OCTOBER 2025

Inner Voice

Newsletter of New Freedom Intergroup of OA

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Tradition 10: Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

A New Dimension of Unease: Traveling and Working the OA Program



Hi! My name is Mary, and I am a compulsive overeater. I came into the OA program in May 2011 and walked out of that first meeting shaking because I knew I had found my answer after years of compulsive eating. Today, I am 120 pounds (54.4 kg) lighter than my highest recorded weight. Through working the Steps, working with a sponsor, following a food plan, going to meetings, sponsoring, doing service, praying and meditating, reading, and writing; today, I can say, I am "happy, joyous and free," (Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Ed., p. 133) and I have a life beyond my wildest dreams! I have physical, spiritual and emotional recovery from compulsive overeating, one day at a time.

Next week, I am traveling to Italy. It's a trip I've been planning

for a year! It will be my first time there, and I'm very excited! When I started doing research about the country and the sites, the guide books mention the different regions and what to see, including what to eat and drink. Each region is known for different cheeses, pastas, and wines. When I started thinking about the food, and how Italy has different foods, I got nervous—actually, I became very anxious! I went to an OA longtimer, and started blurting out about my anxiety, and she replied, "I'm pretty sure God is in Italy"! Oh!—well didn't that just put a stop to my anxious thinking!

Later I reconnected to the *Big Book* (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th Ed.) on page 35, "What sort of thinking dominates an alcoholic . . . ? Our first example is a friend we shall call Jim. This man has a charming wife and family. . . . He is a good salesman. Everybody likes him. He is an intelligent man, normal so far as we can see, except for a nervous disposition." I connect with that reading because everything seems to be good, but I just have one little thing that's off! Maybe I'm a little nervous, or anxious or maybe I am not in touch with what I'm feeling. I just know that I'm off. What I do know is that I do not want to get back into the food. And as Jim's story continues, it says "All went well for a time, but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life" (p. 35). Here, too, was my answer!

My current continuous abstinent date is June 30, 2022. I follow a food plan. I weigh and measure my food because it brings me freedom from the obsession. Those boundaries help me to stay abstinent, sane, and free. When a longtimer said to me, Do you eat salami here? No? Then don't eat it there. Do you eat pizza here? No? Then don't eat it there. Simple advice. I will not be eating pizza, salami, gelato, cheese, or pasta, nor will I be drinking wine while in Italy. Why? Because those foods are not on my list of abstinent foods.

At a recent meeting, a member shared that while she was on vacation, she got out of her daily routines of prayer and meditation. I heard that! That spoke to me! Any busyness can keep me from doing my consistent daily activities. But



this disease is gripping and powerful, and the only way I know to combat it is to start my day with prayer and meditation, sending a food plan, working the Steps, reading, and writing. I plan to do these while in Italy. I also downloaded a meditation book as an app on my phone, and I found an app that has the Big Book and AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. I plan to find moments of connection to God through art, people watching, nature, and museums.

I also know I need silence! That's when I connect to my Higher Power. From what I understand Italy will be very busy with tourists, and I will be jumping into that busyness! I'm not sure how I will find the silence in the busyness of the day. I'm still working that part out and asking God to help me. I'm going to make some more calls and ask what other people have done while on vacation to remain abstinent. I also may go to an OA meeting while in Italy! (If I don't go in person, I know I can find a meeting online.) I will still send a daily food plan. I have arranged to have people whom I can call and text all hours of the day (and they can do that to me too!) We just leave our phones off while sleeping and get the messages when we see them.

Traveling brings a new dimension of unease in working this program, but all I can do is work OA one day at a time. For me, I cannot let up. I pray for the honesty, openness, and willingness to work this program on a daily basis. I am so grateful to be a compulsive overeater because while right now I might be focusing on food preparations and coming up with a plan to stay abstinent and talking out my anxiety, while I am traveling, I will be present to for the people I'm with, I will have energy, I will be in a positive frame of mind, I will keep my expectations low, I will be open to new experiences and people and sites, and I will keep my connection to God high, just like I've been doing in my home, at work, in my community, at church, with my family of origin, and with my OA family! God is in Italy! Actually my Higher Power is traveling with me all the time!

