

# WHAT'S NEW?



OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS- REGION II

FEBRUARY 2019 | BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER

**TOGETHER WE CAN DO  
WHAT WE COULD NEVER DO ALONE**



Editor's note:

Welcome to the Region 2 Spring Newsletter for 2019. Here you will find personal reflections on our theme, "Together we Can do what we could never do alone", as well as committee reflections on their progress. R2 has 6 Committees that meet twice a year to develop specific Action Plans and then work towards implementing them. The function of each R2 Committee is to serve and support our local Inter-group Committees.

Reach out with any committee related questions to Bonnie, our Publications Coordinator, who will direct questions to the appropriate committee. She can be reached at [publications@oar2.org](mailto:publications@oar2.org).

In service,

Phoebe B., R2 administrative assistant and enthusiastic member of young person's committee.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Region 2 exists to support individuals in need of recovery from compulsive eating (e.g., overeating, bulimia, anorexia) through empowering all groups within the region. Through the 12 steps, we discover that our problem isn't food or our weight; our problem is our wounded approach to life. In recovery, we finally learn how to live. Sign up at [OAR2.org](http://OAR2.org) to receive the "What's New at R2 emails", sent 6 times per year.

## Trusted Servants:

Anne O., Chair [chair@oar2.org](mailto:chair@oar2.org)

Carolina R., Vice Chair  
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Jeremiah A., Secretary  
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Treasurer: We need a treasurer! Service opportunity.

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## Key dates

**2019 Convention: CANCELLED**

**Fall Assembly: Nov. 1-3, 2019**

**Spring Assembly: April 3-5, 2020**

**Convention: July 10-12, 2020**

**New Oakland Airport Hilton, Oakland, CA  
510-635-5000**

## Chair Report

As we were reading Tradition 2 at my home face to face meeting, I got the reminder that this is not a they/them program but a we/us program. There is no “them” to start a new meeting or write new literature or do service. There is only WE/US. We keep this program going, we keep the meetings strong, we let newcomers know that it works.

It was very sad to make the decision to cancel the 2019 Region 2 Convention in Pomona but there was no choice. We lacked the necessary number of volunteers. Sometimes we think “they” will do it, “they” will volunteer. But we cannot depend on “they” in this program. It is up to “us”.

Remember that we cannot keep it unless we give it away. I get so much back for the service I give.

Anne O

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## Twelve Steps Within Committee (TSW)

I arrived at the Sheraton Fairplex, Friday, November 2 eager to observe OA at the next level of commitment to those who suffer from our disease of compulsive eating. As I mingled with the other attendees, I felt the love and generosity of spirit generated by the OA fellowship “trudging the Road of Happy Destiny”.

When I initially registered for the assembly, I had picked the “sexy” and “politically hot” Unity with Diversity Committee. As I sorted my handbag for my assembly attendance, I discovered a 1” square of folded notepaper tucked in the outer pocket of my “go to” bag. I unfolded and read “Why”, unfolded again and read “I feel sad” unfolded again and read “Because I feel nobody likes me (as a friend)”. It brought to mind the oft remembered feeling of not belonging and the food I crammed down to fill the emptiness. I felt the presence of my HP and agreed the Twelve Step Within Committee and its goal to carry the message of hope and recovery to those who still suffer within the OA fellowship was the best place to be of service to my fellows and my lonely anonymous OA friend.

Lorraine S.



## TSW Committee Goals

To increase general awareness of TSW in our respective IGs and membership meetings

To promote International TSW Day of December 12

1. South Bay Intergroup hosting an event at Manhattan Beach
2. Palm Springs Intergroup hosting an event
3. Region 1 December 12 conference call

To encourage returning to OA literature as a resource guide

1. WSO TSW handbook
2. Welcome Back kit packages, ordered for 2019 Convention
3. Recovery Checklist and Members in Relapse pamphlets also for 2019 Convention
4. OA Third Edition, Appendices page 198, “Disease of the Body”.
5. Review of San Francisco IG workshop material for resource guide

To explore at future Region 2 TSW Committee meetings

1. R2 Relapse and Recovery Speaker List
2. Sober Eating podcast
3. Role play skit
4. Developing an active TWS Committee at the IG level (more than 1 person) meeting monthly

Current projects underway:

1. TSW table set up for 2019 Pomona, Sheraton Fairplex Convention with tri-fold board and literature relevant to Relapse and Recovery
2. Encourage the respective IGs to sponsor TSW programs within their IG

## Young Person's Committee

*Young people need OA, and OA needs young people.* Why have so few young (under age 30) people heard of OA? Just over a year ago, I was a young, desperate compulsive eater who had never heard of OA. "I'm like an alcoholic, but with food!" I tried explaining to a normal eater in a moment of desperation. At age 22, after a life of "normal" eating, I felt my body had been taken over by a food-obsessed alien. It was after 8 months of bingeing that God put the right search term in my search engine, and I discovered OA. In OA, I have new wonderful friends who share my disease, but almost none share my stage in life. Walking through my life with program and abstinence can feel like uncharted territory: my wonderful OA friends remember what their 20's were like, but none are walking their 20's with me. Increasing young people outreach is one major answer to the question of how to increase our numbers, and how to solve the problem of our aging OA demographic. How can we make young people feel welcome? Untold numbers of college-aged kids are struggling with our shared disease: how can we build a front door that welcomes them?

