

2008 TRI-COUNTY  
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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.

*The OA Responsibility  
Pledge:*

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

# Looking Up

Tri-County Intergroup Newsletter

November 2008

**21 Tips for Getting Through the Holidays Abstainently** *Origin unknown c. 2001*

1. Focus on the true meaning of the holiday or event rather than the food orgy that sometimes accompanies it.
2. Don't set yourself up to feel bad because of unrealistic expectations of what the holiday will bring. Sometimes we're with family, sometimes with friends, sometimes we are alone. Face the reality of the situation beforehand. For example, if a family occasion almost always turns unpleasant, plan not to be a part of the unpleasantness. If you're going to be alone, face that you may be sad. Plan to deal with it without excess food.
3. Build up your recovery bank account before and during the holidays by attending lots of meetings, working extra hard on your 12 steps and using all the tools, especially service. Keep in constant contact with your sponsor. The disease doesn't take a holiday, nor should our recovery.
4. Keep your OA phone numbers with you at all times. Use them.
5. Know the limits of your recovery. When in doubt, avoid persons, places and things that have in the past triggered overeating. The party is not worth it. Choose not to attend if you feel it may be a major problem. Remember that abstinence, one day at a time, has to be the highest priority in your life. Without it, all other things suffer.
6. From the food perspective, treat the holiday like any other day. Our disease never takes a holiday.
7. Plan something special for yourself during the time other people are eating sugary desserts that you choose not to include in your food plan. Special tea, hot water with lemon, fruit... anything that is special for you and allowable in your plan.
8. Whether attending a holiday gathering or ordinary party, choose to focus on the people rather than the food. Pick out people and engage them in **real** conversation. If they don't want to participate, move on to the next person. People like to talk about themselves. Ask them questions about their life, their work - and really listen to their answers.
9. Try to really connect with people at the holiday table. Make the food a secondary thing.
10. At Halloween there is no law that says you have to give out candy. We're not doing these kids a favor by giving them junk food. Give nutritious snacks, toys or money. Do not give out things you would not consume yourself. Then there will be no problem with leftovers.
11. Set an extra place beside you (in your mind or in reality) at the table for your Higher Power.
12. Remember Step Two: with the help of a Higher Power, we can be restored to sane eating behavior. Call on your Higher Power. HP can keep you sane, one day at a time, one meal at a time.
13. During the holidays, get out of yourself by giving service, any service, whether it is to the program, to needy individuals, or to the community. Do something that may be a little hard for you, but that you know you will feel good about later. Give yourself something to build self-respect.
14. Plan! Plan! Plan! Be proactive toward the holidays and the meals. Don't just sit back and hope for the best. Rehearse in your mind over and over exactly what you will do, particularly what, where and when you will eat. Pray just before sitting down to the meal.
15. Just before sitting down to eat or being served, go to a private room somewhere in the house or restaurant, call your sponsor, and commit what you are about to eat, as well as what you will choose not to eat. It makes no difference whether you get your sponsor or an answering machine - it is **your** commitment.
16. If you are visiting others for a holiday dinner, it is up to you to know what is being served and whether it is something that you choose not to eat. Call the host ahead of time. Plan accordingly. People understand others' food limitations. Even people without our disease have foods they don't eat for one reason or another. Volunteer to bring something that is good for you. The host then thinks you are gracious, while you are taking care of yourself!
17. Remember that you are responsible for what you eat. It's easy when sitting with family to slip into old childish roles where you feel you must eat whatever you are given. It's not true. We are adults and are responsible for our own choices. It is up to us to take care of ourselves. It is up to us to set whatever parameters or boundaries we need to set with our families.
18. Gratitude, gratitude, gratitude. There is nothing as good for staying abstinent, particularly during the Thanksgiving season, as focusing on the many things we have, rather than what we do not have. Write gratitude lists frequently.
19. How about writing a little card or note to each person who will be at the Thanksgiving dinner table telling them why you are grateful to know them? Leave it at their dinner place. The focus will quickly get to the real meaning of Thanksgiving rather than on the food.
20. For many of us, the most dangerous period for our abstinence is after we have successfully gone through a difficult occasion. The insanity of our disease subconsciously or consciously tells us to reward ourselves with food because we did so well yesterday. Or, we suffer some type of letdown about the occasion; it didn't meet our expectations. Some of us feel an emptiness after holidays that in the past we have tried to fill with food. For these reasons, plan to go to meetings the next day after the holiday.
21. A holiday is not a crisis. Holidays come every year. They are simply calendar times set aside to honor certain things. We deal with holidays the same way we deal with the rest of the days in the year. You can do it. Relax and work your program the best way you know how.

