

Freedom from Bondage

The Newsletter from Region 5 of Overeaters Anonymous
Spring 2020

Fear and Faith

This was the topic for our Sunday morning Coffee and Recovery Zoom meeting this morning. What inspirational shares today. I believe that we will make it through these difficult times together and come out even stronger.

FEAR – False Evidence Appearing Real – I know that there is a lot of scary information and misinformation available that can be accessed 24/7. On my computer stand I have three plastic frogs. I am reminded at all times to Fully Rely On God. I pray that I will continually remember to turn all my fears and worries and concerns over to my Higher Power – Step 1 - I admit that I am powerless over pretty much everything and my life is unmanageable. Then – Step 2 - I acknowledge that a Power greater than myself, my God, is all powerful and God can restore me to sanity. Next, I seek repeatedly throughout the day to practice Step 3 and turn my will (my thoughts) and my life (my actions) over to the care of God, as I understand God, knowing full well that my finite mind cannot even begin to understand infinite God.

In my 10-plus years in program, I have developed a spiritual connection with God that is beyond my wildest dreams. I have come to believe that we get more of what we focus on, so I choose to focus on what I want, not on what I don't want. Today I am focusing on health, joy, love and peace, and fellowship with God and my fellows and my family. I want more of that in all of our lives. May this day be filled with random acts of kindness – given and received. Be well.

From the Chair

It is a blustery day outside my window today and it reminds me of the swirling emotions around life as we now know it. I love home and I am thankful for this time to be in one of my happy places. Life as we knew it even two weeks ago has changed. For the first time ever, to the best of my knowledge, the World Service Business Conference will take place

virtually this year as the New Mexico government has extended their ban on meetings. The registered delegates will do our best to complete necessary business of OA in the virtual world this year - the election of Trustees and the review of the new literature proposals.

Many of our Intergroups have helped their groups to open virtual meetings using the technology that is available. Also please check OA.org for virtual meetings around the world.

The nominating committee has been appointed and they will be seeking applications for the positions of Chair and Treasurer to be elected at the Fall Assembly. The application to run for these positions is available on the Region 5 website in the forms section. Please prayerfully consider offering to serve. I believe that you will find that this service will be filled with blessings for you and your program. The phrase "We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed" (page 25 AAB) comes to mind.

Thank you to all of you for your service to this fellowship! TOGETHER WE CAN!

— CJ M. *Region 5 Chair*



OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®
REGION 5

www.Region50A.org

RECOVERY'S ALIVE
IN REGION 5

RESPONSIBILITY PLEDGE

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

NEW Region 5 32" x 80" banner.

Overeater Anonymous Literature in the Early Days

Old timers say that in the early days, “We only had the Alcoholic Anonymous Big Book.” It seems hard to imagine that OA had nothing of its own to explain the program or guide members onto recovery. It turns out that in the beginning, OA had literature that did not use AA’s steps and traditions. That change came later. Compared to Alcoholic Anonymous, OA had to struggle with a different problem. Members still had to eat while they tried define what it meant to be abstinent from compulsive overeating.