Currently most of our YP members are older than 30, but we are extremely grateful for their loving assistance. Each month we meet on the phone. We are reaching out to young people in program across the regions to see who is willing to be a "YP contact person." That way, young people newcomers can talk to compulsive eaters who are sharing their same life stage.

Phoebe B.



## Vice Chair Reflection

In 1997 I was visiting friends in the Poconos. There was a man I was dating and things were not going well. I was unhappy, anxious, frustrated and my reaction to all these horrible feelings was to eat ! A lot !

I went to church and to my surprise, the church bulletin had an advertisement for Overeaters Anonymous, and a phone number.

As soon as I got home I called the number and a lady answered. She was surprised to learn I was from Mexico City. I told her I was new in the program and having trouble. She suggested I go over Step 3, and surrender myself to a Higher Power and Step 11. Meditate! She told I could call her whenever I needed to. TOGETHER I COULD DO WHAT I COULD NOT DO ALONE.

Before OA my life was unmanageable and I was not prepared to make changes for good.

On another occasion, traveling in New York, I visited a fellow OA member and she asked if it was ok to bring another friend. This friend was also an OA member and I found we could speak the same language , understand the same concepts, and were OA sisters under the skin. We are truly together.

It is indescribable to feel love and understanding by others

who speak the same language. As Rozanne mentions in

her book " It is the language of heart".

Carolina Vice Chair R2



## The Power of Community

*"The strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack." - Rudyard Kipling*

When I came into the OA rooms to stay after 7 years of "visiting", I had never felt as if I truly belonged anywhere. No job, no real friends, a family who disliked me. Food had been my only friend, and not a true one at that. I felt like a buoy hanging out in an endless sea, isolated and alone.

Imagine my surprise when, as a relative newcomer, I had been invited to do service. It was a small task: putting out chairs but I felt both welcome and possibly a little part of something. It was the beginning of understanding a few simple truths: I must participate in order to feel I belong; my newness on the road to recovery helped keep recovering members' memory green; and I was of value in maintaining the fellowship.

As I grew in recovery I was then able to share my experience, strength and hope with others who were just like me. What a miracle to find others who understood my disease, behaviors, defects, and successes! I was not the only one. Yes, I was in a lifeboat where we were all paddling to shore. Some occupants would jump overboard but many of us were there to throw life preservers. Our joint strength kept us afloat and continues to do so.

By myself I'm the lone buoy. With the power and strength of the OA fellowship I can stay abstinent, bring my recovery into all other areas of my life, offer support where needed and hang in a safe harbor with a bunch of other buoys. I provide strength to the Pack as it gives me the power to continue recovering one day at a time.

Sherri Flynn, R2 Treasurer

## Service on display

I distinctly remember attending my first meeting of OA held in a community room at a bank on busy street near where I was living. The acceptance and welcome in the room were palatable. I was allowed to just be. I kept going back to that meeting because I felt that I belonged. I was home. That meeting had active service on display every week as well. There was a secretary, treasurer, someone to call newcomers, a Lifeline rep, coffee person and an intergroup rep. I also met members who did service above the intergroup level. I saw recovery and serenity in the people who did service. When they shared, they were solving problems in real life without turning to the food, unlike what I was doing. I saw the functionality of the meeting by the service reports people gave such as treasurer, intergroup rep, literature. I knew I wanted what they had so when the opening came up to be an intergroup rep, I volunteered. Soon I was attending the local intergroup meetings and bringing the info back to the group as others had done before me. When announcements were made asking for service, I made sure that my hand went up. When I saw that service positions that interested me had abstinence requirements, it made me more aware of my program and willingness to work it harder so I could do those jobs. Every where I have attended OA meetings, I have made a point to do service. OA has saved my life! I want it to be there for me and other fellows on the journey of recovery.

