



New Horizon

OA Manasota Intergroup Quarterly Newsletter June 2017

Manasota Intergroup
Information Line

(941) 957-1488
www.oamanasota.org

Please Join Us: Manasota Intergroup meets the 2nd Saturday of every month at 11:15 am at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3975 Fruitville Road, Sarasota (Jefferson Room, inside the Courtyard). Everyone is Welcome.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Board Members & Committee Chairs</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Chair</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Pam</td> <td style="width: 15%;">(941) 343-7181</td> <td style="width: 55%;">ilovelfants@hotmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice Chair</td> <td>Dennis</td> <td>(617) 460-0188</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secretary</td> <td>Leslie</td> <td>(941) 223-4100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Treasurer</td> <td>Audrey</td> <td>(609) 273-6701</td> <td>audreyt16@icloud.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SOAR 8 Reps</td> <td>Pam</td> <td>(941) 343-7181</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Paula</td> <td>(941) 487-8027</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>WSO Delegate</td> <td>Robert</td> <td>(978) 821-8236</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newsletter</td> <td>Anna</td> <td>(941) 378-9944</td> <td>manasotanewsletter@comcast.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12th Step Within Retreat</td> <td>Elizabeth</td> <td>(978) 766-7040</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Karen</td> <td>(614) 500-1080</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public Info</td> <td colspan="3">Vacant</td> </tr> </table>	Chair	Pam	(941) 343-7181	ilovelfants@hotmail.com	Vice Chair	Dennis	(617) 460-0188		Secretary	Leslie	(941) 223-4100		Treasurer	Audrey	(609) 273-6701	audreyt16@icloud.com	SOAR 8 Reps	Pam	(941) 343-7181			Paula	(941) 487-8027		WSO Delegate	Robert	(978) 821-8236		Newsletter	Anna	(941) 378-9944	manasotanewsletter@comcast.net	12 th Step Within Retreat	Elizabeth	(978) 766-7040			Karen	(614) 500-1080		Public Info	Vacant			<p>To contribute to this newsletter or to report any changes to the meeting list, email manasotanewsletter@comcast.net please.</p> <p>Editorial Policy: Opinions expressed here are solely of the writer and not OA as a whole or necessarily those of the editor. Articles are edited for style, but not content.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coming Up on the Horizon</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Serenity Through Surrender”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OA Manasota IG Spring Retreat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2-4, 2018</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New Venue: Canopy Walk, Pier with Canoes & Kayaks, Labyrinth & Much More</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DaySpring Retreat Center 8005 25th Street East Parrish, Florida 34219</p> <p>Questions? Barbara (941) 228-7422 sousabarb@aol.com Karen (614) 500-1080 kacie.kb40@gmail.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Addresses for 7th Tradition Contributions</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">We are self-supporting. Please consider a donation of \$3 at the meetings you attend.</p> <p>World Service Office www.oa.org PO Box 44020 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020</p> <p>SOAR 8 Treasurer www.oaregion8.org PO Box 40273 St. Petersburg, FL 33743</p> <p>Manasota Intergroup Email: audreyt16@icloud.com 14712 Newtonmore Lane Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Make check payable to: Manasota Intergroup or MSI <i>Please include your Group Number on your check.</i></p>																																												
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Living Through Literature</u></p> <p>“Many of us had asked God to help us control our weight and this prayer hadn't worked. Later we understood why our pleas for help seemed to fall on deaf ears. What we were really asking God to do was remove our fat while allowing us to go on eating whatever we wanted, whenever we wanted. Most of us also needed to learn to ask other people for help and let God speak to us through our fellows. in OA, God's healing power comes to us through a caring community of other compulsive overeaters. Before we joined the OA Fellowship our prayers for help might have gone unanswered simply because we were never meant to face this disease in isolation. We were meant to open up so that we might learn to truly love others.” <u>The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous</u> _Step Two, pages 15-16</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Slogans, Sayings & Such</u></p> <p>BINGE = Because I'm Not Good Enough</p> <p>FEAR = Future &/or Forgetting Events Everything's Appearing All Real Right</p> <p>OA's Responsibility Pledge states, “Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion, for this, I am responsible.”</p>																																												

WSO Ask-It Basket Q&A

1. I would like to ask about the cycle of addiction. Before considering feelings, should we consider the thoughts that generate feelings that can lead us to obsession and the first compulsive bite?

