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# Oasis

Fall 2021

[www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org)

Infoline:  
973.746.8787

## My Plan of Action has been a Blessing

When World Service announced that Action Plan would be a new tool, while I was initially pleased, I realized that I had been using an Action Plan, combined with my food plan for quite some time to aid in my recovery. I took every opportunity at meetings to share on my "favorite tool" for with an action plan I have purpose, structure, peace and happiness in my life. Granted there are days that I cannot adhere fully to the plan but having it has been a blessing.

I start my day by thanking my Higher Power for the opportunity to be of service and to express my gratitude. When I call my sponsor, I text my food plan for the day as well as sharing my plans for the day. Limiting my "to do" list to 5 items ensures that I will not be overwhelmed. When possible, I also provide for myself times for the events and meals. This helps me keep a balance placing food in its proper place while also insuring, on those more difficult days, that another meal is coming!! The Big Book promises that I will have a life of sane and happy usefulness but that only occurs when I am working the steps and the tools. I often refer back to my action plan throughout the day. While at times I see my actions as obsessive, I am grateful that I am using this compulsive behavior in a positive way to aid in my recovery.

—Susan L., NJ



## Action Plan for Procrastination

When I began in program 13 years ago, Action Plan was not one of our tools. However, since it's been added, my program and my life have become more balanced and manageable, and therefore serene. I am a "do-er" but I am also a die-hard procrastinator. I may put items

on my To Do list, but if I can't see how to get it done, I may not even start. The longview overwhelms me. That's why an Action Plan is critical for me.

I was struck by the definition: "the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions, both daily and long-term." What a concept. If I break down a task into smaller pieces, it becomes attainable. Just like driving a car at night, the headlights only show 300 feet ahead but as long as I keep moving, the lights will guide me to my destination. Every day, I commit to my sponsor at least 3 actions I will take toward my goals. It may be a small action but it moves my life forward. It is a commitment to my program, my recovery, and my daily life. My action plan gets me through the day, just like my food plan.

— Fran S, Teaneck

## Planning Means a Happy, Sane Life

I came into program thinking that if I just lost weight my life would be perfect. My whole life revolved around food, how to get it, how to lose weight, and how to get the weight off. Seventeen years later I am still amazed at how different my life is since entering program. The actions I take today help me live a happy and sane life. I do not have to concentrate on the food anymore. I love having an action plan because I did not take care of myself before entering program. The main action I take today is to keep in conscious contact with my Higher Power. I also work the steps and tools of Overeaters Anonymous, make sure I have my food ready every day, take my medicine and vitamins, go to doctors regularly, and rest when my body is telling me to. Every day I feel so blessed to be in program!

— Shari, Saddle Brook

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER

#### Serenity Prayer Workshop

Sun. Sept 26 at 12:30pm-2:30pm

#### Back-to-Basics Big Book Study

Sundays 9/26 to 10/31, 9:00am-10:30am

### OCTOBER

#### Region 7 Assembly Oct 1-3, 2021

NJIOA Intergroup Mtg Thurs. Oct 14, 7:30pm

Firelight Meeting Sat Oct 16, 8:00pm

### NOVEMBER

#### Region 7 Convention Nov 5-7, 2021

NJIOA Intergroup Mtg Thurs. Nov 11, 7:30pm

IDEA Day Sun Nov 21, 10:00am-12:00pm

### DECEMBER

NJIOA Intergroup Mtg Thurs. Dec 9, 7:30pm

12th Step Within Workshop Dec 12, 2:00-4:00pm

### SAVE THE DATE

StarLake Annual Retreat—"ZOOM INTO ACTION"

Sat & Sun Jan 22-23, 2022

All events are virtual and held on ZOOM  
All times shown are Eastern Time ET  
See website for event details and ZOOM links.

## How I Use The Action Plan

All of this activity is so much less time-consuming than obsessing over when I can get my next fix, what it will be, and then hating myself during and after doing it. In chronological order, my daily action plan involves 22 minutes /4,200 meters of indoor rowing; reading a brief 12-step piece of literature; writing about it for myself and my sponsor in the following format—In the past 24 hours, have I been kind and loving toward all? Which character defects or shortcomings did I display, if any; including the excerpt of the reading that spoke to me; and writing to God, my Higher Power, in a thank-you only format based on the excerpt, rather than asking God for things. Then I call my sponsor and read my writing aloud to her; we discuss it along with any challenges I've been having with food -- amounts or types.

