

# NOVATIONS



## STEP 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

## TRADITION 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.

## SIXTH FRUIT

Willingness

## SIXTH PROMISE

We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

## SIXTH CONCEPT OF SERVICE

The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.

## TOOL OF THE MONTH: SPONSORSHIP

Sponsors are OA members who are living the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to the best of their ability. They are willing to share their recovery with other members of the Fellowship and are committed to abstinence. We ask a sponsor to help us through our program of recovery on all three levels: physical, emotional and spiritual. By working with other members of OA and sharing their experience, strength and hope, sponsors continually renew and reaffirm their own recovery. Sponsors share their program up to the level of their own experience. Ours is a program of attraction; find a sponsor who has what you want, and ask that person how he or she is achieving it. A member may work with more than one sponsor and may change sponsors at will. Reprinted from "Tools of Recovery", OANOVA website.

## STEP SIX—KEEPING IT SIMPLE

When I first read this step I thought, No problem! Piece of c\*ke! I *thought* I was ready to have my character defects removed, but as it turns out I was only ready to have the *consequences* of my defective behaviors and thoughts removed. Just like I was ready to be thin, but I was not willing to put down the fork—I wanted to continue to eat exactly what I wanted without getting fat. How was I ever going to survive without a particular beloved food item?

Similarly, how was I going to live without assuming the role of the victim (so everyone would feel sorry for me and so I'd have an excuse for why I couldn't do something because *my* life was so hard)? How could I manage to get through a day without being critical and judgmental (so I could try to muster some self esteem, not by doing estimable acts, but by tearing down others to make myself better somehow)? How would I let go of my cynicism and sarcasm (so I could keep others at a safe distance to keep from getting hurt)? Could I give up my people pleasing (so everyone will like me)? You get the picture. Maybe it sounds familiar.

And at the bottom of all of these behaviors is fear—fear that I'm not strong enough or good enough or smart enough; fear that I will be disappointed or abandoned. I recently heard someone at a meeting share that fear is lurking under all, or nearly all, our character defects and if we can lick the fear—the granddaddy defect of them all—then we are well on the way with Step 6. Easier said than done!

But by keeping Step 6 simple in this way and focusing on fear, it helps me to feel less overwhelmed and like it might just be possible, with the help of my Higher Power, to be free of that fear. Maybe then the other defects can fall more easily. The truth is I haven't been struck perfect yet, so I'll just keep coming back! Anonymous

*"A willingness to change is the essence of step six"*



## SLOGANS

Live and Let Live.

Meeting Makers

Make It.

One Day at a Time.

When In Doubt,

Leave It Out.

### SUGGESTED WRITING:

*How has working with your sponsor changed the level of your recovery?*

*How do you put yourself in the "frame of mind to receive God's help" in removing our defects?*

*Have you ever heard someone talk about or read from non-OA-approved literature at a meeting? If so, how did you feel about it?*

Share your writings with your sponsor, another OA member or in an article for Novations

## THE FIFTH TRADITION

Each OA group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to the compulsive eater who still suffer.

There are many 'perks' in going to OA meetings, some of them social and some psychological. Yet, remembering why we exist as a BODY of men and women who suffer with the disease of overeating in any of its forms, can be inspirational. All we have to do is show up to meetings with the willingness to share our experience, strength and hope, and our loving Higher Power will do the rest! We gather in all phases and stages—people committed to getting well through working the Steps.

This is a program of celebration of spiritual awakening that comes through working the Steps. Once here, we learn that we are never alone! We have a Higher Power of our very own. Where I am, He is. I am often by myself; but I am never alone. We meet others who are unburying and clearing out the wreckage of their past, and we meet God who helps us to get past ourselves and our destructive habits of living. We are 'grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty.' We come to OA to share the message with others, including one another, who still suffer. Candace

## THOUGHTS ON TRADITION SIX

Tradition Six is a Tradition meaningful to groups and me. Tradition Six has shown me that it is important to see the Seventh Tradition as a tool in our group, not as a goal. Money must be used to carry the message. As a group, we don't need to be rich to do our part in OA. When our intergroup's funds increased because of growth, we used the money for new projects: hiring a professional translator and sending money to region and WSO.

Tradition Six is one of the Traditions I try to apply in my life. "Lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose" speaks to problems that can divert me from my primary purpose as a member of OA — to recover and to carry the message.

