

# FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS REGION 5  
SEPTEMBER, 2015

Overeaters Anonymous  
**Region 5 Convention**



**Transformation**  
Being Transformed in OA

**September 11–13, 2015**

Chicago Marriott Schaumburg  
50 N. Martingale Rd., Schaumburg, IL  
(847) 240-0100

**Early Registration is over,  
but you can still register at  
the door!  
Plan to attend!**

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## Calendar

Fall Assembly:

<http://www.region5oa.org/events/region-5-fall-assembly-nov-6-7/>

**TALK WITH THE TRUSTEE - Sunday September 13,  
2015**

**7-8 pm ET (GMT -5:00)**

**BRING YOUR QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS TO THE  
MEETING...**

Do you have any ideas for the 2016 World Service  
Convention in Boston? **Phone bridge =**  
[424-203-8405](tel:424-203-8405) **Access code =**  
[925619#](tel:925619#)

## HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE TRUSTED SERVANT

When we take on the responsibility of service beyond the group level there are principles that will enhance the service experience which are connected with both the Traditions and the Concepts. Our service bodies do have business to conduct each time they meet. Understanding and practicing these spiritual principles make service bodies more effective and benefits all members of OA.

<p>1) <b>Focus/Stay on Topic</b> – Respect everyone’s time. Have an agenda and stick to it. Don’t spend time discussing outside or personal issues. Everyone at the meeting has a life and is giving their time voluntarily. Wait until the chair gets to what you want to discuss.</p>	<p>Concepts 5 Consideration 12f Respect Tradition 5 Purpose</p>
<p>2) <b>Inform</b> – If you are leading a discussion or a committee, come prepared with the information you want or need to share that is important for members to hear when making a decision. Group conscience is our guide. To keep relevant information from the members is not acting in the group’s best interest.</p>	<p>Concepts 9 Ability 10 Clarity 12b Realism Tradition 2 Trust (group conscience)</p>
<p>3) <b>Be Considerate</b> – Listen carefully and consider all points of view. Group conscience is about hearing and evaluating the ideas of all members. Don’t be in a rush to persuade everyone that your way is the best or only way.</p>	<p>Concepts 5 Consideration 11 Humility 12e Compassion 12f Respect Tradition 12 Spirituality</p>
<p>4) <b>Voice Opinions</b> – Speak up. If you have a concern or an idea, put it before the body. Don’t be afraid of what others might think or say. It is your responsibility as a member to contribute and occasionally defend an idea in order to make a difference.</p>	<p>Concepts 4 Equality 6 Responsibility 12c Representation 12d Dialogue Tradition 1 Unity (not conformity)</p>

### Voice opinions

While we come from many backgrounds, we are unified in our disease and the solution OA offers. As trusted servants, our responsibilities include speaking up for those who may not be able to participate; maybe from fear, or lack of information. When we remember our primary purpose is to help the compulsive eater who still suffers, we can examine the principles that apply in each discussion. We may be afraid that our ideas will make us unpopular. However, if we believe that something will better the fellowship as a whole, we have the responsibility of bringing it up for discussion, and defending it if necessary. Once we have fully stated our case, we are then free to let our HP work through all of us to arrive at the greatest good for all concerned.

Louisville

One of the most effective tools in being a valuable trusted servant is the gift of **listening**. I have found this to be true in many service positions and in sponsorship. God gives each of us the answers we need to guide us in our recovery. My sponsor is a genius at knowing what questions to ask of me in order that I search within – often doing some legwork along the way – and find the answers I need to deal with any and all situations. This is true also with service work. When I pray for guidance, God provides me with just the right questions. In this way, others are empowered to make wise decisions for themselves, their groups, their families, their food choices, and life in general. Part of the lessons in listening to others is humility, compassion, respect for others, and the opportunity for spiritual growth.

I admit in step one that my life is unmanageable. How then, can I possibly think that my way is the best way for others – not knowing (on my own) the best ways for my own life at times. God, I offer myself to thee.....

Anonymous

## From Our Chair

Our Newsletter Committee selected the Step Principles for our theme this year; my thoughts today are on Willingness – the principle for Step 6.

It seems like some days I wake up running on fumes, needing to fill my tank with willingness.....to get out of bed, to ask HP (for me, that's God) for help/willingness/abstinence one more day, to plan my food and stick to the plan, to pick up the 1-ton telephone and make an outreach call, to pick up the phone *again* and call my sponsor, to do the next right thing. These are the days when I know what "trudging" the happy road to destiny feels like. Yet in my 14+ OA years, there have been some days when I wake up willing - I am strong in my recovery, my food is just nourishment, my emotions are stable, traffic just flows and I flow with it, I'm walking with God and He's leading. That's serenity for me...I work this program for more days like that!

