

JANUARY 2020 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

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office is usually open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
9:30 am -12:30 pm.

*"... we find love and understanding beyond our
wildest dreams,"* **Rozanne S.**

I'd like to report that the 'wildest dreams' part of my OA journey came quickly - it didn't. I was sober thanks to another 12 step program for ten years when a friend from that fellowship suggested I try OA, so I took her suggestion. Initially I was one of those members who used OA as a diet and calories club. I attended meetings, chaired, set up/put away meeting materials but didn't work the OA steps or formally use a sponsor (I figured I had done all that in my other program), and I waited for those extra 15-20 pounds to drop off, but they kept coming back. What I failed to understand was weight loss would not solve all my problems, and, in order to sustain weight loss, what I needed first was a deeper spiritual foundation. Clearly more would need to be revealed.

What I learned in OA that I didn't learn in my original 12 step program was that my food issues were there long before my drinking and drugging started. Overeating started in my childhood, growing up in what I came to understand was a dysfunctional, alcoholic home. (I had thought I was the problem.) Growing up, food was always there for me. In an attempt to please my hard-to-please mother, I became a member of the 'clean plate club.' In school I was never popular, slim, or academically focused, so, after a rough day (there were many), food was there. When my parents fought and threatened divorce, food was there. In my family we were expected to eat all the heavy food served but never get fat. No surprise, in my adolescence, I went on my first of many diets, and for the next several years gained and lost the same 15 to 20 pounds. It wasn't until I worked the OA twelve steps with the support of a recovering member that changes began.

Today I work the first three steps every morning. Throughout the day, I pray and make the

effort to live in steps ten, eleven, and twelve. When I am feeling resentment, fear, selfishness, or dishonesty, I can send a tenth step to a friend and help another. When no friend is available, I can pray and journal. Nightly I review my day and send an eleventh step off to a trusted friend. And those extra 15 to 20 pounds? Gone!

One day at a time I make healthier food choices. I do not diet. I have learned that my trigger foods may or may not be yours, I exercise moderately; take time to think about what I'm thinking about. If it's judgmental, negative, anxious, or critical I can tenth listen to inspirational speakers, and read helpful literature. Today I can wear all of the clothes in my closet - no longer limited to one or two pairs of pants (that I would rarely wash lest they shrink). The focus on the holidays, vacations, the new year, etc. is an opportunity to enjoy others. Today I set flexible goals, skip resolutions, remind myself to enjoy my 'now and I seek peace rather than look for happiness. Have I found love and understanding beyond my wildest dreams? Yes!

Liz P. Missouri.

My Daily Prayer

Dear God,

Just for today, let me be willing to hand my life and will over to you totally, feeling secure and protected in the knowledge that your love for me is unconditional, trusting that your plan for me today is to lead me one small step nearer recovery. No matter what today brings, I know you are watching over me, and you will guide and protect me.

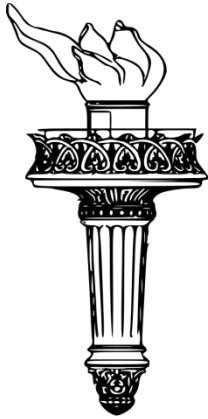


Let me feel the joy of knowing that for the next twenty-four hours-if I'm willing to admit my powerlessness and hand my life and will over to you-in return I will receive freedom and relief from the pain and bondage that trying to control life, people, and my weight has caused me. Just for today, if I can believe that all I need to do is work the OA steps to the best of my ability and live as simply as possible, I will receive the wonderful gifts of abstinence, serenity, and sanity and be filled with the warmth and security of your unconditional love. Thank you God for giving me this very special day.
- Dubai, United Arab Emirates, *Seeking the Spiritual Path, OA, pg. 87.*

Intergroup Information

November 10, 2019 Intergroup Meeting Highlights

- Operations Administrator: Four new office volunteers are needed.
- Vice Chair: Missouri Baptist Auditorium has been assigned for all meeting dates requested in 2020.
- Ad Hoc Ways Means Inventory Survey: This will be ready for distribution at the January 2020 meeting



Passing the Torch

I had the honor of serving as Intergroup (IG)--- Chair for most of the past four years and I step down formally when the new Chair, Dianne S. is seated at the January 12 IG meeting. I am writing to thank you for the amazing ways that you stepped up to IG service during that time period, offering your time and talents to carry the message to the still suffering compulsive eaters. We did some bold things together:

- Reduced the size of our prudent reserve so that more funds could be used to carry the message;
- Consistently offered abstinence recovery focus events;
- IG did an inventory event assessing collective group efforts;
- Innovative events planning were implemented;
- Changed bylaws and IG structure to simplify process;
- Added the ability to attend IG meetings via teleconference option.