My desire for money and power have cause me problems. To recover, I need to surrender to a Power greater than myself. That Power is not interested in my financial and social status. It only wants me to recover and to be useful to my fellow human beings. I still struggle with the desire to be above everyone and to not suffer ordinary human pain. Tradition Six helps me to see that I'm not the only one struggling with that. Even OA as whole can sometimes fall into that trap. Reprinted from *Lifeline*, June 1998 JP, Groningen, Holland

I find tradition 6 to be a way of leveling the playing field when I come to an OA meeting. By that I mean everyone is focused on one purpose — to recover from compulsive overeating. I don't have to worry about someone trying to sell me the latest diet book, political idea, raffle ticket, or diet food. The tradition also states "...lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose". What that means to me is I am safe from my own and other's ego. I don't have to compete with anyone to be the best or to have the most.

I get enough of that outside the rooms.

I think the traditions are so amazing. They all build on each other and keep us all focused on our primary purpose — to carry the message...the message that recovery from compulsive eating is possible through the OA program...and that program of recovery is the Steps. Anon.

**WELLSPRING RETREAT**

The Washington DC Area Overeaters Anonymous  
 Sixth Annual June Retreat Summer Solstice Weekend  
 June 16, 17, 18, 2006

Wellspring Retreat Center Germantown, Maryland

Accommodations are cabins in the woods, each with kitchen and lounge. Each room has a twin bed and a bunk bed. Blankets, sheets and towels are provided. Meetings are in the Wellspring Center Main Lodge. We prepare and serve our own buffet meals.

Cost is \$99 per person for two nights' semi-private lodging, meals (3 on Sat, 1 on Sun).

Registration begins Friday at 6:00 p.m                      Contact: Cheryl (301) 785-3808

*The Fall H.O.W. Retreat  
 November 10-12, 2006  
 Bons Secours Spiritual Center  
 For more info contact  
 Maria @ 571.332.8458 or  
 Heidi @ 703.471.0866*

**THE PROMISES OF THE PROGRAM**

**If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.**

Do you eat when you're not hungry?

Do you go on eating binges for no apparent reason?

Do you have feelings of guilt and remorse after overeating?

Overeaters Anonymous can help!

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating.

There are no dues or fees for members.

*The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively*

**Hotline Phone:  
 703 823-NOVA  
 (6682)**

**AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE**

Tradition 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.*

“Whenever an OA member displays or sells none-OA-approved literature it implies that OA endorses the philosophy of whoever wrote that piece. OA-approved literature reflects the experience of many members of the Fellowship whose recovery is strongly rooted in the twelve steps and twelve traditions.”

“Those who suffer from the misery of compulsive eating need to hear about the solution found in working the twelve steps during our meetings and phone calls. They also need to know that there are no strings attached...”

“OA groups often meet in facilities belonging to an outside enterprise, such as a church....This implies no affiliation with the entity which owns the building .... OA groups traditionally pay rent for the use of meeting space ....”

(reprinted from *The 12 Steps & 12 Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*)

Last week, a reading in *For Today* expressed the ultimate form of gratitude - gratitude for the disease of compulsive eating. This challenged me to reflect on what I really mean by “grateful”.

I am immensely grateful for OA. I'm grateful for my sponsor who always knows just what to say, for the service of OAers, for the tools, and the promises (slowly coming true for me). I'm grateful for our strong Washington OA community. In my hometown my best friend struggles through this disease on her own, unable to find others

willing to share their fight toward recovery. I'm grateful for Google for directing me to the Arlington Sunrise group after I desperately searched for “eating disorder support groups” one miserable night, a year ago.

When I showed up at that meeting the next morning, I was so grateful for the diversity of individual's struggles and everyone's unquestioning acceptance of me.

The concept of being grateful for having disease, however, was (is) a novel, frightening concept for me. It requires fully accepting myself as permanently imperfect

. It requires seeing through the pain and disappointment of losing abstinence to find understanding and acceptance of my weakness and lack of control. Finally, it represents the pinnacle of the promises - an incredible renewing of spirit, mind, and body that is still, for me, a dream more than a current reality.

