

NOVATIONS

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The Monthly Newsletter
of the Northern Virginia
Overeaters Anonymous
Intergroup

On Step 8: Cleaning the Mirror

Working Step 8 was like cleaning off a mirror that had collected dust and grime, undisturbed for 54 years. Overeating, and trying to control my weight was far more important than a dirty mirror. After all, I once weighed 350 pounds. I have lost and kept most of it off for two years. That seemed like enough Self-Discipline to me!

I told myself "That mirror is unimportant, plus I haven't hurt many, and I reek of self-discipline!" Until the food got harder and harder. Gaining all the weight back became a continuous worry. Long term abstinence can't be white knuckling for the rest of my life. The weight was gone and so was the pink cloud. Could making a list of people I have harmed and working on self-discipline, be a mirror to get me through all of this?

My brain said, "Nope, let me keep reading labels instead." HP and my sponsor encouraged cleaning the mirror "But surely they understood what a victim I have been, and they couldn't want me to blame myself! After all I hadn't hurt people on purpose! Maybe I had hurt a few people, my son, my mom, maybe some siblings and friends, but that has to be it! Well maybe my Exes, their families, and some coworkers."

"Thinking about this really makes me want to run back to the food. I thank HP for Step 8 and knowing discomfort is part of recovery. Ok I'll clean the mirror!"

I started cleaning off the fears, shame, guilt, resentments, and the mirror was far cleaner than before. I risked it and looked at myself in the mirror! Wow, in addition to losing weight, I accepted I am powerless, and that a power greater than myself can do what I can't. Now I can decide to turn my will and life over to my HP, and not try to solve it all myself!

The mirror is clear that this is a way to light and life. The mirror will get dusty again and with my HP I pray I will want to see me clearly again. I can now allow my HP to clear away my wreckage so I can see you and me clearly. When I do, no one is all that bad at all.

-Trasie P

Principle of Step 8: Self-Discipline

To me progress and perseverance are fueled by self-discipline. Self-discipline means letting go of the thinking that a knight in shining armor is going to rescue me and then my life will be perfect. It is letting go of the "if only I have _____, then I will be happy".

Self-discipline means looking at myself, good and bad. It means, by working the 12 Steps and calling on HP, those parts of me that are of no further use are discarded and those things that work well are enhanced.

Self-discipline means that each day I continue my physical, emotional and spiritual maintenance. I continue to do a little more of what has brought about my recovery from compulsive overeating.

People say "you have such will power". I know for sure that my recovery is not governed by my will but it is given to me by a Higher Power. Instead of my being my own worse enemy, I have become and continue to be my own best friend through the self-discipline of the Principle of Step 8.

from Anonymous

A Word from the Editor

Readers - we are working to bring you articles to support your recovery and information about Overeaters Anonymous Region 7 in Northern Virginia. If you are new here, welcome!

I do mean 'We!' All of our articles are written by volunteers from our oanova.org membership. We also have a diligent group of proof readers. Thank you to those who contributed by giving service this month.

If you are interested in writing about a Step, Tradition or a Spiritual Principle that you have worked through, please contact me for details. Also, if you have a favorite slogan, we'd love to hear that too!

Keep Coming Back, Cathy C., Editor
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See Page Two for More!

On Tradition 8: Fellowship

Fellowship is the spiritual principle of OA's Tradition 8. The main themes of this tradition involve a nonprofessional structure with flexibility to employ special workers when needed.

Working the 12 Steps helps us to get right with ourselves and the individual Higher Power of our understanding. Practicing the 12 Traditions helps to improve our interactions with others, both inside the fellowship and in every outside group setting.

Every time I've been lovingly guided through the Steps, each Step made increasing personal sense to me. But the 12 Traditions sometimes aren't studied as often or deeply, so their power and applicability were less obvious to me.

Tradition 8's nonprofessional aspect allows each of us to leave our degrees, titles or training at the door. We come in and participate as relative equals, each with something valuable to share and learn. OA offers a spirit of caring, cooperation and discovery to our membership. These offerings can be the antidote to a complicated world sometimes plagued with rivalries, competing goals, profit motives and poor communication.

Applying Program principles in roles outside OA has greatly improved my results and satisfaction as a sister, daughter, partner, employee, volunteer and neighbor.

Because OA employs special workers on the World Service level, our membership is strong and reaches around the globe. Each Region, Intergroup and meeting benefits from continuity of message, helpful literature, shared best practices and common purpose. The absence of profit motive ensures we see our donations hard at work making a positive difference.

As we work our individual programs of recovery, members are encouraged to employ people with special skills as our needs dictate. At some point on their recovery path, most members have benefited from nutritionists, counselors, fitness instructors, or medical doctors. Such professional help complements our 12-Step work.

I credit living by OA's principles with giving me the confidence to make a major relocation. In the new community I moved into, there are several daily opportunities to interact, relate, enjoy, learn and serve. Since joining OA, my every personal and professional relationship has improved. I am grateful I stayed involved these last 13 years, because this Program is truly a design for better living.

-Anonymous

Slogan: Another Bozo On the Bus:

To be just another bozo on the bus
I must let go of the pronouns, them and us.
The spiritual principles I want to follow
Make me feel a lot less hollow.
Right now, today, I hold onto HOPE
It helps me feel that I can cope.
I call my sponsor once a day
After which I often pray:
Dear Lord let me eat just this food
It's healthy, wholesome, and so good.
To overeat because I paid,
Of this I still am afraid.
But when I surrender my food to God
I find the process much less hard.
Writing now, I find it fun to rhyme
And though I am up too early
I feel just fine.
Gratefully, Joan S

Visit oanova.org
for
Upcoming OA Events
and NoVA Region
meeting times/places

OA 8th Step, 8th Tradition and 8th Principle for August

Step 8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition 8: Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Spiritual Principle of Step 8: Self-Discipline