



IV Thought

Volume 8, Number 4

Fall 2011

Covering: Illinois [except the Chicagoland area], Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Manitoba, Northwest Ontario, and Nunavut Territory, Canada.

The mission of Region IV is to make OA known throughout the Region so that anyone with the desire to stop eating compulsively may find an OA group, and provide support so that any OA member can have recovery from compulsive eating through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.

What is Your Recovery Worth? by Region IV Chair

Hey Region IV,

A lot has happened in our region since the last report.

- We adopted a new logo and a new slogan: Region 4 Abstinence Freedom Recovery.
- We've published and started distributing our *Daily Journals*, which are selling very well. They are available on line, or you can mail in your check and we'll be happy to ship them to your door.
- Plans for our 2012 Convention are underway – it will be in Omaha, NE, July 13-15, so set the date on your calendar.
- We are making every effort to encourage Intergroups to take advantage of our funding for sending reps to our Fall Assembly, September 30 – October 1, in St. Louis, MO.
- Preparations are in process for the Assembly, motions are being prepared, workshops are being planned, and travel arrangements are being made. We hope to see new as well as familiar faces.
- Local events and retreats are being planned by our Intergroups. Check out the events calendar on oregion4.org to find out what's up coming.

- Groups continue to meet and members continue to seek recovery.

This is the beauty of OA. We continue to share our experience, strength and hope with one another to achieve release from the compulsion of our disease. Some of it is fun and some of it is just getting through today without using food. Just these 24 hours. That's all we have.

The time passes more enjoyably when we are working our program. Our lives are richer when we are abstinent. It's the reason most of us joined OA. If you are struggling with abstinence and it's keeping you from being able to enjoy life, ask someone who has what you want to help you. They don't have to be a sponsor; they can just be a buddy. Someone who can answer the phone when you are faced with the decision to eat or abstain. Working the steps and working on the relationship you have with HP will expose the parts of you that need to change.

I find that most of my problems are self induced. When people offer suggestions on how to handle things differently my first response is NO. But when I turn to HP for guidance I then see how the suggestion can be useful and I decide to try it for just

one day. That's what's gotten me through the past 21 years. Some days were successful and easy and others were less so, but I keep making an effort and things have always worked out for the best.

I sincerely hope that you are in a good place in your recovery, and willingly doing what you can to pass it on to others. Even if you are having difficulty, you know the solution is here. Even my worst day in recovery is so much better than anything I experience prior. So I'm grateful, and that gets me through another day. Hope the rest of your summer is peaceful and that I'll see many of you on that "road of happy destiny" over the next few months.

Yours in Service,
Cyndy L., Region IV Chair

Special points of interest:

- Featured Tool
- Featured Intergroup
- Words from Region IV Trustee
- How much time did your food plan cost?



Slogan – Keep it Simple

When I stopped trying to find an easier softer way my abstinence started. Then it was easier and softer when I made the decision to turn my will over to my Higher Power. My Higher Power let me struggle to find a food plan. He sent somebody to deliver it. Then I was ready to strictly adhere to it.



learn for his direction. I see his will for me everyday that I permit myself to have faith and be happy.

I didn't think I could ever get out of the deep grave I was already inside. I thought I would eventually be buried alive as I lost physical, emotional and spiritual life.

My weight loss has allowed me to be comfortable enough, to let go of my will. I can now let go and let God. I have faith in my HP daily. My job is to walk through my day and listen, look and

God truly can and did when I sought his help.

By Lu Ann B. - Jamesport, MO OA group

Featured Intergroup: St. Louis Bi-State

History: St. Louis B-State Intergroup was formed in 1979 That's 32 years of carrying the message. One member served as the first Region 9 Trustee when Region 9 was formed. Have had 3 members serve on the Region IV Board.

Location:

Missouri Baptist Hospital
(in the Nurse's Institute)
3015 North Ballas Road
St. Louis, MO 63131

When: Second Sunday of the month (some exceptions apply)

Time Begin: 12:00/12:30 PM

Groups: 46 groups ~
St. Louis and surrounding area.

