

## Put A Little Spring In Your Step **BUH-BYE WINTER TRUDGE**

### Spring in your step

Exercise has always been part of my life. I did sports early on, but as I grew older and had less instruction to stay active, I gained weight. I blamed my metabolism, but I couldn't keep up with the binges. I was so obsessed with my image and weight that I couldn't bare my stomach hanging over my pants, or buying larger shirt sizes. Exercise became a punishment and every 100 calories over on my fitness pal became 10 minutes of cardio. I would carry the calories over to the next day and (attempt to) deprive myself of healthy sized meals. This rarely worked, and the only time I caught up with my calorie surplus was when I had a trip/wedding/event/ if pictures were being taken (i.e. external motivation). Funny how well I could starve myself and compulsively exercise when it came to impressing a man or making an enemy jealous. Also funny how that "willpower" usually died off in a matter of days.



I would be so hateful towards myself while running "you have plenty of fuel fatass", "you HAVE to workout longer because you decided to binge". I would run 15 miles in attempts to "clear" the calories, but I would be so hungry by the end of my workout I would binge again. "Clearing calories" took priority over spending time with my family, getting my homework/projects done, and going out with friends. My self esteem was so low that I would not leave the house if I was over calorie count. Still, I was desperate to binge so I tried to do all my eating in the morning and struggle through the rest of the day. I don't know how I was able to stay in school/internship while living in this cycle.

Since starting OA, Exercise has a new meaning. I tell myself "you can do this" and I use workouts for stress relief and balance. I stick with 30/45 minutes

of cardio MAX, and I rarely measure time/heart rate/calories (Any number leads me back to the obsession). I had to delete my fitness pal, get rid of my scale, and trust that God will help me listen to my body. Getting to run outside puts a spring in my step because I don't have to worry about a machine counting my progress and I can actively meditate with nature. Im happy when I exercise and I don't shame myself if my body wants to stop. I don't have to run the furthest or the fastest, I don't have to be the skinniest, or the most fit. Thank God for this program.

- Holly P.



hop, skip, jump, run, walk, leap, dance, gallop

The Trudge

## MAI Information

MAI Website oamilwaukee.org

### Board of Directors

Chair	Joy M.	414-304-5078
Vice Chair	Kris W.L.	414 731 8572
Secretary	Kathy Wh-	414 607 0217
Treasurer	Kathy W.	262 236 9138
Region 5 Reps	Lynn H.	414-281-2066
	Kris W.L.	414 731 8572
World Service Rep	Lynn H	414-281-2066

MAI Business Administration \* **414-259-0640**

MILWAUKEE AREA INTERGROUP

PO Box 270054

Milwaukee, WI 53227

### MAI News Available Via Email — The OA Blast!

Information about the Milwaukee Area Intergroup can be obtained via email. Please send an email to [emailblast@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:emailblast@oamilwaukee.org) to sign up for free semi-monthly mailings of OA information including marathon/special event flyers, this newsletter and other relevant local OA information for yourself or your OA group. Your email address will never be distributed nor seen by other people receiving the mailings.

### MAI Meeting Schedule

Third Monday of every month, 6:30-8:00 pm, at Rogers Memorial Hospital  
11101 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis  
**Everyone is welcome!**

If you wish to attend an MAI meeting via SKYPE, please contact Kris MW, at 414-731-8572, a day or 2 prior to the meeting. MAI will be excited to have you join us! Always on the 3rd Monday at 6:30 p

### Dec. 2016 Income/Expense Report

Starting Balance	12,041.47
Total Income	2,243.01
Total Expense	(3,989.80)
Net Operating Balance	7,533.33

## OA/WSO (World Service Office)

### General Website Information

[oa.org](http://oa.org)

For all PC, Mac, iPod users, there are free OA podcasts featuring OA speakers at [www.oa.org/podcasts/](http://www.oa.org/podcasts/). A podcast is a radio-type show that you can download from the Internet to your computer.

A link also is available at this site to get World Service Office (WSO) information including the quarterly newsletter "A Step Within." The most recent quarterly newsletter is at [www.oa.org/pdfs/asa1stqtr10bw/pdf](http://www.oa.org/pdfs/asa1stqtr10bw/pdf).

