



Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

• Spiritual Principle: Integrity

Tradition 5: Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

• Spiritual Principle: Purpose

Concept 5: Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

• Spiritual Principle: Consideration

Promise 5: That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

Survey: What Works for You?

The OA Board Approved Literature (BAL) Committee is revising a piece of literature on the topic of what recovery actions are most helpful to our members. Your answers to this survey will provide valuable insight for this purpose.

This survey should take about five minutes to complete. *Please complete the survey only once*, but feel free to share the link below with other members to help us get as many responses as possible.

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BAL24>

While this survey is in English, we encourage service bodies to help non-English speaking members with translation to complete the survey.

We plan to begin sharing survey findings at World Service Business Conference in May, 2024.

Thank you for sharing your OA recovery experience with us!

Gearing Up for Recovery



I began using the **Tools of Recovery** before I even knew they were the Tools.

It started with the Tool of meetings: I attended my first one, then my second. As I listened to others' shares, I kept hearing, "Find a sponsor." When I made the decision to jump in, I found a sponsor (a second Tool) who had

what I wanted: peace, joy, and program experience. My sponsor asked me to telephone her (another Tool), and from there, we established a plan of eating (yet another Tool) that I could live with while I made changes in my choices. Once I became comfortable with my plan of eating, my sponsor introduced me to an agreeable action plan, another Tool I could use along with my plan of eating.

My action plan included daily meditation, which involved prayer, reading, and the Tool of writing. As I began working Step One, I'd read all I could find about it and then would write down my thoughts on those readings and what they meant to me. Writing helped reinforce what I was reading and encouraged me to explore the feelings that surfaced. The more I read,

the more I felt and wrote and learned about myself. I completed the first three Steps smoothly and with little pain. Then came Step Four, which prompted me to use many of the Tools. At meetings, I would listen to others share about their Step work. I would call my sponsor daily and talk about my work: Am I doing it right? What exactly do I need to write down? I would consult the Big Book (Tool of literature) and found answers to my questions about what I ought to include. The OA Twelve and Twelve also provided a wealth of information. When I thought I'd read, felt, and learned all that I could, I shared it with my sponsor in Step Five.

I continued to use meetings, my sponsor, the telephone, writing, and literature as I worked the remaining Steps. I still use these Tools today as I work my daily action plan of making healthy food choices, exercising, and reaching out to others.

The Tool of service takes many forms. I listen to others share their problems and try to focus on their day and their needs. I chair meetings and volunteer as meeting secretary, both of which encourage me to talk about the program with others while reinforcing my practice of the Principles in my own life. As I speak with others, I remember to use the Tool of anonymity by keeping these conversations confidential out of respect for all concerned.

The Tools give me what I need to work a successful program at any moment of any day. They reinforce my commitment to become a better person and, at the same time, offer me opportunities to help others do the same.

— Liz

Step 5: Life & Death Errand Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Once we have finished Step Four, it's time to look for someone we can share it with. Many of us choose our sponsors. Others choose someone from their religious affiliation, or a doctor or therapist. Still others look for a "closed-mouthed understanding friend." The bottom line is that we choose someone who can understand our mission, who will not repeat what we've shared and will offer considerate and thoughtful responses. Why does the *Big Book* call this important process part of a "life and death errand"? Because "If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome our [eating] problem." And because "We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world." Do you want to live "long and happily" in this world without a food problem? **! Do!** After we share our Fifth Step, we are directed to take some time to thank God and reflect on Steps 1-5; whether we have left anything out. We want to be sure we are building a strong foundation for the rest of our work.

What do we gain from completing Step Five?

1. "We can look the world in the eye."
2. "We can be alone at perfect peace and ease."
3. "Our fears fall from us."
4. "We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator."
5. "We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience."
6. "The feeling that the food problem has disappeared will often come strongly."
7. "We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe."*

I don't know about you, but you had me at "we can look the world in the eye." **Yes!** There are promises after Step Five! The promises above are the result of being completely honest with God, ourselves and someone else about all the behaviors and activities we have been feeling shame about. We get to let go of them and experience our own conception of God. We get to go from believing to experiencing....I can honestly share with you that I continue to experience all these promises after having done Step Five.

If you haven't already, I hope that you will give yourself the gift of Step Five.

— Lucy B.

(Quotes are from **Into Action** from *Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th Edition.)



