



December 2018

Volume 13, Issue 12

"The degree of my anxiety is a measure of my distance from God."

Anxiety used to be the master of my life. Without a relationship with God, I faced life alone and was in constant fear of not getting my needs met or of losing something I had so desperately fought to get. The past was a constant source of regret and shame, and the future was filled with countless unknown dangers that would surely overwhelm me. All of this made the present intolerable.

When I entered recovery, I brought my constant obsession with the past and the future into the rooms with me. Thankfully, my sponsor taught me about living one day at a time, and showed me that this was where I would find God – today, right here, right now. She told me that if I could get present, and thus be in the presence of God, my anxiety would go away.

This is simple advice, but not easy to follow. The more I worked at practicing it, though, the more I found it to be true. Over the years, I've discovered that the more I use the tools of the program – prayer and meditation, pausing and asking God for guidance, and acknowledging in the moment that God is here – the more I find myself in the peace and serenity of God's presence. Today, I use the degree of my anxiety to measure my distance from God.

-Mike Z.

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NEXT PTI MEETING:

Friday, December 21st - 6:30 PM

**Overeaters Anonymous
Pinellas Traditions Intergroup
P.O. Box 16582
Clearwater, FL 33766
www.oapinellas.org**

The opinions expressed in this newsletter reflect those of the writer and do not represent OA as a whole. Serve your group by sharing your experience, strength and hope in the newsletter. Please submit your article by the 15th day of the previous month for publication in the next month's newsletter.

Please send to: newsletter@oapinellas.org

Step 12

Having had a spiritual awaking as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Tradition 12

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



The dog bark but the caravan moves on.

-Arabic proverb

Complaints: I have a lot of them – the ice is too cold, the sun is too hot, the rocks are too sharp. There is not much I can do about any of it, so why complain? Chronic complaining is a useless practice that destroys self-acceptance and self-reliance. Complaining about things I dislike in my life increases my dissatisfaction. Instead of buttonholing all who will listen, I can ask myself, “Is there anything I can do to help myself with this?”

Yes, there is: I can practice the twelve-step program, as written. Complaining about my faults or the lack in my life is folly; it is time wasted that might be better put to use in self-caring and acceptance.

For Today: There is no need to complain about personal characteristics or other aspects of my life I do not like. Instead of complaining, I can do two things: pick up the steps where I left off, and pray for the removal of this defect.

“For Today” p. 239



Concept 12

The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:

- a. no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power.
- b. sufficient operating funds, plus ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle.
- c. no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority.
- d. all important decisions shall be reached by discussions, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.
- e. no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy.
- f. no OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain

My Service to Overeaters Anonymous

Hi my name is Linda and I am a grateful compulsive overeater. That's how I introduce myself. Grateful, you might ask? When I first heard that expression I was not in the program long. I thought, what is there to be grateful for? I have lost all my friends (food), my lover (food) and all of my comforting mechanisms (food). I did say food was my friend, so I thought.

Today, when I look back at my journey of 29 years in O.A. I see how food became my enemy. In reality, my disease wanted me dead! I learned all this while attending meetings. People shared their experience, strength, and hope with me. I was open and teachable. I learned from them.

One important lesson I learned was to give back what was so freely given to me. What is that you might ask? Service is the answer. As Step 12 states: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs." Service is the principle of Step 12.

Carrying the message takes on different forms of service. When I first came into program I did service at the group level, things like carrying the key to open a meeting, put out literature, group treasurer, group secretary for recording our group conscience meetings, putting out chairs, making coffee (yes we had 2 hour meetings and we made coffee) and clean up. Oh yes let's not forget getting to a meeting and sponsoring, that counts as service too. I was happy to do what I could do for the meetings I went to. It gave me a sense of belonging. I was doing my part.

When I came to Florida, my new sponsor invited me to come to Intergroup. I had no idea what that was. She told me it was service above the group level for our county. I went and checked it out. The Intergroup needed an acting secretary; I thought I could do that, so I volunteered until there was an election. Then I got elected into the position. I volunteered for different service positions when needed, and rotated out as suggested. As a matter of fact I was in all of them. Again, I felt a sense of belonging. It was fun to plan workshops, marathons, retreats and even hosting our Region 8 Business Assembly and Convention.



