

Fall 2012

SOAR 8

Southeast Overeaters Anonymous Region 8



Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Louisiana
Mississippi
North Carolina
South Carolina
Tennessee
Puerto Rico
South America
Central America
Caribbean Islands

How I Learned to Love the 12 Concepts of Service

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Many years ago, when I was new in OA, I loved the 12 Steps but resented the time it took to read the 12 Traditions. I was especially sorry when our literature meeting was studying one of the traditions. I thought they were so boring and irrelevant to my recovery. However, it didn't take me too long to love those "boring" traditions because: they guaranteed me a place in the fellowship; they taught me how to function in my relationships with other people; and they helped assure that OA would always be there with my recovery. So now I'm a tradition thumper, but it's taken a lot longer to warm up to the 12 Concepts of Service.

We don't read them at recovery meetings. When we read one a month at my IG meeting, it always sounds so prosaic following the reading of the steps and that month's tradition. I found them even more boring than I had once found the traditions, and I also found them too concerned with "minor details." Now I have to tell you that when a woman who loves being on the Bylaws/ Electronic Documents Committee says something is boring and too concerned with little details that would seem to make it so. After all, nobody is more of a detail nerd than that! So that's what I was like. What happened?

What happened was that



my committee was charged with raising awareness of the 12 Concepts by arranging that a skit about them would be held at regional assemblies (and ultimately both IGs and WSBC). This meant I had to give some attention to reading the concepts for their value. Then I got to read the deliciously funny and eye-opening skit that Dave C from Florida wrote

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Hosted By
Pinellas Traditions Intergroup

SOAR 8
Recovery Convention &
Business Assembly
November 9-11, 2012

St. Pete Beach, Florida
Tradewinds Grand Island Resort

Always & In All Ways



**“What is that pledge?
To live according
to God’s will alone,
in all my affairs.”**

PRAY

I came into our rooms in 2006, weighing 313 lbs. By the grace of God and with the help of my sponsor and the members in our rooms, I became abstinent right away, shed 150 lbs in about eighteen months and have maintained my weight at between 163-165 lbs for over four years. At first I thought it was my food plan that kept me abstinent, but while working the steps, I began to see the real reason for my continued abstinence and return to sanity. It was my pledge, my contract, I made with God in Step 3 and my continued meditation and prayer in Step 11, which daily reinforces my 3rd Step pledge.

What is that pledge? To live according to God’s will alone, in all my affairs. I tell my sponsorees that I signed a contract with God in Step 3. I will do His will – always. Not just when it is convenient, not just when I want to shed some more weight, but always, in all places, and under all circumstances.

In other words, not just “always,” but, “in all ways.”

So I hear: “Sander, put down the fork.” “OK God.” “Sander, stop arguing with your wife.” “OK God.” “Sander, it’s time to take up that service position.” “OK God.”

I don’t follow my food plan to simply follow a plan. I do it because I believe that is what my HP wants me to do. To treat my body with respect. To treat all others with respect and dignity. To become an instrument of His peace.

In Step 11, I learned to reinforce that commitment, that contract, on a daily basis. I pray:

“Dearest God, I pray now only for knowledge of Your will for me today and the power and strength to carry that out. Show me Your will, and I shall align my will with Yours. I shall become an instrument of Your will. Make clear to me Your will this day – especially at moments of fear and anxiety. In moments of

uncertainty and temptation, grant me pause, long enough in the decision-making process, to ask for, listen for, and understand what You want of me today, and I shall follow Your will with all the strength that is within me, with every fiber of my being. And if I lack sufficient strength, then I ask that You grant me even more, so that I can continue to follow Your will today. Please also strengthen in me today the desire to make the decisions that You want me to make. And remove or weaken in me today the desire to make those that You do not want me to make. Reveal to me also today any further defects and shortcomings that I still have so that I can admit them freely to You, to myself, to another person, and to make amends to any that I may have harmed or wronged. Thank You dear God. Thy will be done.”

~Sander B.
Marietta, GA, USA

Pass it On!



Hi Region 8!

Here are a few quick things you might find helpful, and some

COMING ATTRACTIONS!

More will be revealed!

