

Inner Voice

Newsletter of New Freedom Intergroup of OA

Step 7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Tradition 7: Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

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

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 Edition, 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 Edition) 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.



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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 June 14. 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, July 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 April business meeting:

Service Opportunities:

- VACANCIES:

Elected positions:

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

Appointed positions:

- Parliamentarian – Ensures that we are operating the meetings fairly and following the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures manual.
- Newsletter Chair – Creates the monthly newsletter by collecting articles from membership and OA resources.



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

Other Items of Note:

- All meetings are to let Chair know about changes in format. Thank you to those who sent us updates this month! They should be reflected on the website and meeting list.
- We reviewed the report from Barb C. about her service at the World Service Business Conference, and the motions that were discussed and voted on. The wrap up report from WSBC can be found here: <https://oa.org/documents/2025-wrap-up-report/>
- Our PIPO Committee is getting ready to finalize a test run of an effort to carry the message to the public. We will utilize the 30 second PSA from [OA.org](https://oa.org) for advertising on smart TVs and handheld devices, and a static pause ad that features a QR code that directs users to our Intergroup website.

Step 7: To Ask

Step 7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.



Humility has been a challenge for me. In the past, I think my focus was on feeling humble; I would try ways to make myself feel humble. I would change my facial expression, body language, and words to control myself into feeling humble. Maybe I was trying to control others, so that they would see me as humble.

I’ve had new insight when reading Step Seven: Humility is not a feeling at all! It is an action. This is a program of action. To ask is a concrete action demonstrating humility.

To be truly open to the answer, whether it is yes, no, or maybe, is to trust and have faith. To receive a “yes” to my asking and fully appreciate it is a gift of gratitude. To receive

a “no” and receive it without anger is a gift of acceptance. To receive a “maybe” to my asking and to be able to wait is a gift of patience. To ask is to admit that I need help and that I can’t do it alone.

To ask is to be vulnerable because I bare my soul and express what I need. To ask puts me in relationship with God and my fellows.

This is a spiritual program and a “we” program. Together we can do what we could never do alone.

— Maureen T., Canada (reprinted from *Lifeline*)



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More on Step 6 from our Region

When I first came into Overeaters Anonymous almost 17 years ago, I thought the problem was food because I was over 350 pounds and miserable but could not seem to stop eating and purging. My daily attempts at controlling my food were done by 8 AM. It turns out that food was only the symptom—what I really had was a living problem. I did not know how to live life on life's terms and was battling a host of character defects: self-pity, fear, pride, envy, resentment, anger, dishonesty, laziness, impatience, greed, selfishness, self-justification, negative thinking, and the relentless need to control. I was beaten when I walked in the door, so I admitted that I was powerless over food and that my life was unmanageable. I put down the food on July 9, 2008, and with God's grace, I have never picked it back up.

I diligently did whatever my sponsor told me as I worked Steps One through Three. Then I dragged out Step Four for a good six months. The minute I finished Step Four, though, my sponsor scheduled a time for my Fifth Step the next weekend. After my Fifth Step was done and we were sipping tea, my sponsor told me that I was immediately ready for Step Six. She pointed to pages 75–76 of Alcoholics Anonymous and showed me that Step Six would begin as soon as I returned home. I followed the directions, reviewing what I did, thanking God, and reading the first five Steps to make sure I had not omitted anything. I asked if I was “now ready to have God remove from us all the things we have admitted that are objectionable?” I was and truly felt “entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

So, was I immediately transformed? Did I never again act on a character defect? Of course not! I am human and hung on to some of them. I was being asked to let go of these defects but that meant giving up the things I thought kept me safe. As uncomfortable as my self-pity, fear, and resentments were, they were familiar. They gave me a false sense of power in a world that often felt overwhelming.

One of the turning points came when I reread page 66: “It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness... this business of resentment is infinitely grave.” That line reminded me that my defects were not just holding me back, they were poisoning my spirit. I had to stop justifying my defects. I had to believe that a different way of living was possible, and that God was capable of changing me in ways I could not change myself.

Control was the hardest to surrender. I believed if I did not manage everything—other people's reactions, the outcomes of situations, my appearance, my schedule—then everything would fall apart. What fell apart was me. The more I tried to control, the more I ate to soothe the anxiety it created. That is what brought me through the doors. Becoming entirely ready meant admitting that I had not been successfully controlling anything.

I had to be willing to trust that God could handle what I could not. I needed to be teachable, willing to see how life could be when I was truly in line with what God wanted for me: “sane and happy usefulness.”

I prayed every day for willingness, and one by one I saw these defects fade. What surprised me, however, was that a defect would resurface even after I thought I had let it go, or like a game of whack-a-mole, a new defect would pop up to replace an old one. Rather than feeling like a failure, I came to see Step Six as a daily practice. Readiness and willingness were not one-time declarations—it was an ongoing relationship with humility. Each time I noticed fear or resentment cropping up, I had a chance to become ready again. I did not have to muscle through it. I could pause, breathe, and ask God to guide me back to willingness.

