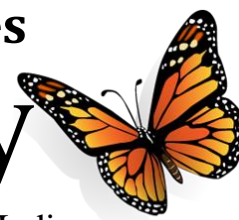




March 2021

Setting Healthy Boundaries

# Monarch Monthly



The Three Rivers Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous Serving Northeast Indiana

Twelfth Step Within .....	pg 4
Region 5 Newsletter Blog .....	pg 4
Can't Read the Newsletter Online? .....	pg 4
Sunday Morning Coffee & Recovery Mtg ...	pg 4
Region 5 Assembly Free to Visitors .....	pg 4
Big Book Quotes Needed.....	pg 4
Intergroup Meeting Minutes .....	pg 5
Treasurers Report .....	pg 5



## The Art of People Pleasing

Before I took my first baby step, I had mastered the art of people pleasing. Learning how to set boundaries was equal to climbing Mount Everest backwards with my hands tied behind my back, and blindfolded. Of course, the more I practiced my addiction, the more perfect I became at people pleasing. The more clarity I gained through abstinence, the more painful people pleasing became.

I daily choose abstinence because I do not want to lose the clarity of mind that I now possess. Sure, it is painful at times. However, there is pain, and then there is pain. Which pain is less painful?

You figure it out!

— BobbieLee

## I Needed Boundaries



For a time, “Just quit, Nanc” and “Turn out the light” were written on cardstock in different working areas of my home. Entrepreneurship has its advantages, but also its stressors. Some are self-imposed, like the 20-hour workday, seven days a week. I love my

profession and am only steps away from the planning table or office desk. Inspirational words or thoughts or a client telephoning can leave cleaning or bookkeeping till whenever. Character defects of too available, too flexible, and perfectionism were robbing me of much needed sleep. The realization came that in setting boundaries, I needed to respect myself first. I was a slave to the phone. I was the one staying up late, surrounded by books and writing lesson plans in creative bliss.

Out came the God Box and sharing journaling with my Sponsor. Action was needed. Just as I had put boundaries around food and eating behaviors, I needed to put boundaries on my time. What I was doing was good and helpful to friends, neighbors, and clients, but I was out of balance, neglecting adequate sleep and recreation. A brief inventory identified some people “would not like me.” Are they really my friends if they do not care about my health? What is in my best interest? Do I really care what they think? I am responsible for me, just as they are responsible for themselves. Just as with my above notes, self-talk said, “Knock it off, Nanc!” Our answers are within. God gives direction and guidance when we live in the quiet and listen. “.....our thinking will as time passes, be more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely on it.” (Alcoholics Anonymous p. 87)

— N.J., Illinois



## A Healthy Recovery = Healthy Relationships

Of course, working my OA program has helped my relationship with food, but one of the great gifts of recovery is my improved relationships with others.

I was active in my disease the 18 years that our daughters lived in my home. When they were young, I only worked part time. Looking back, it is painful to know that I often ignored their needs and was unable to be attentive to them because I was too busy eating. Then I would respond by overindulging them.

Another problem I had was giving too much time and energy to an individual who asked for my help or who I wanted to "fix". Then I would feel anger and resentful. I did not find the balance between doing service and also caring for my own needs.

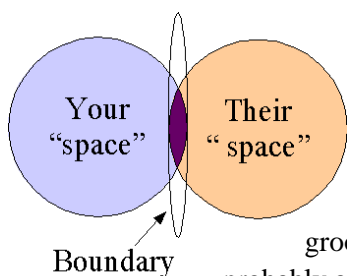
My relationships with friends and work were fairly good, but now that I'm in recovery, I wonder -- "did Jan notice that her candy dishes were almost empty after I visited her?" and "how could I have improved the work program I planned and led (like trying new things, doing some research, etc.) instead of being so concerned about finding a sugar snack?"

The 12 Step slogans have helped me learn healthy ways of relating to others. "Expectations are premeditated resentments" has been a great learning tool for me!

Learning to admit my mistakes and making amends has greatly improved my relationships with my family. They noticed and appreciated that change.

Now that I know myself better and can be honest with myself, I am better able to love and serve God and others while maintaining the healthy boundaries that help me enjoy abstinence and serenity.

— Joyce H.



## Setting Boundaries

I am a perennial people pleaser. I was raised and groomed to be one and I will probably always be one.

