

# New Horizon

#### OA Manasota Intergroup Quarterly Newsletter December–2016

www.oamanasota.org

INTERGROUP MEMBERS			To contribute to this newsletter, email <u>ilovelfants@hotmail.com</u> or to report any changes to the meeting list.				
Chair	Pam	(941) 343-7181 ilovelfants@hotmail.com	Editorial Policy: Opinions expres	sed here are solely of the writer and not			
Vice Chair	Dennis	(617) 460-0188	OA as a whole or necessarily those of the editors. Articles are edited for style but not content.				
Secretary	Leslie	(941) 223-4100	ADDRESSES FOR 7th TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS				
Treasurer	Vacant		We are self-supporting. Please consider a donation of \$3 at the meetings you attend.				
SOAR 8 Reps	Pam Paula	(941) 343-7181 (941) 487-8027	World Service Organization P.O. Box 44020 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020	<u>www.oa.org</u> (505) 891-2664			
WSO Delegate	Robert	(978) 821-8236	SOAR 8 Treasurer	www.oaregion8.org			
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12 <sup>th</sup> Step Within	Elizabeth	(978) 766-7040	Manasota Intergroup 1132 Ranchero Drive	Email: <u>oamanasota@gmail.com</u>			
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#### From the Editor -

Sadly, I have to report that I must step down from this position as Newsletter Editor. After being elected the Chair of this intergroup and my service position as Region 8 Bylaws/Electronic Documents Committee Chair, I am just spreading myself too thin. This is now your opportunity to step up and reap the rewards of doing service above the group level. Please contact me as soon as possible if you are interested.

Together in Recovery – A 12 Step Journey Winter Retreat, January 13-15, 2017 Christian Retreat Center 1200 Glory Way Blvd, Bradenton, FL

Registration starts Friday at 3, Dinner at 5, Program begins at 6:30. Retreat ends Sunday at noon. Register before Aug 1, 2016 - \$45; after Aug. 1 - \$65 (Retreat program only) Single Room: \$65 x 2 nights = \$130 Double Room: \$32.50 x 2 nights = \$65 Meals = \$50 (Fri – Dinner; Sat – Breakfast, lunch, & dinner, Sun – Breakfast) Questions? Call or email: Karen (614) 500-1080

#### kacie.kb40@gmail.com

Sponsored by Manasota Intergroup OA.

## Help Wanted:

**Intergroup Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for collecting money from the meetings, preparing monthly financial reports and expending funds as directed. Accounting or financial experience preferred but not required.

**Newsletter Editor:** The Newsletter Editor solicits content from group members, lays it out in this or any other 4 page format, provides copies for distribution at Intergroup meetings 4 times a year. No experience necessary.

Contact Pam – 941-343-7181 or Email: ilovelfants@hotmail.com

#### My Notes from the WSO Convention – Boston, MA

From September 1-4, 2016 nearly 1,200 members of Overeaters Anonymous met in Boston, MA for the WSO Convention. Seventeen countries were represented to participate in the theme "The Trail to Recovery." I went along with two other OA friends from the Sarasota area and met up with another Sarasota OA friend and several other New Englanders who have spent time in the Sarasota area.

It was my first OA WSO Convention and WOW! What a shot in the arm of recovery. Registration began Thursday evening followed by two sets of workshops. The general format for the workshops was two speakers each sharing their experience, strength, and hope for 20 minutes followed by 20 minutes of sharing by the audience.

The first night I went to a workshop on "Surrender: A Revolutionary Idea." Jen spoke about her journey in OA before surrendering like boxing where she was always fighting with the food. When working a program, it became more like surfing and riding the waves of abstinence. She talked about continuous surrender and recovery became getting over her terminal uniqueness when she heard others telling her story. One person who shared said outside these rooms you get medals for victory. Inside these rooms you get medals for surrender. Another person shared that surrendering is not giving up, rather, it's about cooperating.

I also went to a workshop that night entitled "Balancing Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Recovery". C.J. spoke about how her Higher Power can see the big picture, like the completed picture on a puzzle box. Janene from St. Louis talked about a grazing relapse and making food our God is part of the disease not love. One person shared "If my food is black and white, I can live my life in color." Greg shared that "I used to try and fit OA into my life, like going to the gym, now I'm going to fit my life into my program."