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More on Step 4 From Our Region

When I came to OA in June of 2022, I committed to a plan of eating, then immersed myself in an intensive step study hosted by my home group. We used the *OA Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide*. While I had worked Step Four several times in another fellowship, being abstinent opened the door to understanding many issues not addressed while in my active food addiction.

Overconsumption of addictive foods had blocked my connection with my Higher Power (HP). With abstinence from my addictive foods, I have a clear, direct connection to my Higher Power, which enables me to fully address and let go of resentments, fears, and other troubling character traits.

For example, I had struggled with a major resentment for many years that continued to plague me. Once I did a fourth step inventory, much was revealed, and HP finally put this resentment to rest. If it ever comes back, I know what to do about it. Willingness and persistence have been the key to doing a meaningful fourth step. I have to be willing to write down my thoughts and feelings, persistently, until I discover the truth lurking behind them.

I do a fourth step by writing the following:

- 1) What happened or what I am disturbed about?
- 2) What is the cause?
- 3) What character traits are affected, e.g., fear, self-esteem, security, personal relationships, sex relations, and/or pride? Sometimes it is just one or two; other times it might be all six!
- 4) What is my part? I always have a part, even if it is just carrying the resentment or other negative feeling(s).
- 5) What would my HP have me be? What will I think, say, or do next time?

In addition to examining my negative character traits, it is important to acknowledge my positive ones.

Step Four enables me to become honest about the wreckage of my past and present, paving the way for future peace, serenity, and a happy, abstinent life.

— Anonymous, Tampa, Florida

Tradition 5: Over & Over **Tradition 5:** Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

How do I incorporate this into my life? I welcome newcomers. Later I text newcomers and tell them I am glad they came and to keep coming back. I show up every week to my meetings unless I am sick. I call or text people I have not seen for a while. I share what has worked for me and help people find out how the program might work for them instead of trying to put them on my plan of eating, my daily routines, my beliefs, or my opinions.

These steps are suggested. No one does it perfectly. When I couldn't get abstinent right away, my sponsor would say "maybe you are a compulsive overeater and are doing what we do." Slips are Step One and many of us have had to take it over and over. Please never give up. Don't let shame at failures drive you away. It takes practice to get abstinent and practicing will get us there.

When I got into program I had been practicing my dysfunctional eating, thinking, and beliefs for 45 years. That is not going to stop in a week or 30 days. That's why I worked the steps slowly and thoroughly, over and over. I never give up. Never give up because the steps will teach you how to live as an imperfect, lovable human being. You are imperfect. You are lovable. You are human. These are three things many of us have been encouraged not to acknowledge and don't believe!

Develop your own food, behavior, and thinking guidelines. We each have to find out what works for us. My main suggestion: keep coming back and never give up. It kicks in eventually. So start over every time as soon as you can.

I also donate OA books and pamphlets to the friends of the library sale, put up OA posters on bulletin boards and used to try to keep meeting information in the local paper. There are plenty of opportunities for service.

— Patience M., Gainesville FL



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Promises: It's a Miracle

Promise 5: That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

Uselessness and self-pity – how accurate this was about the way I felt about myself in the throes of my active food addiction. Of course I could not be useful, since I harbored such a low opinion of myself. As I struggled through the mire of battling food addiction on my own, my life was a continuous series of failures.

These inevitable failures helped validate my low self-esteem. It also gave me great excuses -- If you had my life, you would be a compulsive eater too. I lived under this delusion and self-pity for many years. And the more I indulged my ego in the poor-me's, the more I believed that I had the right, or better, the need, to binge.

My children wouldn't obey me. My spouse or partner was a nag and didn't understand me. My boss and co-workers were stupid. There's no way I can eat right with my schedule. Working out won't fit into my schedule, I have too many important things to do and appointments to keep. If I don't participate in this eating event or that food celebration, people will think I'm weird. Poor me – I'm trapped.

The reality is that even if these delusions were true, the fact remains that as a food addict, my situation is quite grave. In the chapter **How it Works** in the *Big Book*, it says, "In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill." With the help of my sponsor, the program, and my Higher Power, it is clear that my feelings of uselessness and self-pity were indeed fancied. Upon close inspection, I can see that fostering feelings of uselessness and self-pity only serves my addiction.

Today, as an active member of Overeaters Anonymous, my dignity has been restored. And, as a recovered food addict, I am whole and useful in many aspects of life. And, thankfully, my experience fits me to be uniquely useful in helping other food addicts. Today I am useful in passing along the 12 steps of recovery to the next person that comes into the rooms of OA.