The daughter of a Pastor, I was aware that my behavior would reflect upon him and I never wanted to bring shame to my household. At school, I was told that my behavior would be a reflection upon the race so therefore, I not only was cognizant of my behavior but that of others of my race. What a load for a little girl to carry.

I can't blame this for my becoming a compulsive overeater, but it certainly played a significant role in my development. Becoming an overachiever and a fearful overly cautious human being was my reaction to these messages. It has taken me years of work in OA to be at peace with who I am and to accept that the world and its people, like me are imperfect.

An aspect of people pleasing is codependency and it's an ingrained character defect that I will be working on until I

die. I have gotten into many difficulties because of it. But through inventories and step work I am slowly learning to pause and seek God's guidance before I jump to the aid of relatives and friends.

I discovered that I don't like feeling bad and I had been trying to play God and solve others' problems. Not only was I trying to aid them but I was avoiding my negative feelings. I am learning that we all have to experience the vicissitudes of life, even the people that I love. That's how we grow.

Each day I pray to carry out God's will and I depend upon the 11th Step to help me with my life's decisions. Sometimes, I might need to consult with another recovered member. But God is doing for me what I could never do for myself. I keep working at it. One Day A Time. The price for this growth, is to stay out of the food and work the Steps.

— Nancy R.



## A Necessary Evil

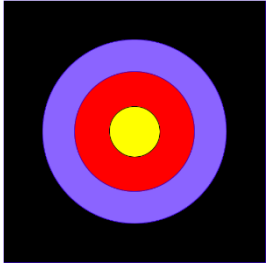
There are countless necessary evils in life and setting boundaries is just one. Here are a few necessary evils:

Finally leaving an abusive relationship, having a colonoscopy, visiting the dentist, washing a stack of dirty dishes, scrubbing the bathroom, children leaving home and you and hubby are faced to deal with "an empty nest," giving a loved one permission to die, resigning from a position that is no longer suitable, asking for a long overdue raise, etc.

Setting healthy boundaries can be very painful. Think of it as weeding a garden. If the weeds are allowed to grow, what happens? The weeds grow and grow because that is the nature of a weed. Once a weed, always a weed. Unattended or ignored, the weeds will smother, cover, and destroy healthy plants. I know that weeding is a lot of work. No sooner do I pull them all up, and they are right back in the same spot. I always have a choice. I can choose to ignore the weeds and lose my lovely plants altogether, or I can go at it and remove the weeds and enjoy the fruits of my labor.

— Bobbie Lee

**Slogan of the Month: What Other People Think of Me Is None of My Business**



## Setting Healthy Boundaries

This is a topic I knew nothing about when I came to the 12-step program. Boundaries? What was that? Yet, today I know about

setting healthy boundaries for myself. This means that I can choose the people in my inner circle, my second circle, my third circle and those that are not safe to have in any of my circles.

When I came to the program, I had many empty seats in my circles because I didn't have many friends or people who I could depend on to support me. Today, the seats in my circles are full except I keep one open for the next person I meet who belongs in that seat. This keeps me open to new friendships and relationships.

Today I have rich relationships with many program friends. This was just a dream before coming to the program. In each relationship, I can set healthy boundaries based on how close that person can get before I start to feel pain. If another person is too close, that relationship causes me pain. If I move them out into a circle further from me, then I may be able to have a pleasant relationship with them. I learn from the pain of relationships how close to let the other person get to me. This is healthy boundaries to me today.

I am so grateful because I know that other people don't change unless I change first. If I change, then the other person has to change in response. This is how healthy boundaries work for me. Maybe that relationship can improve, sometimes that happens. Sometimes I see that the other person is not safe to allow any closer. I can still love them from further away without any pain. This is the miracle of healthy boundaries for me today.

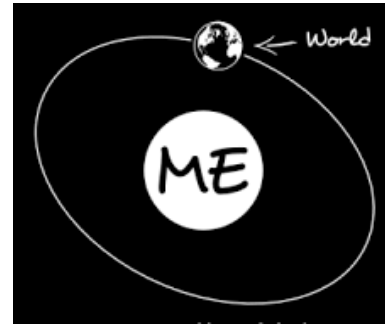
What other people think of me is none of my business.

