



Spring 2020



Alabama
 Arkansas
 Florida
 Georgia
 Louisiana
 Mississippi
 North Carolina
 South Carolina
 Tennessee
 Puerto Rico
 Caribbean Islands
 Central America
 South America

Southeastern Overeaters Anonymous Region 8

SOAR8 Regional Assembly

Traveling the Bayou to Recovery

Uncover,
Discover,
Recover on
the Bayou

**March 20-22,
2020 Baton
Rouge, LA**

Join us and share your experience, strength, and hope with other OA members while strengthening your own commitment to recovery. Whether you are new to the program or an “old-timer,” we invite you to a weekend full of recovery and fellowship in the **Bayou in Baton Rouge LA.**

HOTEL INFORMATION

Crowne Plaza Baton Rouge

4728 Constitution Avenue
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
225.925.2244

Use Code: **SOA**

Check in 4 PM
Check out Noon

Airport Shuttle \$10 per trip

Hotel Rates:

Standard Double Room \$125

Sleeps 4, includes breakfast

Rooms have fridge &
microwave

REGISTRATION FEES

Early Registration:
\$45 (Before 2/20/20)

Late Registration:
\$55 (After 2/21/20)

Saturday Only Registration: \$35

Virtual Registration: \$35

MEAL FEES

Saturday Lunch: \$35

Saturday Banquet: \$40

All meal orders due by 3/14/20



Funds Are Available to Support PIPO Efforts

In Overeaters Anonymous, intergroups, meeting groups, and individual members are becoming involved in **Public Information and Professional Outreach (PIPO)** works in a number of fun and effective ways. The Region 8 PIPO committee encourages and supports all efforts to carry the message of our solution to compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors through the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 9 tools of OA.

To help in this vital form of service, we'd like to highlight two specific ways that intergroups and meeting groups can receive funds to support their PIPO efforts:

Carrying the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers is the basic purpose of our Fellowship. Service through Public Information and Professional Outreach efforts helps to fulfill that promise.



The Professional Exhibits Fund

In 2005, the Board of Trustees created a special fund to help service bodies exhibit at health-related professional conferences and conventions that might otherwise be too costly. This fund is supported by the contributions of OA members and service bodies.

It's important to note that a professional tradeshow is not a health fair. Professional tradeshows are attended by professionals such as doctors, nurses, family practitioners, and nutritionists. (where as health fairs target the general public). The Professional Exhibits Fund is available for professional tradeshows ONLY.

Some of the expenses this fund may cover: booth costs, production of signs for the booth display, professional presentation folder costs, printing expense for handouts, literature purchases, and even some of the travel expenses.

In the spirit of the Seventh Tradition, it is requested, where feasible, that each applicant's service body provide some portion of these expenses from their available local treasury or regional treasury.

For more information on the Professional Exhibits Fund, see the application available on the Region 8 website:

<https://oaregion8.org/documents/PDFs/PE-Fund-Application.pdf>

The Reduced Cost Literature Program

OA approved literature are ever available tools which provide insight into the problem of eating compulsively and the strength to deal with it. Therefore, literature is a vital tool when making any Public Information and Professional Outreach effort as it highlights the solution offered in Overeaters Anonymous and the very real hope available to suffering compulsive eaters who have not yet found the rooms of OA.

Service Body PIPO Committees may purchase literature through members of the Board of Trustees at a reduced cost when hosting health fairs or professional exhibits, or when distribution to professional groups. This is a great way of getting OA approved literature into the hands of professionals who then in turn distribute to a patient population or the general public.

The reduced cost shall be calculated to be the higher of either: a) The actual cost of the literature, or b) 50% of the retail price. Literature shall be shipped and the actual cost of shipping shall be added to the order.

For more information on the Reduced Cost Literature Program, see the application available on the Region 8 website:

<https://oaregion8.org/documents/pipo/reduced-cost.pdf>

The committee meets monthly on the second Monday of each month via telephone conference call. All who wish to assist IGOR are welcome to join in, just contact me prior to the calls and I will fill you in on contact information. We are working on setting up Intergroup Sponsors, we have quite a list and are happy to make someone available to those Intergroups who want and need some assistance. Also working on contacting groups and Intergroups that seem to be unaffiliated



We do have funds available to send leaders to workshops and retreats and are happy to address any requests.