Board: Chair, Chair, Secretary and Office Administrator are elected in odd numbered years. Vice Chair and Treasurer are elected in even numbered years. All positions are two-year terms with a requirement of a minimum of one year of abstinence, working the 12 steps and actively working a program of recovery.



St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup information can be found on www.stlouisoa.org
Mailing Address: 9907 Gravois Rd, Suite E, St. Louis, MO 63123
Phone: 314.638.6070
bistateoa1@prodigy.net

Service Positions/Committees: Convention Chair, Convention Co-Chair, Convention Treasurer, Lifeline, Literature, Media, Newsletter, Outreach Directory, Public Information, Retreat Chair, Retreat Treasurer, Twelve Step Within, Ways and Means, Webmaster, Young People . All positions have a requirement of six months of abstinence.

Elections: **Board**—September
Committee—May

Retreats:

Annual Fall Retreat: Oct 28—30
“Body Image and Sexuality: Welcome to your Body, Welcome Home”

Events: Super Saturday—

- Sep 17 “Fall into a Plan of Action”

Interesting Facts

OA signs in Bus Shelters. The St. Louis Transit Authority donated space. The sign rotates to any of the 15 shelters that have an opening. They even got an inquiry.

Lending media library with over a thousand tapes and CDs, which can be checked out.

Has an office where volunteers come to answer phones and handle literature orders. Recently renovated office to enlarge meeting space. It accommodates 3 weekly meetings.

Beyond Intergroup:

Region IV Reps – Can send 5
WSO Delegates – Can send 4

Featured Tool: Literature

Through the Grace of God and the 12 Steps, I've been gifted with freedom from bingeing and purging for almost ten years. My life has changed drastically and my spirit has been transformed.

Recently, I was reading an article that a member wrote that is helping trust in my HP more deeply. The author has been in program for many years. She added up all of the meetings she attended over the years, and it was in the thousands. She wrote, "In all of those years of attending meetings, I have never, ever, heard a member say, 'I turned my life and will over to HP and really got screwed over.'"

Of course, I had to laugh, which is good, because laughter and not taking things too seriously is part of my recovery, but, the deeper meaning hit me. I, too, have never heard anything like that at a meeting. In fact, it's been 100% the opposite. I've heard people let go and let God

and gain serenity, even if the results weren't what they would have chosen.

I looked at my own experience, HP has never, ever let me down. In fact, when I get in the way, that's when things get screwed up, when I want to run the show. When I give it to HP, no matter what the results, I have peace. So, the million dollar question: If HP has such a great record and never disappoints, why is it so hard to turn things over?

I'd say habit. As it says in *For Today*, "Repetition is the only form of permanence." I am forming a new habit to replace the old one of doing things my way, substituting Letting Go and Letting God in place of self-will. This is one of the most radical things I could do. And, it takes practice, lots of it. I am willing for today, even if that means, "Acting as if."

This insight is helping me work Step 3. That's the great thing about literature. You never know what you're going to get when you pick it up!

Anonymous

Check out www.oa.org for all of the tools.

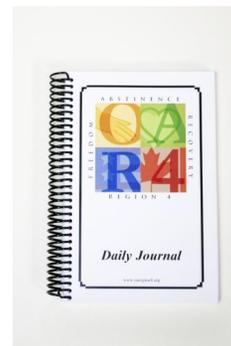
www.oa.org

Daily Journal for Sale!!

Enjoy our newly created and designed Logo on our Daily Journal.

A place to write down your food, your intent for the day. Step 10 never looked so easy...

Go to www.oaregion4.org and order yours today.



OA Has Got it Going On!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

When surfing the net, take some time to test drive www.oa.org.

In the upper right hand corner check out "Documents". Enter an exciting array of articles and forms that not only help you increase your meeting attendance but offer ideas on how to keep them coming back as well.