The OA/HOW group of Bethel United Methodist Church in Fort Worth has updated and revised their Recipe Book. If you would like a copy, please send \$7.00 with your name and address to: Molly Horn • 5329 Locke Ave. • Fort Worth, TX 76107 or email [bethelhow@gmail.com](mailto:bethelhow@gmail.com) for a FREE digital copy.

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

We need your words! Please send newsletter submissions to [bethelhow@gmail.com](mailto:bethelhow@gmail.com)  
All submissions are welcome: journal entries, articles, thoughts for the day, etc.

## 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% to Tri-County Intergroup**  
Billie Stamp  
P.O. Box 14324  
Arlington, TX 76094

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

**10% to Region III**  
Juda Smith  
Region III Treasurer  
10517 Goldenrod Ln.  
Midwest City, OK 74868

**Look for the Treasurer's Report in the December issue of Looking Up.**

The Light of God  
surrounds me.

The Love of God  
enfolds me.

The Power of God  
protects me.

The Presence of God  
watches over me.

Wherever I am, God is  
... and all is well.

*James Dillet Freeman*

Monthly Treasurer's Report  
and Intergroup Meeting  
Minutes are available on the  
Tri-County Website:  
<http://www.oa-tricounty.org>

## AS BILL SEES IT More Than Comfort

When I am feeling depressed, I repeat to myself statements such as these: "Pain is the touchstone of progress." ... "Fear no evil." ... "This, too, will pass." ... "This experience can be turned to benefit."

These fragments of prayer bring far more than mere comfort. They keep me on the track of right acceptance; they break up my compulsive themes of guilt, depression, rebellion and pride; and sometimes they endow me with the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

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### **Resentments - They will kill me if I let them**

Anonymous

How do I recognize resentment? Recognizing my feelings has taken years of program work, therapy, etc. I can recognize:

*A physical change:* I'm frowning, sticking my nose in the air, pursing my lips.

*A change in my thinking:* I'm thinking things like:

"How dare they?"

"If I were doing that..."

"If they only knew what I did."

"It's not fair."

*Changes in my emotions:* I start lashing out at people. I can slide into self-pity. I get angry. I am afraid I am not getting my share.

I believe that resentment is about a child's sense of justice. A child sees things as black and white, right or wrong, good or bad. It's the immature child in me who wants justice and gets resentful when she doesn't get what she sees as "right." This is where "living on life's terms" becomes crucial. That's the point when I surrender to the fact that there is no justice; life is not fair; and I don't get to take home the golden ring. What I get is what is in front of me and I have to deal with it. But I have a choice how to do that. Am I going to stamp my feet and holler, It's not fair! Or am I going to say, "how important is it?" and make the best of a bad situation?

I had a sponsor who encouraged me to thank God at night for both the good and bad things that had happened during the day. I thought she was nuts! But then I started trying to actually do that. Being grateful for situations where I thought I had lost out was a real challenge, but it slowly started to change me inside and I became less and less resentful.

I think the important thing about a resentment is not that I have them, but what do I do with them? When they crop up, I try to talk it out or write it out, or both. Where other people are concerned, I say the sick man prayer on page 67 of the big book (3d ed.). The sick man prayer goes:

"\_\_\_ is a sick person. How can I be helpful to \_\_\_? God, save me from being angry. Your will be done."

I write it out at least 4 times. The resentment/anger flows right out of me onto the paper. Then I can move on and stay out of the food.

