



# 4 Thought

Volume 9, Issue 1

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 4 Chair

Hey Region 4,

Here we are in a new year and I find that really exciting. There's always so much hope as newcomers visit our meetings looking for an answer. We need to be welcoming and caring to let them know there is an answer in our rooms. We've all been there at one time or another, demoralized from the holiday weight gain and without a clue what to do differently. If this is their first time in a meeting, let's be sure and share our experience, strength and hope and talk about how we survived the holidays abstinently. If for some reason your experience with the holidays was less than stellar, then share that you too are powerless and need the help that is available from your Higher Power and fellow members of OA.

I want to thank Region 4 for sending me to the Region 8 Assembly in November. The Assembly was held in Medellin, Columbia South America. This was my first experience participating in a bi-lingual OA event. It brought home the fact that it doesn't matter where you live, or who you are, recovery is available if you want it. I spent a couple of days before the Assembly touring the city and getting acquainted with some of the

local members. I was really impressed with their desire to carry the message.

They had an information booth set up in the lobby of the hotel from Monday morning until the event was over on Sunday afternoon. They handed out literature to people attending other events in the hotel. Prior to that week they had distributed 10,000 flyers on the streets of Medellin in hopes of attracting newcomers to the Convention being held along with the Assembly. I had the opportunity to visit their office, 2 small rooms in a downtown office building. They have translated many of the books and pamphlets into Spanish and operate a warehouse to sell the literature throughout South America.

I also attended a local OA meeting. A member from Florida was the speaker, which meant that there was an interpreter available to translate the talk to the local members. The interpreter was a member willing to do the service. There were several members who performed this valuable service over the weekend. Even though there was a language difference when I left there I knew that there was no difference in how the disease affects us and how recovery can work its miracle and bring great joy to our members.

One of the topics at the Assembly was ways to communicate across the vast distances that exist. The people in South America are looking for sponsors and speakers for their meetings. With tools like Skype and Google translator it is possible to work with a sponsee whose first language is not English. I'm going to be sharing at a meeting in Ecuador this month. I know there is no way I can fully share what this experience meant to me or how much it renewed my desire to be of service, but it was something I am grateful I was allowed to do.

Our Region 4 Assembly in October was very productive and enjoyable. We approved the mailing of a tent card that each group will be receiving by the end of January. We made several changes to the policies and procedures manual which make doing business easier. We had a great Intergroup share on Friday night as



(Continued on page 3)

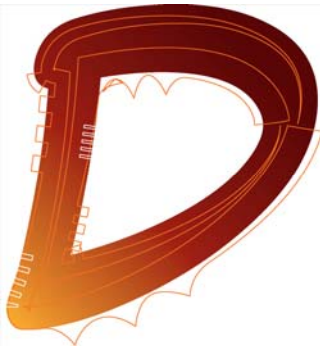
PS Reading of page 120,  
"Voices of Recovery".

"Trusting me by my "self" is impossible;; my "self" is as crooked in thinking as my "me" is.

## Staying Committed to Recovery

One of the things that help me to stay committed to my program is ten little D words, this especially helps when the urge to overeat or cravings come.

1. D-Distraction; do something else, particularly something for others.
2. D-Delay: the gratification (remember it's only for 24 hours, if it's not a binge food you can add it to tomorrow's breakfast menu).
3. D-Drink; cravings often are started by dehydration.
4. D-Disgust: picture worms on what seems too appealing.



5. D-Dance: move, get away and re-energize yourself with movement.

6. D-Diary: journal your feelings, usually the urge to eat is linked to something I need to work on.

7. D-Dial: use the phone as a lifeline. Call your sponsor, another OA member or the OA office.

8. D-Decision: make a decision that the pain of not getting what you want, when you want it, is not worth the regret of compulsive eating.

