



# THE STEPPINGSTONE

*Newsletter of the Baltimore Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous*

Hotline 410-764-3136 BAIG Website: <http://www.oabaltimore.org> Region Seven: <http://www.oaregion7.org>

**September/October 2013**

## **What I learned at the 2013 World Service Convention**

I had the great good fortune to attend the World Service Convention in Cleveland August 29-September 1. If you've ever been to a Region 7 Convention (and if you haven't, I hope you'll be able to make it to this year's), picture that times ten. It was a very, very powerful event and I'm still assimilating everything I learned. I want to talk here about two things I already knew intellectually, but really get in my gut now as a result of the convention experience:

1. **This program works if you work it.** I heard so many speakers who have 10, 20, 30+ years of abstinence. I heard people who kept coming back for years before they got abstinent, and now have 10 years of abstinence or more. I heard people who relapsed, kept coming back, and now have 10 years of abstinence or more. I heard people who have been maintaining weight losses of 50, 100, 200, even 300 pounds for 10 years or more. All these people are working the program daily. They work the steps, they use the tools, they do lots of service. A lifetime of recovery is possible, if I rely on my higher power and follow directions.
2. **I am so fortunate.** It is so easy to work the program here in Baltimore. We have face to face meetings every day, we have special events and conventions – all within reasonable driving distance of my home. I have a meeting I can walk to. I have meetings that are a short bus ride away. And if I can't leave or don't feel like leaving my house, there are online and telephone meetings just about every hour. I have access to all the OA and AA literature,

in my native language. At the convention, I learned about folks who live in parts of Australia where the nearest meeting is two days' drive away. I learned about the efforts people are making to translate OA literature into many languages. In my Big Book study meetings, we often talk about the pioneers of AA and the lengths they went to in order to recover. There are still people going to those lengths today.

I came away from the convention feeling so grateful, and wanting to do more service. When I relapsed, I stopped identifying myself as a sponsor, and I have been questioning whether my recovery is strong enough for me to have something to offer as a sponsor again. At the convention, I heard that if I have one day of abstinence, I have something to give. This convention made me want to give as much as I am able. When my sponsor asked me to write an article about my convention experience, I thought, "It's the very least I can do." I hope someone reads something here that helps them in their recovery.

Abby C.

**2013 Region 7 Convention November 1-3. Holiday Inn Oceanfront. Registration \$45. Lunch and dinner Saturday: \$50. Rooms \$79 per night double occupancy.**  
<http://oaregion7.org/events/convention-registration/?ee=5>

## MY PROGRAM IS MY ANCHOR

Life is never easy for people with addictive personalities – at least mine wasn't.

Extreme behaviors and attitudes weren't going to fix me. The fix came from daily self-assessment and correction – by arresting the behavior, paying attention, and eliminating distractions. Working the OA program was hard, but it was simple. Learning to stick with something was hard – surrender was hard – not doing something that I really wanted to do was hard.

Program cultivates personal integrity. It requires striving for balance, and treating myself as if I deserve something better than an unhappy life. Only the process wasn't quite as linear as I thought. The benefits were humility and gratitude. They were usually a byproduct of doing something that I was told would help me in some area where I was blocked.

Making phone calls helped reveal low self-esteem, shyness, or approval-seeking behavior. Writing forced me to slow down and take a look at my disproportionate reactions to life and what was going on inside of me. Sponsorship was about commitment, and learning to trust without becoming codependent. Service meant connection, taking the time to go to meetings and make calls, following my Plan of Eating, establishing personal boundaries, recognizing limits, and understanding the spiritual principle of "enough".

I had to sublimate harmful urges and desires in order to reverse habits that brought me so much pain. I had to take responsibility for each choice that I made on a daily basis. The answers didn't come from trying to control my life through self-will or exercising bad

judgment. It came from listening, complying, waiting, contemplating, meditating and praying. It came from community, fellowship, participation, and unconditional giving.

Interrupting the process by rejecting concepts that I hadn't really tried or had only tried in small doses, only led me to draw the wrong conclusions about the results these concepts produced.