I loved working with all the members. I felt I was giving back to what was so freely given to me. I became a Region representative for my Intergroup and that's when my Region service began. I sat on the Twelfth Step Within (TSW) committee and helped create beneficial subcommittees that are still in use. I was then elected TSW funded chair. While in this position there was a call for nominations to be Region 8 Trustee. I had no aspirations to be a trustee, wasn't even on my radar. I remember our parliamentarian at the time nominated me. What was he thinking!!!!???

In that moment my mind raced. OMG, should I accept? Should I decline? One thing that came back to me was one sponsor telling me, never say no to service if it's at all possible so I said, "Yes!" Then it hit me, I don't know the first thing about being a trustee!

That's when my program kicked in and a quote from a friend, "God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called." I thought I'm open and I can learn. I put my application in and the rest is history.

Service is the best form of recovery for me. It keeps me in the program. I sponsor, I have a sponsor, I go to meetings and still volunteer at the group level. When you're a trustee that's all you can do, you have to give up all other positions.

Service also helps Overeaters Anonymous stay alive. We are a volunteer organization. O.A. depends on our members to take on service positions, make 7th Tradition donations, anything to keep O.A. going.

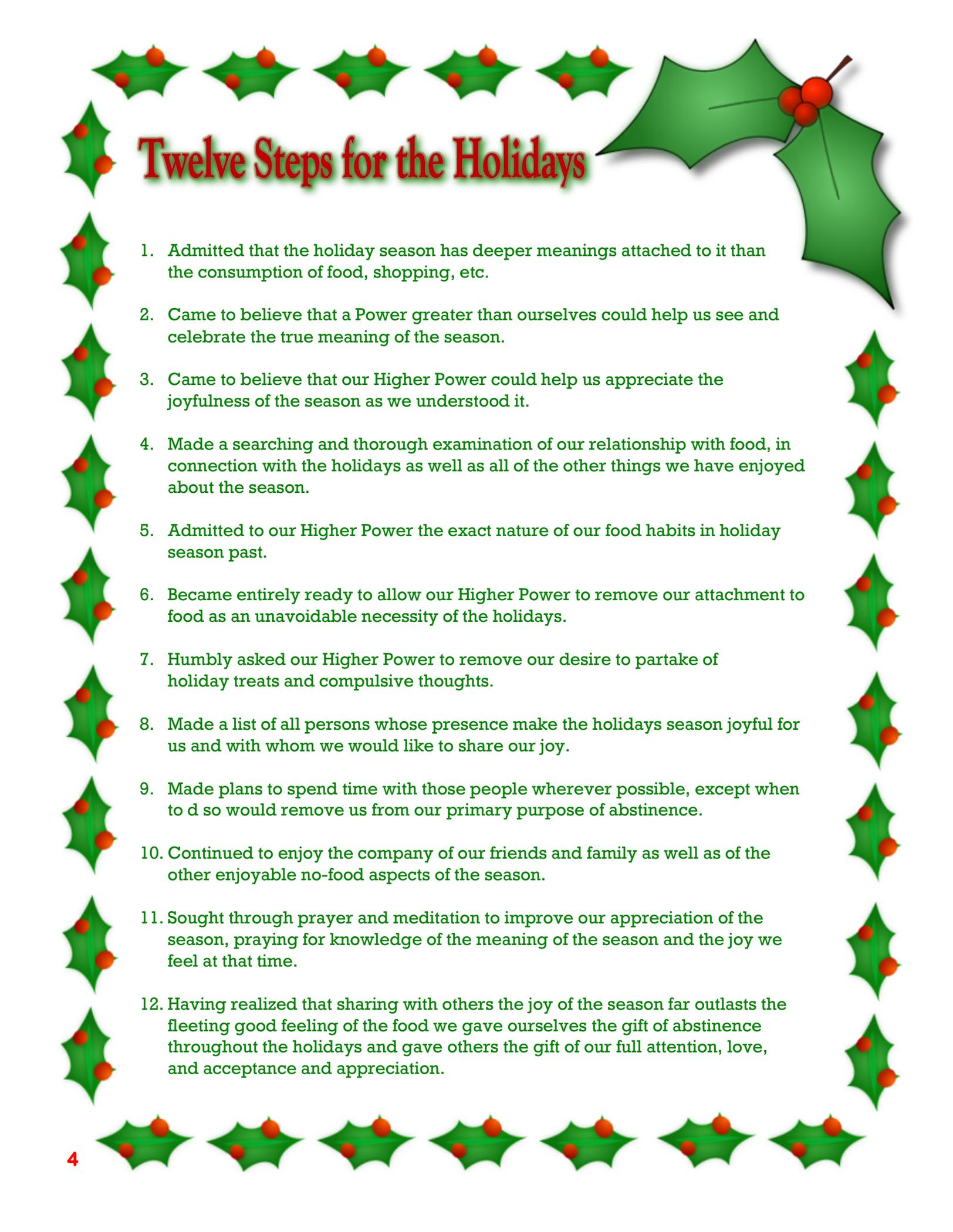
I know for myself in the beginning meetings kept me going. Today my service work and meeting members is so important to my recovery. I want this program to be around for a long time for people who need us.