One workshop I went to on Friday was titled F.E.A.R. (Face Everything And Recover). J.C. from Florida shared that she finally accepted that this was a disease and wasn't going away. But it wasn't her fault. It was an allergy of the body and she had "no control over sugar." She said the unconscious fears were the thread running through her life and she had to ask herself if she is willing to turn her fears over to God. She continued that this is a progressive disease and she had to face the fear that this addiction is not going to change, no matter how much step work, therapy, etc., will make it go away. She can't do it alone. She can't do it with just her Higher Power. She needs the fellowship. It is important to face the fear even if she is shaking in her boots. She ended by saying "I can face whatever life brings me. It doesn't mean the fear goes away."

Opening Night was a festive gathering where the emphasis was on the International Growth that OA continues to have. A woman living in Cambridge, who is from South Korea was the first keynote speaker. She recently did 12th step work by going back to Korea for 9 months to nurture and grow OA in South Korea. There are now 3 meetings and a number of people with abstinence are sponsoring. There is work translating OA literature into Korean. They are getting help from Australia and New Zealand as well. Stella from England also spoke and said when she first got in OA she didn't feel she would ever change inside. Now "I feel so healed and the damage has gone away." There are currently 200 meetings in the UK. She is currently working with a Russian group on a Step Study on Skype. She said, "Why should I get better first just because I speak English," and talked about the need for translation of OA material.

In the next issue of the newsletter I'll share Part 2 beginning with Saturday of the WSO Convention.

Leslie C.

#### **Belief in a Higher Power**

To my own great surprise (and relief!) I have come to believe in a Higher Power that works. I never thought this could happen for me. Like many of us, I am basically a rebel and had rejected any organized religion so completely that I didn't think I could ever regain any personal connection with a HP. I had my first inklings of a spiritual awakening when I realized that it was OK to create a God that works for me. Like it says in Bill's Story (Big Book, p. 12) "... My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea...why don't you choose your own conception of God?" Bill W. goes on to say, "That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I have lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last."

I felt something like this when I realized that no one could judge me or keep me from spiritual growth if I had beliefs that were not perfectly consistent or tangible or explainable. Ideas that I'd previously thought were perhaps unenlightened or simple suddenly became more acceptable to me. And it is OK for me now to embrace seemingly contradictory things in the spiritual realm. In fact, I now revel in the paradoxes that I see all around the program and, of course, in the universe. "It is the great mystery" I will say to myself and then, it is an even greater mystery that I feel satisfied with this answer! My thirst is guenched and after years of searching in vain I can finally rest and enjoy the peace this awareness brings —when I remember to do so!

During my first year of abstinence I was complaining to a program friend about my life (as I often did), and she, somewhat firmly stopped me in my tracks and asked, "Sandi, how big is your God?" What a concept that was! It got me thinking that maybe I needed to enlarge upon previously held ideas about God so that my God, which I lovingly call "Patchwork God," can handle whatever comes up. And things DO come up. Patchwork God doesn't care that he/she/it is made of scraps of different spiritual traditions that I have pieced together in a crazy guilt because it is something warm that covers and comforts me. The scraps and threads are many shapes and colors woven together and they are like the impossible juxtapositions of life that make a strange kind of sense. I could love Krishna and Christ. I could worship nature and worship a gospel. It is hard to explain the excitement I feel

about this sometimes. I feel like an old cantankerous single woman has finally met her match and taken a lover! ME. GOD!

#### Sandi

I just keep it very simple by trying to be in touch with Him every day through meditation. I don't have a lot of expectations about meditation but it has really been an added bonus to my life to meditate—I feel that it's probably kept me a little younger mentally. I feel like I might live a little longer because of meditating because it relaxes. I do a lot of walking while I'm meditating and that's the way I'm in touch with my Higher Power. It's 'plugging into the electrical outlet' and continuing to reap the fruits (no pun intended!) of recovery!

#### Mary Beth

Some of my treasured resources about finding a HP include: Steps 2 and 3 in the OA and AA 12 & 12, Chapter 4, "We Agnostics" in the Big Book, Appendix II "Spiritual Experience" in the Big Book (p. 567), [the AA books "Came to Believe" and "Drop the Rock" (non-conference approved)]. Another treasured resource is my spiritual mentors and fellows in the program:

"BRADENTON MONDAY NIGHT 7PM MEETING SHARES THEIR EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE ABOUT HOW THEY FOUND A HIGHER POWER THAT WORKS!" Here is what they said:

Since I never believed in a traditional God, finding a HP that worked for me was challenging. But I definitely believed there was something more powerful than me that kept the earth spinning and the sun shining. I'd also heard that God was within each of us. So my belief evolved into a knowing that God resides within me; that small quiet voice that knows all of the answers if I can just be still and listen. I believe that my obsession with food blocks the channel to my HP, and when I'm in recovery I am open to the wisdom of that spiritual force that keeps me on track, and the stars in the sky.