- Mary Jo, Illinois USA (Reprinted from Lifeline)

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 September 13. 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, October 11 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am by Zoom. (Meeting ID: 872 7218 1719, Password: 883350).

Highlights of what was covered at the September business meeting:

Service Opportunities:

- WE HAVE A CRITICAL NEED FOR SERVICE AT THE INTERGROUP LEVEL!
- 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.



- 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 Adults Subcommittee Chair As part of the Professional Information/Public Outreach committee, the Young Adults subcommittee works to increase awareness of OA among the young adults in our area, and welcomes young adults who come to OA.
- Sponsorship Coordinator Maintain a list of available sponsors and help people seeking sponsorship to be connected to a potential sponsor.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS:

- Nominations will open in October for the following positions:
 - Chair Leads the monthly intergroup meetings, maintains meeting information on OA.org, works with NFI committees, attends regional meetings on behalf of NFI as first alternate for the delegate or in addition to the delegate.
 - Treasurer Maintains the bank accounts for NFI, tracks donations, maintains the budget and other financial documents (ex: liability insurance) required for NFI business operations. (NOTE: Augusta is eligible and willing to serve a second term, but would likely love if someone wanted to start shadowing for the 2027 election!)
 - Public Information/Professional Outreach Committee Chair Engages with the public to provide information about OA through attending events such as health and wellness fairs, researches and implements opportunities to spread the message, and also works with professionals (ex: doctors and medical facilities) to spread information about OA (ex: provide professional outreach packets and pamphlets to a doctor's office for their waiting room or to hand out to patients). 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.
- PIPO Committee had another successful event at the St. Augustine Recovery fair in September there was good engagement and several new visits to the NFI website. Thanks to Nancy and Liz for their service! For more information, look for the PIPO reports on the NFI website.
- TSW Committee will be putting on a workshop on October 4th from 2-4 pm on Zoom. The focus will be on the **Freedoms of OA**. If you are interested in giving service, please contact Cynthia H.

New NFIG Sponsorship Coordinator

Cynthia H. is the new NFIG Sponsorship Coordinator. OA members looking for Sponsors and OA members wanting to be on the list to be a Sponsor should contact Cynthia. Be sure to include what type of sponsorship you are interested in, e.g., General Sponsor, Temporary Sponsor, Step Sponsor or Food Sponsor. Cynthia's contact information is cynthhuey@yahoo.com or 404-788-8089.

Step 10: Returning from Relapse, I Did a Step Ten Inventory and Started Working Step 11 Daily

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

I thought God had forgotten me in my relapse, but when I returned to the meetings, I realized it was another call from God. I joined a virtual OA meeting and truly listened and engaged in the meetings and shares. I prayed for willingness and saw myself participating when they called for shares from returning members.

I first came to OA because I felt the impact of my compulsive eating on my self-esteem and relationships. Through working the Twelve Steps in the OA program, I found a personal and loving God and realized I needed to ask for help. At first I didn't believe that God was actually interested in what I ate, but then that same Higher Power guided me to a journal for maintaining a healthy weight. Upon reading it, I knew God was leading me to OA for healing. With my awareness opened, denial disappeared. I realized that my Higher Power does care about what I eat, just as a mother



cares about what her children eat. This was my first serious awakening in OA, and what a relief it has been to understand that mindless eating isn't a battle that I have to win on my own.

