

# STEPPING UP

## STEPPING INTO RECOVERY

### 2019 FALL RETREAT

#### Summary... Marcy

The retreat was wonderful! Mort, our speaker, was refreshing, well prepared, and so honest. It seemed like she was an old friend, even though this was the first time I had met her. I am still playing some of the songs she recommended (see page 5) that correspond with the steps. Mort encouraged us to journal on each step and even provided us with a folder and worksheets to do so. Very inspiring.

Our ways and means committee did an outstanding job. There were several pretty baskets up for silent auction, two beautiful quilts raffled, a split the pot 50/50 and more handmade items for sale.

Saturday evening was a riot singing karaoke and even some dancing. What we lacked in talent we made up for in enthusiasm!

The attendance at this retreat was smaller than past years, but the amount of OA spirit remained positive as ever.

#### Miscellaneous Thoughts... Members in attendance

- For the first time in my life I feel truly understood by people. I never guessed it would be these people if I saw my fellow OA members on the street. I am appreciating God's mysterious ways.
- The God you are looking for is looking for you.
- AA = you don't quit drinking you quit drinking alcohol; OA = you don't quit eating you quit eating unhealthy foods
- Make my eating an event with purpose. Invite my Higher Power to join me. My Higher Power revealed to me to set a place for my Higher Power at the table by where I sit. When I share my table with others, I am inviting them into my life. To share intimacy with food is another way to be intimate with my Higher Power.
- In the Big Book when it says we ask that's the part of the program that's prayer and when it says we will get that's the promise part.
- At the end of my day my roommate and I shared what we had written in the five-minute journal part of the presentation. It was helpful to review
- We no longer have to face recovery alone
- The chapel touched my heart, simply beautiful
- As we drove into the retreat we were greeted by OA members on a hike, I knew all was well
- If we want to live free of the killing disease of compulsive eating, we accept help without reservation from a power greater than ourselves. We begin taking actions that will allow us to receive that help.
- I learn to let go of being right.

#### Labyrinth Healing by Linda

Sitting in the middle I feel such safety and peace. The knowledge that I am exactly where I am supposed to be in my life. Calm surrounds me. The dining hall is loud with fellowship and smells that remind me of self-care. I am blessed beyond belief. I am filled with gratitude.

#### River Reflections by Linda

The bench to rest in an excellent spot

River views panoramic

It flows from the left to the right before my eyes

I am in the moment

My life is flowing too

The old castaways are gone - large refrigerator, tractor tires and garbage that blocked the stream

Gone are the toxins and chemicals

I've spent the time working to clear away the wreckage of my past

I am reminded of the program promises

#### Personal Response... Judith

*What important message did you take away from the retreat?* That I have A LOT of work to do on getting rid of resentment. It was after supper on Saturday evening that the speaker walked us through Steps 8 and 9. It was in that session I realized that I had not forgiven some people in my life, and that the resentment I'd been carrying all these years — resentment I had nurtured because I thought it was protecting me from being hurt again — was only harming me.

*What was your favorite part of the retreat and why?* My absolutely favorite part was Sunday morning. I'd had a great revelation in the Saturday night session, so I woke on Sunday with a renewed spirit. I woke early, so I made some coffee and I wrote about what I'd learned, and in that process I discovered even more about what had been going on inside of me. It was like doing a Step 4 — well, starting one, at least — and it became a way forward in my recovery.

*What else would you like to share?* I'd like to share my thanks for other people at the retreat — some who I knew well and others who I didn't know at all — for being willing to allow me to be as I was. I came to the retreat under a dark cloud of anxiety and depression, and that cloud hung around me until the Saturday night session. Many times someone would ask me how I was doing and my response was, "I'm OK. I'm just not connecting with this speaker." Most people simply said, "Hang in there." One of my good friends in the program took some time to just sit with me after supper even though she was physically in pain at the time. She didn't try to talk me out of how I felt; she just listened. (What an amazing service!) All of that acceptance helped me to be open to what I needed to hear.

## You Can Help When No One Else Can Super Saturday Workshop

I put my hand  
in yours . . .

. . . and together we can do what we could never do alone! No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.

On Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, the Greater Heartland Intergroup welcomed Cyndy L, Region 4 Trustee, for a wonderful Super Saturday workshop on service and working with others. Cyndy started by sharing some of her own journey. In talking about service, she said she got in, got excited, and gave back right away. Cyndy shared many words of wisdom. Here are some of them...