### Patti

I am still in the process of finding my Higher Power. I do this by getting on my knees morning and night and thanking HP for abstinence. One of the best ways for me to find HP is to slow down and pause. My intuition usually tells me what's right as long as I'm willing to let go of the fear and selfcenteredness which block it. I try to take quiet time before I start my day and to write out my resentments. I know my HP is there. My part is to do the work of the tools and the steps to "unblock" myself from hearing and following HP's will for me! *Tina* 

There is absolutely nothing too big for my Higher Power! I feel real recovery is living and walking with the supernatural—the spirit. And my real recovery began the day I understood that my Higher Power has ALWAYS been with me, it's just that I never knew it—because I trusted myself as my own power. Humility is the bridge to get to that Higher Power. I thought about how unworthy I am and also how much my Higher Power loves me. He gives me everything I need. *Angela* 

How do I find a Higher Power that works? Through the 12 Steps, in the rooms, in the AA Big Book. I also found a God through music, art, literature, travel, nature, life experiences; people I've met along the journey, random acts of kindness that have been bestowed on me or I have shared with others...

### Barbara

What follows are some things to consider and suggestions for writing on this topic:

- Does our conception of God need to grow? Write a mini 4<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> Step focusing on resentments towards God, religion and/or religious people/institutions. Consider...
  - Is our concept of God based on negative projections from our relationship with our own parents? Do we project hurts, limitations, angers from our childhoods on God unwittingly (Punishing or Distant God?)
  - Do we expect god to grant our wishes (Santa Claus God)?
  - Do we still believe that we are unworthy of God's love?
  - What role do our assets and defects play in our spirituality?
- Choose your own conception of God: Write a want-ad for the HP you want in your life.
   What are the qualities you desire. Write a "job description" for God. Be specific. Draw pictures if you like.
- 3. Write a letter to God asking him, her, or it anything that is in your heart. Begin a conversation...
- 4. Continue the conversation by writing God's 'response" to the questions you posed. Try not to edit but let the words of God flow out (as an option you can use your non-dominant hand to write out the 'God responses'). Keep a journal of these letters to God if desired.

## **PI Committee Report**

The PI committee met 11/22/16 on a conference call so it was relatively painless. We brained stormed ideas for future ways to get the word out. We came up with many ideas but first we want to come up with places we could put up flyers. We are asking for your help to add to the list and possibly join the committee. If we share the load no one would have too much to do. Our 12th Step says we need to reach out to others and this is a perfect opportunity.

#### Put on Bulletin Boards at

Panera; Post Office at Bahia Vista and other locations; Libraries; Whole Foods; Trader Joes; Student bulletin board at SCF and other colleges; Richards-all locations,-class about workshop there; Grainery; Condo bulletin board; Jewish Family Services

Next meeting Tues., Jan. 10, 2017, 7:45-8:45 pm

## NEW OA MEETING IN LAKEWOOD RANCH

Beginning on October 27, 2016 there is a new OA meeting in Lakewood Ranch. It will meet on Thursdays at 7:00 – 8:00 PM and the format will be Big Book Step Study (BBSS).

BBSS is a format which helps members achieve abstinence by working the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. BBSS groups work the steps exactly as they are laid out in AA's Big Book, changing only the words alcohol and alcoholic to their equivalents for compulsive eating.

The meetings are structured and specific, providing clear-cut directions on how to recover from the disease of compulsive overeating.

Lakewood Ranch Big Book Step Study

Thursday Nights, 7:00-8:00PM

Chabad of Bradenton 5712 Lorraine Rd. Lakewood Ranch, FL. 34211

Contact: Barb S. 941-228-7422

"It works - it really does." -*Alcoholics Anonymous, fourth edition*, Into Action, page 88

This is my favorite promise from the Big Book. It is short, simple and accurate. It (the twelve-step program of recovery) really does work. Last weekend I enjoyed hanging with the Fellowship during the World Service Convention in Boston. On Saturday night I wore the same size 6 dress that I wore to the banquet three years earlier at the Convention in Cleveland (see below) - a far cry from the 240 lbs I came in with. I spent some time this morning looking for a picture from three years ago to show the side by side comparison. Although I was unable to find that particular picture, I did get to see a bit of my history in recovery as I scrolled through my saved photographs. My, how I have enjoyed my life over these past 10 years! The freedom and the abundance of good are almost unbelievable. Yet I continue to experience moments sublime, because the 12 Steps continue to work in my life. They work. They really do!

