



Giving Back What We Have Been Given Can Start on Day One

“Many of us would not be alive today if it were not for our OA groups. Here is the only place we have found recovery from the devastating disease of compulsive eating. If we are to continue to live and recover, we must have the continued support of OA groups and the inspiration of our fellow OA members. What’s more, we need daily opportunities to be of service to other compulsive overeaters. Thus the unity of OA is a matter of life and death to us.” (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, second edition, pg. 92)

To me, giving back what I have been so freely given in the program is so vital to my recovery. I’m so grateful there was a local meeting in my area and someone was there to open the door to welcome me into the group. That love and acceptance was amazing as I came into my first meeting desperate, deflated, and I had nowhere else to go. What if I were rejected by the members of the group?

Because of the love and acceptance in OA and hearing the directions in the OA steps and traditions, I kept coming back and the miracle happened for me. I’ve

been at a healthy body weight by the grace of my Higher Power and working the spiritual principles in all my affairs one day at a time. I was told early in my recovery by my first sponsor, that I cannot keep what I have unless I give it away. “Moreover, he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he gives it away.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pg. 30)

That first sponsor had me doing service right away—picking members up to attend the meeting, being the chairperson of our small Racine meeting, and even took a vote for me to be the group representative at the Milwaukee Area Intergroup of OA.

After working the first three steps with my sponsor, she had me sponsoring new members that came to our

Continued on page 6

In this issue...

Allow Time and HP to Make Change	5
Carrying the Message column	3
Getting a Sponsor	2
Giving Back What We Have Been Given Can Start on Day One	1
Looking Good Helps Balance Three-Legged Stool ..	4
MAI Board	2
MAI Marching Band Unifies Carrying the Message ..	3
Sharing Gratitude Adds Extra Dimension to Program	4
The Serenity Prayer	5
Third Quarter Topic	1, 2
Weight Control is More Than Food Control in OA	6

Our *Cocoon* is an impressive example of the on-going 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.

The theme for the third quarter 2024 *Cocoon* is “How and When I Share My Program.” Writing about any experience, strength, and hope also is welcome. Due: Aug. 1.

Milwaukee Area Intergroup

Serving Eastern Wisconsin

MAI Website oamilwaukee.org

Facebook Overeaters Anonymous - OA Milwaukee

Contact Info

414-259-0640

Milwaukee Area Intergroup

PO Box 270054

Milwaukee, WI 53227

QR Code

direct to website



Board of Directors

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

Chair, Pat G: chair@oamilwaukee.org

Vice Chair, Louise V: vicechair@oamilwaukee.org

Secretary, Ann E: secretary@oamilwaukee.org

Treasurer, Mary P: treasurer@oamilwaukee.org

Region 5 Reps:

Louise: region5rep@oamilwaukee.org

Judy W: region5rep2@oamilwaukee.org

World Service Reps, Judy W, Lynn H: wsorep@oamilwaukee.org

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!

Issue	Deadline	Topic
3rd Quarter	Aug. 1	How and When I Share My Program

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

Editor: Cindy F.

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.

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.

Carrying the Message

2024 Initiative to Carry the Message at Farmers Markets Begins

In Fall of 2023, Milwaukee Area Intergroup voted to include a column in each issue of *The Cocoon* dedicated to helping members “Carry the Message.” We all are invited to “Carry the Message.”



This graphic will be used on all of our “Carry the Message” materials and will be incorporated into all of our activity flyers during 2024.

Who would be attracted to OA’s recovery message? Everybody eats! Not everybody eats normally. We are saddened that so few people know of our cherished recovery program.

The Public Information and Professional Outreach (PIPO) committees have made an observation that people who attend and shop at a farmers market are likely to be health conscious, active in the community and proactive about many things. This is supported by a national alliance of farmers’ markets states one of its purposes is to help promote healthy communities. Many, many people “of all stripes” shop at the summer farmers market in their community. By creating even a small presence at just a few of these markets in summer 2024, MAI can sow our seeds of information among the community.

