

TRIANGLE OA RECOVERY NEWS

Step 10 Prayer

I pray I may continue: To grow in understanding & effectiveness:
To take daily spot check inventories of myself;
To correct mistakes when I make them; to take responsibility for my actions;
To be ever aware of my negative & self-defeating attitudes and behaviors:
To keep my willfulness in check
To always remember I need your help:
To keep love and tolerance of others as my code:
& to continue in daily prayer how I can best serve you. My Higher Power



Triangle OA Recovery News is a publication of
Triangle OA Intergroup • P.O. Box 12525 • Durham NC 27709
newsletter@triangleoa.org • webmaster@triangleoa.org
Email the webmaster to subscribe to the newsletter by e-mail.

Intergroup Trusted Servants for 2023:

Chair: Anne L. (chair@triangleoa.org)

Vice Chair: Karen V.

Treasurer: Mary Anne S. (treasurer@triangleoa.org)

Secretary: Dana B.

WSBC Delegates: Neill M. & Cheryl Y.

SOAR Reps: Karen V. and [vacant]

Webmaster: Heather O. (webmaster@triangleoa.org)

Newsletter: Colleen B. (newsletter@triangleoa.org)

Group Outreach: Zach P. (outreach@triangleoa.org)

Public Info/Professional Outreach: Liz V.

12th Step Within: Mel F., Diane C. (12stepwithin@triangleoa.org)

STEP 10

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. *Spiritual Principle: Perseverance* Quote. — OA 12&12 p

10th Step writing contributions

10th Step Poem

*When I first came into OA,
I was all filled up with shame.
Each of my shortcomings,
Weighed upon me, just the same.*

*While first attending meetings,
Should my sharing come out " wrong "
My inner criticizer would say:
" See? ... You don't belong! "*

*In time, I found a sponsor,
To help take me through the steps.
My newly trusted higher power,
Leads me through all the rest.*

*Growing through each step, by step,
My future's opened wide.
I live through times, in comfort,
Where I used to run and hide.*

*As I begin each tenth step,
I settle down and pray:
" Please show me all the worldly
Hurt, that I have caused today?"*

*The freedom this provides me,
Is the chance to comprehend,
The impacts my behaviors had,
And where to make amends.*

*It's great to see my faults now.
Through my new, wide, open lens.
Not everything is all my fault.
Or meant for me to cleanse.*

*To sum up my perspective,
On just how my life has changed.
I live my life in real time now.
Just minus all the shame.*

THE Cause versus Because

Here's an obvious statement: We OA members eat over our feelings. Our program literature tells us that the cycle of addictive behavior begins with a thought. We are activated before the first bite. A primary emotional trigger for addicts of any stripe is resentment.

The Big Book describes resentment as "the number one offender." We eat because we are pissed off at the world, at people, at situations. When Bill Wilson and company put together the Big Book in the 1930s, they very carefully selected their words. They knew that the addicted brain manipulates us by turning our feelings into powerful language. So when they wrote down how they inventoried resentment, they used precise language that doesn't give our brains wiggle room to make excuses.

Look at page 65 in the fourth edition of the Big Book. It lays out the first three columns of resentment inventory (the fourth column, or "turnaround" appears in the middle of page 67). The first column is headed "I'm Resentful At." The second: "The Cause." Notice they didn't say "BEcause" but rather "The Cause." There's a world of difference.

Our addict minds are like little lawyers, always seeking to parse language in ways that justify or excuse our behaviors and let us keep eating. Among trial lawyers, there's a well-known axiom about questioning a witness. Never ask *why* [unless you've personally coached the witness' answer]. Lawyers frequently ask leading questions that begin with *What, Who, When, Where, or How*. These are all closed-ended questions with a single answer: "I saw Joe"; "I was cleaning the barn"; "8:19 PM"; "He opened the door with a lock pick." But *why* is open-ended. It allows a witness to pontificate and deflect blame elsewhere. It allows opinion to enter the record. It may also give a witness license to build sympathy when sympathy is the opposite of what you want to elicit.

In a similar way, "because" is a weasel word for us addicts. We use it as a way to keep on destroying ourselves with food. Why do we eat? Because blah blah blah. If someone asked us why we were burnt up, we'd give them a litany of because statements. Insidiously, what "because" does is shift the blame to someone else.

Because Mom said I was fat, I am resentful.

This is far different from the language the Big Book recommends in that second column: "THE Cause." To get grammatical for a second, "the" is the definite article. It indicates singularity or specificity. It reduces confusion and ambiguity. To use it in a sentence related to resent would sound like these examples

The cause of my resentment is Mom's saying I was fat.

We can see that when we use "the cause" instead of "because" we turn a statement of blame into a statement of fact.

Here's a big difference between these two ways of talking about resentment. "Because" creates slippery slopes. We've all heard someone talk about how their mind will create a chain of because statements that leads to eating:

Because Mom said I was fat, I eat.

The struck out text is a reminder of how over time our brains skip over the "reasoning" and go straight to the food. But "THE cause" doesn't easily lead to that slippery slope.
Mom said I was fat, so I must not be good enough....