Funds are also available to assist any Intergroup who cannot afford to send a Representative to Region Assembly, please request asap. Still possible to help with the Spring Assembly in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Please if you need assistance for the fall Assembly in Nashville, Tennessee submit the request for funds.

In Loving Service, Aleta H Pickholtz, Chair
IGOR Committee OA Region 8

Abstinence is My New Super Power

I've loved food for as far back as memory serves. When I think of my childhood growing up, I think of our big family dinners with a sense of love, happiness and security. I think of our everyday family dinners, consisting of just Mom, Dad and me as being 'seen'. Most other times, Dad was working and Mom was absent, not physically, but emotionally and socially. The dinner table is what brought us together. When I think of family, I think of food. When I need love and support, I think of food. When I am afraid and in need security, I think of food. And I've always been afraid. Not just afraid, but terrified...of being alone, of not being loved, of not being worthy, of not being enough. I ate to comfort myself, not knowing that at the time.

With excess food, comes the weight problem. That always made things worse, but somehow that consequences wasn't enough to make me stop. I've tried a million diets over my 59 years of life, some fairly reasonable (to "normies" at least) and some really crazy. Sometimes they worked and I felt better about myself for a while, but they hardly ever worked well enough, and even when they did, it STILL wasn't enough. So, eventually I'd gain the weight back.

When I was 12, I discovered alcohol and drugs. They seemed to work even better than food to subdue the fear, but the consequences were bigger too. Shame entered my life in a way I never saw coming. I never understood why I did what I did. I knew of a good and loving God who was kind, merciful and full of grace. I

had good, healthy examples all around me. Yet, I couldn't emulate any of that. The Big Book says "We had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to". Amen to that!

At 23, I hit bottom. My simple prayer, "Please send help," was answered, and God miraculously intervened in ways that are still beyond my comprehension. I began AA in 1984 and have been sober ever since. In so many ways, it was what I'd been looking for my whole life ... "a design for living that works" and an avenue to a personal relationship with my God that I always craved. I continue to work a strong program and have long since recovered from the hopeless state of mind and body that is the manifestation of alcoholism. All the promises came true for me. My fears fell from me...or so I thought.

Looking back, I realize now that my old love, food, had been there to greet me at the rehab door and that I was still using it to calm my emotions. I yo-yo dieted, sometimes successfully for a time, but the weight always returned. I suffered pain from the inflammation of sugar, went to many doctors, trying one solution after the next, complaining to friends, making resolutions and promises, both to myself and others, but nothing solved the food problem. I understood the allergy of the body and the obsession of the mind, and still thought I could work my AA program on my food, despite evidence to the contrary.

At 45, I decided to go to college for Interior Design. There aren't enough words to express how out of character that was for me, a left-brainer computer geek my whole life and not an ounce of creativity in me. But I felt God leading me there and I went, terrified the whole time, and satisfying my fear with food. Even after graduating with fairly high accolades the fears were still there. I ate every time I got 'stuck', every time I was afraid, every time I got

angry...I just ate. I graduated 8 years later, but I only got so far in my career before it came to a screeching halt and nothing I could do would get me moving again.

At 59, my old friend, low self-worth, came back to haunt me, now accompanied by shame and guilt. I had reached 200 lbs and was in tremendous physical pain from all the inflammation. Besides that, I couldn't focus, and had become very forgetful. I began to isolate when I wasn't at meetings so my friends didn't see what I'd become. Once again, I knew who God wanted me to be, and yet I just couldn't get there. I came to OA in tears; defeated. I asked God to help me once again and I have been abstinent from sugar ever since and free of any cravings.

Today, I am working the steps with my OA sponsor and in a step workshop at the same time. No longer dieting, I have a food plan that works for me and have been tweaking it with the help of another OA member who is on the same plan. My focus is on abstinence rather than weight, but it is coming off slowly anyway. I feel like I have been given a new freedom from food. I picked up a 6 month chip recently and know that I am on the right path. I attend three OA meetings a week, two of them big book studies, and two AA meetings as well. I have a new family in addition to my AA family and I treasure them both.

