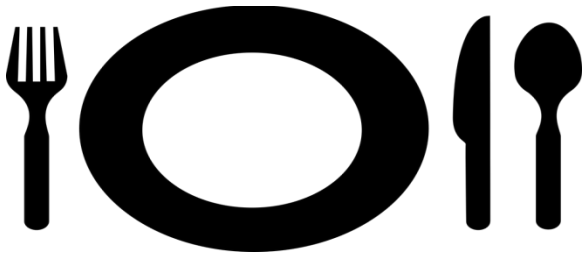


# MARCH 2020 OA TODAY NEWSLETTER

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



I read about Overeaters Anonymous about 6 or 7 years ago, when my weight started to spiral out of control. I decided at that point that it sounded too intense, and surely all I needed to do was eat healthier food. So I spent about \$300-\$400 dollars on pills, eating programs, point systems, and various other diet programs. Some of the pills/shakes, made me violently ill, but I thought ‘no pain no gain’ – right? I also started an insane exercise program that eventually I would have to seek medical help to just be able to walk. The crazy thing, instead of losing weight, I actually managed to gain 70 lbs over this period! I couldn’t figure out why I kept gaining and why I binged on food when I knew how horrible it was for me. I felt like I had no other options at this point and decided to go to an OA meeting. I really thought it was only about the food. It wasn’t until I started working the steps, that I realized that the food part was only a symptom.

My first meeting was not what I expected at all. I listened to several people share parts about their life that were almost identical to mine. I wanted to jump in right way, to hurry up and fix whatever it was that I couldn’t seem to get a hold of. I was given several pamphlets that would help me get started. I was preoccupied with the notion of learning whatever it was that I needed to learn so I could move on with my life. I was told to attend at least 6 meetings before continuing. I listened as

people spoke about this program that had helped them. It became apparent that OA wasn’t a quick fix, a diet program, or food planning group. If I wanted to have this program work for me I needed to make room in my life for it.

I was not really looking forward to working through the steps. I am a rather introverted person so exposing all my issues to someone seemed like too much; however, after finding a sponsor my steps went rather quickly. Working on the daily inventory on Step 10 gets a little daunting for me at times. I really had no idea how snarky/jealous of a person I am so admitting this multiple times a day to my sponsor is still a little hard. I have completed one evening review, but am figuring out how to fit it in my schedule. It is strange that there are so many tools to help but at times they feel like quite the burden. When I start to feel like I am ready to walk away I listen to a meeting or attend a meeting. It brings me back to a centered state so I can think more clearly. I didn’t realize how difficult this would be but I know it is worth it. I can feel a change taking hold, a sense of calm that I have not experienced before. I have been hiding a lot of emotions behind a laugh. I think honesty, even when it doesn’t feel good or it isn’t pretty, is required to open the path to my Higher Power. So even though I might not be moving as fast as I wanted to in the beginning, I feel like am still make progress. It will just take time. – *Christina M.*



## OA SAYINGS

- **Abstinence:** frees me to choose healthy foods, healthy friends, and healthy thoughts.
- **Abstinence:** keeps me present for life and joy.
- **Abstinence:** is a life style.
- **Abstinence:** is all GOD is asking of me today.
- **Abstinence:** takes care of the fat on my body.
- Since **Abstinence:** my only “To Do List” is life! (*OA Central Colorado*)



**INTERGROUP INFORMATION**

At our January 12 Intergroup (IG) meeting, we welcomed new IG Rep Margaret M. from the Tue. night Renewed Hope meeting in Alton. In February we welcomed new Rep Jeanine M. from the Thu. night Bookworms meeting in Affton. We are grateful for their commitment to service.

Twenty-three people attended IG in January (seven by teleconference), while 24 attended in February (including three by teleconference). We are pleased that IG Reps are using teleconferencing to represent their groups when they can't attend in person. If your group wants to know more about that way of participating, contact Dianne S., 314-238-4052 for details.

**INTERGROUP MEETING INFORMATION**

The next Intergroup meeting is Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 1:30 – 3:00 at Missouri Baptist Medical Center, Main Tower auditorium rooms section. Please send a representative from your group to this important monthly meeting. The 2020 Intergroup meeting dates are 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.



- March 21, 2020: St. Louis Area Bi-State Annual Convention (see details on p. 4 in this newsletter)
- March 27-29, 2020: Region 3 Convention, Tulsa, Oklahoma (details at oaregion3.org)
- August 16, 2020: Super Sunday (afternoon), PNC Bank Building, Kirkwood, Missouri

(cont'd)

- August 20-22, 2020: OA World Service Convention, Orlando, Florida (details at oa.org)
- September 11-13, 2020: Our Annual Fall Retreat, King's House, Belleville, Illinois
- October 3, 2020: Super Saturday, Drury Inn Airport, St. Louis, Missouri

**HOST A SUPER SATURDAY OR SUNDAY**

To set a date/obtain info on how to host an event, contact Christina D., 314-954-1944. The following months are open:  
April • May • June • July • November

Dear Fellow OAs, it's almost Spring! I'm thinking about how our Intergroup can Spring forward with Recovery. It's almost time for our Annual Convention, it's not too late to register and make plans to attend on **Saturday March 21**. Get a bunch of your recovery buddies and make it a day or a weekend if you're driving from one of our fabulous longer commute meetings. I plan to make at least one new OA friend.

Many thanks to our World Service Delegates, Susan T, Pat M and Christina D. They did a super job of organizing the many WSO motions and proposals submitted this year. Our job at our February IG meeting was to decide whether or not the Delegates at the World Service Business Conference in April should discuss a motion/proposal. Task completed. Speaking of April and May, **we need groups to host** Super Saturday/Sunday/Weekday Evening Events. If your group has never hosted one, just reach out to me or Christina D, we're happy to get you started.

