



How Convention Helps My Recovery

What a privilege it was to be part of the committee for our Spring 2021 Convention back in April. I was so amazed at all of the volunteers and the different skills they possessed. Although I enjoyed my participation, I was a little worried that I might not be as good as the other volunteers were. I was comparing my insides to their outsides.

Anyway, the first time I had been on that committee, was for the 2020 convention. Because of the pandemic, I had only been able to participate through March of last year, not seeing that convention come to fruition. In many ways the convention last year, seemed a bit more straight forward, not being virtual one. There was a crazy learning curve this year, due to it being virtual, and I didn't even help with that part, but many of our fellows were up for the task.

When Laurie L. announced that she was going to be chair of the convention, I remember saying to her, "Great! If you need any help, let me know." I truly meant that I wanted to help, but there was no knowing what was going to be involved, so it all began with Laurie's desire to make this the best convention she could, starting with weekly meetings, way back in November. I ended up enjoying those meetings very much.

After January, more details were forming and by March, I remember thinking, "*Isn't one of our slogans, 'Keep it Simple'?*"

Well, by the week before convention I was beginning to panic. I hate to admit this, but I was even anxious for the convention to be over. I did several Tenth Steps on my fears about my performance, because I was afraid I'd goof things up—I think that's called *pride in reverse*. Did you notice how many times I used the words "I" and "my" in this paragraph? Yes, I'm an addict.

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Fourth Quarter 2021 Theme

The theme for the fourth quarter 2021 *Cocoon* is "Honesty, Open-mindedness, and Willingness." Share how you have used, or are using, these key 12-step principles in your recovery. Or share any stories of your experience, strength, and hope. Deadline: Wednesday, Nov. 10.

Milwaukee Area Intergroup

Serving Eastern Wisconsin

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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 or phone. 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 also 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
4th Quarter	Nov. 10	Honesty, Open-Mindedness and Willingness

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

Editor: Louise

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.

Choosing COOL Rather Than REACT

I didn't go to convention; I was on vacation in the peace and tranquility of spending time at the ocean, I got to spend lots of time with HP. It set the tone for one of my best vacations yet!

No hurrying, no rushing, just be-ing. This is what HP suggests I do most of the time. Be. Be still. Be myself. HP tells me I'm His greatest delight!

When I am still and invite HP into my life, my perspective changes. I allow HP to take the reins, take control and allow myself to relax. I allow HP the proper place in my life—in charge. I lovingly agree to His plan for me. I only have to allow it.

The question comes up: how good am I willing to *allow* my life to get? Allow? Allow? Why wouldn't I allow my life to be wonderful? That would be insane to not allow it to be absolutely wonderful, right?

Yet when it requires me to let go of ill will, bad habits and old ways of thinking, at times I hesitate. I put off allowing myself an extraordinary life.

When I worked in business, one of my least favorite things to hear from others was, "That's not the way we do it here," as if that was a good enough reason to

Sponsors Wanted!

The MAI Twelfth-Step-Within Committee maintains a list of available sponsors and connects newcomers and other members with the help and support that is so essential for recovery. The committee maintains a list of male and female sponsors.

Please consider taking on this important service and volunteering to sponsor at the level of your own recovery. Food and Step sponsors are always needed. Maintenance and temporary sponsors also are needed.

If you are available (or need a sponsor), please email 12th-stepwithin@oamilwaukee.org or leave a voice mail message at 414-259-0640.

In Service,
Cindy K and Marsha B
12th-Step-Within Co-chairs

not do something a better way! And yet isn't that what I tell HP every time I don't want to do something a new and better way? Steps 4-9 help me clear away the wreckage of my past and yet sometimes, I am not 100% willing to let go.

There were those people I somehow thought would be able to hurt me if I let go of them absolutely. I found out the opposite was true; they had no power over me whatsoever.

A couple of acronyms I've learned to help me when tempted to grab onto old behaviors, especially in relationships are COOL and REACT. In recovery, I would much rather stay COOL, "Consider other options, lovingly," rather than REACT, "Risk everything and choose turmoil!"

Turning things over to my Higher Power while I do the next right thing, allows me to stay COOL or Consider Other Options Lovingly.

~Anonymous



How Convention Helps My Recovery

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Even though I'm an addict, I'm lucky to know prayer works, so I prayed a lot as the beginning of the convention was underway that Friday. So many people amazed me, that I started feeling grateful for each participant and for God's hand in all of it. The dread I had been feeling was being replaced with gratitude and energy, so there was no overeating that weekend.

If you have ever feared helping with convention or any other OA event, because you didn't think you had much to give, or you wouldn't be good at anything, I understand, but we all have something we can do, even if its small. Now, I'm so grateful that I could be a part of something much bigger than me. Thank you for letting me be of service.