### Spanish OA Website

<http://espanol.oa.org>

### French OA Website

[Francais.oa.org](mailto:Francais.oa.org)

### Region 5 Web Site [region5oa.org](http://region5oa.org)

### Editorial Policy

"Out of the Cocoon" is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Milwaukee Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. We welcome contributions from members that are OA-related. Material cannot be returned, nor can payment be made. All submissions must be signed; names will be withheld upon request. The editors reserve the right to make editorial changes or to refuse any article not meeting the editorial policy. Articles may not appear in the month of submission. Other OA groups may reprint 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.

*(Adapted for Milwaukee Area Intergroup "Cocoon" from Central Ohio "Transformations")*

*See page 7 for submission information, deadlines and themes.*

## 12th-Step-Within ~~ Available Sponsors and More Sponsors Needed

The Twelfth-Step-Within Committee was created to reach out to those in the Fellowship who still suffer and to address the relapse and recovery of our members. The MAI Twelfth-Step-Within Committee maintains a list of available sponsors, temporary sponsors or first contact people so that newcomers and long-timers can get direction and support right away from a member of the fellowship. Please add your name

and phone number to the list so that you can help another member "Keep Coming Back". It is a great service to the fellowship!

If you need a sponsor, email Darlene D. at [12th-stepwithin@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:12th-stepwithin@oamilwaukee.org)

Provide your contact information and any specific needs you have, including the type of sponsor you are seeking (i.e. food, step, late night calls, etc.). Darlene will have a sponsor call you.

## "Weight Is Just a Number"

By: Michelle R.

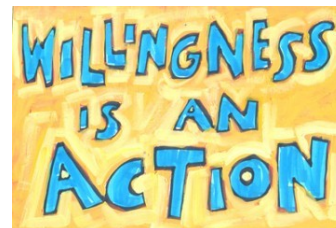
My weight has always had a lot of power over me. If the number on the scale were lower than the last time I had weighed in, it would bring me great joy, sometimes jumping up and down and squealing with excitement. If the number on the scale were higher than I'd hoped, it would bring me down into sadness. No matter the number, my weight had always had the power to make me feel bad about myself. The numbers called me fat, ugly, unlovable and not worthy of good things. Thankfully, through the OA work I've done with my Higher Power, the level of power my weight has over me has been changing over the last half a year. It doesn't matter the number on the scale, I am beautiful inside and out, I am loved and loveable, and I am worthy of all good things. I am still astounded and so very grateful to my Higher Power for this change. I never thought that I would be relieved from the power my weight once held over me. I am so grateful... and a little scared. I am now only weighing in once a month. This used to be impossible for me. I tried a few months back and maybe only made it a couple weeks at tops. Now I'm only a few days away from that first weigh-in and I'm just a bit afraid that seeing the number on the scale, whatever it is, will cause the mind games to come back. So, I have come up with an action plan to try to fight the mind games. First, in the few days leading up to the weigh-in, I will pray that the mind games will not come back and that I will be able to let it go, realizing that weight is just a number. Second, right after weighing in, I will pray no matter what the scale says. If my weight has gone down, I will thank my Higher Power for the program, for abstinence and for the fact that my body is getting healthier through the work we are doing together. Then, I will record my weight in my book and I will let it go for another month til the next weigh-in. If my weight has gone up, I will thank my Higher Power for the program, for continued abstinence regardless of the weight gain and for my mind and spirit growing stronger through the work we are doing together in the program. I will pray again that the mind games will not pick back up and that I will remember that weight is just a number and has no bearing on who I am. I will record my weight and then I will let it go until the next weigh-in one month later. I have faith that through the program, and with the help of my Higher Power, weight will continue to have no power over me, one day at a time.



I spent much of my life believing that my happiness depended on other people and what they did or did not do. The fact that I am sometimes unhappy today only shows that I am, consciously or unconsciously, clinging to old habits; that is, I'm not willing to be happy. Like everything else that's good in my life, willingness is the key to happiness.

