

AUGUST 2018 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

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The office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

My Sponsor Wants Me to Call – No Matter What

When I first came to OA, I didn't like the telephone. I didn't want to call my sponsor daily to call in my food and discuss my food. I did not want to do the 30 questions in 30 days. However, Higher Power had a better idea. HP needed me to surrender, and daily calling in my food plan was surrender. Gradually, I enjoyed calling in my food plan before I ate anything each day.

My sponsor required me to call in any food changes. If the change was emotional, I had to call until I talked to someone. I put everyone under O in my phone, so I could find OA members easily. One day, I needed to change my dinner because my father was taken to the hospital, and I couldn't go home to eat my planned meal. I decided on a change and started calling people until someone answered. I didn't know the person, but they talked through my plan until I got to the restaurant. Then, they asked if I wanted them to stay on the phone as I ordered and ate. It was the first time I understood how important telephone was and how much other OA members are willing to help others. I didn't need to stay on the phone, but she also offered for me to call back if I needed it.

Another example of using the telephone is the "call bag." At my home meeting, we exchange phone numbers and call each other during the week. I have gotten to know new members and members who visit and many other OA members. It is truly a blessing to receive encouragement and give encouragement throughout the week.

If you need someone to talk to, call an OA member today!

- Tami H.

Is the Food Calling to You?

If you want to make an OA call, but don't know whom to call, you can call the OA member who wrote the "My Sponsor Wants Me to Call – No Matter What" article on this page:

Tami H. 314-341-6520

plantrose2020@gmail.com

Also - our OA office (314-638-6070) can provide a list of OA members to you who are happy to receive telephone calls.

"I am so grateful today for the freedom that comes to me daily when I choose abstinence. It is a daily reprieve; I can't hold it over until tomorrow or borrow it for a lifetime. It requires a daily laying down of myself, my will, my obsession, my reactions in humility. It is a letting go where I can't and a trusting of God to do for me what I can't do for myself."
– Local OA Member

**"Abstinent sponsors came into my life, sharing with me the need to work the Twelve Steps."
- *Abstinence, 2nd Edition* p. 89**

Eight weeks ago, I attended my first OA meeting. I'd researched OA and vaguely knew about a concept of abstinence, but that was about it. After a bit more reading, another meeting, and devouring the Big Book and Twelve and Twelve, I realized I urgently needed a sponsor. After all, on reading the Twelve and Twelve, it seemed I was already through Steps One through Three and needed to be getting on with Step Four. I could sense it might be insufficient to work that one alone, so I drew breath, gathered my courage, and found a sponsor.

In our first conversation, we talked a little, but before I could tell her how far along in the program I was, she asked me to read aloud the first paragraph of Step One. Then she asked which sentence resonated most with me. I pulled one out and read it back to her. She said, "Right. Go away and write about that for next time we talk."

I wanted to say, "No, no, it's okay. I've done Step One. I accept I'm powerless over food and my life is unmanageable. I need and want God's help. Let's look at Step Four!" I didn't want to waste more time. Didn't she realize I'd been immersed in the material for two weeks and was a very fast learner? I was secretly horrified that if this was the pattern, it would take me at least two weeks to do Step One!

Something held me back. I knew she had more than twenty years of abstinence, and I wanted that too. And a little voice said, "Maybe you aren't such a fast learner. Maybe you should listen to someone vastly more experienced? Maybe not be such a know-it-all?"

I took my sponsor's advice. I moved slowly through the paragraphs. I found there was so much to write about, and suddenly I didn't want to rush.

When I first rushed through the chapter in my initial excitement, I grasped it intellectually. Now, I have come to believe it in my heart. – *Lifeline*
<https://oa.org/members/working-the-program/get-a-sponsor/>

Q: How many OA sponsors does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Just one – but the bulb has to want to change.

SPONSORSHIP DAY is August 18-19, 2018. Take time to thank your sponsor in a special way.

