

Gratitude in Action (GIA)

3rd edition - 2018

What is GIA?

GIA is a quarterly email publication of the WSI 12th Step Committee. Its purpose is to inspire FA members to engage in service and to carry the message of FA recovery to those who still suffer from food addiction.

Personal Reflections... Why Do Service?



Why do I do service? To be honest, it's totally selfish. When I'm being of service, I just feel better. When I'm being of service, the food doesn't call to me. When I do esteemable acts, I build up my self-esteem. I experience a force field wrapping around me—protecting me from my addiction. I feel my Higher Power working through me. Before talking to my sponsees every morning, I pray—I ask my Higher Power to give me the words and guidance to help my sponsees. There have been countless calls where I've said exactly what I needed to hear. For an hour every morning, I have the chance to help others and get outside of myself. I feel closer to my Higher Power. Sponsoring has been a complete gift. I get to give back what I have so generously been given. When I take on service positions at meetings, I feel like I'm a part of the community, not just a visitor. I feel invested in the meetings and making sure they run smoothly so we can support the newcomer. When I help with service on the international level, I get to connect with fellows all over the world—from making international phone calls to serving on committees and voting at the business convention. I fill up with peace and feel grounded.

Malka P., Georgia

Spotlight on Service: Treasurer

(Two years of continuous abstinence suggested.)

- Collects the Seventh Tradition donations and keeps a record of all income and expenses.
- Pays rent, literature, and any other expenses and gives a monthly report at each business meeting. (It is wise to compile the report prior to the business meeting to avoid having to crunch numbers at the business meeting itself.)
- Sets aside a prudent reserve sufficient to cover one or two months of meeting expenses and/or funds for an upcoming FA Information Session and sends the remainder of the money, per group conscience, as a donation to World Service and to the meeting's chapter or intergroup. Refer to the pamphlet, *Your FA Seventh Tradition: Reaching the Suffering Food Addict*. This document will provide the recommended donation split between WSI and the meeting's intergroup or chapter. If the meeting does not have a copy of this pamphlet, download it at www.foodaddicts.org or ask the meeting's literature person to order one online through the FA website at the same time a literature order is placed (there is a minimum order requirement for online literature purchases). Before mailing checks, always write the meeting day, time, and location on the check memo line.
- Often either the secretary or the treasurer acts as the meeting's main point of contact with the landlord of the meeting facility.



Personal Reflections...Treasurer

I remember how nervous I was the first time I volunteered to be the treasurer at one of my committed meetings. I only did so because no one else raised their hand and I knew the importance of doing service. I had been avoiding this service position because of my fear, doubt, and insecurity about being responsible for the meeting's finances. What if I made a mistake, what if I didn't know what to do? Would people think I was dumb, or would I be embarrassed? All these thoughts whirled in my head, but fortunately I talked with my sponsor and other fellows in my phone calls. They understood my feelings of inadequacy and reminded me to ask God for help. I got a lot of encouragement and excellent suggestions about how to be a treasurer. I was nervous at first, especially when I made mistakes, but every month it got easier and I grew more confident. This experience has served me very well when I face new experiences or challenges and the fear returns. I remember to ask God for help, to ask lots of questions, and to remember that mistakes are part of learning new skills and to be grateful for the opportunity to be of service.

Linda Grace, California

I had had some experience with being the treasurer of the last weight-loss program I was in before I joined FA. It was very complicated and all the transactions had to be documented. My paperwork resembled a spreadsheet before I had any knowledge of a computer! I was not a numbers person, so I agonized over every penny. With that background, I was fearful about the treasurer's job. But when the service position opened up at my meeting, I understood that I needed to do service and take my turn at this position. So I agreed.



I was given a zippered bag full of money and papers that had recorded transactions on them. I looked it all over and followed suit, putting in the 7th Tradition collections and paying out funds for the rent and literature. After business meetings, I went home and paid the rent and sent out funds to WSI and EAI. The hardest part for me was the adding up and reconciling of the balance. I agonized over the results. If I was off by a penny, I was frantic. Even more so if I was off by more. I was so frustrated that I would put my own money in to make the balance right. I reached out to my fellows and they gave me advice, most of all to let go and let God, to do the best I could, to trust that, in the end, the money in the bag was what we had to use, and to let go of my insecurities. I thank God for the wisdom of the fellowship that helps me see that I am enough, I have enough, I do enough. I am also happy that I can be of service for FA.

Paula K., New York



On a number of occasions, I have had the fortune of holding the Treasurer's position at one of my committed meetings. It has been terrific for my recovery! I have struggled all my life with being consistent in turning up for things in life and doing what needs to be done. These are often the mundane tasks that I don't get a "hit of euphoria" from but are critical to the functioning of my life. The Treasurer position is one of those types of tasks/duties. Accepting this responsibility has helped me show up every week to do the simple tasks of: taking the week's Seventh Tradition home for counting; recording it on a basic recording sheet; banking the money into a designated FA account; producing the monthly Treasurer's report; and handing over a clean account to the incoming Treasurer when we rotate service positions.