Since I read that article, I've begun praying praise and thankfulness for my disease itself, rather than for small wins. I'm finding that I am very grateful for having a condition that pulls me back to God every hour of every day. Cary

Intergroup (IG) is a clearinghouse through which meetings & members can communicate quickly and efficiently for the purpose of OA business. intergroup operates a 24 hour answering service (703-823-6682), maintains a local meeting list, publishes our monthly newsletter "Novation" , disseminates information to the public, keeps the World Service Office informed of meeting changes, and arranges marathons & retreats. We also interact with other intergroups and Region Seven to bring our members news of additional special events and meetings outside of Northern Virginia.

Each meeting in the Northern Virginia area may elect a member (and an alternate) to represent the meeting at the monthly Intergroup meeting. While meetings are limited in the number of "official" representatives, Intergroup meetings are open to all members of the fellowship. In carrying out our mission, service opportunities are numerous. We welcome all those who are interested in participating in one of the four special interest committees within intergroup. These are: Communications Within; Publicity/Communications Without; Special Events; and Intergroup Operations. If you are interested in strengthening your program with the rewarding service opportunities available above the meeting level, please join us at intergroup.

*Intergroup meets at Hall of Hope Lutheran Church, the third Saturday of the month 10AM*

**TWO REPORTS FROM REGION 7 ASSEMBLY APRIL 6 & 7, 2006**

**Region 7 Assembly is held two times a year — in the Fall and Spring at Rehoboth Beach. Region 7 Intergroups send reps to discuss our yearly convention, how to retain and service our members, our by-laws and finances, and how to communicate our message to the still suffering CO. Our NOVA Intergroup can have 5 representatives, so if you are interested in doing this service come to an Intergroup meeting to find out more about being a Regional Representative.**

From Dick D:

Because I'm the chair of the program sub-committee for the WSBO Convention in Philadelphia on Labor Day Weekend, 2007, this year at Assembly I focused on program issues. I attended the committee meetings for HIPM/PI Committee, the Region 7 Convention and the ad-hoc committee on the Region 7 newsletter.

The HIPM/PI committee agreed to form a sub-committee/working group on reaching out to young people.

The Region 7 Convention committee pulled together assignments for this November's Convention. This is a major fundraiser for Region 7. The Committee agreed to recommend to the full Assembly that no Convention be planned for 2007 so as not to compete with the WSO Convention in Philadelphia. The full Assembly agreed to this. The committee agreed to look at ways to raise the funds that the Convention generates for Region 7.

The Assembly agreed the new newsletter format will provide news about Region 7 activities. The new editor is Chrystine Gaffney and the 1st edition is due in a few weeks. There will be elections in October. Nomination forms are on Region 7 website and due by Sept. 6, 2006. Thanks for letting me do service from NOVA Intergroup.

From Gail W.

I am very happy to represent NOVA at the semi-annual assembly. I attended a few of the workshops but the one I got the most out of was Communication Within.

This workshop gave me ideas to share with our groups for helping new members to keep coming back. Some of these ideas were: volunteer to call each new member during the week; ask if a new member needs a ride or would like to go for a walk or cup of coffee. Some Intergroups are sponsoring picnics or hikes. One group gets a volunteer to talk with newcomers after the meeting.

Another idea on how to communicate within OA was to have members go to different meetings and share about Intergroup and what it does. The importance of using the tools was also stressed. I also heard a great slogan: If you are having a problem pick one of the 12 steps to work on.

Step 6

*Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*

“In practice, step six turns out to be one of the most difficult of the twelve steps, because *saying* we're entirely ready and *being* entirely ready are two very different things.”

“Some of our defects are not only familiar and comfortable to us, they're also enjoyable.”

“We are powerless over each of our defects of character, just as we are powerless over the food. It will be up to a Power greater than ourselves to remove them from us; we can't do it alone.”

“When and how our defects are removed is entirely up to God. Our work is to do what we can to make ourselves ready, by actively reaching for recovery and putting ourselves in the frame of mind to receive God's help.”

“...our commitment to embrace the needed changes in ourselves has given us an extraordinary power to deal with life's challenges. No longer do we go through life clinging desperately to the past, resistant to change. From now on. We will strive to keep ourselves entirely ready for any transformations our Higher Power wants to bring about in us. Having such an attitude, we cannot fail.”

*(Reprinted from The 12 Steps & 12 Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous)*



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### THE TWELVE STEPS OF OVEREATERS ANONIMOUS

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. Make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, ourselves and another person 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 and 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.

**On the web at:**  
**www.oanova.org**  
**Hotline Phone:**  
**703 823-NOVA**  
**(6682)**

To submit articles email  
**mfs3@verizon.net**

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