

Inner Voice

Newsletter of New Freedom Intergroup of OA



March 2022

Step 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

- Spiritual Principle: Faith

Tradition 3: The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

- Spiritual Principle: Identity

Concept 3: The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

- Spiritual Principle: Trust

Promise 3: We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

How do we give service?

There are so many ways to give service. A primary way is to show up at a meeting, in person or virtual, to support OA's continuity. And at the meetings, we can greet each other, offer support, read one of our program texts, chair or speak at a meeting, be a timekeeper, help set up or clean up, etc.

We can be an intergroup representative, attending NFI meetings and reporting back to the group, take on a task for an NFI event, perhaps venture forth to the larger region, and then perhaps to the national organization.

When we do give service, we keep in mind Tradition 2 (see last month's issue!) which reminds us: "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." One way we maintain this tradition is to rotate positions.

Often in the *Inner Voice* we have mentioned someone needing to rotate out of office, and very often our dedicated officers simply rotate to other positions of need. Sometimes this is a chance to acquire other skills and do something new. Other times it is out of necessity—some jobs just need to get done.

Unfortunately, this can lead to burnout, and can even have dire consequences as far as living and working the OA program.

When I, as editor, have to reprint month after month blocks in our Trusted Servants grid marked **VACANT—Consider doing service**, I find it discouraging. Shuffling from one position to another, without having substantial fresh blood leads to a lack of new perspectives and ideas.

When we say "consider doing service," this is an ideal opportunity to practice Step 11, prayer and meditation. Ask yourself, "do I have anything to offer the larger organization?" and "how can I expand my frame of reference, knowledge, and group of friends and compatriots?"

The effort can be fun and rewarding. And while the meetings are virtual, no one even has to climb in the car!

Thanks for your patience in letting me share this. I welcome any feedback you'd like to offer, especially if it has provoked change!

Mark W., Editor
innervoicenfi@gmail.com



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Lifeline: Stories of Recovery

A Series of Miracles



In 2011, I weighed 534 pounds (242 kg) and was unable to walk due to sepsis from an *E. coli* infection. When I was admitted to the hospital, my feet and legs were black from the blood pooling, my organs had shut down, and I smelled disgusting because my skin was weeping from the infection. I also had diabetes, high blood pressure, off-the-charts triglycerides, and a rapid and irregular heartbeat. In fact, I was so close to death that the doctor sent me to die at a skilled nursing home in a nearby city.

But the nurse who took care of me looked at me one day and said, “This woman is not going to die.” She worked hard to help me clean my food and my body.

It took six people to roll me over to change my sheets or my diaper. I was on oxygen and so many medications. I had pain medications available that would have let me die, and I would have gladly died because I couldn’t imagine my life without my legs. But the nurse saved my life and my legs, and I went home weighing 300 pounds (136 kg).

Once I was at home, though, I quickly gained back some of the weight. Five years later, at 400 pounds (181 kg), I fell and crushed my femur just above the knee. I was too fat for surgery, so they put a brace on my leg and sent me to the same skilled nursing home. Again, I was able to control my food in this medical setting. I went from 400 to 300 pounds in just seven months, even though I was not allowed to walk because my leg bone had to grow together without surgery.

It was December 2016 when I fell. A series of miracles started the following September:

A woman in the recovery room next to me and her brother and I started a God table so we could pray for others. They prayed about a small growth on my face. It fell off the next day. No scar, no healing— it just fell off. I knew God was trying to reach me. I knew it was a miracle.

After they left, I started having lunch with the man in the room on the other side of me. I started crying one day because I was so terrified of going home and gaining my weight back. He said he belonged to AA and asked if I had ever heard of Overeaters Anonymous.

God had absolutely made a path to my bed. I’d been flat on my back for seven months, yet here I’d found a woman who had brought me to God and a man who had brought me to OA. Then, when I called the local phone number for OA to find a meeting, the man who answered eventually became my sponsor, and he is to this day—another miracle from God.

The day I told my AA friend that I was willing to work the OA program, the nursing staff told me I was ready to put weight on my leg again, and I took my first steps.

The stronger my program gets, the more miracles I get—too many to even begin to name. I am currently at 250 pounds (113 kg), and I have lost 284 pounds (129 kg). I’ve had to stop weighing myself, however, because my doctor does not want me to be misled by water retention in my legs. My heartbeat has been improving, and everything else is working perfectly—no more diabetes (my A1C is lower than normal), no more oxygen, no more high blood pressure, and no more high triglycerides. I am taking a diuretic to help my heart, but I take no other medication.