Are you wondering, what the heck we do at IG meetings anyhow? Visitors are always welcome! Come on in, we always need another pair of hands to work on our recovery projects and events. Our Public Information committee will need our help.

Your Board of Trustee still needs a Secretary, please prayerfully consider this great service opportunity. Give me a call with any questions. Since our March meeting will have passed as you read this, our next IG meeting will be May 17, 2020. – *Dianne S., IG Chair*



### **OK...I'm Fat!**

OK, I'm fat! Why do people treat me different than a skinny person? Why do they think I am any different than anyone else? Do they know anything about me? No, they don't! They don't know what I went through as a child, a teen, and now as an adult. When I was little, I gained weight I changed from being slim to being chunky. I felt others immediately thought differently of me. When I was a teenager I was about 15 pounds heavier than the other guys in school and was made fun of. I used to go classroom to classroom picking up attendance sheets and the comments I received were mean they would say things like, "Look at that Butt", "Did he swallow a watermelon", or "I think he needs to go on a diet." My best friend was obese and was constantly harassed too; later in life he committed suicide which I believe was directly related to being ridiculed. As an adult, I felt there were different judgments like hiring the skinny guy over the fat guy or thinking the fat guy wasn't as smart as the trim guy. When the skinny guy spoke I felt they listened but when the fat guy spoke they didn't. The feeling of not being heard doesn't feel good. I put up with a lot of mean comments about my weight from my first wife. I put up with nasty comments from my coworkers about my weight even though I got better performance reviews. Recently at my volunteer job a comment was made about my "big belly" is that really necessary? Does it make that person feel they are better than me? I feel sorry for them because they apparently don't get that all people are different in some way and that we should always try to be respectful of each other. We all need to realize that each one of us affect the life of others that we meet. Life isn't fair, people should be understanding that sometimes there is no explanation except, I was fat!

I have joined Overeaters because it will give me the support I need to overcome my compulsive eating which has made me fat.

-James K.

### **OA SLOGANS**

- Came in for the Vanity, stayed for the sanity.
- I don't think less of myself, I think of myself less.
- If you pray, don't worry. If you worry, don't pray.
- Expectations = Resentments under construction. (*OA Central Colorado*)



### **An Atheist's Recovery Story**

Can an atheist recover in OA and still be an atheist? For me, the answer is yes. When I came into OA in 1986 I was bingeing every waking moment and I hated myself so much I wanted to die. At my first OA meeting I could tell right away that there was a solution here. There was hope. But there was a problem too – spelled G. O. D. This was a huge problem for me because I was an atheist. Not a casual atheist, either. No, I was a fierce atheist, like my whole family. What could I do? First I opened my heart to the fellowship and hope that I found in OA. Then I started working the steps. I got all the way to Step Two! There I was stuck. It seemed that I had to “find God” to make this program work for me. I tried my best for about two years, without getting any closer to the “belief” I was searching for. Finally I just moved on to finish the steps as best I could. When my 10-year OA “pink cloud” finally ended I had been abstinent and at a healthy body weight for years, but I had no real relationship with any kind of Higher Power that could keep me from dropping out when I started to relapse. I went right back to bingeing and hating myself. I gained over 150 pounds. Defeated, I came back to OA, knowing that I had to deal with the Higher Power issue. I had to either “come to believe” in God, or I had to come to some other kind of workable peace with not believing. Over the next several years I tried many avenues:  I tried figuring out what I would like a Higher Power to be for me

(cont'd. p. 4)

### **Atheist's Recovery Story** (from p. 3)

and starting there. I tried, but I never got over the feeling that it was all just a phony exercise.

□ I started visiting a church. I heard many good reminders of the OA Twelve Steps, but I didn't hear anything useful to help me with my disbelief. □ How could I trust something I didn't understand? I started studying theology from various religions. Maybe knowing how other people understood God would help me understand. I read heaps of theology books, but it didn't help. Maybe I would never understand.

□ It seemed to me that theologians all had different answers or non-answers to my central issue: A God would be all-powerful, all-knowing and all-loving, right? Then how could so many terrible things happen, both in my own childhood and around the world? Finally I threw down the books. By now I knew from direct experience that there is some kind of loving, healing force or energy. My heart was beginning to open to that. But my mind insisted on blaming the loving power for all the un-loving things in the world. My mind is still a fierce atheist. Over the years, I have found more and more peace with the fact that my heart and my mind are in such a deadlock. That peace allowed an increasing connection with some kind of Power greater than myself. That connection in turn has led me to over nine years of abstinence, the release of more and more excess weight, much personal growth, amazing friendships, and a true joy of living. I couldn't begin to imagine, on the day I first walked into OA and saw hope here, just how powerful that hope really is!

*-Elizabeth C.*



### **LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

Give your recovery story a voice! The OA newsletter readers have spoken and have asked for more personal stories of recovery so I encourage you to write and submit them. I have gotten articles from new comers and old timers alike – everyone has something to offer.

*-Liz P.*

### **ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ARE DUE BY**

March 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.



### ***Our Annual Convention – Please join us!***



**20/20 VISION:  
SOLUTIONS FOR “I” PROBLEMS  
March 21, 2020**

**Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
15750 Baxter Rd., Chesterfield, Missouri**

This year's convention will be a full day recovery event designed to bring clarity to your personal “vision” problems. Whether committing to a full or half day, you will find experience, strength and hope in abundance.

**Featuring:** Keynote Speaker from Region 5 who will speak three times throughout the day

**Sessions:** Twelve or more local speakers leading two tracks of meetings

**Sponsor:** St. Louis Bi-State Intergroup of OA

**Questions?** Contact Susan T., 314-283-0204  
*See stlouisoa.org for schedule and registration details.*