

UNITY

April 2024
Gold Coast Intergroup
www.oabroward.org



Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.



SAVE THE DATE

SOAR 8 BUSINESS ASSEMBLY & RECOVERY CONVENTION

September 20-22, 2024

DoubleTree by Hilton

Deerfield Beach/Boca Raton, FL 33441



*“Be Protected,
Stay Connected”*



Hosted By



OVEREATERS
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GOLD COAST INTERGROUP

PALM BEACH COUNTY INTERGROUP

Your Gold Coast Intergroup Trusted Servants

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Please consider joining
Intergroup and help us fill
our open positions.



Thursday 7pm
Newcomer/Speaker
Cooper City
Hybrid meeting
is looking for
speakers
to give service
at their meeting.

*Speakers can join
in-person or Zoom.*

*Please contact
Haya P.
(954) 732-7728*

**New Postal Address:
OA Gold Coast Intergroup
P.O. Box 416
Deerfield Beach, FL 33433**

*Please ask local meetings to
update their meeting formats with
this new address when mailing
7th Tradition donations.*

Keep Writing!



Perhaps nothing in OA's program of action inspires more dread than writing a fourth step inventory. We've been eating over all the hurts we've accumulated, trying to avoid them. **Now OA tells us that we have to allow them out of the cage inside that barely keeps them under control.**

Well, we're fooling ourselves, of course. **We don't control our fears, resentments, bad memories, and feelings. They control us!** Truth is that until we look at them, all of them, they own us. Every time we feel any kind of feeling, we are driven back to the food because every feeling we have reminds us of the ones we are covering up with food. Yes, even happy feelings, because they remind us of how awful we generally feel.

When we write an honest and thorough inventory of ourselves, however, we discover that we have not been victims of others so much as victims of our own thinking. **Our disease has taken control of our thoughts and used them as a weapon against our better judgment.** We see through an inventory that we are human beings being human with all the same flaws that everyone else has. That we take personally what is not ours to take. That we have little ability to distinguish feelings from facts. That we have precious little accuracy in our self-reflections...if we've bothered to be self-reflective.

In some cases, we learn that we have been victimized by someone at one time, but that, even though it is not our fault, we have to claim what's ours: we carried around that victim mentality for years; **we are the ones replaying the past over and over again and using it as a reason to eat.**

The third point is the one that we must all pay attention to in OA. **If we don't do the work, we will not get the results our program promises.** It's like staring at the aspirin bottle in hopes a headache will go away. We've got to take our medicine. Hanging around in meetings and waiting for the "right" time to do

an inventory just prolongs our agony. It gives our disease time to reassert itself inside our minds. Our window of willingness is only open for so long.

We may be afraid of digging too deep, of reliving past episodes we'd rather forget, and of seeing the worst of ourselves. But we aren't writing to be published in The New York Times. Our inventory is ours and will only be shared with one other person (in our fifth step). **We make it objective. We don't lard every resentment with the whys and whatfors. We keep our writing concise so that our disease doesn't have room to turn us toward excuse making.** We only want to record those things that our illness uses against us. That way in Steps 6 and 7, we know exactly what it is we are asking God to remove from us.

The Big Book has very specific suggestions for structuring an inventory. They have proven for over 80 years to be immensely powerful and helpful. There are other means as well. In the end, however, the most important things are honesty, fearlessness, and thoroughness.

Honesty: We must be willing to be completely and utterly honest about our part in what we write about. No excuses, no stories, no bullshit.

Fearlessness: We must not shrink at writing about the most difficult aspects of our lives. For example, many, many survivors of physical, sexual, and mental abuse have written fourth steps about them and found the inventory transformative as a result.

Thoroughness: We must get it all out—everything that keeps our true selves at bay and allows our illness to run the show. If we hold onto something, we may not recover. Like one rotten apple spoiling the whole barrel.

This is our course then. In Step 3, we've told our Higher Power that we'll go to any length for recovery. Now we put pen to paper to start the process of getting rid of what separates us from God's love. Then we'll have it removed so we finally have the slate cleared and into the business of living a useful and productive life.

Anyone who has done a thorough fourth step will tell you a few things:

1. It is simple, but not easy.
2. It is life changing.
3. It is utterly necessary for recovery.

Searching Out Shame



In Overeater's Anonymous, we rely strongly on AA literature, and we are truly blessed to have it. I am infinitely grateful to AA and its founders and its members. **I do find, however, one critical difference between alcoholism food addiction that, once addressed, finally gave me the freedom of back-to-back abstinence that eluded me for decades.**

Members of AA can walk away from alcohol. As hard as it must be, they can find new activities and new friends. With the support of their program, fellowship, and higher power, they do not have to engage with their substance again.