And, paradoxically, the more I think of you, the less I think of me. And, for me, my self-pity vanishes when I'm not thinking about me. For this selfish, self-centered food addict the disappearance of my uselessness and self-pity is more than a promise, it's a miracle.

— John K.

And More Promises

Here are some *other* promises in *Big Book* order with a few comments (see last month for the first installment). Note that the promises are generally conditional. **One needs to work the program for the promises to come true in our lives.**

Bill's Story

"...I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day." An outward focus reminds me that I'm not the center of the universe.

"We commenced to make many fast friends and a fellowship has grown up among us of which it is a wonderful thing to feel a part. The joy of living we really have, even under pressure and difficulty." The word fellowship, used repeatedly in the book (58 times in one e-edition!) is echoed in the familiar promise that your Higher Power, "will show you how to create the fellowship you crave." This is a craving that we have sought to satisfy with food.

"I have seen hundreds of families set their feet in the path that really goes somewhere; have seen the most impossible domestic situations righted; feuds and bitterness of all sorts wiped out. I have seen men come out of asylums and resume a vital place in the lives of their families and communities. Business and professional men have regained their standing. There is scarcely any form of trouble and misery which has not been overcome among us."

"There is, however, a vast amount of fun about it all." ("...we aren't a glum lot.")

"Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia. We have it with us right here and now." Living in the present beats living in regret for the past or in fear of the future.

— Mark W.



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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
 Barbara C. 352.474.1366
 Augusta L. 912.508.4777
 Sandi JC 912.464.4231
VACANT—Consider doing service
 Mark W. 904.527.3433
 Nancy K. 516.286.1888
VACANT—Consider doing service
VACANT—Consider doing service
 Hailey R. 404.797.5586
 Brian B. 904.616.0608
VACANT—Consider doing service

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 delegatenfi@gmail.com
 innervoicenfi@gmail.com
 piponfig@gmail.com
 youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com
 TSWnfi@gmail.com
 sponsor.nfig@gmail.com
 websitenfi@gmail.com
 wandmnfi@gmail.com

Save the date!

Big Book Weekend NOVEMBER 1-3, 2024

Join us in person as we witness examples of ‘how to recover’ from the disease of compulsive eating, as outlined in the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous. A guest speaker will share how he practices his program, maintains recovery, lives in spiritual abundance, letting go of the food and working with others. There will be group sharing activities and plenty of time for fellowship, reflection and relaxation. Abstinent meals, on the premises, will be available.



Program begins at **7:00 pm Friday** evening
 and ends at **12:00 pm Sunday**.

LOCATION: MARYWOOD RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER
 235 Marywood Drive, St. Johns, FL 32259
www.marywoodcenter.org
 904.287-2525

If you cannot attend the full weekend in person, virtual access will be available for the speakers. Virtual registration will give you access to these workshops, but not any of the after-hours activities.

More information and the registration flyer will be coming soon.



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Highlights of the April 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 April 13. Each meeting is welcome and encouraged 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, May 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 April business meeting:

Service Opportunities:

- We need to fill the following service positions: Delegate, Parliamentarian, Young Persons subcommittee chair, Twelfth Step Within chair, and Ways and Means chair. Other committees also need volunteers to provide service.
- We'll be hosting a *Big Book* Retreat at Marywood on November 1-3, 2024. There will be many opportunities to give service as we plan for this event and at the event itself. If you are interested in volunteering in any way, please reach out to Nancy K. Expect more details soon! And please continue to be on the lookout for more announcements and information about this!
- 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

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.
- Voted to increase the budget for Marywood Big Book Retreat by \$2,000.00 – This will allow the planning committee to hire a professional Audio/Visual company who will livestream the event and create audio-only recordings for registered attendees. Having a livestreaming option allows us to carry the message farther, and hiring a professional company to provide this service will guarantee that the quality of the sound and video is high and they will be able to provide technical support as needed.
- Reports from the Region 8 Spring Business Assembly were given by Echo G., Barb C., Georgette P., and Sandi JC. All motions that were submitted passed.
 - The International Committee has moved from being a subcommittee under IGOR to a fully funded committee.
 - Added more flexible wording to allow R8 BAs (Business Assemblies) to be held in alternate months when the preferred timing isn't feasible.
 - Added guidelines for how to write a motion and the timeline to be followed.
 - Cleaning up the information tied to C. "Carry the Message" fund and ensuring the correct form is listed.
- Next assembly will be held September 20-22nd and is being sponsored by Gold Coast Intergroup and Palm Beach County Intergroup.
 - Location: Doubletree by Hilton in Deerfield Beach/Boca Raton.
 - There will be a Recovery Convention and a Business Assembly.
 - Theme is "Be Protected, Stay Connected."
 - More information will be provided as we are given it.



