

# Inner Voice

Newsletter of New Freedom Intergroup of OA

**Step 6:** Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

**Tradition 6:** An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

## I Had Successful Weight-Loss Surgery, but It Was OA's Twelve Steps That Transformed My Life

I joined OA after undergoing weight loss surgery, exactly when I had reached a healthy weight and was no longer the obese, forty-something man I used to be. A friend had suggested OA because I had inner feelings of inadequacy and had already tried various ways to address those feelings, including reading psychology and philosophy books and seeking therapy. Learning about the characteristics of compulsive overeating was intriguing, but when I heard other OA members talk about their food and weight, my thought was that it didn't appeal or apply to me. Since I had undergone surgery, I thought I wouldn't become obese again, so I didn't need OA!

But about a month into joining this community, I realized there was something in the universe called the Twelve Steps. I started searching for a guide in the online meetings, and that's when an OA member suggested I start praying to find a sponsor. I prayed, but I was doubtful. A few days later, I attended a meeting where there were only six of us. I wondered how I could possibly find a sponsor in this small group when I hadn't succeeded in larger meetings. It was a literature meeting, and someone read from the *OA Twelve and Twelve*, "Many of us held responsible jobs and ran our households with reasonable success. We had friends who liked us, and many of us had fairly good marriages. That these didn't make us happy was surely due to the fact that we were fat (or felt we were)." (p. 5). In fact,

this paragraph beautifully described my entire adult life! Later in the meeting, another member shared their experience and said, "In addition to overeating, we can have other negative traits, such as talkativeness and greediness, and alongside the negative traits, we can have positive traits, like kindness and talent." The very same traits he described were the ones that had plagued my life! I had been the hero of others' lives and the failure of my own life. I believe the distresses of countlessly stepping in to rescue others while failing to help myself is what drew me into this community. OA miracles happen in such strange ways.

I chose the member who shared that day to be my sponsor and asked them this question: Even if I want to eat, I physically can't because of my surgery! How can OA help me?

Having an aware sponsor in the OA program is a blessing and a gift from God. My sponsor replied, "In OA, we say, 'Put down the fork and work the Steps.' Apparently, you've put down the fork with your surgery. We will start the Steps next



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week, and I hope you'll accompany us through the end of the all Twelve Steps. When the compulsive eating behaviors stop, you'll work on healing the overeater, and then you will receive answers that will calm not only your mind but also your heart."

I have worked all Twelve Steps twice since then and taken a sponsee through the Steps once. What I've learned is that Steps One, Two, and Three help us stop compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and also help identify that there's a "shadow" that follows compulsive eating:

In Step One, I realized that my compulsive overeating was a representative display of my entire life: my compulsive eating behaviors mirrored broader traits that were also a problem. For example, my fast eating is a compulsive food behavior, but I also display hastiness in other ways. When my disorder stops, my fast eating stops, but my hastiness does not, especially when my recovery is not strong. My hastiness needs a spiritual healing.

In Step Two, I realized that my compulsive eating had affected my beliefs, thoughts, and attitudes. My compulsion led me to believe that I shouldn't waste food and should eat out of pity. But the similar overreach of responsibility and sense of ownership I have displayed towards my loved ones also comes from the same compulsion.

In Step Three, I realized that to stop my compulsive eating disorder, I needed to design a dietary plan for abstinence and commit spiritually to implementing it with the help of my sponsor. But my mistrust in handing over my plans to the Higher Power was also part of my compulsion.

To fully overcome the compulsion and heal the overeater not only physically but emotionally and spiritually, we work the next eight Steps:

Step Four is the beginning of a journey towards healing for the overeater. I used a Fourth Step inventory worksheet to identify four main emotions: pride, fear, shame, and guilt. And I inventoried my reactions resulting from distress, anger, and negative thoughts. I realized that since childhood I had been using these scenarios to reach a bad state, which always culminated in the soothing comfort of food. However, even after I had completed a Step Four inventory, I could still experience cycles of emotions and turmoil. So Step Four was how I started to emerge from my own prison. That was where I first understood how an overeater can consume both food and his companions.