Today, I live most of my life in program (I’m retired, so I have the whole day to fill). I moderate a meeting once a week. I sponsor five people. I make a lot of outreach calls and texts and receive just as many. I start my day with *For Today* and *Voices of Recovery*. I say the Serenity Prayer and Third Step Prayer before each meal to center myself before I start eating. Here’s how I know when my abstinence is spot-on: When I have my meal in front of me on one dish, I imagine someone I don’t like coming through the door. If I’m embarrassed, then I have too much food.



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OA has saved my life, my sanity, and my legs. I cannot begin to describe how grateful I am for OA's founder, Rozanne, and her wisdom in starting this unique program for those of us with the disease of compulsive overeating. I will cherish and love her through all of eternity.

— Carrie C., San Diego, California USA (Reprinted from *Lifeline*)

Do You Like to Write?

The newsletter is looking for a person who would like to write a brief article each month on the **STEP, TRADITION or CONCEPT** of the month. You would be using your tools of reading and writing and delving deeper into the principles behind each one. Let the newsletter chair (innervoicenfi@gmail.com) know if you want to volunteer for this service. Articles would be due by the 20th of each month. Members may also submit articles on other topics any month.

Step 3: Power Surge

Step 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

At my home meeting, a member shared a story about wanting a specific food and not being able to stop herself from going to buy it. While she was putting on her coat, she said a prayer. "God, if you want me to not eat this, you're going to have to help me." When she arrived at the shop, there was a sign on the door: "Closed—no electricity."

Hearing this story had an immediate and profound effect on me. I realized I'd never completely surrendered my food. I write it down, call it in to my sponsor, weigh and measure it, but I've never given it to God.

Maybe that's why I still struggle when I enter the grocery store? Or why the newest fad diet always grabs my attention? Could it be the reason why I want something to eat when my spouse is snacking in the evening?

After leaving the meeting, while riding home with another member, I realized I didn't want to struggle anymore. I was ready to surrender my food to God. So I visualized holding my food in my hands, lifting both hands up above my head, and saying, "Here, God, I give you my food."

What happened next was amazing. I felt as if a huge weight was physically lifted from my shoulders. I felt 10 pounds (5 kg) lighter. More important, I stopped struggling. The food stopped calling out to me. From the beginning, I had the willingness to do what was necessary. It was surrender that made the difference.

— Norinne M., Fort Myers, Florida USA (Reprinted from *Lifeline*)

Order Your Recovery Jar

A Recovery Jar is made up of 366 different questions or prompts to help you achieve or maintain your recovery and growth in the program. Each strip of paper in the jar has a unique prompt that you can write or meditate on as part of your daily OA work, with the idea being to use one per day for a year. Examples include writing on the different steps, the principles, gratitude, etc. Jars are 1 recyclable PET plastic with a black screw-top lid. Perfect for carrying with you!

Each jar costs \$20 plus shipping. If you would like to pre-order a jar (or more than one), please fill out the form at this link: <https://forms.gle/6bPaYJgu57sW24Yq6> and select whether you would like to arrange to pick it up in Newberry, or have one shipped to you. If you select the shipping option, I will contact you to make arrangements for the shipping costs (currently an additional \$8-\$10 for one jar). Hint: It will be cheaper to ship multiples, such as a case of 12 for your group. (NOTE: We are offering free shipping on a case of 12!)

Payment can be made in cash at pick up or by check/money order ahead of time. (Please make check out to New Freedom Intergroup and mail to: NFI Ways and Means, 28303 SW 101st Avenue, Newberry, FL 32669.) If you have additional questions, please contact: wandmnfi@gmail.com

— Barbara C.



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Tradition Three: Desire and Beyond

Tradition 3: The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Many a member has said that if the requirements for membership in OA were more stringent than “a desire to stop eating compulsively,” they probably wouldn’t have felt qualified to be at a meeting.

Unfortunately, this unique requirement—the only requirement in our entire Fellowship—is often used to avoid being “made” to do anything else that makes somebody uncomfortable, like having a food plan, being accountable to a sponsor, working the Steps, or realizing that abstinence comes from continuous action, not just a desire.

A desire is the beginning of a process, but a desire alone will not accomplish very much in OA. The Third Tradition ensures that anyone who wants to can attend an OA meeting, but I don’t believe it was intended to be the standard to which one aspires to attain abstinence, or to effectively fulfill our primary purpose, or to insure the continuing wellness of our beloved Fellowship.