My daily action plan also includes three meals a day with nothing in between other than water. I don't even lick my fingers while preparing food, as that's a slippery slope. My meals include no sugar, other than from a half a tomato or a cup of berries or 20 cherries or a pear, apple, peach or nectarine and no flour, other than occasional chickpea or lentil flour (like once monthly at most). Eating restaurant-cooked food is relatively rare because I don't like not being able to control what the restaurant puts in it. I say a blessing in gratitude to God whenever I put any food in my mouth to stay conscious of my eating. I also receive calls from two sponsees in the evenings, who read me their writing and with whom I have conversations about what they've read and their food amounts and choices as needed.

At my three meetings a week, I take my turn leading them, and I qualify with my story when asked. I share for up to three minutes at every meeting, including my experience, strength, and hope. I give service by leading a committee at the regional level of OA. And while my fitness and exercise has not been fully consistent over three decades, the rest has been. I'm in my best version of recovery when I'm exercising daily. I've



been abstinent from all forms of sugar, except the ones in the fruits, for 31+ years so far, one day at a time. I aspire to add meditation and a daily practice of further writing to my action plan, and for today, I accept myself as I am, at my current stage of recovery. —*Sarah S., Memphis*

## 7th Tradition — Hooray!

Being on the OA zoom meetings has increased my meeting attendance — yay! — but I noticed I wasn't tossing dollars into the meeting basket. Recently, I added a 7th Tradition commitment to my Action Plan that I shared with my sponsor. I committed myself to using Venmo to make a regular OA donation, on the first of each month. So far, so good. —*Alison L.*

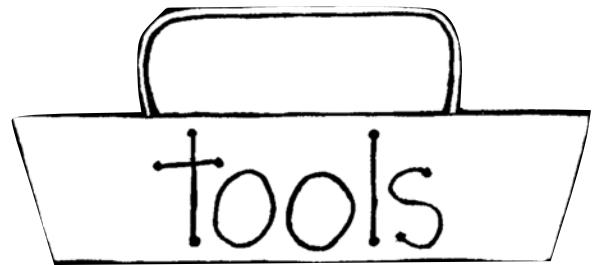
## Taking Action with the Tools

The Plan of Action was not always an “official” tool in the OA program however, it was a tool that I used constantly without even realizing it at the time.

When I first walked back into the rooms, my sponsor stressed that I should work all the tools as much as possible and to do that, I needed to take action. I can have great intentions to do something, but I also need to act on the thoughts and plans in order to help myself and others.

The following things are a part of my action plan for today: abstinence/eating my committed foods, calling/texting others, taking medication to minimize health issues, reading, writing, service.

Whether I am at work or at home, an action plan allows me to make progress and I am so glad that it is an important part of my life. I am so grateful for all the tools, especially action plan. — *Anonymous*



## The OA Plan of Action

An action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions, both daily and long-term, that are necessary to support our individual abstinence and emotional, spiritual and physical recovery. While the plan is ours, tailored to our own recovery process, most of us find it important to work with a sponsor, fellow OA member and/or appropriate professional to help us create it. This tool, like our plan of eating, may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted as we progress in our recovery. For example, a newcomer's action plan might focus on planning, shopping for and preparing food. Some members may need a regular fitness routine to improve strength and health, while others may need to set exercise limits in order to attain more balance. Some of us may need an action plan that includes time for meditation and relaxation or provides strategies for balancing work, personal interactions with family and friends, and our program. Others may need help to organize their homes; deal with their finances; and address medical, dental or mental health issues. Along with working the Steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance and manageability into our lives. As we use this tool, we find that we develop a feeling of serenity and continue to grow emotionally and spiritually while we make measurable progress one day at a time.

