

# WHAT'S NEW? OVEREATERS

ANONYMOUS- REGION II NOVEMBER 2019 | BIENNIAL  
NEWSLETTER

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



## **Editor's Note:**

Welcome to the Region 2 Fall Newsletter for 2019. Here you will find personal reflections on from program fellows across R2, as well as a couple reflections by both board and committee members on on-going developments. 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 Jeri, our Publications Coordinator, who will direct questions to the appropriate committee. She can be reached at [publications@oar2.org](mailto:publications@oar2.org).

In loving service,

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

## Trusted servants:

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

Vice chair: Carolina R., [vicechair@oar2.org](mailto:vicechair@oar2.org)

Secretary: Jeremiah A., [secretary@oar2.org](mailto:secretary@oar2.org)

Treasurer: Patti, [treasurer@oar2.org](mailto:treasurer@oar2.org)

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Webmaster: Mary H., [webmaster@oar2.org](mailto:webmaster@oar2.org)

## KEY DATES

### **2019 Fall Assembly**

Fri-Sun, November 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> 2019

### **2020 Spring Assembly**

Fri-Sat, April 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### **2020 Convention**

Fri-Sun, July 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Hilton Oakland Airport**

**One Hegenberger Rd.**

**Oakland, CA 94621**

Hi, my name is Jeri and I am a compulsive overeater who is grateful for another day of abstinence and another day of service. Thank You, God.

Forty-four years ago I walked into my first Overeaters Anonymous meeting. I came in riding the Terrible Four Horsemen --- terror, bewilderment, frustration, despair because diet pills weren't working for me anymore. I believed I was too old to lose weight, and I was only 29.

In those days my mantra was 'I Can't'. I can't stay on a diet and I can't lose weight anymore. I thought my body was too old to lose weight. What happened at my first meeting was I felt hope as I listened to all of You. Each time I came back and saw how it worked in all of You, my "I Can't" turned into: "Yes, that happened to me." And "Yes, I've felt like that", And "Yes, I believe this program can work for me too." (BB pg. xii).

This is definitely a WE CAN program and definitely TOGETHER WE CAN DO WHAT WE COULD NEVER DO ALONE" --- beginning with abstinence and continuing with service at all levels. As it says in the Big Book: "Each day, somewhere in the world, recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength, and hope."

BB pg. xxii

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Loving Myself  
By Zoyer

Perhaps it's the most important relationship in my life  
And yet still I listen to these lies  
My life is a prison, locked up in chains  
I fight and fight but is it all in vain?

I try to love myself, to stand as I am  
But I look around and no one understands  
I am in pain, I feel I can't do anything right  
I fight the negative thoughts with all my might

From me, I expect the best  
Because I see myself as quite different from the rest  
With every attempt my heart nearly beats out of my chest  
I crumble, as I am in state of ultimate arrest

It's an all or nothing situation  
I must be the best, a smashing sensation  
And If I am not, I feel rotten  
I might as well be forgotten

I begin to see the light

Like A glow in the middle of the night  
Because amidst all the negativity I call out to my higher power  
Because her love is so much louder

And the love of my fellows  
Keeps me strong, the thoughts get mellow  
My higher power calls out to me  
And tells me there is progress in my individuality

So much of my life I begged for love, utterly yearning  
So much of my time now I spend unlearning  
The perfectionism leads to stigmatism  
These bad habits are automatic

I want out, I want to love myself  
So dare I say it's time to let go, my crown on the shelf  
I am neither better nor worse  
I am me, I am a good last as I am first

So much of my life I have spent preoccupied with the lives of others  
I could tell them how to live til they feel smothered  
OA taught me to focus on myself  
Because the real work was self love, for that was where I really needed the help

OA foremost teaches me that I am even worthy of love  
And that my HP will be there when push comes to shove  
I began to act as if I am a person of great confidence  
Even on days I begin to feel so insignificant

OA shows me vulnerability is not a weakness but a strength  
I owe my life to OA  
And any time the voices in my head have something negative to say  
I pray to my HP, work my steps, and tell the voice "Not Today"

I appreciate how the OA literature seems to read my mind  
And gives me insight and vision where before I was blind  
Insecurity exists but does not dominate me like before  
With my fellows, my HP, and steps, I know I have now so much more!