Thank you for letting me share. Have a beautiful day!

Atiya Raleigh, NC

## OA MANASOTA MEETING SCHEDULE

Day	Time	City	Location	Contact	Notes	
Monday	1 pm	Venice	Lion's Club Venice Health Park 1283 Jacaranda Blvd. (Left side of bldg., Community Room A)	Gloria: 941-488-2533	Discussion/Literature	
Monday	7 pm	Bradenton	Trinity Methodist Church 3200 Manatee Ave W (park in back of church; in conference room in adjacent Lighthouse building)	Sandi: 941-932-6651 Mary Beth: 941-705-1417	Literature/Big Book	
Monday	7 pm	Sarasota	First Presbyterian Church 501 Bowman Ct. (off Oak St. east of301) Rm. #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 St., Portable 3 (back parking lot behind church)	Robert: 978-821-8236	Steps & last Tues. Tradition	
Wednesday	6:45 pm	Sarasota	Gratitude Club, 530 Payne Parkway	Andrea: 941-926-7555	Literature	
Thursday	10 am	Bradenton	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church 833 Magellan Dr (9th Street East) (between 63rd Ave East and Whitfield) Rm. #10 in school building	Mary Ann: 941-744-0230	Steps & Traditions	
Thursday	10 am	Port Charlotte	Pilgrim United Church of Christ 24515 Rampart Blvd. (off King's Highway)	Carolyn: 941-626-8969	Discussion/Steps/Speaker	
Thursday	6:30 – 8 pm	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church, 3975 Fruitville Rd. (Jefferson Room inside courtyard)	Ree: 315-447-4175	Special Focus Meeting: OA H.O.W Call in (712) 775-7031 Access code: 519003816#	
Thursday	7-8 pm	Lakewood Ranch	NEW! Chabad of Bradenton 5712 Lorraine Rd	Barb S.: 941-228-7422	Big Book Step Study	
Thursday	7 pm	Anna Maria Island	Episcopal Church of the Annunciation 4408 Gulf Dr. Bradenton Beach	Gillian: 941-243-3919		
Friday	10 am	Venice	Lion's Club Venice Health Park 1283 Jacaranda Blvd. (Left side of bldg., Community Room A)	Gloria: 941-488-2533	Discussion/Literature	
Friday	7 pm	Sarasota	St. Wilfred Episcopal Church, 3773 Wilkinson Road (parking lot in back of church; little white house)	Andrea: 941-926-7555	Speaker/Discussion	
Saturday	8:30 am	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church 3975 Fruitville Rd. (Jefferson Room inside courtyard)	Wendy: 941-806-7080	Special Focus Meeting: Anorexic/Bulimic	
Saturday	10 am	Sarasota	Unitarian Universalist Church 3975 Fruitville Rd. (Jefferson Room inside courtyard)	Mary: 941-321-8756 Wendy: 941-806-7080	Big Book/Literature	
Sunday	4 pm	Sarasota	Bahia Vista Mennonite Church 4041 Bahia Vista St., Portable 3	Kathy: 941-954-4210	Big Book/Step Study	

Manasota Intergroup meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month at 11:15 am at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3975 Fruitville Road, Sarasota (Jefferson Room inside Courtyard), following the Saturday morning meeting.