I've needed extra willingness lately – my food had gotten a bit sloppy...a reaction to too much going on, I think. Out of honesty with my sponsor and fear of relapse, I prayed for the willingness to do something different. God answered – He gave me a name. This OA member has a calm demeanor about her recovery and her food – she has what I want – food is in its right place in her life. I prayed for the willingness to reach out to her...God answered. I prayed for the willingness to be honest with her – we are as sick as our secrets and she couldn't help me unless I was honest. More importantly, I couldn't help myself! God answered. She made suggestions and I prayed for the willingness to follow them. God answered. She calls me on my 'stuff' - I'm willing to listen and change... haven't needed to pray for willingness on that yet.

I guess I also need to write a bit about Humility, the Step 7 principle. Whenever I begin to think just a bit that I might have my collective 'act' together, God reminds me that He's God, I'm not. Once again, I'm shown to my assigned seat on the OA bus. I'm told in no uncertain terms that His plan rules, not mine...that I need to do the next right thing and practice acceptance. This has been a summer of practicing acceptance and doing next right things...for which I am very grateful.

Thank you all for riding the OA bus with me...we are not alone!  
Blessings in recovery today,  
Denise O.



# Willingness

*.. inclined or favorably disposed in mind; ready; prompt to act or respond; done, borne, or accepted by choice or without reluctance; of or relating to the will or power of choosing*

I can't practice Step 6 until I have become aware of the defects I have, which I discovered in Step 4 and 5. Once I had completed 4 & 5, I got down on my knees and asked God to remove them. (Impatience, Perfection & Fear). It was like dropping a big boulder off my shoulders. Will I never be impatient, strive for perfection and be fearful? Of course I will, but my awareness of these character defects have made me work on them and give them over to God. Only He can remove them. Just the same as He has removed my compulsive overeating, He will guide me in removing my defects.

Jackie  
Indianapolis

For me, Willingness is the key. From that, all other things follow. But, if I am not willing to do what needs to be done, I am lost.

Just think about it. If I am not willing, I cannot follow any of the steps. It is the biggest road block I have in the program. I have been in and out of these OA doors for more than 20 years. Those times I was "out" were the times I wasn't willing. I was not willing to work the steps, listen to my sponsor or others, accept help, or surrender my problems over to the care of God or my Higher Power. In short, I was unwilling to work the Steps.

## Willingness is the Key



When I find myself resisting an action or suggestion, it is important for me to find the willingness to examine its basis. After looking carefully at the cause of my resistance, I pray for the willingness to move forward and do what needs to be done.



# Love for Others



I choose this topic for today as I'm waiting to donate my hair for locks of love today. It is the third time I've grown my hair out to donate and as it grows I think about those who can't grow hair or are in treatment with cancer. I feel like it's such a simple thing I can do for others. I'm also reminded of the growth I've had in OA. Since I was young my Mom dictated and controlled my life (so I felt). Even today she feels I should not grow out my hair and I should let the younger girls donate their hair. I was told by her that I looked better with short hair – and I believed it for most of my life. After having babies and my weight soared to 300lbs – my hair got shorter and shorter. After a divorce, I devoted my life to lose weight on my own. Lots of exercise, changing my food, binging and restricting food I lost 120lbs. I grew my hair out and started dating. In came my now husband and the exercising slowed down but the food really started to turn on me and I could not stop – this is a progressive disease. I became completely powerless and the weight started to rapidly reappear on my body despite my exercising (I was training for my first full Ironman). I came into OA 40lbs up, at 210lbs, and the miracle happened in the first day of attempted abstinence. I prayed that God would make it enough food and it was. God relieved me of the 40lbs, I completed the ironman and the next year was married.

Today I continue to work the program and know that I'm still growing (my hair and my emotional maturity). "It became clear that if we ever were to feel emotionally secure among grown-up people, we would have to put our lives on a give and take basis; we would have develop the sense of being in partnership or brotherhood with those around us." Pg 116 AA 12&12. I have a sponsor I report to daily, attend at least two OA meetings a week, do a lot of service work and work the steps daily. I'm slowly learning how to grow up. I can't keep it unless I give it away I heard from my sponsor.