In certain ways, I'm as broken as I ever was. But, I wake up each day committed to applying all the methods and taking all the actions that I've learned. These actions help me prevent unmanageable circumstances that trigger emotional binges. Acting on life nurtures a sense of personal pride, integrity, and accountability. These were things that I didn't have before I came to OA.

My Program is my anchor. I've given it permission to inhabit my mind, body and spirit to enable me to access a healing energy that fills me, reassures me and guides me. It's the anti-me solution.

Addiction kills people: stubborn, willful people. People who have a high pain threshold. People who aren't willing to go "all the way" to get to the other side of their underlying issues. How much pain we can endure before we either lose everything or find the answer to our problem is the only relevant question facing the addict at the crossroad of "pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization" that is referred to in the Big Book. I choose life: recovery through the 12 Step Program of OA.

Neil R., Baltimore, MD

### *A JOURNAL TREASURE HUNT...*

Writing is a powerful tool and your journals are full of wisdom. Please look through your journal and consider sharing your writings by submitting an article to *The SteppingStone*:

[tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com](mailto:tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com)

or calling 410-665-5754

### **OA CARAVAN**

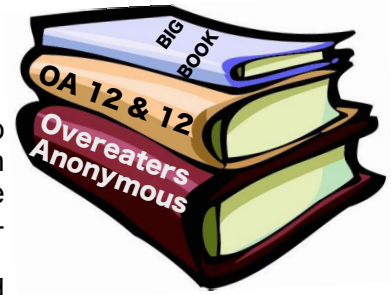
The OA Caravan is a group of OA's who will hit the road to visit any meeting that is in need of support. Whether your meeting needs support or you would like to give support, contact Tania at 410-336-5035.

## LITERATURE HIGHLIGHTS

### NEW ITEMS IN OA

These e-publications are PDF downloads that give you unlimited space to type your answers to the questions. You can save your answers and reopen the file to make future additions or changes. Although these file cannot be printed, if you wish to print a hard copy of your answers, you can copy-and-paste your text into a word-processing program.

Works best on a PC or Mac computer with Adobe Reader (Version 7.0 and later). Not compatible with iPads, mobile devices or e-readers.  
\$7.50 each.



### For Today e-Workbook Downloadable PDF

**This item is NON-REFUNDABLE. Read complete description before ordering.**

#### **NEW! For Today Workbook**

Gain new insights by using the tool of writing as you reflect on the daily readings in *For Today*. This accompanying workbook provides thought-provoking questions for each day in the book.

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### Voices of Recovery e-Workbook Downloadable PDF

**This item is NON-REFUNDABLE. Read complete description before ordering.**

**New!** This e-workbook provides thought-provoking questions for each of the daily readings in *Voices of Recovery*. When answering these questions, it will be helpful to refer to either a printed copy or an e-reader copy of *Voices of Recovery*.

## JUST FOR TODAY

In his poem titled *Write It on Your Heart* Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year." This thought is good for every day of the year not just New Year's Day. I need to forget yesterday, not think about tomorrow, and just concentrate on and enjoy today. Easier said than done, but worth the effort; I think. Forgetting yesterday can mean the day before today as well as something from years ago that still bothers or burdens me.

Another passage from the same poem says, "Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders

and absurdities, no doubt crept in." Isn't it wonderful to be a human being with all of the imperfections and frailties? Not everyone is going to like me. Not everything I do or try is going to work out, but at least I tried. At least I have today to try again.

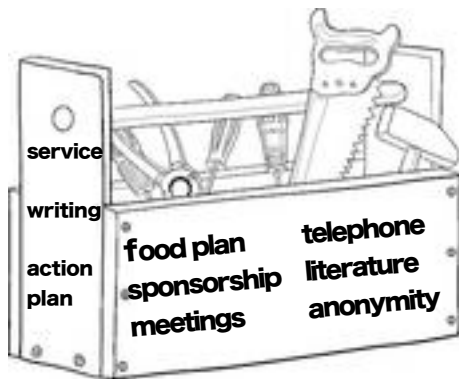
The last line of the poem says, "This new day is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on yesterdays." How wonderful is it that HP gave us a new day to be the best person (fill in your name here)\_\_\_\_\_ can be.