The most amazing part to me thus far, is that I am suddenly able to focus on my work again. Not only that, but I'm putting myself out there without fear and I'm being met with the most wonderful praise! Where I used to have nightmares riddled with fear and failure, I'm actually having dreams of success!! I still have fear, but it is not paralyzing anymore. I am so grateful for OA and the people in it and I look forward to the days ahead when "more will be revealed." Sue K

At the Fall 2020 Assembly we will be voting on the vice chair and secretary positions.

Are you willing to strengthen your recovery by applying for one of these positions on the board? Being vice chair has given me opportunities to grow by discovering assets that I didn't know I had and defects that threatened my recovery. Uncovering them has brought me closer to God (my higher power) and enabled me to do things that I thought I could never do. And I learned that I didn't have to do it alone! The Board has been a great support system! So, if you're organized, like to work with people and get excited planning events, apply for the position of Vice Chair. And even if you're not, apply any way! You may not know what you can do with the gifts that God (or your higher power) has given you. It's an experience that you will not want to miss. Pam G., Region 8 Vice Chair



Wanted: Hosting Intergroups!

At the March assembly we will be voting on where to hold the Spring Assembly 2021. As of writing this report, I have not had any responses for hosting the event in March or April of next year. Maybe your intergroup would be willing to take on the task? Or maybe 2 intergroups could get together and share in the responsibilities? The Hosting Manual has been updated and is available on the Region 8 website for step by step instructions! Please contact vicechair@oaregion8.org for more details on how to submit a bid!

“Service Put Me There”

Service above the group level was never in my plans, but as I write this, I am the treasurer for my region. Thanks to my region-level service, I am about 30 pounds (14 kg) lighter!

After twelve years of recovery and maintaining a 40-pound (18-kg) weight loss, I thought my weight-loss days were over, and I was comfortable with that. But I guess the God of my understanding wanted more, both for me and from me.

About five years ago, I found my way to an emergency intergroup meeting. Our intergroup board was concerned that the same few people had been doing all the service far too long; that unless they recruited new members and rotated service, the intergroup would fold. Because I would have hated to see an end to our newsletter, our updated meeting lists, our hotline for newcomers, and our strong connection with region and the World Service Office, I thought I could do some small part to help.

I volunteered at that meeting to take the minutes because they had no secretary. At the next meeting, they asked if I would be willing to take that job for the foreseeable future. I didn't accept until I talked to my sponsor and prayed about it. When I did accept, I said okay, as long as I didn't have to move through the service chairs. They said, “Oh no; you only have to do as much as you want to.”

Well, two years later, I was vice chair and then chair, I was a region representative and a world service representative. Next, I was a funded chair at region, then

treasurer for my intergroup, and now treasurer on the region board! It certainly wasn't my doing, but as a program friend is fond of saying, “I've been bitten by the service bug!” I've loved every phase of it, proving once again that my HP knows better than I do what's best for me.

Meanwhile, I'd been thinking about changing my food plan and praying for willingness because I didn't want to do it, even though I did want to lose more weight. At the March assembly, I talked to a dear program friend whose recovery I'd been watching. She explained her food plan and suggested I write down everything I ate on my current plan until the end of the month.

Then, on April 1, I could try the new plan one day at a time while continuing to write down everything I ate. I agreed to start writing down my food. The next day, I heard the closing speaker share about her own goal to get to a healthy weight, even though she'd already lost quite a bit. Those two people were the angels my HP sent to inspire the willingness I needed. On April 1, I began my new food plan, giving up foods I'd been unwilling to give up just a few days earlier. Today I'm about 30 pounds (14 kg) lighter. I owe it all to my region service and to being right where I needed to be to hear what I needed to hear. Thank you, God and my region (and my intergroup for choosing me to represent them). Today I'm a happier, healthier, and thinner recovering food addict.

