

THE OA STEPPINGSTONE

SPRING ISSUE

APRIL 2023

CHECK OUT THE "RECOVERY BOOSTS"



On oabaltimore.org's
home page, OA
members can access



- ◇ Prayers for recovery
- ◇ Podcasts
- ◇ Worksheets to strengthen one's recovery

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Higher Power's Whispers

Page 63 of the AA *Big Book* says, "Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well." When I look back at my life, I find that that promise is not only true, but even when I wasn't following His will for me, He still provided!



In my darkest hours He was there for me and provided what I needed. Not always what I wanted, but what I needed, for sure. My blessings list is overflowing despite still struggling with having a big enough concept of Higher Power and living by self-will.

Furthermore, I've been told in meetings by recovered compulsive overeaters that it only gets better as I learn to listen to that voice inside of me that is Higher Power's whispers.

I can't wait to see what Higher Power has in store for me as I learn the depths of the Third Step prayer and pray only for knowledge of His will for me and the power to carry that out.

~ Benjamin, Compulsive Overeater

The Buzz

(Something Heard at a Meeting That Kept Buzzing in Your Head!)

- * "If I'm only one compulsive bite away from relapse, then I'm only one bite away from surrender."
- * "Don't pick up that first bite, no matter what!"
- * "Craving doesn't justify breaking my abstinence."



- * "I noticed after each relapse that it took me longer to recover emotionally. I don't want to put myself through that difficult rebound again."

The Carrot and the Stick

A couple of us members were talking about the proverbial “carrot and stick” yesterday at a meeting, where a rabbit chases the carrot while someone is pulling it along with a stick.

We told stories of how we compulsive eaters can tend to pull the proverbial carrot away from ourselves in our quest for happiness and recovery.

How many times have I stepped on the scale to see a healthy body weight but pulled away from gratitude by saying, “I should lose five more pounds”?

How many times have I felt ashamed because I did not share something in a meeting in the most articulate fashion, in other words, “the right way,” yet someone thanked me after the meeting for my profound message?

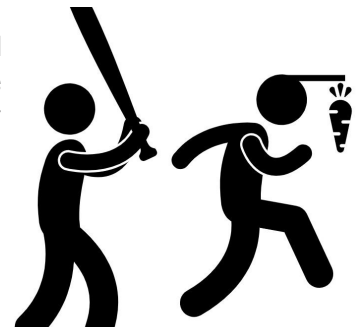
How many times have I felt like I didn’t pray hard enough though I spent time in spiritual reflection, didn’t abstain perfectly despite eating appropriate foods and amounts, didn’t perform a work task effectively despite pleasing my customer, didn’t bowl enough strikes and spares in my league games despite winning the games, or didn’t return

a call immediately even though the caller was very happy to hear from me when I did call later?

How many times have I not accepted that “good” was “good enough” and that I could appreciate that I am making the best efforts with the time and energy that I have? How many times was the “carrot” in my hands, yet I threw it away?

Part of my recovery work is to appreciate the efforts I make today, no matter how sloppy, imperfect, or ineffective I might feel they are. Most of the time, recipients of my efforts are superbly appreciative and affirming. I am grateful for the opportunity to release rigid expectations and instead celebrate the “good enough” by catching that carrot of gratitude and happiness.

~ Mike B., Parkville



Abstinence: A Manifestation of My Faith in God and OA



I heard this recently on a phone meeting: “I love my abstinence. It’s so freeing. It’s the most important thing in my life because it’s a tangible manifestation of my faith in and reliance

on God and OA.”

I am newly abstinent *again* and definitely feeling free compared to how I felt before coming to OA and how I feel when in relapse. I felt chained to the refrigerator; chained to the obsessions about food; chained to the shame when I

couldn’t stop eating no matter how hard I seemed to try; chained to the scale; chained to yet another diet; chained to the fear of calling my sponsor; and chained to the idea that I was probably going to die obese and alone in a nursing home because I was certain my family would give up on me since I had become such a burden to them.