~Lisa N



MAI 2021 Convention: A Dream Come True

Attending the Virtual 40th Annual MAI Convention was like a dream come true—a bit of Heaven on Earth for me. There is no comparable love like what I felt all weekend. The tender, loving, and supportive community of those gathered to share their experience, strength and hope remain in my heart to this day. Hope truly does spring eternal and I saw it in the faces all around me that weekend.

While living in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, this weekend pause was just what I needed. I came away feeling connected, refreshed, and renewed. Having my HP speak to me through all the speakers, convention volunteers, and attendees really opened my eyes to new and helpful ideas that strengthened my abstinence. What a profound privilege to be around so many who carried the message directly into my heart and mind. I thank you all so much for the privilege of being with you. My heart is full.

~Shonna D

Virtual MAI Convention Inspires Beyond Expectations

I registered for this year's convention having had wonderful, memorable experiences at past MAI conventions. There had been so many rewards to attending. The sense of belonging to something much larger than my circle of local members was one of the obvious exhilarating benefits. Hearing the experience and strength of the keynote speakers was always inspiring. I would feel awash with the positive vibrations from the speakers and from every individual—those I was first meeting, those I already knew well, and those in the crowd that I saw only from across a room. I would come away with memories and messages that I would use far into the future to further build upon my own personal recovery in OA.

It was always a heady experience for me and, though I never felt hesitant about attending the MAI Virtual Convention of April 2021, I had reservations about what the experience might be. In fact, I was skeptical that it could hold my attention, much less captivate me as the in-person conventions of past years had done. I am joyous to say I was proven wrong!

When I sat in my own home, watching the very first keynote speaker, I was glued to the image of a woman I'd never met as she poured out her story of recovery, spiritual growth, weight loss, and life improvement.

It was magnetic in a way I hadn't anticipated. I'd watched so many entertainers, politicians, etc., doing video interviews during the months of the pandemic, and yet, I'd not seen one that was able to reach across the internet to grab and hold my attention like that.

This palpable experience held true for each of the speakers that April weekend of 2021. It reminded me of times I'd had deep one-on-one conversations within the OA universe. Maybe I was the experienced person sharing my life and soul with a newcomer or a struggling member. Or maybe I *was* the newcomer hoping for a miracle. Or maybe I *was* the struggling member looking for strength I could somehow absorb into my mind and body. My experience with the virtual speakers reminded me of the well-known conversation of AA's founder when he'd given up hope for a normal life and was counting time until his death due to alcoholism. It felt to me like that "bleak November day" when he sat at his kitchen table across from a friend who had come to share the life-changing story of his new sobriety. This conversation was revolutionary for him and the 2021 Virtual Convention was a revelation and an inspiration for me! I'm so grateful to the many within MAI who made this possible.

~Joy M



Responses to Three of the “Thirty Questions to Ask Newcomers” Shared

These are my thoughts as I responded to three of the “Thirty Questions to Ask Newcomers.”

Read *The Tools of Recovery*. What is the importance of giving service in OA? What is the importance of meetings? How are they both part of the road to recovery?

Giving service is important, because it gets us out of our heads and out of isolation. It gives us something important to do that isn't eating and helps us reaffirm the importance of abstinence and the fellowship by serving others. It gets us out of the selfishness of our own will and helps us to be more responsible to HP and the group. Meetings also get us out of isolation. They help us to feel and know that we are not alone and they affirm there can be recovery and continued recovery. Meetings have a power to turn our day around and help us keep going. They give us purpose as we share strength, experience, and hope. Both service and meetings help us get out of ourselves and grow within the fellowship and as individuals working to recover. They affirm our need to change and grow along spiritual lines.

What is the importance of telephone in OA? What is the importance of anonymity? How are they intertwined?

Telephone is important because it helps OAers to stay connected throughout the week. It serves as a way to reach out when you are in need of help or to serve others by seeing how they are doing. Telephone also connects sponsors/sponsees to each other. If we could only get sponsors from our own local meetings, we would be limited in smaller groups, leading to less recovery. There are also telephone meetings, opening up many possibilities for recovery, as well as connecting people from all over the world.

Anonymity is important, because it allows us to share openly about ourselves, our disease, and our program. Telephone and anonymity are connected, because we have to remember anonymity isn't just for meetings, but also for when we are connected to members in other ways, including on the telephone. Anonymity when leaving a message on an answering machine is a must!

Reflect and write about reading literature and writing as tools of the program. Why are they essential to our recovery?

Reading literature helps us keep our heads in the program. It teaches us how to do, and leads us through, the 12 steps. It reminds us that we are not alone. It gives hope to the sufferer and it reminds the abstinent OAer of what they never want to go back to.

Writing is a tool that helps us to sort things out that we might not be able to otherwise. It helps us work the steps and clear our minds of the jumbled up mess that can sometimes lead to eating badly.

These two tools are essential to my recovery this time around for all the reasons above. My HP used both literature and writing to bring me closer to Him again and to abstinence. He continues to have me do them as a very important part of my program to keep me abstinent.

~Michelle R

