

*A monthly newsletter published and distributed by New Hampshire Intergroup.
This newsletter is made possible by your generous contributions.*

Have you ever submitted an article to the Promises Newsletter? This newsletter is yours and NHI welcomes members to submit articles/stories regarding your program/experiences/recovery. What are you waiting for?.

Email your submission to nhipromises@oanewhampshire.org or submit via USPS mail: Promises Newsletter, c/o NHI, PO Box 1363, Derry, NH 03038-6363. The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month.

Meeting List changes

- Please forward any meeting information (New, Closed, changes, etc.) to: nhimeetinglists@oanewhampshire.org AND nhipromises@oanewhampshire.org so the NH meeting list can be updated and the information can be included in the Promises Newsletter.
- It is a meetings' responsibility to notify WSO and newspapers regarding their meeting list info (new, changes, closed).
- If you are searching for a location to schedule a meeting, please consider a location that is handicap accessible
- You can send your meeting info to your local newspaper and ask that your meeting info be listed in the Community Calendar section (free of charge as OA is non-profit)



NH Intergroup Business Meeting

May 7th @ 2PM
Concord, NH

Details: OANewHampshire.org

41st Annual Retreat (An OA 12 Step Journey)
Sponsored by Western Mass IG June 2 – June 4
Genesis Spiritual Life Center, Westfield, Mass.
Info: www.oawmass.org/wordpress/events/wmi-retreat

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Region 6 Convention Oct 20, 3 pm – Oct 22 12:30 pm
Stepping Up For Recovery
Toronto, Canada (Sheraton Parkway North Hotel & Suites) For Info: oaregion6.org/2017/

7th Tradition Donations (February, 2017)

<u>Group Name, Day/Time/#</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Nashua, Mon 7 pm (40655)	\$ 86.46
Nashua, Thu 6:30 am (51426)	\$ 36.60
New Boston, Tue 6 pm	\$ 97.80
Total Donations	\$ 220.86

* Please note *

1. NHI transfers 36% of meeting donations to the Delegates fund for reimbursement of delegates expenses attending the Region 6 and WSO Business Meetings. \$79.51 was transferred for February.
2. NHI donates 5.5% of meeting donations to WSO. \$12.15 was donated to WSO for February.

NHI also donates \$75 per quarter to Region 6

Sponsorship – the following articles are from the Fall 2015 Region 6 Messenger

HOW DOES HAVING A SPONSOR AND/OR BEING A SPONSOR STRENGTHEN YOUR RECOVERY?

The tool of sponsorship has been my lifeline in so many ways. My sponsor sometimes knows me better than I know myself and helps me make connections that I would never have made on my own. She is able to dig things out of me that I didn't know were there, unscramble my emotions that threaten to overwhelm me and sabotage my recovery, and help me put things in perspective. She is that lens that helps me re-focus on what is truly important. Being a sponsor keeps me honest and committed to my program. By sharing my experience and hope, I constantly remind myself that OA is a We program, not a Me program. I cannot do this by myself and need to give it away if I am going to hold on to what my HP has given me. ~Amy R. Greater Rochester Intergroup

Having a sponsor keeps me accountable to a person who is unbiased and not living in my diseased head. As far as my experience goes, helping someone else make healthy food choices is much easier and much more obvious than choosing my own food. Also having a sponsor keeps me
(cont'd)

from being stagnant. My sponsor gives me structure and shows me the way through sharing her own experience. It allows me to learn to trust and rely on the program more than my own thinking.

Sponsoring other people has helped me have a stronger program because I am constantly having to review my own program when I am making recommendations to my sponsees. I feel more responsible to go to my meetings and to stick with my disciplines. Relapse is less appealing when you have others relying on your abstinence. ~Jackee