John L.

## CHECK OUT THE BAIG WEBSITE

Check out our newly redesigned OA Baltimore Area Intergroup website at <http://oabaltimore.org>! On the site is our meeting list, events, and links to the electronic Steppingstone newsletter! You will also find resources for your meetings, podcasts, intergroup meeting minutes, and links to the upcoming OA Region 7 Convention, and the Region 7 Cruise.

You will do yourself and your meeting a huge service by spending 10 or 15 minutes browsing through the pages. Enjoy!



## OA TOOLBOX

### Why a Weighed and Measured Food

“Eating with guilt” may be one of the simplest descriptions of active food dependency or eating disorders. A commitment to a defined eating plan can mean walking away without the punishing mental voices – the guilt, the worry, the anxiety.

Every bit of food confronted during the day no longer provokes an agonizing decision. The decision has already been made. Gone is the constant, excruciating debate: Should I or shouldn't I?

Serenity in relation to food is the ultimate goal. A food plan can be a vehicle for learning detachment. Food is eaten at regular intervals to meet physical needs. Weighed and measured meals are eaten to promote optimum health and not in response to the emotional fluctuations of the day. A food plan becomes a way to disengage the food from the feelings.

A food plan affirms the physical nature of the disease. Food dependency is not a moral problem, nor is it a physical symptom of an underlying psychological disturbance. It is a complex brain disease caused by the effects of toxic foods, and it is a physical/emotional/spiritual problem.

A weighed and measured food plan facilitates seeing the correlation between what food is taken into the body and what the body looks like. There is a cause and effect relationship. A food plan can put an end to the mystery that plagues many their whole lives about what food has to do with weight.

An accurate reporting of what is eaten is a baseline from which to troubleshoot physical symptoms. The perpetual, terminal vagueness about what is actually eaten is eliminated and the facts are evident. It is then possible to discover and uncover clues about what foods may or may not be appropriate for a particular individual's biochemistry. Adjustments can be based on accurate nutritional information. A weighed and measured food plan provides the data.

Phil W., Florida

## SPONSOR AND SPONSOREE

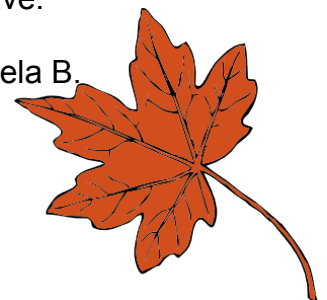
A sponsor is a good listener who gives positive advise. A sponsor is a good teacher. A sponsor points out your strengths and your weaknesses constructively. A sponsor digs in deep to reveal you to you. A sponsor comes up with alternate plans to things that are not working in your favor. Most importantly, a sponsor encourages a sponsoree to keep striving for progress in recovery.

A sponsoree must always be honest with a sponsor. A sponsoree must not hesitate to contact a sponsor whenever there is a problem.

A sponsoree must be accountable for all her actions. As part of the recovery process, a sponsoree reads OA literature and shares her findings with a sponsor.

A sponsor and a sponsoree work together for the common interest of working a good program. I thank my Higher Power for sending me the sponsor that I have.

Angela B.





**Purpose:**

Purpose of prayer is to establish a relationship with the divine. It builds love, hope, and character. It establishes the foundation for a spiritual life.

**Reflection:**

Reflection on life, dreams, aspirations and what one learns through daily experiences.

**Altruism:**

Altruism is selflessness and the spirit of service & concern for the welfare of others. Giving time and energy for the benefit of others becomes prayer in motion.

**Yearning:**

Yearn for a spiritual connection with the divine. Crave the serenity that comes from a relationship with a higher power. All prayers are answered in time.

**Eternal:**

Eternal prayers are continuous, sustained and persistent. The universe is always listening and presents options.

**Receive:**

Receive willingness, guidance, intuition, signs, dreams through prayer.