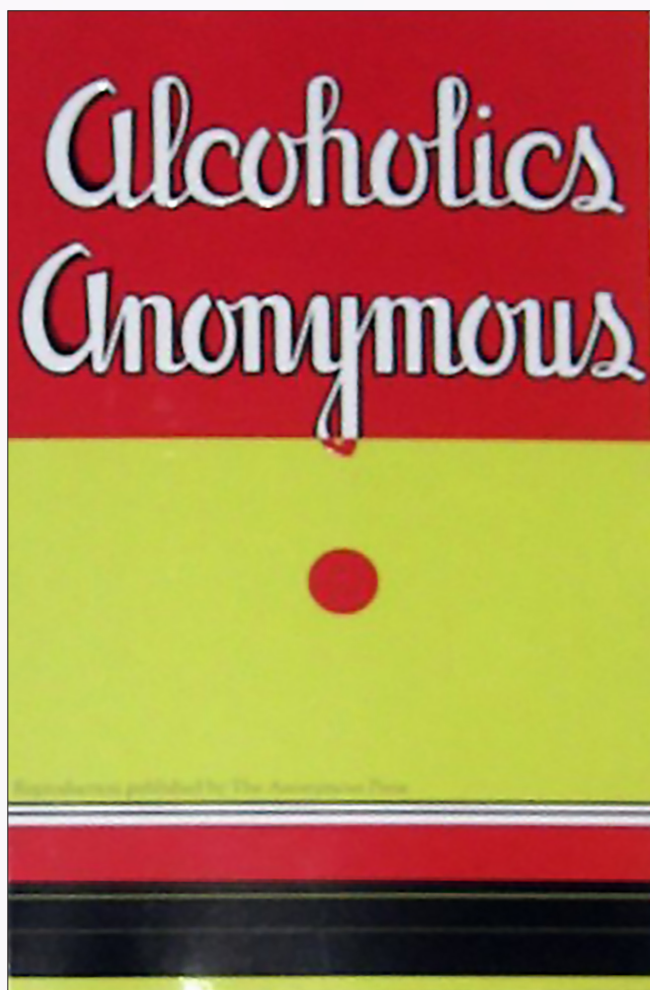
In her book *BEYOND OUR WILDEST DREAMS*, Rozanne S. told a rocky, but encouraging, story of

how OA really got started. Rozanne recalls in 1960 she was a rebellious newcomer with no knowledge of what the AA Twelve Steps were about. She wrote her own Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous and The Twelve Unifying Rules because she thought she could do a better job than AA. These first steps and rules reflected the diet mentality, common in most compulsive eaters. The first piece of literature, a four-page booklet explaining OA, included Rozanne’s revised OA Step and Rules (not Traditions). Also included in the booklet was an introduction and a history of the OA organization, which was less than a year old.

Rozanne later worked with a sponsor more familiar with AA, who explained to Rozanne the value of surrender and dependence on a Higher Power. Other members who had experience with AA also felt that stronger spiritual language needed to be used. In February, 1962 a meeting of nine women, representing six Los Angeles meetings, voted to change the OA Steps to read exactly like the AA Steps substituting food and COE for alcohol and alcoholic.

The literature handed to newcomers to evolved from that first pamphlet. Individual meetings developed their own newcomer pamphlets. The desire to give people guidance continued to center around the “diet” people should use. Some favored very structured programs of eating, while others allowed members to develop a plan based upon advice of a health care professional. Over the years factions developed in the fellowship, mostly centered around the the use of low-carbohydrate diets. The meetings in favor of carbohydrate limitations published specific food and meal guides that members were required to follow if they wished to attend and share at those meetings.

Theses diets were printed on colored paper. Different forms of the low-carbohydrate diets were printed on lots of different colored paper, whatever was available. Later one low-carbohydrate food plan was published on gray paper and was known as the “Gray Sheet”.



The First Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book.

(continued on page 3)

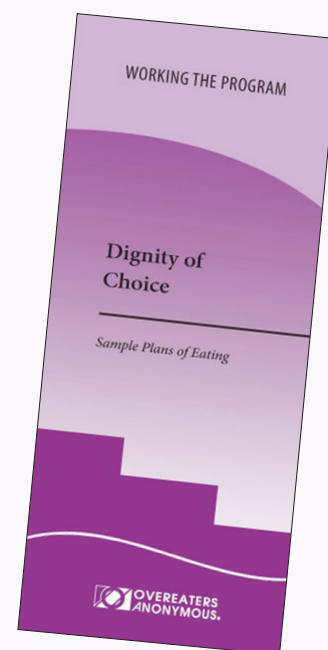
Many “regular” OA members objected that excluding members was against OA principles and Traditions. If a member who had been following a different plan came to one of the carbohydrate abstainers’ meetings, they were told they are not abstinent and could not share.

In 1966 the OA National Conference approved the pamphlet “To the Newcomer”. The pamphlet said that in OA abstinence was abstaining from compulsive eating. An eating plan was a method by which one learned to abstain. It also stated that OA does not endorse any particular eating plan. Meetings still remained autonomous, but no one could prevent anyone from attending a meeting based on food plans.

