

# Looking Up

Tri-County Intergroup Newsletter • September 2010

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## Think, Ask, Action

My favorite tool is the food plan. It is so good to know what I am going to eat. It is a plan I don't have to think about except when I'm making it out. I don't trust myself but by repeating it to my sponsor I am trusting God, it's like He says it's ok.

Meetings help me, too, because I hear things that help me see myself. I need to be aware of the areas that I don't admit to, or ignore, that need to change so I can be free of my own bondage. I see others and their success and struggles and don't feel alone anymore.

– Anonymous

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## Steps 8 & 9 : New Bridges of Love & Service

I found out early on that fear of these two steps was truly misplaced. It was in the approach that these steps are misunderstood. There were certainly a number of deeply painful events in my past that needed to be rectified but I was not here to grovel before another but to offer my new self in service and love.

I personally believe we restore damages done to those we do not know and we offer a new life to those we love. The first is atonement for our past mistakes - the latter is the embodiment of what we seek in this program - a life of freedom and a reason to live it.

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

and

**9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

The list made itself and the "half-step" for me was to allow it to become something special. A map to rebuilding the bridges of love I had torn down.

I was fortunate to find an old wallet many years after starting this journey. There was a piece of paper in it with the word "HOPE" showing. Before tossing the rather worn piece of leather I opened the note. There was a simple list composed at the outset of my 9th Step adventure. I slowly read each name and let them fill my heart. The broken bridges had been long ago repaired and the intervening years had added wonderful joy from many of these relationships. I have been truly blessed by this program and these two steps in particular. Before we are halfway through....

The person, resurrected with the gentle touch of my Higher Power, has found a sense of wonderment being a part of this world. This "new me" has been fulfilled by those I have been able to serve. No compulsion has every provided this much lasting joy. No compulsion ever will. Here is a wonderful meditation to enhance your own continuing 8th and 9th step. Look at the promises on pages 83-84 of the Big Book and see how they relate to your relationships. Can you see that they are fulfilled in the wonderful action of personal relationship? Can you feel the presence of your Higher Power in each bridge you have built?

May your journey be filled with the adventure of the 8th and 9th Steps, and may they expand your joy and love exponentially.

A fellow traveler  
Anonymous

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## Message from a Meeting

Lately, my program literature has reminded me of the awareness that I have a disease that is not going away; my program is not going away, either. My disease is strong. It was a comfort to hear someone read that my compulsion/desire for more or inappropriate food will come up from time to time – no need to panic.

My working to keep life simple is a *full time job!* Keeping my life simple allows all the room to make OA and abstinence number one before anything else. This always amazes me. I've just been doing it. Each time my life gets more simple, it feels weird, right, exciting, calming, hopeful, happy.

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*When a person tries to control their addiction they have already lost control.*

*If you want to overeat, that is your business; if you want to quit, that is our business.*

*First we stayed abstinent because we have to, then we stay abstinent because we are willing to, finally we stay abstinent because we want to.*

*It is not the experience of today that drives people mad, it is the remorse or bitterness for something which happened yesterday and the dread of what tomorrow may bring.*

# The Stupidity of Perfection

by Glenn C

It seems easy to ignore the pebbles on the plain  
see the blue and gray peaks  
beneath the amberpink horizon  
believe this is life and all is well

and miss the canyon  
already twilight darkened  
tumble down its rocky banks  
shocked and dismayed

wondering what faultline I missed  
in my geology  
captured in the shadowy delusion  
of perfection.

Then waiting in this dusk  
for death's dateless night  
I look up and see the mantel  
peopled by friends

folded into cards  
with suns setting and sea birds  
fishing boats resting safely in harbor  
butterflies wishing well

calligraphy inked from hearts  
pulsing with love  
and memories of poker,  
travels, tears, and laughter.

Sudden as the fall  
I am again transported  
to the golden plain  
sure of the stupidity of perfection

and resting  
in the simple faith  
it's ok just to be  
me.

## Author's note on "The Stupidity of Perfection"

This poem was written as I was feeling down on myself, sad and frustrated that after all these years in recovery I still struggle with my own character defects. Then I realized that it is my ego that demands perfection and then kicks me in the gut when I fail. The program reminds me: "Progress not perfection," and the main thing to remember about God is that I am not him and don't need to try to be. As I wrote this poem, lamenting my faults, I remembered our long mantel across which I had placed beautiful, thoughtful, and affirming birthday cards received from friends and relatives. I remembered my kin and some of the wonderful moments spent with them over the years and I fell into their love - smiling.

# Wha???

I don't have anything to paint. *Then paint anything.*  
I don't have anything to do. *Then do anything.*  
I don't have anything to write. *Then write anything.*

This program of action has saved my abstinence and saved me from myself so many times. Boredom is one of my former best friends. It always lured me into eating. After all, it was what I did when there wasn't anything to do. It was my default means to an end, the end being freedom from pain. I trusted it to work and it always did. After I joined OA/HOW, I had lots of things to write and, therefore, do. I was busy daily answering questions. I've never counted all the OA/HOW questions, but they kept me busy for at least a year and probably longer. After I had been answering the questions for only the first 30 days, I realized that I was no longer bored and miraculously didn't want to overeat. What was the connection? I was becoming free from pain. Why was that? As I pondered this miracle, I started watching myself, noticing what was happening to me physically, emotionally and spiritually when I took this simple action, writing, on a daily basis.

