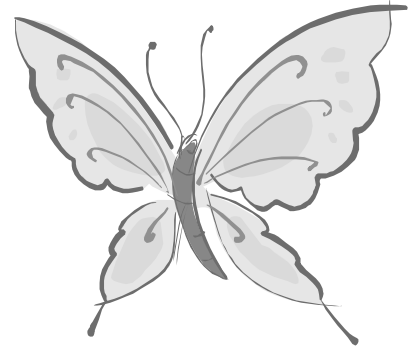


MONARCH MONTHLY



We do this
One Day at a Time

Three Rivers Intergroup Newsletter



Letter from the Editor

Hello my fellow OA's,

Spring has arrived, what a wonderful time. I hope you have found time to enjoy the sun.

In this issue you will find words of encouragement from

members right here at home.

There is something for the newcomer, something for the men, and words from some-one with many years of abstinence under their belt..

Please take their words of wisdom to heart and use them in your program.

Thank you,
Justine W.
Editor

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Overeaters Anonymous Preamble

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating com-

pulsively. There are no dues of fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political

movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues.

Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over food, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrong.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcoming.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it..
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

I came to OA in the late 1970s. I had the good fortune to walk into a Step meeting that became my home group, and I soon realized the Steps would change my life. I thought everyone else had the “handbook for life” and I never got my copy. The Steps were the handbook I had been seeking.

I was skeptical about the first three Steps, but I jumped into my Fourth-Step inventory. My wise sponsor told me to take a sheet of paper, draw a line down the middle, and put my positive traits on one side and negatives on the other. I had to list a strength before each weakness so I could end up with an extra positive or an equal number of positives and negatives, but I could not get more negatives than positives.

I was prepared to list numerous defects, but couldn’t write them down unless I came up with a strength

first. That forced me to own talents and strengths I had ignored or undervalued.

The first Fourth Step was simple (not easy) and quick. In one evening I saw myself in a new light. I realized how far off-track my life was and how it happened. I began a major course correction to get it back on track. Later inventories delved into specific issues, but that quick, one-hour inventory was the one that saved my life.

It pains me to see what has happened to the fourth Step in our Fellowship. Guides and books have proliferated, along with worksheets and lists of questions covering every possible crime or mistake. Newcomers compare themselves to others’ list instead of fearlessly searching within to uncover issues and defects. This takes the searching out of the Step and adds to fears, one of the biggest being the notion of a right or wrong way to do this Step.

The Fourth Step need not be a huge, tedious assignment bogged down by perfectionism, avoidance and procrastination. I hear of people who so concerned about doing it right they take a year or more to do an inventory, or they never get it done before deciding this program doesn’t work and dropping out. . . .

The AA Big Book describes a simple chart for an inventory that allows the person in question to do the searching. I suggest to my sponsees that their Fourth Step should uncover the big issues affecting them right now. A Fourth Step is not an autobiography of every mistake we’ve made. It’s a look at what kind of person we are and what the consequences of our character are—an inventory, not a history text.

After dealing with our inventory results through the rest of the Steps, we can catch the issues that will inevitably surface, using either the Tenth Step or, if needed, a repeated Fourth Step

Joanne H. Columbia, Maryland
March/April Lifeline 2008

I haven't graduated yet.



Experience Speaks

You would think after 20+ years in program, I would have learned what I came here for and could "move on" in life. I did learn what I wanted to learn, but I learned much more and that's why I'm still here at OA meetings and still working an OA program.

My question when I came to OA was this: "Why do I overeat?" I remember saying and have heard it said by others since then: "I just wish I knew *why* I eat so much."

I didn't have to be in the OA program very long before I learned many of the reasons why I overeat. You know them, so I'll just list a few favorites: I eat because I'm tired, lonely, happy, sad, bored, and/or resentful. Something I also learned is that my "allergy" to some foods has the reaction of making me want more and more of them.

I learned why I eat...but that didn't stop my overeating. Have you ever thought this while overeating: "I'm eating right now because I'm so aggravated with my job/spouse/kids/self..."? I've sure done that!

So I'm still here after learning why I eat. What do I do, then, to get what I need out of this program? I know I won't "graduate", so

I need to make this a one-day-at-a-time program that I can live with each day.

My answer for anyone who wants to work the program is this: Work the steps and use the tools. Sounds simple enough! It takes effort, though. Working the steps means reading and writing, talking with someone (usually a sponsor) and changing your life. Using the tools helps that happen. There are eight tools and here they are, briefly: go to meetings, get a (good) sponsor, read the AA & OA literature, take time to write, practice anonymity, have and use a food plan, offer your service, and make phone calls to other OA's. (See the pamphlet on the Tools for more information.)