The Step Four inventory in AA literature focuses on fears and resentments and has been enormously helpful, but **there is a critical difference for me as an overeater that requires additional probing in my personal Step Four inventory. My food addiction is not to individual foods but to eating itself.** I have to go head-to-head with my addiction three times a day. In order to do that abstintently, I have to delve deep. I believe strongly that

my food struggle is an emotional struggle. I cannot be in emotional discord for long without it leading to a food struggle. Since I have to engage with my addiction every day, it puts me on very shaky ground to be in a state of emotional "dis-ease."

I recently heard a helpful metaphor: If I wanted to replace the blades in a blender, I'd obviously have to turn the machine off. But would I then put my hand inside it? Of course not, because it might turn on if still plugged in. I'd first be sure to disconnect the power source, or the blades could start spinning and I could get badly hurt. Disconnecting the power source is key. **So I had to ask myself, "What is the power source of my compulsion?"**

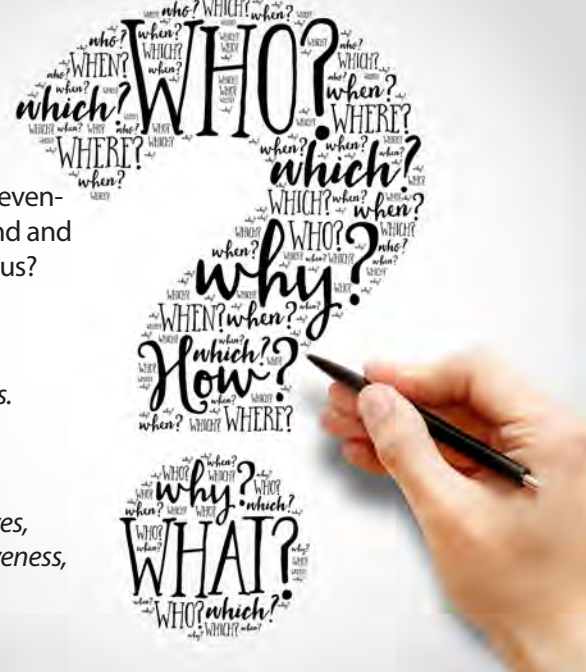
For many OA members, the power source of our compulsions is not just fear and resentment, but shame, which is rooted in the codependency that developed in our dysfunctional childhoods. **Shame is my power source. If I don't address it, the power can kick on again with the slightest trigger.** Before I healed my shame, for example, a critical comment by a co-worker or supervisor was enough to send me into relapse. Trying to abstain without understanding the power of shame was like trying to stop the blender by only pressing the off button. It invariably kicked on again and cut me with a relapse.

My experience is that I only became able to abstain peacefully and consistently when I began a searching and fearless Fourth Step journey into my shame and codependence. I then began to enjoy the greatest gift of all: comfort in my own skin. This comfort is glorious and precious in itself, and it has protected my abstinence, one day at a time, for over five years.

Step Four is a fact-finding and fact-facing process.

Step Four can be feel daunting. I find myself waltzing to the "Step One-Two-Three-Eleven-Twelve" tune and go round and round in circles... Never receiving the promises. Round and round I go. So what is the purpose of the Twelve Steps? Why are so freely given to us?

- 1. To help us discover and establish a conscious relationship with a Power greater than ourselves.*
- 2. To help us improve our conscious relationship with a Power greater than ourselves.*
- 3. To produce the personality change necessary for our recovery.*
- 4. To provide a design for living – that can help us be happy, comfortable, and at ease, living an enjoyable life of purpose, with peace and harmony with ourselves, with others, and with God as we understand Him, growing in understanding and effectiveness, serving and helping others – without the need to compulsively overeat.*



Learning to Forgive, Accept and Love Myself

Food was always a big part of my life. I was the sixth of eight children, and with so many siblings, I learned to sneak food because I was afraid there wouldn't be enough for me. From a young age, I also learned to use food as a way of gaining my mother's attention. At 16, I alternated between restricting and binging, quickly losing 25 lbs., then immediately gaining 40 lbs. When I was 17, I was at a potluck dinner where there were several tables laden with dishes, and I decided that I had to have not just a taste, but a serving of each. I ate and ate until I couldn't sit or stand comfortably because my belly was so swollen. I was afraid I would have to go to the hospital.

My weight – and my self-esteem – continued to fluctuate up and down through college and into my young adult life. By my late 30's, I was married with two children. My husband and I struggled with healthy

communication, and I would eat when I was angry or resentful. We got into therapy, and I was fortunate to be led to a therapist with expertise in addiction. I committed to her that I would try OA.