The issue of OA approved food plans continues today. We now have the OA approved pamphlet “Dignity of Choice” which helps compulsive eaters find a way of developing a plan of eating.

World Service Organization today has a robust process to develop and revise the OA literature. Publications are carefully reviewed and reflect all the OA traditions, polices and principles. All members can rely on Overeater Anonymous approved literature to support their recovery.

— Barbara E.



OA's current Dignity of Choice pamphlet.

A Personal History in OA Meetings

I came into OA in 1986 suffering from panic attacks and nightmares. That year my oldest daughter got married and moved three states away.

I consider that Monday Night Meeting my home meeting. It was large enough that we would split into three groups to share after we read “How it Works” from the AABB. This meeting was also my first introduction to 12 Step Programs. We had For Today, Lifeline, and Lifeline Sampler, and a Hard Cover OA Brown Book, otherwise we used Hazelden Literature.

My youngest daughter, still in high school, would ask me if I was going to my meeting, if she noticed I was still home at the regulat time for my meeting.

In 1990 we had to move our meeting place, the church was being sold and torn down to build an Outpatient Surgery Center for a Medical Center.

We have been at our present location since then, so it is thirty years this year.

We had many meetings in Janesville then and two meetings at our current location (Monday Night and Thursday Morning). Over time we have met in 4 different room in this facility.

By the mid 1990's we had one meeting, barely surviving, with mainly three people attending.

We now have six meetings (of which I attend four). I have done two of the “OA Step Study” and more members just completed a third Study.

I hear very good responses about our new “12 and 12”. I especially like the way it is written.

We currently do the latest format with minor changes done by a group conscience at our meetings.

After missing many of our meetings the winter of 2018-2019, due to storms and other weather issues, we have two people that have stepped up and we have Zoom/phone capabilities at our meetings or if the meeting is cancelled we can still connect and have our meetings remotely.

We celebrated the OA Birthday with Unity Day because of a snowstorm in January. We also get together for Sponsorship Day and IDEA Day. For 12-12 we suggest that people contact other members that have been absent.

We are currently working on starting one or two groups of an AA Big Book Meeting. The first meeting will be Friday, March 27, 2020.

Rock River Inter Group is located in Central Southern Wisconsin and follows the Rock River.

— Shirley L

Looking Back on What Went Right

60 years of OA. I feel blessed to have had OA in my life for nearly the last 2 years. I am so thankful that it has survived this long, to help me and other newcomers continue to recover from compulsive eating. After all, if we were all cured, there would be no OA to help future sufferers!

It's times like this where it's interesting to look back and see what happened to make us last this long. What did we do right to get us here, 60 years later?

The Tools of Recovery have been essential. Through sponsorship and service, we give back what was freely given to us, and by giving back, we encourage those we help to help other compulsive eaters. Meetings, in any form, keep us from isolating, keep us in the solution, and build fellowship among us; this fellowship keeps OA going. The telephone, which can be expanded to include video calls, keeps us connected even when we physically can't be, and it gives us a way to have fellowship or a meeting without having to

find an in-person meeting, especially in tight spots when you need a meeting right now. OA literature, published by everything from small individual groups to the WSO, reminds us of our common solution, regardless of where and when we are; this literature can be carried around with us in print or on a phone, giving us access to recovery wherever we are.

The most important tool, though, is anonymity. OA would not have lasted 60 years without this. It allows us to know that we can speak our truth rooms. It is only with this freedom to share ourselves that we can recover. This freedom allows us to see how similar we are to others in OA, allowing us to no longer feel alone. Knowing that our program is kept anonymous helps us open up because we know that our reputations will be protected outside the rooms.

Meetings above the group level are also important. Small groups have business meetings where events can be discussed, group consciences

(continued on page 5)



can be held, and more, Intergroups and regions have meetings and assemblies to discuss bylaws, events, resources, etc. The WSO has conferences where the same things happen, but on a world wide scale. This global unity throughout OA keeps us going because it reminds us that we are part of a worldwide fellowship. We receive resources from our intergroup, region, and the WSO to help us when we struggle financially, when we desire to do a workshop and need help planning it, when we want to print or publish things, and so on.