**EVENTS CALENDAR**

September 29, 2013: Stop The Compulsion. Service, Traditions, Commitment. 1pm-4pm.  
Serenity Center  
9650 Basket Ring Road  
Columbia, MD 21045

November 1-3, 2013: Region 7 Convention, Ocean City, MD. Fliers are available. Early registration through September 15. Save \$10.  
Register at [www.oaregion7.org](http://www.oaregion7.org)

November 17, 2013: 37th BAIG Anniversary Celebration. Save this date.

April 6-13, 2014: Region 7 Cruise. For more info go to [cruise@region7.org](mailto:cruise@region7.org)

**Baltimore Area InterGroup Meetings** occur monthly at the Calvary Baptist Church at 120 Pennsylvania Ave. in Towson from 3:30 to 5:00 PM.

**Scheduled meetings:**

- October 20
- November 17
- December 15

**All are welcome and encouraged to attend.**

***The Steppingstone* needs your service.**

It is written by local members for local members. Without you there is no *Steppingstone*. Work Step 12 and use the tools of service & writing by creating an article of your choice. Send all submissions to [tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com](mailto:tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com). Or, call Tonia at 410-665-5754.



**BALTIMORE AREA INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS:  
YOUR TRUSTED SERVANTS**

**7th TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Intergroup is again receiving mail at the address below. Please resume sending contributions.**

60% Baltimore Area Intergroup,  
Box 20013; Baltimore, MD 21284

30% OA World Service Office  
Box 44020; Rio Rancho, NM 87174

10% OA Region 7  
3500 S. Dupont Highway  
Dover, DE

<b>Chair</b>	Neil R.	410-318-6737	<a href="mailto:neilrauch@comcast.com">neilrauch@comcast.com</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Mike B.	443-610-7846	<a href="mailto:mike1bear@gmail.com">mike1bear@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Shabina B	410-960-0050	<a href="mailto:sbahl1@jhmi.edu">sbahl1@jhmi.edu</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sam B.	410-241-0775	<a href="mailto:samfb123@yahoo.com">samfb123@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Librarian</b>	OPEN		
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## Baltimore Area Intergroup OA Meeting Directory