After my relapse, it was suggested that I write a Step Ten inventory, along with another member who was returning after relapse. It was tough, but I did it:

- Arguing. In the last week before my relapse, I argued with my neighbor over a trivial matter for hours. In the midst of the argument, I realized it was futile, but I continued anyway.
- Selfishness. On the day of my relapse, during a family gathering that I enjoyed, I monopolized all the time and kept boasting about myself. I knew it was wrong but continued anyway.
- Self-will. In my last conversation with my sponsor, I felt I understood everything and needed no guidance.
- Disobedience. When I reviewed my food plan, I didn't want my abstinent portions to be that way.
- Denial. When my loved ones told me I wasn't eating peacefully, I replied that everything was calm.
- Depression. I repeatedly didn't answer the phone, didn't take a shower, and had no reason to clean the house.
- Dishonesty. Three nights before my relapse, I lied about the amount I had eaten.
- Eating foods that cause cravings. Although I know I have a sugar addiction, I consumed a diet soda.
- Excessive fatigue. Suddenly, the age on my identification card seemed old to me, and I felt unable to do things and constantly felt tired.
- Expecting too much from others. Why didn't my sponsor call me? Why did that man stand up on the bus? and a thousand other whys severed my connection with others.
- Forgetting gratitude. I didn't see any reason for gratitude, and my notebook was empty of any thanksgiving.
- Hopelessness. I was hopeless not only about weight loss through this Fellowship but about everything. I imprisoned myself in my room with constant sadness and listened to sad music.
- Remorse. There were moments when I couldn't sit still, feeling an emptiness in my heart. To soothe it, I indulged in overdrinking.
- It is not ruining me. My spouse told me, "I think you're eating too much fruit. Is this diet not ruining you?" I replied loudly, "It's not ruining me."
- Carelessness and neglecting discipline. I took casual walks and didn't even bother to put my shoes in the shoe rack.
- Pitying myself. A voice in my head said, "You're so unfortunate that you're even helpless with your eating."
- Using food to alter mood. I was heavily reliant on overdrinking.
- Avarice. I found myself trapped again in the cycle of greed.

In OA, I've learned that mindless eating is a physical illness with an emotional cause and a spiritual remedy, and after reflecting on my Tenth Step inventory, my perception is that I had experienced spiritual relapse long before the physical relapse. Since returning to OA, my relationship with my Higher Power has expanded and deepened because the Fellowship helps me in my relationship with my Higher Power. Now every morning, I lift the veil of disobedience and commit to recovery as I pray, "God, humbly I ask that you nourish my body, heart, and soul. You know what I need, and when I'm afraid and powerless. Help me surrender myself and my loved ones to you and your divine timing. Help me be in the hands of your love and peace, and today, I've resolved to serve as you command."

Abstinence provides clarity for me to remain open to the messages from my Higher Power that come when I listen to my body's wisdom and hear the guiding voices of my Higher Power, my recovery companion, and other OA members when they share during meetings. I pray to see and hear others through God's eyes and ears. As I heal, I open my heart to receive spiritual gifts, including acceptance, forgiveness, freedom, and the serenity of my soul, so that I may share these gifts with others.

— Hafeze, Gilan, Iran (reprinted from *Lifeline*)

Tradition 10: Is Abstinence an Outside Issue?

Tradition 10: Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Overeaters Anonymous exists because folks like us need to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors. We need a solution to our problem with food. In the sense that our primary purpose is to carry the message



of hope to those who still suffer, abstinence is very much an inside issue. We go to any length we must for relief from compulsive eating, and we go to great lengths to help others find it too.

At the same time, abstinence is a slippery topic. Whose abstinence is the right one? Do you have to be squeaky clean in every facet of abstinence? What about the differences between food substances and food behaviors? How about anorexia, bulimia, and other disordered eating? Fortunately, OA has a definition of abstinence that helps us all find common language:

Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.

Regardless of the kind of eating or food issues we have, this definition includes us. We are all part of the OA tribe.

Beyond this, however, OA has no position on food and abstinence. We have no official food plan because it's an outside issue. How can that be true when abstinence itself is central to recovery? Simply because OA isn't the food police. If we spent our time hunting down food-plan heretics, we would not be spending time helping others get better. Instead, we encourage every person to have their own food plan and to seek medical and nutritional advice for creating one. We support their efforts to follow it as best we can and share helpful experiences as appropriate.

