring your bagged lunch if you want to stay and fellowship over lunch after the meeting ends. This special-focus meeting will take place in my home in Fort Mill, SC. Please call me (Stacey) at 626-354-2334 for the address.

A SNEAK PEEK INTO 2024

If you are a planner like me, here's some dates for your calendar. Please let me know if you would like to give service at any of these events. Plan now to attend next year.

UNITY DAY

Sat Feb 24 1-3pm
Grace Presbyterian Church
2955 W Hwy 160
Fort Mill, SC 29708

SPONSORSHIP DAY

Sat Aug 17 1-3pm
(Hopeful location, TBD)
St. Stephen United Methodist
6800 Sardis Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28270

SUMMER SOCIAL

Sat May 18 1-3pm
(Hopeful location, TBD)
Community Christ Church
Lake Norman Island Drive
Cornelius, NC 28031

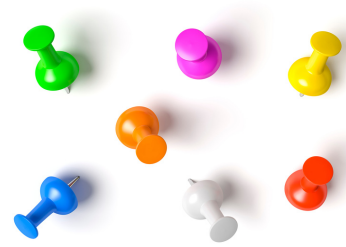
IDEA DAY

Sat Nov 16 1-3pm
(Hopeful location, TBD)
in Matthews or Lake Wylie



STACEY M

EXPERIENCING CONNECTION



I just returned from Region 8 Recovery Convention. The theme was Connection and I want to share my experience.

While I was registering at the hotel I turned around and there was an OA friend that was at my first meeting in Miami-March 1, 1984. I still remembered her words of wisdom she shared with me in the parking lot after that meeting-the cravings pass if we wait 10 minutes. This is almost 40 years ago and I hadn't seen her or spoken with her since I moved to Charlotte 13 years ago! It was then time to pick up my materials at the OA registration desk. I had another fabulous surprise-another member from my home group in Miami was there. The fun continued as I saw friends from the Retreat, WSBC, Region 8 Assembly, our intergroup and a new friend I made from Charlotte as I got to ride with her to and from Tybee Island. For me it was one continuous love fest renewing connections and making new connections with friends.

I was asked to speak on the 10th step-what an honor and a God thing as its my favorite step. After speaking I had several people ask if they could call me. I'm now looking forward to making new friends and making a connection with them. It further reinforces that when we do service it helps me so much as well as helping others. I find that with so many of the tools-phone calls, meetings and sponsoring. If I hadn't spoken, I would have been anonymous in the rooms.

The speakers were all fabulous with lots of recovery and I took several numbers. I did relate to them in listening to how they work the steps. I heard from one person that the most important time to use her HP is when things are going well. When things are going poorly, she automatically turns to her HP. This was an aha moment as I remember early on in program, I went to Disney World and was vigilant with my food. I was so happy and came home, let my guard down and boom-slipped.

We make connections when we speak and when we listen. If I don't share, nobody can know me or relate to me...

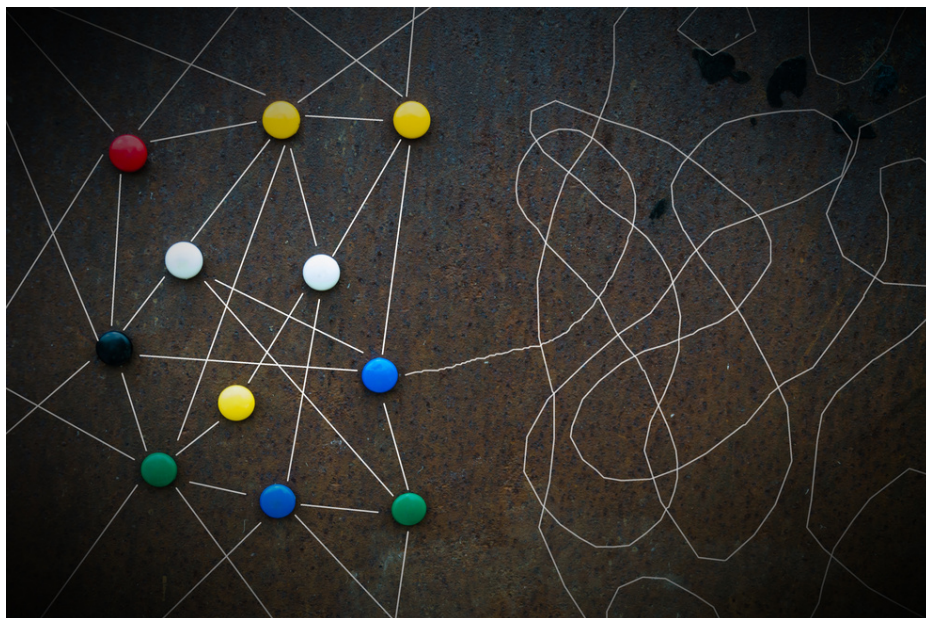
CONT...

I was reminded that my most important connection is with my Higher Power. Although I thank God throughout the day and do a 10th step at night, I sometimes miss my prayer and meditation in the morning. This weekend reinforced the importance of the 11th step practice on a daily basis. It is a maintenance step, as well as steps 10 and 12. Another God thing-I saw a sleep Dr. yesterday as I nap so much and he has me on a schedule getting me up 30 minutes before my norm. How funny that that gives me the time for prayer and meditation. There are no coincidences.

At the closing, we were given instructions on re-entry to going home. Be curious about what our families at home have been doing while we were gone instead of blabbing all the wonderful things about the convention. My husband had told me he was making a special dinner for me. I got home at 5:45 and he was cooking lobster and my favorite mushrooms. How special. I was patient, kind and a good listener and of course appreciated the special meal he made for me. Boy did I appreciate him more when I realized I had left my purse in my friend's car and he had to drive me 40 minutes each way to retrieve it. He wasn't thrilled but did it without a huge fuss. We got to have a road trip (HA) and have quality time together. More connections.

I was a girl scout and our slogan was "make new friends but keep the old." This weekend was my birthday gift from my husband. I hope each of you have the opportunity to expand and grow your connections whether it's at a retreat, convention or a meeting. I find when I put myself out there the rewards are "beyond my wildest dreams".

SUSAN W



ABSTINENCE PRAYER

God, today is a new day for me and with You it can be a day of abstinence; with You I can handle anything. I ask for Your protection in case sometime during the day my desire to eat compulsively becomes stronger than my desire to abstain. I ask for Your protection today from anyone or anything that would interfere with my abstinence. I know that I am powerless over food and that my life can become unmanageable again. I do believe that You will relieve my compulsion and restore me to sanity. Please help me to know Your will for me today and give me the willingness to carry it out. I turn my will and my life over to You. Please guide me through another day of abstinence. God I need You.

Please grant me Genuine Humility.

LYN M



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Thank you readers for carrying the message.