This unity within OA is also a closely guarded tradition; our recovery depends on OA unity. This unity allows us to be a part of OA as a whole while maintaining that individual groups are autonomous. We follow our Higher Power's will, not our own desires and wishes. We are inclusive, accepting anyone who wants to recover, regardless of how we are different. We have a singular goal, to help other compulsive eaters. We remain unbiased,

self-supporting, non-professional, we do not give opinions on outside issues. We use attraction rather than promotion.

All of these things, the tools & traditions, have brought us to where we are today, but we can't forget the steps. It is the 12 steps, as adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous, that have allowed us to recover. Without recovery, none of us would be here, and the fellowship never would have lasted this long. It's times like this where I wonder what my life would be like if the Big Book had never been written, and I wonder how addicts like me lived before the Big Book existed. I am truly blessed to be alive when and where I am, with OA and my fellows to support me.

I hope to keep passing it on, so that 60 years from now, someone like me will have the help they need to be freed from food obsession.

— Christina H.

Region 5 Online Meetings

Region 5 has budgeted to provide video conference service to facilitate online committee and intergroup meetings between assemblies. This service provides the ability:

- for committees to meet virtually via video conferencing on computers, tablets, and mobile devices
- to share a white board, apps, and screen for collaboration effort
- for virtual voting / polling


Region 5 Committees and Intergroups can request an online meeting by sending an email to R5Host@Outlook.com. When you send the request please provide the following information:

1. Name of Region 5 Committee or Intergroup.
2. Purpose of the meeting.
 - a. For example: Committee Meeting, Intergroup Meeting, Intergroup Board meeting
 - b. Outside of the above list of purposes will require approval by the Region 5 Board.
 - c. Recovery groups may want to utilize the video conference service during this time when Face-to-Face meetings are not possible. The Region

5 account would be easily overwhelmed by such requests, so for this reason Region 5 is encouraging Recovery groups to purchase their own accounts. If you need help doing this please contact the Region 5 Secretary for assistance.

3. Date and Time of the meeting.
 - a. If the meeting is recurring, please provide a list of specific date and times to schedule the meeting. We cannot schedule meeting for a specific weekend of the month as so many Intergroup meetings are scheduled.
 - b. Please indicate the time zone.
4. Duration of the meeting. 1 to 2 hours is typical.
5. Please indicate if you need the meeting private and locked down. To do this the meeting will need be encrypted and locked with a password. It may also require prior registration. For the most part this isn't necessary for our online meetings. It is much more difficult to set up a private meeting. Also, the chances of someone uninvited joining a regular meeting is minimal.

(continued on page 6)

- 
- Week 1:** OA 12 and 12 Step of the month
Week 2: OA Principle of the month
Week 3: AA Big Book Step of the month
Week 4: Lead/Speaker Meeting
Week 5: Topic Meeting

Sunday Morning Coffee and Recovery Meeting

Online Zoom Meeting - Every Sunday

9:00 AM to 10:00 AM (Eastern)

Zoom Meeting ID: 860 512 7192
Link: <https://zoom.us/j/8605127192>

Password: 7344665
Dial In: +1 929 205 6099

Flyer for the R5 Sunday Morning Zoom Meeting.

(continued on page 7)

6. Name and email of the OA person who will hosting the meeting. An online meeting host is the person who starts and ends the meeting, has the ability to record the meeting, and can control participant access. A host is not necessary, however it is best to have someone designated the host, if only to end the meeting properly. If you do not specify the host then the requester will be designated the host.
7. Polls need to be created ahead of time. If you are planning on using the polling feature for voting, please indicate in your request the questions and various answers you need for your polls. Only the designated host can initiate a polling question.

Online meetings should be scheduled as far in the future as you can reasonably request. Only one Region 5 Committee or Intergroup can utilize the service at a time. The Coordinator of Virtual Meetings uses the R5Host account calendar to schedule the meetings and prevent two groups from having a meeting at the same time. When you request a meeting at a specific date and time you may be told that date and time slot is already

occupied. We also typically leave a 30-minute window before and after the meeting so that people may join without interrupting an ongoing meeting. If you request a meeting within the two weeks before the requested date and time, you run the increasing risk the date and time slot is already occupied. Please be flexible and request an alternate date and time if the initial request is denied.