I've come to realize how selfish I was in my disease of over-eating. I thought I was a loving and generous person – but now I realize I gave to "look good" in front of church goers, friends, family and God. Now I feel of more usefulness to my fellows as I continue to ask God to remove my defects of having an overactive ego, selfishness, people pleasing and low self-esteem. "Practicing the principle of love we learn to accept others as they are, not as we would have them be" OA 12&12 pg. 105. I'm realizing how to love myself as God fills me with peace, love, understanding and forgiveness of myself and of others. This makes helping others more achievable as I try to listen more and try to fix others less. "True giving of myself requires not advice or helpfulness, but allowing others to be, without trying to change their opinions or protect them from making mistakes" pg 217 For Today. God helps me to remember the love He so freely gives me is meant to be shared daily in words and actions. Today, I love myself, my hair and you.

Kim B.



## Region 5 Trustee Report

Submitted By: Linda J

July 10-11, 2015

### **New Literature**

Three revised pamphlets were adopted at 2015 WSBC: **A Program of Recovery, A Guide for Sponsors, and the OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies**. The Handbook should be available in August and is considerably improved over the old one. I'd recommend getting a copy when it becomes available.

The new Board approved **Twelve Stepping a Problem** writing exercise was introduced at the WSBC Region Chair's Forum and is now available as a free download on oa.org. This writing tool will help you navigate life's challenges—without turning to food. It is comprised of twelve questions using the Twelve Steps.

Also coming this summer, **Taste of Lifeline**, a new Board approved book of collected stories from the pages of Lifeline magazine. With more than 100 personal stories, Taste of Lifeline is by OA members writing about their challenges and recovery and how they work the OA program.

**Phone workshops** on "Working all 12 Steps" presented once a month. The Board of Trustees, Virtual Services Committee, and Region Chairs are continuing the series of phone workshops on the Steps. They are held the second Sunday of the month at 2PM Central time. The phone number is: 424-203-8405 and the access code is: 925619#. The past workshops are available as podcasts on oa.org.

### **Simplicity Project**

The Simplicity Project is a new resource to help you stay abstinent! Created by the Twelfth Step Within Committee, the project encourages you to design a meaningful, personal card to reaffirm your program—and take it wherever you go. The emphasis is on keeping it simple! Be inspired to create your own Simplicity Project card to reinforce your abstinence: See sample cards on the OA website.

### **Region 5 Trustee Elections**

My first term as your Region 5 Trustee will end on May 7, 2016. I hope to be honored to serve a second term as your Region 5 Trustee. The instructions and application are already on oa.org at Trustee Application Instructions and Trustee Application. Our Region may affirm up to three candidates at our November Assembly for the election at WSBC in May. This is a huge opportunity to do service. The rewards are even larger than the large time commitment required. I'm happy to answer any questions you have about the job. For all the details about the duties, qualifications, and elections of Trustees see OA Inc Bylaws, Subpart B, Article IX, Board of Trustees. Please consider this opportunity for service either at the upcoming election or in the near future. I am honored to serve as your Trustee. Feel free to contact me if I can be of service.

Linda J

# THIS & THAT

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**IS YOUR MEETING CURRENT??**  
Please check to be sure your  
meeting information is up-to-date  
on "FIND A MEETING"

[https://www.oa.org/  
membersgroups/find-a-  
meeting/](https://www.oa.org/membersgroups/find-a-meeting/)

This will insure newcomers can find the meeting and  
the group gets the latest information from the WSO.  
Thanks!

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**Taste of Lifeline**

is now available as an e-reader  
on Amazon (Kindle)  
and  
Barnes and Noble (Nook)

The OA bookstore has hard  
copies available at:  
<http://bookstore.oa.org/>

**TALK WITH THE TRUSTEE**

**+++new date!+++**

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# SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Region 5 needs nominees for the following positions for elections in November:

Vice Chair  
Secretary  
Trustee

If you are willing, able, and qualified, please prayerfully consider applying. If you know someone you think would be good in one of those positions, please encourage them to apply, or let the Region 5 secretary know so she can ask them.

More information about the Vice Chair and Secretary positions may be found in our Policies and Procedures in Article II (Responsibilities and Duties of Officers and Representatives of Region 5), Sections A-E (General), G (Vice Chair), and H (Secretary).

The Policies and Procedures document can be downloaded from the Region 5 Resources page at [region5oa.org](http://region5oa.org).

Service at the region level is a great way to grow in recovery. Past position holders and current board members are very helpful. You do not need to know everything in advance! Together we get better!

Thank you for your service and consideration.