But more important than that is the fact that food plans aren't just a tool. They are spiritual. When we commit to a food plan, we direct our willful selves away from our selfish impulses and toward something healthier and, ultimately, more spiritual. A food plan may be the first spiritually oriented move we make in OA...whether we know it or not. Initially or later in our journey, we may begin to ask our Higher Power, the universe, whathaveyou for willingness to follow our plan and relief from the obsession with food. From these small starts comes the willingness for more recovery, the willingness to surrender to the idea that we are no in charge. Never have been, if we're honest.

If food plans and abstinence are, in fact, spiritual in nature, then they are our Higher Powers' business. Each of us must find our plan on our own, just as each of us must do the Steps on our own. The Steps provide a framework for recovery, just like the OA definition of abstinence provides one for the food-based part of our journey. Although the pamphlets "Dignity of Choice" and "A Plan of Eating" give us helpful suggestions, they are not codes of food conduct. We cannot legislate the direction of someone's first steps toward God. We can only share how we did it and help them to find the honesty, willingness, and spiritual connection to get going and keep going.

- Reprinted from Seacost OA

More on Step 9 from our Region

Like much of this program, Step 9 is simple but not easy. I have struggled a lot with Step 9 over the years such as when to make them, how to make them, and how to sit with the feelings that come up before, during and after the whole process. Whenever I have acted in such a way that I may owe amends, I go back and take an inventory of the situation by asking myself where I was resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid, and how my behavior and words harmed someone else. Once I discover my part in the situation, I discuss it with someone else, such as a sponsor or someone experienced in recovery. I must get out of "my story" of the wrongs done to me and see how I harmed the other person. If I'm still relating the story to others and casting myself as the victim, I know I am not ready to make amends. Often, I have struggled with holding on to self-righteous anger. However, I've learned that even self-righteous anger does not give me a pass to behave disrespectfully towards others. In Step 8 I need to be willing to extend forgiveness to the other person or institution before I can prepare my amends. Once I have done the necessary spiritual work and am ready to go ahead with Step 9 and make my amends, I write out what I intend to say, using a modification of the template below:

"Person's Name, here is what I did. It was wrong of me and I apologize. Is there anything I can do to make this right?" or "Is there anything else you want to discuss with me about this?" Then I need to **BE QUIET** and give the other person space to respond. Finally, I can add my intention for the future, such as "My intention is to behave more respectfully toward you in the future. Thank you for listening to my amends."

Tips that I've learned for making amends:

• Don't do it alone. Prepare for it with the help of a sponsor/recovery buddy. Don't make amends if you haven't caused harm to the person.



- Keep the amends clear and concise.
- Give the other person space to respond.
- Invite your Higher Power in before, during, and after making amends.
- Try to make direct amends when possible.
- Make sure you have done Steps 4 through 8 before making amends.

The benefits of making Step 9 amends have been immense. I have a clear conscience and take responsibility for my behavior. It gets me out of the victim role and gives me clarity about how I am showing up in the world. If I am consistently making amends for the same behavior, it motivates me to want to change my behavior in the future. Step 9 gives me a wonderful opportunity to try to show up differently in the world and be a better daughter, sister, friend and employee. Thank you, Overeaters Anonymous, for teaching me this new way of life!

- Tina S., Florida

Trusted Servants and Committee Chairs (New emails)

GENERAL INFORMATION	Secretary will for	orward as needed	oanfig@gmail.com		
Chair	Echo G.	561.704.2917	chairnfi@gmail.com		
Vice Chair	VACANT—Cons	sider doing service	vicechairnfi@gmail.com		
Treasurer	Augusta L.	912.508.4777	nfitreasury@gmail.com		
Secretary	Lucy B.	786-351-0472	oanfig@gmail.com		
Delegate	VACANT—Cons	sider doing service	delegatenfi@gmail.com		
Newsletter/Meeting List	VACANT—Cons	sider doing service	innervoicenfi@gmail.com		
Public Info/Prof. Outreach	Nancy K.	516.286.1888	piponfig@gmail.com		
Young Adults	VACANT—Cons	sider doing service	youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com		
12th Step Within	Cynthia H.	404.788.8089	TSWnfi@gmail.com		
Sponsor Coordinator	Cynthia H.	404.788.8089	sponsor.nfig@gmail.com		
Website	Brian B.	904.616.0608	websitenfi@gmail.com		
Ways and Means	VACANT—Cons	sider doing service	wandmnfi@gmail.com		
Bylaws	Barbara C.	352.474.1366	bcarter337@att.net		

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.