It wasn't until Step Five that I experienced the cessation of my compulsive eating disorder. Abstinence was a great blessing for me. Step Five was the beginning of amending my relationships with food, myself, God, and others.

In Steps Six through Nine, I learned about and worked on the subtleties of emotional recovery. Working these Steps was like putting on glasses that revealed a world full of people consuming the venom of their defects of character and eating over everything. I reflected on the Step Six question about defects of character, "Now we ask ourselves what is it doing for us as well as what is it doing to us" (*OA Twelve and Twelve*, p. 56). I realized that until the overeater overcomes their barriers to humility and their defects are removed, food will remain as a suitable means to fill the void. I understood what feelings lurk behind each behavioral pattern, the same feelings that had long been numbed with food. If they are not addressed, not only minor eating but also other minor compulsive behaviors can lead to a slip or relapse or harm to my relationships.

Working Steps Six through Nine created such clarity for me that in Step Ten, I realized how just one untreated thought, feeling, or behavior can create a bad day for a compulsive overeater.

Through Step Eleven, I came to understand conscious contact with my Higher Power in a way that was incomprehensible to me when I was compulsively overeating. Food was transformed from a sedative and narcotic to a blessing for this recovering compulsive overeater to have the necessary energy to fulfill God's desires. Meditation has changed the direction of my thoughts so the disorder does not become active.

In Step Twelve, I learned that my compulsive hunger had its roots in spiritual hunger, and to find healing, I must always be connected to the source of God's love and apply Spiritual Principles in all aspects of life.

I don't know if it was your prayer for still-suffering overeaters or my own heartfelt prayer that brought me to Overeaters Anonymous. Whatever it was, I thank God I'm here.

— Kaveh, Tehran, Iran (reprinted from *Lifeline*)



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## NFI Meeting Highlights:

(Note: These are NOT the official minutes; they are only a recap of what was discussed. Official minutes are released after changes and approval in the next month's business meeting.)

New Freedom Intergroup business meeting was held May 10. Each meeting is welcome to send two voting members, and as many observers as desire to attend. The meeting is always the second Saturday of the month (unless otherwise decided) and runs for one and a half hours. Thus, the next business meeting is Saturday, June 14 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am by Zoom. (Meeting ID: 872 7218 1719, Password: 883350).

Highlights of what was covered at the April business meeting:

### Service Opportunities:

- VACANCIES:

Elected positions:

- Vice Chair – Serves in the absence of the Chair, assists with coordinating special events, maintains the meeting list, and serves on the bylaws committee.
- Delegate – Attends the World Service Business Conference annually, attends the Regional business assemblies (2 per year), and provides reports to the Intergroup about the actions of the conference/assembly.

Appointed positions:

- Parliamentarian – Ensures that we are operating the meetings fairly and following the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures manual.
  - Newsletter Chair – Creates the monthly newsletter by collecting articles from membership and OA resources.
  - Twelfth Step Within Chair – Focuses on membership retention and outreach to existing members and assists with special events and workshops.
  - Ways and Means Chair – Researches, reviews, and develops ideas for fundraising on behalf of the intergroup. These funds are used for carrying our message.
  - Young Persons Subcommittee Chair – As part of the Professional Information/Public Outreach committee, the Young People's subcommittee works to increase awareness of OA among the young people in our area, and welcomes young people who come to OA.
  - Sponsorship Coordinator – Maintain a list of available sponsors and help people seeking sponsorship to be connected to a potential sponsor.
- Want to give service, but you're not sure where to start? Consider volunteering for one of our committees! We can always use help, and it's a fabulous way to start giving service beyond the meeting level.