Here we can see that when we put "because" ahead of Mom, she bears the blame for our believing her. If we put "because" instead of "so" it wouldn't even make sense. When we put "so" in

front of "I," we start to see that we are taking someone else's words and turning them into a reason to eat. Why should we believe that we are not good enough just because Mom says we are fat? Unless we, of course, we, ourselves, are complicit in that belief?

We don't have to be linguists for OA to work. But the folks who wrote the Big Book used "The Cause" instead of "Because" because they knew from personal experience that blaming the rest of the world for their drinking predicament didn't work. We have to own our part of things. We're the ones holding onto the hurts, big or tiny. We're the ones eating ourselves to an early grave. After all, it's our inventory, and no one else's.

This was shared by a beloved member from [THE Cause versus Because | Seacoast OA](#)

TRADITION 10

Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. Spiritual Principle: Neutrality Quote. —OA 12&12 p.

As there were no writing contributions, I hope you will enjoy this Lifeline story:

Tradition 10: Capital Idea

I recently had a spiritual aha moment: Many of us learned that a proper noun is not just a person, place, or thing, but a specific person, place, or thing, usually beginning with a capital letter. If I'm talking about a proper noun in a meeting, I'm probably referring to an outside issue (and possibly breaking the spirit of anonymity).

In *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, the chapter on Tradition Ten explains that talking about specifics—religions, eating disorder treatment centers, and even other Twelve Step fellowships—is really talking about outside issues. What do those specifics have in common? They all start with capital letters. If I share about any of them, referring to them by name, I'm not upholding Tradition Ten.

My husband came home from a meeting in another fellowship (it doesn't matter which one) upset because several people had bashed the faith he was raised in (it doesn't matter which one). He had enough recovery to know not to leave his program, but a newcomer might have stopped going altogether. If I really need to share about the impact a religion, treatment center, or other fellowship has had on my life, simply dropping any words with capital letters when I'm sharing keeps the focus off That Thing and on me and my recovery instead.

The chapter also talks about why we don't sell outside literature but stops short of saying we should never mention non-OA-approved literature. My aha moment happened after a leader at a retreat read from and referenced outside literature. Some people were upset. While I felt she did it in a loving and respectful way, sharing about her own experience with those books, I realized the controversy could have been avoided if she had simply not mentioned specific book titles or authors. I find a lot of wisdom in non-OA books, and I am free to share what I've internalized from other sources, but I have to remember that I'm not writing a research paper and I don't have to provide a bibliography. I can just say I got it from a book, a movie, or a celebrity (it doesn't matter Which One). I realized my need to share A Name is part of my insecurity—it's me wanting to bolster what I say because I'm afraid my own words are not enough.

I also realized that if I talk about specific OA members, I'm not upholding Tradition Twelve. During sharing, I can talk about what I learned from a speaker, rather than

*The opinions expressed are those of OA members and not of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole.
For more information about OA, please visit Triangle OA's website or www.OA.org.*

thanking the speaker by name. If I tell people the name of my sponsor, I've shifted focus to that sponsor and away from my own recovery. If I share a fantastic recovery metaphor, it doesn't matter Who shared it with me—we're all just Overeaters.

— Anonymous [Tradition 10: Capital Idea - Lifeline \(oalifeline.org\)](http://Tradition 10: Capital Idea - Lifeline (oalifeline.org))

Concept 10

Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided. *Spiritual Principle:*
Clarity

Quote —12 Concepts of OA Service

As there were no writing contributions, I hope you will enjoy this Lifeline story:

Just Taking My Turn

I learned about service when I first came into OA long ago, working the Steps and using the Tools.

I learned it was good for my recovery to get out of my head and do things for others—that one recovering compulsive eater reaching out to another is the foundation of OA. I learned that no CEO presides over us. Rather, OA's *service structure* is upside-down: groups are at the top and the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee are at the bottom. But I wasn't sure where I fit in. The lower part of that structure was made of members who had something I didn't. And I wasn't sure what this had to do with abstinence.

Now that I am studying the *Twelve Concepts of OA Service*, I see the service structure in a new light. I see it as a three-dimensional pyramid made of many individual bricks. Every brick is a member, and not one of them is more important than any other. Over time, we member bricks change positions in the pyramid. Sometimes, we are near the top, doing service in our groups or as sponsors; other times, we are near the bottom, giving service as representatives, delegates, or trustees. Still, each brick is the same size as any other.

This makes sense! Any member can be elected as a representative, delegate, or trustee, as long as certain requirements are met, and all these trusted servants are still regular members at OA meetings.

Can this image, the 3-D pyramid, help me stay abstinent? I suffer from the character defect of "I'm-not-as-good-as-ism," and when my disease picks up on my insecurity, it knows how to tempt me with food. The image of identical bricks simply switching places in the pyramid reinforces, for me, the Principle of humility. I'm reminded that I'm neither better nor worse; I'm just taking my turn.

