

Gratitude in Action

Fall 2016

What is *Gratitude in Action*?

Gratitude in Action is a free, quarterly email publication of the WSI 12th Step Committee, offering tools and resources within FA to inspire you to do service.

FA News You'll Want to Know About

4,239...thank you! Thank you to the 4,239 FA members who recently completed the FA Survey. Thank you, also, to the many others who contributed their time to make it a successful effort, whether it was developing and proofreading questions, testing the survey, offering phone support, or announcing the survey at meetings. The data are currently being analyzed, and results will be coming soon. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please send them to survey@foodaddicts.org.

New York knows how to do it. FA members in local service groups from Central and Western New York recently held their first "NY Fellowship Day" on October 1, 2016, at a church in Syracuse. Forty-one people attended. Over the course of several months, members planned an agenda that included facilitated break-out sessions on best practices for helping the newcomer and keeping our meetings strong. The event ended with a BYO dinner, an FA Jeopardy game, and a raffle drawing. If you'd like to learn how you can organize a similar event, feel free to contact Pat at max6dog@gmail.com or (607) 882-0445. To view the flyer that was created for the event, click on the following link: <https://www.foodaddicts.org/downloads/2016%20ny%20fellowship%20day%20tri%20fold.pdf>

Get your gratitude on...Thank-a-thons are coming. For those in the US, it's time to start planning for an abstinent Thanksgiving holiday. As in previous years, Thank-a-thons will be held in cities throughout the country. Thank-a-thons are special two-hour meetings with a focus on gratitude. Stay tuned for an announcement with all the details to be sent over the next few weeks.

More Frontier Support Calls are on the way. The next frontier support call is scheduled for Sunday, November 20 at 3:30 p.m. ET / 12:30 p.m. PT. It will be the first in a series of four calls on “The ABCs of Growing a Fellowship.” Topics for this first call include abstinence on the frontier, building a fellowship, and courage. If you’re interested in specific questions related to the topics above, please submit them in advance of the call to 12thstep@foodaddicts.org. Dial-in information will be sent to WSI contacts and to members on the Frontier Member List over the next few weeks for announcement at meetings. It will also be posted on the FA website in the “Frontier” tab.

Before you contact the FA office. Did you know you can get many of your questions answered by checking out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section of the FA website? Check them out here: <https://www.foodaddicts.org/members/faq-for-members>. You can find out how to manage meeting information, how to subscribe to *connection*, how to obtain the EAI or WAI monthly meeting summary, and more, all at your fingertips. Also, consider using the very handy, user-friendly “search” box on the top right section of each page of the website. When you type in the key words tied to the document or information you seek, an array of relevant links will pop up.

Social media: when you mean well. Do you ever wonder about anonymity as it relates to social media when you’re in a 12-step program? Sometimes members in FA participate in social media to stay connected or to spread the word to the still-suffering food addict without realizing they could actually be going against our Traditions. Posting about FA on your own Facebook page or creating a group Facebook page or a Meetup group where members post their names and/or photos is actually a break in anonymity, for example. Guidelines about FA and social media are found in FA’s “Statement on Social Media” posted on our website: <https://www.foodaddicts.org/members/social-media-and-paid-ads>. You can also send an email to pi@foodaddicts.org if you have questions. And if you’re concerned about something that could potentially go against a Tradition, please contact traditions@foodaddicts.org.

Service in the sun. Headed to the Fellowship Convention in Florida this October and eager to be of service while you’re there? Volunteers are still needed as greeters as well as at the registration and 12th Step Frontier tables. You can easily sign up for a one-hour shift by clicking on one of the following links:

- Registration:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pLDatYqfDKsDsEP2D_4Wjqj8DTgHfAusPe_XLWWj0Oo/edit#gid=0

- Greeter:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_TFVezAbzbl2quiaZ8yYVOQUs1Bn_ZeecwKtskwJ3Ws/edit#gid=0
- Help teach other members how to make phone calls to members on the Frontier from a smartphone. To volunteer, send an email to frontierlist@foodaddicts.org.

EAI Service Support Weekend will be here before we know it. Unable to go to the Fellowship Convention, but still want to spend time in fellowship and service? The EAI Service Support Weekend is coming up on November 12-13, 2016, in Dedham, MA at the Holiday Inn Boston. All are welcome to attend this annual fellowship gathering and celebration of FA service. For registration details, go to: <https://www.foodaddicts.org/eastern-area-intergroup/eai-events>.