I chose a time of day when I normally felt the most pain, when I came home from work. I used to go straight to the refrigerator and fill myself with everything I could quickly stuff into my mouth because I thought I felt physical pain. So, after joining OA/HOW, I took a different route after I entered the front door. I was going to DO something different. I made myself walk into the bedroom and pick up my question for the day, the books I was to read, and my journal. I sat down and spent 30 minutes DOING my reading and writing. When I was finished, I no longer had any pain! I was no longer in a panic to eat. I was calm and peaceful. Why? I hadn't eaten anything and I thought I was hungry (starving is how I usually put it).

I believe it is because in the DOING, in answering the soul-searching questions that were presented to me, that I made daily contact with my higher power at a time of day when I was at my weakest and my disease was at its strongest. Yes, I was in physical, emotional and spiritual pain. I was lonely in a house with three other people in it and several pets, all waiting to be fed. After I had written, spilling my guts out on paper, being as honest as I could be, I no longer felt lonely. For me, writing like that creates a direct connection with my higher power. I am letting my higher power flow through me and the result seemed to be that my higher power filled me up. Thus, I lost the desire to eat. After awhile I realized that I had never really been physically hungry. My family learned they could wait 30 minutes to be fed their various and unique dinners. (Yes, we all ate different types of food, but that's a whole 'nother story.)

My sponsor explained to me that physical hunger was usually accompanied by my stomach growling and that wasn't happening. What I was experiencing was spiritual and emotional hunger and that felt to me like pain. The exciting thing for me was that when this pain started going away because of writing, not eating, I didn't feel remorse, guilt, and stuffed. I hadn't added any pounds. I was free. I felt light. I started to feel joy. And most importantly, I no longer felt lonely. I was able to DO THE NEXT RIGHT THING, walk into the kitchen, start my dinner first, then the various food-like substances that my family ate, and do it all joyfully. I was able to maintain my abstinence on a daily basis.

I don't know why this program works; I only know for a fact that it does if I work it. So, right now, I'm going to go DO something. How about you?

Betsy H., Chair, Tri-County Intergroup

**2010 TRI-COUNTY  
INTERGROUP BOARD**

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(817) 870-8703  
(817) 921-4676  
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Arlington, TX 76094

**Tri-County Information Line**  
(817) 303-2888  
[www.aa-tricounty.org](http://www.aa-tricounty.org)

LOOKING UP is a monthly publication of the OA Tri-County Intergroup. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and not of the OA Tri-County Intergroup or OA as a whole. Editor reserves the right to edit material submitted.

Monthly Treasurer's Report and Intergroup Meeting Minutes are available at [www.aa-tricounty.org](http://www.aa-tricounty.org)

**Seventh Tradition Donations**  
OA's Seventh Tradition tells us that we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions. After paying group expenses (rent, literature, supplies) and maintaining a prudent reserve (determined by group conscience), OA suggests that groups distribute the remaining funds as follows:

**60% : Tri-County Intergroup**  
Billie Stamp  
1513 Tyler  
Arlington, TX 76012

**30% : OA World Service Office**  
P.O. Box 44020  
Rio Rancho, NM  
87174-4020

**10% : Region III**  
Region III OA  
Barbara Vervenne, Treasurer  
PO Box 29903  
Austin, TX 78755

Give as if Your Life Depends On It.

*OA Responsibility Pledge: Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this, I am responsible.*

## Intergroup News & Information

The Monday night Granbury/Acton meeting will now convene at 6:15 pm, rather than 6:00. Please call Leah for further information, (817) 219-2393.

Region III has a new Treasurer, Barbara Vervenne. Find her contact information in the lower left portion of this page.

If your group has extra jewelry left from the retreat fundraiser, please have someone bring it to the retreat. We will collect it and try to sell it there. If no one from your group is attending the retreat, please contact Molly H., (682) 556-9217.

Can your group help raise funds for the retreat? Consider donating one week's 7th Tradition basket income to the Retreat Fund. Simply designate a week, collect all 7th Tradition money from the basket that week for the Retreat Fund, and send to Intergroup Treasurer Billie Stamp, with the notation that it is for the Retreat Fund.

### Treasurer's Report 07/2010

Your trusted servant, Billie S.

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$4631.70</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Income</b>		AT&T	\$124.13
Arlington	\$300.00	Bank Fees	\$14.00
Bethel HOW	\$42.05	Newsletter	\$73.28
King of Glory	\$10.00	Literature	\$77.00
Misc. Donation	\$12.00	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$288.41</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$364.05</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$4707.34</b>
Retreat Reservations	\$190.00	Delegate Fund	\$1708.05
		General Fund	\$1566.35
		Retreat Fund	\$1432.94

## The Big Book Come Alive in OA

**Tri-County Intergroup Fall Retreat**

November 5-7, 2010

Glen Lake Camp at Glen Rose

Registration: \$95



To register, contact Billie (817)460-3083 or Margaret (817)277-8706

Deadline: October 6, 2010 • No refunds after October 20, 2010

**Speaker:** Canadian male with numerous years of abstinence in OA. His presentation will be modeled after the **Joe & Charlie Big Book studies**.