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***Cravings are my pride and my selfishness demanding care for myself through food.***

***Gratitude is the hinge upon which an abstinent life swings.***

***We have to change completely when we get abstinent.  
The me who ate compulsively will eat compulsively again.***

Tri-County Website Address  
<http://www.oa-tricounty.org>

If you want to receive the electronic version of this newsletter, please send an email with the subject line "Subscribe" to [bethelhow@gmail.com](mailto:bethelhow@gmail.com)

## 90 TOOLS FOR ABSTINENCE - Part 2

- 46) Cherish your recovery.
  - 47) Dump your garbage regularly - GIGO = Garbage In Garbage Out.
  - 48) Get plenty of "restful" sleep.
  - 49) Stay abstinent for you - not someone else - otherwise it won't work.  
Practice rigorous honesty with yourself and others.
  - 51) Progress is made ONE DAY AT A TIME, not 10 years in one day!
  - 55) Make no major decisions the first year.
  - 56) Get a sponsor and use him/her, (not just selectively share).
  - 57) Know that no matter what your problems, someone's had them before. Don't be afraid to share, as a problem shared is half solved.
  - 58) Strive for progress, not perfection.
  - 59) When in doubt, ask questions. The only stupid question is the one not asked. You weren't afraid to speak before, so why now?
  - 60) Use prayer and meditation...not just pillow talk, get on those knees. Put your shoes under the bed just in case someone's looking.
  - 61) Maintain a balance: spiritual, physical, emotional and mental.
  - 62) Don't use other substances as a maintenance program.
  - 63) Learn to take spot check inventories.
  - 64) Watch out for the RED FLAGS ... things that give excuses for poor behavior and inevitable relapse.
  - 65) Know that it is okay to be human ... just don't binge over it.
  - 66) Be kind to yourself. It's about time, don't you think?
  - 67) Don't take yourself so seriously- take the disease seriously!
  - 68) Know that whatever it is that's causing pain - it shall pass.
  - 69) Don't fall back into the diet mentality - stick to your food plan.
  - 70) Don't give away more than you can afford to; your abstinence comes first and must be the #1 priority. Protect it at all costs.
  - 71) Take down those bricks from the wall around you; you'll be able to see the daylight better. Let people know who you are.
  - 72) Get a home group and attend it regularly.
  - 73) Know that the light at the end of the tunnel is not an oncoming train, but actually a ray of hope. Drop the negativity.
  - 74) Know that you are not alone, that's why the "We" is in the steps.
  - 75) Be willing to go to any lengths to be and stay abstinent.
  - 76) Know that no matter how bleak and dark your past may be, your future is clean, bright and clear if you don't binge today.
  - 77) Stay out of your own way.
  - 78) Don't be in a hurry--remember "TIME = Things I Must Earn."
  - 79) Watch the EGO. "EGO = Ease God Out."
  - 80) Protect your abstinence at all costs. Keep the light on you.
  - 81) Learn to listen, not just hear. Be open-minded and nonjudgmental.  
Know that if your insides match your outsides, everyone looks good.
  - 83) If the rest of the world looks bad, check yourself out first.
  - 84) Gratitude is in the attitude.
  - 85) When all else fails ... PUNT! Up the Number of Meetings.
  - 86) Remember FEAR = FALSE EVIDENCE APPEARING REAL!
  - 87) Remember FINE = Fouled up, Insecure/insane, Neurotic and Emotionally imbalanced...watch the FINE.
  - 88) Handle what you can and leave the rest, don't overtax yourself. You can only accomplish so much in 24 hours.
  - 89) Honesty and consistency are key factors in recovery.
  - 90) Let the little kid in you out - learn how to laugh from the gut.
- \*\*\* Note: this list is not necessarily in order. They are but suggestions and items to put in your little TOOL BAG.