Most of all, I am thankful that many more of our service positions are currently filled than when I started attending as IG rep in 2012. I am inspired by the commitment to saving lives and promoting physical, spiritual, and emotional recovery that so

many of you exhibit.

You have not seen the last of me, as I know it is a mistake to isolate! I will remain in service as a Region 4 Rep until October of 2020, and I am also a sponsor. Service is vital to my abstinence and growth in the ability to accept life on life's terms. I will see you in the variety of rooms where we offer a Welcome Home to compulsive eaters such as myself.

J-MO



Happy New Year!

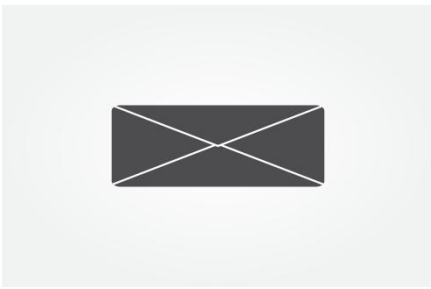
Dear Fellow OAs,

I'm filled with excitement, enthusiasm, and humility as I begin my new service opportunity as our Intergroup Chairperson. I must first give my deepest thanks and appreciation to everyone who gave service to our IG in 2019, a list too long to name everyone here, which lets us know how important our IG is to our unity and recovery.

I'm thrilled to report our IG is vibrant and ready to serve you with recovery events and services in 2020. Our vision for 2020 is to focus on Tradition 5: *Each group has but one primary purpose to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.* Our IG is blessed to have a Public Information Chairman, Melanie T. and at our November Annual Business Meeting we passed a motion to add this as an officer position to our Board of Trustees. Our vision is action. We are committed to creating awareness of our life- saving program and attracting newcomers to our meetings. We will also be stepping up our Twelfth Step within efforts, reaching out to our members in relapse, supporting the recovery of our members and supporting our Bi-State home groups - the bedrock of our program.

From the Big Book, pg. 164: *“Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you-until then.”*

Dianne S.



Carrying the Message Do and Don't:

Do

- Openly talk about your recovery.
- Emphasize the peace of mind you have found in life and around food.
- Suggest people come to meetings and simply listen.
- Mention OA to your doctors and health care professionals.
- Carry the message as part of your action plan.
- Explain some of the program's tools.
- Share how OA has helped in all facets of your life.
- Mention OA is nonprofit.

Don't

- Don't tell people that OA is the only way.
- Don't sound like a preacher or give a speech.
- Don't judge another's shape or weight, only your own.
- Don't mention specific spiritual or religious beliefs.
- Don't put down other methods of weight loss.
- Don't make any promises.
- Don't put down diet or methods of weight loss.
- Don't argue. *OA.org*

Every year the Board of Trustees and the Intergroup Representatives take a deep breath and wade into the highly ritualized effort to address any By-Law and Policy & Procedure changes we would like to make for the following year. Anyone familiar with Robert's Rule of Order? Well, thank goodness our Chair is! It is a lot of formal language and formal behavior and for those of us dedicated to group conscience, it feels pretty stilted.

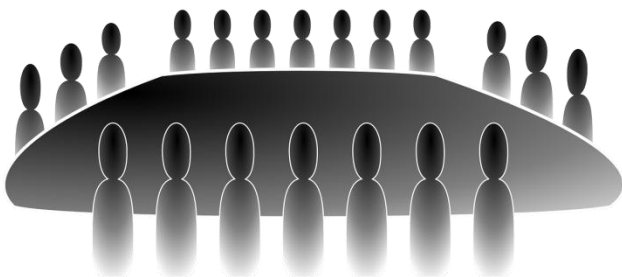
So I was surprised that my involvement in this worrisome rule fest was rewarding and seemed just exactly what we needed. A big surprise! Made easier by the kindness and leadership of our Chair, eased by the fine detail work of our Operations Administrator, we worked through a long list of rules and definitions. And in the end, we ended up making sure the service roles were a little cleaner and the duties and responsibilities a bit easier to understand. We will pass on our efforts, our definitions, understandings, and procedures on to those who will come after us as Board Members and IG Representatives.