1. OA’s Theme for year 2013 is: **“The Year of Abstinence Awareness”**.
2. Coming later this Month:
Who cares what you think? We do!!
The Region Chairs have developed a comprehensive survey/inventory about the OA program, which you will be asked to complete and return.
Your opinion counts!
Details will be forthcoming.
3. Are your meetings asking, “Will all ABSTINENT sponsors please identify themselves?”
ABSTINENCE MATTERS!
4. OA now has indexes for several pieces of literature including:
Voices of Recovery
OA 12 and 12
Go to www.oa.org for more information

Mad Lib—Preamble

OA is a (noun) -ship of (plural nouns) who through shared experience, strength and hope are (verb) -ing from compulsive over- (verb) -ing

5. Have questions about the steps and traditions? Attend a SOAR 8 WORKSHOP—we can bring one to your Intergroup. Ask me how! Also, go to www.oa.org and follow options to the Ask it Basket.
6. Do your Intergroup Bylaws include a definition of an OA Group? If they do, have your Intergroup Bylaws been amended to change the definition of an OA Group as adopted at WSBC 2012?
7. Love the old game MAD LIBS? Play it with an OA twist—go to www.oa.org

8. How does your meeting conduct a Group Conscience? Go to www.oa.org and download the Guidelines for Conducting a Group Conscience and never flounder again!!

From Gloria L,
Region 8 Chair

How I Came To Love the 12 Concepts of Service *continued*

for us about this document. (You’ll see it if you come to the Assembly in St. Petersburg in November.) Suddenly, the reason for all those “dull” details became clear.

This is the document that spells out precisely how all of our traditions will be

safeguarded as OA operates day-to-day on the international level—to assure that “World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole;” to guarantee that “no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified

authority” and that “no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power.”

I love the 12 Concepts. They protect us from all those crazy, grandiose, recovering addicts in the rooms like me! They are one



more voice of HP guiding our fellowship so that we remain effective, fair, and compassionate, in carrying the message.

Region 8 Trustee Report

My husband and I are traveling through the south in our RV. It's easy to be abstinent when your own little kitchen goes right along with you! I get to weigh and measure most of my meals, just like at home.



In order to serve as a Region Trustee, I'm required to physically reside in the region no less than the six months immediately prior to election. We've contained our travels to North & South Carolina and Georgia for most of the summer so that I'd be able to meet the requirements for my service position.

Next year however, we'd like to go west, and that would put me out of Region 8 for more than a year! I have enjoyed serving Region 8 but am at a point in my life where I want to travel. So, it really is time for me to pass the baton.

This has been an amazing summer for me, with regards to service. I've attended some great OA meetings and have been able to present workshops in Greenville, SC, Black Mountain, Raleigh and Topsail Beach, NC. We've delved into such topics such as sponsoring, abstinence, service and the traditions. If you contact me or the region 8 chair, we'd be happy to get someone to your area. It's not only a good shot in the arm for local recovery, but also can be a fundraiser!

Have you sent your application for delegate funding for the World Service Business Conference yet? If you haven't sent a delegate before, or it has been a long time, there is funding available, but you must have your application in before November 1st. Please check out the application process on the OA website, <http://www.oa.org/world-service-events/world-service-business-conference/>. The first posting of information for WSBC 2013 is on the website now. Make sure you check the dates – if your service body wants to submit a motion, or register your delegates. Check the website frequently so you don't miss any deadlines.

OA has gone GREEN, and will not be mailing any documents for WSBC 2013. –Your Inter-
group may want the designated downloader to print out the conference information. Inter-

group Chairs, make sure your delegates are accessing the conference information. The first “mailing” was posted on September 1st.

The theme for the 2013 WSBC is “Searching and Fearless, A Fellowship Inventory”. What does that mean? The delegates will be looking at what is working and what is not with our fellowship as well as the conference. You don't want to miss out on this opportunity to pave the way for OA's future.

The Board, Committee Chairs and I have been skypping into local meetings that need a boost. This is a great way to have a ‘speaker’ at your meeting with no cost. You pick the topic and we show up, via computer or even your cell phone! Also, check with the speaker's list on www.oaregion8.org – perhaps one of these abstinent members can also be available by internet or conference line.

One thing I've noticed in the meetings is a critical lack of sponsors. Why is that? The new meeting format asks for all ‘abstinent sponsors’ to identify themselves; very few hands go up. There are some excellent pamphlets available on the OA website to help you with sponsoring. When is the best time to start sponsoring? Ask your sponsor when you should start.

There's always new stuff on the OA website. If your group has a designated downloader, you can have access to the latest information, forms and new literature, via your ‘DD’.

When have you updated your meeting format? If it hasn't been in the last year, you're probably using an old version. You can download a new one at <http://www.oa.org/new-updated-suggested-meeting-format-includes-abridged-tools/>. It includes the new ‘abridged tools’, which many meetings are enjoying; a quick way to get all the tools included in your meeting! Did you know that you can do a skit on the Concepts? They are also on the OA website; ask your Designated downloader to print out a copy for your group! <http://www.oa.org/new-rotation-of-service-skit/>. That's not all that's new! Overeaters Anonymous Podcast #24:

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“OA has gone GREEN and will not be mailing any documents for WSBC 2013.”



