



50 Years of Successful Program Started with Service

I walked in the doors of OA on May 15, 1974, so I'm coming up on my 50th anniversary. Over the years, I've seen a lot of changes. My personal plan of eating has changed but one idea from my early days has remained pretty consistent: 3-0-1—three moderate meals a day, nothing in between, one day at a time. A little over 20 years ago I was diagnosed as a type 2 diabetic. I believe the way I ate before that time had kept it under control. I was under a tremendous amount of stress the year I was diagnosed. The day after my doctor appointment, I would find out if I would be downsized from a long time job (the process had been going on for four months) and two months earlier, my mother had a stroke from which she was not recovering.

Learning to say “No” or “not today” to foods I enjoyed in the past is hard but only for the moment. Over the years I have followed many different “printed” diets, made up my own (I did major in Foods and Nutrition in college but knowing and doing are two different things), following plans given to me by dietitians, and the list goes on. A couple of big changes for me were getting rid of the diet mentality and finally turning my food over to my higher power.

Currently I have a home group and I try not to miss those meetings unless I am out of town or ill. I have a sponsor I contact on a regular basis and I sponsor other women. I call or text other members (I heard at

an event in Kansas City in 1974 to make three phone calls a day), I read OA and AA literature daily. I use daily meditation books from 12-step programs and my personal faith beliefs. Writing is one tool I struggle with. I keep buying the perfect journal and the perfect pen to write with, but continually fall short of my goal. I envy those who journal regularly. I have written down every bit of food put in my mouth consistently since May 2019 and this is the longest I have ever done that. I will write when I'm struggling with a decision or problem in my life and that usually consists of a pro-and-con list which usually helps me come up with an answer.

Service has been one tool I believe has helped keep me coming back. Early on I was taught to come early to a meeting and help set up and stay late to help clean up. Lots of fellowship occurs during those

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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.

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The theme for the second quarter 2024 *Cocoon* is “Things You Would Tell Yourself If You Were Again a Newcomer.” However, writing about any experience, strength, and hope also is welcome. Due: May 1

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!

Issue	Deadline	Topic
2nd Quarter	May 1	What Would You Tell Yourself If You Were Again a Newcomer?

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

MAI Public Information/Professional Outreach to Professional

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.

This means being loving, gentle and kind to my body. But also, as our OA literature suggests, to get professional help frequently.

In January, I went to my annual check-up with a new primary doctor, got blood work done, saw a podiatrist, a dietitian and I'm in physical therapy. I made sure that, when seeing all these new-to-me health professionals, I brought OA information. Being in the service position of Professional Outreach Chair with Milwaukee Area Intergroup (MAI), I am especially tuned in to sharing with the professionals that I see myself. I brought things like an updated MAI meeting list, OA informational business cards, current Professional Courier newsletters (available at oa.org), and MAI informational sticky notes. I even found some MAI posters the professionals could hang in their offices or waiting areas if they choose to. Each person I brought information to seemed to appreciate it.

As a health professional myself, I always like to add that OA endorses its members seeking professional help as needed. I mention how this program is a lot like AA and helps me keep off over 140 pounds for more than 14 years.

Happy New Year 2024. For me, working this program one day at a time for over 14 years, I've grown up a lot – to the point that I actually want to take care of my body, the body God, HP, gave me.

As I share my medical history with each professional, I am reminded that my compulsive overeating/over-exercising has damaged my body. This includes foot pain, stress fractures in my feet, high blood pressure in my twenties, osteoarthritis starting in my 40s, tendonitis in my hamstring, degeneration in my lower back, pinched nerves in my neck—to name a few. This is a cunning, baffling, deadly disease and I'm so grateful that my Employee Assistant Program therapist in the spring of 2009 asked me if I could stop eating once I started. I had never had anyone ask me that before. I said that I could not stop eating. In fact, I think I even chuckled at the question. She suggested that I attend at least six Overeaters Anonymous meetings. I'm so grateful for that suggestion. I attended that first meeting and it saved my life.