So what holds the pyramid up? I believe it's the Principle of responsibility. When I take on a job and do it, and all the other bricks do their jobs, then the pyramid stays together as a unit. I can't make someone become responsible, but maybe once we all see how important each one of us is, we'll all want to become more involved.

Why doesn't the upside-down pyramid topple over? Concept One reminds us that "God is the ultimate authority . . ." (*Twelve Concepts*, p. 3). My HP is greater than gravity! When I bring God into everything I do, he does miraculous things.

— Anonymous

TOOL OF THE MONTH: Literature & Writing

All our literature provides insight into our problem of eating compulsively, strength to deal with it, and the very real hope that there is a solution for us." —*Tools of Recovery pamphlet, p.4*

In addition to writing our inventories and the list of people we have harmed, most of us have found that writing has been an indispensable tool for working the steps. Further, putting our thoughts and feelings down on paper, or describing a troubling incident,

*The opinions expressed are those of OA members and not of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole.
For more information about OA, please visit Triangle OA's website or www.OA.org.*

helps us to better understand our actions and reactions in a way that is not often revealed to us by simply thinking or talking about them.”
—*Tools of Recovery* pamphlet, p.5

Announcements

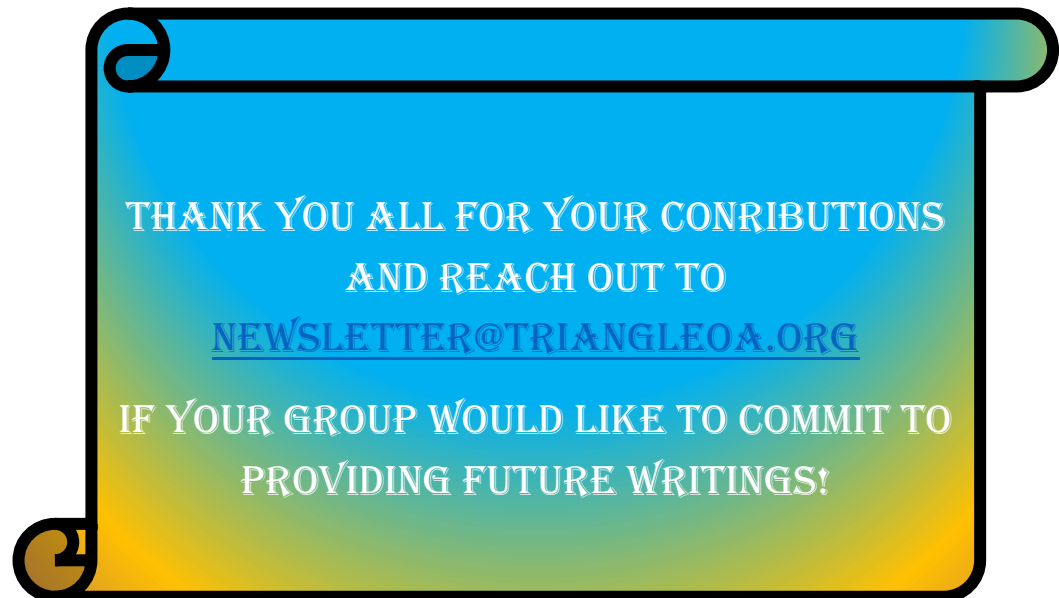
Due to unforeseen circumstances the intergroup meeting planned for September 16, 2023 was rescheduled for October 21, 2023 – please see the next newsletter for meeting minutes.. Thank you all for your patience.

The Tuesday, 6pm Raleigh voted to change the time of its meeting and widen the focus. The meeting will now be :

Raleigh, 7pm, Zoom

Contact: Liz Vines, 919.649.2088

Focus: Big Book/Step Study



Newsletter DEADLINES

The newsletter is published early in the month related to its content (so issue 1, content on Step/Tradition/Concept 1, is published in early January. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the previous month (see list below). Remember, without you, we have no content! Please send your ideas, original writings, artwork, or puzzles to newsletter@triangleoa.org.

The theme is always the step, tradition, or concept of the month (so, Step/Tradition/Concept 1 in Jan, and so on etc.) and associated spiritual principles, but you can always share whatever is on your heart regardless of the theme!

Upcoming dates:

Oct 15: deadline for November newsletter - Chapel Hill Thursday 7pm

Nov 15: deadline for December newsletter

December 15: deadline for January newsletter

January 15: deadline for February newsletter

February 15: deadline for March newsletter

March 15: deadline for April newsletter

April 15: deadline for May newsletter

May 15: deadline for June newsletter

June 15: deadline for July newsletter

Triangle OA Speaker List

Alice 919-271-3292

Anne L 919-360-8711 (text)

Atiya 919-302-1030

Elizabeth 919-929-5936

Heidi
..... heidicoach4you@gmail.com

J.V. 919-233-9777

K.C. 919-612-2000

Liz 919-649-2088

Mary Anne .. 919-260-5693

Neill 919-789-9402

Robin 919-667-7546

Tammy 919-274-4052

(updated Feb 2021)