

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®

OTTAWA DISTRICT INTERGROUP

Spring
2023

THE SUNSHINER

Newsletter



IN
THIS
ISSUE

Soundbites from the Virtual Region Convention (March 3-5, 2023)

Service

- For service positions - make all positions 'co-chairs' or have back-ups – so that you're never alone
- Approach people personally to ask them to do service
- Need to improve opportunities for BIPOC community to participate in service positions – particularly at higher levels of service

Tools

- Anonymity - finding something great about everyone in the room (neither better nor worse than others).
- It's not a break in anonymity if someone is in danger. E.g., saying to other members that "Person X could use a phone call"
- The group conscious of OA is we have to do our own analysis for a food plan (i.e., there is no 'one' food plan)

Tools Continued

- There are as many food plans as members I've come across in OA
- It does not make sense for everybody to eat the same way
- "I can't stop once started. And I couldn't stop from starting." Step 1 - my mind kept finding reasons. On my own I can't fix the mind problem.
- "The serenity prayer will make everything better"
- Literature is a meeting between meetings; or a meeting in the middle of the night when no meetings are being held
- Privilege of being an English speaker given how many languages do not have OA literature published
- "I wanted my life to change without looking at all the things that weren't working..."
- "Having smart feet" - I don't want to be in a meeting but I am!

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Other good tidbits

- Things don't need to be perfect to be good enough
- My sponsor taught me I needed to separate what goes into my mouth, from what goes on in my life.
- Need to know the difference between hitting a bump in the road versus driving over a cliff (in terms of "breaking" abstinence).
- Perfectionism will kill me ... we are all going to screw up at some point in time.

Have you heard great things at a recent event or speaker meeting? Please feel free to share them for the summer edition, keeping in mind our spirit of anonymity!



A HUGE thanks to Erica S, who has agreed to be on the Sunshiner Committee, and help edit and do graphics work.

Together we can do what we could never do alone.

Thank you, Erica!!!

Greetings from your new Sunshiner Team!

Hi fellow OAs!

It is with some excitement (and trepidation) that I take on the role of Sunshiner Editor. A huge thanks to Gabriella for all the work she has done over the past 2 years: connecting us to one another at a time when most of us were hungrier for connection than ever (pun intended).

The story of how I came to take on this position, and this edition's topic, are connected. The topic, "growth and renewal" seemed appropriate for spring. But it is also appropriate for my program. My growth often feels painfully slow in this program (and sometimes nonexistent to my own eyes). I hit a point this winter where I knew I had to do something to 'renew' my program - give it a fresh start in some way - so that my program would have some extra pep in its step, so to say.

I was contemplating two different kinds of service, suggested to me by a friend and fellow. I hummed and hawed between Option A and Option B, but neither felt quite right. My anxiety was loud, and my body felt unsettled (with program, I have listened to learn to how my body responds to choices in front of it). So, I did what does not come naturally to me, and I waited. And as I went about my life and continued to work my program, Option C magically appeared!

Option C (the Sunshiner) was not what I had envisioned, but I think it's what my HP had in mind. Program has taught me to sleep on big decisions, but when the option was presented, my body felt relaxed. And a spark of interest. And so, I accepted the position.

Working on the Sunshiner shows me my own growth, in being able to listen to my intuition and wait to see what God has in store - instead of jumping on the first option that I think I 'should' do. It is also a tool I hope will help me renew my program, and I have already seen it work, as I have connected with many fellows this past month as we work on content and layout for the new edition.

Thank you for this opportunity to be of service. I hope you too can see opportunities for renewal, and demonstration of your growth, this spring.

Meaghan H., Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter

A Recovery Perspective On Spring

The theme for the Sunshiner this month is Renewal and Growth. That brings Spring to mind, of course, with fresh, vibrant green grass, and new flowers suddenly appearing. But when it starts, Spring is usually pretty dirty, mucky with mud and other debris that's collected over the long winter. And it's often still very cold. Sometimes it's hard to believe that Spring will ever come.