As I'm writing this I'm in NY -- my home town. I have already done some service here by volunteering to be a speaker at a meeting. What a pleasure to travel the road of recovery anywhere I go. My program is portable!

If you're sitting in a meeting, and they need volunteers, try some service. Hey, you never know. You, too, could be Trustee one day! LOL

Hugs,
Linda





Twelve Steps for the Holidays

1. Admitted that the holiday season has deeper meanings attached to it than the consumption of food, shopping, etc.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could help us see and celebrate the true meaning of the season.
3. Came to believe that our Higher Power could help us appreciate the joyfulness of the season as we understood it.
4. Made a searching and thorough examination of our relationship with food, in connection with the holidays as well as all of the other things we have enjoyed about the season.
5. Admitted to our Higher Power the exact nature of our food habits in holiday season past.
6. Became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to remove our attachment to food as an unavoidable necessity of the holidays.
7. Humbly asked our Higher Power to remove our desire to partake of holiday treats and compulsive thoughts.
8. Made a list of all persons whose presence make the holidays season joyful for us and with whom we would like to share our joy.
9. Made plans to spend time with those people wherever possible, except when to do so would remove us from our primary purpose of abstinence.
10. Continued to enjoy the company of our friends and family as well as of the other enjoyable no-food aspects of the season.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our appreciation of the season, praying for knowledge of the meaning of the season and the joy we feel at that time.
12. Having realized that sharing with others the joy of the season far outlasts the fleeting good feeling of the food we gave ourselves the gift of abstinence throughout the holidays and gave others the gift of our full attention, love, and acceptance and appreciation.

“ You are only as sick as your secrets. ”

When I first entered the program, I was filled with guilt and shame over some of the things I had done. When I sat in meetings and heard others share openly about some of their past behaviors, I was shocked by how honest they were. Even more baffling was how they and everyone else could laugh at their very own dark secrets. I didn't know it then, but this was the beginning of hope and recovery for me.

“You are only as sick as your secrets,” was a phrase I heard early on in the program. At first there were things I swore I would never and could never reveal. After hundreds of meeting thought the openness, forgiveness and recovery of others created the safe place I needed to come clean. As I began to uncover, discover, discard those parts of myself I was ashamed of I experienced the freedom and forgiveness I needed to fully recover.

As I completed my fourth and ninth steps and cleared away the wreckage of my past, I was reborn into a new man who is sober and recovered. Now I can laugh at myself, along with others, over some of the things I used to do. Moreover, I realize how the shame I felt about my dark past is the very key I need to help connect with and help heal other. Today, I use the tenth step to help guard against keeping secrets, and to stay free of shame, so that I can be available to work with others.

Mike Z.



After doing the newsletter for many years, it is past time for me to step down and let someone else take up the commitment and do the service to fill this position. I have enjoyed doing the newsletter and it has helped me but I find myself involved with other aspects in my life that require me to move on from this endeavor. Hopefully, someone will find it in their heart to take up this service if it is meant to be.

Good luck to you all and many blessings in the new year!