I am really glad not to be on this road alone. I love the part in Voices of Recovery 01/31/17 about "just for today," instead of one day at a time, as one day at a time assumes another and another making it bigger than it is or I can handle at that moment. My mind knows that I will never "make it," but not sure my soul is in line yet. I hope so and am definitely working on it. Same is true of "today is all I really have for sure." Even all of today is not guaranteed. Goes with "this minute is my only reality," from For Today 1/31/17. I get it, logically and rationally, but, this disease is neither reasonable, logical, nor rational. So where does that leave me? Working the program to the best of my ability at all times no matter what that entails, looks like or what I did or could do some other day. Full circle back to, "Just for today." Whala!!!

M<sup>2</sup>



### Do I believe in God? Or Not?

Sometimes I think that I if I was really, really a strong willed person that I wouldn't need some other power to believe in. I often think that if it weren't for my food addiction that I would be an agnostic. I seem to contradict myself about this. Sometimes I MAKE myself believe in a higher power just so I can "qualify" for the third step...but then I go and pray/talk to "God" about other things - because praying comes so naturally to me. So f----- it, I give it up and will let "God" take over. But believe in an HP or not, I have to the footwork. That's part of the magic. No footwork, no magic. Sully, the pilot who successfully landed the plane of 150 souls on board said that in order for that miracle to happen, one had to bank (or deposit) a lot of experience in order to make that large of a with-drawl. What really is karma? So, "God" willing, I will continue to make various deposits and believe that someone, some thing, outside of me or inside of me will enable me to maintain abstinence and live in the 12 steps.

## Abstinence and Honesty

First, I have been abstinent now for 31/2 tough years. The thought of giving up the freedom of what I have gained by my abstinence is a scary thought especially since I have chosen this path so many times before. So, I pray for the willingness to stay on this path and probably need to every day.

This brings me to the idea and action of truly being abstinent. You notice I didn't and never will say perfectly abstinent as I believe that no such place exists. I think it is hard to be honest about binge foods because there are so many levels of them.

First and foremost, for me were the obvious trigger or binge foods. The obvious ones sugar, white flour or anything with these things in them, and I sure knew what they all were and they begrudgingly but easily made the list. Although difficult to give up, easy to identify and admit that I could not and would not ever be able to control or eat any of these foods casually or normally.

Then the next level for me sugar free stuff that seemed ok in the beginning like gum, or even a little sugar free ice cream at times, were much harder to identify and give up. This was very difficult for me and I went through many stages and much agony. There were many things like that, but you get the point. This process continues today and probably always will in one way or another.

Then, just ordinary things like rice cakes--seemingly ok, but when thinking about or eating them every day or maybe every meal makes it necessary to add even these things to my list. These types of things were even more difficult as they were NOT typical and also because of that NOT FAIR that I had to give them up. Let's think about that distorted thinking. Not fair to give up something that is hurting me and propelling me back into my disease, if not today, certainly, as I found out time and time again, would do so sooner or later.

Lastly, at least for right now whole wheat and Splenda or substitute sweetener of any kind. They probably go with the last group but are so difficult and a nemesis to me that I give them their own category.

These substances, although not a binge food in the traditional sense of the word, ARE things that just don't make my body feel right or make me actually feel bad sometimes or even a lot. See, I am even playing with it in thinking and writing about it now. I have given up whole wheat and gluten for about a month now and my body definitely knows the difference and feels so much better. Splenda I have cut waaaaay back on, but still use on occasion for various reasons. Kind of checking out my body's response although I am pretty sure it is not good for me, but not willing to make the commitment to swear off entirely.

So complex an issue. I think some of this is the crux of losing my abstinence so many times. It is not cut and dried --black and white (which I love so much) but nebulous and tricky--especially with the compulsive overeater mind and body that I have. Interesting way to think about it. I think that guy, Lorrie says anything you can't wait to eat or you just have to have daily or many times a week, even though not on the traditional banned list is dangerous territory. I am starting to see his point and how it makes this disease and abstinence so much harder. Everyone is different and, as such, has to navigate their own path in the end. What works for one won't necessarily work for another, however that is why it is so important to go to meetings, make calls, talk honestly to others, and have a food and step-sponsor to help navigate this treacherous terrain.

