

Reaching Out Our Hands

Recently, I've been in the middle of a kitchen remodel project. It's taking a whole year of research and gathering the motivation to sign the deal to make it happen. Now I'm completely surrendered to it and doing a lot of letting go. As I'm watching the process unfold, it occurred to me how much this experience is aligning with my program experience.....specifically, Reaching Out Our Hands.

This kitchen project has taught me a few life lessons too; including some gratitude for my 12 step program. One thing that's been evident is that when I don't have the strength, the desire or the wherewithal to get thru a challenge, my friends and family and program peeps - Reach Out Their Hands to help. If I'm in the middle of a breakdown in my program, friends and family- Reach Out Their Hands to help. In the middle of being riddled with fear about decisions that I'm making and my perfectionism on high alert, my friends and family Reach Out Their Hands to help. I have people that hold me up during the chaos. Whether it's this kitchen project or my abstinence, the OA program friends and family Reach Out Their Hands to help. And as they do, they hold my excitement for my new kitchen when I don't have it. They give me hope and strength with compassion. They hold my decisions and choices with me. They affirm that everything is going to be ok and work out.

I've experienced the same in my OA journey. When I am struggling or need an extra hand or I don't feel like I can get through and want to give up, "I put my hand in yours". You give me a tribe - a support group to hold me while I walk through the sometime nuances of my OA journey.

Along with doing this project, my schedule changed and my food plan adjusted as well. I was feeling a bit a loss of my regular scheduled meetings and support. But the faith and the trust and the surrender that I have knowing that others are there with me ...through it all, whether I'm speaking with them or not, I know they're holding me up. They're waiting for me. They're allowing an open space for me to work it out ... and to come back. They are Reaching Out Their Hands!

I don't know what is more beautiful than that! This is what cultivates love and gets rid of all ego. Now I regain my balance on my three legged stool. God always at the helm. I hope I've been there for others like that. I think I have. I'll continue to serve because I know the benefit and the glory that comes of it.

J.

In this issue...

Reaching Out Our Hands	1
Readers Email	2
Reflections	3,4
MAI Board	5
OA World Service	5
Seeking a Sponsor.....	5

Our *Cocoon* is an impressive example of the ongoing work of OA members in MAI's communities. You can give service by taking a few of your program moments to read a *Cocoon* article, and give your own comments about anything in the *Cocoon* (anonymously or with your name) to be posted in the blog on our website. Just email a few words to yourstory@oamilwaukee.org. Your words can make a difference to those who visit the oamilwaukee.org website.

Reader's Email

Today is the anniversary of my very first binge, July 4, 1965. I was just a kid, and my parents took me with them to a large Fourth of July celebration. My folks were very social people and didn't seem to notice all the eating I was doing, because they were having fun with all their friends.

The only good that I can say about that bingeing habit I started that day is that I binged every six to eight weeks. I didn't binge as often as some people do, and I'm not sure why not. I know when I was relieved of bingeing, thank you, Higher Power, March 9, 1984; I had racked up about 19 years of that hateful hurtful addictive behavior, and I pray that it never return. Why?

Because I love Recovery and not using and abusing. One day at a time.

So for me, this holiday is a celebration of freedom: freedom from the bondage of self to addictive substances. If you are struggling today with food or booze or some other substance, please Reach Out Your Hands so we can communicate.



From Rifkah....

Today I weighed myself and it showed I gained 3 lbs. That was honestly really hard for me since I have been consistently abstinent and working out everyday. I feel really sad and discouraged by the weight I saw. I really thought it would for sure be in the 80s. I feel like a failure and it's really hard. It's really hard to keep this hope. I also still feel happy not obsessing over the food and I want that. I don't want to give this all up I want to keep living with abstinence and serenity.

MAYBE I WOULD BE OK WITH OA EVEN WITHOUT THE WEIGHTLOSS.....