In Love and Service,
Joan R.



Please refer to oapinellas.org for the latest available
Pinellas Traditions Intergroup meeting minutes
and treasurer's reports.

PINELLAS MEETINGS ... WE NEED YOU!!!

IS YOUR GROUP REPRESENTED?

Your attendance at the Intergroup meeting is very important to the health and well-being of the Pinellas Traditions Intergroup. It is also an invaluable form of service.

Intergroup reps have the opportunity to share information about their group, learn what other groups are doing, and make new friends. This helps us all stay connected.

Please make every effort to do your part in keeping OA strong and vibrant. We meet the third Friday of every month. Please join us!

Morton Plant Hospital
1st Floor – Tuttle D Auditorium
300 Pinellas St. / Off Harrison
Clearwater, FL 33756



NEW TO OA?

Would you like to know what's happening in OA locally? Please visit our website and complete a request form to join our mailing list.

Go to <http://oapinellas.org> and look on the right side as you scroll down the main page.



Abstinence in Action "Adventure" Fellowship

December 25th [10AM]

Christmas Day OA Meeting
See calendar on OAPinellas.org

Clearwater, FL

February 22nd - 24th

Florida State Convention
*See calendar on OAPinellas.org
to download registration flyer*

Cocoa Beach, FL

ALL upcoming event flyers may be found on our PTI website ... <https://oapinellas.org/pti-calendar>

Happy Holidays!

Pinellas Traditions Intergroup - 7th Tradition

The 7th Tradition states, "Every OA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions."

Available online, local OA groups and members can send a contribution using a secure site via PTI's PayPal page.

Please click the below PayPal button on the bottom right or you may visit our website at <http://oapinellas.org/donations> to send in a donation today.

Your donation is very much appreciated!!!

Donate now with..