Lastly, at least try your best to be honest, if not with your sponsor or someone else at least with yourself and even maybe your HP. Talking about it doesn't have to mean you change everything at once or at all. It just gets it out of the shadows where, if I keep it there, it haunts me and pushes me closer and closer to relapse or quoting what I am capable of doing to right now.

I choose when I am ready based on some things not in my control going on in my life which sometimes interfere with my ability to do certain things even if I have the desire and willingness. At these times I hang on and do the best I can at the time and look to the future and make baby steps to get to a point when I am able to act. Knowing that whatever am able to do today, though maybe not miraculous, moves me closer toward the path or keeps me on my path of recovery.

M<sup>2</sup>

Dear Recovering Rita,  
 My husband of 10 plus years has been verbally abusive to me for so many years I'm almost to the point of considering it normal. "He's not physically abusive, Thank-God." I keep telling myself, but he's so controlling, possessive, and manipulative-----I constantly feel like I'm walking on eggs trying not to break them!!! The marriage started out great, we truly were in love!!!! We had our first girl after 2 years, I was so elated, then with a flip of a light switch and overnight, he completed changed!!! I could not do anything right, he started using hurtful words, and accusing me of things I didn't do. I thought a 2<sup>nd</sup> child would make everything better, so I got pregnant again with our boy!! After that birth he stated to yell at me because of being fat, lazy, and more indecent words!!!! Now I'm starting to actually believe him since he insists he's right. Is that insane or what!!?? I don't want a divorce, I truly love the man, and he says he really loves me, BUT I don't feel like this is living!! I've also started to turn to food, and especially sugar, to make myself feel better, which makes things turn for the worse. Is there a way in life a person can be positive and accept things that they cannot change?? PLEASE HELP ME AND THIS MARRIAGE-----I NEED IT!!!!!! Desparata

**Dear Readers, Please help Recovering Rita with an answer.**

Desparata really needs our help!  
 Send answers to  
[cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org)



**I Had No Intention**

I had no intent of being addicted when I enjoyed dessert as a kid. Or when I ate Frosted Flakes or Lucky Charms or Sugar Crisp or even tomato soup. I had no intention in first grade, when my parents noticed I was getting chunky because they sent dried fruit as a snack instead of government subsidized whole milk. Or when I snuck more food in Jr. High. I had no idea, I was an addict until I walked into the OA doors. My dad, an internist, was a compulsive overeater too. He and I used to talk about the drug companies looking for the magic cure. The billion dollar cure. Many health professionals today still bemoan the low fat diet rather than the no sugar no gluten. I believe our food industry who has made great strides in preservation and enrichment have also changed our food so drastically that is no longer recognized by god himself. Also advertising, larger and larger portions. And more and more sugar added have made a lot of addicts inadvertently. Someone mentioned in college he tried alcohol and drugs because everyone else said it was so great. I never went down that path. I never needed to escape. I still don't. But I too liked the taste and the effect of food. I didn't know I was stuffing my feelings. I didn't know I was addicted. I didn't know it was a disease. Now I do. Now I know what to do. How to talk about it.

Sue W

**PRAYER OF THE MONTH**

Thank You, God for blessings already sent,  
 not yet received.

Wheel of Fortune **r s t l n e**

Rel \_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_n \_\_\_\_.  
 Tr \_\_ st.

**DEFINITION OF THE MONTH.**

The trudge— doing the daily readings and writings. Following others directions and relying on a power greater than yourself

Next month

**Spirituality**

Please send definitions and drawings to

[cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.com](mailto:cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.com)

The daily grind of hard work



## MAI: Intergroup in Action

MAI N  
Region 5 E  
WSO W  
S



### Editors Note

Please send feedback.

Together we get better.

