



JANUARY | 2021

# The Abbie

## Central Ontario Intergroup

### Reflections on my first year of abstinence

A year ago, I weighed 200lbs. with waist/hip measurements of 41"/48" respectively. As I celebrate my one year of abstinence today, I have weighed 195lbs with waist/hip measurements of 38"/46" for the last 6 months. Five pounds and a couple of inches may not seem like much but I'm happy to report that I no longer shop in Plus Size stores/departments.

I owe all my progress to my commitment to the OA program and to my Higher Power.

I've heard many times at OA meetings, "that it is not about the food". That has been true for me from the start; i.e. it has never been just about my weight or my physical appearance. It has always been about my emotions and hating – just simply hating – my powerlessness over food.

I have been a successful and intelligent woman in other areas of my life. The fact that I couldn't exercise control over my food drove me completely crazy. I used to run a non-stop, negative self-talk dialogue from morning until night. My self-esteem was non-existent.

These days, that talk is gone. I live most of my time in peace, gratitude and groundedness. I want to reiterate that that is how I live most of my time. I still have occasional days and times where I struggle. I can be frustrated and sad and confused.

The difference now is that no matter what is going on in my life, I continue to work my program. One of the most important aspects of that is mindfulness; i.e. staying in the moment. I pay attention to what is going on and to how I am feeling. If I am fortunate, I will recognize how I am feeling before I do something - or as I am in a situation. Sometimes, I don't realize until afterwards that something didn't feel good and that I wanted to eat over it.

This is where my sponsor has been invaluable. In my conversations with her, she has helped me to identify what is going on and often to go deeper than I would on my own by encouraging me to go deeper by journaling.

I am in my late 60s and have done a lot of personal work and therapy over many years to clean up my life and deal with regrets and unfinished business

and yet, I continue to be amazed at insights that come for me when I journal. How can I still have blind spots? How can there still be things I don't know about myself? I actually find it hilarious that these are often the very things I have shared with someone else because they have touched me so profoundly.

A recent one was an insight I had about my relationship with my only sibling – a younger sister. I recognized at Thanksgiving that I didn't feel good for long periods in her company. I identified that it was because I did not get the "Hallmark Moments" that I thought sisters should have. I put my energy and attention on all the ways my sister didn't love me the way I wanted to be loved. The activities of paying attention, having talks with my sponsor and journaling all revealed to me that I had ignored all the ways my sister did show me she loved me – in her own way. I had dismissed all of that. My relationship has been transformed. Thank you, God.

“Keep coming back. It works if you work it. And you’re worth it” is said at the end of many OA meetings. I have found it to be true. Below is a description of how I work the program.

- When I wake up, I repeat the Serenity Prayer and a prayer for abstinence before I get out of bed
- First thing in the morning, I read OA literature, journal and work on step homework
- Attend meetings at least once a week
- Chair meetings occasionally
- Speak with my sponsor weekly and more often if something comes up Every Sunday morning, I share my step homework with my OA buddy. She is equally committed to this work. We plan to start with Step One again in January
- Call OA members if I think I can share hope or an insight that might help them

- Follow my eating plan and record my food
- Weigh and measure myself once a month
- Perform service by writing this article

Do I do all of this faithfully daily, weekly, monthly? No, I don’t. I am human. Things come up. I get tired or sick or go away on holiday. What’s important to me is that I do it 80% of the time. That is my own personal yardstick of excellence.

Since perfectionism is one of my defects, it doesn’t work for me to strive for 100%. If I strive to be perfect, I feel pressure and stress and never adequate – so what’s the use? “Good enough” has allowed me to relax and to be kind to myself.

I am grateful to OA, to all the people who have helped me and lifted me up when I needed it and to my Higher Power. My ego wants me to think that I have done all of this. OA reminds me that I owe all of my progress –not perfection – to my Higher Power. My wish is that my humble words may give someone hope or inspiration.

“...together we can do what we could never do alone...” from the OA promise.

Lydia S.  
Cobourg ON

## GETTING IN TOUCH

### OA Central Ontario Intergroup Contact Information

OA members are cordially invited to attend the monthly Central Ontario Intergroup meeting, held on the second Saturday of each month from 10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM. The meeting will be held remotely on the Zoom platform.

Central Ontario Intergroup is pleased to announce that we can now accept electronic funds transfers (eTransfer) for literature payments!

To send an eTransfer to COI, set up a new payee using the email address: [coitreasurertoronto@gmail.com](mailto:coitreasurertoronto@gmail.com).

**IMPORTANT:** In the message section of your eTransfer, please describe what the funds are for:

- Literature – date of literature order, who the order is for personal or meeting.

CLICK  [SEVENTH TRADITION](#)



**Mailing Address  
Change**

**Central Ontario Intergroup  
c/o A. Goodale  
108 Waterloo Street  
Waterloo, ON N2J 1X9**

## January 9<sup>th</sup> – COI Planning Day – Everyone is Welcome

We will use part of the January 9<sup>th</sup> Intergroup meeting to decide 2021 priorities to support our Intergroup’s Strategic Plans.

For more information : [January 9th 10am - COI's first ever Planning Day - EVERYONE welcome! — Central Ontario Intergroup \(oaontario.org\)](#)



Watch this short video to learn more about how Overeaters Anonymous can help you recover from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours by following the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA.

[Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous](#)

---

# SPECIAL EVENTS



JOIN US: Finding Your Higher Power  
January Speaker Session  
Saturday, January 17th at 2pm

## Finding Your Higher Power

We were excited to announce our January Speaker Session on *Finding Your Higher Power*. Join our Zoom session on January 17th at 2 pm. The Zoom session link will be placed on the Central Ontario Intergroup website one day prior to the event. No pre-registration is required.

Please view and share the flyer for this event, which can be found by clicking [here!](#)

Any questions, please contact [coiigor@oaontario.org](mailto:coiigor@oaontario.org)  
Intergroup Renewal Committee (IGOR)

## Been Slipping and Sliding?

Take action now with this reading and writing tool

<https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/From-Slip-or-Relapse-to-Recovery.pdf>

---

## 2-day Big Book Workshop January 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>

12 steps to freedom. For more information [Two-Day Big Book Workshop January 9 & 10 — Central Ontario Intergroup \(oaontario.org\)](#)

**Reserve Your Spot:** There are limited spaces available, please [click here to register your spot.](#)

---

## LA Intergroup - OA's 61st Birthday Party - Keys of the Kingdom

Saturday, January 16, 2021 12:00 PM and Sunday, January 17, 2021 11:00 PM

Join the LA Intergroup for fun, laughter and the fellowship you crave. Registration is \$30 USD and is open until January 17th. [Click here](#) to open registration page. Event runs Eastern Standard Time from 12pm until 11pm each day.

---

**For the most up-to-date listings of special events, meeting lists, please go to <https://www.oaontario.org/>**

---

# NUGGETS

Grateful for the start of a new year. For me, it's a time to reflect on what things I want to bring into this new year, what I want to keep doing, and what things I'd like to leave behind. A start/keep/stop review.

Most of my daily practices I will keep, they are my medicine – prayer and meditation, connecting with my HP, sponsor, and others in program, attending meetings, step work, using my OA tools. Some opportunities for being of service, like using the phone to make outreach calls, adding different prayers and literature to my practices that are starts. Some ways of thinking, and defects of character that are not working for me I would like to stop. I've been making progress on these, and see the lessening of them more and more as I continue to practice the opposite.

As we continue to grow in program, there are opportunities to review and refresh – and I encourage everyone to review where they can bring more service into their program, strengthen their connection to their higher power, connect with others in fellowship, bring new practices to welcome newcomers in their meetings. A refresh is a great way to continue to grow and be teachable, recognize where we are, and continue on our path of recovery.

We have 11 months of The Abbie that can reflect our personal stories of recovery. The message should be focused on RECOVERY, be a message of hope for others. There are prompts and guidelines <https://www.oaontario.org/submit-material> please feel free to reach out if you have questions. Don't be concerned about length, I will make it fit.

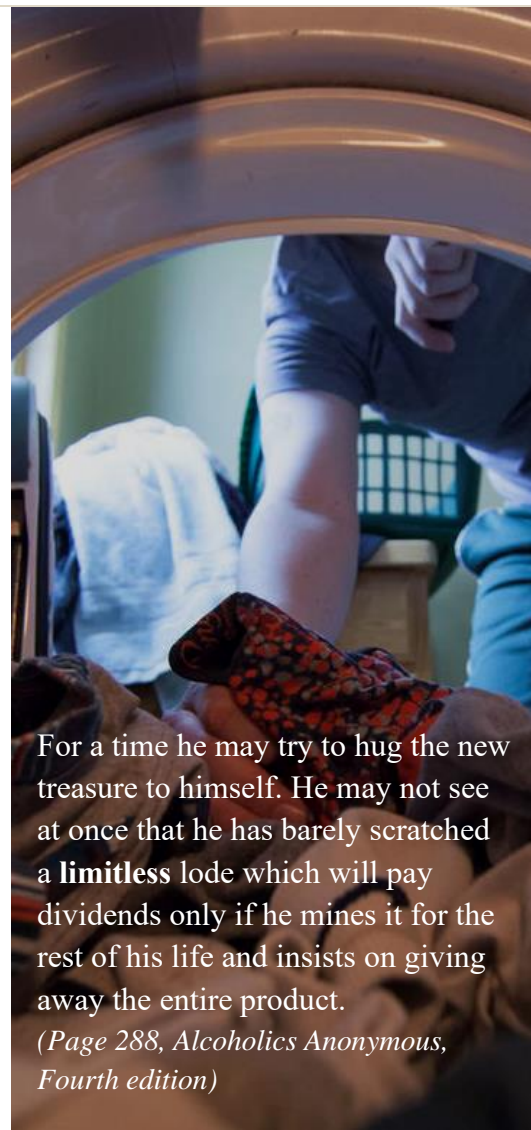
Thank you to everyone who submitted articles this year. When The Abbie does not have a story of recovery to include, the space is left blank, and makes me wonder if this newsletter is valued. The submission that comes in last minute is a sign of hope to me that the newsletter is valued and it's very encouraging.

Rose Marie

## OA Document Library – Did you know ...

You have FREE access to the OA Document Library?

The OA Document Library is an extensive resource at your fingertips! Have a look at A Kid's View of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/a-kids-view-web.pdf>



For a time he may try to hug the new treasure to himself. He may not see at once that he has barely scratched a **limitless** lode which will pay dividends only if he mines it for the rest of his life and insists on giving away the entire product.

*(Page 288, Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth edition)*