At an introductory workshop in May, several attendees were introduced to this concept and were given the opportunity to go back to present this idea to their local OA group. If you didn’t attend and would like to

learn more of how you can serve the Milwaukee Area Intergroup and OA in general, you can join us at any of the meetings, held on most Monday mornings via Zoom. To ask questions or find out more, email me at communications@oamilwaukee.org.

~Joy

MAI Marching Band Unifies Carrying the Message

Fall to me is a beautiful time of year. Leaves of the trees turn beautiful bright colors of orange, yellow, red, maroon, and all the shades in between green and brown. Transformations happen in nature. It’s about beautiful harmony and that’s what I get working with others in recovery of Overeaters Anonymous.

I’ve been a member of the Milwaukee Area Intergroup Marching Band Public Information and Professional Outreach group for a few years, and it’s been an amazing journey of transformation and harmony in my recovery. I get to work with beautiful recovered Overeaters Anonymous fellows and our hired marketing staff person who is amazing and encouraging when I feel discouraged about not reaching our fellow sufferers in the community.

Just like a marching band, it takes good leadership and participation from each other. When I was in marching band in high school, our band director would attempt to get us all to march and play our instruments in alignment with the standards of marching heel to toe, shoulders back, head straight, and instrument up ready to play. We’d watch for the instructions of the band leader and do the best we could as teenagers.

In this marching band in MAI OA instruction, I’m listened to, heard, welcomed, and we follow the 12 steps and traditions of Overeaters Anonymous. We keep our focus on the still suffering, as directed in our 12th step.

Continued on page 4

MAI Marching Band Unifies Carrying the Message

From Page 3

In the *Alcohololics Anonymous* book, which I find to be the instructions to working this amazing way of life daily, states “But life among Alcoholics Anonymous (Overeaters Anonymous) is more than attending gatherings and visiting hospitals. Cleaning up old scrapes, helping to settle family differences, explaining the disinherited son to his irate parents, lending money and securing jobs for each other when justified—these are everyday occurrences. No one is too discredited or has sunk too low to be welcomed cordially—if he means business. Social distinctions, petty rivalries and jealousies—these are laughed out of countenance. Being wrecked in the same vessel, being retored and united under one God, with hearts and minds attuned to the welfare of others.” (*Alcohololics Anonymous*, pg. 161)

I plan to keep on marching with this OA band who understands me as a compulsive overeater and welcomes me so that we can band together to carry the message to those who are still suffering. To be “attuned to the welfare of others” and to share this amazing program with those in the community through public outreach and professionals who have never heard of this life saving program. Who will join me? We need more band members and will welcome you with open loving arms and as we band together, we get better. United under the direction of a power greater than ourselves, the 12 steps and 12 traditions, and our leaders/chairs in the fellowship.

Looking forward to marching in unison with you soon.

In loving service,
~Kim B.

Sharing Gratitude Adds Extra Dimension to Program

My sponsee and I write emails several times a week, and we usually include our gratitudes for the day. I received an email from her with no gratitudes, just saying she felt less than grateful at the moment. I couldn't tell what was going on for her from the email. I wrote back to her saying “I hope you are physically feeling okay, and that you are keeping your Higher Power nearby. It is in the first step, we admitted we were powerless over ... (food, the price of gas, the weather, our kids, friends, politicians, grocery prices, sleep interruptions, dog behaviors, husbands and ex-husbands, forgetting, other people's choices, and more), and that our lives had become unmanageable. And then we come to believe that there is a power greater than ourselves, God, Higher Power, the great universe, whatever/whoever, but know that that power greater than ourselves is not US. I am not in charge. I cannot be in charge.

Then we make that decision (over and over and over to the CARE of God – I love that. The CARE of God. God CARES about me! So whenever I think I am alone, whenever I feel scared, isolated, angry at everything, sad, hopeless, if I can remember step 3, I can remember that I turned my life over to the CARE of God. Several hours later, I received a lovely gratitude list from my sponsee.

Thank you to OA, thank you to Higher Power, thank you for willingness, thank you for once again realizing, this is how it works.
~Grateful anonymous member

Looking Good Helps Balance the Three-Legged Stool

At a Monday meeting in February, I shared that I was proud of the way I look when I look in the mirror. I had lost so much weight—over 100 pounds. I worked hard to get to that appearance. When I look in the mirror, I see a whole new person in that mirror that I haven't see for a while and I love the way all my clothes look on me.