Change is always possible with God's help. I no longer live under the illusion that I can fix myself. Instead, I know that God is constantly shaping me because each day I ask Him to help me be the best version of myself that I can be. I commit myself to being of use to Him and my fellows. That gives me peace, even on the days I fall short.

— Michelle S., Mississippi

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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Tradition 7: Strive to Give

Tradition 7: Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.



I schlepped into my first OA meeting late and in dirty clothes, fearful of the people around me. I left early too. But I kept coming back, and eventually I found sanity, a benevolent higher power, and abstinence. I've recently become interested in exploring the Traditions at a deeper level. This is what Tradition Seven means to me.

I strive to give more than I take. I come to meetings to support the still-suffering through whatever forms their eating disorders take. I come to offer experience and hope, strength and compassion. And I reach out for support when I need it. Members in my meeting need to hear about the healing that is possible. I don't dwell on the events of the week, wallow in self-pity, or detail the

latest argument with a family member unless it underscores recovery. I bring the message to my meetings and the mess to my sponsor or another OA friend.

Being self-supporting means that I perform service at the meeting level and beyond when I have the time and resources. Somebody has to do it, so why not me? I learned that service providers will sometimes be criticized, but criticism doesn't kill. I learned to step back from service when I took on too much and discovered that people still loved me. I took on tasks to learn them, not because I was already an expert, and taking these risks taught me faith, trust, and new skills.

Something as simple as decorating tables or carpooling with other members is a meaningful contribution. Volunteering at special events enriches my recovery: At a marathon lunch, I learned to design beautiful food trays from a member who catered professionally. At our region assembly, I was introduced to Robert's Rules of Order, which now enables me to lead business meetings at work and at intergroup. And when I was a regional delegate, I learned to dance the Y.M.C.A. (and had a blast!) when I stayed for a convention.

The Seventh Tradition encourages me to be financially responsible for myself and to OA. I don't expect my meetings to give me free literature or pay the rent without my help. I don't expect a free ride. Whatever my circumstances, I can give something: time, talent, or money.

To be self-supporting means so much—it means making our own decisions with the help of our Higher Power and being grown up. So share what you know, share your hope and recovery, and support this life-enriching Fellowship.

— Cindy W., Arizona USA (reprinted from *Lifeline*)

Trusted Servants and Committee Chairs (New emails)

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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


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piponfig@gmail.com
youngpeoplenfi@gmail.com
TSWnfi@gmail.com
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bcarter337@att.net



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Events from All Over

**OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS.**
World-Wide and Via Keys Fellowship

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
*July is on Thursday due to holiday.

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Registration Now Open!

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

Overeaters Anonymous®

CONVENTION WISDOM

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

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

*Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous.
Welcome home!*



Save the Date!
August 21-23,
2025



To be kept up to date with the latest
convention news, email
CONVENTIONINFO@OA.ORG



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Mountain of Miracles

Annual Retreat 2025



Original Art work by Dana Bernard

**Unity With
Diversity
Steps 10 - 12**



| 19 - 21 Sept 2025
Fri Eve - Sun Morn



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

Register Early - Retreat Fills Quickly

**OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS®**
Piedmont Intergroup



[Click HERE to Register](#)

Questions?

