

Oct 2011

# Together We Can

A publication of the NYS Capital District Intergroup

## ***Tools = When, Why and Which do you use?***

### ***Man***

I always had a paunch around my waist especially as I aged out of my 20s and 30s into my 40s. But I think for me the turning point was looking at a photograph my older brother took of me at around age 49. It was in Congress Park Saratoga Springs, a lovely green setting, and I saw a Michelin man figure in baggy khakis and a huge upper body covered in a triple X large red polo shirt. I justified my gluttony because I worked so hard in a stressful, deadline-oriented business. I "deserved" to eat whatever I wanted, no matter how I looked, the extra weight I was putting on my poor feet, my gastrointestinal problems, the difficulty finding pants that fit my bulging waist, and on and on. I gave up so much of myself for the addiction.

Thanks to the program of OA I have learned to take care of myself by: asking for help from my Higher Power; sharing my struggles with safe OA members; moving more with light exercise like walking a nature trail or weeding my garden; and improving my work/life balance. On my good days, and they are increasing, I don't need to medicate with food. If something is disturbing me I ask for help. Food is not the answer. Knowing that I am loved unconditionally by my Higher Power does help. A.S

### ***Yes! I CAN***

The OA tools of recovery have helped me to live the 12 steps and enjoy a quality of life far beyond freedom from the chronic bingeing and purging that brought me to my own **private secret shameful hell**.

Sometimes **stuff** happens in life that I can't control. Loved ones die, **stuff** breaks, people let me down. I learned early on that's it's not the events, but rather the feelings over the events, that I used to eat over. The tool I've so often come to count on to get me through those difficult periods is what I call "yes I CAN".

CAN Is actually an acronym for "Call A Newcomer".

When times are tough and the end not yet in sight, before I pick up the first compulsive bite I remember "Yes I CAN"! ~~Yes~~-I can choose to call a newcomer or struggling member for that matter and offer some hope, share my experience or just listen. By the end of the call it's amazing how trivial my own adversity can seem. I usually have hope and a sense of acceptance that keeps me abstinent and until my own next miracle happens. **Thanks you** newcomers for taking my calls and helping me recover. Someday, if you keep coming, I hope you'll understand. MGL

*This issue's special focus is on Tools*

*"Many of us have found that we cannot abstain from compulsive eating unless we use some or all of OA's Nine Tools of Recovery to help us work the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions"*

*From OA's Statement of Abstinence*

*The Nine  
Tools are:*

*A Plan of  
Eating*

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*Sponsorship*

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*Meetings*

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*Telephone*

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*Writing*

–

*Literature*

–

*Anonymity*

–

*Service*

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*Action Plan*

***Tools Front and Center***

We talk a lot about the tools of recovery in our neck of the shoulders, and I'm newly committed to taking a daily count of the tools in my toolbox.

I have three areas in my house where real tools are jumbled into some state of readiness. None are organized in the way my grandfather's tools were in his workshop, where I spent many happy hours as a child. He had a giant dark brown pegboard where his tools hung, each one outlined in white chalk as if the board were one giant crime scene. Nuts, bolts, screws and nails were stored in neat rows of hanging baby food jars, their lids nailed in regimented rows into boards. If you needed a certain sized nail, you just unscrewed the appropriate jar, took one out and screwed the jar back into its stationary lid. I loved doing projects with my German-Lutheran grandfather in that small room, the cool of the dank concrete floor mixing with the warm aroma of fresh sawdust. That ordered and purposed place felt like one of the truly safe places of my childhood. Something about putting a hammer back onto its pegs, inside its white outline of chalk, was deeply satisfying.

My project today is to create my own metaphorical pegboard for my tools, so I have them in front of me in a state of visibility and readiness at all times. I'm making a chart with the names of the tools running down the left side, and the days of the month stretched across the top. Every time I use a tool, I'll put a little hatch mark inside the appropriate box. I'm not going to set any goals about how many tools to use per day or week, but just observe what I do as if I'm an anthropologist. But I know that the mere act of counting will increase my use of the tools. There's an old saying, "What is inspected is respected." Counting my use of tools is a concrete way of being honest with myself about whether I am relying on random willpower to muscle through my addiction, or building walls of protection against it.  
K.A.

***We Got a Plan***

A plan, oh we got a plan,  
Right here is capital city!  
With a capital "P"  
That rhymes with "T"  
And that stands for tool,  
That stands for tool!  
We've surely got a plan  
Right here in capital city,  
Right here!  
Gotta figure out a way  
to build a three-pronged stool.  
A plan, a plan, a plan!  
Emotional, physical, spiritual,  
We gotta plan!

*"The Words That No One Reads"*

Woke up got out of bed, dragged a comb across my head.  
Coffee is fresh, hot, I love the gurgling sound of the pot,  
Then, here come the feelings, like it or not.  
I write the words that no one reads.

A brand fresh day in the world of recovery on life's terms is a gift.  
No reason to resent, hurt or eat.  
I can scream, you can scream so that's ok, I just don't scream for Ice cream.  
I write the words that no one reads.

Disease is still there, defects as well.  
I admit, I surrender I give!  
OK its time to decide already.  
Bring God there to avoid that hell.  
I write the words that no one reads.

I believe, I affirm, I acknowledge.  
I do trust God. At least that's what I say.  
What's he got to do with it?  
What doesn't he at the end of the day?  
I write the words that no one reads.