### Other Items of Note:

- All meetings are to let Chair know about changes in format. Thank you to those who sent us updates this month! They should be reflected on the website and meeting list.
- We were able to correct the issue with our website and PayPal donations!!! You may once again donate by selecting the "Donate" button on the website or by sending donations to [@oanfig@gmail.com](mailto:@oanfig@gmail.com) using PayPal.

## Step 6&7: Light Wash

**Step 6:** Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

I have a habit of checking how clean a drinking glass really is by holding it up to the light. A glass that looks so clean when out of the bright light can actually be very dirty, covered in fingerprints and all sorts of marks—it's not fit to drink from. It makes me think of my character flaws and shortcomings and how well-hidden they can be.

From the outside, I can appear so clean and pristine in subdued light. I say, "Look at me . . . no flaws that I can see. I'm just fine, thanks, God."



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But he insists I be held up to his light. I reluctantly agree, and all is revealed—the stains, the marks, the prints upon my soul, the habits, and the defects all glaring in clear light. It is shocking to see me as I really am, not as how I think I am.

the great news is that Step Seven is all about humility. We humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings: to wipe us clean, wash us in his truth, and cleanse us of shortcomings that are ruining our lives. If we humbly ask, we receive—it works every time.

If I want my metaphoric But glass kept clean and sparkling, I go to God in humility and ask him to remove those stains upon my character. He never fails me.

Of course, the odd smear will keep appearing now and again on my glass, but now I know what to do about it and how to contact the source of all the help I need in the cleaning process. What a blessing! Thank you, God and OA!

— Paulette N., New Zealand (reprinted from *Lifeline*)

## More on Step 5 from our Region

Step Five calls for me to admit to God, myself, and another person the “exact nature” of my wrongs. In this Step, I let go of dishonesty and rationalization. I talk about my resentments, fears, wrongs done to others, and sex conduct, without justification. I humble myself and share these shortcomings with a trusted person.

The AA *Big Book* states the importance of this step thusly: “We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world” (pp. 73-74). I sit down with my sponsor or a trustworthy OA buddy and shed light on the shame, dishonesty, and mistakes that have kept me enslaved to food and self-will.

My first Fourth Step contained two wrongs that I had previously decided to carry with me to my grave. However, I kept hearing at meetings that “we are only as sick as our secrets.” I believed that I had found a trusted person in my OA sponsor, so I took a deep breath and spoke about these two incidents. My sponsor smiled and said, “That’s just kid stuff. I’ve done that kind of thing, too.”

I felt tears and relief welling up inside me. All those years I had carried this toxic shame with me, eating over it and punishing myself. I had asked God for courage and let it go. Another person accepted me just as I am. I became more aware of the concept of real humility, of being no better or worse than someone else.

Thus, my journey of self-acceptance and freedom from the bondage of food and self-centeredness took a giant leap. Taking Step Five was truly one of the most loving things I have ever done for myself. I now have the privilege of hearing others’ Fifth Steps. I continue to do daily Tenth and Eleventh Steps. The healing and freedom contained in the Steps continues if I work them.

— NM

## Tradition 6: Approved or Not?

**Tradition 6:** An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

One of the ways this tradition plays itself out in our meetings is what literature we use, display, and/or sell.

“It is the group conscience of the 1993 World Service Business Conference that the sale or display of literature other than OA-approved literature and AA conference-approved literature (as described in WSBC Policy 2010a) is an implied endorsement of outside enterprises, and therefore in violation with Tradition Six.” (**Business Conference Policy Manual, 1993b [amended 2010]**)



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Sometimes materials, especially AA-related, have “floated around” for decades, and seem to be grandfathered in. If we have outside literature or recordings we’d like to share, it is important to do it outside of the meeting itself, noting that it is not, indeed, OA or AA material. OA also offers guidelines to locally-produced literature which note, in part: “Local literature should be considered temporary and discontinued when OA literature approved for general use is available to cover the topic.” A fuller look at the guidelines will be posted in a future issue.