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Events from All Over

Building a Firm Foundation- Steps 1-3

Sunday, June 9, 2024

3:00- 5:00p.m. (EST)/ 2:00- 4:00 p.m. (CST)



Join us for a virtual interactive workshop:

A Guest speaker for each Step 1-3

Followed by open Sharing

Interactive activity: Mind Mapping!

ZOOM ID: 833 3622 1986 PASSCODE: 434673

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83336221986?pwd=eDhqdGNkQjNaUVdtU1pYc1dPOVZRZz09>

Please consider giving a 7th Tradition donation to Region 8 at
(<https://oaregion8.org/region-8/contributions/>)

For more information, please contact:

Susan F. smfitzmaur@gmail.com or Sandi JC at (912) 464-4231.



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Meet the Virtual Region Chair



12 PM ET (4 PM UTC) & 8:30 PM ET (12:30 PM UTC)
The Fourth Friday of Every Month

Bring your **QUESTIONS** and **IDEAS**

Join the **DISCUSSION**

Learn about **UPCOMING EVENTS**



Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87080400598?pwd=TnhOQm1EN1R1WWQ0N2xVbEJQm1tuQT09>

Meeting ID: 870 8040 0598. Passcode: 120912



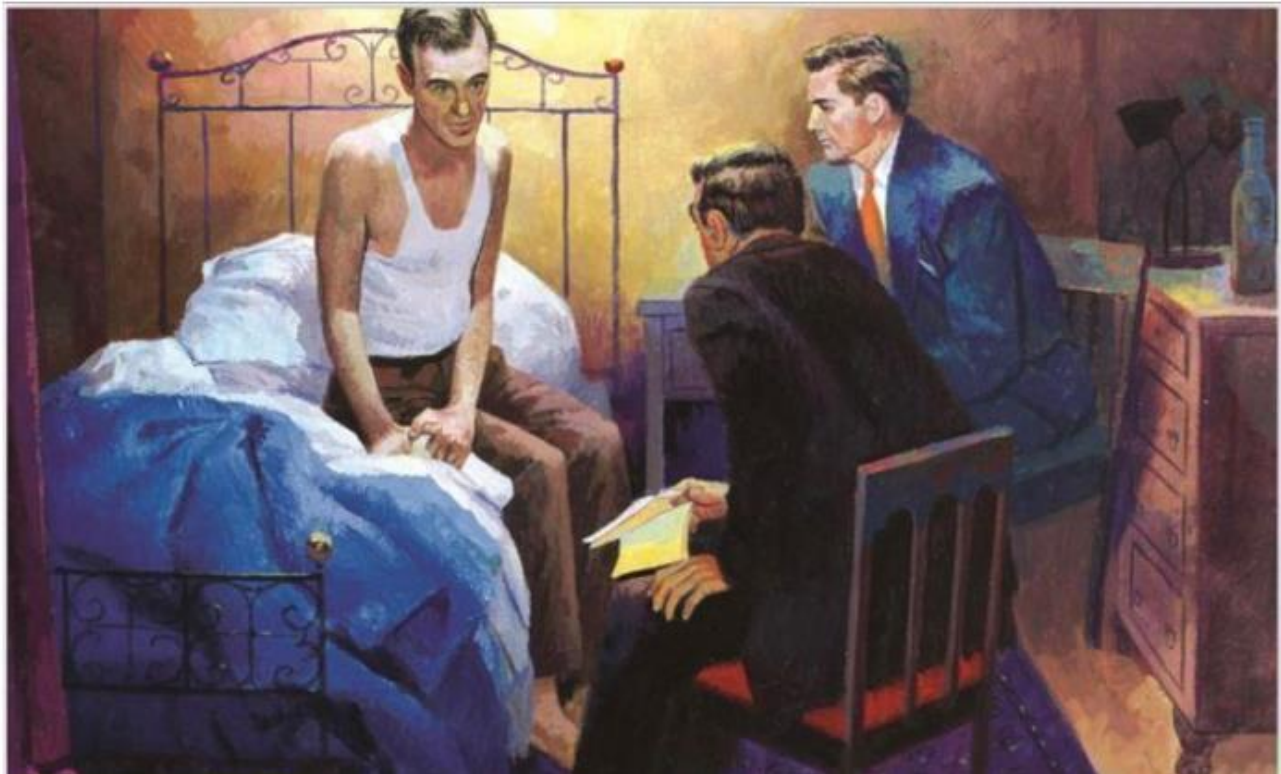
Responsibility Pledge

Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all
who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.

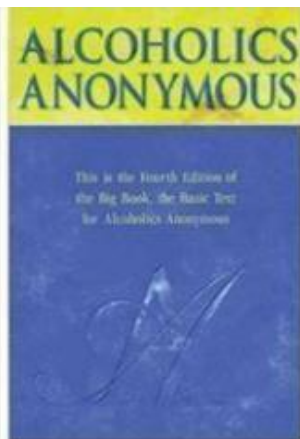


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*Using scripts based on the beginners meetings
in the 1940s: a focused introduction to the 12
step program in 4 weekly sessions.*



**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
BACK TO BASICS
EVERY SUNDAY
7:30-9pm UK
2:30-4pm EST
11:30am - 1PM PST**

**ZOOM ID: 853 4685 2850
PASSWORD:121212**



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Week 1: OA 12 and 12 Step of the month
Week 2: OA Principle of the month
Week 3: AA Big Book Step of the month
Week 4: Lead/Speaker Meeting
Week 5: Topic Meeting

Sunday Morning Coffee and Recovery Meeting

Online Zoom Meeting - Every Sunday
9:00 AM to 10:00 AM (Eastern)

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 2999 2560 883975 Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84229992560>
Dial In: +1 929 205 6099



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More from Region 8

A new way to carry the message!

Region 8 announces an excellent resource page with links to valuable OA information to benefit newcomers, returning and current members. Maybe even the "old timers." 😊

Have you read the appendices to *Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition*? They include writings on The Role of a Plan of Eating, A Disease of the Mind, A Disease of the Mind, A Disease of the Body, A Disease of the Spirit and more.