- In talking about the steps, she explained...
  - o Steps 1-3 are about getting honest with self and HP;
  - o Steps 4-9 are about cleaning up the past;
  - o Steps 10-12 are about continuing – to keep one’s house in order, to work on one’s relationship with HP, to carry the message.
- Some words about service...
  - o We are a volunteer organization, we are the ones that keep this going.
  - o The first service we give is at meetings – setting up chairs, leading a meeting, carrying the literature. The next level is the Intergroup level.
  - o Service brings fellowship. It is an important piece of recovery.
- Chapter 7 of the Big Book (p 89-103) talks about working with others.
  - o On page 89, are the promises of working with others: “an experience you must not miss”.
  - o “I can’t give as much as I get”.
  - o Program offers us the opportunity for community and belonging.
- Reaching out...
  - o “Each one reach one every day”.
  - o Start small.
  - o Who? Colleagues in our jobs, people at Church, people we know.
  - o How? Just have a conversation. Be kind, warm, courteous: How are you? I used to have the same problems, OA has made a difference, would you like to try it.
  - o Be open to carrying the message – put out little cards in restrooms, suggest the 15 questions, make outreach calls, talk to people in other programs, say something when people try to give you food.
- When newcomers come...
  - o We need to have a strong meeting (suggestion: go over the Strong Meeting checklist).

- o We need to be there.
- o Are we welcoming?
- o Do we share the solution?
- o Is the meeting safe?
- Miscellaneous...
  - o Whose job is it? We all need to pitch in!
  - o If we want OA to continue, we need to be willing to serve.
  - o What can I do to keep OA vibrant?
  - o When we don’t reach out, our numbers shrink and we can get bored
- How do we find people?
  - o Take pamphlets to doctors’ offices. Share why you are so healthy. Make yourself available by giving your number to give out.
  - o Send mailings to bariatric surgeons
  - o Reach out to nutritionists and diabetic counselors.
  - o Go where you can be helpful, offer to be a speaker in a group.
  - o Go to health fairs.
- “Stay until you’re ready” – if someone is not “ready”, be patient, be welcoming no matter where they are
- 12<sup>th</sup> step calls
  - o Inform
  - o Give copy of Lifeline
  - o Give the 15 questions
  - o Make follow up phone calls

Toward the end of the workshop, participants wrote and shared “elevator speeches”. Here are some samples...

- “I’m a member of Overeaters Anonymous and it has helped me so much with my eating. Would you be interested in something like that?”
- “There was never enough food to fill the hole inside me. OA gave me the tools I needed to put the food down and keep the promises I make to myself.
- I struggle with food and weight. I am a food addict. OA has made a difference.

What is your elevator speech?

Thank you to Cyndy L!! We all walked out with many new ideas for reaching out and sharing recovery!!



## A Meeting Boost: Public Information Night in Hastings Mike H

A public information meeting was held Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, at Saint Michael's Catholic Church family room. The goal was to spread the word of OA to the still suffering compulsive overeater. A pre-recorded radio interview on 1230 AM KHAS at approximately 7:35 am and 12:35 pm were aired the day of the public information night. Local newspaper press release was also another medium that was used to spread the word about the public information night, which was printed on Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> with the article title "St. Michael's to Host OA Info Meeting." Here is the link to the article: [http://www.hastingstribune.com/news/st-michael-s-to-host-oa-info-meeting/article\\_f2e91790-a284-11e9-8446-7fd456f6da87.html](http://www.hastingstribune.com/news/st-michael-s-to-host-oa-info-meeting/article_f2e91790-a284-11e9-8446-7fd456f6da87.html)

At the Public information Night, five newcomers came to the event. Mary C. and Kathleen G shared their story about overcoming the disease of compulsive overeating. Two OA members from Omaha also were in Hastings and decided to stop and help direct people to the family room upon entering the church complex. Thank you for your service and support during that night. This event has helped grow the Hastings OA Meeting that meets on Saturdays at Saint Michael's Catholic Church Library at 8:30 am. Now at least two or three people show up to meetings. It is a newcomer and literature meeting.

Personally I want to thank the two who came out to the event from Omaha, the speakers, RoseMary and the Greater Heartland Intergroup for their support in providing financial assistance to get pamphlets, books, and assist in getting speakers out that way. This has been a great example of how Intergroup can support others in getting meetings starting. Some might hear me say this a lot, but "together we get better," just as the OA Promise states in its message. I am paraphrasing of course. Hopefully this can provide insight and give encouragement to someone wanting to start a meeting or to reach out to intergroup if your meeting is struggling.

Thank you for taking the time to read this story.

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### Saturday "Oasis" Meeting 8:30 a.m. • St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (60th & Walnut Streets) Judith B, Group Rep

Our meeting has been going strong for many years, and for this we are grateful. We meet in the Library on the 2nd floor, except the 4th week of the month when we meet in the Fellowship Hall (1st floor). The church has ADA parking reserved and an elevator (northwest entrance) for those who need assistance.