Credit cards will be accepted at the Florida State Convention for purchases over \$10	opintunate55±@gmain.com 954-295-1123	Plac (mee	Visit the Recovery Bookstore	- OA Manasota - days of continuous abstinence	Where needed		Literature Table	Boutique Hospitality Room	REGISTRATION FORM: I WILL GIVE SERVICE:
or this liver can be downloaded at www.oaregion8.org	If you are reading a paper copy, additional copies	Hotel Liaison – Joan Russell Email: russelljo1@verizon.net Phone: 727-785-9208	Vice Chair – Jacqueline R. Email: jarock587@aol.com Phone: 407-423-4086	For more information contact: Committee Chairperson – Ruby Hayn Email: fsctogether@gmail.com Phone: 813-516-0782	FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION COMMITTEE OF ALL PARTICIPATING INTERGROUPS	Sun Coast	<ul> <li>New Freedom</li> <li>Palm Beach County</li> <li>Pinellas Traditions</li> <li>Snace Coast</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Central Florida</li> <li>Gold Coast</li> <li>Highlands Ridge</li> <li>Miami-Dade &amp; the Keys</li> </ul>	PARTICIPATING FLORIDA INTERGROUPS
Tampa, FL 33609 866-941-4919 (Reservations) 813-289-8200 (Hotel Direct)	Holiday Inn Tampa– Westshore 700 N. Westshore Blvd.	Feb 24-26, 2017			HAPPY JOYOU Serene	Joyous and <i>Jerene</i> in 2017"	Can Be Mappy,	"Together We	27 <sup>th</sup> Annual Florida State Convention of Overeaters Anonymous

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REGISTRATION FORM "Together We Can Be Happy, Joyous and Serene in 2017" Name and City for Badge:	Name:	State: Zip:Zip:	Fees Enclosed: Registration Fee \$5	(Automatic entry to win \$50 – 4 winners.) Sat. Lunch ONLY* \$		TOTAL \$ TOTAL \$ If ordering meals, please circle your choice: Lunch choice: Chicken Tilapia Vegetarian Banquet choice: Chicken Salmon Vegetarian (Meal cut-off date is 17 FEB 2017.)
Convention Highlights         Registration in Hotel Main Lobby         Friday: 3:00 – 7:30 PM         Saturday: 7:00 AM – Noon         (closed during opening ceremony)         Workshops start:       4:00 PM FRI         7:15 AM SAT	8:30 AM SUN Opening Ceremony: 7:30 PM FRI Unity Day Celebration: 1:30 PM SAT Convention ends: Noon SUN	REGISTRATION FEES Early registration: \$30.00 (Postmarked by 1/27/2017) One Day Pre-Registration: \$30.00	<ul> <li>Late registration: \$40.00         <ul> <li>(Postmarked <u>AFTER</u> 1/27/2017)</li> <li>WALK-INS WELCOME!!!</li> <li>Credit cards accepted on site.</li> <li>No refunds after 2/10/2017. These funds will be a 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Donation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	No one will be turned away for lack of funds. If you cannot afford registration, consider giving service or a donation.	Register on-line: https://flsconvention2017.eventbrite.com \A surcharge is added when using this site.)	Register by mail: Make checks payable to: *Florida State Convention 2017" Send to: Carl Kutlin 8775 Como Lake Blvd. Jacksonville, FL 32256 Email: fscregister2017@gmail.com Phone: 323-304-9287
HOTEL INFORMATION Holiday Inn Tampa – Westshore You must make your own reservations before 1/30/17. Use code 'OVE" for special rates: \$145.00 Double + 12% taxes per night. Any reservations made <u>after</u> 1/30/17 will be charged at the current room rate in effect on the day of the reservation. Hotel requires a credit card to hold your reservation. THERE WILL BE NO	Rates are available for one day before and after the event. Hotel check-in is at 3:00 PM, Friday; check- out is Noon Sunday. Refrigerators in every room; there are a limited number of microwaves available. Be sure to request at time of reservation if desired. <b>PARKING IS FREE and adjacent to hotel</b> . Complimentary Shuttle Service available	to/from Tampa International Airport. Call to schedule pick-up: 1-813-289-8200. MEAL INFORMATION Meals must be ordered before 2/17/17	Everyone who signs up for the 4-meal package will be entered to win one of four \$50 cash prizes. Winning is like attending the banquet for free!	4-Meal Package: \$115 Includes breakfast buffet Saturday and Sunday; Saturday lunch and Saturday banquet; taxes and tips incl.	You may also choose to attend the Saturday lunch and/or banquet separately. Guests are welcome if you prepay for them. Sign up for one or both and pay the meal fea(s):	Saturday Lunch ONLY: \$30 Your choice of chicken, tilapia, or vegetarian entree. (Indicate choice on registration form.) Saturday Banquet ONLY: \$45 Your choice of chicken, salmon, or vegetarian entrée. (Indicate choice on registration form.) More information about what is included in each meal is available on the EventBrite web page.

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