I have days like that in recovery. Sometimes it's more like weeks, or even months. Everything in my program

feels flat and stale. My Higher Power feels very far away at those times, and it's hard to remember why I keep doing all the reading, and writing, and praying. Food may be louder at these times, but not always. Sometimes I worry about my weight, or a new diet I saw advertised. I worry about my health, or about money; I even worry about how much I'm worrying!

Underneath all that debris and muck, my recovery lies dormant. It hasn't gone anywhere. It's just waiting for me to take a fresh look around as I trudge the road of happy

destiny and see something new. A new face at a meeting, or a new spin on that old familiar page in the Big Book, may be enough to bring me a new way to look at my life and my attitudes. Perseverance can sow the seeds of spiritual growth, even when I'm not looking!

My Higher Power can take just a hint of renewed energy and transform it into growth. Before I know it, my program feels fresh and green once more. Spring is here!

- Chantal G., Ottawa

Is 2023 Your Year to do Service At Intergroup?

Ottawa District Intergroup needs your help to continue providing the services members and newcomers have come to rely on. It's been proven that doing service strengthens an OA member's recovery in the program and helps prevent relapse. Here is a great opportunity to provide service above the group level. Be part of the team!

We have open positions and are looking for members to fill these roles:

- Region 6 Representative
- Publications Chair
- Public Information/Professional Outreach Chair

For more information on the duties of the position, click [here](#). To apply to a position, members must first be nominated by their group and complete the nomination form. You can download the [PDF](#) version, or the fillable [MSWord](#) version. Send your completed form to: chair@oa-ottawa.ca

OA Responsibility Pledge

“Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.”

Sunshiner submissions

The Sunshiner is only a good read if we get contributions from YOU! It is also a form of service. Please consider contributing at the next call out.

A prayer: My Higher Power Whispering in My Ear

Why not act as if you are worthy?
Why not stop apologizing for your faults?
Why not try believing that you are loved?
Why not believe that that love transcends your own
measure or understanding?

You have never needed my forgiveness.
You are complete.
You are finite.
But you are part of the infinite.
Why not embrace the love I have for you,
And trust the process?

- Erica S.

Have you checked out these OA Online Resources?

(double click to access the link)

[Overeaters Anonymous Great Britain – audioshares](#)

[Region 6 Convention 2022](#) – new speakers being added

[Virtual Region Convention 2020](#)

The Sunshiner wants to include your voice! Theme for summer's edition to come soon. Please email sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca to submit an article or for more information.

2023 Ottawa IG Retreat

The 2023 OA Intergroup Retreat will be held in-person this year on June 23rd to 25th at the Galilee Centre 398 John Street N in Arnprior.

Cost to be determined. More information to come!

Sponsorship

Looking for a sponsor? Wanting to become a sponsor?

The Twelfth Step Within Committee organizes and runs special events such as workshops. It also keeps a list of members available to sponsor (both temporary and long-term). To get on the list, or to find a sponsor yourself, email sponsors@oa-ottawa.ca for more information.

Growth in OA

*"Trees grow where they are planted
People grow where they are loved and
accepted"
- Bob Goff*

When I first "shamefully" slid into the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous on April 19th, 2017, I embodied the characteristics of a very "dead" tree...

... the bark was falling off
... No leaves much less fruit
... visible open wounds
... root damage unfolding

My characteristics though maybe not externally visible were certainly apparent and visible to you people! You people, being grateful compulsive overeaters/bulimics/restrictors/sugar addicts/underweight/overweight beautiful human beings.

Just a few characteristics I secretly carried internally were guilt/shame/fear/anger/hurt/painful past/broken heart and resentment.

I definitely did not show up in that dark dingy cold smelly church room to "GROW."
I just came to lose some weight... get slim quick... do a quick exit and go on my merry way!!

However, that's not how growth happens. I had absolutely no idea that coming into these

rooms that I would "one day at a time" become planted as a human being in the great forest of life!!

As Bob Goff so eloquently states in his quote: "People GROW where they are loved and accepted."

Within the walls of these rooms... doing the 12 Step work... reading the literature... learning to live in the Big Book... sharing at meetings ... being of service... using the tools ... and keep coming back! I have become loved and accepted with the amazing people who share my disease.

