



April 2022

How OA Changed My Life

Monarch Monthly



The Three Rivers Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous Serving Northeast Indiana and Beyond

Share Favorite Slogans	pg 4
Share Favorite Big Book Quotes	pg 4
Next Newsletter Topic	pg 5
Three Rivers Intergroup News.....	pg 5



Always Remember

I remember the yesterdays. "Help me in the kitchen, Lord. I can't go there by myself." That was more than half a lifetime ago, before I knew I had a disease and felt like a failure. Our stories will differ, but none of us wants to relive the pain.

To quote Spanish philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

My first meeting was informative, enlightening, and motivating. It truly was a new beginning for the rest of my life. I plowed through the AA Twelve Steps, no thought of waiting. I used the tools every day, even though I could only get to the Tuesday night meeting for the first five months. I listened carefully to anyone speaking on relapse, because I wanted to learn from their experience (soft lesson) rather than suffer myself (hard lesson).

I have long volunteered to be Newcomer Greeter and have made it a habit to call new members and those who are struggling in our meetings. I have sponsored since the first time through the Steps at five months and speak when asked. Do I mess up? Thank you, God, for Step Ten, Sponsors, and Tradition Ten. Do I have food thoughts? Sometimes, but the hum of background music is no comparison to the siren song of the yesterdays.

Today I have a choice, and I choose freedom from food obsession: eat when hungry, sit at the table,

moderate amounts of foods I enjoy preparing, and fill up on the people and experiences God brings into my life. I remember the yesterdays. I celebrate today.

—N.J., Illinois



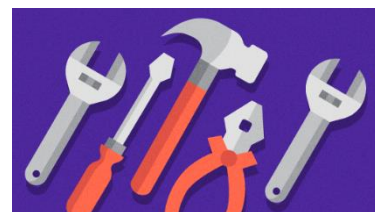
Express Lane to Recovery

How did OA save my life? I could write for days on

this topic. The 12 step program gave me an express path through the grief and pain and anger and damage of my past to a way to heal and recover and forgive and feel good. The 12 simple steps and particularly Step 4 provided a structure to that thing called "recovery".

And along the way, I learned about the food and the problems I had with it. Food, so simple and yet so difficult. I had struggled to manage food for over 20 years when I came to OA. Here I learned about compulsive eating. I learned how a plan of eating tailored for my needs could set me free from the bondage of food obsession that I had when I came. Thinking about food all day every day. What a terrible waste of precious time and energy. Using food to deal with the strong emotions I felt, using food to deal with the ups and downs of life. Not having any tools to use but food. How sad and painful it was.

OA recovery has given me the tools to use to deal with life. The plan of eating was the foundation. The eating disorder nutritionist that



my sponsor used was the first step to finding freedom.

I didn't know that I was sensitive to ingredients in food and was addicted to them. This knowledge gave me the power to remove these foods from my life. On the other side of that withdrawal was the ability to choose healthy food in moderate amounts and the freedom from food obsession. This was life changing and life-saving.

But there was more. The 12 steps and working them with my sponsor and with a group gave me tools to heal my past pain and live in today.

But there was more. Today I am happy, joyous and free. I live a high-quality life with much gratitude. I have a personal and intimate relationship with my higher power who I call God. I did not have a relationship with God

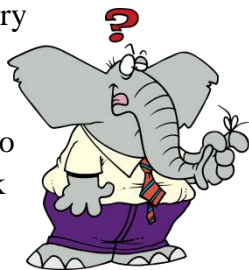


when I came. I had a hole in my soul that I tried to fill with food. And it never worked. Today, that hole in my soul is filled with an abundant relationship

with God. That hole in me was God-sized and today God fills it.

But there was more. Today I have rich friendships and relationships with people I met in the rooms of the program. These people are living life richly in recovery and bring joy and hope and fun and energy into my life. I don't want to live life without these rich relationships today.

After looking at all that, I am so very grateful to be a recovering compulsive overeater. I remind myself of this each morning so that I do not forget. I never want to go back to where I was before I came. I plan to keep coming back!



