

# Inner Voice

Newsletter of New Freedom Intergroup of OA

**Step 4:** Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

**Tradition 4:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

## Empty Chairs, Full Heart

I sat at the table waiting for someone to show up for the meeting. No one came. I'd felt angry before, but tonight was different. I was feeling afraid—afraid that this meeting would fall by the wayside as others had done through the years. Afraid that the people I had come to know and love through this small-but-mighty meeting were slowly slipping away from their commitment to the meeting, or from OA altogether.

I shook fear from my mind and turned my attention to completing the quarterly treasurer's report. I recorded the Tradition Seven contributions for the quarter. I tallied up our contribution percentages: 60 for intergroup, 30 for the World Service Office, and 10 percent for our region.\* As I began writing the checks, I was reminded of the Fellowship of OA beyond my empty meeting room.

I wrote the check to intergroup, which caused me to think of the wonderful people who, like me, had served for years in one capacity or another at the intergroup level. Many of them had become my second family and my dearest friends as we shared our hearts and our hope at OA meetings. I also thought about other group representatives I've come to know, and the folks they represent. I whispered a prayer for each one.

I wrote the check to the World Service Office and thought of the first World Service Convention I attended. I was so blown away by the experience of meeting people from all over the world who were living a life of freedom from the bondage of compulsive eating. I can't put into words the overwhelming feeling of unity that I experienced at that Convention as I stood in a room and joined hands with OA members from around the world. My mind went to the 2016 Convention in Boston, and I felt excitement and deep gratitude because I'll have this opportunity again.

I wrote the check to our region and thought of the business assemblies I had attended as our region representative. I thought of the beautiful faces of those with whom I had served at conferences. I remembered their passion when they spoke, the time and energy they gave to their committee duties, and the joy of abstinence they displayed in their everyday living. I remembered the speakers I had heard at the regional conventions. I remembered seeing them return to the conventions year after year with smiles on their faces, sporting the same normal-sized bodies they did in previous years.

I began to silently thank my Higher Power for these wonderful people who touched my life in so many different ways. I began to ask that they experience peace and joy, and the acute knowledge that they are not alone. They had given those things to me, even as I sat in solitude in that meeting room. It seemed only fitting that I ask for those gifts to be returned to them.

— Anonymous

\*(*Lifeline*) Editor's note: The suggested 60/30/10 percent contribution split for groups has been changed to 50/40/10 starting in 2025. See Seventh Tradition of OA (pamphlet) for more information.



NEW FREEDOM INTERGROUP

PO Box 31072 • Savannah, GA 31410 • Email: [oanfig@gmail.com](mailto:oanfig@gmail.com) • Website: [www.oanfig.org](http://www.oanfig.org)

## 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 March 8. 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, April 12 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am by Zoom. (Meeting ID: 872 7218 1719, Password: 883350).

Highlights of what was covered at the February 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.
  - In August of 2025, the World Service Convention will be held in Orlando, FL. While NFI is not officially sponsoring or hosting this event, ANYONE is welcome to give service for it! If you are interested in helping with planning or otherwise volunteering, please contact Susan B. by email at [chair@oaregion8.org](mailto:chair@oaregion8.org)

### 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.
- Continued discussion of upcoming motions for World Service Business Conference. If you have opinions on how NFI should be represented at WSBC on these matters, please reach out to Barb C. as she will be serving as our Intergroup Delegate this year.

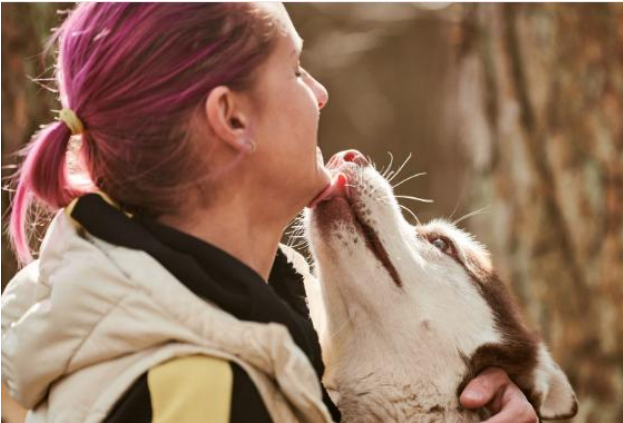


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## Step 4: My Fourth Step Support Animal

**Step 4:** Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.



I just listened to a podcast posted by OA Los Angeles Intergroup about a woman who had two young puppies who fought. Their fighting really freaked her out, and she decided she was going to give them to someone to help train the puppies to control themselves.