I’ve been gifted *again* with the removal of food compulsions. I’m not sure why. All I know is that I kept praying for willingness. I kept reading my *For Today* daily meditations. I kept sharing in meetings. I kept using the Tools.

I kept coming back.

~ Anonymous

Blasts from the Past

Enjoy these pearls from BAIG's Steppingstone archive!

In OA, "[w]e are part of something. We can acknowledge that we need the structure and boundaries around our addiction, not as a punishment or source of deprivation, but because we've forgotten how good it feels to push ourselves away from a meal, knowing that we've enjoyed just enough food, no less and no more."

~ Neil R.
Reprinted from Feb. 2010
(Volume 35, No. 1)



"They say this is a program for those who want it, not for those who need it. I needed it for many years, but I wasn't ready to give up my disease. I had gone to any length for my disease; now I [am] finally willing to surrender and go to any length for my recovery."

~ Liz E.,
Reprinted from Feb. 2010
(Volume 35, No. 1)

"Recently, I encouraged a friend to reach out and sponsor some newcomers in her group. She was quiet for a moment, and then she said, 'Who, me? I don't think I'm far enough along in my program to be a sponsor.' I asked her if she was abstinent. She answered, 'Yes.' Then I said, 'You can surely sponsor up to the level of *this part* of your program . . . These newcomers just need someone who is willing to listen to their food plan for the next day, someone that is ready to encourage them, someone who cares. They have been alone in the darkness for a long time!

~ Reprinted from Oct. 2002
(Volume 25, No. 2)

A Dog's Point of View

My dog is better at working the 12 Steps than I am. Thank you, HP, for sending me a role model to follow.

My dog does what works—and stops doing what doesn't work. Begging at the table doesn't work, so he stops doing it. Sitting quietly by my side in mid-afternoon usually gets him a walk, so he keeps doing it.

What about me? I was more stubborn and slow to learn. Use the 9 Tools, work the 12 Steps—that's what works for recovery. Ignore the Steps and tools that I don't feel like using—those things don't work anymore.

My dog wakes up every morning grateful for another day on Earth. When we take one road that day, not another, he doesn't stop and stare down the other road with

longing and regret, nor does he complain about the road we're on. He goes along with the plan, happy to have company by his side and curious about all that crosses his path. I need to follow his lead, relax, take it easy, and appreciate the life journey that HP is taking me on each day.

My dog does not complain about his food plan either. He's happy and excited about each meal, even if it's the same one he had yesterday. He teaches me to accept my limits graciously and enjoy all the foods I can eat with pleasure.

My dog is most secure and balanced when he knows his humans are in charge. He doesn't have to be afraid of potential harm since he trusts me to protect and provide for him. He teaches me how to trust my HP with