9. D-Do the "next right thing". One of my first things is saying, "thanks HP for getting me through this".

Do more meetings (we have meetings in a box available to anyone at the OA office-called CD's) of course, since

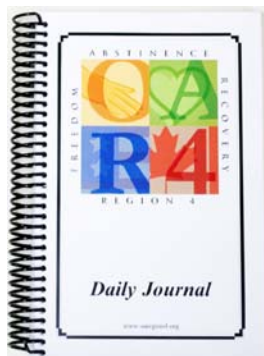
I just became the Media Librarian so I am now quite enthusiastic about this resource. :)

10. D-Delight feel the joy that abstinence brings.

Thank you to all who share, care, volunteer and come to meetings. Because of you, I have connected with my Higher Power and am enjoying weight loss and more importantly peace and sanity.

~Patsy, St. Louis, MO,  
St. Louis Bi-State IG

## Region 4 Daily Journal—For Sale



### Daily Journal for Sale!!

Enjoy Region 4's  
Daily Journal

A place to write down your...

- Food
- Intent for the day
- Gratitudes
- Step 10 never looked so easy...

### Ease of Use

- They are lightweight and great for travel
- All of your writing can be in one location
- Lays flat when opened
- Coil binding keeps pages intact
- Affordable—@\$12 — includes postage

### Get one for...

- Yourself
- Your sponsor
- Your sponsee
- A fellow member

Go to [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org) for ordering.

## What is Your Recovery Worth? by Region 4 Chair

(Continued from page 1)

well as got competitive over a game on the Concepts. We had several new faces as well as Reps who will be serving for their last time this year. I wish more of you were able to participate. The feeling of belonging to something bigger than my local meetings and Intergroup just helps me be even more committed to my daily routines and abstinence. I spent Idea Day in the Quad Cities presenting a workshop on Abstinence and Action Plan. I am scheduled to go to Wichita in April. Carrying the message as far as possible in hopes that it helps our members and service bodies gain strength and commitment. Remember that all of our Board members are available to travel to Intergroups and present workshops. All we need is for you to invite us and set up the venue.

Don't forget that 2012 is a convention year. We will be celebrating recovery in Omaha, July 13-15, this year. Your Intergroup will be receiving registration forms soon. You can also go to [oaregion4.org](http://oaregion4.org) and open the Events page to find out more. The registration form is available there as well. You may also register on line if you prefer. We want everyone to come join us in a weekend of recovery.

If you are interested in receiving information on what's new in OA or what's going on in Region 4 please send an email to [region4email@gmail.com](mailto:region4email@gmail.com) and we'll add you to the distribution list. You will then be notified when new publications are available, such as our wonderful 4 Thought. Wishing each of you a joyful and abstinent 2012.

Yours in Service,  
Cyndy L., Region IV Chair

### REGION 4—WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

1. What year did OA set up regions?  
1968  
1972  
1974  
1976
2. What 2 countries were initially parts of this first regionalization?
3. How many Regions make up OA?
4. What states were initially voted into Region 4?
5. What was the last state brought into Region 4?
6. What was the first year Region 4 had their Assembly?  
1968  
1972  
1974  
1976
7. What state is hosting the Spring 2012 Assembly?
8. Which 3 states in Region 4 have the most Intergroups?
9. How many standing rules does Region 4 have?
10. What are the minimum times in a year (Assemblies) that Region 4 must meet?

*Look for answers in the next issue of 4 Thought.*

## SHARATHON 2012

Saturday April 28 - Wichita, KS  
"Practicing These Principles In All Our Affairs"  
Featuring a Region 4 Officer as Guest Speaker!