*Patti S., Tampa, Florida USA
Reprinted from Lifeline October 1 2019*

Perfectly Imperfect

Perfectionism was a deeply held character defect of mine. In fact, a reasonable argument could be made that this one character flaw above all others was the catalyst that caused my compulsion to take priority in my life above all else. With this defect in place, I “knew” that even when doing well, I could always do better. I felt I could always do more—or less—and my attention focused on these perceived deficiencies. Never satisfied, I’d seek avenues for relief from these negative labels I believed about myself.

Reading about perfection in OA literature made me reflect on my Universe and how nothing in it—absolutely nothing—is perfect. There is always a flaw and this is also a critical component for the evolutionary process. It is perfectly normal to not be perfect. You know how there is the old saying, that “no two snowflakes are alike,” well...the truth of the matter is, because of natural imperfections, no two potatoes are alike either. Or bananas, or leaves, or birds ,or...fill in the blank. In addition, it is vital for me to recognize that there is no board or chart or checklist for what “perfect” is. **Perfection is completely a human construct of my diseased mind.**

As if there was some Standard Universe Perfection Law that I could measure myself against!

Once I honestly faced this truth it seems remarkable that I held onto perfectionism for as long as I did.

I found it incredibly difficult to release this character defect over to my Higher Power. I would take diligent action, release it, only to find it slowly seeping back into my sphere of existence.

And so I would repeat. Eventually, my Higher Power nudged me into a different direction suggesting that instead of releasing it, I adjust my perception of it. Redefine it. So, after a time in reflection, I have come to accept perfection as: **Doing the best that I can and being satisfied with the result.** The “best that I can” includes gentleness with myself...the resources I have today and the situation I am living within today.

Maybe tomorrow’s “best” will be different, but for today I did the best with what I had. The last part of my definition “being satisfied with the result” is truly a partnership with HP. It is only through acceptance of doing the best that I can that I find peace and harmony with my perfectly human imperfections.

Today may we rest comfortably in our normality and love ourselves just as we are—perfectly imperfect.

Michelle D, Region 8 Treasurer



**August 20-22, 2020 in Orlando FL
World Service Recovery Convention**

**October 9-11, 2020 in Nashville TN
Region 8 Spring Recovery/Business Convention**

I am extremely overweight. I won't put a number on it since I honestly haven't weighed in a very long time—and with my mental health issues, hearing a number puts me into an even deeper depression than usual. It's not worth it to know a number. However, you can imagine it as more overweight than anyone you know but not as overweight as the shows where people are practically immobile.

As a stigma, eating too much is both the most accepted addiction because so many events center around food and the least, as it's one of the few addictions/mental health conditions that society and public figures can make fun of without any backlash.

I have no doubt that I have had things held against me just because of my weight. There are jobs I know I'm qualified for and was high in the running for—until a face-to-face interview. It is definitely an area that in many places, you are “welcomed but not accepted.”

I have been on diets or other weight loss methods from the time I was little until I was in my 30s. However, I would gain weight and then would lose it, only to repeat the cycle over and over. You know the saying about how if you can do something for 2 weeks, you'll replace the old habit with a new one? Well, I'd keep up “being good” for months, only to still relapse. Now that I know I am bipolar, I wonder how much that played into it, as I have realized I eat differently when depressed than when manic. It doesn't matter; no matter why it happened, it consistently happened.

So I finally gave up. I thought that maybe I'm just going to be this weight and there's nothing I can do about it. The only problem is that I haven't stayed that weight. I haven't gained a lot at a time, but even a few pounds each year over many years eventually makes a big difference, especially if you aren't thin to begin with. For a while now I have been in the “I'm worried” stage. Recently due to some joint and other health issues, I'm to the “I'm terrified” stage. But even

that won't make me change, which gave me a realization.

My daughter was diagnosed with an eating disorder and I realized at that point that overweight people can have eating disorders. I also realized I'm a sex addict. After becoming abstinent from that addiction, I realized that at those support meetings I was starting to substitute “food” for “sex” in all of the readings and the shares. When I did that, everything in my past concerning food would start to make sense.

It's just like any other addiction...some people have no issues with dieting and when they decide they want to lose weight, they

One Day At A Time

have the willpower to stop. Just like my sex addiction, I realized I am powerless over this thing without help (and not just help from a nutritionist or from the latest diet fad) We're talking major, gut-wrenching, get-a-sponsor, 12-Step, with consistent-support-group-meeting-attendance help.