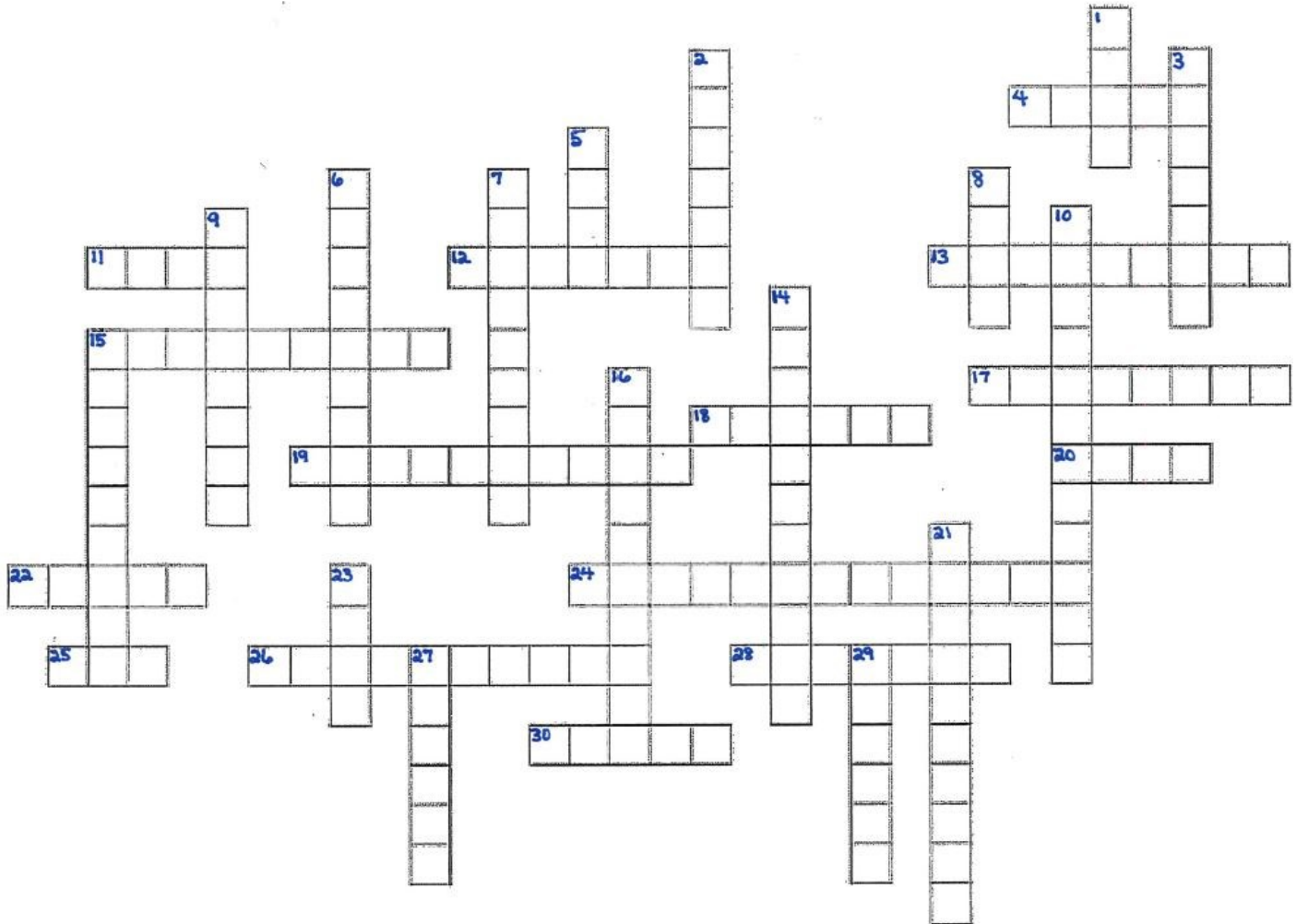
all of life's decisions and choices and, in return, I get that same sense of security and serenity.

My dog doesn't want to live his life alone. He wants and needs companionship to make his life rich and full. I need OA and the fellowship I find here to live freely, compassionately, and lovingly. Thanks, HP, for putting a 12-Step guide dog in this OA's life.

~ Anonymous
Reprinted from Oct. 2004
(Volume 27, No. 4)

BIG BOOK BUFFS CROSSWORD

Questions have been created using *Alcoholics Anonymous*, Third Edition. New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Service, 1988.



The crossword questions are on the next page, and the answer key is on page 6.

