

Message From the SJIG Chair

Came to believe that a Power Greater than myself could restore me to sanity.

Wow. That was, for me a tough one. First of all, I wasn't willing to believe that I NEEDED to be restored to sanity. Then, when my insane behavior regarding food became apparent (certainly weighing 350 pounds didn't seem crazy, but spending a night in jail because I bounced a check at Krogers to buy something to eat was THAT wake-up call), finding a power that not only was powerful enough to restore me to sanity, but that cared enough to be bothered to do so took a while.

What did it? Well, it was a slow process. And, it had very little to do with food. My spiritual awakening came as I kept screwing things up and somehow they turned out alright. Lucky 'accidents' that had occurred along the way. It got to the point where, one day speaking with my sponsor I agreed that if the other things were a result of a power greater than myself who cared about me, that maybe I could hand over my compulsive overeating.

That was just over 29 years ago. Several homes, jobs and two husbands (I lost my first to cancer and I'm still very happily married to #2), and 185 pounds later, I'm placing my trust in that power greater than myself once more.

My husband has been offered a wonderful career opportunity. In Columbia, MD. I'm thrilled for him. I have been able to come to an agreement with my employer for a manageable schedule where I'll come up for two working days each week and work remotely the other three. I'm excited.

I'm terrified.

The good news is that I trust it will work out for the best. I have no idea what that will be. However, it means that I must step down from my service in South Jersey Intergroup. Since we have no Vice Chair, Lesley M. has agreed to step-in as Chair for the remainder of my term. I know she will do a terrific job. I will chair the March meeting, and it looks like I might chair April (I'll be in the area all week to cover for my boss's vacation) due to some personal commitments that Lesley had prior to my announcement.

I will miss SJIG. However, I will remain in Region 7 and my participation at that level of service makes the move that much easier – I already know people in my new intergroup. I wish you all well, and I'm sure I'll see many of you along that Road of Happy destiny.

— **Karen B.**

HP Speaks To Me Daily

I want to share an experience I had lately, one of the many that deepen my faith that there is a Higher Power active in my everyday life. I was attending a baby shower at work. Of course there were lots of decadent sweets available, and my kind coworkers also provided a fruit tray, as they know I do eat fruit. It was not my time of day to have a serving of fruit, so I politely declined and tried to enjoy the social part of the event. The problem was, I had a rare, but strong desire to eat the sweets. I sat resentful, this is supposed to be removed, what is going on? I know better than to analyze, my thinking does me nothing. I surrendered to the food thought, I NEVER had a choice, never did, never will. I am deceiving myself if I think I have the power to resist that thought. I prayed, hard, for strength that I do not have alone, and continued through the event. I texted someone, and let them know I was having a moment. Once shared, it seems to have less power. In that text I promised to go straight home, have an abstinent dinner and do an inventory. On my way home, a thought came to me, that I would stop at a local jewelry store and buy myself a bracelet I have been wanting. I worried that this is not what I promised, I said I would go straight home. Was I rewarding myself with a gift? Was I filling a hole with something material? I asked HP again, what should I do? I felt like I did not get an immediate answer, as I often don't, and my car seemed to turn into the jewelry store of its own accord. Asking myself, why this strong need to go to this store? I walked into the store, and it dawned on me. My close friend at work is celebrating her birthday, and I have been at a loss as to what to buy her. Her husband is battling cancer, and she really needs support. This particular jewelry line has inspirational charms, and some specifically related to courage and faith etc. I very happily chose a bracelet for her, had it wrapped and left the store calm and serene. I knew it was HP directing me. I had to get outside of myself and care for someone else. I was definitely thinking of myself too much and too often. I looked forward to going to work the next day and giving her the gift and a hug. I began praying for her and her husband. All food thoughts had disappeared. I felt safe and secure, through no power of my own. It is hard to know which gut feelings are HP, and which are my addictive brain. Sometimes I am not even so sure afterward. But the journey is interesting, and rewarding. I am also grateful for the occasional food thought. I can never forget that I am a compulsive overeater. And I need to be constantly reminded that it is HP doing this for me. ~Jill F.