When the meeting is scheduled the Coordinator of Virtual meetings will send out two emails. First is a meeting request and invitation. This email includes instructions on how to connect to the online meeting. It should be forwarded to all participants. The second email is the host designation. It is sent only to the designated host. This email has full instructions on how to claim the host privilege and how to properly host the meeting. Please do not pass this email anybody but the person hosting the meeting.

You can find additional information on online meetings in the Assembly Information document on pages 13 and 14.

— Joel I. *Region 5 Secretary*

Service Has Always Helped

Looking at the past of OA I can see that service has been important from the start. When reading Rozanne's story I felt like that could be my story. Without service it's too easy to quit and leave. Service keeps me connected, honest, and accountable.

Without service I risk losing everything. I need my fellows. Service doesn't have to be big. Nothing is small. If I'm not involved, I'm isolating and that's dangerous. Keep coming back and do what you can. My life depends on it. — Paula K.



Friends Don't Let Friends Isolate

What should one do if you find your meeting site unexpectedly closed?

Here are some suggestions brainstormed by the Region 5 Media Committee at the Spring Assembly:

Old School:

- Pick up your phone list and call someone. Ask if they are open to a mini meeting.
- Keep the meeting time slot open, including your commute time. Other activities might fill it up if you let them.
- Pick a topic from an index that speaks to you and read the pages. Write a little on each entry.
- Share with a buddy or two on the phone.
- Move the meeting to a coffee house or a member's home. Include those sequestered by phone.
- Learn how to hold a conference call on your phone and do it.
- Don't eat over it. This too shall pass.

If you are able to text or email, you can:

- Take a picture of your meal before you eat it and send it to your sponsor, if they are willing.
- Create a phone tree or an e-mail list.
- Take a picture of the meeting phone list and send it to those on it in case they've lost theirs.

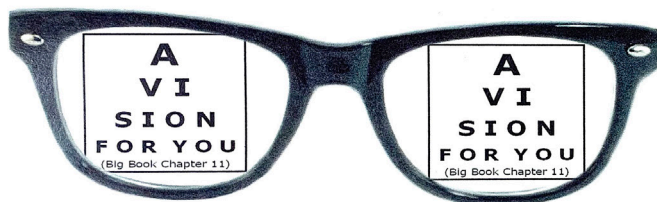
- Create a text group. Pick a topic and share on it via text with your OA Fellows and then everybody responds to it.

If you are a bit more tech savvy, you may:

- Go to OA.org Find A Meeting to find virtual and other meeting options.
- Include existing virtual meetings options on current meeting lists, even if temporary.
- Hold a meeting with a podcast, telephone meeting, or other online meetings with your OA Fellows.
- Explore OA.org topics and share links with your OA Fellows.
- Create an online chat room or private social media group and invite others in to explore a topic.
- Move your meeting online using a video conferencing service.
- Update oa.org with any new information, even if it's temporary.

Above all, stay in touch. Our face-to-face meetings are important. It's crucial to keep our fellowship alive. Keep your meeting contact person information updated for members as well as for the venue where you usually meet. — Diane C. for the Region 5 Media Committee

2020 Region 5 Convention



Come get a Vision check

Check the Region 5 website for more information!

Vision Script				
	Sphere	Cylinder	Axis	Add
Right	OCT	9th	-	11th
Left	Hotel	Holiday Inn	Independence	Ohio
Prescriber				
<u>Cleveland Central Intergroup</u>				

20/20 Vision

LINKS:

www.oa.org
[OA Podcasts](#)
[The 12 Steps](#)
[The 12 Traditions](#)
[The 12 Concepts](#)
[R5 Board & Committees](#)
[R5 Assemblies](#)
[Region 5 Calendar](#)

www.region5oa.org
[R5 Intergroups](#)
[R5 Resources](#)
[R5 Forms](#)
[R5 Links](#)
[Find a Meeting](#)
[Donate to OA](#)
[PIPO Funding Request](#)

[OA Seventh Tradition Cycle](#)
[WSO News and Events](#)
[A Guide for Anonymity in the Digital World](#)