I used to spend a lot of time thinking and worrying about what other people thought of me. Managing their perception of me was a big job. I needed to be friendly, kind, hardworking, honest, fair, reasonable and so many other things to so many people. This was exhausting and difficult. I used food to deal with the pain and to comfort myself. When were other people going to see how great I was and treat me better? It never seemed to happen. Today, I am free from that worry. I have to be accountable to God, to myself and to another human being for my behavior. I take responsibility for my choices and make amends when

I make a mistake. This sets me free from the opinions of everyone else.

It is such a gift and a joy to be free. I know today that other people can have whatever opinion of me that they choose to and it does not affect me. The same action I take may be acceptable to one person and unacceptable to another. This is their concern and not mine. I am so grateful to have this freedom today, it is a gift of recovery that I am happy to have received.

— Debbie H.



**What other people think of me is none of my business!**

I couldn't believe it the first time I heard this slogan in OA. I was 24 years old, 50 pounds overweight, and constantly concerned about what other people thought about me. I was self-conscious and fearful. At the same time, I was resentful and angry...how DARE other people think bad things about me! What did they know about me and my life? As I had heard it in meetings, I knew I was the piece of s\*\*\* the world revolved around.

Yet I took this slogan, as I did the others, and embraced it. It took a lot of work to walk from the entrance of the pool to my seat (felt like miles, but was probably 100 feet) in a swimsuit, saying to myself again and again: *What other people think of me is none of my business. What other people think of me is none of my business.* That day at the pool I knew that I was down about 20 pounds and I felt so much better, but I still figured that people were looking at me and wondering about the other 30 extra pounds. That slogan helped me put that obsessive thinking at bay.

And it still does. Thirty+ years later, my weight is at the right spot, but I don't look like I did at 24! Really, who does? But I'm better with the idea that I need to take care of myself and not worry about what other people think. I still try to do and say the right thing. I use my HP, sponsor, OA friends and others to see if I'm in the right spot. I don't have to judge myself by others' standards. I work my program one day at a time, make amends as needed, and carry on with my life.

Thank you, HP, and thank you, OA!

— Debra M.

## TWELFTH STEP WITHIN

For our 12<sup>th</sup> Step within this month, we thought it would be good to remind ourselves about the varied symptoms and characteristics of our members.

### In OA, you'll find members who are:

- Extremely overweight, even morbidly obese
- Moderately overweight
- Average weight
- Underweight

### Symptoms are as varied as our membership:

- Eating binges or grazing
- Inability to stop eating
- Fantasies about food
- Starving
- Excessive exercise
- Preoccupation with diets
- Inducing vomiting after eating
- Constant preoccupation with food
- Excessive use of diuretics and laxatives
- Obsession with body weight, size and shape
- Using food as a reward or for emotional comfort

**The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively!**

they have problems reading large amounts of text on a phone or computer screen? We would like to try sending them a printed newsletter via US Mail, if that would be helpful.

Please have them call me at 574-742-1042 and ask to be sent a printed newsletter.



## Sunday Morning Coffee & Recovery Meeting

Region 5 is hosting a Coffee and Recovery meeting every Sunday morning at 9am ET via Zoom. The topics are:

Week 1: OA 12 & 12 Step of the Month

Week 2: OA Principle of the Month

Week 3: AA Big Book Step of the Month

Week 4: Lead/Speaker Meeting

Week 5: Topic Meeting

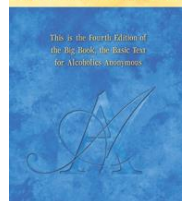
For more information go to [3riversOA.org](http://3riversOA.org) and click Events.



## Region 5 Assembly Free to Visitors

The March 12-14 Region 5 Assembly business meeting is open/free to visitors and available via Zoom. Ever curious how OA does its business? Now is the perfect time to find out! For more information go to [3riversOA.org](http://3riversOA.org) and click Events.

ALCOHOLICS  
ANONYMOUS



## Big Book Quotes Needed!

Do you have some favorite quotes from the AA Big Book? We would like to start a section in the newsletter of 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](mailto:newsletter@3riversOA.org) and keep them coming.