I have come to love and accept myself as I am and who I am becoming... much more than that I AM also loved and accepted by the beautiful undeserving grace of an all powerful, all knowing, all loving God who wants what's best for me, on a daily basis.

This beautiful program and God's Presence has blossomed me into a different human being bearing the fruits of the spirit in my life... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and most importantly as of late... long suffering (having or showing patience, despite troubles).

Do I produce these fruits everyday?
Absolutely not this is a program of spiritual progress not spiritual perfection.

As long as I continue to work my program (with the help of my amazing sponsor) Blossoming and helping others will always be the nourishment that my soul will long for!

#ODAAT

- Annette S.



Events Happening Within Region 6!

Coming Back to OA: A New Beginning

April 22 @ 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Saturday, April 22, 10:30am-noon



Come hear a panel of speakers share their journey from relapse to recovery. Everyone is welcome! Mass Bay Intergroup

For questions, please contact: info@oambi.org or phone: 1-781-641-2303

<https://oaregion6.org/index.php?gf-download=2023%2F03%2FMFI-Flyer-Coming-Back-to-OA-A-New-Beginning-April-22-2023.pdf&form-id=2&field-id=9&hash=6aa6cfcff01b9141a5ebf4f99e0152ada8ce72ce570eca0c4f6d7178211f07b8>

WELCOME
home

WHITE PLAINS NY

Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous

invites you to attend the

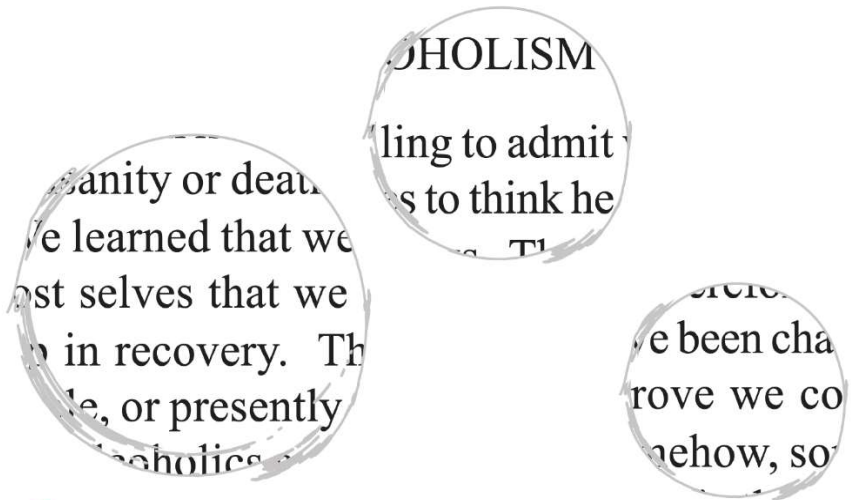
2023 Region 6 Convention!

JOIN US IN PERSON

October 13-15

Registration is open - online only to Sept 28th:

Click here to register



AD4L Speaker Series

“We Agnostics”

...

New York
Time

8th April
5:30pm - 7:00pm

London
Time

8th April
10:30pm - 12:00am

Melbourne
Time

9th April
7:30am - 9:00am

ZOOM ID: 200 540 624
(no password)

Leaps of Faith

Four years ago, I returned to OA after a three-year relapse. At 47, I weighed more than ever, but that wasn't why I returned. I came back because I had finally accepted that my way was never going to give me the life I desperately wanted. I am a compulsive overeater and a restricter and bulimic. I've been all different weights in my lifetime, but none gave me a life "happy, joyous, and free" (*Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed.*, p. 133). Today, I weigh 65 pounds (29 kg) less than my top weight, but more importantly, I have an amazing life, free of the regrets and struggles that kept me imprisoned for years. Recently, I had one of those countless spiritual experiences we get in recovery. It reminded me just what it means to keep coming back.

I was running along the beach and listening to an OA podcast. As a recovering bulimic, I no longer exercise to erase the damage I used to incur with food. Now, exercise is a joy and a time to connect with HP. But that day, as sometime happens, I'd become lost, spinning in fear and obsessing on something painful. Even the podcast, which minutes before had felt so powerful and inspiring, seemed flat. No longer in the present, I was in the "bondage of self" (p. 63).