Building Bridges

Overeaters Anonymous offers us a Program of Recovery.

What exactly is a **program of recovery**?

Merriam Webster dictionary defines the word **program** as “a plan of things that are done in order to achieve a specific result.” So looking at our definition, let’s define our goal.

In OA, our “specific result” is **freedom from the bondage of food obsession.**

“If you are an alcoholic {compulsive eater} who wants to get over it, you may already be asking- “What do I have to do?”

“It is the purpose of this book to answer such questions specifically. We shall tell you what we have done.”

~The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, Page 20

“After years of guilt over repeated failures to control our eating and our weight, we now have a solution that works.”

“Our solution is a program of recovery—a program of twelve simple steps. By following these steps, thousands of compulsive overeaters have stopped eating compulsively.”

— The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p.ix

Visit the Program page on the SJIG Website for more on Building Bridges

Food is my best friend, and overeating, my worst enemy.

It is there when I need it, every time, everywhere.
after work, while driving,
alone, almost always.

Its varieties are endless,
yet chocolate, the most common, most frequent
and the most desired.

The obsession is real, in my mind,
it is relentless, overbearing, powerful.

Fight it, I do...
the thoughts, wants, cravings,
until, I get closer to the store, bakery,
or restaurant.

Then I give in. It is over.
I acted, agreed, and accepted
the temptation.

The choices, decisions, sometimes vary,
but often become repetitive.
That first bite, ahhh, so sweet!
So good! Too good!

The battle has ended.
Satan has won.
The hatred and self-loathing come.

But God lifts me up,
gives me strength, hope,
an alternative.

He led me to OA,
and there shall I stay.
For He loves me,
and has now (as then)
Set me FREE!!!

Pamela @ October, 2011

Step 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.