I have found that the most effective approach has been taking it "a week at a time." Rather than rush and panic at the end of the month to count all the money and produce the report, I have a routine whereby I count the money as soon as I get home and record it. I may hold the

money for a couple of weeks (maximum), but I always bank it so I am not holding the cash. I have even been able to use this method to easily manage the treasury for two meetings at once. It seems to me that if I can maintain my routine (just like my daily routine with my FA tools), I have the freedom and the time to live and enjoy my life. It also reminds me that I can use a routine to simplify a task that I could very easily complicate!

Adam S., Australia

I have a history of devious and dishonest acts with money. I was known to steal change from my mom's change jar on a regular basis as a kid. I was sneaky about borrowing money from others and finding ways to get around paying them back. At one point, in high school, I created a way to steal money from the daily deposit at my job for almost two years before I was caught and fired. I'll spare you the details of the many other money troubles I have had, but they are vast. Thank you, God, the Twelve Steps have helped me address and amend these behaviors.

Despite working through my past issues, fear still comes up for me around money. When I had enough suggested abstinence to hold the service position of treasurer, I resisted. Even though my fellowship was small and not many could hold this position, my fear crept in and I avoided it at all cost. This avoidance continued for almost three years. Eventually, at one of my meetings, I was the only likely person to hold the treasurer position. With a lot of prayer and asking my sponsor and fellows for help, I gained enough trust that I could show up differently around money and be of service.



By working my program and asking God for help, I pushed my fear aside and held the treasurer position. It was such a blessing! In a way I was able to make a living amends because I could practice honesty with money in a safe place. Service continues to teach me how to live a better life. I'm grateful I worked through my fear and have clarity that the old me, with the help of this program, can change.

Anonymous

Traditions Corner



In 2018, the Traditions Review Committee received an inquiry from an FA member who owns a small commercial building. The FA member wanted to make the building available to start an FA meeting. The building would be closed during the meeting time and only available to FA. The original intent was to offer the space rent-free, as a service to the FA meeting. However, meetings accepting contributions in the form of free space conflicts with the principle of the Seventh Tradition, that we be self-supporting through our own contributions. To resolve this issue, the owner suggested that the FA meeting give a regular donation to a tenant in the building.

The Traditions Review Committee recommended the meeting group find a different location that is not financially connected to FA members in any way. While the offer is generous, the TRC felt that it would be very challenging to maintain necessary boundaries. Questions arose such as: What would be the impact if the FA member who owns the building were to leave the program? What if the tenant changed their working hours? These scenarios could affect the group's ability to serve the newcomer (Tradition 5). In addition, an FA member having a landlord relationship with an FA meeting could be perceived as a Tradition 6 issue: no affiliation with any facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Highlight: *Your FA 7th Tradition*

This pamphlet discusses “the spiritual and practical principles involved in how Seventh Tradition donations are used.” It also describes ways in which members and meetings contribute to FA, financially, in support of the tradition that “Every FA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside donations.”

In keeping with the philosophy of corporate poverty, WSI recommends that meetings, chapters and intergroups (IGs) handle their funds in this manner:

1. First, pay expenses: rent, literature, public information, etc. (Note: if there is no rental fee, a meeting will usually make a donation to the hosting facility, in order to avoid “outside donations.”)
2. Next, maintain a prudent reserve of 1-2 months’ expenses for the meeting. Chapters and IGs should keep a prudent reserve and budget appropriate to their needs.

Other issues relevant in considering the Seventh Tradition include:

- Supporting new meetings
- Annual contribution limits for individuals

Words to Live By

“We need to give service. When we feel cravings for the foods we used to eat or when anxiety about work or family makes us think too much about ourselves or our next meal, reaching out to a newcomer relieves our obsession and worries as nothing else can.”



Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous, p. 410

Subscribe to *Gratitude in Action*

- Go to the FA homepage at www.foodaddicts.org
 - Click "login" at the top of the right page
 - Type in your email address and password
 - Click on "Manage my email list preferences"
 - Ensure Gratitude in Action is clicked as "Subscribe"
-

Share your experience!

Sharing experience, strength, and hope is essential to our recovery—and to Gratitude in Action (GIA). Your submissions can help inspire all of us to do service. In particular, we’re looking for brief paragraphs on:



- how service in FA has enriched your life and strengthened your recovery
- examples of experience on our highlighted position—the WSI Contact

Please email your stories of experience with the WSI Contact position to GIA@foodaddicts.org by **September 22**. Other submissions are welcome on a rolling basis. We are also looking for artists who would like to produce line drawings for future editions. Please contact us at the email above to let us know your interest.