But program teaches actions that release me from the prison of self-will and connect me with God's will. I texted a fellow and described exactly how I felt. She replied, "Give it to God. You are a miracle. We are all miracles." So, right there, in the middle of the dirt road, I got on my knees and talked aloud to God, sharing all the crazy, scary stuff inside my head. I let the tears run and breathed in God's love.

As my eyes and heart opened, I gazed at the ocean and saw countless dolphins arcing among the waves, perfect symbols of God's promise of a life happy, joyous, and free! I felt my obsession lift and fear wash away. I texted my fellow, and she replied: "God gave you a gift, and a smile."

By reaching out to God and a fellow, I received the gifts of peace and serenity that only come from surrender. To that truth I keep coming back. So many times, I tried to control my food to get abstinence. I tried to clutch and claw my way through relationships and life. But effortless abstinence and freedom are not to be wished for, grabbed at, or achieved. They are gifts I receive when I become willing to come into the present with all I feel and humbly ask for help.

Today I keep coming back by taking actions that bring me out of the bondage of self and into reality and recovery. Thank you, OA! Thank you, God! — Amy L., Central Coast, California USA

Posted Feb. 1, 2020 on oalifeline.org

Thirty Days!

I've reached my twenty-ninth day of abstinence. Tomorrow will be my weighing day and my highly anticipated thirtieth day. I've never gone thirty days without weighing myself, but the experience has been interesting! It really takes the focus off numeric results and has made me realize other subtleties of physical, emotional, and spiritual recovery.

Thirty days ago, I wrote a letter to myself about how bad I was feeling and how I never wanted to feel that way again. In fact, changes are happening.

Shortness of breath was one of the first things that went away, and I haven't been out of breath for days, not even when reading to my daughter. What a relief!

I couldn't sit on the floor for a long time or find a comfortable position, but the other day, I spent a lot of time sitting on the floor organizing some drawers with my daughter without suffering. Wow!

My migraines have decreased considerably, and consequently, so has my use of painkillers! The migraines are torturous, so this is a great victory.

What has been very evident in the last few days is how my irritability has decreased, both with family and people at work. Before, I was ready to explode at any time, but now it seems that without excess food and junk food, space has opened for me to think calmly and either solve things with more serenity or realize that it is not my problem to solve and really deliver it to a Higher Power.

One of the biggest changes has been to really feel that when I give my powerlessness to a Higher Power, my Higher Power works for me and does for me what I can't do for myself. This is getting me closer to God than ever before.

I've noticed that I can feel life in between meals. I was born anxious, so I know anxiety is part of my nature, but it is much more controlled since it is not being fed! It's not always easy. Sometimes, I need to stop everything and identify the emotion that is disturbing me at the moment and decide what to do with it without anesthetizing with food. This process has become more controlled every day. I feel my clothes fitting me better. Before, I refused to buy even bigger sizes, but everything was super tight and at the limit!

Attending one [meeting](#) a day, working with a great [sponsor](#), and using the [Tools of Recovery](#) has kept me working the program. Each day I've learned something new. The [Big Book](#) has been the great light at the end of the tunnel. Nothing has been perfect or easy, but the changes that have happened are indescribable! I feel like a phoenix rising from the ashes!

— Athena C., São Paulo, Brazil
posted Nov. 1, 2020 on oalifeline.org

“Thirty days ago, I wrote a letter to myself about how bad I was feeling and how I never wanted to feel that way again.”

Editorial Policy

The Ottawa District Sunshiner Newsletter Publications Committee welcomes your comments and suggestions. The opinions published in the newsletter are those of the writer, not those of Ottawa District Intergroup or OA as a whole. Please address all submissions and correspondence via email to: Sunshiner@oa-ottawa.ca

We request that submissions be signed, but names will be withheld from publication upon request. Please limit the scope to your OA experience, noting that references to other Twelve Step programs cannot be published.

Meaghan H., Incoming Editor, Sunshiner Newsletter
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Vacant Position, Chairperson of the Publications Committee