PayPalTM

Christmas Day OA Meeting



Tuesday - December 25, 2018



10:00 AM

**Central Church of Christ
1454 Belleair Rd.
Clearwater, FL**



PINELLAS COUNTY MEETING LIST

December 2018

DAY	TIME	MEETING NAME	MEETING TYPE / NOTES	LOCATION	CONTACT
Mon	10:15 AM OA#46182	Just For Today ^^	Big Book / 12 & 12	Lutheran Church of the Resurrection 1555 Windmill Pt Rd., Palm Harbor	Mary Ellen (727) 781-2597 Joan (727) 785-9208
Mon	12:00 PM OA#48303	Voices of Recovery (Candlelight Meeting)	Voices of Recovery Discussion	Unity of St. Petersburg 6168 First Ave. N, St. Pete	Ann G. (212) 399-7099
Mon	7:00 PM OA#47788	Focus on Abstinence ^^	Speaker Meeting Speaker Abstinent 90+ Days	Central Church of Christ 1454 Belleair Rd., Clearwater <i>(NW of Belleair Rd. & Highland – entrance on Belleair)</i>	Mary T. (727) 593-4758 Mardie (727) 501-3949
Mon	7:00 PM OA#01530	Search Out Serenity "SOS"	Leader / Discussion Jackson Street entrance	St. Anthony's Hospital, Classroom D 1200 7th Ave. N., St. Petersburg <i>(Jackson Street entrance)</i>	Cynthia (561) 254-3642
Tues	10:00 AM OA#54726	Abstinence NEEDS SUPPORT	Daily Readings Open Discussion	REBOS Center 5639 54 th Ave. N., Kenneth City	Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Tues	7:00 PM OA#54697	Living In Today	Step/Lifeline/Daily Reader/ BB/Leader's Choice	Northwood Presbyterian Church – Rm #4 2875 State Road 580, Clearwater	Lee (727) 480-4821
Tues	7:00 PM OA#54346	The Mile Stretch Meeting NEEDS SUPPORT	Literature Meeting	St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church 4843 Mile Stretch Rd., Holiday	Chris (727) 688-9823 Judy L. (727) 457-1053 Jeanne A. (727) 494-7994
Wed	6:45 PM OA#10359	Madeira Beach Beach Bunch NEEDS SUPPORT	Open Discussion	<i>On the beach in front of the snack shack</i> 15100 Gulf Blvd., Madeira Beach <i>(Bring a chair)</i>	Linda H. (727) 647-8280 Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Thur	10:30 AM OA#53015	Hope NEEDS SUPPORT	All Literature	Aldersgate Methodist Church 9501 Starkey Rd., Seminole <i>(Back of church near the office)</i>	Lynn E. (901) 830-1092
Thur	11:00 AM OA#40873	Key to Freedom	Big Book Meeting	First Presbyterian Church 455 Scotland St., Dunedin <i>(Downtown Dunedin)</i>	Laurie (727) 517-4137
Thur	5:30 PM OA#49784	Steps to Freedom **	Focusing on Recovery through the Steps and Traditions - 90 Days	St. Cecelia's Church, Room A 820 Jasmine Way, Clearwater	Mary Mc. (727) 319-4321 Mary T. (727) 593-4758
Thur	7:00 PM OA#46183	First Fellowship	1-Step/ 2-Speaker/ 3-Lit/ 4-Big Book/5-Lifeline	Palm Harbor Presbyterian Church 2021 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor	Beth P. (813) 486-9324
Fri	6:45 AM OA#54674	Fresh Start	Voices of Recovery For Today	Central Church of Christ 1454 Belleair Rd., Clearwater <i>(NW of Belleair Rd. & Highland – entrance on Belleair)</i>	Phil L. (727) 754-0131
Fri	12:00 PM OA#52863	Message Carriers	Open Discussion	Metro Center 3251 Third Ave. N., St. Petersburg <i>NEW entrance on west side of building (closest to 34th Street)</i>	Ellen L. (727) 381-8043
Fri	6:00 PM OA#49602	Nitty Gritty	Big Book	Unity of St. Petersburg 6168 First Ave. N, St. Pete	Cora L. (813) 956-4642
Fri	6:30 PM OA#09412	Pinellas Tradition Intergroup Meeting	Third Friday Only All OA's welcome	Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor Tuttle D Auditorium, Clearwater	JC D. (813) 240-8572
Sat	7:00 AM OA#36776	Great Reality NEEDS SUPPORT	Beginners	St. Giles Episcopal Church 8271 52nd St. N., Pinellas Park	Donna D. (727) 480-0865
Sat	10:00 AM OA#45426	First Fellowship	Step/Tradition Meeting	Palm Harbor Presbyterian Church 2021 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor	Pat (727) 784-3375
Sat	10:30 AM OA#27235	Saturday Serenity ^^	Big Book	First Lutheran Church 1644 Nursery Rd, Clearwater	Cora L. (813) 956-4642
Sat	10:30 AM OA#17950	Pasco Pioneers	1-Step/ 2-Big Book/ 3-Leader's Choice/ 4-Traditions/5-Brown Book	Unity of Port Richey 5844 Pine Hill Rd., Port Richey	Betty N. (727) 505-4562
Sat	12:30 PM OA#52497	Oldsmar Men's Group **	Men's Meeting	Community United Methodist Church 207 Buckingham Ave., Oldsmar	Lee (727) 480-4821
Sun	6:00 PM OA#32923	Clearwater Oasis **	Big Book (90 Days)	Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor Tuttle A Auditorium, Clearwater	Chrissy (813) 377-5332 Michelle (314) 378-9391
Sun	6:30 PM OA#49012	Beginner's Meeting Step Study	Beginners/Step Study	Gulfport Neighborhood Center 1617 49th St. S., Gulfport	Judy C. (201) 259-3924

PLEASE NOTE: All meetings are open meetings unless indicated otherwise. **Closed Meetings (OA members only) ^^Children welcome

If this is your first time attending a meeting listed, please be sure to call to clarify directions and meeting specifics.

Pinellas Traditions Intergroup meets the 3rd Friday of each month: 6:30PM - Morton Plant Hospital, 1st Floor – Tuttle Auditorium

OA World Service Telephone: 505-891-2664 Website: <http://www.oa.org> To find telephone or online meetings,

please go to: <https://www.oa.org/find-a-meeting> Pinellas Traditions Intergroup Website: <http://oapinellas.org>

Hotline #'s – Hillsborough & Pinellas: (813) 254-4190

REVISED: October 2018