BIG BOOK BUFFS CROSSWORD

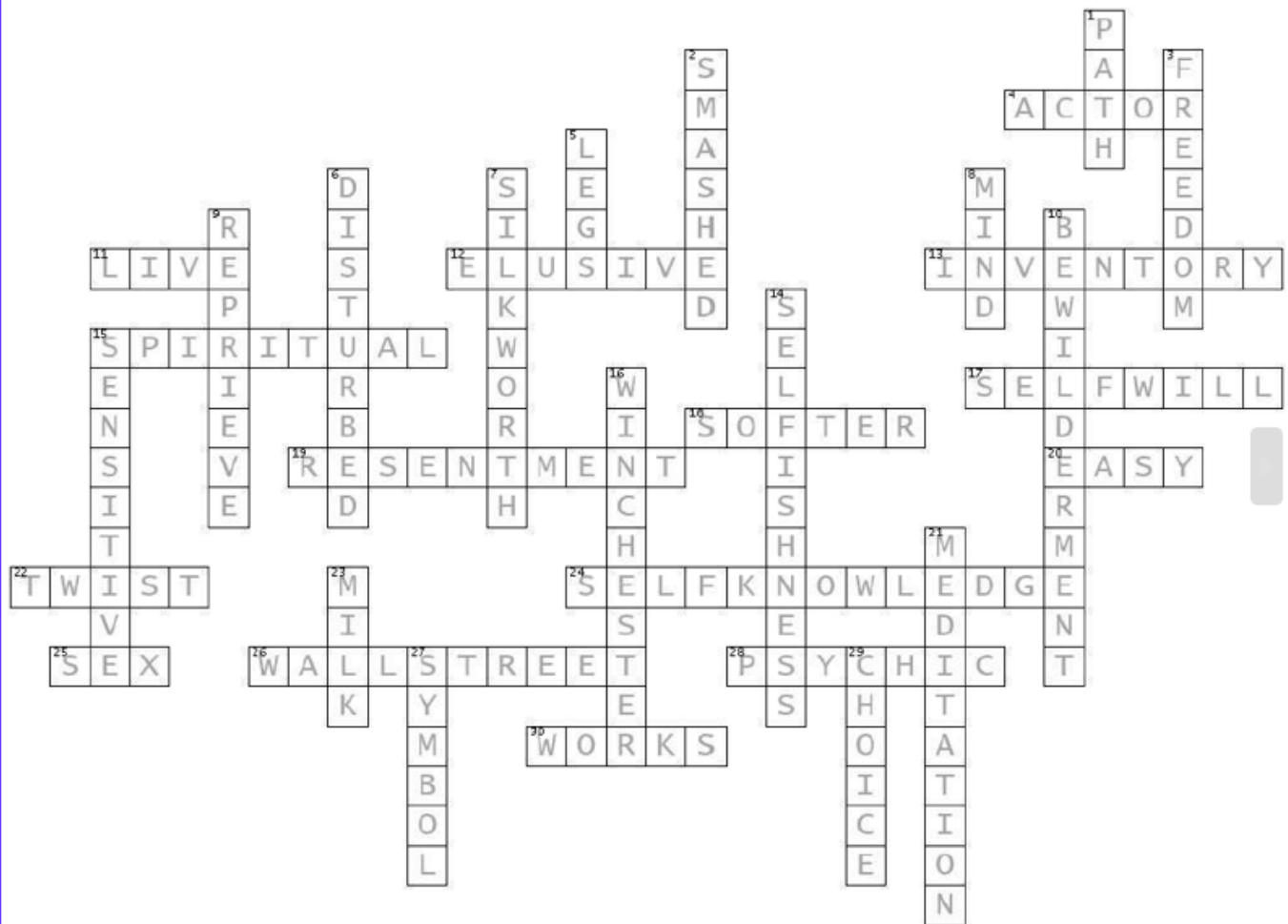
ACROSS

4. An alcoholic is like an __ who wants to "run the whole show."
11. "Spiritual life is not a theory. We have to __ it."
12. "Men and women drink . . . because they like the effect produced by alcohol. The sensation is so __ that, while they admit it is injurious, they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false."
13. Step Four is a personal __.
15. Even though Jim made a go of A.A. in the early days, because he "failed to enlarge his __ life," he returned to drinking time and again.
17. "Any life run on __ can hardly be a success." (hyphenated)
18. We had to be "ready to take certain steps. We thought we could find an easier, __ way. But we could not."
19. The "number one" offender, destroy[ing] more alcoholics than anything else"
20. __ does it!
22. Alcoholics have a "peculiar mental __" (type of dance)
24. Alcoholics, with "hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of __." (hyphenated)
25. When we do a Step Four and list our injuries, the Big Book suggests that we look at how those injuries affect our self-esteem, security, and __ relations.
26. Bill Wilson worked here in his early years (2 words)
28. "The Doctor's Opinion" states that unless someone experiences an entire __ change, there is "very little hope of his recovery."
30. "Faith without __ is dead."