— DH

Enriched in Change

Before I came to OA, I was of no use to myself or anyone else. The disease was making my life smaller and smaller, focusing more and more on the food and less and less on everything else. It felt like I was just marking time, just existing to get to the next day. I definitely wasn't living.

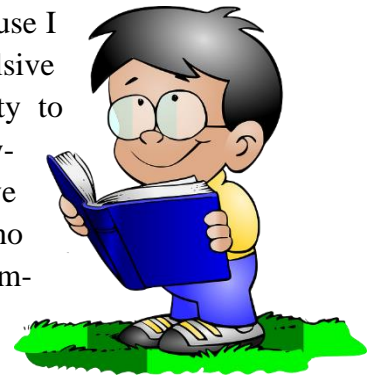


Then I started going to OA meetings. The first thing I remember changing was that I was no longer alone. I had thought I was the only one who did the crazy things with

food that I did. OA proved that wasn't true. There were so many of us that they even printed books for us! It felt wonderful to know I was no longer alone.

Next, I realized these OAers cared about me. They genuinely seemed to be glad I was there. I had believed I was a terrible person. But these OAers seemed to love me. I had to ask myself, "What is the chance that everyone in the meetings is wrong and I am right about being a terrible person?" I had to finally accept that maybe I was okay and maybe even lovable.

Next OA told me that because I was a recovering compulsive overeater, I had the ability to carry the message of recovery to other compulsive overeaters in a way that no professional or family member could. I carried a message that could save someone's life! I had something life-saving to offer!



OA was a wonderful relationship sandbox where I could learn how to relate to others in healthy ways. OA taught me a lot about relating to others. After being in OA for 6 years or so I started dating again after not having dated for over a decade. I met my wife and after 4 years we were married. I know there was no



way I could have gotten into or maintained a close relationship before OA.

OA has been a wonderful training ground in many

other ways. When a task needs to be done, OAers usually don't ask if I am qualified. They only ask if I am willing to try. That has been helpful in letting go of my perfectionism. In the past I didn't want to do things that I couldn't do perfectly right away or at least very soon. I deprived myself of a great many opportunities that way. But in OA I don't have to do things perfectly. I just have to be willing to try. Accepting that I'm not a pro at some of the tasks I take on makes it a lot easier to admit when I have made a mistake. OAers are very accepting and tolerant when I make mistakes. I learn a lot more that way than by trying to hide my mistakes.

Ah, perfectionism. I could write a whole article on how that one thing has changed. I can think of three things that I have learned in OA that have helped me break down the walls of perfectionism.

I may make a mistake, but I am not a mistake.

Wow! That really touched me when I first heard it. I had always thought that every mistake I made just proved over and over again what a flawed, damaged person I was. I tried hard to hide my mistakes because it was just so heartbreaking to see another example of my flawed existence. But OAers let me know I was okay, just the way I was. I wasn't a mistake or a flawed creation. I may have made mistakes but that didn't change the fact that I was okay, that I was lovable.

What other people think of me is none of my business. Yet another big wow! I was a people pleaser. I always wanted people to think well of me and say good things about me so I could feel good about myself. The trouble was I could never please everyone. Even when I came close the cost to me was very high. I could not sustain it. Then OA taught me that what really mattered was how I thought about myself. If I wanted to feel good about myself, to have self-esteem,

then I needed to act in ways that were esteemable, in ways that made me feel good about myself. Talk about sudden 180 degree turns! I had to focus on doing things I could be proud of. It wasn't good enough if people just thought good things about me. I had to convince my toughest critic, me! Thank HP! I have found it so much easier to gain self-esteem by acting esteemable than by trying to get those feelings begging compliments from other people I am trying to please.



Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly. Another big wow! The perfectionist in me always said, "If you can't do it perfectly don't bother trying!" As I said earlier, this attitude deprived me of many valuable experiences before OA. What a different way of thinking! If something is worth doing then it is worth doing even if I can't do it very well. Suddenly I had permission to try even if I couldn't do it perfectly right away. I could try even if I couldn't do it perfectly soon. I could try even if I would never be able to do it very well! The important thing was if it was worth doing then it was worth doing no matter how well it turned out. I had to remember, HP asks me to do the footwork. The outcome is his responsibility, not mine.



— KG

OA Has Saved My Life



OA has given me life, saved my life and given my life true meaning and direction. For this I am eternally grateful and full of awe about the goodness and greatness of my Higher Power – God.

I have always been goal oriented and subsequently always tried to fix, manage and control the external. When things did not go my way I was angry, disappointed, bitter, jealous and full of self-pity. Only after

being totally defeated would I give up and I was too blind to recognize that situations always worked out.

Incorporating the Steps in my life has given me a design for living that I would not trade for anything in the world. God was always there, I just did not recognize the power available to me. I was so busy playing God to myself and everyone around me.

Today I admit my powerlessness and have a connection with the power that has saved me from this deadly disease. This is a power that guides and directs my life on a daily basis. I am not perfect and my self-will crops back up. I can tell when I'm off center by doing a daily 10th Step and I can get back on track. The joy of daily communion with my Higher Power strengthens my connection and enables me to carry the message that recovery is guaranteed if the Steps are taken and lived. I am a new creature. Food no longer runs my life and I am so thankful. I had to learn the program works not because I need it, but because I want it. It works because today I am willing to do the required actions as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and the OA 12&12. I am no longer ashamed of the way I look and I don't need extensions when I fly. I have been relieved of 100+ pounds since 1993 and I have become a lap-distance swimmer. These are OA miracles! I can't begin to say thanks enough.

-Nancy R.

The Wisdom of 12 Step Slogans

Compared to many, the past few years have not been extremely difficult for me. No one close to me got seriously ill or died from COVID, I have a loving family, I am content in my small retirement apartment and my daily needs are met. However, I have been more



stressed than usual lately. The pain and grief caused by the worldwide pandemic and this current war are overwhelming. I worry about how my grandchildren will cope in the world they live in.

One thing that keeps me abstinent at times like this is remembering the wisdom in our slogans.

Taking life **one day at a time** (or one hour or one minute at a time) helps me **keep it simple** and **just do the next right thing**. I tend to make life too complicated as my brain comes up with the correct answers and only solution for any situation (a favorite character defect). I get upset when a neighbor, grandchild or politician does not agree with me or do what I want them to do. This is when I need to remember that I am not only powerless over food, I am powerless over other people, places and things. To stay in recovery and maintain my abstinence, I can pray, focus on this moment and use the tools we have been given.

I am aware that when I was active in my disease, my life was the opposite of most of our slogans. (My 1st and 4th steps prove this!) Now I try to get out of my head and live from my heart. My relationship with my HP enables me to seek the wisdom of this program, practice my new ways of responding to life and be grateful for the serenity and joy I experience, even during difficult times.

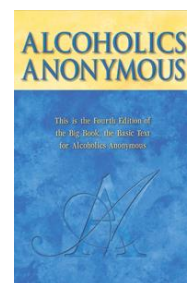
— Joyce H.

Share Your Favorite Slogans!

Please share your favorite slogans with us along with why you like them. Send to:

newsletter@3riversOA.org

Can't remember your favorite slogans? Go to 3riversoa.org/oa-slogans for a list of over 200 slogans to jog your memory.



Big Book Quotes Needed!

Do you have some favorite quotes from the AA Big Book? We now have a section in the newsletter for people's favorite Big Book quotes! Please include the page number and a little about why you like it, if you are willing. Send them to:

newsletter@3riversOA.org and keep them coming.

May Newsletter



Surrender and Serenity

The May Monarch Monthly topic will be " Surrender and Serenity."

Surrender is the key to OA recovery, and serenity is the benefit. How did you surrender to a Power greater than yourself? Have you surrendered more than once? How has willingness played a role? How has surrender and willingness helped you choose recovery and self-

care? How did you find serenity, and how has it appeared in your life?