Newman University campus.  
3100 McCormick Ave  
Wichita, KS, 67213

Where: Eck Hall, Room 120.  
(<http://www.newmanu.edu/attend-nu/visit-campus/campus-map>)

Check In: 8:30 am  
Sharathon ends: 4:00 pm

*To RSVP, call or email the registrar:  
Deb S at 316.734.6790*

# RECOVERY ROCKS

Things I can do in recovery on most days that I couldn't do before  
(with the help of HP, a sponsor, the Steps, the tools, and the fellowship):

- Look at a table of binge foods and know that one will NEVER be enough and the whole table is too too much.
- Feel at ease, calm, complete, loved, and full, not from food, but from my Higher Power.
- Wear the same clothes year after year.
- Let go of the desire to impress others by putting my security in Higher Power.
- Give service from a desire to share what I have instead of trying to get recognition, praise, and approval.
- Look for HP's spark in others instead of trying to find ways that I am better or worse than them.
- Say "No" without making up a lie to go along with it.
- Say "Yes" even when it's scary.
- Accept a compliment instead of rejecting it.
- Stick with a food plan, weigh and measure, and eat whole foods and feel nourished instead of deprived or superior to others.
- Want the best for all involved when dealing with OA, my family, my students, my coworkers, instead of just wanting to make sure I get my needs met.
- Look in the mirror and know that several people know all of me and still love me instead of feeling shame and self-hatred.
- Understand that I am not in charge. I have a Higher Power who knows what's best for me.
- Go for a walk to enjoy nature instead of trying to calculate how many calories I've burned.
- Meditate.
- Say, "I don't know," instead of making something up.
- Take responsibility for myself. Realize that I always have a choice. Use my choices instead of blaming circumstances.
- Focus on people at parties instead of wondering if they've noticed how much I've eaten and how I can get more.
- Ask my husband to take out the trash without fear that he'll find bags of my empty food packages.
- Cry and feel cleansed instead of empty.
- Be held, be vulnerable, and be heard by another compulsive eater.
- Have a bad day and know that "This too shall pass."
- Have a bad day and know as long as I am abstinent, it is still a successful day.
- Ask for what I want.
- Mess up and know that I can try again.
- Be myself.
- Do wonderful things for myself and not feel guilty: massage, gentle yoga, rest, etc.
- Donate to causes without fear that there won't be enough for me.
- See that I am part of something greater than myself, that we are all connected. I am not alone.
- Detach from others and not make it all about me.
- Be present with another, really trying to understand his/her feelings, desires, and point of view instead of thinking of what I will say next.
- Make love and feel a spiritual connection instead of wondering if my husband is noticing all of my imperfections.
- Tell the truth.
- Ask for help and be open to receiving it.
- Get joy from helping others.
- Be present.
- Laugh, really laugh, and not at someone else's expense.
- Walk away from gossip.
- Listen to another without trying to fix her or make her feel better.
- Sit through the uncomfortable.
- Visit my parents without being angry at them for something in the past.



~Lisa B, St. Louis, MO—St. Louis Bistate IG

## Tool: Plan of Eating

My plan of eating is basic. I follow what I got from a Nutritionist and just add variety within the list of abstinent eating. My menu items have changed since walking back into OA in June 2004. I now weigh my food 98% of the time and now refrain from wheat, artificial sweeteners and caffeine in addition to recreational sugar, fried foods, junk food and those foods that are not on my safe list. Having renewed abstinence since 2004, I'm maintaining an 80 pound (36 kg) weight loss and feel the best I ever have – and I'm in my fifties!

All of these changes were gradual after the initial removal of sugar and junk food and eating three times a day. My rising cholesterol pushed me to meet with a Nutritionist (and believe it or not I learned a few things). My total reading was 230. I was incensed! After all I was abstinent and eating well. To avoid medication, I sought out a new plan of eating. Apparently, my artificial sweetener consumption was to blame. I also learned that my body didn't process wheat



(holding onto trapped gas everyday). In addition, I changed my fats and gave up eating soy. Being a volume eater I had no problem eating fruits and vegetables, so that was easy. Giving up bread and my love affair with diet soda was a relationship that needed to be severed. (Sigh)

I jumped in and used my new plan. The gas disappeared, I lost a little more weight, my digestive system thanked me, the weather cleared, the birds warbled and I learned to live without "sugar-free" soft drinks, gum and mints. A year rolled around and it was time to get my cholesterol checked. Silently I said, if the number doesn't go down, I'm going back to my lovers. Ah, the musings of an addict.