The words we often close our meetings with come to mind here: It works if you work it. The other words I like to share are these: Don't leave before the miracle happens. If you're not getting it, just keep at it. Keep coming back to our meetings and keep talking to other OA's. Its worth it...you're worth it. You can have serenity and peace concerning food. You can be a healthy, normal weight. You may not graduate, but you'll get a great ongoing life education and many other blessings you might not have ever imagined.

Debra M.

MARK YOUR CALENDERS

- Blooming In Recovery will be in Goshen on Saturday, April 10, from 9 - 3 with three area speakers. Flyers are available. The fee is \$10, but no one will be turned away. Car pool. Bring lunch or see list of local restaurants to be provided
 - 16th -18th 18th Annual Spring Retreat Central Indiana IG Flat Rock YWCA
 - Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting 26 April 2010
 - May 8th Workshop—Spring into recovery Michigan City Monday Night Meeting, Michigan City, IN
 - June 19th A gathering of Men in Recovery, Turning Point Intergroup, Chicago, IL
 - July 9—10 Region 5 Business Assembly, Region 5 board, Fort Wayne, IN
 - Hoosier Day of Recovery 26 June 2010
 - 15-17 October 2010 Region 5 Convention in Dearborn Michigan
- Please see Region 5 website for more information!***

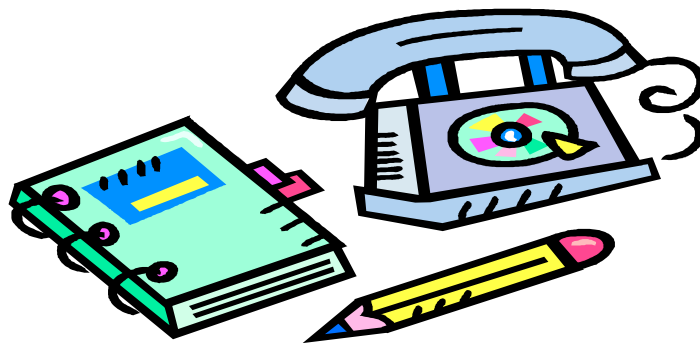
Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting List

Day and Time	City	Location	Meeting Type	Contact
Monday 7:15-8:15 pm	Fort Wayne	<u>Park Center</u> 909 E. State Street #03792 Greenly Bldg. Room 105 <i>Kinship Room</i>	Big Book meeting	
6:15-7:15	Fort Wayne	<u>Park Center</u> 909 E. State Street #09145 Greenly Bldg. Rm 105 <i>Kinship Room</i>	Intergroup meeting -- <i>Last Monday of the month</i>	Ron (260) 704-0453
6:00-7:00 pm	Elkhart	<u>1st Presbyterian Church</u> 200 East Beardsley Room 107 #02327	Format varies	Debbie (574) 266-8710
6:00-7:00 pm	Portland	<u>Mt. Zion Lutheran Church</u> 218 E. High Street #45129	Format varies	Judy (260) 726-9187
Tuesday 7:00-8:00 pm	Garrett	<u>St. Joseph Parish Center</u> #33135 300 W. Houston Street	Big Book study	Gene L. (260) 357-4189
Wednesday 6:30-7:30 pm	Fort Wayne	<u>St. John's Lutheran</u> 729 Washing- ton (meeting in small house next to playground) #47393	Step Study OA 12 & 12	Ron M. (260) 704-0453
Thursday 5:30 pm	Culver	<u>Culver Public Library</u> 107 N. Main St. #47753		Chris (574) 850-3914
6:00 pm	Mentone	<u>Bell Memorial Public Library</u> 101 W. Main Street #49706		Amy (574) 551-0727
Friday Noon	Fort Wayne	<u>Reliable Cleaning</u> 1015 Production Rd (Door on right, end of hall, turn right, last door on left– Board Room) #00256	Big Book meeting, bring abstinent lunch	Ron M. (260) 704-0453
Saturday 9:00- 10:00 am	Fort Wayne	<u>Parkview YMCA</u> (off of DuPont Road) Turn right as soon as you come in the front doors. #37739	For Today — <i>Speaker 1st Sat of Month</i>	Patty (260) 241-6009 Also Debra M.
10:00 am	Goshen	<u>Trinity Lutheran Church</u> 202 S. Greene Road	OA 12 & 12	Kevin (574) 533-3777