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### ***Twelve Steps to a Better Holiday Season***

1. We admitted the holiday season has a deeper meaning than devouring food.
2. We came to believe a power greater than ourselves could help us see and celebrate the true meaning of the season.
3. We came to believe our Higher Power could help us appreciate the joyfulness of the season as we understand it.
4. We made a searching and thorough examination of our relationship with food during the holidays and other things we enjoy about the season.
5. We admitted to our Higher Power the exact nature of our food habits during holiday seasons past.
6. We became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to remove our attachment to food as a necessity of the holidays.
7. We humbly asked God to remove our desire to partake of holiday treats.
8. We made a list of all persons whose presence makes the holiday season joyful for us and with whom we would like to share our joy.
9. We made plans to spend time with those people whenever possible, except when to do so would remove us from our primary purpose of abstinence.
10. We continued to enjoy the company of friends and family and other nonfood aspects of the season.  
We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our appreciation of the season, praying for knowledge of its meaning and the joy we feel at this time.
12. Having realized that sharing the joy of this season with others far outlasts the fleeting pleasure of food, we gave ourselves the gift of abstinence throughout the holidays and gave others the gift of our full attention and appreciation.

***give thanks   give thanks   give thanks   give thanks   give thanks   give thanks***

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### TRI-COUNTY MEETINGS

<b>MONDAY</b>				
6:45 pm	<b>Fort Worth</b> - Bethel Methodist Church 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76116	HOW	Patrice	(817) 377-0180
7:00 pm	<b>Arlington</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</b> - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Step Study/ Literature	Happy	(817) 370-7207
<b>TUESDAY</b>				
Noon	<b>Fort Worth</b> - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Commitment and Writing	Happy	(817) 370-7207
6:00 pm	<b>Weatherford</b> - All Saints Episcopal Church (white house on corner) 133 S. Waco Street Weatherford, TX 76086	Step Study/ Literature	Richard	(817) 929-5767
7:00 pm	<b>Arlington</b> - Covenant United Methodist Church (west side between Arbrook & Mayfield) 3608 Matlock Road Arlington, TX 76015		Dianne	(817) 980-3013
7:00 pm	<b>North Richland Hills</b> - St. Johns Hall (the center building) between Glenview and North Hills Mall 4101 Frawley Drive North Richland Hills, TX 76180	HOW	Barbara	(817) 284-4258
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>				
12:00 noon	<b>Fort Worth</b> - King of Glory Lutheran Church (Sandy Lane at Brentwood Stair) 1659 Sandy Lane Fort Worth, TX 76112	Literature	Gay	(817) 275-1085
7:00 pm	<b>Arlington</b> - Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013	Literature	Billie	(817) 460-3083
<b>THURSDAY</b>				
6:45 pm	<b>Fort Worth</b> - Bethel Methodist Church 5000 Southwest Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76116	HOW	Patrice	(817) 377-0180
6:30 pm	<b>Cleburne</b> - St. Marks United Methodist 1109 W. Henderson Street Cleburne, TX 76033		Roxy	(817) 641-5020
7:30 pm	<b>Fort Worth</b> - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133		Happy	(817) 370-7207
<b>FRIDAY</b>				
Noon	<b>Arlington</b> - Covenant United Methodist Church (west side between Arbrook & Mayfield) 3608 Matlock Road Arlington, TX 76015		Katie	(682) 438-1851
Noon	<b>Waco</b> - St. Alban's Episcopal Church 305 North 30 <sup>th</sup> Street Waco, TX 76710		Faye	(254) 678-3420
<b>SATURDAY</b>				
9:00 am	<b>Fort Worth</b> - South Hills Christian Church 3200 Bilglade Road Fort Worth, TX 76133	Step Study/ Writing	Happy	(817) 370-7207
10:00 am	<b>Southlake</b> - White's Chapel United Methodist Church Portable building 3B 185 South White's Chapel Blvd. Southlake, TX 76092		Mike	(817) 498-4244
12:00 noon	<b>Arlington</b> - Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley House 3216 West Park Row Drive Arlington, TX 76013		Billie	(817) 460-3083
12:00 noon	<b>Eules</b> - United Memorial Christian Church 1401 N. Main Street Eules, TX 76039	Discussion & Big Book	Rosalie	(817) 355-5070
<b>SUNDAY</b>				
4:00 pm	<b>Arlington</b> - Millwood Hospital (at Randol Mill Rd.) 1011 N. Cooper Street Arlington, TX 76011	Newcomer/ Literature	Rachel	(817) 595-3044
	<b>NEED A MEETING IN GRANBURY?</b> Call Leah, (817) 219-2393			

Revised 10/20/2008