Her sponsor asked why these pups were in her life right now and what it could mean, and she realized that the dogs reminded her of her parents who were always fighting. Gaining that insight unlocked something in her, and she was able to learn how to heal the relationship between the two dogs. At the same time, she was healing herself in program.

After I had been in OA for two months, I adopted a wonderful dog—but he was also “the wrong dog,” male and 110 pounds (50 kg)! He and I both had to be on a good food plan.

This doggie was wonderful to me, he had my back and looked out for me all the time. At the dog park, he would go off and play but then stop and search me out. I always felt safe with this dog, and I loved him dearly. He showed me how it was to be loved unconditionally and have someone care about me.

During the life of this doggie, I worked on my Fourth Step about my issues with my mother. My mother was a good mother but she often didn’t have my back. She criticized me and tried to control me, even after I had grown up. This doggie showed me what I had missed by having someone in my corner. I think he came along at just the right time. I got a lot of love and that enabled me to let go of all my resentments towards my mother. And it allowed me to love her the way she needed to be loved.

I know now that if something is in my life, it is there for a reason: to do some work.

—Ali (reprinted from *Lifeline*)

## More on Step 3 from our Region

### FAITH IN THE THIRD STEP

March is a very special month for me. I began my OA journey at 300 pounds on March 16, 1991. I married my second husband on March 16, 2003. I chose that date for my marriage because OA has given me a life second to none. I took a leap of faith when I married my second husband, praying our married life would be as wonderful as my OA Life. After all, I had only known him for a week when my precious husband proposed, and I said “yes.” I had felt a spiritual presence with me at the time of that decision. I knew all would be well.

Working all Twelve Steps—especially the Third Step—on a daily basis has changed my life. Turning my will and my life over to a power greater than myself was paramount to my recovery in working Steps Four through Twelve. In Step Four, I had to take a moral inventory of my life. Instead of playing the victim, I now had to be brutally honest. What was my part in my life? What did I do to myself in my life that made me binge myself up to 300 pounds? It could have been even higher. I refused to get on the scale or go to the doctor out of shame and guilt. At one point in my life, my weight went yo-yoing from 135 pounds when I met my first husband, a veteran and hardcore alcoholic with two children who needed a mom. I was ecstatic to be a mom to ready-made children. He fell out of love with me as my body got bigger and bigger. I was no longer 135 pounds but quickly going to 300 pounds. However, I was also a loved mom. That was all I needed, I thought. So why was I still compulsively overeating?

As the years went by, I worked the Twelve Steps. I got the courage to see a therapist, who told me I was killing myself and recommended getting a divorce, which I did. He got a restraining order against me. No longer could I visit the kids.



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Higher Power did for me what I could not do for myself. I found Overeaters Anonymous through the therapist in Manchester, New Hampshire, in 1991. Now I could work solely on me. That was almost 34 years and 183 pounds ago. Through the steps, I learned I had to make amends to several friends and family members.

The thought of discussing situations that had happened over 50 years ago petrified me. But it had to be done to continue with my recovery. I had faith that the outcome—and I—would be okay. Higher Power put situations in my life that allowed me to move to Florida in 1999. My parents and I were able to establish a respectful, adult relationship. This was the beginning of my amends: caring for my parents, gently discussing the past. When my mother passed away in 2004, and my father in 2007, I felt that we had closed the book. The hole in my heart from my parents' lack of attention toward me as a child was closed. All was well. They and I were at peace with each other.