Tap into the Strategic plans from 2008 through 2013. From you to

the World, it takes all of us to live the program and continually work to get the word out to the still suffering compulsive eater.

The richness of these ideas are for us to take and craft our own community outreach and twelve step within by creating any type of event for our meetings, intergroups and regions.

Please send your marvelous contributions to
IVthought@oaregion4.org.

All writing is subject to editing.

Newsletter Deadlines

Nov 13

February 13

May 13

August 13



Never too Late No One Left Behind

Greater KC Area Intergroup Annual Retreat 2011
Sanctuary of Hope, Kansas City, KS

October 15—16, 2011

Event begins Saturday at 9:00 am and ends Sunday at Noon

Bring

- ◆ Journal
- ◆ Big Book
- ◆ OA and AA Twelve and Twelve books

All bedding and towels provided

Overnight and Daytime include meals and Program

For more information: Deanna 913.406.5277 or pbr.deanna@yahoo.com



What OA means to me...

(50 words or less)



OA to me means life and freedom. Freedom from dwelling in the past and now living in the present. Loving myself for who I am.

It has saved my life. I truly believe I could have killed myself if I had not found this program. It has taught me how to live.

Deb S

Region IV Fall Assembly

September 30—October 1, 2011

Host: St. Louis Bi-State Area Intergroup

Wingate by Wyndam St. Louis Riverport

13615 Riverport Drive

Maryland Heights, MO

314.209.0001

Call for reservations by September 15



Message from the Trustee

Reading Aloud from Literature during OA Meetings

OA's group conscience has decided that we should only read from OA approved literature at our meetings. That includes both OA Conference- or Board-approved and AA conference-approved literature. Although OA has not reviewed and approved AA literature, we deem that their group conscience approved of the content of that literature. When we read AA literature and change the words, no one has approved that literature – neither OA nor AA.

When OA was founded, we asked permission from AA to modify their Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for our use in OA, and they graciously granted that permission. However, that is the only thing that we have the authority to change. When OA first began, we had no literature of our own, and we used AA's Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. We commonly changed the words when reading aloud from the literature during meetings to better understand how the concepts of the AA program could apply to compulsive eating.

AA World Service asks that we respect their literature and their group conscience by reading their literature, such as the Big Book, as written, without changing the words. AA also asks that we read excerpts from their literature in context, which means to read it from the actual literature as printed, and not from a typed sheet of paper. Of course, when we share in meetings about the passages we read, we are free to share our experience, strength and hope in our own terms related to compulsive eating. If we want to read only literature that uses terms related to food and compulsive eating, we have a wealth of OA literature to choose from which doesn't require changing the words.

It is also a common practice to change the words of OA's Twelve Steps when reading them aloud at meetings. People replace "God" with "Higher Power", replace "him" with gender-neutral terms, and add "we" at the beginning of all the steps. When we make those changes, we are amending the Steps. Our OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1 very clearly spell out the

amendment process. Amendments to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions must be adopted by 2/3 of the delegates at the World Service Business Conference, and that vote must be ratified by three-fourths of the registered Overeaters Anonymous groups responding within six months of notification, provided at least fifty-five percent of the registered groups have responded. It is clear that no individual member, group or OA service body can amend the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions themselves because they "belong" to all of us.

One could argue that Tradition Four allows each group to do what it wants, as long as it doesn't affect other groups or OA as a whole. True, but we also have Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on OA unity". We have Tradition Two: "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern". Concept Two states, in part, "World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole".



When I insist upon changing the wording of OA or AA literature to suit myself, I am displaying the same selfishness and self-will that landed me in OA in the first place! As one trustee wrote: "From my vantage point and experiences, there is a tendency to mold the OA Program of Recovery to the molds of individual members & their ways of doing things. I am reminded, if my way worked, I would not be in OA or need to be. Obviously, my way did not work. So I am quite willing to work on changing me, which is a challenge, and not try to revamp OA or AA suitable to me. When a physician gives me a prescription for treatment of an illness, I am well advised not to make any attempts to rewrite it." If I believe OA's

literature needs to be amended, I am encouraged to participate in our collective group conscience by serving as a delegate to the World Service Business Conference. Failing that, I am committed to respecting the group conscience of both OA and AA by reading the literature as it is written, from the original source, without any creative editing on my part.