Upcoming Dates

- Nov. 9-11, 2012—SOAR8 Recovery Convention & Business Assembly, St. Pete Beach, FL
- Nov. 17, 2012—IDEA Day International Day Experiencing Abstinence
- Dec. 12, 2012—Twelfth Step Within Day
- Jan. 21, 2013—OA's Birthday
- Mar. 15-17, 2013—SOAR8 Recovery Convention & Business Assembly, Memphis, TN
- April 24-May 3, 2013—WSBC, Albuquerque, NM



The 12 concepts of OA Service: Concept 3 - “The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.” [TRUST]

I must admit that when I started in OA 13 years ago, I don't remember hearing much about the 12 Concepts of OA Service. Certainly we never read them in meetings, as we sometimes do now. I knew nothing about them until I started doing service beyond the Group level. Taken as a whole, the Concepts provide a “chain of delegated responsibility” that we use in OA to perform our service work.

I learned that the Concepts need not be “mysterious”. They are simply a set of principles that help me perform my service work. Each concept is associated with and represents a spiritual principle that helps all who serve, no matter in what capacity. These principles are also very useful for service work outside of OA!

For example, let's look at Concept 3 and the principle of Trust. To be really effective, trusted servants must have the right to decide how to do their jobs. Concept 3 gives a group or service body (such as Region 8 for example) the right to confer upon certain trusted servants chosen or voted in by the Assembly (such as Region 8 Board Members) the right to make certain decisions and to take certain actions on behalf of Region 8 as a whole.

Trusted servants are just that—individuals who are trusted to act and to lead, responsibly guided by the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts. As trusted servants, Region 8 Board Members are accountable to those they serve—the OA Members in Region 8.

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Trustee Report continued

Hearing is Believing—OA Members Speak. This 20-minute inspiring collection of interviews depicts the journeys of several OA members from despair to recovery and serenity, helpful for newcomers, returning members and long-timers alike. For more information on Overeaters Anonymous, please go to www.oa.org or call the World Service Office at 505-891-2664.

When you attend a phone or online meeting, have you ever heard, “We have no expenses”? Unfortunately, this just isn't true. As virtual groups are forming service bodies — similar to intergroups, they'll be able to send delegates to WSBC ... except that there's

no money! Try making your donation online, use the group number that's found to the right of the meeting information. As our world shifts more and more to virtual, we need to make sure that this part of our service structure is properly represented. And while on the subject of Virtual – congratulations to Stephanie D, our previous Region 8 Chair who now serves as the first dedicated Virtual Services Trustee. She has come out with a boom and is making great strides in her new position.

We'll be winding our way south in time to make the assembly in St.

Petersburg, and I'm forward to seeing you there. It will be my last November assembly as your Trustee. I know

that God will guide us as we choose another member from Region 8 to serve our beloved SOAR 8. I'm going to enjoy my next six months as your Trustee and look forward to whatever my Higher Power has in store for me in OA Service. See you in Saint Pete!

~Gerri H.
Region 8 Trustee





Mystery Made Real—Concepts at Conference

My first introduction to OA’s 12 Concepts was at Intergroup meetings, where they were read each month. At first, these concepts were just a confusing jumble of words. I knew about the steps and had been exposed to the Traditions. The Concepts were just a mystery. Each month, I hoped I wouldn’t be the one asked to read them—they were long and incomprehensible.

A few years later, I went to my first World Service Business Conference (WBSC) and discovered the meaning behind that phrase on all our literature: conference approved. It just hit me! This is where “conference approved” happens and I am a part of it! WOW—that was big, and humbling.

Then in those hectic, emotional, productive days of conference, the concepts came alive for me. I was there as a delegate, representing my Intergroup (#2) which is part of the collective conscience of our fellowship (#1). I was elected because my local OA family trusted me (#3). When voting on motions brought before the conference, the service body listened to both

sides of each issue (#4) and solved the problems brought before us (#5). We worked with the board of trustees and the WSO staff (#6, 7, and 8) to reach decisions with substantial unanimity. We elected new trustees (#9 and 11), each of whom chairs a subcommittee (#10). We honored OA’s 12th Concept and it’s many parts.