I went to a few meetings with the group that met where my daughter got treatment. Nothing against them, but I didn't see any success in that group. I need success. I have got to know that it could work for me to even think about trying again.

Once again I gave up. I was still terrified about this addiction but I thought that maybe I could work on it when I finally got completely through the 12-Steps in the other program.

Knowing how important support groups have become to me, I finally looked for and found a mental health support group in my area to get support with my bipolar disorder. When I was successful in finding a mental health group, I decided to try again and look more into eating disorder help. I thought OA sounded most like what I needed. I looked up the meeting time and shockingly, it was a night I was available.

So I went.

Just like when I went to my first support group for my other addiction, I knew these were my people right off the bat. They struggled with not only losing weight but keeping it off. They knew it was deeper than breaking some bad habits or a willpower issue.

I walked out with mixed emotions, though. I was really happy to have found this group. There were people who had success. I had a little bit of hope which is something I had completely given up on having.

But I knew that it was going to be hard. I mean HARD. I know how hard it was to become sober from my other addictions. It “only” took a few months to become sober in that addiction and I've now been sober over 18 months. But being addicted to food is something I've dealt with since I was a toddler—about 50 years of addictive behavior. I have no doubt that it's not going to be easy.

Plus, my life is almost as far from settled as it can be. I am not living in the kind of conditions to be able to successfully undertake such a huge endeavor. I also realized I just can't wait. I have to start now, even if it means only taking baby steps.

I couldn't go to the next meeting but went again the next week. The same thing happened: feelings of both hope and despair.

Those feelings were amplified when I went to an all-day retreat that next weekend. So much hope. So many stories that I could relate to. So much validation that I'm not alone in this struggle. So much love and support from complete strangers. However, so much fear.

By the end of the day, I was exhausted, much more from this mental merry-go-round than by anything physical.

I'm still wondering how to do this. Honestly, I'm still wondering if I can do this. But I know I have to try...one day at a time.

Tracy R, Central Alabama Intergroup/ Birmingham

We currently have ordered a trial run of t-shirts for sale at Region 8 that incorporate the WSBC conference logo to see how they sell. If we sell them well, then we will order more t-shirts as they are designed, or possibly change the design a bit.

We are also going to try and order recovery journals and trackers that have been so successful in Region 5, but make them specifically for Region 8.

We are also looking at recovery literature bracelets that will be affordable and possibly show up at a later Region 8 Assembly for sale.

We have a wonderful committee: Barbara, Ingrid, Michelle, and me, Melissa.

Love and hugs to all, Melissa H, Chair, Ways and Means, OA Region 8

**One bite
NEVER
satisfies...
it only
INTENSIFIES**

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

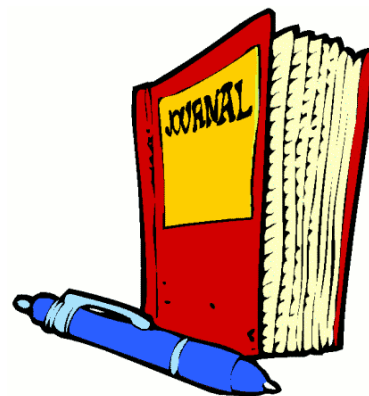
Excerpts from my Journal

As a compulsive overeater, I am terrified of not having or being enough. Even when I could step out of my fear of not having enough food to diet and lose weight, I stepped square into that fear of not being enough and tried to use weight loss to add self worth.

OA offers me a true solution—conscious contact with something greater than myself and greater than the disease.

When I work this Program, I not only have enough and am enough, the only things lost are my illusions. The weight falls like the “scales from my eyes” and I am living a life beyond my wildest dreams.

Anonymous in East TN



The Hamster Wheel of Dysfunction

This afternoon I read about willingness in the Jan 20th For Today entry. The reading reminded me of the many barriers to spiritual growth that I have surmounted as I worked the 12 Steps of OA. Indeed, as the reading stated, my old life was full of “I can’t do it.” Whether the barrier was fear, sloth, or simple resistance, I would avoid a new problem or task. All the while, I would indulge in self-pity and self-hatred until I ate to temporarily blot out the



feelings of negativity. This hamster wheel of dysfunction kept me in bondage to food and negative self-obsession.