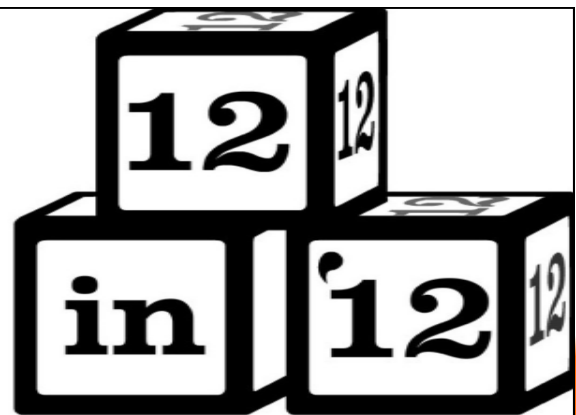
To my surprise and chagrin my new total reading was 162. My Higher Power has a great sense of humor plus some pretty awesome powers. That was over five years ago and I'm still grooving' on my food plan.

~Meg M

## Back to Basics—St. Louis, MO Convention—Mar 23 - 25, 2012

Email for more details: [bistateoa1@prodigy.net](mailto:bistateoa1@prodigy.net)

# Back to Basics



St. Louis Bi-State Convention 2012



## Maintaining our Commitment to Recovery

When a newcomer comes to one of my local meetings, our format asks one of us to share why we came to OA and what keeps us coming back. As a long-term abstaining member of this program, I often share my own experience, strength and hope in this area. I have been abstinent from compulsive eating since July 19, 1990, and maintain a normal healthy body weight. The response from newcomers seems sometimes to be a question – if I've been “successful” in losing and maintaining my weight, why don't I just leave? And how do I keep going, day after day, year after year?

First, I take my disease very seriously. I believe it is cunning, baffling, powerful, patient, and fatal. So it's important to be willing to go to any lengths to keep what I've been given. I abstain from compulsive eating, call my sponsor daily, pray and meditate, work the Steps, respect the Traditions and Concepts, maintain a healthy body weight, and do service at the individual, group, Region and World Service levels. I regularly attend both face-to-face and phone meetings. I continue to do all those daily things that help me to maintain my abstinence. I can't

take it for granted. My abstinence and recovery have to be the most important things in my life without exception, not something I fit in when I have the time. I make the time. When I think about all the time I spent eating, it's a small investment in my health, sanity and serenity.

Working with others is vital. I sponsor 4 people currently. Bill's Story in the Big Book states it very clearly - it is imperative to work with others. If I fail to perfect and enlarge my spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, I won't survive the certain trials and low spots ahead. If I don't work, I will surely eat again, and if I eat, I will die. Working with them may not get them abstinent, because they need to find the willingness within themselves to take the necessary Steps, but it CAN help keep me abstinent.

What can I do if my recovery feels stale? I think anyone who maintains long-term recovery has gone through those periods occasionally. First, a gratitude checklist may be in order. I live a wonderful life, but all of my misery will be refunded if I go

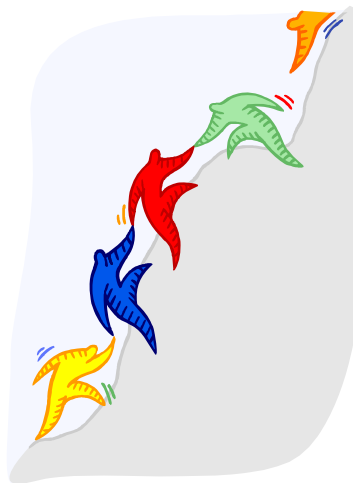
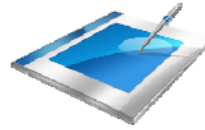
back to compulsive eating. Another round of working the

Twelve Steps, with my sponsor, a sponsee, or another group of members, can lead to an amazing renewal in my recovery. I can reread some literature that I

haven't read in a long time – 5 of our OA books are now available for eReaders and mobile devices, so I can read something on my phone while I wait in line. Lifeline has something fresh to offer with each issue, and the electronic version comes out weekly. A new service position can often offer new perspectives. I don't agree that service is inherently slimming, because I have to have a plan of eating that enables me to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. But a service position ties me to the Program and challenges me in ways that force me to stay closely allied with my Higher Power.