INTERGROUP MEETING INFO

Our next Intergroup meeting is **Sunday, September 9 at 1:30** at Missouri Baptist Hospital in the auditorium room area. Please send a representative from your group to this important monthly meeting.

Future Intergroup meetings will be held **October 14 and November 11**. There are no meetings in April, August, or December.

JULY 10, 2018 INTERGROUP MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The Region 4 Convention was a success. A financial accounting will be presented at the next Intergroup meeting.
- Over \$1,000 of literature was sold at the Region 4 convention. The new OA 12&12 has been selling well.
- The feedback we received to the Region 4 viability survey was discussed, and we formulated a plan for what to communicate to Region 4.
- A new webmaster was hired by a vote of the group.
- A Tradition Workshop will be held September 29. See the article on this page for details.
- Meetings in our area that have not been in communication with Intergroup will be contacted and encouraged to be more involved.
- The Effingham meeting will be hosting an all day November 10 Super Saturday in Effingham, Illinois. Those who want to carpool to this event are asked to contact newsletter@stlouisoa.org or call JMO at 314-775-3261 .
- The bylaws may be changed in order to allow Intergroups to attend Intergroup meeting via conference call.

OPEN SERVICE POSITIONS

- Office Administrator** (one year of abstinence)
- World Service Delegate** (4 positions open; one year of abstinence)
- Region Representatives** (1 position open; six months of abstinence)
- IG Office Volunteer Coordinator** (Six months of abstinence)
- Public Information Chair** (Six months of abstinence)
- Retreat Chair** (Six months of abstinence)

For descriptions of each position, please see:

<http://oaregion4.org/stlouisoa/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/PP-2016.pdf>

If you are interested, or have questions, please call IG Chair J-MO at 314-775-3261. You can apply at:

<http://oaregion4.org/stlouisoa/integroup/documents-and-forms/>.

For more OA recovery, check out:

OA World Service Organization quarterly newsletter - <https://oa.org/members/service-resources/a-step-ahead-newsletter/>

4 Thought, our Region 4 Journal of Recovery quarterly newsletter – <http://oaregion4.org/4-thought-region-4-newsletter/>

Spotlight on the Traditions! Saturday, September 29 Workshop

Ever wonder why people make such a fuss about the traditions? What does it matter if I tell my meeting about a great book I'm reading? Isn't it a good thing to stand up for my religious beliefs? When I know I'm right, why not insist "it's my way or the highway?"

Would you like to find some answers? Come to a special "done-in-an-afternoon" workshop. Using short videos, real life examples and fun interactions, we'll hit the highlights of the traditions and see how we use them in OA and in our everyday life.

It will be on Saturday, September 29, from 1-4:30 pm at the Webster Groves Christian Church in the first floor Chapel. The address is 1320 West Lockwood Ave, 63122. Go east on Lockwood between Sappington and Berry, and the church will be on the right, surrounded by a golf course. It's fully accessible.

For more information, contact Elizabeth at elizabethoaSTL@gmail.com, or text or call 314-304-1444.

A Close Look at Sustaining our Intergroup

Our OA Intergroup, made up of some 45 active groups that meet weekly, extends across the Missouri and tip of Illinois area. It supports the meetings through all the business of OA, interfacing between the individual groups and the Region and then World OA. As important, it interfaces between the individual groups. Intergroup gathers us all together nine times per year to ensure we have a group conscience and then enact the will of all who participate to support our recovery. We have an office to facilitate this work and monthly meetings to work on Conventions, Retreats, and other gatherings of recovery. We sustain all of this through our service and through our donations. In short, we are the Intergroup. We are the WE of Intergroup.

Today we have a formed Ad Hoc (means temporary) Ways & Means (means the method in which we will have sustainable health as an organization) Committee to review the needs of Us. We have hit a concerning level of financial imbalance and service gap that deserves our immediate attention. We do this because we are bringing in somewhat less than we need in the regular course of a year and we continue to have important service gaps...which are exacerbated by attrition. (That is, people who wish to leave service cannot find replacements, so continue on beyond their comfort, or release the position, so it is empty).