For six years, I slipped and slid. I’d get some abstinence, then become complacent and backslide. I’d “tighten my food up,” only to renege on my new commitments. I was alternately attracted to people with solid abstinence and repelled by them as rigid perfectionists who sang the shrill song, “I don’t eat no matter what.” They must have been cheating or lying, I thought, since nobody could possibly get and stay abstinent. Such was the state of my willingness to act upon my feeble desire.

My desire stopped being the answer once I realized that recovery was about taking suggestions, commitment, principles, and personal integrity. Until I understood at a deep personal level that I was different from people who ate what they wanted without hating themselves, my problem continued unabated. When I accepted the spiritual consequences of my eating, and the totality of my absorption in it, I found the willingness to convert desire into action and began to make progress. Today, after more than ten years of continuous abstinence, I sing the praises of physical recovery and service as a formula for keeping a willing OA member moving forward in recovery.

OA became an international entity because people sublimated their egos, undertook tasks that forced them outside their comfort zones, and endured extreme emotional challenges. Without diligent, daily effort, our recovery and OA’s credibility will suffer. Undertaking a difficult action to attain or maintain abstinence is a desire to be a living example of the best that this program has to offer.

— Neil R., Baltimore, Maryland USA (Reprinted from *Lifeline*)

Trusted Servants and Committee Chairs (New emails)

GENERAL INFORMATION	Secretary will forward as needed	oanfig@gmail.com
Chair	Echo G. 561.704.2917	chairnfi@gmail.com
Vice Chair/Bylaws	Barbara C. 352.472.9924	vicechairnfi@gmail.com
Treasurer	Carly B. 303.710.0589	nfitreasury@gmail.com
Secretary	VACANT—Consider doing service	oanfig@gmail.com
Delegate	VACANT—Consider doing service	delegatenfi@gmail.com
Newsletter/Meeting List	Mark W. 904.527.3433	innervocenfifi@gmail.com
Public Info/Prof. Outreach	Nancy K. 516.286.1888	piponfig@gmail.com
Young Persons	VACANT—Consider doing service	youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com
12th Step Within	Georgette P. 352.870.4454	TSWnfi@gmail.com
Sponsor Coordinator	Christen C. 904-844-1454	sponsorsnfi@gmail.com
Website	Lori L. 904.964.9991	websitenfi@gmail.com
Ways and Means	VACANT—Consider doing service	wandmnfi@gmail.com
2022 5th Annual “Big Book Convention”	TBD	



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Highlights of the February NFI Business Meeting:

(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 February 12. 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). Thus, the next business meeting is Saturday, March 12th at 10:00 am by Zoom. (Meeting ID: 872 7218 1719, Password: 883350). Highlights of what was discussed/accomplished in January:

Old Business:

- We need to fill the following service positions: Secretary, Delegate, Parliamentarian, Ways and Means Chair. The motion to use monthly volunteers (no abstinence requirements need to be met) as the secretary was approved and will start in March. Other committees also need service.
- All meetings are to let Chair know about changes in format.
- NFI voted to submit a bid for the Fall 2023 SOAR 8 RC & BA to be held in Savannah, GA (bid to be entered in fall 2022). Barb C. working on this.

New Business:

- It is time to review to NFI Bylaws. The recommended change for next month will be to increase all terms for the Board and the Committee Chairs to two years (instead of one) with a chance to renew one time (4 years consecutively).
- NFI P&P Manual: new section 20 was sent out with all intergroup reps to address with their members. This section adds reimbursement guidelines for speakers that we invite for special events. Vote will be called in March.
- PIPO will be attending and hosting a table for the "Holistic Living & Healing Expo" Saturday, February 19th, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in St. Augustine, FL.

Need planning committees:

We need to establish two special event planning committees in the very near future:

1. **The 5th Annual Big Book Convention.** Normally held at Jekyll island, last year's committee received feedback that this venue may be cost-prohibitive for many, and the December time-frame is problematic. That being said, the new committee can change the time and place – which is why we need to get started! If you would like to chair this committee, please step up and inform Echo G.
2. **SOAR 8 Recovery Convention and Business Assembly.** This committee will be planning all the events to be held for the recovery convention to be held in fall 2023 at Savannah, GA. If we are selected to host this event (submission will be made to Region 8 in fall 2022), NFI will be responsible for all aspects of the recovery convention. We last organized one of these in March 2017 in Jacksonville, and it was a huge success from the recovery and financial aspects! We will need people to plan the sessions, theme, boutique, decorations, entertainment, get speakers and timers, arrange volunteers, set up hospitality, baskets and drawings, ...you name it, we need it! We need you – and there is no time like the present to start planning. Let Barb C. know if you are interested.