Three Rivers Intergroup We Care List

Name	Phone	E-mail	Sponsor	Best time to call
Bethanie	Cell: (260) 494-7093	hirschelmanb@comcast.net	yes	Anytime
Debra M.	(260) 492-2581	itsdebra@comcast.net	yes	Before 9 pm
Diane	(260) 627-3324	Dlallen54@verizon.net		
Gary (Indy area)	(765) 621-2115	renindy@sbcglobal.net	yes	
Jerri W.	(260) 471-4432	Jerri_tnm@verizon.net	No	Before 9 pm
Justine	(260) 415- 8085	nmrk.justine@gmail.com	no	
Kevin G. Goshen	(574) 606-8926	kevin@kevingross.net	yes	
Lynn	(260) 426-1111	jo58LYNNE@aol.com	no	
Marilyn	(260) 432-8313	marilyn313@verizon.net		anytime
Marti	(260) 755-0550	tlk2mne@comcast.net	yes	
Patty	(260) 241-6009	PDBPDQ@hotmail.com	Yes	Before 9 pm
Ron	(260) 704-0453	rvmausser@msn.com	yes	
Sally	(260) 623-3485	sasti_is_back@yahoo.com	yes	until 9 pm
Tricia	(260) 489-0537	tricia1012@aol.com	no	

Have your
number
we care list



name and
added to the

**SECRETARY'S REPORT – MINUTES OF THE
OA THREE RIVERS INTERGROUP MEETING
22 FEBRUARY 2010**

Ron M, Chair, opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer at 6:15 PM. Those present were: Ron M. - Chair, Kevin – Vice Chair, Mary M-S - Secretary, Marilyn – Wed Rep, Lynne - Monday Rep, Suzette – Tues. rep, Paula and Jennifer representing themselves. The minutes from the January 25, 2010 Intergroup meeting were submitted by Ron M. and Mary M-S and approved with a typographical correction.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented. The checking account balance as of February 17, 2010 was \$604.37

Telephone Committee Report:

Ron received two calls; **Marilyn** received one. Ron didn't get to call Sally.

Literature Report:

Marilyn said there was nothing to report. She said we have a large supply of pamphlets and brought them for reps and members to have and to bring to meetings for free distribution. She asked to be advised if anyone needs books.

Newsletter Report:

No report. The newsletter was published in February and will be available online. Justine is looking for input for the newsletter.

Old Business

Goshen Workshop: *Blooming In Recovery*

Kevin reported *Blooming In Recovery* will be in Goshen on Saturday, April 10, from 9 - 3 with three area speakers. Flyers are available. The fee is \$10, but no one will be turned away. Car pool. Bring lunch or see list of local restaurants to be provided.

Financial Audit Report:

Mary M-S reported she and Patty B met to do the Financial Audit, which will be completed by the next Intergroup meeting.

Report on assessing interest in developing an outreach program:

Ron reported 3 people interested in Outreach: Jeri, Paula, Mary M-S. World Service and Region 5 have materials to distribute to radio stations and/or for podcasts, etc. Very short discussion ensued on simple means of distributing pamphlets, and putting brief ads in newspapers.

Related was a short discussion on ways to reduce costs, in particular the monthly phone answering service cost.

NEW BUSINESS

Suggestion to assess interest in local Fort Wayne event:

Short conversation about, and encouragement of, informal gatherings occurred. Paula invited members to her home for such a gathering.

Meetings Rep Forum:

General comments and conversation on:

- Someone needs a sponsor
 - Phone calls working well
 - Someone talks to another daily on BB or other topic they read together
 - Someone uses email
- Someone speaks to another OA daily to create a focus for the day

Key Dates:

- Next Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting 29 March 2010
 - Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting 26 April 2010
 - Hoosier Day of Recovery 26 June 2010
- 15-17 October 2010 Region 5 Convention in Dearborn Michigan

Ron adjourned meeting at 7:12 PM with Roseanne's Promise.
Respectfully submitted, Mary M-S, secretary

FOR THE NEWCOMER

I was asked to write on what it was like for me as a newcomer and what I feel newcomers need to survive. So as a newcomer I was sick and tired of feeling sick and tired. I was so tired of not liking who I was when I got out of bed, not liking who I was in the mirror, not liking who I was when I went to the closet, not liking who I was when I had to go shopping for some clothes, not liking who I was when I looked at a picture of me, not liking who I was when I ate whatever it was that I had just baked or bought, not wanting to share any of it, but had to because I had little ones watching me. You see when I ate I liked to hide, eat alone, eat large quantities, I could not stop, I wanted more.

We were members of the YMCA when it was brought to my attention by my thoughtful husband that there was an OA meeting there. I knew I needed to go and try it. I had attended **ONE, ONLY ONE** OA meeting **before about 10 years prior**. Back then I knew what I was eating was bad for me, but I couldn't put the food down, but I never really tried. So in that 10 year time frame I gained about 70lbs., putting me over 200lbs. Having been familiar with 12-Step programs I knew I needed to put the food down! Cold Turkey! Quit! Just like an alcoholic needs to stop drinking, I need to put my "alcoholic" food down. Today! Not tomorrow, tomorrow may never come! So I went to my first (technically my second) meeting. I was shocked when I walked into the room, I was the heaviest person there. I felt awkward. Everyone just listened to everyone and nodded.

