

## ***TOOLS OF RECOVERY RETREAT report***

The 2018 Fall Retreat was a great event featuring the use of Tools in our OA program of recovery. 43 registered for this event. We enjoyed sessions on each of the tools, we got to write in some segments, interact as teams, and share. The retreat committee would like to apologize to the attendees for the mix up in start time. We did make an error on the original registration form. We are very sorry and I know some of you were disappointed to miss the part of the first session. We are first timers.

Comments from retreat:

"Amazing retreat (my first ever and first OA). I felt so welcome even through all my fears! Thank you for a lovely weekend I may try and make the fall retreat a yearly commitment."

"Thanks to all! Just what I needed."

"I liked the interactive nature of some of the sessions, and the wonderful sharing of experiences of the speakers."

"I enjoyed the different format vs prior retreats, in using "tools" as the themes, and having many local speakers rather than 1 speaker for almost all the weekend."

"Great retreat Rochester group! Relaxed, informative, enough time to rest and meet with friends for deeper sharing."

"I appreciated all the speakers and being in group '1'. I am so grateful to so many of the OA weekend that helped me to find my way or find something I lost. Some one who gave up their seat for me."

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## LETTER TO MY HP

Dear HP: Are you really listening to me?

HP: Yes, Absolutely!

To HP: Can you really make a difference in my life and help me?

HP: If you let me, I can.

To HP: I don't believe you.

HP: Can't you try and see what happens?

To HP: Yes, but not sure how to begin.

HP: Pick one thing you want help with and tell me about it.

To HP: Not to binge today.

HP: Great. When you have the urge, talk to me.

To HP: What do you mean?

HP: Speak to me. Share your feelings, your fears and why you want to eat.

To HP: Ok, I want to eat today. I am scared about not working and food calms me down.

HP: Food does not change the fear. It is a feeling and feelings pass. Have the feeling, it will not hurt you in the moment. Food does not have arms to hold you or a voice to talk to you.

To HP: What should I do?

HP: Talk to me, write about your feelings, meditate....

To HP: I will try.

HP: That is all I ask of you.

To HP: What happens if it does not work?

HP: We try the tools—call a OA member, read, go to a meeting, read literature, do service. Use the options available to you.

To HP: It's hard and scary.

HP: Yes, but you are not alone. I am here.

To HP: Anytime?

HP: Yes, anytime!

To HP: Ok, I will try it for today.

***This was one of the exercises offered at the retreat as a way to use HP in your program, especially if you are not sure about God.***

New meeting starting  
Saturday, September 29, 2018 at 10:00 am  
Holy Cross Lutheran in the Abbey Room  
30650 Six Mile Road, Livonia, Michigan 48152  
Contact: Merle, 734 240-1515

**Secretaries: Update Your Meeting Info** Give service to the new-comer! **Help us keep meeting information up to date.** Confirm your meeting's details in the [Find a Meeting](#) database on [oa.org](http://oa.org).

## Address Change: New PO Box for the World Service Office

**Starting today**, the World Service Office has a new post office box for all correspondence, including contributions and *Lifeline* magazine. The old post office box will no longer be used. The new address is:

**PO Box 44727**  
**Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4727**

### LOVELINE ASKS —

#### Question #1:

Is the Loveline (The Detroit Intergroup's Newsletter) a positive recovery tool for you & our membership in general?

#### Question #2:

Are you willing to submit an article (a sentence, a paragraph, poem) about your recovery to be included in the Loveline?

Send answers to: [lnewsletter.editor@gmail.com](mailto:lnewsletter.editor@gmail.com)

**PLEASE SEND AN INTERGROUP REPRESENTATIVE TO INTERGROUP  
THE 2ND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH**

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Each represented group shall be entitled to one vote through its elected Intergroup Representative. (Only Reps who have at least 1 year of current abstinence shall have voting privileges.)

Each registered group shall elect, by any method it chooses, one representative and up to three alternates. Each group shall be free to designate alternates when the necessity arises.

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The Intergroup Rep's primary responsibilities are:

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To represent their group at all Intergroup meetings.

To act as liaison making their group's conscience known.

To see that all communications pertaining to Greater Detroit Intergroup are made available to their group.

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## LITERATURE

OA is rich in Literature: Have you given yourself the gift of reading from our Meditation Books, FOR TODAY or VOICES OF RECOVERY? Have you given yourself the gift of reading from OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS first, second or third edition of recovery stories? Check out the many titles of recovery literature that are available to our membership. Pick up a book..treat yourself to recovery. Read with another member, it is a great connection.

## Getting Through the Holidays Abstainently

by Don C

Focus on the true meaning of the holiday or event rather than the food. From the perspective of food, treat the holiday like any other day.

Skip any parties/eating occasions you're nervous about. If there's one you can't skip, text someone before and after the event.

Don't project about holiday temptations; remember "one day at a time."