I forgive, how did it go? What did I do?  
Only my part, how am I doin', livin', feelin'?  
Fear or doubt?  
Give love for the hurt, write it down, get the poison out!  
I write the words that no one reads.

Poisons out God is in, why am I here?  
Giver stuck? no way, I get what I give.  
Something's got to give and that something is me. Time, talent, treasure, what's my pleasure?  
I write the words that no one reads.

I pray, lordy I do.  
Prayer changes things, it changes me!  
Writing to.  
Oh lordy lordy it do.  
Thank you God! Jah Jah, HP  
My world is full and safe and free!  
I write the words that no one reads.

Michael L.

***Life's Choices***

I've often heard that we can be sure of only two things in life: taxes and death. Just as surely as we are born, we are also going to die. My compulsive personality also believed: Why should I deny myself the satisfaction of bulimia or overeating? What difference does it make, since I am going to die anyway? I used other clichés, such as "death by chocolate" and "I'd rather live dangerously and die in my prime than live to be old and helpless."

I came to OA believing my life could not be any other way than filled with bingeing, purging and dieting. I just wanted to control it. Then I saw life as people in recovery lived it. Those with abstinence know peace and serenity. They focus on living rather than on defying or rationalizing death.

I will face death like anyone else. However, I can choose how I will live until my Higher Power calls me. By choosing how I will live my remaining days, I may also be choosing how I will die, or at least I am decreasing my chances of dying from complications of bulimia or obesity.

I am grateful to the tools and Steps of the OA program.

Before OA I didn't believe I had many choices. Now, through the grace of my Higher Power, I have hope, strength and recovery from this baffling, cunning and deadly disease. I'm learning to believe I have a life worth living.

*D.W., Coopersburg, Pennsylvania USA (reprinted from Lifeline Mar/April 2006)*

**New York  
Capital District  
Intergroup  
Meetings**

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**October 8  
(Saratoga)**

**November 12  
December 10**

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*All Meetings are held at 10:10am following the 9:00am meeting at the VA Hospital in Albany, except the May and October meetings which are in Saratoga after the 9:15 meeting at the Nolan House Ne Presbyterian Church.*

*Each OA meeting may send two voting representatives to Intergroup, but you do not need to be a representative to attend. All are welcome!*

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### ***2011 Fall Sharathon***

Intergroup is sponsoring an all-day event *Using the Tools: Building Recovery* on Saturday October 29<sup>th</sup> from 10am until 4pm at the Albany VA Medical Center at 113 Holland Avenue in Albany. Local and out of area speakers will share their experience, strength and hope in working a recovery program using the nine tools of Overeaters Anonymous. The event will include last year's popular pick-a-prize raffle, a *Lifeline* drawing, and a few other new features, but there will be no clothes exchange this year. The suggested seventh tradition contribution is \$8, but no one will be turned away.

To volunteer to help with the event or for more information, contact Kathryn at (518) 463-5938, (518) 229-8682 or [kathryna@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kathryna@nycap.rr.com) or Mary at (518) 427-5040 or [lynne5185@hotmail.com](mailto:lynne5185@hotmail.com).

### **Intergroup's Second Annual 100 Calls Outreach Project**

The second annual 100 Calls Outreach Project will begin October 1<sup>st</sup> and run through the end of December. ***All OA members are encouraged to participate!*** You participate by making a phone call to someone you used to see at OA meetings, but have not seen "in a while." We encourage you to talk to the person, not just leave a message. When you have made such a call, you can report your call on the Intergroup website at [www.nycd.oagroups.org](http://www.nycd.oagroups.org) or report to your Intergroup Rep. Our goal is 100 calls!

## What's going on in Intergroup?

- Visits to outlying OA meetings continue by the Meeting Outreach group. If you would like to visit other meetings call Faye – 235-1110
- Intergroup is considering organizing transportation to the Region 6 convention in October. See your Intergroup Representative for more information.
- The Nomination Committee is forming in anticipation of Intergroup Trusted Servant elections this fall. If you are interested in service or have questions, contact your Intergroup Representative or join us at the next meeting.

## Dates to Remember...

September 24 – Region 6 Assembly, Best Western, Western Avenue, Albany

October 21-23 - Region 6 Convention, Crowne Plaza White Plains New York

October 29 – Albany Area Share-a-Thon, VA Hospital Alb.

November 19 - International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA)

December 12 – Twelfth Step Within Day

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### We're on the Web!

#### Check It Out:

[nycd.oagroups.org](http://nycd.oagroups.org)

#### Meeting Lists

#### OA Information

#### Inspiration

#### Event Calendar

#### Links

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#### World Service

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

#### Region 6

[oaregion6.org](http://oaregion6.org)

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### Capital Region Answer Line Meeting Information

(518) 292-0666

## Editorial Policy

*Together We Can* is the newsletter of the New York State Capital District Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous.

Submissions will appear with the author's initials unless otherwise requested. Materials cannot be returned nor can payment be made. Together We Can reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity.

Other OA groups may reprint without permission. We ask that you cite the writer and Together We Can as your source.

The opinions expressed are those of the individual writers and not those of NYSCD IG or OA as a whole.

Please address all submissions and suggestions to the editor.  
Maureen S.

## About Our Organization...

The NYS Capital District Intergroup provides support to OA members and groups within the greater Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Saratoga and Glens Falls area.

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