Articles are due **Thursday, April 21st**. Thanks for making our newsletter great! Send articles to: newsletter@3RiversOA.org



Intergroup News

Bank Account Register

Initial Balance: \$4,269.51

Three Rivers Intergroup

January-2022

Corrected

Current Balance: \$4,483.76

Check	Date	Description	Category	Withdrawal	Deposit	Balance
	1/1/2022	Beginning Balance				\$4,269.51
	1/10/2022	7th Tradition	Gosh Sat #22495		\$130.22	\$4,399.73
	1/24/2022	7th Tradition	Member Donation		\$18.81	\$4,418.54
	1/24/2022	7th Tradition	Gosh Wed #89142		\$65.22	\$4,483.76
						\$4,483.76
						\$4,483.76
						\$4,483.76
						\$4,483.76
	1/31/2022	Ending Balance				\$4,483.76
Totals				\$0.00	\$214.25	\$4,483.76

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
New Meeting Startup	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Newsletter	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	0.0%
Public Information	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	0.0%
Region 5 Assembly	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	0.0%
Website Hosting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$105.00	0.0%
Workshop Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Zoom/Phone Conf Srvc	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	0.0%
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Year End Donations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,164.51	0.0%
Payment Total	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,269.51	0.0%

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
FW Mon #03792	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$77.73	0.0%
Elk Mon #02327	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$518.22	0.0%
FW MonN #57032	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$251.20	0.0%
Gosh Wed #89142	\$65.22	\$65.22	\$150.34	43.4%
Ga Thur #51350	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
FW Thur #54657	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$127.48	0.0%
FW Sat #37739	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$420.46	0.0%
Gosh Sat #22495	\$130.22	\$130.22	\$498.76	26.1%
Member Donation	\$18.81	\$18.81	\$340.26	5.5%
Workshop Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.55	0.0%
Deposit Total	\$214.25	\$214.25	\$2,400.00	8.9%

Bank Account Register

Three Rivers Intergroup

February-2022

Initial Balance: \$4,483.76

Current Balance: \$1,917.07

Check	Date	Description	Category	Withdrawal	Deposit	Balance
	2/1/2022	Beginning Balance				\$4,483.76
134	2/9/2022	Donation to WSO	Year End Donations	\$1,623.38		\$2,860.38
135	2/9/2022	Donation to Region 5	Year End Donations	\$541.31		\$2,319.07
136	2/13/2022	Mid-West Family Radio Ads	Public Information	\$500.00		\$1,819.07
	2/14/2022	7th Tradition	FW MonN #57032		\$98.00	\$1,917.07
						\$1,917.07
						\$1,917.07
						\$1,917.07
	2/28/2022	Ending Balance				\$1,917.07
Totals				\$2,664.69	\$98.00	\$1,917.07

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
New Meeting Startup	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Newsletter	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	0.0%
Public Information	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$750.00	66.7%
Region 5 Assembly	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	0.0%
Website Hosting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$105.00	0.0%
Workshop Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Zoom/Phone Conf Srvc	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	0.0%
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Year End Donations	\$2,164.69	\$2,164.69	\$2,164.51	100.0%
Payment Total	\$2,664.69	\$2,664.69	\$4,269.51	62.4%

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
FW Mon #03792	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$77.73	0.0%
Elk Mon #02327	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$518.22	0.0%
FW MonN #57032	\$98.00	\$98.00	\$251.20	39.0%
Gosh Wed #89142	\$0.00	\$65.22	\$150.34	43.4%
Ga Thur #51350	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
FW Thur #54657	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$127.48	0.0%
FW Sat #37739	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$420.46	0.0%
Gosh Sat #22495	\$0.00	\$130.22	\$498.76	26.1%
Member Donation	\$0.00	\$18.81	\$340.26	5.5%
Workshop Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.55	0.0%
Deposit Total	\$98.00	\$312.25	\$2,400.00	13.0%

There were no financial transactions in the month of March. -Kevin G, Treasurer

Three Rivers Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

Minutes from January 31, 2022

This meeting was held on Zoom

Meeting ID: 966 0796 9857

Meeting Passcode: 260574

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96607969857?pwd=R3Z0a0N2THkwaFQrMURCZUdzdmhzZz09>

Meeting opened at 8 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer.