Maybe my abstinence is really enough, Little Rifkah, I'm checking in on you. Would you be ok with me focusing on the program of recovery and not the weight on the scale? Can you trust me to take care of you and nourish you? Do you want me to guide you to serenity and peace? Do you feel ready to let go of the deep belief that it's all about the weight loss? I know it would be so hard for you since it was wrongfully taught to you at such a young and impressionable age.

Little Rifkah, My sweet girl I know it's really scary. I know you feel hopeless and helpless and honestly it made so much sense you did, because you really were. Such a little girl shouldn't have been put the burden of weight loss at that age. Mommy should have done that for you and naturally incorporated healthier choices without you even realizing or feeling the loss of the foods and quantities you were used to being served. My love, I can be that for you now, I am that adult in your life that can nourish your body and be your support. Do you want to come off that doctor's scale and come with me to the future?

My love take my hand and let's walk away from this painful place together. I'm here for you and I won't leave you ever again. You will never have to face that doctor's scale again alone. I'm so sorry for the pain and shame you felt in this room. I love you so much and I am here for you. ****hugging and kisses on cheek**** Come let's go to a park and have fun! I will check in on you my sweet girl.

Reflections

From the Region 5 Convention

The quote "When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us" is attributed to Alexander Graham Bell

This is the quote I heard at the Region V OA convention as a speaker shared on how to live sober through good times and bad. It was a huge reminder to me that no matter what happens I can let go and let God.

That I can see the closed door, say goodbye to the old and rejoice in the next exciting adventure God has in store for me. Just four days prior to hearing this I resigned from my job. It has brought on alot of fear and financial insecurity as, though I'd been applying for new jobs, I do not have a job lined up.

This was not my plan, but I feel it was the best for me so that I could be free of an unhealthy work environment. At 52 years old and having a twenty-five-year career in the field, I feel I can no longer work in that environment or with the population I've been working with. Although, as I write this, I feel the icy anger and resentment I have from this past job I was at for almost two years, melt away. The fear subsides, and I feel spiritually lifted.

I feel this is a huge result of attending the region 5 OA convention and being with my family of choice for the past several days. I felt God's presence all around me. God directed me to the OA family members I needed to hear from and to meet.. It's been an incredible experience feeling all the hugs, listening ears, compassion, smiles, laughter and honest shares from the heart. Thank you, GOD. And thank you to all who put on the convention in Milwaukee, WI!

Kim B.



What A Gift

Service at Region 5 Convention 2025

"An experience that filled my heart and soul with an unspeakable Joy."

Continued on page 4.