Today, I jump at the chance to read the concepts at the monthly intergroup meeting—it gives me chills! They are very much real and alive for me. In my daily life, even when I can’t remember the entire concept, I can rely on the principles associated with the concepts to guide my thoughts and actions. Those principles are: Unity, Conscience, Equality, Consideration, Responsibility, Balance, Delegation, Ability, Clarity, Humility, Selflessness, Realism, Representation, Dialogue, Compassion and Respect.

Kat M.
Region 8 Ways and Means Chair
North Palm Beach, FL

“Each month, I hoped I wouldn’t be the one asked to read [the Concepts]...”

Concept 3 continued from p.5



Why are we willing to place our trust in these persons? Usually, it is because we have seen them do service in other positions and their past performance indicates they are worthy of such trust. In fact, the requirements for each Board position are intended to give the voting body a record of past performance to determine whether the applicant can be trusted to perform the service tasks associated with the desired service position.

It is a sacred responsibility to be a trusted servant; one I must never take lightly. When you place your trust in me or any other Board Member, you are giving us the right to make certain decisions because you have formed the opinion that we will act responsibly in accordance with the Concepts of OA Service. I take the responsibility of keeping your trust very seriously and will do all I can to continue to deserve the trust you have placed in

me. That responsibility guides my actions and keeps me focused on the work I have to do on your behalf. It is a sacred duty and a sacred trust and I pray every day to continue to be worthy of it; that accountability also keeps me abstinent!

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Chair!

~Gloria L.
Region 8 Chair

A Service Story—HP's Plan

Service above the group level was never in my plans...but today I'm the treasurer of Region 8 and thanks to my Region 8 service, 30 pounds lighter!

After 12 years of recovery and maintaining a 40 pound weight loss I thought my weight loss days were over and I was generally comfortable with that. But I guess the God of my understanding wanted more for me, and more from me.

About 6 years ago I found myself at an emergency IG meeting. The current board was concerned that the same few people had been doing everything for far too long and if they didn't recruit some new members and rotate service, the IG would fold. Because I hated to see an end to our newsletter and regularly updated meeting lists, a hot line to direct newcomers to us, and contact with our Region and WSO I thought I could certainly do some small part to help.

I volunteered at that first meeting to take the minutes because they had no secretary. At the next meeting they asked me if I would be willing to take that job for the foreseeable future. I didn't accept until I'd talked to my sponsor and prayed about it, but when I had, I said okay - just as long as I don't have to move through the chairs...and they said oh no, you only have to do as much as you want

Well, two years later I was Vice Chair and then Chair, and then Region rep, and then World Service rep, next a funded chair at Region, and now treasurer on the Region 8 board! It certainly wasn't my doing, but as a program friend is fond of saying, I've been bitten by the service bug! I've loved every phase of it, proving once again that my HP knows better than I do what's best for me.

Meanwhile, I'd been thinking about changing my food plan and had been praying for the willingness, because I really didn't want to do it, even though I did want to lose more weight. At the March assembly (of 2009) I was led to talk to a dear program friend whose recovery I'd been watching. She explained her food plan to me and suggested that I write down everything I ate on my current plan for the next few days, until the end of the month. And then on April 1st try the new plan one day at a time while continuing to write down everything I ate. I agreed to start writing down my food. The next day, Sunday, I heard the closing speaker share about her goal to get to a healthy weight even though she'd already lost quite a bit of weight.

Those two people were the angels my HP sent to inspire the willingness I needed, and on April 1st of that year, 2009, I began my new food plan - giving up foods I had been unwilling to just a few days earlier, and today I'm 30 pounds lighter. And I owe it all to my region service and being right where I needed to be to hear what I needed to hear.

Thank God and Region 8 (and my IG for choosing me to represent them); today I'm a happier, healthier and thinner recovering food addict

Patti S.
Region 8 Treasurer



"I thought I could certainly do some small part to help."

Serenity Prayer Pocket Reminder

100 % lead-free pewter

Made in the USA

1.25" diameter

front



back

A Region 8 Fund-Raiser

Available November 2012

\$4.00 each

Region 8 Trusted Servants

Voting Board Members

Chair—Gloria L.
Vice Chair—Sander B.
Secretary—Janet T.
Treasurer—Patti S.

Non-Voting Board Members

Trustee—Gerri H.
Parliamentarian—Gary D.

Committee Chairs

Ways and Means—Kat M.
Public Information/Public Outreach (PI/PO) - Melanie C.
Intergroup Outreach (IGOR) - Betty S.
Unity with Diversity—Lonna C.
Bylaws/Electronic Documents—Mary Anne S.
Technology/Website—Burt T.
Twelfth Step Within—Linda H.