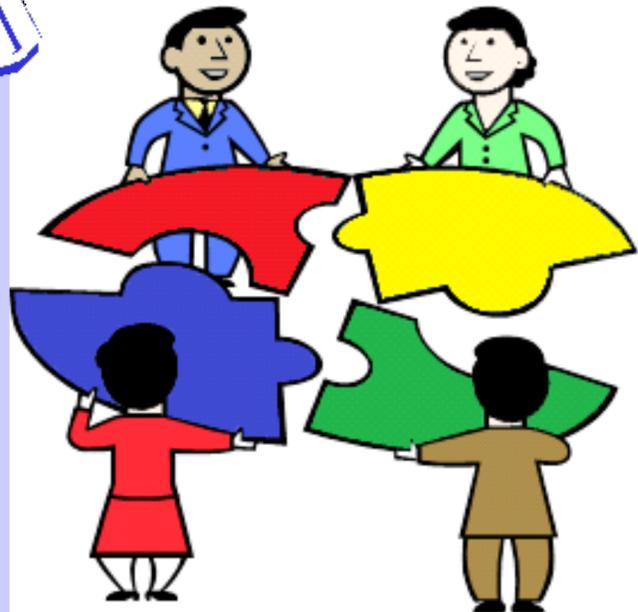
Yours in service,
Teresa K, Region IV Trustee

There Is A Solution...



**CONNECT
TO
RECOVERY**

**November 4, 5, 6,
2011**



Overeaters Anonymous

MINNESOTA STATE CONVENTION

Our 38th Year!

Immerse yourself in a weekend of experience, strength, and hope:

- National Keynote Speakers
- Workshops on Steps, Newcomers, Sponsors, Relapse, Body Image and more.
- Entertainment, Abstinent Meals, Fellowship

START PLANNING NOW!

- Build a car pool (free parking at the hotel)
- Find roommates (up to 4 in a room — less than \$25pp)*
- Recruit a newcomer
- Save \$10 per week (that's less than eating out 1x week!) and you're covered!
(Based on 4 people sharing 800 mile RT by car, hotel room, all convention meals, registration and meals to and from Minneapolis-St. Paul)

* Crowne Plaza Hotel (free shuttle from the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport)
3 Appletree Square • Bloomington, MN 55425 800-593-5447

FOR MORE INFO/REGISTRATION FORMS: www.overeaters.org
OR send email to pegmitch16@gmail.com OR call Peg M. 612-280-6119

State of Iowa OA Convention 2011

Hosted by Northeast Iowa, Central Iowa, Promises of Eastern Iowa, Quad Cities and Tri-State Siouxland Intergroups

Ready...Set...Action!

September 16 -18, 2011

Stoney Creek Inn and Conference Center
5291 Stoney Creek Court, Johnston, IA 50131
515.334.9000 or www.stoneycreekinn.com



Contact: Betty W 515.221.3559

How much time did your food plan cost when your food plan made you brood?

How much time did you spend on your food plan when you were in the food? When I look back at a typical week, I would take time going to the store – nightly versus my weekly run now. It would take me an extra hour, because I would troll the aisles looking for those specific items that would fit my craving – sweet, crunchy, sour, soft, hearty, salty, fun, fresh, new, familiar, healthy, decadent, frothy, fruity, tasty, smooth, fizzy, cold, hot, easy or any combination. This took some serious thought because I wanted to nail down the most accurate collection so that when I was nestled in at home, there was no need for me to have to trek back to the store to obtain the needed ingredients for my commemorative indulgence. This could easily take two hours a night – both drive and hunt.

After unpacking my goods in eager anticipation of my in-home celebration, my spirits lifted. I couldn't wait for the magic to begin.