Sometimes I would brief try to “figure it all out,” but my efforts would shortly disappear under a tide of overwhelming sadness and despair. As I surrendered my old ways of thinking and behaving, I began to use the OA Steps to find my way out of self-will. When I didn’t have the willingness to move forward, I found that I could pray for the willingness. “Figuring it out” gave way to acting my way into right thinking and behavior. Willingness was the key through the doors of fear and resistance into a new life. I accept that sometimes being willing doesn’t mean that I am committed body and soul to growth. I’ve rarely woken up in the morning and said “this would be a great day to accept, inventory and to surrender a defect to HP.” Sometimes I skip down the Road of Happy Destiny...sometimes I trudge or drag myself forward. And sometimes, my HP carries me until I can take my own steps to freedom. It all begins with willingness. Neill M

What Two Members Do...

My #1 go-to thing I do when I feel my recovery is being threatened is mindfulness—consciously reaching out my spirit to connect with my Higher Power. This may look like a deep, cleansing breath or it might take the form of an entry in my journal or a gaze out the window.

I pull out some program literature & study like my life depends on it (it does!)

I am so grateful to be back in the U.S. and attending meetings, conventions & retreats with my OA family again. When I was away, I felt very alone with my disease. My higher power never left my side, but I lost

motivation to keep growing my recovery and eventually relapsed. Being surrounded by recovering members keeps me motivated to take the next steps I need to take in order to grow. OA supports me in my spiritual growth which keeps me abstinent, & I think I would be lost without it. Luckily I don't have to find out!

...When Recovery Is Threatened

Hello from Twelfth Step Within (TSW) Committee

As we are well into the new decade of 2020, I hope your New Year got off to a good start. Maybe there are lots of newcomers at your meetings now, learning the ropes, asking for sponsors, etc. But being a member of the TSW committee—carrying the message of recovery to members already INSIDE the fellowship, my awareness of “fallen away” or struggling OA members is always in the forefront. How about asking yourselves: Who hasn't been here in a while? Who seems to be having trouble with their food plan or abstinence? Are there long time members who've lost their enthusiasm? And maybe more importantly: Am I having trouble? Working the steps with my Sponsor? Doing service? Struggling, but hiding it? Let me tighten up MY Program first. In addition to the 12th step, our Traditions 5 and 11 directly support both the inside and outside importance of “carrying the message of recovery to those who still suffer” and BEING the attraction of recovery through recovery and service.

OK, so NOW what do we do? Well, I heard this in a

program workshop: HP provides the POWER, OA provides the PATH and MEMBERS provide the SUPPORT. How does this apply to TSW? Working my program to the best of my ability keeps me connected to my HP, the source of all my recovery. The 12 Steps and Traditions of OA give me the formula to make that recovery happen in my life. But it's my FELLOW OA MEMBERS who have shown me the way by sharing their personal experience, strength and hope! Bill W., the founder of AA, the flagship 12 Step Program, said, “I have been granted a gift which amounts to a new state of consciousness and being.” Gifts and miracles bear responsibility—to help another suffering compulsive eater. In order for me to change, awareness, information and insight are forefront, but most

often it comes through other OA members. I call them “GOD with skin on.” Page 268 (Sept. 24) of OA's FOR TODAY says “It is my responsibility to carry the message of spiritual awakening and recovery to compulsive overeaters, wherever they may be.” Bill W. and the early fellowship knew the one action that helped keep them sober was to work with another alcoholic. That principle applies to OA as well as all the 12 Step Programs! Page 228 (Aug 15) of FOR TODAY encourages “OA doesn't hand out degrees that qualify one to help another compulsive overeater. I have all the inner resources I need to do it now.” That's why TSW work is a “win, win” situation! When I reach out, I end up helping myself just as much, if not more than my fellow member!

Need some help? The TSW Committee has their own RED RECOVERY HELP button on the Region 8 website. Just click on that and you'll find lots of recovery resources.

