

🌐 Is Language a Barrier for you or someone you know? 🌐

Reading OA literature daily is a helpful tool for recovery. If English is not your first language, however, this can be a big challenge! You can see what OA books and pamphlets have been translated (and into what languages!) here:

<https://oa.org/files/pdf/Translated-OA-Recovery-Materials-2016.pdf>

If you would like to purchase OA materials in a language other than English, please contact our Intergroup Literature Coordinator, Mellissa, to make arrangements. Mellissa is at serenitybabe@gmail.com or 778.233.4544.



This is the Canadian contribution to the **OA Region 1 quilt raffle for 2017!** The Sea to Sky intergroup made the 2nd quilt block on the left. Thank you to Betty-Lou of SoulFood on 5 (Richmond) for organizing! **If you'd like to see the other quilts or to purchase tickets,** go to www.oaregion1.org and the links for the Convention, then Quilt Raffle. Tickets are \$1 or 6 for \$5. The draw is October 15th. Good luck!

SPONSOR? SPONSEE? WANT TO BE?

Faye D writes: I could not have found better words to express my experience with being a sponsor that those written by Susie T. of Frederick, Maryland. In "A Wonderful Boost" she writes:

Sponsoring others in Overeaters Anonymous has been a blessing in my recovery. I am learning to be humble and say "I don't know" and "let me get back to you" when a sponsee asks me something I don't have an answer to.

My sponsees keep my head in recovery by staying in touch with me through phone calls, emails, text messages and social networks. It's difficult for me to forget I have a program when I have a sponsee reminding me. As they work their Steps, I rework my Steps with them. I am reminded of the Nine Tools of Recovery when I suggest they use them. I am developing a network of love and support via my sponsees.

If you haven't started sponsoring I suggest you start. It can be a wonderful boost to your recovery. Remember we can't do this alone. We have to give it away to keep it. (Lifeline, March 2015)

You do not have to wait until "you know it all" to be a sponsor. If you ever get to that happy state of being all knowing, you might want to question your concept of humility! More sponsors are needed in our Sea to Sky meetings. Virtual (phone & email) sponsors are also needed in Region 1 (www.oaregion1.org). **If you take the plunge, you will gain so much more than you imagine!** To learn more about sponsorship, be sure to attend the **sponsorship workshop on Saturday, September 23rd from 1 pm until 4 pm at Ladner United Church.** - Submitted by Faye D, Langley, BC.

STEP 4 AND NOTES ON COURAGE

Most days we only can see as far as we have the courage to look. Step 4 asks us to make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. The underlying spiritual principle is courage.

Many of us who have a slipping and sliding kind of abstinence may have plenty of courage to do our Step 4 but then we falter. We struggle to find the courage to do the daily work we need to do with those character defects, those emotions, that cause us to binge, to purge, to overeat, and to have compulsive food behaviours. Or our courage to do this work is not sustained.

How committed have you been to working on your character defects? The angers? Resentments? Fears? Basically, all the icky emotions we would rather avoid. **You know, all the feelings we used to numb or silence by abusing food.**

Addicts as a group generally do not have a good vocabulary or working skill set for emotions. Until we develop those skills, working through our Step 4 emotional baggage, we are white knuckling our recovery to at least some degree.

White knuckling is the idea that you are holding on so tight the blood flow is restricted in your hands and your knuckles go white. It is also the idea that you are hanging on until the end of the ride - just using pure willpower to stay sober but expected to crash eventually. **Have you (mostly) given up addictive substance(s) or behaviours but you are carrying on in your life in the same old ways, much as you always have?** It's a kind of courage, but it is not true recovery. There is none of the surrender we learn about in Steps 1, 2 and 3. And so Big Book's Promises (pp.83-84) haven't come true (yet).

If we don't learn to work with our emotions, we do not learn what courage in action actually means. We do not protect ourselves from emotional chaos. If anything, we are simply postponing the day we get overwhelmed and binge.

If I am not consistent and dedicated in feeling my emotions, learning to live with them, how to interact positively with emotional energy, and be in relationship with others without my defects getting in the way, I will fall. I cannot trust my "I don't wannas" to protect me. The "I don't want to feel sad." I don't wanna feel mad. I don't want to express my fear, my sadness, my resentments. These "don't wannas" are a recipe for a binge.

Ask yourself, have I been resistant to doing the work of dealing with my emotions which I need to do to ensure my recovery from food addiction? Are you slipping and sliding in your abstinence? Well...

White knuckling is being dishonest with ourselves. **Unless we deal with the underlying emotions that cause us to get upset and overwhelmed, we are not dealing honestly with the cause of our addictive behaviours.** A white-knuckle kind of abstinence isn't true abstinence – it is not full surrender. Instead, we rely on human will power (which inevitably fails). Someone with white-knuckling recovery is more at risk for relapse, depression, or for developing other addictions.

Recovery means building a new and better life away from substance abuse. This takes a lot of effort. **If the emotional work of recovery is incomplete, we have a low tolerance for any type of irritation.** Everyday ups and downs in life are a real challenge without the numbing out of addiction. Instead of enjoying the freedom and promises of recovery, we just muddle through.

It takes courage to retake your inventory daily with the view to look at every evasion, every "I don't wanna", "not now", "it's too hard." Watch your behaviours closely. Are you inconsistent in your abstinence? Can you talk a good 12 step recovery but cannot (or will not) consistently practice good recovery habits? Are you restless? Irritable? Discontent? Do you lash out at people close to you? Do you flirt around the edges of situations you know could get you in to the food?

If so, your recovery is a work in progress. A white knuckling. You could go either way – back into active addiction or you could grow. **Giving up the addictive substances / behaviours is only the start. It gets you clear enough to look at the mess of everything else. But you need some impetus to grow more.**

Let this be a call to courage! Are you cleaning up your side of the street emotionally? Or are you simply abstaining from the worst of the addiction and rearranging the emotional deckchairs on the deck of your personal Titanic? Courage, friends. It is not too late to build a better life. – Jennifer S, North Vancouver