To find complete listings of OA Conference-approved literature, OA Board-approved literature and materials, and AA Conference-approved literature, visit <https://oa.org/guidelines-meetings/approved-literature-list/>.

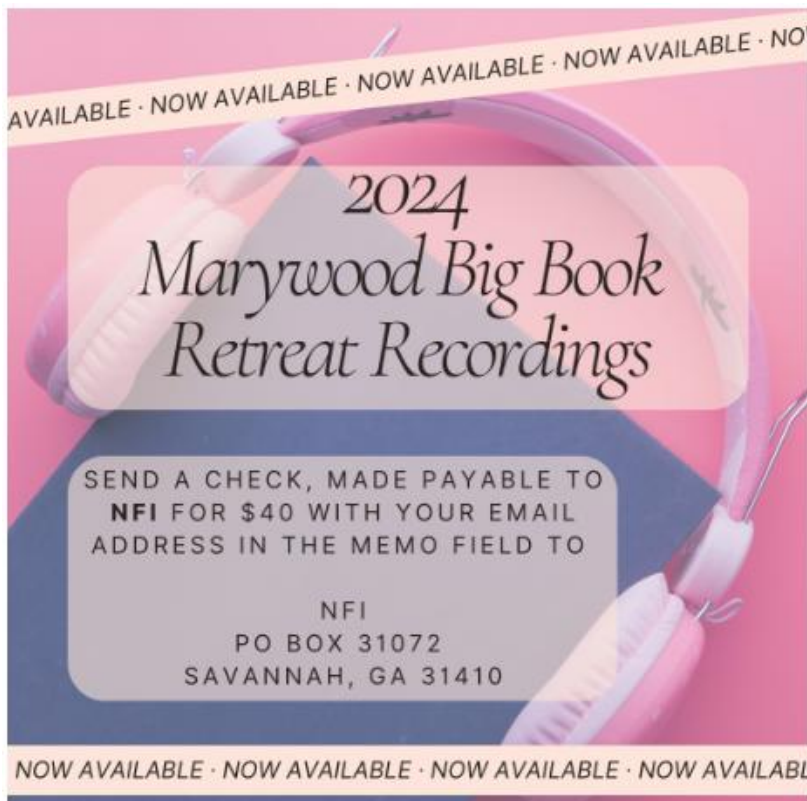
## Trusted Servants and Committee Chairs (New emails)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Delegate  
Newsletter/Meeting List  
Public Info/Prof. Outreach  
Young Adults  
12th Step Within  
Sponsor Coordinator  
Website  
Ways and Means  
Bylaws

Secretary will forward as needed  
Echo G. 561.704.2917  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
Augusta L. 912.508.4777  
Lucy B. 786-351-0472  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
Nancy K. 516.286.1888  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
Brian B. 904.616.0608  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**  
Barbara C. 352.474.1366

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oanfig@gmail.com  
delegatenfi@gmail.com  
innervocenf@gmail.com  
piponfig@gmail.com  
youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com  
TSWnfi@gmail.com  
sponsor.nfig@gmail.com  
websitenfi@gmail.com  
wandmnfi@gmail.com  
bcarter337@att.net



The recordings from the **2024 Big Book Retreat** held at Marywood are now available for purchase through NFI. Please note: The recording for the weekend speaker, Larry K, was done by a professional recording company and is of excellent quality. It consists of over 9 hours of recovery, divided up into 10 different audio files, with labeling to indicate which steps are discussed.

To purchase a copy of the recordings from the weekend, please send a check for \$40 to our treasurer at NFI PO Box 31072 Savannah, GA 31410, made payable to NFI and please include an email address in the memo line. Once payment is processed, you will be sent a link to the google drive where you can listen to and download the files.