Our weekly topic schedule is as follows:

- 1st Saturday = Read the Step chapter (from the OA 12 & 12) for the month
- 2nd Saturday = Topic led by a volunteer
- 3rd Saturday = Read Tradition chapter for the month
- 4th Saturday = Topic led by a volunteer
- 5th Saturday = Topic selected by the meeting leader from the Overeaters Anonymous "Brown Book"

**Babysitting:** This meeting offers babysitting. There is a nursery/childcare room on the second floor that is especially for children to play. The suggested donation is \$1 per child per family. The babysitter is a very experienced teenager and the granddaughter of one of the meeting regulars. She is paid through separate donations (in other words, she is NOT subsidized through our 7th Tradition).

**Other notes:** On the 3rd Saturday of each month, the door to the church is locked. We usually have a volunteer at the door to let OA members in, but sometimes we just post a cell phone number to call if you need to get in. The church has asked us to do this because that Saturday is their Food Bank each month that doesn't start until 10:00 a.m., but people start lining up for it as early as 8:30 a.m. Because church volunteers need to organize their set-up for the Food Bank, they have asked us to keep the door locked.

## My Anniversary Gift



July 21, 2019 I would be celebrating 30 years of recovery in OA. In past years when I hit a milestone number I would celebrate with a party. This year there would be no time for that. So, I decided to gift myself by going to every OA meeting in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area. I had recently had concerns about OA and abstinence and declining meeting sizes from when I first came in these rooms. This is the story of my adventure visiting all these local meetings, the effects on my concerns, and the gifts I received.

My first meeting I attended with expectations. I thought when I announced it was my 30th year of recovery and abstinence from sugar I would get applause and lots of congratulations after the meeting. I had known several people at this meeting for many years. You can imagine my disappointment when I received only a few claps during the announcement and NO congratulations after the meeting closed. I felt really let down. Was long term abstinence a thing of the past? Was it just me? Was I too proud? I was tempted to stop attending meetings, but after some self-searching and talk with my sponsor I decided to carry on.

My second meeting was a small group, about 5 to 6 of us. To my surprise, a member who had been in program but left, came back for the first time in years. It was so nice to see her and she was glad someone she knew was there. What a gift! I had not been in many meetings with the others there. They had their own style of picking out the meeting topic. It was a great meeting with good recovery shared. I received lots of congratulations on 30 years.

The next meeting, I felt like a newcomer. I did not know where the meeting was located. I held up a lot of traffic and probably cut someone off. I thought to myself, I hope that person's not going to the OA meeting. It was a relief to get there. I explained to an old friend why I was there. She was very excited for me. Their method of picking the meeting topic was again different and fun. I heard good shares from the other two people there.

My first meeting this day I officially got my chip. My sponsor said many very nice things to me. We shared lunch and fellowship. This, I realized, was how most people celebrate their anniversaries, at their home group with their closest friends.

Later that day I attended another meeting that I had attended before. To my surprise, another person in program I hadn't seen in a year or so was at the meeting. I was so glad to see her and hear her story of what had kept her away. A usually small meeting had about 7 people that night. About 4 out of the 7 congratulated me on my 30 year chip.

On to the next meeting. Again, a small group of 3, but people I knew but only saw at this meeting. Again, a different choice of meeting topic and good sharing. By attending this meeting, I got to ask for help to 12 step a man I'd hope to introduce to the program. I got 2 members right away to go with me. Another gift.

Early bird meeting for me today. A large crowd again, faces I hadn't seen for a while. Happy to see these people as I'd known some of them for years in OA, but seldom crossed paths. They celebrated birthdays at this meeting. I announced mine and my gift to myself of attending all the OA meetings. It was well received and a good meeting. I was changing my thoughts about OA in Omaha.

Second meeting of the day. One I was a little concerned about attending. I had announced anniversaries before at this meeting and had gotten little response. I continued my routine with my share about my anniversary and my gift to myself by attending all the meetings. As I write this I don't remember the response of the members. I only remember I was OK. I realized I wasn't a big thing, but recovery is the big thing and I had 3 meetings to go!

The next meeting was small, 4 people. Some I knew from IG but had not been in meetings with them. Again they chose a different style of meeting topics. They were all excited for me and offered congratulations. We got to share a lot. One member thanked me for my presence and my share and I felt the same. It was good to see new faces. I felt we'd become friends after just one meeting. I was asked to come back.



Another road trip to a beautiful library. Once again, a friend whom I haven't seen in years since our meeting had dissolved was there. We got to catch up in the parking lot after the meeting. I was so blessed to reunite with her. Response on the anniversary was great.

