

# fa | FOOD ADDICTS *in recovery anonymous*

## Gratitude in Action – Spring 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.

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### Personal Reflections... Why Do Service?



Every morning I roll out of bed onto my knees. I humbly ask God to help me be abstinent that day. For 3 1/2 years, one day at a time, He has freed me from addictive eating. It is a gift my Higher Power freely gives me. In return, as a gift to Him, I ask Him to use me to serve Him, in whatever way He needs me. One important way I serve is reaching out to the newcomer, especially at my weekly meetings. I will always remember how scared I was, sitting in my car outside of my first AA meeting. I prayed to my Higher Power: I asked for acceptance from the alcoholics, even though I was a food addict, and I asked for courage to overcome my fear. He granted me both. Despite my fear, I walked in and was warmly greeted by a man who welcomed me, no matter what my addiction was. I want my Higher Power to be able to use me to answer a suffering food addict's prayer. This is one reason why I serve.

Becky J., UT

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### Spotlight on Service: *connection* Representative

(Six months of continuous abstinence suggested.)

**As your meeting's *connection* Representative, you:**

- Stand and introduce yourself as the *connection* Representative at the end of the *connection* announcement
- Order/renew your meeting's *connection* subscription
- When you receive the meeting subscription in the mail, you place it on the literature table
- Raise awareness about *connection* among FA fellows at meetings, on phone calls, and at business meetings



- Encourage members to write and/or create artwork for *connection*
- Participate in *connection* Rep Network conference calls



## Personal Reflections... *connection* Rep

### *“Growing up” in FA*

For many years of my life, my morning caffeine, flour and sugar were three of my highest priorities. Even though it filled my head with lots of big ideas, my addiction caused many of the most basic responsibilities of adulthood to fall through the cracks. I remember how difficult it was for me to follow through with paying bills. The simple steps of writing a check, finding an envelope, stuffing the envelope, finding a stamp, addressing the envelope and finally getting the letter to the post office seemed overwhelming to my addict self and could take weeks to complete, if ever.

Little by little, in recovery, I’m learning to follow through with my responsibilities. I’ve enjoyed the way that doing service in FA gives me an opportunity to practice being an adult. After I got 90 days of abstinence, I had heard that being the *connection* Representative was “one of the easiest service positions,” so that seemed like a good one for me to try. When the Web and Directory Contact of my meeting successfully switched the subscription to my name and address, it became my responsibility to maintain the subscription and to deliver the magazine to the meeting. I remember admitting to my sponsor that I had been forgetting the recent edition at home for weeks. With some helpful suggestions from my sponsor, I eventually got the magazine to the meeting. Doing service in FA gives me a great opportunity to see clearly the areas where I still need to grow. Every commitment I make to this program gives me a chance to practice following through with the important details of life.

Hal W., Ohio

### *Learning to be Present*

My listening skills have improved greatly since becoming a *connection* magazine representative. When fellows share from the front of the room, I often think about how these shares might work as a *connection* article. I have then asked several fellows if they’d be willing to write their stories for *connection*. If they can’t quite “remember” what they said from the front of the room, I describe what was so meaningful to me, and tell them that others might also benefit from their sharing. It reinforces for me the power of their shares, and it encourages those who do not feel they are writers to try writing anyway.

Listening with my “*connection* ears” began as an exercise in doing my job. Now my listening has become a gift to my own recovery, as I find myself hearing everyone on a deeper level.

Mary B., Michigan

### ***Writing and Fellowship***

Each year our local service group plans two connection writing workshops, one in January and another in July. We usually do this on a Saturday afternoon, and we have met in many different locations: the common room at an apartment complex, a member's bed and breakfast, and-- my favorite--members' homes. Everyone is invited to come, whether they have 90 days of abstinence or not, to practice the tool of writing. We begin by sharing a fellowship lunch, and then we follow the simple format available from the *connection* website. These sessions are very relaxed. First, examples of articles and suggested topics are shared. When individuals write, they are encouraged to find a comfortable chair, table, or floor space to sit (at one July writing session, I sat on someone's deck in the warm sunshine). Once we find our spot, we are asked to sit and write for 30 minutes. That sounds like a long time, but it passes very quickly. Finally, after writing, fellows are invited to share. I really look forward to these writing sessions and the fellowship they provide.

Paula K., NY

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### **Traditions Corner**

In 2005, the question was asked of the Traditions Review Committee: "Could the phone numbers of the *connection* article authors be published in the magazine, so that readers would be able to contact them if they related to an article?"

*connection* magazine is a valuable tool. FA members often relate strongly to the experience, strength and hope shared in the magazine, so it is natural that they might like to contact individual authors. The telephone is also a very important tool to the recovering food addict, so it is logical that members would try to combine the tools of telephone and literature, by reaching out to *connection* magazine writers.

After discussion, the TRC responded that Traditions 11 and 12 would be infringed upon if phone numbers were published. Both of these traditions focus on anonymity. Tradition 11, in part, says, "We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press." Anonymity is important even in FA literature (press) to protect FA as a whole. If an author of an article is publicly known (even in the FA public), and that person has a relapse, it can affect the attitudes people have towards the FA program of recovery. As well, the idea of being put on a pedestal due to a relatable article can place added pressure on the individual author, which can also hinder their individual recovery. This point is connected to Tradition 12, "ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

In addition to these Traditions issues, there is simply the issue of safety. These magazines are intended for use by recovering and still suffering food addicts, but there is no way to prevent them from being read by the general public, and protecting anonymity can also protect individuals from unwanted attention. The TRC recommended not to publish phone numbers of authors in *connection* magazine.

## Highlight: *connection*-Related Resources

If you go to the *connection* website (<http://connection.foodaddicts.org>), you can:

- submit articles and artwork online
- request a format to host a writing session
- get information on the bimonthly *connection* Rep conference calls
- receive talking points that will help encourage FA members to submit art and articles
- obtain contact information for *connection* writing coaches, who can assist FA members with their submissions
- find links to subscribe to *connection* in print (\$25) or in digital (\$20) formats



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## Words to Live By

Service will set us free from the miserable self-centeredness that used to force us to turn to food. If we look for ways to help others, our daily troubles and worries recede in importance. We gain a more balanced perspective on our lives and have the deep satisfaction of being useful members of our fellowship.

*Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous*, page 409.

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## Subscribe to *Gratitude in Action*



- Go to the FA homepage at [www.foodaddicts.org](http://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"

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## Send Us Your Suggestions!

Our next "Spotlight on Service" will feature the Treasurer position. How has your experience with this position enhanced your recovery? What would you suggest to members who are new to this position? Let us know **by June 20**, by emailing us at [GIA@foodaddicts.org](mailto:GIA@foodaddicts.org).