I am very passionate about carrying the message to health professionals so they can suggest that others attend OA to help save their lives from this horrible disease! I hope you will join me and the Marching Band to keep carrying the message “Be the message in 2024!” The Marching Band was created by the Public Information and Professional Outreach committees to carry the message in a unified, focused effort that is guided by our paid Communications Specialist, using an online news source and a poster campaign.

~Kim B Professional Outreach Chair and Marching Band member!

Overeaters Anonymous Responsibility Pledge:

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

My First Convention: “Befriending Obedience”

Have you been to any of the MAI Conventions? If not, I’d especially like to connect with you – here and at the next Convention! For many of my OA years, I lived south of the Wisconsin/Illinois border. I had heard about Milwaukee holding conventions – every year! We weren’t doing that in the Chicago area. I heard they were good and that stuck in my mind, but I didn’t consider attending until I moved to the Milwaukee area. Then I decided there was no reason not to go and see for myself.

I didn’t know many OA members in the area, just the ones who attended the small meeting I had made my new home meeting. I do love interacting with people (really love it with other OA members!), but I’ve also spent enough time as a “loner” when I wanted or needed to experience something that my “outside” friends wouldn’t care to. Still I felt tentative when I first walked into the “auditorium” alone. I found a seat off to one side, near the front. There was another person who had chosen to sit alone in that area and she and I later talked and got to know each other a little. There were several keynote speakers spread over the weekend and one in particular impressed me with what she had to say. She talked about her disease, her successes, and difficulties on the road of recovery. She credited a certain attitude with being hugely helpful and a breakthrough in her recovery. She called it “befriending obedience.” I didn’t/don’t like the idea of “obedience” at all and “befriending obedience” seemed a bit bizarre. As much as obedience rankled me, I listened to the speaker and was won over to what she was saying. Obedience was

not something I needed to fear – if it meant I was obedient to principles and suggestions that were going to aid me in my recovery. Thus my attitude forever changed in a way that has served me well.

This was 14 years ago, and I still remember and utilize the experience and strength of that speaker. I’ve attended many conventions since that first one, and every time there have been important “aha” moments and/or significant boosts in my recovery that have stuck. I haven’t missed a convention over the years and wouldn’t today. I’ve grown closer to my home group members who have attended and have made many new friends there. That person sitting alone I mentioned earlier? I did get acquainted with her and later we became close at Intergroup (when I became a rep) and we have enjoyed working together over the years on several service tasks.

Convention has boosted my recovery every time and has filled my life with meaningful relationships with so many OA members who were just “friends I hadn’t met yet.” I hope to meet you next time!

~Joy

Each year Milwaukee Area Intergroup holds a convention, usually in Spring. It is our only fundraiser and a full, concentrated weekend of sharing of experience, strength, and hope beyond the meeting level. It is open to those who are in recovery, want to know about recovery, want to again experience recovery. When details are available, they appear on our website at oamilwaukee.org. In 2024, convention is April 12-14 at Brookfield.

50 Years of Successful Program Started with Service

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times. I got involved with Intergroup early on (at that time we thought we were a steering committee). My first OA meeting was the first meeting of the fifth group in the greater Milwaukee area. We took turns leading the meeting and since there were five of us in the beginning, the longest you could attend before leading was five weeks. Since we were all new, I volunteered to attend the Intergroup meetings which were held in a member's home. Over the years I've held many jobs in OA. One of the first was literature person for the meeting. We couldn't store our meeting supplies where we met so the box was in my trunk. That brought me to meetings at times when I didn't

want to go because they would notice if I wasn't there. Because of positions at the group, Intergroup, Region and World Service levels, I have met many wonderful friends and developed a commitment to recovery.

Sometimes I wonder why have I kept coming back all these years while others have left. All I know is I need this program and it's 12 steps, 12 traditions, and 12 concepts. I know I need the program and all of you. I hope you do too. Keep coming back or better yet stay until the miracle happens.

~Nancy H.