So how did I make it....I remembered from the other 12-Step programs this key phrase **TRY THE MEETINGS FOR 6 MEETINGS and if you don't feel it is for you then they will refund my misery. "KEEP COMING BACK" it works IF you work it.** How do you work it? I had to talk to other OA members after the meeting to find out what they did. If I want what they have, I have to do what they did. I was told **DON'T QUIT BEFORE THE MIRACLE HAPPENS!** I heard from others their miracle stories. Their weight lose success, their restored relationships, their increased self-esteem.

So what did I do....I put the sugar down. I asked a lady to be my sponsor. I do what my sponsor tells me to do (I may be a little slow at times, but I do it). I talked to others to find out what they ate. This is what I heard: whole foods, protein, fruits, vegetables, at every meal. I needed to re-learn how to eat healthy. If God made it, it was good. God doesn't make junk. I went to a dietician to learn and get information, however there was sugary stuff in there menu/ideas. But I knew not to eat it just because they said I could, because I knew I was different, I can not eat sugar. But by going I found out some good information about portions etc. I went to **MORE THAN ONE OA MEETING**. I went to all of them for a while. I prayed the Serenity Prayer over and over minute after minute to get me through until the craving past. I walked into a different room when others were eating foods that I could not handle. I stopped baking. I wrote in a notebook about my feelings, how difficult it was to put the food down, how much I wanted whatever it was, how angry I was. I chewed sugar-free gum for quite awhile when I felt a craving or felt stressed. I found for me that sugar-free gum was the only "sugar-free" item that I could handle. The other items I over ate or over drank or it caused cravings or made me feel hungry.

In the beginning I recording my weight on the calendar weekly. I was losing weight by the grace of God and OA. It was nothing I could have done on my own. The weight just started melting off. Later I only recorded my weight monthly. I was told to only weigh myself monthly it is healthier for me so I wasn't obsessing over a number. Once I started losing weight I thought maybe I should set a goal weight. I achieved it, and actually passed it, God has my weight under control, not I. Had I started off with a goal weight in mind I would of said **NO WAY**. It was too overwhelming for me.

I started liking the person I saw in the mirror. She looked familiar, I didn't see a stranger in the mirror anymore. I started liking to go clothes shopping. I liked who I saw in pictures. The Miracle was happening the OA promise was coming true!

Now I have slipped...don't get me wrong. I am not perfect. The program is progress not perfection! What saved me though is that I continued coming to meetings. **I kept coming back no matter what!** My first slip was about 5 months, my second slip was one day, my third slip was about a year on again off again.

I have seen many people come and go in the program. Some never come back. Some don't really work the program. The program is not magic. You do have to work it. I was told at an OA Convention (which I would highly recommend) **"GET A SPONSOR, WORK THE STEPS!"** If I leave the program, I know the only place I will go is up on the scale and down on my self.

I thank my Higher Power and OA! They are saving my life! I have a deadly disease that is being arrested for today. Live for today, today is all we have.

Jerri W.

SOMETHING FOR THE MEN

Acceptance Was Needed Before I Could Work the 12 Steps

I can remember being one of only a couple of men in the OA rooms when I first came to OA in 1998. Of course, the rooms were not exactly overflowing with any recovering people of either sex, but there was enough for me if only I would look, learn and act. I followed a food plan, got a sponsor and began to work the steps and the weight poured off, but after awhile something was missing.

I had become obedient but I didn't believe. Sometimes, I thought that I was so unique that only the exact mirror of my life could reflect my image of me in a way I could see and accept. I blinded myself to what HP offered me in those around me. The truth was that I could see a part of me in every broken, shattered mirror of the life of those who entered the rooms and were willing to be honest about their relationship with food and the damage that distorted relationship had inflicted on themselves and others.

I was blind and could not see the path to recovery. But, one day I came to believe what I read in the AA Big Book. The Doctors opinion claimed I had a disease and Chapter 2 said there was a solution. It was only after accepting those facts that my food plan became more than a diet and meetings became a source of encouragement and the steps could be worked beyond the first three. When my program stalls and I need a boost, my experience leads me back to those two foundational concepts – I am sick and there is a solution. On that foundation I can take the steps leading to a daily reprieve from the insanity of a life driven by a desire to hide in food.

Ron M – Fort Wayne

About the Monarch Monthly

*To be included on the We Care List please send your information to the Editor: nmrk.justine@gmail.com or the PO Box below.

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Fort Wayne, IN 46854-0823
(260) 460-4958



Regional website: www.region5oa.org	www.oa.org
OA's website:	

Disclaimer: The Monarch Monthly is the Three Rivers Intergroup publication for compulsive overeaters. The contributions and articles of the newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole. Materials submitted to the Monarch Monthly cannot be returned. In most cases, if material is edited in some way, it will be for grammar/typos. Those who have submitted material will be apprised of all other changes. Permission to reprint all material in the Monarch Monthly is automatically granted to all anonymous groups, providing proper

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