We need not panic. Our recovery is not at risk and our organization is not floundering. Yet, as all good self-care and recovery demands, we are at a point when a clear understanding and acceptance of who we are, what we need and how to make that happen is now very appropriate and timely. We have begun that good work. Join us if you may and contact us if you have thoughts and concerns. More will unfold over time as we research the issues before us. We will stay in touch!

Respectfully submitted,

Christina D. – Board Secretary and Ad Hoc Chair



Featured Meeting of the Month

Sunday Afternoon Abstinence First
Sundays, 4 p.m. at PNC Bank
333 S. Kirkwood Road, Suite 305
Kirkwood, MO 63122

The 4 p.m. meeting has been my home group for the past nine years. I originally went to this meeting because it was suggested that I go to more than one meeting a week. I walked into the meeting room and remember being immediately annoyed by how happy everyone seemed to be. I laugh now, but at the time, I really could not understand how these people could be so joyous as we discussed the disease of compulsive over and under eating. The group had something that I could not put my finger on so I came back to try to figure it out.

One thing that really helped me start to understand the program was how this meeting spoke on abstinence. They said it was the most important thing and even stated how long they had been in program and the length of their abstinence. This helped me to see that abstinence was possible. It made me mad because I could not get abstinent right away. I felt shame when I would go back to the meeting and say that I am starting over again. I could have made the case that I didn't want my failure to be pushed in my face and admit my weakness. However, my sponsor reminded me that it is a deadly disease and admitting to the group that I had to start over or only had a few days of abstinence, kept me humble. I needed that reminder.

Abstinence didn't come quickly and there were several times I had to admit that I had lost my abstinence. I hated admitting it. I was so used to lying to myself and this was the first time that I stayed honest. The group accepted me each time as I struggled with the disease. By coming back each week, I saw that there were others who were also struggling and more members who had gotten and stayed abstinent. This gave me hope.

My home group reminds us each week that abstinence is the most important thing we can do each day. Whenever I start to stray, I get reminded and motivated to stick to the middle of the boat by going to my group each week.

You are all welcome to join us each Sunday. We are not a glum lot. - Stacey Z

It's Going to be Amazing - Why You Should Consider Going to the 2018 Falling Into Fellowship OA Retreat

Our St. Louis Bi-State Area IG Retreat will be coming to us in October 26-28th, once again held at Sojourn Retreat Center in Dittmer, MO.

This three-day retreat is really planned to focus on our recovery. It is not about the future. It is about the present. Our present. What is going on, how to reach our best right-sized selves, and how to share our recovery. The retreat will be led by a keynote speaker who has agreed to fly in and spend the weekend with us. We are grateful for this service and welcome the different perspective and new voice, in the hope that we may hear and absorb the message yet more deeply. Our theme this year is on the fundamentals of our program and their connection to the how and why of our fellowship. There will be no fundraising at this event.

It is in relationship that we most deeply experience our lives and the promises. The retreat will be on how to bring our program into our lives fully, learning from and with others. Translating the steps, traditions and promises into action and reaction brings us gifts: the gift of listening, the gift of receiving, the gift of giving, and the gift of remaining teachable. For all of this, we need to live our program fully each day, with awareness and intention.

Come join us in fellowship, which will include good food that we will eat communally, in a quiet and lovely space that inspires walks to the water, quiet meditation, and gathering around a bonfire. Our time together will be full of learning and working together. This will be a refueling of our serenity so that we may live our lives with shared courage and wisdom. Come join us!

If you need assistance with the cost of the retreat, We Care funds are available to cover part or all retreat costs, upon request and up to the limits of the fund. We Care funds are totally dependent on voluntary contributions. If you could sponsor a participant or donate funds to We Care, or want more information about the retreat, contact Christina D. at secretary@stlouisoa.org or 314-954-1944 or go to <http://oaregion4.org>. A retreat brochure is also available with registration, schedule, menu, and schedule information.