Just the FAQs, Please

The new **Frequently Asked Questions about OA Bylaws** is now posted online and is available for free download. Find it on oa.org here:

What's happening at OA? <https://oa.org/news-events/>

Document Library under the category "Bylaws" <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2022/01/faq-frequently-asked-questions-about-oa-bylaws.pdf>

The general category of FAQs, <https://oa.org/faqs/> will give you access to many areas of exploration, each of which has multiple offerings. We encourage you to explore these in more detail: Top FAQs, About OA, Literature, Events, Service Bodies and much more!



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Planning to Host a Workshop?



This is a great time to consider giving service and begin planning to host a workshop. You can plan one with just your group or better yet, join forces with another OA group 😊. Consider topics such as “The Tools of OA,” “Surviving Relapse,” “The OA Principles,” etc. Our Twelve Step Within (TSW) committee is here to provide you with any assistance you need.

Please contact our chair of the Twelve Step Within committee, Georgette, if you have any concerns, questions, or ideas at tswnfi@gmail.com.

In grateful service,

— Sandi J

Region 8 Public Information/Professional Outreach (PI/PO) Committee Programs

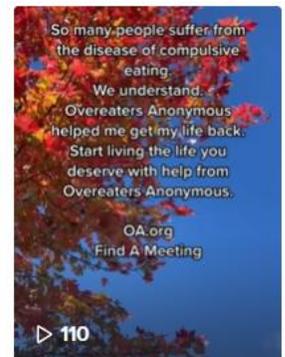
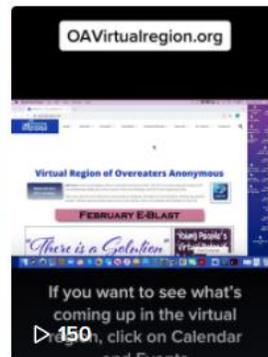
The goal of OA public information work is to carry the message of recovery to compulsive eaters outside the OA rooms. They recently held the first session of their **Tips Series**: How to use Public Information / Professional Outreach (PI/PO) efforts to bring in Newcomers. Region 8's PI/PO Chair Melissa and Treasurer Michelle co-facilitated the session. They have provided a link for those who might like to watch.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/cgj4bbzu8fbm67m/SOAR8TipsSeries%2020%20Jan%202022.mp4?dl=0>

Here are the upcoming sessions:

- 10 March: How to grow and develop new groups or meetings
- 19 May: How to encourage intergroup to send a rep to Region 8 Assemblies and/or WSO conference
- 21 July: How to host recovery events
- 15 September: How to encourage meetings to send a rep to Intergroup

To sign up for the series, it is necessary to sign up for the distribution list. Zoom information will be shared ahead of each session in the series via email to ALLSOAR8. Sign up at <https://oaregion8.org/contact/join-email-group>.



And for those who are interested in how Pam (pamtinker@gmail.com) and her Central Florida IG fellows got started producing short videos for *TikTok*, one of the newest ways to attract newcomers. The OA CFI TikTok collection features >300 short videos! They can be found at https://www.tiktok.com/@oacfi?is_copy_url=1&is_from_webapp=v1.



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Attention All Sponsors!