We are looking into offering an option to pay for the recordings via our website, but right now the only way to receive a copy is to send a check.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Echo at [chairnfi@gmail.com](mailto:chairnfi@gmail.com)



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# 2025 Trustee Vacancy Announcement and Call for Applications

As of May 10, 2025, there is one vacancy on the Board of Trustees. In accordance with the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, the Board of Trustees has chosen to receive applications to appoint a qualified member to serve through World Service Business Conference 2026. To best serve OA as a whole, it is important to make this appointment as quickly as possible.

Basic qualifications for a trustee are:

- Seven years in the Fellowship;
- Five years of service beyond the meeting level, including at least two years of service as a region representative, region committee chair, region board member, region trustee liaison, or having served as a board member of a national service board;
- Attendance as a delegate to at least two World Service Business Conferences; and
- Five years of recovery in Overeaters Anonymous.

The interactive PDF application and job description can be viewed and downloaded in the Document Library (<https://oa.org/document-library/>) under category "Board of Trustees." The completed application must be received at the World Service Office by **Thursday, June 12, 2025**. The application may be sent by registered mail to the World Service Office or emailed to [info@oa.org](mailto:info@oa.org). An officer of your region must sign the application.

Please let it be known throughout your area that the Board of Trustees is soliciting qualified applicants who are willing to fill this position. It is the intention of the board to appoint the new trustee as soon as possible.

We are soliciting names to fill the vacancy from June 2025 through April 2026. If you should have any questions about this appointment process, please do not hesitate to contact the World Service Office.

Yours in OA service,

Bob L.

Chair of the Board

Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the opinion of each individual OA member and do not represent OA as a whole. Intergroup meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month. The deadline to submit articles is the 20th of the month before the Intergroup meeting. Articles may be edited. When submitting articles, please include your name and phone number and whether or not you would like your name printed. This newsletter may be reproduced and enjoyed by other 12-steppers without written permission. If you would like to submit articles and/or comments, or if you would like to receive the Inner Voice in color as a pdf, send your email address to the Newsletter Chair at [innervoicenfi@gmail.com](mailto:innervoicenfi@gmail.com).



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## Events from All Over

# Building A Strong Recovery Virtual Workshop

**Speakers, Writing Exercises,  
Open Sharing, Fellowship**

**Saturday, June 14th  
1:00 pm–3:00 pm Pacific**

**Register for Zoom ID & Password**  
<https://form.jotform.com/251215605954153>

**Questions or for more Info Contact**  
**Lisa S:** [secretary@oaregion1.org](mailto:secretary@oaregion1.org)  
**Barbara B:** 530-859-1248

**Hosted by Region 1**



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**Thoroughly  
Follow  
Our  
Path...**



## **A Step-Per-Month Virtual Study Group**

**6:30 PM-7:30 PM  
Eastern Time**

**Speaker - 20 min  
Journal Session- 10 min  
Share Circle - 20 min**

The first  
**Friday** of  
every month

1/03/2025	7/03/2025
2/07/2025	8/08/2025
3/07/2025	9/05/2025
4/04/2025	10/03/2025
5/02/2025	11/07/2025
6/06/2025	12/05/2025

**Zoom meeting number 864 1518 6652  
Password 305305      Security measures enabled.**

Seventh Tradition encouraged. Visit [www.oaniami.org/contributions](http://www.oaniami.org/contributions)

\*July is on Thursday due to holiday.



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# Registration Now Open!

<https://oa.org/world-service-convention/>

Overeaters Anonymous®

## CONVENTION WISDOM

OA is hosting a recovery Convention for the first time since 2016. Come, join hundreds of fellow members in celebrating OA recovery at a live, face-to-face event.

- The Convention is NOT a business event; it IS a recovery-focused global gathering.
- Open to all - members, newcomers, visitors, family, and friends.
- Over 50 OA meetings, great and varied topics.
- Three keynote speakers, several workshops.
- Dedicated rooms for specific focus meetings.
- Socializing and a chance to meet your virtual friends, in person.
- A real-life hug!
- Banquet and dance Saturday night!
- OA recovery will be rocking in Orlando.

*Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous.  
Welcome home!*



**Save the Date!**  
**August 21-23,**  
**2025**



To be kept up to date with the latest  
convention news, email  
[CONVENTIONINFO@OA.ORG](mailto:CONVENTIONINFO@OA.ORG)



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# Mountain of Miracles

## *Annual Retreat 2025*



Original Art work by Dana Bernard

**Unity With  
Diversity  
Steps 10 - 12**



| 19 - 21 Sept 2025  
Fri Eve - Sun Morn



Christmount Retreat Center  
Black Mountain, NC  
2 Hours NW of Charlotte

Register Early - Retreat Fills Quickly

 **OVEREATERS  
ANONYMOUS®**  
Piedmont Intergroup



[Click HERE to Register](#)

Questions?

Alice (919) 247-1338 or Melinda (817) 727-3331  
[registrar@piedmontintergroup.org](mailto:registrar@piedmontintergroup.org)

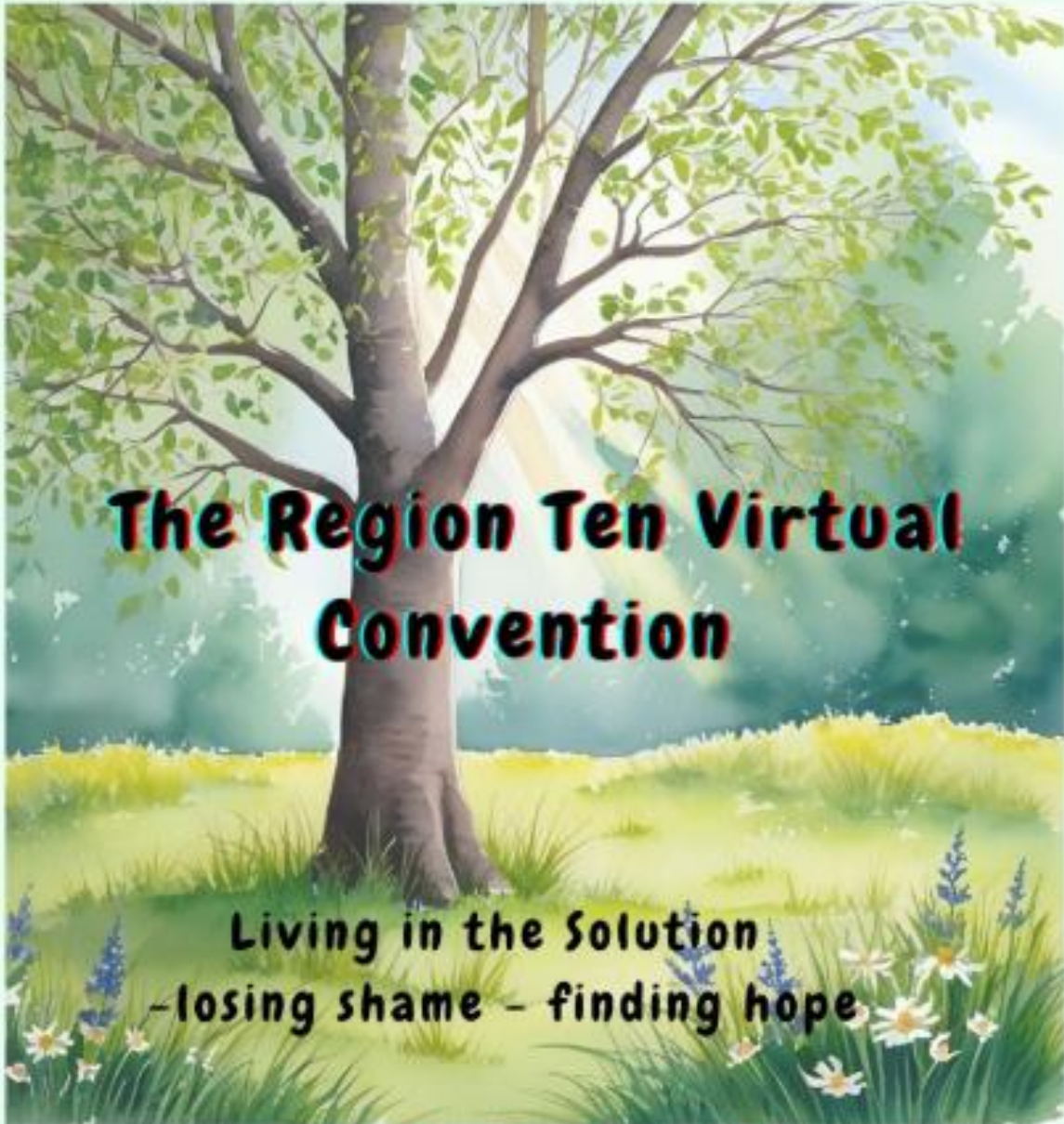
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ANONYMOUS®**