Sue W [cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org)

To Buy OA Books in Milwaukee:  
Go to the AA Office,  
7429 W Greenfield Ave.  
Phone: 414-771-9119

Books available:  
\*"OA 12 Steps and 12 Traditions"  
\*"Overeaters Anonymous, Ed. 3"  
\*"For Today"  
\*"For Today Workbook"

\* **414-259-0640** Our Phone number still works and is being answered daily. Questions and concerns are welcome.

### NEW YEARS DAY WORKSHOP

On New Year's Day, the Milwaukee Area Intergroup held a workshop-style meeting titled, Digging Deeper - Beneath the Snow Lies the Rose. We wrote our highs and lows on fabric rose petals. This simple exercise helped me see past my numerous significant health concerns (new diagnoses of MS and asthma, hernia surgery due in part to my weight issue, daughter also being diagnosed with MS) to the good things in 2016 (hiking another county of the Ice Age Trail, starting school to train for a new career as a machinist, starting in OA). Hearing others share reminded me that I am not alone – and that I have even more blessings than I realized.

When the speaker shared her story, I was reminded of how we can all learn from each other.

After the break, we each filled in a rose (think kids' coloring book-type) with words related to: What works? What doesn't? Trigger foods? Trigger behaviors? What needs more work? How can I include the steps in my recovery? It was striking to see different interpretations of the directions. I really liked that we could write specific to ourselves (irregular sleep is a huge issue for me) and learn from what others wrote.

- Mary D.



The Christmas Day marathon took place from 10:00 a.m. until noon at the Dewey Light-house. Among the 8 people in attendance was my sister who was attending her 2<sup>nd</sup> OA meeting. I was grateful for the opportunity to practice the 12<sup>th</sup> step by sharing this program with a newcomer. The leaders of the meeting focused on OA daily readings, discussion and recovery crossword puzzles. The puzzles had a couple tricky answers so I sneakily texted my spouse for a little extra help.

This time of year can be difficult for many people who connect the holidays and food with (positive and negative) memories. Attending a meeting on a holiday was awesome; it helped me keep my spirit and attitude grounded in gratitude. I didn't need to eat over any of it. **Service is showing up!**

### The Wellness Weekend

For the second year we have been invited to the First Lady's Wellness Fair. This year was at Green Lake's Heidl House. Several of us, from MAI met others from Osh Kosh, and Appleton to set up an information table. We have a beautiful, professional, presentation board that we take to health fairs. This year was equally classy as last, however we were placed right next to the dessert table. That could be a bad thing, but in this case it sparked a lot of conversation, embarrassment, and humor. It was an honor to do this service. I hope we are invited back. Maybe you will do the service next year.



Today I put my hand in yours  
because you understand. You  
have been in my shoes. You are  
healing. You are equal. You  
came in as desperate as I did.  
You offer no guilt or shame just  
acceptance. I thank you.

--VIRTUAL INTERGROUP REP? WHAT IS THAT? WHAT'S THE POINT?

A little known secret: A virtual representative with MAI is a meeting volunteer who receives a monthly email containing 3 attachments - an Agenda for the next MAI meeting, Minutes from the last meeting, and Financial Reports for the most recent full month. AAANNN-DDD....who shares the highlights at their group meeting.

By becoming a virtual rep, you could be in the know on events, issues, and projects going on in your intergroup even though you cannot attend the MAI monthly meeting. You would have phone numbers and email addresses for MAI officers and committee chairs, so that you can ask questions and receive answers. These people are members like you and they would be thrilled to hear from you!

A virtual rep can simply be a conduit for information from MAI, but a virtual rep can get involved as much as he/she wishes. You can share your opinions and concerns and you can ask for assistance from MAI. You can help create a 2-way communication, and keep close to your intergroup, even from a great distance.

I hope to hear from you. Contact me, Joy M, by phone or email: 414-304-5078 or [chair@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:chair@oamilwaukee.org)

NOW IS THE TIME TO CREATE !!

### RAFFLE BASKETS

For the MAI Convention, "Going to Any Length for Recovery", Fri-Sun, March 24-26, Brookfield Sheraton

Please ask your meeting to donate items and/or money to create a basket on a theme:

"What Can We Do Besides Eat"

We are hoping for 50 baskets this year! (PS: An individual can create a basket, too.)