## Region 5 Newsletter Blog

Region 5 has started a newsletter blog on their website. It is a

collection of articles written by OA members on various topics. Right now, there are about 20 articles posted. You can also write your own articles and submit them to the newsletter blog! To read some articles go to:

[region5oa.org/freedom-from-bondage-newsletter](http://region5oa.org/freedom-from-bondage-newsletter)



## Can't Read the Newsletter Online?

Do you know of someone who can't read our newsletter online? Maybe they don't have a computer or phone capable of doing it? Maybe

**Bank Account Register**

**Three Rivers Intergroup**

**February-2021**

Initial Balance: \$3,474.67

Current Balance: \$3,779.42

Check	Date	Description	Category	Withdrawal	Deposit	Balance
	1/26/2021	Beginning Balance				\$3,474.67
	2/8/2021	7th Tradition	Member Donation		\$44.75	\$3,519.42
	2/8/2021	7th Tradition	Gosh Sat #22495		\$90.00	\$3,609.42
	2/22/2021	7th Tradition	Elk Mon #02327		\$170.00	\$3,779.42
						\$3,779.42
						\$3,779.42
						\$3,779.42
						\$3,779.42
	2/22/2021	Ending Balance				\$3,779.42
<b>Totals</b>				<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$304.75</b>	<b>\$3,779.42</b>

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
FW Mon #03792	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$217.56	0.0%
Elk Mon #02327	\$170.00	\$170.00	\$455.49	37.3%
FW MonN #57032	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	
Gosh Wed #89142	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$32.92	0.0%
Ga Thur #51350	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
FW Thur #54657	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$163.15	0.0%
FW Sat #37739	\$0.00	\$55.42	\$532.71	10.4%
Gosh Sat #22495	\$90.00	\$90.00	\$598.17	15.0%
Member Donation	\$44.75	\$54.16	\$0.00	
Workshop Income	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$160.00	9.4%
Deposit Total	\$304.75	\$409.58	\$2,160.00	19.0%

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	\$180.00	0.0%
Public Information	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	0.0%
Region 5 Assembly	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	0.0%
Region 5/WSO Donation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Website Hosting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Workshop Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	0.0%
Zoom/Phone Conf Srvc	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	0.0%
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Payment Total	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,160.00	0.0%

**OA Three Rivers Intergroup Monthly Meeting, 1/26/2021**

Meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer at 7:31pm.

This meeting was held on Zoom (ID 970 5024 1729, Password 198390).

Attendance, Positions, and Meetings Represented:

- Debra M, Chair, Fort Wayne Monday noon
- Dave, Vice Chair, Goshen Wednesday
- Kevin G, Treasurer, Goshen Saturday
- Christina H, Secretary, Fort Wayne Saturday
- Jodi C, Region 5 Rep
- Jan C, Fort Wayne Monday night and Thursday
- Joyce H, Elkhart Monday

Today's agenda was accepted without changes.

Minutes from 11/24/2020 were accepted without changes.

Treasurer's Report:

- Kevin did the December and January reports.
- Approved without changes.

Newcomer Report:

- Elkhart Monday = 1
- Fort Wayne Monday noon = 1
- Fort Wayne Monday night = 0
- Goshen Wednesday = 1
- Fort Wayne Thursday = 1
- Fort Wayne Saturday = 2
- Goshen Saturday = 0

Newsletter Report:

- February had one article submission.
- March will be out this weekend.
- Idea to discuss: Rather than print the newsletter for general distribution each month (once we meet in person again), we could print and mail it to those who request it.

12th Step Within:

- Approved without changes.

Region 5 Representative - Radio Ads:

- Jodi heard it air once, and it sounds good!

2021 Budget:

- Kevin and Dave will have it for discussion next month.

7:55pm, meeting closed with the unity promise.

Submitted by Christina H, Three Rivers Intergroup Secretary

### **Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting List**

Instead of including a meeting list that may be out of date before it is sent out, we recommend you rely on the master meeting list on our website for meeting information. Please go to: [3riversoa.org/meetings](http://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](http://3riversOA.org) and clicking the "Donate" link. You can also mail a check. Go to: [3riversOA.org](http://3riversOA.org) and click the Contact Us link to get the mailing address.

**Region 5 Website:** [Region5oa.org](http://Region5oa.org)

**OA World Service Office Website:** [OA.org](http://OA.org)

**Three Rivers Intergroup**  
[intergroup@3riversOA.org](mailto:intergroup@3riversOA.org)  
[www.3riversOA.org](http://www.3riversOA.org)  
**(260) 203-1199**

**Disclaimer:** The Monarch Monthly is the Three Rivers Intergroup publication for compulsive eaters. Opinions expressed here are not those of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole. In most cases, if material is edited in some way, it will be for grammar/typos. Permission to reprint articles in the Monarch Monthly is granted to all OA groups and service bodies.