I have two meetings to go. This night I forgot the code to get in. As I was fussing about it since I had no phone to call someone, the newcomer with me said, "Why don't we have a meeting outside?" (out of the mouths of newcomers). So we did. Later the members came out and we explained what had happened. The door was supposed to be open so they said they would look into it. So my being there was sort of a gift to the meeting!

As of this writing I have one meeting to go. I was going to skip it because it's way out of my way, but both my sponsor and another person said I should go as they needed the support, so I will complete my list.

Did I get my gift? You bet I did. My faith in OA has been rebuilt. Small number of members at meetings or not, I got a lot of recovery. Sometimes other members have other things on their mind even though "self" still wants recognition and attention. But when I changed my attitude to looking for the gifts, my journey was exciting and very rewarding. I did see group autonomy as most groups had their own way of doing the topic, from picking topics out of an envelope to reading from the Lifeline which made it fun. Most meetings read the steps involving the whole group. The closings also varied from group to group.

If you're looking for a boost in your recovery, I would highly recommend following me in this journey. It was well worth the time it took and who knows what gifts HP has awaiting you!

### **Songs for the Steps** (from October retreat speaker, Mort)

Step 1. "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by The Rolling Stones

Step 2. "Top Of The World" by Carpenters

Step 3. "Somewhere Over The Rainbow/What A Wonderful World" by Israel  
Kamakawiwo'ole

Step 4. "Everybody Hurts" by R.E.M.

Step 5. "Fear Is a Liar" by Zach Williams

Step 6. "Beautiful" by Christina Aguilera

Step 7. "Perfect" by Ed Sheeran

Step 8. "I Will Survive (Single Version)" by Gloria G

Step 9. "Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word" by LEROI JOLLI

Step 10. "Humble And Kind" by Tim McGraw

Step 11. "Canon in D" by Pachelbel played by Rudolf Baumgartner

Step 12. "Happy (From "Despicable Me 2")" by Pharrell Williams



### **UPCOMING DATES**

November 23 Super Saturday (see next page)

July 10-12, 2020 Region 4 Convention, Omaha

## SUPER SATURDAY

*No Holiday from the Disease*

**\*\*Gratefully Celebrating the Holidays – Abstinely\*\***

**Saturday, November 23, 10AM – Noon**

**St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall  
510 N. 93<sup>rd</sup> Street, Omaha**

**Speakers      Gratitude Lists      Ask It Basket**

**\*\*Immediately following the workshop\*\*** fellowship  
& visiting, sharing recipes & strategies for an  
abstinent holiday season! Bring your lunch & stay  
awhile!

Presented by Overeaters Anonymous, Greater  
Heartland Intergroup

## FIRST STEP PRAYER

God, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my compulsive overeating. Help me to understand how my compulsive overeating has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my compulsive overeating.

### Resources:

#### Greater Heartland Intergroup

Website: <https://omahaoa.org/>

Answering Service: (402) 516-4234

Email: [omahaintergroup@gmail.com](mailto:omahaintergroup@gmail.com)



#### Region IV Office

Website: [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org)

#### World Service Office

Website: [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)

Twitter: [overeatersanonymous\\_official](https://twitter.com/overeatersanonymous_official)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/overeatersanonymousofficial/>

### New from WSO: OA Meeting Formats Revised, Plus a Brand New Format

Revisions have been made to many suggested meeting formats, including new welcoming statements and reading options.

OA has also released a new meeting format, *Suggested Reading and Writing Format*, which includes two periods of reading, writing, and sharing.

Find the new and revised formats at [oa.org/documents](http://oa.org/documents) under "Meeting Formats."

### OA Men's Meetings and Fellowship

<http://OAMen.org> is a website to find resources for men in OA. There you can find meetings with a Special Focus for Men, join an email-based discussion group, and add your contact information to an OA Men Phone Outreach List.

### Region News

- Thank you to Mary and Kay for attending the region assembly in October.
- The regional convention is being sponsored by our Intergroup. Let your Intergroup rep know if you would like to help.

### Intergroup News

- Mark your calendars! 2020 retreat days: September 18-20.
- Intergroup meetings are the second Thursday of the month at 6:15 p.m. at First Covenant Church (201 N. 90<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha). To call in: (605) 472-5702, access code: 795866
- Reach out to Jaime if your group needs literature.

### CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME!!!

Do you have ideas for the newsletter? We welcome contributions! Please consider sending

- ✓ a story or other writing you would like to share,
- ✓ information that you want to get out to the OA community,
- ✓ a meeting you would like featured
- ✓ information about a committee you are chairing
- ✓ writings from a meeting

Next Newsletter: January 2020

Contribution Deadline: Sunday, January 5

Please email Lynne S. at

[abundantmercy1010@gmail.com](mailto:abundantmercy1010@gmail.com)

THANK YOU!