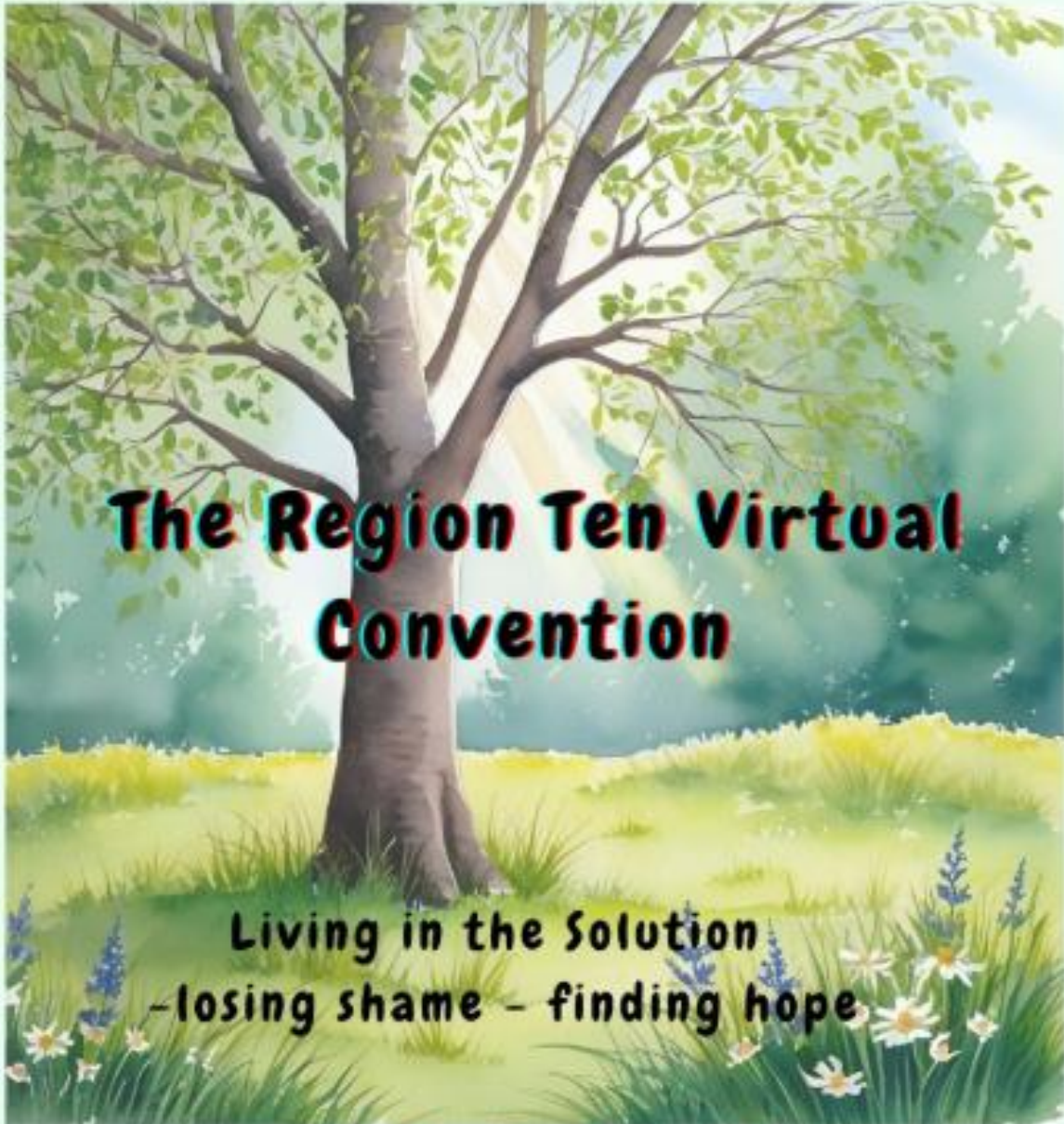
Alice (919) 247-1338 or Melinda (817) 727-3331
registrar@piedmontintergroup.org



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



The Region Ten Virtual Convention

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

18-19 Oct 2025



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



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DONATIONS REPORT 2025		Mar	Apr	May	YTD TOTAL
General Fund / no meeting # specified		\$37.38	\$37.38	\$78.59	\$231.95
Jacksonville Groups	Grp#				
Mon: Shepherd of the Woods Church	00774				\$0.00
Tue: Lakewood United Meth Church	36763		\$50.00		\$50.00
Tue: 7pm Jacksonville (virtual)	800028				\$0.00
Wed: Step Study Mandarin	51223				\$28.16
Wed: JAX Beach-Wisdom at the Beach	54507	\$100.00			\$100.00
Thur: Jacksonville 9am - Our redeemer	57370				\$0.00
Thur: Newcomer, Lakeview Health	47756				\$0.00
Fri: Orange Park - 10am	03654				\$0.00
Sat: Saturday Steppers-Ponte Vedra Bc	51693		\$200.00		\$200.00
Sat: Super Saturday Lakeview	20025				\$0.00
Sat: Believe in Recovery First, Mandarin	32773	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$28.64	\$143.20
Gainesville Groups					\$0.00
Mon: Big Book Study (Alachua)	51137		\$25.00	\$34.22	\$109.22
Thu: Unity Church(Acceptance)	50421	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$9.22	\$46.10
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			\$12.00
Mon.	32609				\$0.00
Wed: Palm Coast - 10am	56604	\$12.00			\$12.00
Thu: Fernandina Beach	49101				\$25.00
Thu: Flagler Beach	15171	\$11.00		\$35.00	\$46.00
Sat: St. Augustine Serenity	00235				\$47.58
Sun: Palm Coast/Flagler Beach	56072				\$0.00
Southern Georgia Groups					\$0.00
Tue: Jesup	54175				\$0.00
Wed: Douglas, GA	57445				\$0.00
Wed: Savannah - 5:30 pm	50301				\$168.00
Thur: Brunswick	51988				\$153.00
Sun: Savannah - 5pm	54362		\$9.16		\$9.16
Totals		\$210.24	\$359.40	\$185.67	\$1,561.37
Don to WSO		\$63.07	\$143.76	\$74.27	
Don to SOAR8		\$21.02	\$35.94	\$18.57	

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.



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