When I joined OA, I had a hard time "identifying

When I practice self-care I can be of service to others. I put my oxygen mask on first, before trying to help anyone else.

in." It took me about six months to really accept that I was powerless over food, and another five months to ask for help. However, once I found my sponsor, I had someone to be accountable to, and was able to become abstinent. By example, my sponsor taught me how to forgive and accept myself. She showed me what self-love looks like. She also introduced the concept of gratitude. With her guidance, I started working the program.

I never expected to be in OA 26+ years later! **Today, food does not rule my life, I do not live in shame or guilt, and I do not have secrets.** My spiritual practice is stronger, and I

have a much better personal relationship with my Higher Power. I have grown in my ability to accept and embrace others as they are. I have developed better relationships with my adult daughters by learning how to respect their autonomy and accept their decisions. When my husband died unexpectedly two years ago, our marriage was full of love and respect, and had healed to the point that I had no regrets in letting him go. **I have learned that "happiness is an inside job" and I can fill myself with love without being greedy.** When I practice self-care I can be of service to others. I put my oxygen mask on first, before trying to help anyone else.

I have been transformed by the grace of God. OA has spoiled my compulsive overeating. Now I cannot tell lies about food, and I cannot trick myself if my behavior is hurting me or someone else. I am no longer in the grip of being "not good enough." I am so grateful that my eyes have been opened. **Today I know that I have enough, I do enough, and I am enough.**

To the newcomer, I would like to say: please don't talk yourself out of really trying OA. Visit several meetings and you will be sure to find someone sharing YOUR story – because they have lived it themselves. **We do not judge, and we love you until you can love yourself. There is no longer any need to live in your secret pain.**



Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

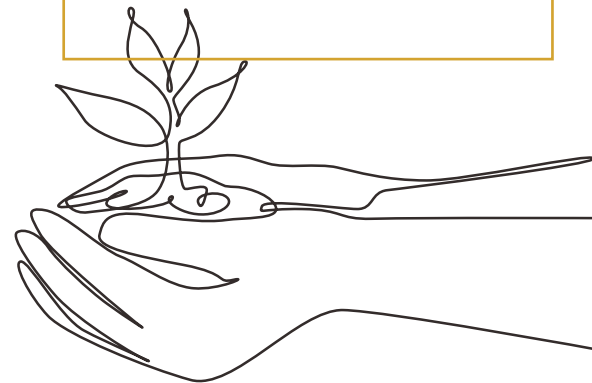
Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Principle of Step #3
Faith

Principle of Tradition #2
Identity

Principle of Concept #2
Trust



Gold Coast Intergroup Meeting List (as of 3/17/2024)

All Zoom meetings have the same dial in number: **1-646-558-8656** and the same **Password: 954954** (except when noted below)
- Check OABroward.org for the most updated meeting list –

Monday

10:00 AM St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/750162024?pwd=MEhrS2U2ajVzd2pvRkt6bl5RUx6dz09

Zoom ID: 750 162 024 - Password 954954

Meeting Type: Big Book / Newcomers

Contact: Charles (954) 600-6280

Meeting Number: #800665

10:30 AM 4th Dimension Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/733969447?pwd=VGhJQitFY1NLK0N1aXNGS1B5cTVOdz09

Zoom ID: 733 969 447- Password 954954

Meeting Type: 12 Steps & 12 Traditions

Contact: Ellie (248) 342-8822

Meeting Number: #801252

7:00 PM Regents Park Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/305659342?pwd=ckR1bVhRaHFzSIFvbVplK3FXRzlydz09

Zoom ID: 305 659 342- Password 954954

Meeting Type: Beginners and discussion

Contact: Bobbie (561) 477 -7914

Meeting Number: #27229

Tuesday

10:00 AM Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/819491242?pwd=V01CYzJWSmxUT2NrSVR1elhsOTZiZz09

Zoom ID: 819 491 242- Password 954954

Meeting Type: OA/AA 12&12 Step Meeting

Contact: Sherry S. (818) 398-4160

Meeting Number: #801313

Tuesday (continued)

10:00 AM Good Shepherd Step Study- **IN PERSON**

Location: 6301 SW 18th St. Boca Raton

Meeting Type: OA/AA 12&12

Contact: Sherry S. (818) 398-4160

Meeting Number: #02797

7:00 PM Crossroads 100 lb Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/516282779?pwd=cTFOUlgxaGx6aGhCd0JHcTdHbTVqdz09

Zoom ID: 516 282 779- Password 954954

Meeting Type: 100 lb (all are welcome)

Contact: Marcia (917) 693-4729

Meeting Number: #54776

7:00 PM Our Lady of Lourdes Boca Raton - **IN PERSON**

Location: Our Lady of Lourdes Church

22094 Lyons Rd., Boca Raton

Location Notes: Lourdes Christian Formation Center
Bldg., Room 201

Meeting Type: Literature

Contact: Ron (561) 483-0500

Meeting Number: #00903

Wednesday

10:00 AM Science of Mind Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/654731057?pwd=QlVReUxGRHY0MGhleGxBNmRTQ0pDdz09

Zoom ID: 654 731 057- Password 954954

Meeting Type: Speaker

Contact: Sherry S. (818) 398-4160

Meeting Number: #30002

Wednesday (continued)

10:00 AM TY Park – Zoom meeting

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/290923334?pwd=cjllcFVtbndGWjY5WE5pL1ZPcjNOZz09

Zoom ID: 290 923 334- Password 954954

Meeting Type: OA 12&12 on 1st, 3rd & 5th Wed. - Big Book of AA on 2nd & 4th Wed.