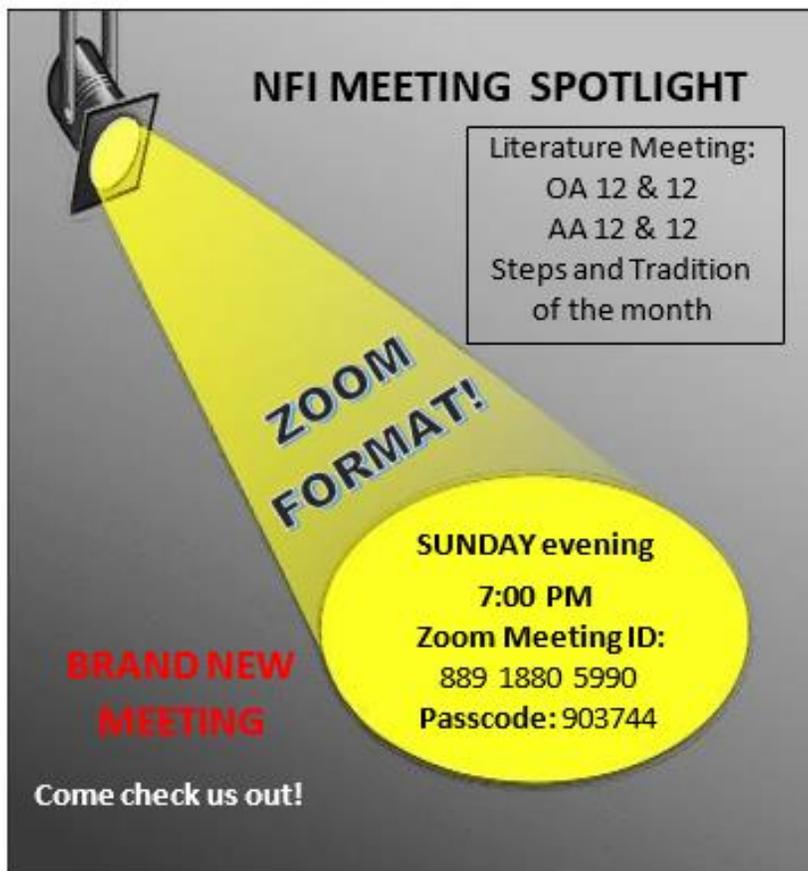
Dear OA Fellows,

For everyone who is a sponsor, we encourage you to add your name to our sponsors list. The sponsor coordinator is working to connect members looking for a sponsor with an available sponsor. Please let us know if you would like to be contacted by a potential sponsee by reaching out to the sponsorship coordinator: Christen at 904-844-1454 or sponsorsnfi@gmail.com. Please provide your name, email, and phone number. We ask that once you have the name of a new sponsee, you contact that individual within a week. It is important that your new sponsee understands you are motivated to work with them. If for some reason you cannot contact the new sponsee in this time frame, be sure to let Christen know.

It is very important that we keep the OA Sponsor List current. If at some point, you decide that you no longer want to be on the New Freedom Intergroup Sponsor List, please email oanfig@gmail.com and we will remove your contact information from the list. Thank you again for supporting your recovery by sponsoring!

— Twelfth Step Within Committee, New Freedom Intergroup

The Twelfth Step Within Committee Wants to Hear from YOU!



NFI MEETING SPOTLIGHT

Literature Meeting:
OA 12 & 12
AA 12 & 12
Steps and Tradition
of the month

**ZOOM
FORMAT!**

SUNDAY evening
7:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID:
889 1880 5990
Passcode: 903744

**BRAND NEW
MEETING**

Come check us out!

Yes, we know that the meeting at left was featured in our last issue! They can **still use your support**. Thanks in advance for considering attending.

The purpose of the Twelfth Step Within Committee is to support our existing members. The committee wants YOUR ideas!

- Does your meeting have a group rep?
- Does your rep attend NFI and bring information back to your group? (NFI meets the 2nd Saturday of every month, right now via Zoom, from 10:00-11:30 AM. Meeting ID: 872 7218 1719. Password: 883350).
- Do you need tools and resources to support your recovery?
- Is there something our committee can do to aid in your recovery? We want to know!
- Do you have a workshop topic or suggestion for a future NFI event? Please share your ideas with us!

Georgette P., Twelfth Step Within Chair,
tswnfi@gmail.com



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To Share or Not To Share

OA Board Urges Members to Stop Unauthorized Screen Sharing of OA Literature

The OA Board of Trustees has issued an instructive letter to all OA groups that meet virtually to immediately stop screen sharing and all other unauthorized reproductions of OA literature in virtual meetings. We ask that you download this letter from the Document Library under the category "Copyright" and share it with your group as soon as possible.

Since this issue affects OA as a whole, it is not a matter of group conscience. Moreover, it is a matter of acting lawfully, since unauthorized reproduction of OA literature violates the copyright of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. While we are all one OA, when it comes to copyright law, OA, Inc. must actively protect its copyrights to maintain these copyrights. This is for the good of the Fellowship as a whole and in support of our Seventh Tradition.

This instruction primarily applies to literature for sale at bookstore.oa.org and at OA's third-party retailers. So long as passages are properly cited with OA's copyright, registered OA groups still have the right to reproduce and share all print material found on oa.org, without written permission. For more information about these options, see the Copy Requests Translation Assistance Funds page on oa.org.