Ready to be Region Chair?

Susan B., our Region Chair writes: In October my term will end. It's been an amazing experience in so many ways serving as chair. I've served two terms and am not eligible to serve again. Could you be the next chair? I'm happy to talk to anyone who is interested about what the job entails and answer any question. We currently do not know of anyone who is running. The position of Treasurer is also open. Our current treasurer is planning to run, but that doesn't mean you can't too!

(The qualifications from the Region 8 Bylaws were printed in the September issue of *Inner Voice*.)

In OA love and Service,

Susan B., Region 8 Chair, Phone: 415.987.3194, chair@oaregion8.org

7th Tradition for Zoom Meetings

Here's what your 7th Tradition supports:

- Zoom rooms.
- Websites that help newcomers find us built, hosted, and maintained.
- Google Ads and real-time support for those seeking help.
- Public outreach campaigns to health professionals and the community.
- Delegates aid and scholarships for OA's business assemblies.



- Translation of OA literature into more than two dozen languages to reach non-English speakers who are the biggest factor in OA growth.
- Professional staff at the World Service Office who keep OA running.
- Region and World Service conventions, where vital business gets done.

In face-to-face meetings, a full basket was visible. Now, with virtual meetings, it's easy to forget — and contributions have dropped.

We are self-supporting, and you are part of "we." Without your support, OA cannot exist.

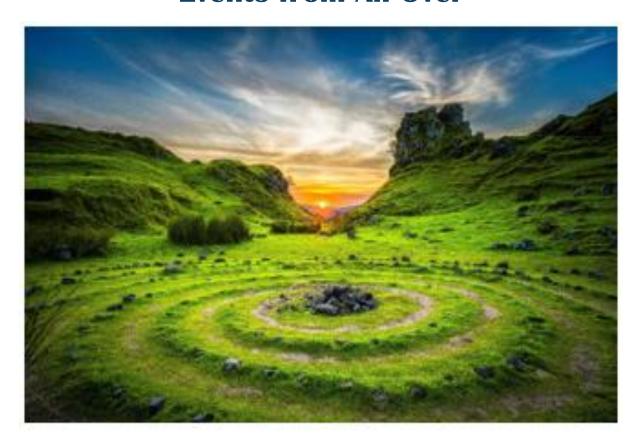
In OA love and Service,

Susan B., Region 8 Chair, Phone: 415.987.3194, chair@oaregion8.org





Events from All Over



JOIN US!!