Your Traditions Corner. An FA member recently contacted the Traditions Review Committee (TRC) about their local fellowship organizing a private, voluntary email group that exchanges information on deaths, births, and sickness for people who have volunteered to be in the group or have given permission for their personal details to be disclosed. The TRC felt that a group email list may infringe on some of the Traditions, such as Tradition 1, which reminds us about the importance of unity within FA. There is a concern that FA members, particularly newcomers, could feel excluded. Also, Tradition 5 ensures that the primary purpose of meetings is to help the still suffering food addict. The focus of this proposed email group appears to be social rather than 12th step work, such as reaching out to those who are homebound or ill. If, however, the list is not using the FA name or is not affiliated with an actual meeting (that is, no sign-up sheet is being passed around at a meeting and nothing is said about it during the announcements), then the Traditions would not come into play.

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## **Spotlight on Service**

*I came into program as most of us do: self centered, selfish, and not wanting to give myself to others without expecting something in return. After all, I had better things to do with my time! I did not know the gift that I would receive by being useful to others. As I continued in my abstinence, with my sponsor's help and encouragement, I have been blessed to become a part of a committee, which enables me to give back to the fellowship that has saved my life. It keeps me busy and takes me out of the most dangerous place I can be: in my head. Being of service in my committee also helps me to learn how to work with others. It*

*teaches me acceptance, tolerance, patience, and to be less judgmental. It also teaches me when to step up and when to step back. By doing committee service, I receive the gift of abstinence, and that gives me so much freedom. I don't do it for the recognition or to stand out because I have learned I am one among many; I am not unique. I do it purely to stay abstinent. What a gift!*

--Elaine, Oakland, CA

*Before recovery, I was trapped in a vicious cycle of eating and discomfort—physically, mentally and spiritually. I hated how my body felt at 200+ pounds, the feeling of not being able to control the way I ate, and never feeling like I was good enough or had enough. In recovery, my life is not perfect, but it unfolds in a virtuous cycle, not a vicious one. I don't know which comes first: abstinence or service. The tool of service reminds me that "We do service by staying abstinent." My tools, especially meetings and calls to my sponsor and other FA members, get me outside of my head, and nourish me emotionally and spiritually. In order to stay abstinent, I must work my program of recovery, which means I connect with other food addicts in recovery. As I connect with fellows, I am filled with a sense of usefulness, gratitude and the inspiration to stay abstinent (which means more service). Talk about a virtuous (vs. vicious) cycle!*

--Kim, San Francisco, CA

*In the 1980s, I lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I attended my first OA meeting there and met a woman with whom I am still great friends. A few weeks ago, I went to spend time with her. Thankfully, she had changed programs to FA, which drew us even closer. Winnipeg is on the frontier—no fellowship or meetings. After my friend joined FA, three more people began working the FA program in Winnipeg. My friend and I pre-arranged for an FA meeting to happen there during my visit. It was fabulous to meet the people I had only met by phone. What a privilege to do this service while on vacation, ensuring my own abstinence and continued recovery. Two of the women had never been to an FA meeting. One of them asked me to stay for the week and to go to a meeting every night! That really spoke to my heart. What a blessing to now have multiple meetings here in Toronto to choose from. I thought of how I had complained about "having" to do four meetings a week for quite a long time, when these women could not even go to one. I am so grateful for the FA people and program both here in Toronto and around the world!*

--Nancy, Toronto, Canada

*This morning an FA member asked me to write a short essay on how service keeps me abstinent. My first response (i.e., my addict response) was “No way! Why me? I’m too busy.” Thank God this program has taught me that God is in the pause. I took a breath, and now here I am—just showing up for my recovery. Service not only keeps me abstinent; it is where I receive the most spiritual challenges and therefore the most spiritual growth. Service is where my character defects shout out to me and it’s where my feelings of self-worth get challenged. Therefore, service is where I must be. FA has given me a life that was unimaginable to me—why wouldn’t I want to pass that on?*

--Susan, Oakland, CA

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## **Words to Live By**

*Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward, in other words, if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you.*

—As Bill Sees It, p.29

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## **How to Subscribe to Gratitude in Action**

- Go to [www.foodaddicts.org](http://www.foodaddicts.org) and click on “login” at the top right
- Type in your email address and password
- Click on "Manage my email list preferences" and ensure that the “subscribe” choice is selected for *Gratitude in Action*

\* Have feedback for Gratitude in Action? Send it to [GIA@foodaddicts.org](mailto:GIA@foodaddicts.org)