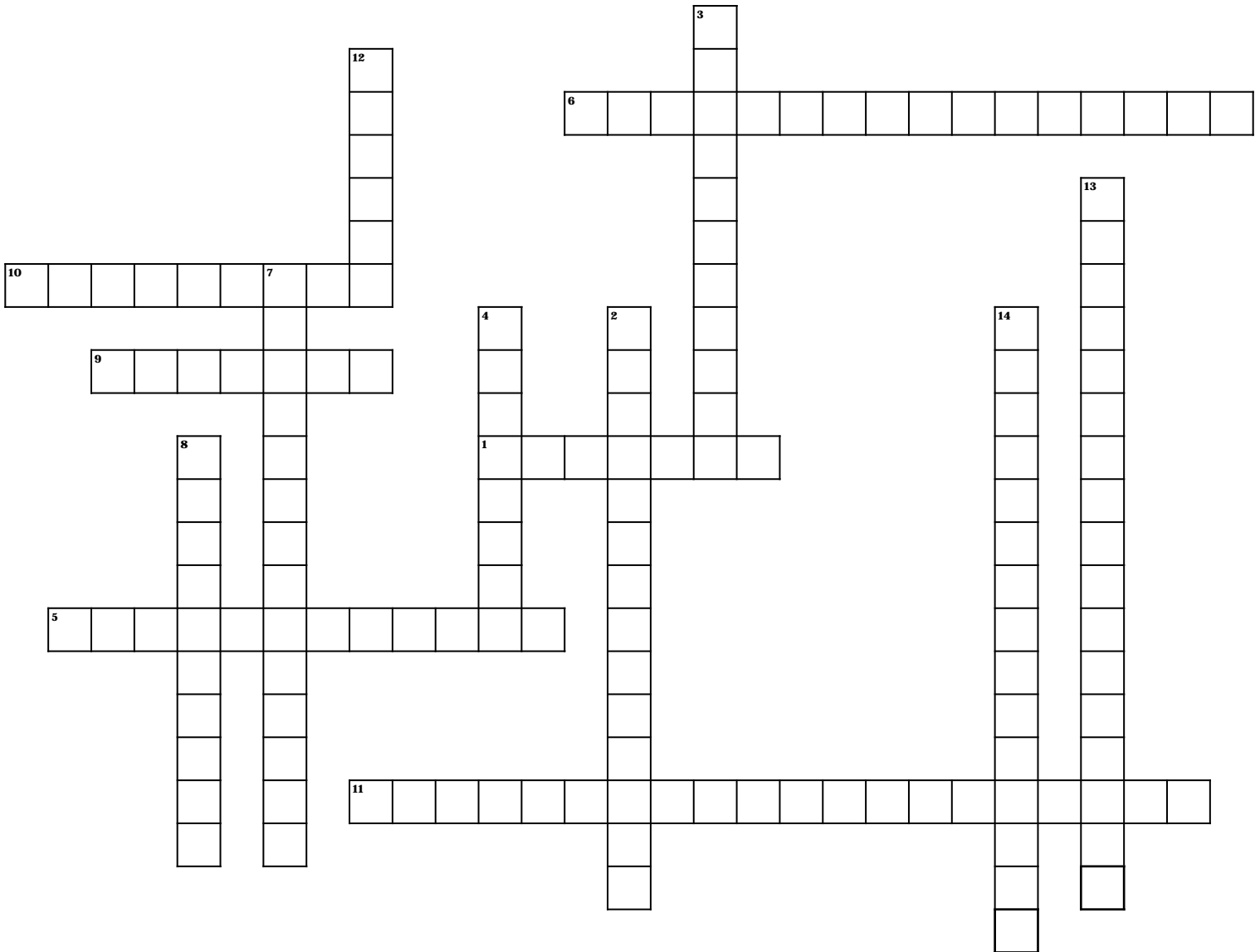


Eleventh Step Prayer

Higher Power,
As I understand You, I pray to keep my connection with You open and clear from the confusion of daily life.
Through my prayers and meditation I ask especially for freedom from self-will, rationalization, and wishful thinking.
I pray for the guidance of correct thought and positive action.
Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done.

Stepping Stone Crossword

Crossword of OA words that we live by One Day At A Time



Across:

1. Love and tolerance of others is ____.
5. A good slogan to apply when working Step 11.
6. The other self- along with selfishness that we think is the root of our troubles.
9. Right Foot, Left Foot _____.
10. It's the spiritual foundation of all our traditions.
11. These can be taken whenever we find ourselves facing difficulties.

Down:

2. According to Tradition Eight, service centers may employ these.
3. We trust ____ rather than our finite selves.
4. We will always have these ____ tendencies.
7. The way we FIRST grasp the knowledge that we can't handle life through self-will alone.
8. The answer to ALL my problems today.
12. The way in which we asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
13. [OA] addresses _____, emotional and spiritual ____-_____.
14. Through working the steps in order to recover from COE, we embarked on a lifelong journey of _____.



SJIG Datebook

05/09/2015
09/25-29/2015

Next Intergroup Meeting, Prince of Peace Church, Marlton, NJ (10:00 am to 12:00 noon)
Region 7 Assembly; Reading, PA (www.oaregion7.org for more information)

SAVE THE DATE!!!

9/1-4/2016

The Trail To Freedom: OA World Service Convention – Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel

Future Intergroup Meetings for 2015: 6/6, 7/11

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The *Stepping Stone*

Contributions
& Ideas

Please submit your contributions and ideas for content by the **25th** of every month to:

Email: **Newsletter@oa-southjersey.org**

Mail: **The Stepping Stone**
c/o Overeaters Anonymous
PO Box 766
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Website: **www.oa-southjersey.org/newsletter**
(use form to submit stories, upload files, etc.)

Please send 7th Tradition donations to:

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