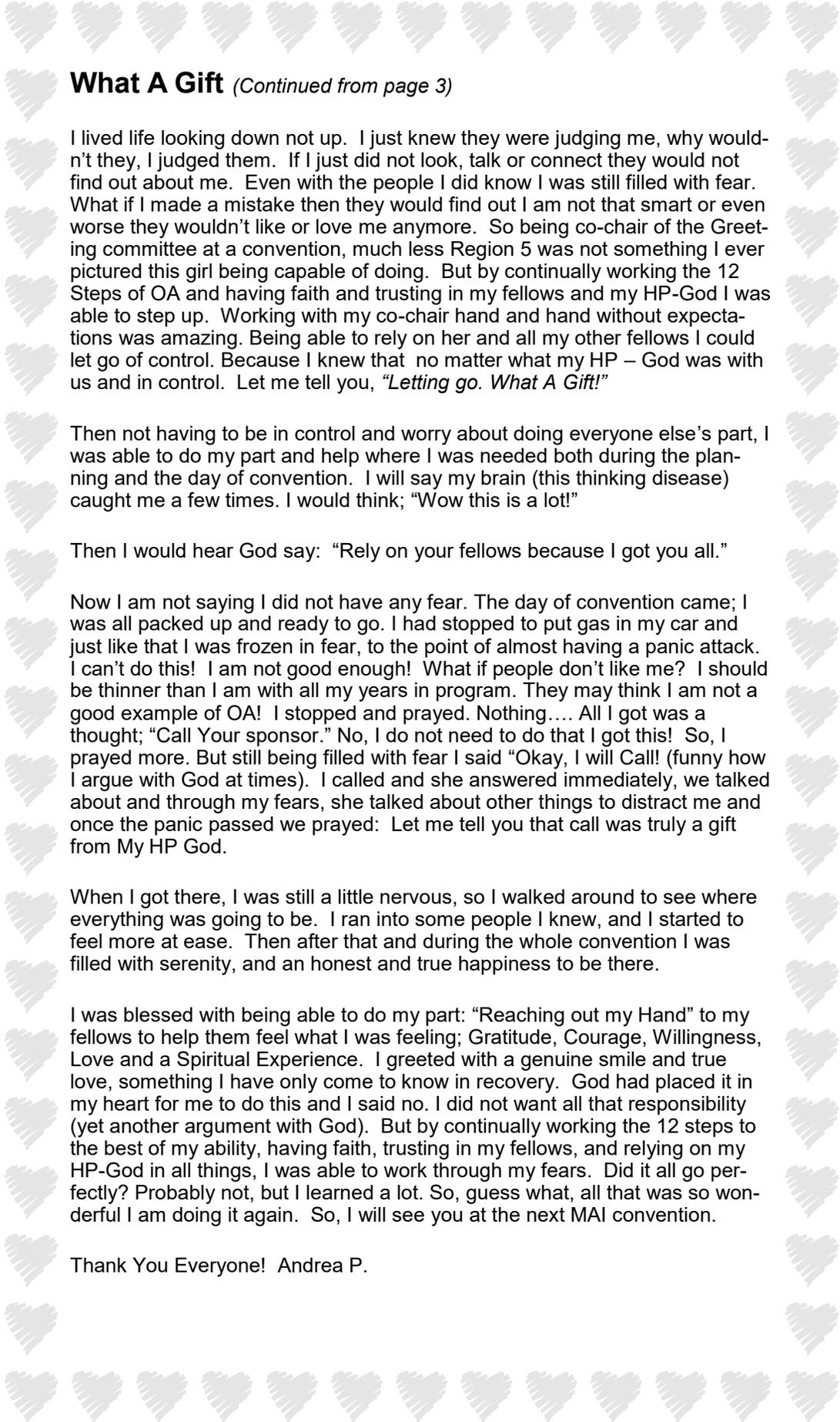
The Bare Oak

The bare oak stands proud and tall, like we recovering Compulsive Overeaters. We stand tall even in our defects, for this is God's will for us. So, His light may shine through us for others to see and give us the ability to share our recovery with other compulsive overeaters.

Meeting Spotlight

Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 CT
 Online Meeting
 Meeting Topic: "Seeking the Spiritual Path: A Collection from Lifeline"

This group holds space for members struggling with their concept of a Higher Power. Our members share openly about how seeking the spiritual path is fueling their recovery. The book we are reading is a helpful resource for OA's who are looking to connect to the Higher Power of their own understanding.



What A Gift *(Continued from page 3)*

I lived life looking down not up. I just knew they were judging me, why wouldn't they, I judged them. If I just did not look, talk or connect they would not find out about me. Even with the people I did know I was still filled with fear. What if I made a mistake then they would find out I am not that smart or even worse they wouldn't like or love me anymore. So being co-chair of the Greeting committee at a convention, much less Region 5 was not something I ever pictured this girl being capable of doing. But by continually working the 12 Steps of OA and having faith and trusting in my fellows and my HP-God I was able to step up. Working with my co-chair hand and hand without expectations was amazing. Being able to rely on her and all my other fellows I could let go of control. Because I knew that no matter what my HP – God was with us and in control. Let me tell you, *"Letting go. What A Gift!"*

Then not having to be in control and worry about doing everyone else's part, I was able to do my part and help where I was needed both during the planning and the day of convention. I will say my brain (this thinking disease) caught me a few times. I would think, "Wow this is a lot!"

Then I would hear God say: "Rely on your fellows because I got you all."