Line up extra OA activities (meetings, phone calls, service)

Don't set yourself up to feel bad because of unrealistic expectations of what the holiday will bring. Be ready to not be part of family dysfunction. Be ready to be alone if you must. Don't sit around feeling sorry for yourself. Get busy. Read, walk, write.

Build up your recovery bank account before and during the holidays by attending lots of meetings (especially special holiday meetings) and working hard on your recovery. The disease doesn't take holidays.

Keep your OA phone numbers with you always. Use them.

Know your limits. When in doubt, avoid persons, place and things that have in the past triggered overeating.

Have some nice fruit ready for yourself while others are doing the cakes and pies.

Choose to focus on the people rather than the food. Have some real conversations.

Try to really connect with people at the holiday table. Make food a secondary thing.

Don't give junk out at Halloween that you wouldn't eat yourself.

Call on your HP for help before and during the meal.

Call your sponsor before you sit down to commit your food. The answering machine also takes commitments.

If you're visiting others, it's up to you to know what is being served and whether it is something that you choose to eat. Call the host. Plan accordingly. People understand others' food limitations. Even people without our disease have foods they don't eat for one reason or another. Volunteer to bring something that's good for you. The host thinks you're gracious and you're taking care of yourself!

If you're visiting with your parents or grandparents, don't slip into old childish roles where you feel you must eat whatever you're given.

Gratitude list: There is nothing as good for staying abstinent-particularly during the Thanksgiving season- than focusing on the many things we have.

The most dangerous time for most of us is the day AFTER the holiday. Plan to go to a meeting.

Holidays come every year. They are simply calendar times set aside to honor certain things. We deal with the holidays just like we deal with the rest of the days in the year. You can do it. Relax and work your program the way you know how.

Even if you cannot give material gifts, you can share the gift of your recovery and enjoy the beauty of the holidays.

Carry the message. Give joy away, and it will be yours to keep.

**Step 1. "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable."**

Facing the truth and being honest with myself I tried to get thin on my own; to overcome my compulsion to use food, to cope with my feelings or avoid them completely and my life remained unmanageable. I realized and had to admit I was powerless over my obsessive compulsive relationship with food and my obsessive compulsive nature. Not until I was honest that my life had become unmanageable could I become teachable. I knew I needed "to find a new approach to life". Having acknowledged this truth...I finally was in the position to "change and learn." p.7 of 12 X 12.

**Step 2. "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."**

This step of hope means so much to me. I have had times when I have stayed in step 2 repeating it though out the day because I could not see a way out. Now I usually get to step 3 quickly but it bears pausing in step 2 to more fully realize it is a Power greater than me that will restore me to sanity, mentally, emotionally and physically. It is that deep realization that there is a power beyond and above my disease of obsessive compulsive food behaviors and the mental chaos that goes with it. It brings me out of catastrophizing thinking and quiets my mind and spirit. Hope is essential to live life well.

**Step 3: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."**

Step three is letting God do for me what I cannot do for myself: heal from compulsive eating; live a healthy life; use faith instead of fear to get through my day, make decisions and act in my and others best interest. Without faith, I am stuck in my defects of character while being overwhelmed by life's challenges. Faith is the spiritual path that is essential to recovery.

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**Step 4: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."**

The spiritual principle for Step 4 is courage. It does take courage to press on despite fears of revealing the down and dark aspects of the emotions and actions that I have and I'm not proud of them. But until I was willing to lean on my H.P. for the strength to dig deep down and be honest with myself could I begin to write down what needed to be written in my 4th step. I saw why it is so important to do the steps in order. I had to surrender myself and my fears of being shamed to my Higher Power to gain the willingness to be able to write my 4th step. I have done 3 thorough 4th steps and benefitted and grown from each. It is true as it says in the 12 X 12 p.25: "That understanding was the beginning of emotional healing." Each time this is what I wrote on the top of the page as I started, "God guide my hand to write what needs to be written.". It is not possible without using the spiritual aspect of this program to lay myself wide open to a truly searching moral inventory. I had to remember it is to be fearless....that is a hard one to pull off for someone who was born and bred in a fear filled life. Only with my reliance on H.P. was it possible.