Marjorie D., R2 Events



## How Can How Can We Grow Overeaters Anonymous with Diversity?

Help OA be more inclusive (and grow our fellowship)! Explore new ways to carry the message of recovery to more compulsive eaters. Check out these resources:

### 1. Put OA Traditions 3 and 5 Into Action

Tradition 3: *The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.*

Tradition 5: *Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.*

- Consider using the Diversity Statement as a part of your meeting format. (This is # 3 on the linked meeting format.) [https://oa.org/files/pdf/Suggested-Meeting-Format\\_817.pdf](https://oa.org/files/pdf/Suggested-Meeting-Format_817.pdf)
- Encourage your group at a business meeting to become familiar with the Policy Related to Unity with Diversity Policy Statements. [http://www.oa.org/pdfs/unity\\_diversity\\_policy.pdf](http://www.oa.org/pdfs/unity_diversity_policy.pdf) (from the OA Business Conference Policy Manual)

The above guidelines help us work our program and conduct our fellowship.

**2. Encourage your meeting, intergroup, service body or committee to use the Unity With Diversity Checklist.** These twelve questions ask us to think about and discuss what we can do to make OA more inclusive and inviting to all. <https://www.oa.org/pdfs/UnityWithDiversityChecklist.pdf>

If your intergroup or service body would like to seek support or guidance around implementing any of these suggestions, please contact [info@oar2.org](mailto:info@oar2.org) and ask to be put in touch with the Unity with Diversity Committee.

## Let's Talk about Strong Meetings!

We can be intentional about strengthening our OA meetings. Here are some “conversation starters” for your next group conscience meeting:

**The Strong Meeting Checklist** - <https://www.oa.org/pdfs/strongmtgchecklist1.pdf>. Ask your meeting to set aside time to review this checklist and create an Action Plan for strengthening the meeting, based on your observations. Review the list again, but this time ask members to think about their personal contribution to the meeting. For example, “Does the meeting start and end on time?” becomes “What can I do to make sure our meeting starts and ends on time?” Revisit the checklist and your Action Plan, looking for progress, in three months.

**The OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Service Bodies** - <http://bookstore.oa.org/>. Get a copy of this invaluable pamphlet, which covers topics such as “*What Does a Group Secretary Do?*” and “*How do Good Groups Get Better?*” and “*How to Keep Them Coming Back.*” (Newcomers, that is!) It may seem at first that some of the ideas are intended for larger meetings, but read the pamphlet with an eye toward what is possible for your group. Think you don't need a group Secretary? Try it for a while! You might be surprised to find how much having a Secretary strengthens your meeting.



- What is a "strong meeting" for you?
2. If someone told you their meeting was struggling, what specific suggestions would you offer to help them strengthen their meeting?
  3. What actions might you be willing to take to help a struggling meeting or to strengthen a meeting you attend?

Let's Talk about Strong Meetings!

**The OA website** – <https://oa.org/> is full of amazing resources! Check out the Group Support page at <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/group-support/>. Bring a new voice into your meeting with an OA podcast from <https://oa.org/podcasts/>. Make sure your meeting information is *always* up-to-date so that World Service can send you important information AND so newcomers can find your meeting. If something changes, edit your meeting details at <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/meeting-changes/edit-a-meeting/>.

- Help your intergroup put on a workshop about building strong meetings.
- Go to a meeting you've heard is strong....watch for things you could bring back to your meeting. ➤ Go to one more meeting than you “need” to per week, just to share HOPE and carry the message.
- Be part of your meeting's “core group.” Show up early and attend the business meetings.
- Read the Traditions in the OA 12&12, then answer the italicized questions at the end of each chapter.
- Set aside time each October – the 10<sup>th</sup> month – to do a 10<sup>th</sup> Step on the strength of your meeting.
- Focus the meeting on a strong topic by providing each member with a slip of paper on which the Promises, Principles, Serenity Prayer or other short quote is copied. Ask for shares on that topic.
- ...What ideas do you have for strengthening your meeting?



## OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS REGION 2

INTRODUCING  
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

### Where Do I Start?

*Everything a Newcomer  
Needs to Know*



The new ***Where Do I Start? Everything a Newcomer Needs to Know*** pamphlet (#705) is now available for \$1 in the OA bookstore. This replaces the Newcomer Packet.

Here is the direct link: [http://bookstore.oa.org/pc\\_product\\_detail.asp?key=044B7B5DE2EC44E6BCA2BE41594DBA5B](http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=044B7B5DE2EC44E6BCA2BE41594DBA5B)

Composed from the five pamphlets in OA's Newcomer Packet, *Where Do I Start?* eliminates repetition, packing key information about OA's Twelve Step program of recovery into a single 32-page pamphlet. Includes: the Fifteen Questions, Tools (abridged), Plans of Eating, OA Promise, AA Third and Seventh Step Prayers, "Welcome Home," and so much more.

Groups, service bodies, fellows: Welcome newcomers and help them get started in OA with our new, comprehensive pamphlet.