Through the years, we have had many medical challenges. I have had three back surgeries, knee replacements, etc. My husband developed cancer and Lupus in 2009. Despite these setbacks, every day we say the **Third Step Prayer** and express gratitude for being above ground and standing vertically. We live the OA Twelve Step life one day at a time. Daily I pray to do no harm to another person or animal. I pray to be of service to another person inside or outside the rooms. Turning my will and my life over to my Higher Power allows me to do things that I never thought I could do. I believe that my Higher Power is always nearby, ready to answer a question or help me with a difficult task. This is faith. Faith that this Power will be there for me. I never have to eat over anything ever again.

I have FAITH that if this program can work for me emotionally, physically, and spiritually, it can work for anyone. It works if you work it! Blessings to all!!!

— Carol Sch.

## *Tradition 4: The Big Picture Decisions*

**Tradition 4:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

Our group considers itself free to make its own decisions, guided by a Higher Power. We don't have to have certain values or particular ways of doing things just because some other groups do. No one can make us do things the way they think is right. We are free to do things the way we think is right. But let's take a hypothetical situation: Suppose we gossiped about groups we thought were doing things wrong and caused others to avoid those groups. Then our autonomy would be affecting other groups. Even worse, maybe newcomers or others would listen to our gossip and conclude that Overeaters Anonymous is too divided and therefore not right for them. In that case, our autonomy would be affecting OA as a whole.

In general, how do the Traditions affect our decisions? Some issues are easy. Is our meeting open or closed? Can people eat during the meeting or bring drinks in? Should we sponsor a Super Saturday? Other issues can be more difficult. What do we do if a speaker starts quoting from an outside source? What kinds of literature will we display on the table? Do we have an official opinion about certain food substances? Shall we change any words in the readings? When we eat out together after the meeting, how do we behave? The Traditions suggest some points to consider in these situations, but a group is free to ignore the Traditions, in the sense that no one has the authority to stop them. (I'm not saying ignoring the Traditions is a good idea, of course.)

In my own journey through OA, there was a time when my two closest meetings openly and enthusiastically used names, words, and prayers from one particular religion. I was completely turned off. That was one reason why I dropped out of OA for over ten years. If I'd had more recovery at the time, I might have just looked for other meetings to attend, or I might have had the courage to challenge those groups. As it was, I just slunk away with the idea that OA was too religious for me—something that wasn't true of OA as a whole, but I didn't know it then.

In my years in program, I've seen several examples of group autonomy being liberating and energizing and also of it being taken too far. It's always a good idea to keep an eye on the big picture.

—Anonymous



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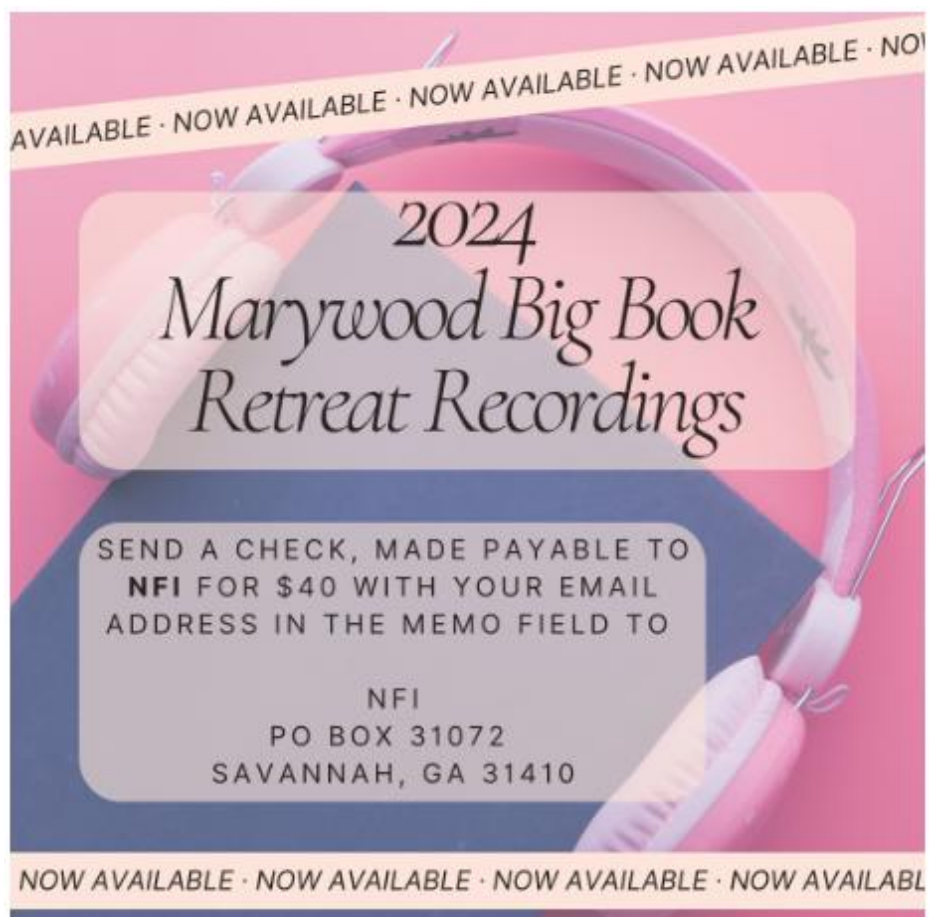
## Trusted Servants and Committee Chairs (New emails)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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**  
Hailey 404.797.5586  
Brian B. 904.616.0608  
**VACANT—Consider doing service**