## PAST EVENTS

### Cherry Blossom Stroll

**M**any of our fellowship gathered in masks at Branch Brook Park in Newark for the Cherry Blossom Stroll under a beautiful clear blue sunny sky on April 13. We started the event with a live meeting and then proceeded to walk a route among the fragrant bright-colored blossoms. Along the way, a perfect cherry tree stood begging us to climb. Many of our group obliged and we all laughed and posed for pictures. The colors and smells from the flowers were delicious although the bloom was early this year. For many of our group, it was the first time being at an in-person meeting since 2020 and, for others, the first time meeting other than virtually. A great time was had by all. See you there next April!

### Yoga in the Park

On May 23, several of our fellows met in Brookdale Park for a yoga class. Special thanks to our leader, who so generously gave her time and ability to direct us through the practice. Your service is so appreciated! People of all different abilities, from beginner to seasoned, attended. At the end, after what is called *Savasana*, a period of rest, we had a meeting during which we all shared what we would be taking away into the day. For me it was what was said during *fetus pose*. I can put myself into this "position" or frame of mind and restart my day or my life at any point I chose. This thought stayed with me. After all, the AA Big Book promises, "We began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn." Namaste.

– **ToniAnn, Montclair**

### Sponsorship Day

All New Jersey Intergroups joined on August 22nd to present this special day. The workshop was a huge success. We had a great turn out. There were two speakers and a three person panel. All aspects of sponsorship were covered and all was received with interest. One of the most important points was there is a sponsor for everyone and having a sponsor is crucial.

### OA Kayak Trip

Before launching on Sunday, August 29th, we gathered in the great outdoors for a Big Book meeting, where we read a portion of "We Agnostics" and shared on our own conception of God and how that is working in our lives. Fellows came dressed in everything from bathing suit with coverup to sweatpants. The air was filled with waterfowl. Little fish jumped about as our group in colorful kayaks explored the waters. We even saw some wild grapes growing, which nobody ate, LOL! One fellow, who had gone off on their own, shared that the repetitive paddling movement coupled with the awe-inspiring beauty of nature evoked an experience of the physical being connected to the spiritual. Conscious contact with the Spirit of the Universe. Come next year and be a part of the excitement and fun!

– **ToniAnn, Montclair**

## PAST EVENTS

### "Am I Worth It" Workshop

On Sunday, July 18, the "Am I Worth It" workshop was held. We had three great speakers: Toni Ann A., Laura W. and Steven G. Each of these three amazing people shared what they have come to find and what they are worthy of through working their recoveries. I also did an interactive small session with the group going over questions that we can use to help us find our worth. After that we opened up for sharing and many participants commented and acknowledged the speakers. The high number of participants was about 80. Thank you to Shawn H. for leading and Terry W. for being our spiritual timekeeper. Also, thank you to Susan S. and Bonnie F. for their support.

– **Jon K., Woodland Park**

### Hike Experience

We gathered in the pavilion to start the meeting on Sunday, June 13th, 2021. As the soft rain fell, we listened to an excerpt from the chapter "Bill's Story" and shared our experience, strength, and hope. After eating our abstinent lunches, several fellows left to ascend the mountain. Others stayed behind for fellowship. For some it was a new and challenging experience. One step at a time, we purposefully traversed the rocky terrain, encouraging each other to make it. The reward at the top was a breathtaking view and a sense of accomplishment. In the words of Bill Wilson, "I felt lifted up, as though the great clean wind of a mountain top blew through and through." Special thanks to all who extended service to make this great event a success! Sure hope you'll join us next time on the road to Happy Destiny.

– **ToniAnn, Montclair**

## Intergroup NEWS

### West Jersey Merges with NJIOA

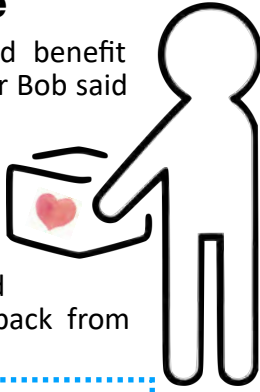
West Jersey formally merged with North Jersey Intergroup in July of 2021. Key WJIOA personnel had left or moved away during the pandemic, leaving us with a skeleton crew, even on Zoom meetings, which were still held every month. Unable to provide much in the way of any services to our supporting groups, we felt that a merge would be best. In fact, a couple of our groups did move over to NJIOA prior to the merge. We decided that our remaining funds would go over to NJIOA. I'd like to thank the groups that supported WJIOA over the years, and of course, all those people who served WJIOA in the effort to carry OA's message to those who still suffer from compulsive overeating and to keep our fellowship united. Special thanks to Barbara, Sallie, Cyndy, Ziggy, Delores and Barry at WJIOA; and of course, many thanks for the tireless effort made by Susan, ToniAnn and Bonnie at NJIOA to make this a seamless transition.