The hard work we do each November (a half hour longer meeting than usual) in preparation and then in consideration and voting, give us a structure. Then we do not need to be present in order for the work to run smoothly. We depend on a very loose affiliation with personalities and a very strong affiliation to principles. That sets us apart from most organizations other than 12 steppers. And it means that the hard work we do in making sure the written work is solid, simple, and clear is of vital importance.

In 2020 new people will serve for their own recovery and ours and in doing so they will bring their best efforts to making sense of the bylaws and policies and procedures we leave in 2019. It took our best time and effort to do this sacred duty as well. They bring their best efforts to the next right action! Our very technical work and our obvious recovery events are all headed toward recovery, a well-worn path we forge for ourselves and our community! I am grateful to be a part of this good work.

Respectfully,

Christina D, Current Intergroup Vice-Chair



INTERGROUP MEETING INFORMATION

The next Intergroup meeting is **Sunday, January 12, 2020** at 1:30 – 3:00 at Missouri Baptist Medical Center, building D, auditorium rooms section. **Please send a representative from your group to this important monthly meeting.**

The 2020 Intergroup meeting dates are February 9, March 8, May 17, June 14, July 12, September 13, October 11, and November 8. Some Intergroup meetings may be preceded by a Board of Trustee meeting. These will be announced by email when scheduled. There are no meetings scheduled during April, August, or December. To participate by teleconference call 712-451-1080 access code 762802.

Meeting News

In recent months, two meetings have changed information:

- 56711/SL448 Friday 10 a. in Eureka no longer just a men's meeting.
- 56489/SL444 Saturday 11 a. Cape Girardeau Change location to Cape Girardeau Public Library, 711 Clark St., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701.

Three meetings have been added:

- 56363/SL450 Monday 5:30 p. Mattoon, IL. Open meeting, Mattoon Public Library (upstairs next to Children's Library), 1600 Charleston Ave., Mattoon, IL 61938.
- 57083/SL451 Tuesday 12:15 p. - half hour meditation step 11 meeting, Open, Concord Trinity Methodist Church library, 5275 S. Lindbergh Blvd., STL, 63126.
- 57059/SL452 Saturday 8 a., 212 Club, 204 W Pitmen St, O'Fallon, MO, open.

Seven Meetings have closed.

- 53817/SL431 Sunday 8:45 a. St. Louis, MO.
- 56673/SL447 Sunday 3 p. Fulton, MO.
- 52125/SL417 Tuesday 11 a. Maryland Heights, MO.
- 53840/SL433 Wednesday 10:30 a. Cuba, MO.
- 35891/SL326 Thursday 7 p. Effingham, IL.
- 54338/SL437 Friday 7 p. Ballwin, MO.
- 24093/SL171 Friday 7:30 p. Mercy South (St. Anthony's) Sappington, MO.

Upcoming 2020 Events

- February 29, Unity Day, Samuel UCC Church, Clayton
- March 21, One Day Convention, Chesterfield, MO
- September 11-13, Fall Retreat, Kings House, Belleville, IL
- October 3, Super Saturday, Drury Inn Airport.

A Super Saturday/Sunday in 2020?

Please confer with your group about hosting a Super Saturday/Sunday for next year. Seven months are open. To set a date or obtain info on how to host one, contact Christina D, 314-954-1944.

- February 29, 2020, UNITY Day, Samuel UCC Church
- March 21, 2020, One Day Convention, Chesterfield, MO
- April Open
- May Open
- June Open
- July Open
- August Open
- September 11-13, 2020, Fall Retreat
- October Super Saturday
- November Open
- December Open



ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY January 20th. Please send your submissions to the OA TODAY Editorial Staff at newsletter@stlouisoa.org or mail to OA, 9907 Gravois, Suite E, St. Louis, MO 63123. Personal stories express the experience, strength, and hope of individual members and not of OA as a whole. Other OA groups and service boards may reprint articles from this newsletter without requesting permission.