I flipped on the TV, retrieved my afghan and continued to transport the bags, bowls and plates of chow to the sacred coffee table – my altar's offerings to me – a most humble servant. This sacrificial preparation was a bit speedier, due to the urgent need to stop my salivary drool from ruining my ratty apartment carpeting. Still with the unpacking and groundwork, I easily spent 30 minutes with this ritual.



Ripping, scooping, smacking, chewing, slurping, burping, gasping,

picking, gobbling, scarfing, wolfing, munching, swallowing, drinking, crunching, gorging, breathing took about 15 minutes. Yeah, so I'm being a bit generous.

Feeling satiated – foody's definition: stuffed, fluffed, and puffed I zoned on my queen's chair (a chair and a half). This could range from 30 minutes to a couple of hours – I'll go with 1 hour.

My favorite time was hitting the sack with the sinking dread of my ongoing failure as a human being, with a faint whisper that tomorrow was a new day and I would deal with my new resolve, reserve and hope to abate the mental obsession that I was a complete waste of skin. Time: varies.

The quiet pocket of night yanked me out of solemn slumber as I gasped for breath. Cursing and vowing, I would roll my fluffed, stuffed and

(Continued on page 8)

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puffed form to the medicine cabinet to pick out the antacids (loaded with sugar) and place 2 under my tongue for a slow dissolve. Waddling back to bed, I once again propped my pillows to continue the twenty winks I had left – upright. Time awake a mere 30 minutes on average.

My former investment was about 4 hours a day – 28 hours a week. That’s over 112 hours in a month! Hmm, a stable part-time job.

How are my newfound hours being utilized now? Through meetings, working the steps, prayer, phone calls, working with my sponsor, sponsoring, group service, grocery shopping, preparing abstinent meals, reading and writing. I realized I had a few hours left over to give some service beyond the group level. I discovered oodles of opportunities to practice stepping out of my isolation, recommitting my abstinence - daily, expanding my community of hookup calls and friends and participating in Step 12.

Rotation of service helps keep me practicing balance and learning new skills. I still get a bit anxious when I step out and do something new. The cool thing is, I don’t have to do it alone. I get to meet someone new and hear their story, experience, strength and hope. I feel light-hearted and excited about my life. My self-seeking slips away and I feel that I do have the right to be on the earth at this time and that my HP thinks I’m kind of groovy. I’m blessed with so much more, which is an enormous return on my new investment.

Meg M



Give back to the World of Overeaters Anonymous Make Sep Spectacular and Oct Outstanding!

Do your part and encourage your OA group to make a “SPECIAL” contribution of at least \$10.

Goal - to donate **10%** over 2010.

2010 contributions = \$449,397

2011 contributions = \$500,000+.

That’s about \$45,000 more – help do your part as a group by sending \$10 or more.

What does World do for you?

- Publish your meeting for free – Face-to-Face, Phone and Online
- Translating our awesome literature
- Creates and updates literature
- Provides scholarships for members to go to the WSBC
- Provides information for ‘Youth in OA’
- Publishes Lifeline magazine and The Courier Newsletter
- Presents an annual World Service Business Conference
- Provides numerous documents to assist us in our meetings – formats, ideas
- Informs us with the “Ask it Basket”

Special World Contribution – Give back to what is so freely given

When your group mails in the contribution, make sure the following is listed.

- ◆ Group Name and #, Intergroup Name & #, , Region: 4 (Info can be found on www.oa.org)

Mail the contribution to: **WSO, PO Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174—4020**

Things I can do in Recovery that I couldn’t do before:

- Maintain amore consistent energy level throughout my day
- Bend over and tie my shoes
- Chase around the house with my 2 1/2 year old granddaughter
- Wake up in the morning with-
out a backache!!
- Do things I was ashamed to do before, like ride my bike
- Go down a mountain on an alpine slide. I fit on that little car!
- Tell the truth
- Bet at peace
- Say “no”
- Feel joy

We are on the web—www.oaregion4.org