Yours in joyful recovery, Chris J, Huntsville, AL



Save the date for Florida State!

The 31st annual Florida State Convention of Overeaters Anonymous will be held **January 15-17, 2021** at the Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront, 1550 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL. 32931.

The theme for next year is
“CELEBRATE RECOVERY... 61 YEARS.”

The registration flyer is not yet available. Room rates will be \$164 plus taxes & fees for up to four people per room.



My Journey to Bylaws Chair of Region 8

When I came into OA I was only 17 years old and frankly, not yet ready for recovery. I wanted to lose weight for sure, but not ready to give up compulsive overeating.

It took me 10 years to get abstinent but that's another story! By then I was a single mother with two young children. Doing any service seemed impossible. It was a success to just get to meetings.

After another 10 years, I was invited to do service at the L.A. Birthday Party. After that I was hooked! It was fun and I learned so much. When I moved from Los Angeles to the Bay Area, service is what helped integrate me into my new OA family. And I volunteered to be Region Rep for selfish reasons. It would allow me to see some of my L.A. friends! I also volunteered to be a World Service Delegate. When I had to choose a committee, I think Bylaws was last. It felt so legalese to me and I didn't understand it. After more years, I became the Region 2 Trustee. I was appointed to fulfill a three year term. I was so relieved that I didn't have to chair the Bylaws Committee!

After years of going to Conference, listening to arguments pro and con on Bylaw amendments and going to the Reference Committee, I discovered that Bylaws were not scary at all. As Region

Trustee, it was my duty to review the bylaws of the Intergroups in our region. That helped me become even more familiar with Bylaws, their purpose and how they helped keep the service body running smoothly.

Two years ago I moved again. This time to North Carolina. I had not been involved in service above the Intergroup in over 15 years but I knew that the way to get to know people was to get involved. I was elected the Region Rep from my Intergroup and the committee I chose

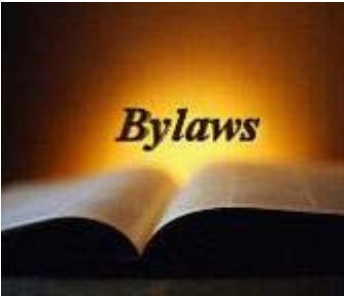
was Bylaws. I knew that committee didn't get a lot of volunteers because it doesn't feel like helping recovery like some of the other committees. Reviewing the Bylaws and Policy & Procedure Manual is very interesting. They are the guidelines that govern the operation of our Region, much like the Traditions govern how our meetings operate and how the steps help us live our best lives.

I'm honored and grateful to be chairing the Bylaws Committee. This year I will be attending the World Service Business Conference for the first time in 20 years and my number one choice for committee assignment is Bylaws. For me, it shows my growth in OA through service. I'm so grateful.

Susan Berland, Bylaws Chair, OA Region 8



GREETINGS FROM THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE



The Bylaws Committee continues to meet monthly and review the Policy & Procedure Manual. We will be submitting motions for the next Assembly.

We are a small committee and currently have only three members. We could really use some support. You don't have to be current region representative to be on the committee. And don't let Bylaws scare you! I'm available to help you understand and get up to speed. If you are interested, please let me know by sending an email to bylawschair@oaregion8.org.

Susan Berland, Bylaws Chair, OA Region 8

From Region 8 Trustee

Hello/Hola/Ola Region 8 My name is Andi, I am compulsive overeater! My nombre es Andi y yo soy un comedor compulsivo! Menu nome Andi e eu sou um comedor compulsivo!

Welcome everyone to Baton Rouge, La. First off let me thank Memphis Tennessee for a wonderful fall assembly, "River City Recovery in Memphis Tennessee." The big book came alive for all of us. We thank you so much for the opportunity to not only absorb new recovery in our program but also to enjoy your city.

So here we are in Baton Rouge "Traveling the Bayou to Recovery." Uncover, Discover, Recover on the Bayou. Thank you so much for this awesome opportunity to be together with our fellow travelers on this wonderful journey of recovery.

These past five months have really been a true learning experience. For me, service has always been a big part of my recovery. Also a big part of my action plan. After I pray and talk to my sponsor and sponsees, I'm either at meeting, on the phone or at my computer...after my first meal of the day of course (LOL).