People may scan this QR code (point your smart phone's camera at the QR code and it will pop up a link) and connect to the Region 8 resources page. Please feel free to print this information and pass around in face-to-face meetings or insert into a visual format for virtual meetings.

Check it out — Pass it on!



OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS.
Region 8

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.



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DONATIONS REPORT 2024		Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD TOTAL
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$162.64	\$152.57	\$329.93	\$645.14
Jacksonville Groups					
	Grp#				
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774				\$0.00
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763				\$0.00
Tue: 7pm Jacksonville (virtual)	800028				
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223	\$64.09	\$59.08	\$48.55	\$171.72
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beaches	54507				\$0.00
Thur: Jacksonville 9am - Our redeemer	57370				
Thur: Newcomer, Lakeview Health	47756				\$0.00
Fri: Orange Park - 10am	03654				\$0.00
Sat: Saturday Steppers-Ponte Vedra Bch	51693				\$0.00
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025				\$0.00
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$78.64	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$135.92
Gainesville Groups					
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137	\$25.00		\$35.00	\$60.00
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$18.44	\$36.88
Wed: Gainesville Unity Church	57568				
Sat: 9:30 AM Welcome Home	48324				\$0.00
Other Florida Groups					
Mon: Palm Coast-St Mark by the Sea	38320	\$62.00	\$35.00		\$97.00
Tues: Lifesaver - Palatka	38464				\$0.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 10am	56604	\$62.00			\$62.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101				\$0.00
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171	\$11.00	\$47.58	\$70.00	\$128.58
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235			\$73.79	\$73.79
Sun: Palm Coast/Flagler Beach	56072				\$0.00
Southern Georgia Groups					
Tue: Jesup	54175				\$0.00
Wed: Douglas, GA	57445				
Wed: Savannah - 5:30 pm	50301				\$0.00
Thur: Brunswick	51988				\$0.00
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$85.92
Totals		\$503.23	\$360.73	\$632.99	\$1,496.95
Don to WSO		\$150.97	\$108.22	\$189.90	
Don to SOAR8		\$50.32	\$36.07	\$63.30	

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 9, 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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