– **Mark H.**

# SERVICE IS SLIMMING

## Carry The Message

Might you know someone who could benefit from our program? Remember Bill & Dr Bob said the only way to stay clean is to work with others. Tell others about our program. Maybe send someone a newcomer packet. Invite them to a meeting. We have beginner meetings, newcomer meetings and meetings to support members coming back from relapse. Everyone is welcome.



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. — **Step 12**

## Our 7th Tradition

When we put money in the 'basket,' we help our meeting, our group, our Region and OA Worldwide.

Please contribute electronically with

Venmo or Zelle

using NJIOAPAY@gmail.com.

Or by mail:

NJIOA, PO Box 827

Fairlawn, NJ 07410



We Thank You!

### Your Trusted Servants

SUSAN S IG Chair	papersusan@aol.com 201-960-1995
JUDY L IG Vice Chair	gratefuljudy@yahoo.com 201-615-4955
BONNIE F IG Secretary	b4oai8n8@gmail.com 201-657-3916
RONNI S IG Corresponding Secretary	ronnis.2020@outlook.com 201-647-3613
TONIANN A IG Recording Secretary	typedforu@cs.com 973-945-0233
ANDREA P Treasurer	andreapascale13@gmail.com 973-985-8169
MARY M Web Chair	printersplacenorth@gmail.com 973-838-9521
MARY ANN C OAsis Editor	maryanncluney@gmail.com 973-568-2761
MARIA G Public Information	mtg7176@gmail.com 201-314-1350
TERRY P InReach, 12th Step Within	terrypolatchek@hotmail.com 862-812-4467

## Public Information Committee

NJIOA has numerous public information events throughout the year & we need help! If it interests you, please join our Public Information Committee, learn about the different forms of media we use, sign up for local health or street fairs in your town, and find out ways in which YOU can help us carry the message! Email our Intergroup Public Information officer Maria G at [mtg7176@gmail.com](mailto:mtg7176@gmail.com).

### RECOVERY HELP LINE

Are you struggling and need to speak to someone?

Living in a remote location and need contact?

Please call our volunteers to remind you that you are not alone!

**PLEASE try all the numbers until someone answers your call**

NAME	PHONE	AVAIL TIMES (ET)
ANDREA P	973-985-8169	4PM-6PM weekdays
ANDREA P	973-985-8169	8AM-6PM weekends
AUDREY C	201-819-5575	Please text first.
GERRI W	310-892-8245	After 9PM
SUSAN L	973-704-6345	4PM-6PM weekdays
SUSAN S	201-960-1995	11AM-7PM
TERRY P	862-812-4467	9AM-11PM
TONI ANN A	973-945-0233	Before 11PM



## NJIOA Intergroup Meetings

Everyone is welcome to come and join us at the monthly NJIOA Intergroup Board Meeting. You might even consider doing service at the Board level. **Intergroup meetings are held at 7:30pm on the second Thursday of every month on Zoom. Find the link on our website [www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org).** If you would like to get an item on the next meeting's discussion agenda, please email our Intergroup Chair, Susan S., at [papersusan@aol.com](mailto:papersusan@aol.com), if possible at least two weeks in advance.

The theme for the OAsis Winter Issue is **A Spiritual Solution**. Submissions are due November 1. Anyone may contribute! Please send writings on **Your spiritual solution, Step 3, Step 11, your experience finding a God of your understanding through the 12 Steps, favorite prayers, meditations, etc.**

Please email all submissions to the OAsis Editor, Mary Ann C. at: [maryanncluney@gmail.com](mailto:maryanncluney@gmail.com)