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chairnfi@gmail.com  
vicechairnfi@gmail.com  
nfitreasury@gmail.com  
oanfig@gmail.com  
delegatenfi@gmail.com  
innervoicenfi@gmail.com  
piponfig@gmail.com  
youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com  
ghabanero56@yahoo.com  
sponsor.nfig@gmail.com  
websitenfi@gmail.com  
wandmnfi@gmail.com



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)

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



**The Heart of Texas Intergroup**  
Hosts the  
**Spring 2025 Region 3 Assembly**  
**Texas State Convention**  
**April 4-6, 2025**  
**Austin, Texas**



**CONVENTION SCHEDULE AND MORE  
INFORMATION**

[www.txoaconvention.org](http://www.txoaconvention.org)



Virtual Registration - \$ 30  
(includes 3 Keynote Speakers)

Scholarships are available.

Email: [info@txoaconvention.org](mailto:info@txoaconvention.org)



**Convention or Registration Questions:**  
**512-657-7677**  
**[info@TXOAConvention.org](mailto:info@TXOAConvention.org)**



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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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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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DONATIONS REPORT 2025		Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD TOTAL
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$55.30	\$23.30		\$78.60
			1		
<b>Jacksonville Groups</b>	<b>Grp#</b>				
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774				\$0.00
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763				\$0.00
Tue: 7pm Jacksonville (virtual)	800028				\$0.00
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223	\$14.08	\$14.08		\$28.16
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beach	54507				\$0.00
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 Bc	51693				\$0.00
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025				\$0.00
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$28.64	\$28.64		\$57.28
<b>Gainesville Groups</b>					\$0.00
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137	\$25.00	\$25.00		\$50.00
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22	\$9.22		\$18.44
Wed: Gainesville Unity Church	57568				\$0.00
Sat: 9:30 AM Welcome Home	48324		\$180.00		\$180.00
<b>Other Florida Groups</b>					\$0.00
Mon: Palm Coast-St Mark by the Sea	38320				\$0.00
Mon.	32609				\$0.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 10am	56604				\$0.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101	\$25.00			\$25.00
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171				\$0.00
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235	\$23.79	\$23.79		\$47.58
Sun: Palm Coast/Flagler Beach	56072				\$0.00
<b>Southern Georgia Groups</b>					\$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			\$153.00
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362				\$0.00
<b>Totals</b>		\$334.03	\$472.03		\$806.06
<b>Don to WSO</b>		\$100.21	\$141.61	\$0.00	
<b>Don to SOAR8</b>		\$33.40	\$47.20	\$0.00	

## 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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