For questions, contact Mary P at 414-335-2690. Also, please call Mary P to let her know you are bringing a basket. (Not necessary if you indicated this on your convention registration).

Milwaukee Area Intergroup thanks you for your donations which help us all to spread the message of OA!



### Gift Ideas

Give an OA friend or Sponsor(ee) \$\$ toward an MAI Convention or Retreat OR request this kind of gift for yourself.



**Going To Any Length**  
Milwaukee Area Intergroup  
Convention March 24-26

**BASKETS NEEDED FOR RAFFLE.**

**THEME: THINGS TO DO OTHER THAN EAT!**

### \$ REFUND POLICY \$ for Conventions & Retreats

Registrations are non-refundable, but they are transferable. This must be cleared with the chairperson prior to the event.

### Cocoon Submissions Info

Your submissions do not have to be on topic!

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Topic</u>
May/June	April 1	Spiritual Awe

**Yes, we need and want your articles, poems, pictures news items!** Send to: [cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org](mailto:cocooneditor@oamilwaukee.org) or mail to MAI P.O. Box attention Sue W. (address on p2)

### CONVENTION SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES!!!

We still need volunteers for the following:

- Anorexia/Bulimia panelists. Call Ann E. 414-507-1188
- Body Image panelists. Call Tracy D. 414-704-4575
- Sponsorship speaker and panelists. Call Margaret T. 262-993-5207
- Staff game or puzzle tables on Saturday night. Call Marsha B. 414-238-5473
- Staff the intergroup table. Call Margaret T. 262-993-5207

# Milwaukee Area Intergroup Calendar

**Regarding Marathons** — Please contact the MAI Fellowship Chair Jill L. 262-549-4452, to volunteer to host a marathon or other event. All events and flyers must be cleared through Intergroup before being publicized. This calendar is updated in every issue of the *Cocoon*. Please note, complete details may not be available at the time of the *Cocoon* printing. Check flyers available at meetings for more information .

## February 2017

26 Unity Day - 1-3 pm, hosted by Sat Fox Point group, Lighthouse Building, Aurora Psych (directions next box over)

## March 2017

12—Joy of Recovery, 1-3 pm, Pass It On Club

### **MAI Convention**

**Mar. 24-26**

**"Going to any Length"  
Brookfield Sheraton**

## April 2017

9 — Joy of Recovery, 1-3 pm, Pass It On Club

### **\*IMPORTANT\* UNOFFICIAL POLICY**

If you become aware of a death of a local OA member or former member, please send any information (including funeral info) to Milwaukee Area Intergroup at:

**info@oamilwaukee.org**

The info will then be e-mailed to all who have requested the "OA Blast". (See p. 2 to request the OA Blast.)

### Directions to the Lighthouse, on Aurora Psych Campus

First, proceed to Aurora Psych campus at 1220 Dewey Ave in Wauwatosa. Then stay on Dewey until it dead ends at Chestnut ST The Lighthouse is on Chestnut - there is no specific address. Turn left on Chestnut. The Light house is the first building immediately on the right. It does not look like a light-house, that is just the name of the building.

**414-259-0640**

Our Phone number still works and is being answered daily. Questions and concerns are welcome.

## **Art & Music Sale**

**Planned for convention.**

**CLOTHING EXCHANGE is back!**

**What will your contribution be?**

### Friday Night at Convention 2017 we will have our premier **Coffee House, Poetry Slam and Comedy Club!**

OA Recovery is the theme for songs, poetry and comedy. Are you in? Submit what you would like to perform and approximate time needed to: Jane D. via email: JDGFfamily@sbcglobal.net. Please put which activity you prefer in the subject line: Coffee House (singing with or without instruments), Poetry Slam or Comedy by March 5 and how you can be contacted. We are looking forward to an exciting, fun filled evening!

### **\*Intergroup meetings**

are held at 6:30pm at Rogers Hospital, 11101 W. Lincoln Ave., West Allis. These meetings are open to anyone who attends Milwaukee Area OA. Each group needs at least one rep at every meeting to relay information back to the individual meetings.