Do thoughts inspire emotions or do emotions set off thoughts? Is that first compulsive bite a response to a thought or an emotion or both? I suspect the distinction between these two is small if it exists at all. For myself, I think I feel something before I think about it. I believe you are free to define your own personal cycle of addiction that explains how you experience your disease.

—August 2016 WSBC ASK-IT BASKET Q&A

2. How does a person turn his or her food over to a Higher Power, and what does it mean to turn one's food over to a Higher Power?

In Step Three of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, much is written about turning the food problem over to a Higher Power. That chapter states, "If we want to live free of the killing disease of compulsive eating, we accept help without reservation from a Power greater than ourselves" (p. 19). The chapter proceeds to discuss the willingness to adopt a new attitude about weight control, body image, and eating.

The following are two quotes of interest from that chapter: "As we become aware of what our eating guidelines should be, we ask God for the willingness and the ability to live within them each day. We ask and we receive, first the willingness, and then the ability. We can count on this without fail" (p. 23) and "As we work the steps, using the tools of the program—a plan of eating, literature, writing, meetings, the telephone, sponsorship, anonymity, and service—we find the help we need" (p. 24).

Rereading this chapter, working the Steps with a sponsor and using the OA tools of recovery are the best ways I know to turn my will, life, and food over to my Higher Power.

—November 2010 WSBC ASK-IT BASKET Q&A

Did You Know? What's New?

Digital communication was unforeseen when the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions were written. It is important to consider how the use of electronic media might impact our own or anyone else's anonymity as we recover and help to carry the message of recovery offered by the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.

Today digital communication is an important way OA members share fellowship and carry the message. Use the new Guidelines for Anonymity in the Digital World to honor our Traditions and protect your own and others' anonymity when posting about your experience, strength, and hope online. Guidelines can be found at oa.org website.

The Spiritual Principles of the OA Program

The Principles in the Twelve Steps are listed here: (as listed in Step Twelve of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous)

- Step One: Honesty
- Step Two: Hope
- Step Three: Faith
- Step Four: Courage
- Step Five: Integrity
- Step Six: Willingness
- Step Seven: Humility
- Step Eight: Self-discipline
- Step Nine: Love
- Step Ten: Perseverance
- Step Eleven: Spiritual Awareness
- Step Twelve: Service

Manasota Intergroup Meeting Mention

Recently the Saturday morning Sarasota meeting with a focus on Anorexia and Bulimia (A&B), celebrated their first year of meetings. For those who attend regularly it has been a powerful, honest and meaningful meeting. For others who have visited the meeting or are only able to attend periodically, it is a wonderful addition to their meetings as well as an awareness that is spreading about A&B compulsive overeaters. The most significant of which is how similar we all are no matter how we look, our backgrounds, how the disease of compulsive overeating affects us, socio-economic differences and any other difference one may have from another.

The meeting is small in numbers and large in sharing. It is an open meeting. We welcome any and all compulsive overeaters. If you have never been to a meeting with a focus on A & B perhaps this is a chance to investigate the possibilities of recovery through an experience that is more similar to most OA meetings than its' name suggests. The group meets at the Unitarian Church on Saturday mornings at 11:15. If you would like to learn more about the meeting please contact Sharon B. (415) 699-6677 or email Audrey T. audreyt16@icloud.com

Submitted by: Audrey T.