Now I am not saying I did not have any fear. The day of convention came; I was all packed up and ready to go. I had stopped to put gas in my car and just like that I was frozen in fear, to the point of almost having a panic attack. I can't do this! I am not good enough! What if people don't like me? I should be thinner than I am with all my years in program. They may think I am not a good example of OA! I stopped and prayed. Nothing.... All I got was a thought; "Call Your sponsor." No, I do not need to do that I got this! So, I prayed more. But still being filled with fear I said "Okay, I will Call! (funny how I argue with God at times). I called and she answered immediately, we talked about and through my fears, she talked about other things to distract me and once the panic passed we prayed: Let me tell you that call was truly a gift from My HP God.

When I got there, I was still a little nervous, so I walked around to see where everything was going to be. I ran into some people I knew, and I started to feel more at ease. Then after that and during the whole convention I was filled with serenity, and an honest and true happiness to be there.

I was blessed with being able to do my part: "Reaching out my Hand" to my fellows to help them feel what I was feeling; Gratitude, Courage, Willingness, Love and a Spiritual Experience. I greeted with a genuine smile and true love, something I have only come to know in recovery. God had placed it in my heart for me to do this and I said no. I did not want all that responsibility (yet another argument with God). But by continually working the 12 steps to the best of my ability, having faith, trusting in my fellows, and relying on my HP-God in all things, I was able to work through my fears. Did it all go perfectly? Probably not, but I learned a lot. So, guess what, all that was so wonderful I am doing it again. So, I will see you at the next MAI convention.

Thank You Everyone! Andrea P.

Milwaukee Area Intergroup

Serving Eastern Wisconsin

MAI Website oamilwaukee.org

Facebook Overeaters Anonymous - OA Milwaukee

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Board of Directors

(new board members take office at November meeting, based on October elections)

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Leave message for any board member: 414-259-0640

MAI News Available Via Email

Want to receive free, monthly MAI news via email? Send an email to emailblast@oamilwaukee.org with "Subscribe" in Subject. Include in the body of the email your first name, last initial, and home meeting.

Your email address will never be distributed nor seen by other people receiving the mailings.

MAI Monthly Meetings

Third Monday of every month, 6:30-8:00 p.m., via Zoom. Contact chair@oamilwaukee.org for the information. Each member group can have two voting representatives. All OA members are welcome.

OA World Service

oa.org

Free OA podcasts featuring OA speakers: oa.org/podcasts/. A podcast is a radio-type show you can download from the Internet to your computer.

A link is available at this site to get World Service Office (WSO) information.

Spanish OA Website Espanol@oa.org

French OA Website Francais@oa.org

Region 5

region5oa.org

Serving Midwest US and Canada

Cocoon Submissions

We need and want your stories of recovery, poems, and pictures, that share your experience, strength, and hope!

Send to cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org or OAMAI, Attn: Cocoon Editor, PO Box 270054, Milwaukee, WI 53227.

Editorial Policy

Out of the Cocoon is the quarterly newsletter of the Milwaukee Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. We welcome OA-related contributions from members. Material cannot be returned, nor can payment be made. All submissions must be signed; names will be withheld upon request. The editor reserves the right to make editorial changes and to refuse any article not meeting the editorial policy or that breaks any traditions. Articles may not appear in the quarter of submission. Other OA groups may reprint articles without permission as long as credit is given. The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers, and not of the Intergroup or OA as a whole. Deadline for articles is the 20th of odd-numbered months to cocooneditor@yahoo.com.

Seeking a Sponsor?

The MAI Twelfth-Step-Within Committee maintains a list of available sponsors and temporary sponsors so newcomers and those still suffering can get direction and support. If you need help finding a sponsor, email 12th-stepwithin@oamilwaukee.org or call 414-259-0640 and leave a message. Provide your contact information, the type of sponsor you are seeking (i.e. food, step, maintenance, late night calls, for newcomer, temporary, etc.), and any other specific needs you have.

Available to Sponsor?

Please add your name and phone number to the list so you can help another member. Indicate type of sponsor you are willing to be (see above for ideas) and time of day you are available.