DOWN

1. "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our __."
2. The Big Book suggests that the delusion that we can drink like other people must be __.
3. If we are "painstaking" about working through the Twelve Steps, we will know a "new __ and a new happiness."
5. "No real alcoholic ever recovers control . . . We are like men who have lost their __; they never grow new ones."
6. "And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am __, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation . . . unacceptable to me."
7. Doctor who worked with alcoholics in the early days of A.A.
8. "The main problem of the alcoholic centers in his __"
9. We only have a "daily __ contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."
10. One of the Four Horseman mentioned in "A Vision for You"
14. This is the root of our troubles.
15. The Big Book states that alcoholics are __ people, which is a "serious handicap."
16. Cathedral in England where Bill Wilson saw an "ominous" tombstone epitaph about a soldier who died from alcoholism
21. Prayer and __
23. After a period of abstinence, Jim stopped at a restaurant to get a bite to eat. Then suddenly he was overcome with the idea that if he added just an "ounce of whiskey in [his] __ it couldn't hurt [him] on a full stomach."
27. "Bottles were only a __ of our problem."
29. "[M]ost alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of __ in drink."

BIG BOOK BUFFS CROSSWORD ANSWERS



**FIND AN OA
MEETING AT**

<http://oabaltimore.org/>

**JOIN YOUR
FELLOWS AT
INTERGROUP!**

The Baltimore Area
Intergroup meets
virtually one Sunday a
month from 2 - 3 :30
pm.

The Spring Intergroup
dates are:

April 16, 2023

May 21, 2023

June 11, 2023

To access the meeting
link, visit

[http://oabaltimore.org/
intergroup/](http://oabaltimore.org/intergroup/)

All contributions to this
newsletter are the
opinion of the writers
and not of Overeaters
Anonymous or the
Baltimore Area
Intergroup as a whole.

Post Office Box 20013
Baltimore, Maryland 21284

Telephone: 443-475-0443
Email: info@oabaltimore.org
Web: oabaltimore.org

Region 7: oaregion7.org
World Service: oa.org

CHECK OUT BAIG's SPRING EVENTS



There are no events listed at the time of this newsletter, but be sure to check for upcoming events at <https://oabaltimore.org/events/> throughout the Spring season.

ABOUT THE BALTIMORE AREA INTERGROUP

The Baltimore Area Intergroup (BAIG) is a group of OA members who seek a simple but more challenging level of service to help our affiliated meetings in the Baltimore metropolitan area. BAIG presents recovery workshops, produces the *Steppingstone*, serves as a liaison between groups and Region 7 and the World Service Office, and reaches out to the community to offer the hope of recovery from compulsive overeating.

Every OA member is welcome to join us at Intergroup meetings as a representative of a group (or "meeting") or just to learn more about the opportunities for service that help us grow as OA members. Learn more at <http://oabaltimore.org/intergroup/>.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE STEPPINGSTONE!

Deadline for the next issue: June 5, 2023

We welcome your contributions to the Summer 2023 issue! Suggested topics include:

- Recovery from Relapse
- Your gratitude "list" (How does gratitude help you maintain your abstinence?)
- A reflection on one of the Spring 2023 articles
- Any other subject that inspires your recovery

You can also create a puzzle, drawing, painting, or other art (no faces, please). Contributions from everyone - newcomers to long timers - are valued. Articles may be edited. Send your contributions to steppingstone@oabaltimore.org by June 5!