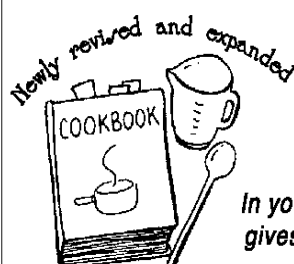
**Schedule:** **Fri., Nov. 5:** Check-in begins at 5 pm, opening session at 8 pm

**Sat., Nov. 6:** Steps 1-10, 3 meals provided

**Sun., Nov. 7:** Steps 11-12, 1 meal provided, closing session 11 am

**Registration includes:** 4 meals, accommodations for 2 nights. Sleeping arrangements are in a rustic air-conditioned dormitory-style cabin with twin-sized bunk beds.

**Bring:** Sheets, blanket, pillow, personal toiletries and grooming supplies, towels, your Big Book, cards and games for relaxation time, and if you choose to, money for literature or donation.



## Bethel UMC Group Recipe Book

To order, email [bethelhow@gmail.com](mailto:bethelhow@gmail.com)

Electronic version: Free

Spiral bound with plastic covers, conveniently mailed to you: \$10

In your email, please specify double-sided or single-sided copying. Double-sided gives you a light-weight book, while single-sided provides ample space for notes.

**TRI-COUNTY INTERGROUP OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS**

Day & time	City – <i>Group Name</i> – Address	Subject	Contact	Contact Phone
<b>MONDAY</b>				
6:15 pm <b>New Time!</b>	<b>Granbury/Acton</b> Acton United Methodist Church, Adult Education Building, Room 202A 3433 Fall Creek Hwy (HWY 167S) Granbury, TX 76049		Leah	(817) 219-2393
6:00 pm	<b>Waco</b> St. Alban's Episcopal Church 305 North 30 <sup>th</sup> Street Waco, TX 76710	Big Book Study	[pager]	(254) 260-1258
7:00 pm	<b>Arlington – Trinity</b> Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	Abstinence	Billie	(817) 460-3083
7:30 pm	<b>Fort Worth – South Hills</b> <b>This meeting could use your support!</b> South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Literature: Step or Tradition of the Month	Happy	(817) 370-7207
<b>TUESDAY</b>				
Noon	<b>Fort Worth – South Hills</b> South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Reading & Writing: Big Book	Happy	(817) 370-7207
6:00 pm	<b>Stephenville – Cross Timbers</b> First Presbyterian Church 1302 N Harbin Drive Stephenville, TX 76401	Literature/ Topic	Pat	(254) 485-0921
7:00 pm	<b>North Richland Hills – Daily Reprieve</b> St. Johns Hall (center building) 4101 Frawley Dr (between Glenview and North Hills Mall) North Richland Hills, TX 76180	Step Study/ Literature	Keith	(817) 692-1641
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>				
12:00 pm	<b>Fort Worth – King of Glory</b> King of Glory Lutheran Church 1659 Sandy Lane @ Brentwood Stair Fort Worth, TX 76112	Literature: focus on Step or Tradition of the month	Lucy	(817) 275-0144
1:00 pm*	<b>*SPANISH</b> <i>Must call Gay to request in advance</i>			
7:00 pm	<b>Tarrant County – Men's Group</b> Ste. 608, Radio Shack shopping center 4105 State Highway 121 @ Cheek-Sparger Bedford, TX 76021	Men's Group	Keith	(817) 692-1641
7:30 pm	<b>Arlington – Trinity</b> Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	HOW (Closed meeting)	Billie	(817) 460-3083
<b>THURSDAY</b>				
6:45 pm	<b>Fort Worth – Bethel HOW</b> Bethel Methodist Church (corner of Southwest Blvd. and Vickery) 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX <b>76116 (not 76109)</b>	HOW	Patrice	(817) 692-7180
7:30 pm	<b>Fort Worth – South Hills</b> South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Literature (variable)	Happy	(817) 370-7207
<b>SATURDAY</b>				
9:00 am	<b>Fort Worth – South Hills</b> South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Writing: topic varies	Happy	(817) 370-7207
12:00 pm	<b>Arlington – Trinity</b> Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	Literature	Billie	(817) 460-3083
12:00 pm	<b>Eules</b> United Memorial Christian Church 1401 N. Main Street Eules, TX 76039	Step Study/ Big Book	Amanda	(817) 776-3030
<b>SUNDAY</b>				
4:00 pm	<b>Arlington – Primary Purpose</b> Millwood Hospital – meet in the Library 1011 N. Cooper Street @ Randol Mill Road Arlington, TX 76011	Newcomer/ Literature	Rachel	(817) 595-3044

Tri County Intergroup meets at 10:30 a.m. the first Saturday of every month,  
Trinity United Methodist Church, 3216 West Park Row Drive, Arlington, in "Wesley House."