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**CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND INTERGROUP  
WARMLY INVITES YOU TO JOIN US AT...**



## **The Region Ten Virtual Convention**

**Living in the Solution  
-losing shame - finding hope**

**18-19 Oct 2025**



**SAVE THE DATE  
REGISTRATION DETAILS WILL BE AVAILABLE  
ONLINE MID YEAR**



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DONATIONS REPORT 2025		Feb	Mar	Apr	YTD TOTAL
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$23.30	\$37.38	\$37.38	\$153.36
		\			
Jacksonville Groups	Grp#				
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774				\$0.00
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763			\$50.00	\$50.00
Tue: 7pm Jacksonville (virtual)	800028				\$0.00
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223	\$14.08			\$28.16
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beaches	54507		\$100.00		\$100.00
Thur: Jacksonville 9am - Our redeemer	57370				\$0.00
Thur: Newcomer, Lakeview Health	47756				\$0.00
Fri: Orange Park - 10am	03654				\$0.00
Sat: Saturday Steppers-Ponte Vedra Beach	51693			\$200.00	\$200.00
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025				\$0.00
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$114.56
Gainesville Groups					\$0.00
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137	\$25.00		\$25.00	\$75.00
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$36.88
Wed: Gainesville Unity Church	57568				\$0.00
Sat: 9:30 AM Welcome Home	48324	\$180.00			\$180.00
Other Florida Groups					\$0.00
Mon: Palm Coast-St Mark by the Sea	38320		\$12.00		\$12.00
Mon.	32609				\$0.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 10am	56604		\$12.00		\$12.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101				\$25.00
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171		\$11.00		\$11.00
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235	\$23.79			\$47.58
Sun: Palm Coast/Flagler Beach	56072				\$0.00
Southern Georgia Groups					\$0.00
Tue: Jesup	54175				\$0.00
Wed: Douglas, GA	57445				\$0.00
Wed: Savannah - 5:30 pm	50301	\$168.00			\$168.00
Thur: Brunswick	51988				\$153.00
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362			\$9.16	\$9.16
Totals		\$472.03	\$210.24	\$359.40	\$1,375.70
Don to WSO		\$141.61	\$63.07	\$143.76	
Don to SOAR8		\$47.20	\$21.02	\$35.94	

## Where are your donations going?

According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. To donate directly to Intergroup, write a check made payable to 'NFI' and mail to: OA NFI, PO Box 550842, Jacksonville, FL 32255; or log onto oanfig.org and scroll down to the 'donate' button. You may pay by PayPal or credit card.

When you contribute your 7th Tradition donations, if you indicate your group number, the donation will be recorded for that specific group. When we do not have a group number to work with, we may include the donations as unspecified.

Each month, NFI tallies the group donations and sends 10% of the total to Region 8, with an additional 30% to the World Service Office. Donations sent directly to World Service Office do not reflect in our group donations total.



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