Contact: Ellie (248) 342-8822

Meeting Number: #800997

10:00 AM TY Park - **IN PERSON**

Location: T.Y. Park - 3300 N Park Rd, Hollywood On Atlantic Street - Keep right and follow sign to Pavilion #2.

Meeting Type: Big Book

Contact: Leon (305) 302-1377

Meeting Number: #27545

11:00 AM - Coral Springs Literature - **IN PERSON**

Location: Coral Springs Medical & Dental Senior Center in Coral Palm Plaza (contains Doris's Italian Market & Michael's). 2029 N. University Dr. Coral Springs. Meeting location is near Panera on south end of plaza.

Meeting Type: OA Literature

Contact: Sue R. (754) 307-5678

Meeting Number: #57389

6:30 PM Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/337815181?pwd=NWhQWjg2UUdKT0ZxYW1CSElwbDVodz09

Zoom ID: 337 815 181- Password 954954

Meeting Type: Beginner / Literature

Contact: Mike (954) 675-7382

Meeting Number: #800744

Thursday

9:30 AM Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/268739522?pwd=Z1BBTDBZK3ZyeDZwVXh3YjhSTmd5UT09

Zoom ID: 268 739 522- Password 954954

Meeting Type: 11th Step/SpiritualityContact: Jody S. (561) 212-7366

Meeting Number: #56655

10:00 AM St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/750162024?pwd=MEhrS2U2ajVzd2pvRkt6bl15RUx6dz09

Zoom ID: 750 162 024- Password 954954

Meeting Type: OA Steps / Abstinence / Literature

Contact: Brenda (954) 609-7393

Meeting Number: #800666

1:00 PM Good Shepherd Big Book - **IN PERSON**

Location: 6301 SW 18th St. Boca Raton

Meeting Type: Big Book Meditation

Contact: Bobbie E. (954) 415-6005

Meeting Number: #53679

7:00 PM Cooper City Newcomer/Speaker – **HYBRID**

Location: 2525 Embassy Dr. Suite 10, Cooper City (Milestones in Recovery/Embassy Lakes Professional Center)

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87204351241?pwd=M2taYVRzK1ZCMXVHbWhCdXFFenIUUT09>

Zoom ID: 872 0435 1241 – Password 954954

Meeting Type: Newcomer/Speaker

Contact: Haya P. (954) 732-7728

Meeting Number: #57865

Friday

10:00 AM Voices of Recovery Zoom

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741340714>

Zoom ID: 897 4134 0714 - Password 561561

Dial in number 1-929-205-6099

Meeting Type: Literature

Meeting Number: # 800108

Saturday

9:30 AM Good Shepherd Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/669862116?pwd=Q3NhemkyYkVsZXhuZmYvNG1nVFN5QT09

Zoom ID: 669 862 116- Password 954954

Meeting Type: 90 Day Speaker (Special Interest)

Contact: Sherry S. (818) 398-4160

Meeting Number: #800526

9:30 AM (New Time) Good Shepherd– **IN PERSON**

Location: 6301 SW 18th St. Boca Raton.

Meeting Type: Topic meeting

Contact: Fred 561-716-4455

Meeting Number: #57655

10:00 AM A Vision 4 You/Plantation Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/194605389?pwd=c0lDdnprbFVFdStPUmVjd1RwK0pOQT09

Zoom ID: 194 605 389- Password 954954

Meeting Type: A Vision 4 You/Big Book/Speaker

Contact: Nancy (954) 600-9513

Meeting Number: #800955

Sunday

12:15 PM Pride Center Zoom

Zoom link:

zoom.us/j/150175349?pwd=bFIFU28rWG9IRGxIRGVPVHhEWFZCQT09

Zoom ID: 150 175 349- Password 954954

Meeting Type: Newcomer / Speaker

Contact: Jules (954) 594-7985

Meeting Number: #46694

Next Gold Coast Intergroup Meeting:

Please be sure to join us remotely for
the next GCIG Meeting
on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 2pm-3pm

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84375463048?pwd=dEgyRnFNSXhHVXBXNVB4a09vazBpUT09>