Experience, Strength & Hope

Why can't I stop eating? It's a question that probably every Overeaters Anonymous member asked themselves every day before they joined. We also asked ourselves similar questions such as:

- *Why can't I eat like other people?*
- *Why can't I stop after just one bite?*
- *What's wrong with me?*

While every OA member is different, we all share some basic understandings about the disease of compulsive overeating. Our own experiences, the experiences of other members in our area, countless recordings and podcasts, and our program's literature give us a reasonable set of explanations for our behavior.

Compulsive Eating is an Illness

First of all, we believe that compulsive eating is an illness or a disease. Just like Alcoholics Anonymous believes that alcoholism is a disease. No healthy person would go to the lengths we go to with food. Who but a compulsive eater would dig into the trash for food? Or eat frozen, burnt, spoiled, stale, or damaged food? Or hide their stash of food? Go out in a horrible storm or the wee hours of the night just to get something sweet or crunchy? What healthy person would allow themselves to gain as much weight as we have despite the well-documented risks, the physical pain, the shame, and the inevitable medications and surgeries? Who would eat themselves to death if they didn't have an illness?

Major Symptoms of Compulsive Eating

We recognize our illness as having three universal components. Every OA member has experienced these, and they explain a great deal of the *why* behind our illness. Sometimes we don't realize it until well after we join OA, but these three symptoms have always been there. These symptoms differentiate us from normal eaters.

1. Physical Cravings

Radio and TV ads often tell us that a restaurant or product can satisfy a food craving. They are talking to normal eaters, not to us. There is no amount of food that can satisfy us physically. That's part of why we keep eating. For many OAs, certain foods are like allergens. When they eat these foods, the allergy triggers a physical need that only more food can meet. Over time, our bodies develop a tolerance, so we need more and more food to address the craving, and the relief from the craving lasts a terrifyingly shorter time. Although the craving may be related to any food, our members often find it manifests often with added sugars, flours, salt, and/or fats. As with any substance-centered addiction, the elimination of physical cravings may require a few days to a few weeks once someone begins to abstain from their trigger foods.

2. Mental Obsession

Physical dependence on food is relatively simple. Remove the substance, and the cravings go away. So then why do people fall off the wagon? It's because our minds are sickened as well. The expression of this sickness is our obsessive thinking about food. Immediately after we've eaten a meal, our mind is asking us *What's next?* We might be doing something very important at home or at work, but suddenly the thought of a favorite food comes to us unbidden. We can't be in a room with food without thinking about eating it. And getting seconds. Or thirds. The mental obsession is so powerful that it overwhelms rational thought. When we try to talk ourselves out of that next bite, the mental obsession shouts us down. Even when we diet, we invariably regain weight because we haven't righted our mind.

3. Spiritual Demoralization

If we could have changed our thinking about food we would have done so years ago. But the fact that we can't stop shows us that we are powerless to stop eating compulsively. We can't do the job. So we've turned to dietitians, weight loss groups, best friends, family members, celebrity gurus, and everyone else we could think of. None of them could help either. Eventually, no matter what successes we had with them, we always returned at some point to compulsive eating. We may have tried religion and found it only so helpful. What we need is someone more powerful than we are to help us. *A Higher Power* as the saying goes. But our illness also affects us spiritually. Our spiritual health has been as deeply damaged as our minds and bodies. We've been denying our problem for a very, very long time, and so we've forgotten how refreshing the truth is. We've been believing our situation hopeless for so long that we've forgotten what real hope feels like. We've been soothing our cravings and immediate crisis-triggered feelings but not our hearts, so we can only feel dullness instead of lightness. We've forgotten what it feels like to engage strongly with our spiritual selves. We may have been angrily denying that we have a spiritual self or that any spiritual power can help us. That's a very common theme in many OAs' stories.

It turns out that spiritual demoralization is at the root of our troubles. When we re-energize our spirits, we can overcome the mental and physical aspects of our malady. That's precisely what OA and the Twelve Steps help us do.