Mary

*Lack of discipline has been a big downfall for me in my life. I never liked the word discipline; it always had connotations of being limiting, suffocating, rigid and restricting. I think now looking honestly within and without, that this is the very thing I need. I have always had a difficult time doing the same thing over and over and over again. I end feeling trapped, bored, stuck. I got scared I would turn into a dull, predictable, boring, whatever of a human being. So, I ended up throwing off what felt like a chaining or a holding down. What I see as I write is willfulness. That struggle is my will busting out, busting through as I run far and fast with my fear. My twist on it is to call it spontaneity, variety, or excitement. This is my rational as I throw off the constraints and run from structure. It shows up in every part of my life whether it is chores, exercise, shopping, cooking.....you name it. I always seem to want to change it up. And I always think it makes perfect sense and is a grand idea. My spontaneous self is full of charge and excitement as I go forth once again, recklessly abandoning my temporary structure.*

*Following a path, with boundaries, structure, rules or requirements, still feels uncomfortable and scary at times. Even impossible at my worst moments. The disease of compulsive overeating thrives on lack of discipline. Any thought, urge or compulsion is my diseases attempt at trying to get me to abandon a disciplined way of life. Recovery is all about denying the disease it's opportunity to trap me. By living in the self- loving container I now understand this structure and discipline to be, I have a chance to win in life. Recovery is all about letting the program guidelines, guide me.*

*Gratefully and lovingly contained for today.*

*Thank you*

### The Changing Seasons

The feeling of fall is in the air. As I embrace the changing seasons, it has led me to thinking of the changing phases of my recovery.

**Summer:** — The next phase was breaking those old habits and replacing them with healthier ones. The tools of the program helped me replace a lifetime of habits that had kept me in the food. Meetings, literature, plan of eating, service and writing helped me to put boundaries around my actions, allowing me to begin the process of changing my thoughts.

The steps brought about that change in thinking. First accepting that I needed and wanted recovery. That I believed I could recover through the 12 steps and was willing to actively take those steps (1 thru 3). Removing the obstacles that stood in the way of connection with a higher power (4 thru 9). Living every day in a way that maintains that connection (10 thru 12).

**Fall:** — Learning to live in steps 10 thru 12 every day has been a journey. One I'll trust that I will be on for the rest of my life.

**Winter:** — I came into the program desperate for freedom from the bondage to food and the cold isolation that came with it. There have been times when I've allowed other activities to take priority. A new challenge at work, a new fitness activity, illness, death of a loved one. All things that can take the forefront of my mind. But now the new habits (created by using the tools) are ingrained and I gratefully stayed connected to my higher power through the steps.

How do the tools bring me back to the steps? Maybe it's a gentle nudge from a fellow's share at a meeting or recognizing my own insane thoughts in a piece a program literature. Maybe it's a service commitment that breaks me free from an obsessive thought.

**Spring:** — My early days in program were filled with hope and amazement. There were others like me who have found freedom. After 'white knuckling' it for almost three weeks, I got my first taste of that freedom. By being willing to live with the discomfort that came with not ingesting my trigger foods, I came to be free from the physical cravings.



### **The Changing Seasons—continued**

**Working with newcomers is a sure fire way to bring me back to spring. Sharing the hope that there is a solution. Being witness to the amazing transformation that comes about through working the steps. Being amazed at my own continuing transformation as I learn from the new comers and long timers alike.**

**While I've learned that there are very few things in life of which I can be certain, I am pretty sure that I will continue to experience seasons of recovery. And that as long as I continue the maintenance work of steps 10 thru 12, I can trust that spring will return.**

**K.**

#### *Nightly Inventory*

- 1.) *When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful?*
- 2.) *Were we selfish?*
- 3.) *Were we dishonest?*
- 4.) *Were we afraid?*
- 5.) *Do we owe an apology?*
- 6.) *Have we kept some-thing to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once?*
- 7.) *Were we kind and loving toward all?*
- 8.) *What could we have done better?*
- 9.) *Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time?*
- 10.) *Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?*

*Be careful not to drift into worry, remorse, or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others.*

*After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.*

#### **FOOD PLAN:**

Yes, I have a food plan. I have a detailed food plan. It is not just my guide. It is the basis of my physical program. My body needs specific foods to function and be and stay healthy. The foods on my food plan are designed to do that job. In living in my screwed up compulsive overeating brain there was a time that that was not clear to me. Today, it is clear that the foods I put in my body are "only" the ones that allow my body to function well. Those foods are on my list in detail. Thanks to HP in helping me to be recovered, for today.

**GREATER DETROIT INTERGROUP**

25511 Southfield Road  
Suite 127  
Southfield, MI 48075  
(248) 559-7722  
info@oagreaterdetroit.org

We are on the web!  
**OAGREATERDETROIT.ORG**

***GDI Board Members/Officers***

Chair	Sue S.	248-683-4354
Vice Chair	Bobbi S.	313-377-2371
Treasurer	Lynn H.	313-613-8754
Recording Sec.	Andrea C.	586-943-6900
Corresponding Sec.	Barbara D.	313-886-3533

***Committee Chairs List***

Bylaws	Judy D.	734-782-4212
Loveline	Susie Y.	248-320-3105
12 Steps Within	Daisy P.	313-377-0548
Speaker/Sponsor List	Pam H.	248-398-8930
Helpline	Barbara D.	313-886-3533
Webmaster	Andrea C.	586-943-6900
Literature	Cyndi K.	248-770-7615
Public Information	Barbara J.	407-312-5428
Office	<b>Open</b>	
Finance	<b>Open</b>	

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