After the meeting, a lady came up to me and called me “skinny.” It made me feel so good. I tell everyone they will be carrying me out of the meetings in a coffin because that is how long I'll be in OA.

I joined OA in 1994, but didn't work the program until 2008. I have been working it every day since. I love OA for all it has done for me. I have recovery on all three levels—physical, mental, and spiritual.
~Mary B

Allow Time and HP to Make the Changes

“The Eleventh Tradition is based on faith in our program and in that power greater than ourselves which guides compulsive overeater to our doors.”
The OA Twelve and Twelve, p. 198
(*Voices of Recovery*, Nov. 15)

When I first joined OA, I didn't know much about the program, only what a therapist told me (“It's like AA”). Although I was hopeful, I had no clue that the program could and would really help me. It has in a few ways that are very important to me. First of all, I now believe in a Higher Power who led me here and has supported my recovery and abstinence all the way. I firmly believe in this Power greater than myself, and I have experienced miracles in my life I never expected. Secondly, I am no longer lonely, because I connect with many OA cohorts, connections, including each of you, that I enjoy, appreciate, and learn from. And my food plan is healthy eating, far healthier than I ever thought possible for me.

None of these changes happened overnight and none of them were my original intention which was to stop dieting. But that doesn't matter. What does matter is that they did happen.

~Bobbi



The Public Information and Professional Outreach committees sponsored an Open House and informational table at the Milwaukee Area Intergroup 2024 Convention.

Serenity Prayer

*God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot
change, the courage to change the
things I can, and the wisdom to
know the difference.*



Weight Control Is More Than Food Control in OA

I am so glad I had already started on a diet in a structured program before I began with a low carb food plan in OA. I didn't have to struggle to cut my intake of food. I was amazed at how full I was when I was eating so little! In the past, I put so many calories in my body each day, it's amazing I only weighed what I did. How could I feel so good with so little food—a miracle, I say!

I have always known that weight loss could not only be about dieting, but I never knew the answer, until Jan. 7, 2023, when my husband and I attended our first Zoom meeting on a Saturday morning. As soon as we started in the meeting, I knew this is where the answer lived! I don't remember what, exactly, went on there, but I heard about the 12 steps, we read

something, and then a woman shared about her experiences. I could relate to everything they were talking about and I thought this was the answer to getting myself whole again.

As I attended more meetings and started praying a little bit, not only did a physical change occur, but a spiritual one also. My entire being is at peace. I don't ever remember feeling like this. I am usually filled with angst about something!

After more than six months, I still feel this way. I know God spoke through our daughter to suggest coming to OA, and I know He's been with me every step of the way!

~Ann S

Giving Back What We Have Been Given Can Start on Day One

From Front Page

meetings. It was a lot, but the pain and the suffering of compulsive eating scared me into the right actions. I plunged myself into helping others so I could keep this amazing miracle in my life.

Today, 14 years later, the miracle continues one day at a time as I continue to grow spiritually—my mental health, emotional health, relationships, and healthy body improve. I still have what I call a healthy fear of relapse and going back into the depths of this disease, which is still cunning, baffling, and powerful.

"We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scales we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others." (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, pg. 83-84)

I need to remember what it was like and how OA and God continue to restore me to sanity one day at a time. I NEED to give away what I have, I need to reach out to those who are still suffering. Being a member of the Milwaukee Overeaters Anonymous Intergroup Marching Band allows me to do this as a committee member of the Public Information, Professional Outreach group. When I put my hand in yours, marching hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, we get

better. We can keep trudging this road together in alignment to our spiritual principles which orchestrates empowerment, healing, unity, growth, encouragement, and fellowship.

"Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion. For this I am responsible." (oa.org, Group Resources, Unity with Diversity, Responsibility Pledge) Thank you for allowing me to share. If you want to know more about the Marching Band and ways of Carrying the Message, see pages 4 and 5 of this issue, watch for the "Carrying the Message" article in each issue of *The Cocoon*, or watch for information on our oamilwaukee.org website.

~Kim B

Overeaters Anonymous Responsibility Pledge:

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