Northern Florida Intergroup OA

12th Step Within Workshop

12 RECOVERY Freedoms of OA

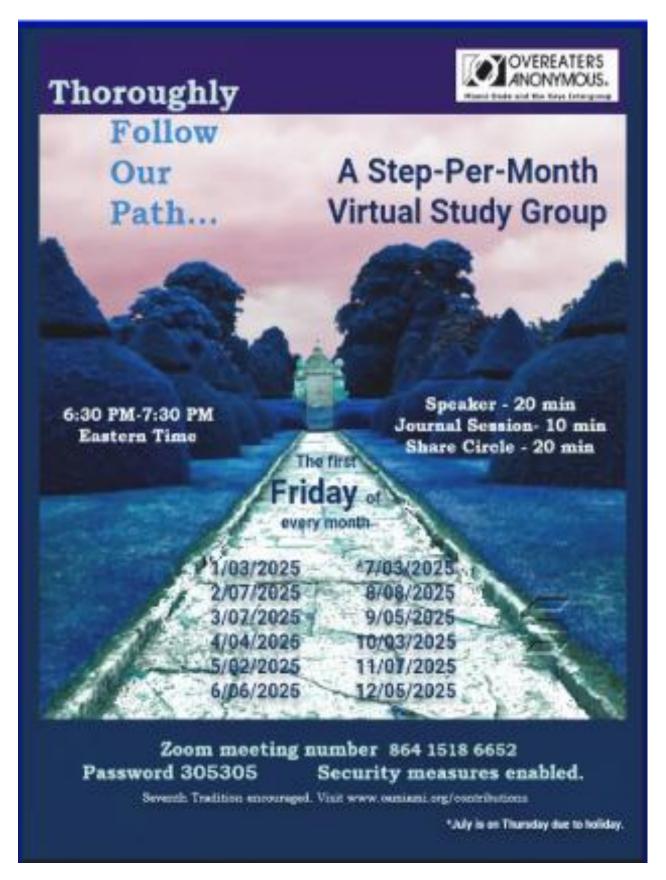
Saturday, October 4th

2pm to 4pm EST

Zoom ID 894 4958 4712

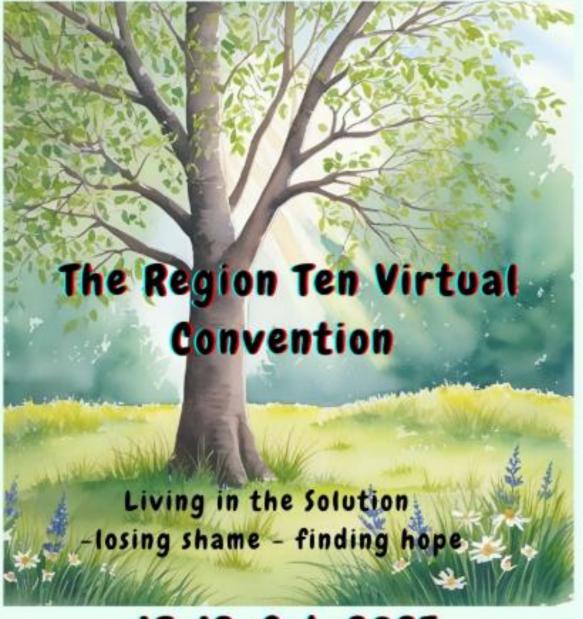
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CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND INTERGROUP WARMLY INVITES YOU TO JOIN US AT...



18-19 Oct 2025



SAVE THE DATE
REGISTRATION DETAILS WILL BE AVAILABLE
ONLINE MID YEAR







DONATIONS REPORT 2025		June	July	Aug	YTD TOTAL
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$37.38	\$37.38	\$563.74	\$870.45
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$57.50	\$57.50	\$300.14	\$070.40
Jacksonville Groups	Grp#				
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774				\$0.00
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763				\$50.00
Tue: 7pm Jacksonville (virtual)	800028				\$0.00
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223				\$28.16
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beaches	54507				\$100.00
Thur: Jacksonvile 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 Bch	51693		\$200.00		\$400.00
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025				\$0.00
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$178.64	\$28.64	\$78.64	\$429.12
Gainesville Groups					\$0.00
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$184.22
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$73.76
Wed: Gainesville Unity Church	57568				\$0.00
Sat: 9:30 AM Welcome Home	48324				\$180.00
Other Florida Groups					\$0.00
Mon: Palm Coast-St Mark by the Sea	38320				\$12.00
Mon.	32609			\$18.00	\$18.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 10am	56604		\$35.00	\$17.00	\$64.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101				\$25.00
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171				\$46.00
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235		\$50.00		\$97.58
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		\$340.00		\$508.00
Thur: Brunswick	51988				\$153.00
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362				\$9.16
Totals		\$250.24	\$725.24	\$711.60	\$3,248.45
Iotais		3230.24	+	4	+-,
Don to WSO		\$100.10	\$290.10	\$284.64	40,210110

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 40% to the World Service Office. Donations sent directly to World Service Office do not reflect in our group donations total.