Terminal Uniqueness

Why can't we stop eating? It's not because we don't want to. It's because our disease has a stranglehold on us. A key to unlocking its grip is to realize that we are not "terminally unique." We are not so different from everyone else in the world that there's no help for us. When we attend our first OA meetings, we learn that in our own communities, there are many people who think just like we do. Oh, the particulars might differ, but the pattern of their thinking is just like ours. If we can suspend, just for a little while, our mind's chatter and go hear what others say about their experiences with compulsive eating and recovery, we are giving ourselves the most valuable gift imaginable: *hope*.

OA MANASOTA MEETING SCHEDULE

Day	Time	City	Location	Contact	Notes
Monday	1 pm	Venice	Lion's Club Venice Health Park 1283 Jacaranda Boulevard (Left Side of Building, Community Room A) CLOSED UNTIL OCTOBER 1, 2017	Dennis 617-460-0188	Discussion/Literature
Monday	7 pm	Bradenton	Trinity United Methodist Church 3200 Manatee Avenue West (Enter Front of Church, 1st Room on Left)	Sandi: 941-932-6651 Mary Beth: 941-705-1417	Speaker 1st Monday, Literature/ Big Book, Newcomer Meeting Available as Needed
Monday	7 pm	Sarasota	First Presbyterian Church 2050 Oak Street (Building on Left, 2nd Floor, Room #203)	Pam G: 941-343-7181	Steps & Traditions, Beginner's Meeting on Last Monday
Tuesday	10 am	Sarasota	Bahia Vista Mennonite Church 4041 Bahia Vista Street Room 9 (Main Building, Entrance Back Parking Lot)	Robert: 978-821-8236	Steps, Last Tuesday Tradition
Wednesday	6:45 pm	Sarasota	Gratitude Club, 530 Payne Parkway (Entrance Back of House, Proceed Right, Thru Kitchen)	Andrea: 941-926-7555	Literature
Thursday	10 am	Bradenton	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church 833 Magellan Drive (9th Street East) (Between 63rd Avenue East and Whitfield) Room #10 in School Building	Mary Ann: 941-744-0230	Steps & Traditions
Thursday	10 am	Port Charlotte	Pilgrim United Church of Christ 24515 Rampart Boulevard (Off King's Highway)	Carolyn: 941-626-8969	1st Thursday Leader, 2nd Steps, 3rd Tradition, 4th BB, 5th Tools
Thursday	6:30 – 8 pm	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church, 3975 Fruitville Road (Jefferson Room, Inside Courtyard) Fragrance Free Requested	Ree: 315-447-4175	Special Focus Meeting: OA H.O.W. Call in Available for Meeting (712) 775-7031 Access code: 519003816#
Thursday	7 pm	Holmes Beach	Episcopal Church of the Annunciation 4408 Gulf Drive (Park in Lot @ Rear of Church, 2nd Avenue)	Gillian: 941-840-4854	Discussion & Writing Open to All, Gay Friendly
Friday	10 am	Venice	Lion's Club Venice Health Park 1283 Jacaranda Boulevard (Left Side of Building, Community Room A)	Dennis 617-460-0188	Discussion/Literature
Friday	7 pm	Sarasota	St. Wilfred Episcopal Church, 3773 Wilkinson Road (Parking Lot in Back of Church, Meet in Little White House)	Andrea: 941-926-7555	Discussion
Saturday	10 am	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church 3975 Fruitville Road (Jefferson Room, Inside Courtyard)	Wendy: 941-806-7080 Mary 941-321-8756	Big Book/ Literature
Saturday	11:15 am	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church 3975 Fruitville Road (Library, Inside Courtyard)	Wendy: 941-806-7080	Special Focus Meeting: Anorexic/ Bulimic
Sunday	4 pm	Sarasota	Bahia Vista Mennonite Church 4041 Bahia Vista St., (Parking Lot Behind Church, Portable #3)	Kathy: 941-954-4210	Big Book Study

Updated June 2017