And that's the true key to maintaining my recovery, which is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. I need to continually strive to develop, maintain and improve my relationship with my Higher Power, which keeps my recovery fresh and growing daily. There are always new opportunities and new horizons to discover in the wonderful world that is recovery, if I keep an open mind and heart. May we all keep growing in recovery together!

~Teresa K, Region 4 Trustee



# 5TH ANNUAL DAY OF OA THERE IS A SOLUTION

**Saturday, April 28, 2012**

**LOCATION: Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
717 Quincy Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701**

**TIME: 8:15 am to 4:00 pm  
REGISTRATION: \$12.00**

**Q & A  
SESSION**

**WORKSHOPS**

**OUT OF  
TOWN  
GUEST  
SPEAKER**



*I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone.*

**CONTACTS:**

Susan L. 605-484-6030  
kingarthr4@rap.midco.net  
  
Phyllis S. 605-381-7334  
phyllis5@rap.midco.net

*Presented by the  
Hills and Plains Intergroup  
PO Box 3295  
Rapid City, SD 57709*

## Region 4 - 2012 Spring Assembly

in beautiful Minnesota –  
by the Mall of America  
(by the airport + free shuttle + pool)

### Holiday Inn Hotel

2700 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, MN 55121  
Call: 800.315.2621

When booking a room use  
“Unity Intergroup” as call in code

**Host:** Minneapolis Unity Intergroup  
April 13 and 14, 2012  
Call for Reservations by April 1, 2012

**Room Rate:** \$89.99 per night or \$94.99 per  
night with breakfast –

Note: the additional fee only covers 1 (one)  
breakfast per reserved room

# Unity Intergroup Super Saturday Presents...

**“Abstinence – 247- Six Course menu of ideas”  
Saturday, April 14, 2012**

### Get the scoop on:

What is abstinence? How do I go about getting and staying abstinent?  
Can I travel, eat out and go to functions and be abstinent?  
How do I deal with my past eating buddies, my family, friends and co-workers?  
*Unity Intergroup meeting will be from 11:00 – 12:30*

### Holiday Inn

2700 Pilot Knob Road  
Eagan, MN 55121

**Starts at 9AM – more details to follow**  
Contact Meg – 763.244.6098 or [rellingem@gmail.com](mailto:rellingem@gmail.com)  
Suggested Donation: \$5 or more

# Overeaters Anonymous Region 4 Convention

July 13, 14, 15, 2012

Regency Lodge Omaha, Nebraska

[www.regencylodge.com](http://www.regencylodge.com)

1-402-397-8000

- Workshops
- Hospitality Room
- Literature for Sale
- Region Key Note Speakers
- Lunch and Dinner Speakers
- Saturday Night Entertainment
- Fun and Fellowship



Please join us in this celebration of recovery at the Region 4 OA Convention in Omaha, NE. Attend workshops and hear speakers from Intergroups throughout our 8 state, 2 province and 1 territory region. Come share your experience, strength and hope with other OA members, while strengthening your own commitment to recovery!

Whether you're new to the program or an old-timer, we invite you!

**Reservations must be made by Friday, June 29, 2012.**

**When reserving your room, refer to Overeaters Anonymous.**

**If flying in, Omaha (OMA) is the nearest airport.**

**Shuttle service is available to and from the convention through**

**A&B Shuttle Phone: 402 403-3085 Fax: 402-331-8408**

**To schedule, cancel or alter reservations, please call: 402 403-3085**

**E-mail: [ShuttleOmaha@live.com](mailto:ShuttleOmaha@live.com)**

**Web Address: [www.OmahaShuttle.com](http://www.OmahaShuttle.com)**



**Contact Marilyn D at 785.862.8213 for more information**