UPCOMING EVENTS –

Super Saturdays & Sundays –

August 12/Sunday – Keep It Simple - Hosted by the Sunday Kirkwood Group at PNC Bank, 333 S. Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122. Registration starts at 1:30, and the program is from 2–5 p.m. Park in the rear of the building and enter through rear of the building, which is handicapped accessible. Suggested donation is \$6. Never stay away due to financial reasons. For more information, contact Stacey Z. at 314-412-3614.

September 16/Sunday – This Super Sunday will be held at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 602 Rockwood Arbor Drive, Eureka, MO 63025. It will be hosted by the Monday night Newcomers meeting in Webster Groves and the Tuesday Newcomer meeting in Eureka. Registration is at 1:30 and the program is scheduled from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Questions? Call Jennifer at 314-229-2118.

October 13/Saturday – Hosted by the Webster Groves Christian Church 10:00 a.m. Step Study Meeting at 1320 W. Lockwood Ave, St Louis, MO 63122. Registration is at 9 and program from 9:30-12:30. For more information, contact Ellen at 314-603-3712.

November 10/Saturday– The Thursday evening Effingham group will be hosting this all day event. If you are interested in carpooling to this event, please call JMO at 314-775-3261. (More details in future newsletters.)

December 1/Saturday – Holiday Booster hosted by Sunday St. Mary's Group from 8:30 to 1:00 at the Maplewood Baptist Church 2806 Marshall Ave, Maplewood, MO 63143. For more information, contact Ellen W. at 314-603-3712.

Other Events -

Saturday, September 29 – Traditions Workshop will be held from 1-4:30 pm at the Webster Groves Christian Church, 1320 West Lockwood Ave, 63122. For more information, see page 2.

October 26-28, 2018 - OA Fall Retreat Sojourn Retreat Center in Dittmer, MO. See page 2 for more information.

ALL 2019 SUPER SATURDAY/SUNDAYS DATES ARE AVAILABLE

Would you please confer with your group about hosting a Super Saturday for next year? All months are open at this time. To set a date and obtain information on how to host a weekend event, please contact Susan T. at 314-283-0204.

JULY 28 SUPER SATURDAY HAPPY, JOYOUS, & FREE IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY

On Saturday, July 28, the Thursday 7 a.m. St. Charles Big Book Meeting and the Monday 7:30 p.m. St. Peters 212 Club Meeting co-hosted a Super Saturday at St. John UCC Church in St. Charles, MO, with the theme "Happy, Joyous and Free in the Summertime."

We were delighted to have 30 attendees, more than double our attendance last year. The half day event consisted of four wonderful speakers who shared their powerful experience, strength and hope. This was followed by a workshop where break out groups discussed the many types of freedom offered by recovery.

Some of the feedback and comments heard during and after:

I think that was one of the best Super Saturdays I have been to!

Every one of the speakers is so inspiring!

It was a good day.

I got a lot from today's Super Saturday.

It was a fun time.

Very good Super Saturday.

From a fellow who traveled - *It's always a pleasure visiting our St. Louis OA friends.*

Hosting the July Super Saturday has been a tradition for many years for the St. Charles County Big Book meeting, on that we hope to continue long into the future.

ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY AUGUST 25, 2018.

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. Thanks!

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.

OA RECOVERY OUTSIDE BI-STATE AREA

September 8 Glendora, California USA: "Mind Games Workshop: Finding Peace and Serenity in Your Body Image" hosted by the San Gabriel Valley Inland Empire Intergroup

September 14 Issaquah, Washington USA: "Big Book Weekend Workshop" hosted by the Greater Seattle Intergroup

September 21 Clive, Iowa USA: "State of Iowa Convention: Twelve Freedoms of Recovery" hosted by Central Iowa Intergroup and Northwest Iowa Intergroup

September 21 Fort Michell, Alabama USA: "Stories of Recovery - 23rd annual Weekend Retreat" hosted by the Roswell, Georgia OA Group

September 21 - Oceanside, California USA: "175th Serenity Retreat Weekend" hosted by the San Diego County Intergroup