(Reprinted from *A Step Ahead* newsletter)

MEETING CHANGES

Please let us know if your meeting is changing formats, e.g., going back face-to-face, or becoming hybrid. To update your listing, send an email to oafig@gmail.com or chairnfi@gmail.com.

— Echo G.

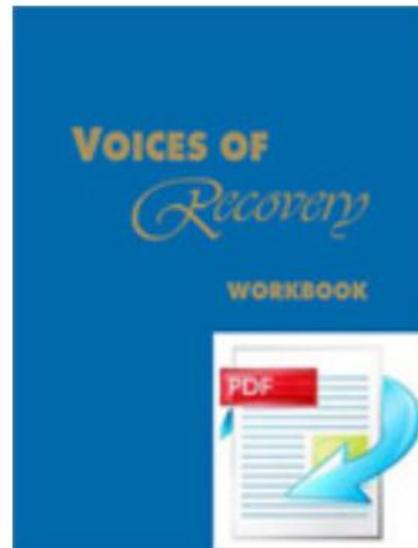
OA MATERIALS (bookstore.oa.org)

Downloadable Workbooks...



For Today e-Workbook

\$7.50



Voices of Recovery

e-Workbook

\$7.50



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Events from All Over



The Buffalo Retreat is Back!!!

Please Update Your Calendar!!!

No matter where you are on your journey – from newcomer to recovered – you'll find what you need at the 2022 OA Buffalo Retreat.

Join others on the road of happy destiny during a transformative weekend packed with speakers, small groups, guided meditation, fellowship, and fun.

It's time to get together again!

Friday, Saturday & Sunday April 8th - April 10th, 2022

Christ the King Retreat Center
621 First Avenue South
Buffalo, MN 55313

No matter where you are on your journey – from newcomer to recovered – you'll find what you need at the 2022 OA Buffalo Retreat. Join others on the road of happy destiny during a transformative weekend packed with speakers, small groups, guided meditation, fellowship, and fun. It's time to get together again!

Costs:

Shared room: \$192.00 before March 15 and \$200 after March 15

Private room*: \$212.00 before March 15 and \$220 after March 15

Program with meals and NO lodging: \$100.00

**Private room availability is limited. No scholarships for private rooms.*

Includes:

Friday: dinner and room, Saturday: three meals and room, Sunday: breakfast.

* \$3 surcharge per meal/per person, gluten free or vegetarian (5 meals is \$15)

Check-in: Friday 5:00, dinner 6:00, program 7:00 and Check-out: Sunday 10:30 am

Register online: <http://overeaters.org/upcoming-oa-events/>



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Our mission is to provide inspiring speaker meetings of depth and authenticity while supporting World Service through financial contributions.

Upcoming Speaker Topics:

MAR **6** The Culmination, The Call, & The Challenge
The Three Cs of Step 12

MAR **20** Experience, Strength
and Hope

1-4 p.m. PDT

Overeaters Anonymous
Registered Meeting #88993

Meetings held regularly on the first & third Sundays of each month
Zoom ID: 947 2125 9974 Password: 810562

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 innervoicenf@gmail.com.



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DONATIONS REPORT 2022		Feb
PAYPAL - Individual Donations		\$159.25
Jacksonville Groups		Grp#
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774	
Tue: Orange Park-10am Presb Church	03654	
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763	
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223	\$29.13
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beaches	54507	\$135.00
Thur: Newcomer, Lakeview Health	47756	
Fri: Orange Park - 10am	49119	
Fri: Orange Park - 6pm	57531	\$20.00
Sat: Saturday Steppers-Ponte Vedra Bch	51693	
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025	
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$154.76
Sat: Serenity Saturday OP NFI		
Gainesville Groups		
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137	
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22
Sat: 9:30 AM Welcome Home	48324	\$48.06
Sun: United Church of Gainesville	52879	
Other Florida Groups		
Mon: Lifesaver - Palatka	38464	
Mon: Palm Coast-St Mark by the Sea	38320	\$10.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 5:45pm	56604	\$10.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101	
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171	\$10.00
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235	\$88.79
Sun: Palm Coast/Flagler Beach	56072	
Southern Georgia Groups		
Tue: Jesup	54175	\$25.00
Tue: 7pm St Simons by The Sea	38311	
Wed: Savannah - 5:30 pm	50301	
Thur: Brunswick	51988	
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362	
Totals		\$699.21
Don to WSO		\$209.76
Don to SOAR8		\$69.92

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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