I do take time to paint and exercise in weekly plan. I always need to find that balance in my life. When I have neutrality around food I am available to learn how to bring balance into my world. Thank you HP.

There are so many ways to give service. I started by carrying the key to my home meeting. As I did service I became more willing to work my program. Isn't it wonderful how that works. Higher Power is always with me and I am so grateful.

Speaking of service, you have a wonderful opportunity to become part of the group that will be working on the World Service/ convention **Sunshine of the Spirit 60 Years Around the Sun!** August 20—22, 2020. We are having the convention in Orlando Florida...what a great place to go for super fellowship, recovery and fun.

I know I will have much more information in March and details on how you can sign up for service. You can register online. We will be at the Renaissance Hotel. There will be workshops, interactive lectures and so much more. Put it on your calendar, maybe even in your action plan?

Thank you for giving me the honor and blessing to continue to grow and to continue to carry these lifesaving solutions to all who share my compulsion, for this I am responsible. Please come up and introduce yourself at the assembly, I love giving and getting all the hugs I can.

Blessings of light Andi Sherman Region 8 Trustee

In December 1988, I read an article in the Ann Landers advice column about Overeaters Anonymous. At the time I was 19 years old and in the darkest of depressions. My eating was entirely out of control and I was terrified I would never be able to stop. On January 3, 1989 I walked into my first OA meeting. That article saved my life.



OA is a program of attraction rather than promotion, but for me, I just needed to know it was out there and read a tiny bit about what it was. That article planted a seed in my mind that OA was out there.

The OA World Service provides several mechanisms for each individual, or groups of individuals who want to plant the seed of OA into people's minds. If any of these mechanisms reaches just one person, it is worth it. Most of the ideas below can be found on OA.org here:

<https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/resources/public-information-suggestions/>

Here are some of my favorite ideas:

- Send a letter and a CD to your local radio station asking them to play the professionally recorded public service announcement that you can find on oa.org. You can listen to the CD at the site above.
- There are 7 different posters (pictured at the bottom) that you can put on bulletin boards in colleges, grocery stores, community centers—



anywhere you are allowed to post really. They are free to download at the link above.

- Check out the bookstore for these really neat (and very inexpensive) items that you can use as an individual: <http://bookstore.oa.org>

⇒ New Prospect Card—put your phone number on it and give to anyone—doctor, person you are talking to on line at Publix, a newcomer at a meeting...so many options. \$2.50 for 30 of them!



OA. It Works!

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www.oa.org



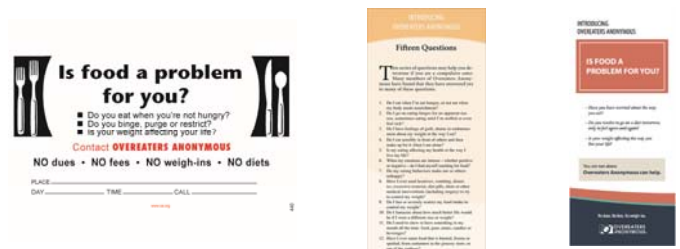
⇒ Sticky Notes (like a post-its) that say 'Is Food A Problem for you?' So easy to post! \$1.75 for a pad of 25

⇒ Fifteen questions card—1 card is 15¢—buy a bunch and leave them anywhere really.

⇒ "Is Food A Problem for You" pamphlet—another good thing to leave in places you think someone might be looking for something to read...20¢ each.

- Get together with some people from your local meetings and go through the Public Information Service manual for ideas and guidelines for tradeshows and other events—also at the bookstore, under pamphlets—each one is \$15. Make sure your group has one!
- Have workshops in your community regularly and post information about them in local stores/ bulletin boards. Region 8 put together a great Public Information Planning Calendar with ideas for each month of topical workshops. Get it here: <https://oaregion8.org/documents/pipo/pipo-planning-calendar.pdf>

There are so many lonely, unhappy people sitting in the dark with their stash of food and TV and just waiting to get that little sliver of hope. Please share this article at your next group conscience meeting, or intergroup meeting and take some action.



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