Attendance, Positions, and Meetings Represented:

- **Chairperson-** Debra M. – Fort Wayne. Mon. Noon
- **Vice Chair -** Christina H. – Not Present
- **Secretary -** Susan H. – Not Present
- **Treasurer -** Kevin G. - Goshen. Wed. 12:30 p.m. and Sat. Goshen 10:00 a.m.
- **Region 5 Rep -** Suzette R. – Took notes for Christina – Thursday Garrett has not restarted yet.

Today's agenda was accepted with changes; Kevin made motion, Joyce seconded. The motion passed.

Minutes from November 29, 2021 (by Suzette): Kevin made a motion and Joyce seconded that the minutes be accepted with change. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report was given by Kevin. There were no questions. Suzette made a motion, which was seconded by Joyce, that the report be accepted without changes. After a vote, the report was accepted without changes.

Region 5 Representative Report: Suzette had no new report.

Newcomer Report:

- Elkhart Monday = 0 via Joyce
- Fort Wayne Monday noon = 0 via Debra
- Fort Wayne Monday night = NC via Jan
- Goshen Wednesday = 0 via Kevin
- Fort Wayne Thursday = Jan
- Garrett Thursday = Suzette stated this meeting is hoping to start in January ● Fort Wayne Saturday = 1 via Christina
- Goshen Saturday = 0 via Kevin

Newsletter Report:

- Kevin stated that articles for the February 2022 newsletter are due on January 27, 2022. The topic of the newsletter will be **Using OA Slogans**. Please let your meetings know.

New Business:

- Officer elections. Debra M. will be in her 2nd term as Chairperson. Christina H. will be in her 1st term as Vice Chairperson. Susan will be in her 1st term as Secretary. Kevin G. will be in his 2nd term as treasurer. Suzette R. will be in her 1st term as Region 5 Rep.
- An e-ballot will be sent by Kevin to the members in attendance at this evening's meeting. An addendum will be made to these minutes to list the results. ● Zoom meeting concerns – Kevin stated that in the short term, we have changed the passwords to the 3 Rivers meetings. We have published the information with WSO, and our site.
- Debbie has been working on radio spots for the Goshen/Elkhart area.

Adjournment:

Joyce made a motion, which was seconded by Kevin, that the meeting be adjourned. We closed with the OA Promise.

RESULTS OF ELECTION:

Chair: Debra M.

Vice Chair: Christina H.

Secretary: Susan

Treasurer: Kevin G.

Region 5 Rep: Suzette R.

Yours in service,
Suzette R. for Susan H.

Need Help Finding a Sponsor?

Having trouble finding a sponsor? Now you can request help from Region 5 OA. Just go to the following link and enter your information: region5oa.org/request-for-assistance-in-find-a-sponsor

Would You Like to Check Out Our Intergroup Meeting?

We meet on the last Monday of the month (except December) at 8pm via Zoom. All in our Intergroup area are welcome! Just click [Zoom Meeting](#). If prompted for an ID or passcode use:

ID: **966 0796 9857** and Passcode: **260574**.

Email chair@3riversOA.org ahead of time to ask for the documents that will be used in the meeting.

Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting List

Instead of including a meeting list that may be out of date before it is even sent out, we recommend you rely on the master meeting list on our website for meeting information. Please go to: 3riversoa.org/meetings.

Donations to the Three Rivers Intergroup

You can make online donations with a credit/debit card to the Three Rivers Intergroup by going to: 3riversOA.org and clicking the "Donate" link. You can also mail a check. Go to: 3riversOA.org and click the Contact Us link to get the mailing address.

Region 5 Website: Region5oa.org

OA World Service Office Website: OA.org

Three Rivers Intergroup
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(260) 203-1199

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