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>8AM: "Rise and Shine" Baltimore</b> Bnai Jacob Shaarai Zion Synagogue 6602 Park Heights Ave. Neil 410-318-6737 Dress Code: No revealing/provocative attire</p>	<p><b>10:30 AM Columbia Medical Pavilion at Howard County</b> 10710 Charter Drive, G level</p>	<p><b>11:30AM Pikesville Big Book Meeting</b> Etz Chaim Center 3702 Fords Lane Gail 410-456-4306 HA, Bus M3 &amp; M10</p>	<p><b>6:30PM Bel Air Focus: 12 &amp; 12</b> First Presbyterian Church 224 North Main St. (Main and Broadway) Daniel 443-655-6399 <a href="mailto:danielroz@yahoo.com">danielroz@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p><b>10AM Parkville Literature Meeting HISS United Methodist Church</b> 8700 Harford Rd, RM C under the sanctuary. Park in lower level lot Pat 410-663-3670 HA, Bus #19</p>	<p><b>5:30PM Baltimore City</b> First English Lutheran Church 3807 N Charles St. at 39th St Mandy 410-825-1782 HA, Bus # 3, 11 22</p>	<p><b>9:30AM Columbia Serenity Center</b> 9650 Basket Ring Road (off Stevens Forest, off Broken Land Pkwy) 21045 Kathy 410-312-2742 morriarty.kathy@gmail.com Call about HA</p>
<p><b>5:15 Tpwson Speaker Meeting</b> Cavery Baptist Church (closed) 120 W. Pennsylvania Ave Side entrance - basement Brenda 410-491-3446</p>	<p><b>6:00 Baltimore City "Homewood Abstinence"</b> First English Lutheran Church 3807 N Charles St. at 39th St Enter on east side of building Tania 443-660-8299 <a href="mailto:taniamazals@gmail.com">taniamazals@gmail.com</a> HA Bus 8, 11</p>	<p><b>Noon St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church</b> 7834 Eastern Avenue Baltimore Bob 410-335-7748</p>	<p><b>6:45PM Federal Hill, Baltimore, "Powerflow" Dinner Friendly Meeting</b> Light Street Presbyterian Church 809 Light St, Baltimore, MD Jay 410-980-9624 Bus # 1, 64</p>	<p><b>7:30 Columbia Serenity Center</b> 9650 Basket Ring Road (off Stevens Forest, off Broken Land Pkwy) 21045 Carol 410-551-1149 Jay 410-551-1149 HA, Bus #19</p>	<p><b>7:30PM Bel Air Big Book Meeting</b> Main St &amp; Broadway (main building - basement) Daniel 443-655-6399 <a href="mailto:danielroz@yahoo.com">danielroz@yahoo.com</a> HA</p>	<p><b>11AM Baltimore City</b> First English Lutheran Church 3807 N Charles St. at 39th St Enter on east side of building Annette 410 825-4639 HA, Bus # 3, 11, 22</p>
<p><b>7PM "Hour of Power - Mixed Format" Bel Air</b> Upper Chesapeake Medical Center 500 Upper Chesapeake Dr. Terri 410 459-9100</p>	<p><b>6PM Columbia Serenity Center</b> 9650 Basket Ring Road (off Stevens Forest, off Broken Land Pkwy) Gar 301-829-8218 <a href="mailto:garri@sacccocpa.com">garri@sacccocpa.com</a> HA</p>	<p><b>7:30PM Pikesville "Abstinence First"</b> Baltimore Hebrew Congregation - Room 211 7401 Park Heights Avenue (Parking lot on Slade) Neil 410-318-6737 HA, Bus M5</p>	<p><b>7:30PM Columbia Serenity Center</b> 9650 Basket Ring Road (off Stevens Forest, off Broken Land Pkwy) 21045 Mary Ann 301 775-0422 HA</p>	<p><b>8PM Baltimore City (Closed Meeting) Search for Serenity Group</b> (mixed format) Church of the Redeemer, Rm 41 5603 N. Charles St, N of Northern Pkwy Katie H. 856-506-1236 Bus 11, #44</p>		<p><b>11AM Lutherville Step Meeting</b> St. John's Methodist Church 216 W. Seminary Avenue Phyllis 410-653-2264 <a href="mailto:lucindaruby@gmail.com">lucindaruby@gmail.com</a> HA</p>
<p><b>7PM - Carroll County St. Joseph's Catholic Church</b> Religious Education Bldg. 915 Liberty Road Eldersburg, MD Contact: Joanne 410-552-9246</p>	<p><b>7:30PM Pikesville - Recovery From Relapse</b> Shomrei Eimunah Synagogue 6221 Greenspring Ave (Corner of Cheswolde) Shani 410-917-7466 Dress Code: No revealing/provocative attire</p>					
	<p><b>7:30PM "Beginners and Strugglers" Bel Air, First Presbyterian Church</b> Main St &amp; Broadway (main building - basement) Suzanne 410-8383-9353 <a href="mailto:spv1020@comcast.net">spv1020@comcast.net</a> Call about HA</p>					
	<p><b>7:30PM Catonsville Salem Lutheran Church</b> 905 Frederick Road Stuart 410-465-1914 <a href="mailto:stfrees@comcast.net">stfrees@comcast.net</a> Call about HA, Bus #2</p>					
	<p><b>7:30PM Parkton - Step/Discussion (New) St. James Episcopal Church</b> 19200 York Road Karen 410-299-1675</p>					
<p><b>Abbreviations: HA= Handicapped Accessible; Bus # = Accessed by MTA Bus routes; Closed: These meetings are only for Compulsive Overeaters</b></p> <p><b>For Online or Telephone Meetings:</b> <a href="http://www.oa.org/meetings/find-a-meeting-online.php">http://www.oa.org/meetings/find-a-meeting-online.php</a></p> <p><b>If your meeting information changes, notify the World Service Office (WSO) at <a href="http://www.oa.org">www.oa.org</a> in the Meeting Registration/Change Information Section. In addition, call Tonia 410-665-5754 or <a href="mailto:tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com">tonia.g.4editing@gmail.com</a></b></p>						