My first sponsor seemed to be at peace. She glowed with kindness and health. She didn't ever give orders but she was also pretty matter-of-fact about why she did what she did. She made me feel like recovery was possible for me. So I took her suggestions, even the one about raising my hand to sponsor once I had about a month of abstinence, even though I was pretty sure I wasn't qualified to be a sponsor. She differed. I did as she suggested because she'd never steered me wrong. Twenty-five years later, I don't think she's still in OA. I can think of at least five past sponsors who are no longer in OA.... but because of their loving guidance, I am. And I know that the kind, nurturing, honest (sometimes VERY honest) support of all these women strengthened the flame of desire for recovery in me. My recovery has never depended on my sponsor, and I don't take responsibility for my sponsees' abstinence, either. But I don't know how I would ever have kept my own abstinence if it weren't for sponsoring and being sponsored. It's one thing to tell my sponsor that I'm going to do something, but if I tell my sponsee I'm going to a meeting, or that I'm going to text them photos of my meals while I'm traveling, or that I need to strengthen my Tenth Step practice, I know I will. I have enough of an ego that I can't bear the thought of not walking my talk, or that I will have to admit I didn't keep to my intention! At 6:15 every weekday, my eyes open when my first sponsee call comes in, and for fifteen minutes I will focus on the solution found in OA. What a great way to start the day, to counter the hamster wheel of negative projection that is my habitual mental state! Then I pray and meditate for thirty minutes, then another call. With some sponsees we read and discuss literature, with some we talk only once a week or so as I guide them through the Twelve Steps. I pray that they find what I've found. Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't; sometimes they find it with someone else. I'm not the right sponsor for everyone. But I've learned how to listen to them, and also how to listen to me - when my tone is harsh or impatient, I've learned to apologize and make amends. I've learned that I am not a mother, doctor, therapist, guru, marriage counselor, or boss. We are not necessarily social friends, either. We don't have to be. What I do have to be is honest about my experience - I cannot share what I do not have. Having a sponsor and being a sponsor has "grewed me up," as a dear OA friend says, and has provided practical, daily support for a life of sane and happy - abstinent - usefulness, one day at a time. ~Anonymous

My HP found a way to connect with me

On my vacation a few weeks ago I was able to read the autobiography of my favorite singer. I've been a fan for over 30 years, mainly because his lyrics about love, hope and faith resonate so much with me. I found that his book resonated with me as well. Being raised in a dysfunctional

family, he writes about growing up with a father who suffered from schizophrenia. Like many of us who grew up amongst chaos, he had to develop coping strategies that enabled him to survive that life. As he grew older he discovered that those coping strategies no longer served him and, in fact, became a detriment to him finding peace and happiness. He writes about how he realized that, while he developed those coping strategies to save his life, he eventually outlived their usefulness. He recalls how he relied on these defenses to isolate and alienate himself from others. He talks about using them as a tool to try to control others and as a way to contain his emotions.

As I read the book I felt as if he were talking about me. Although I did not become a compulsive overeater until I was an adult, as a child I did develop certain coping skills and defenses that saved my life. These skills included things like learning how not to "rock the boat" or get anybody angry, how to stuff my emotions and how to please others so that everyone would like me. Until I came into program, I never realized how damaging these once lifesaving defenses had become. As I grew older it became harder and harder to contain my emotions and more difficult to control everyone and everything in my life. When faced with tragedy, instead of reaching out to others I isolated myself from friends and family. I soon realized that food was a "quick fix" to make me feel better. However, as those who have found their way to this program know, food is not the solution but rather the symptom. I truly was restless, irritable and discontent and binge eating only made things worse. After being in program for 3 years I continue to struggle to let go of these defenses which have now become character defects.

In another part of the book he writes about how we all carry the mistakes and burdens of our past, but if we can shine a light on them they don't have to define our future. Again I felt connected to what I was reading. This is exactly what we do in working the Steps of OA. We take stock of our burdens and mistakes, admit them to ourselves, our HP and another human being and we make our amends. We do these things in an effort to shine a light on them, clean up our side of the street, and let go of the wreckage of the past that keeps us from becoming who we are meant to be. My greatest road block in working this program has been my fear of putting all of my trust into a higher power. I know it works, I see people in recovery, I believe in the Big Book Promises, yet I continue to struggle with this concept. However, someone or something wanted me to read that book. S/he wanted me to see how an artist whom I respect and admire so much also struggled along the way. S/he wanted me to understand that, just as my favorite artist had to take a risk and stop relying on those once lifesaving now life destroying defenses, so do I. The message is loud and clear. I have to change, to stop doing what I've always done and turn my will and my life over to something greater than myself if I want to have a better life than the one I am currently living.

I have so much to be grateful for in this the program. I am thankful to my sponsor and my fellow OAs for sharing their experience, strength and hope with me every day. And I am thankful to my HP who, even though I'm not always sure s/he exists, continues to send me the messages that I need to hear. I am going to choose to keep listening.
Submitted by, Lynn Hudson, NH