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Service with a Laugh

When I first came to OA in early 2011 at the age of 65, I was very familiar with service, having used it in one way or another as a way to feel better about myself, to fit in, to be acknowledged, to be “seen.”

Very early on in the program I volunteered to be the Intergroup Rep for one of my meetings, even before I knew what Intergroup was! I was very self-conscious when I attended my first IG meeting, thinking that I ought to know what was going on – which I didn’t; and that I ought to perform brilliantly and perfectly – which I didn’t. This was before I worked my fourth Step and realized that perfectionism, low self-esteem, and pride were character defects that had hounded me all my life.

Once I got used to Intergroup and learned more about my program, I came to enjoy being a member of Intergroup a great deal. As a matter of fact, I have not left Intergroup since then and have done some form of service at that level for more than eight years.

There is so much to be said for doing service! It keeps me coming back to meetings; it keeps me close to the hand and heart of OA, which we speak about in our Responsibility Pledge; it keeps me in touch with other members of the fellowship and also my Higher Power; and it’s fun!

In OA I learned to take it easy with myself, to make mistakes and make amends, to be less than perfect, and most of all, I have learned to give and take love freely and joyously. Because I am so relaxed in giving service, I find many opportunities to laugh and have fun. Our fellowship means a great deal to me and service allows me to give back and to support this program, which has saved my life.

In loving service,  
Marion, Santa Cruz, CA

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In working my program of recovery, I feel fortunate that our OA program offers so many choices to support me. I remember more than thirty years ago, my sponsor asked me to spread the fingers of my hands and list all the choices I had when I was struggling, hurting or the compulsion to eat was overwhelming. I had suffered from nearly twenty-five years of bulimia and a thirty-five pound weight gain. Together, we mentioned each tool, prayer and working the Steps. She said "eating" was one of the choices. It was comforting to me that choosing to eat was simply one of the choices--and that working the program gave me at least nine others that could strengthen my resolve, my recovery and my physical, emotional and spiritual health. All I needed to do was to be willing. If I were willing to be

abstinent, willing to take appropriate action, to listen with an open mind, and to believe in at something greater than myself I could recover, a day at a time, from the devastating disease of compulsive eating. Today, thanks to God and my OA fellows, I use the tools. I reach out daily and, in turn, receive outreach calls; I attend 2-4 face-to-face meetings weekly and give some service at each of them. (Service strengthens my resolve, and encourages me to "show up," especially on those challenging times when I am tired, cranky, or unwilling.) I work out difficulties and problems by taking myself through the Steps with a sponsor to find answers and to choose appropriate behavior. Often, I need loving support to face feelings or attitudes I find uncomfortable. I strive to be honest about my thoughts and feelings, and to be gentle and forgiving toward myself when I make mistakes. I make loads of mistakes! I speak harshly when I had planned to be kind. I "butt in" to the business of others when I forget to mind my own. I "over-step." I raise my voice. My defects are alive and well. Yet, so is my program. I use Step 10 to inventory my behavior and get help as quickly as possible to make an amend and to forgive myself for being human. Honestly, the kinder I am to myself, the kinder I have become toward others, often forgiving them more quickly than I have in the past, when someone has been hurtful to me.

Working the OA Program of Recovery and my belief in a Power Greater than myself that can restore me to sanity has truly saved my life. I am becoming a person who simply wants a life of sane and happy usefulness. What a miracle. My gratitude for OA, my fellows, and my Higher Power knows no bounds.

With thankfulness,

Cathy L

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### **Growing OA With Diversity: Committee Letter**

What is meant by Diversity? This question was posed to me recently by a group rep at my monthly intergroup meeting. Here is my personal take.

When I look around the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous, including our Assemblies, I see mostly white middle-aged women. Yet the general population who lives in the areas R2 serves is more richly diverse than who attends OA meetings. And compulsive overeating and undereating are pervasive throughout California, Mexico, Hawaii and Northern Nevada. This tells me that people of color are underrepresented in the rooms. This leads me to ask how does Region 2 carry the OA message of recovery to communities of color? Is our program a program of attraction?

The Region 2 Diversity Committee is asking ourselves some tough questions, questions we don't necessarily know how to answer. Do people of color know about OA? Do all newcomers feel welcome at our meetings? Do we hold meetings in communities that haven't heard about OA? Does our message resonate for others in the way it did for us when we first joined OA? What can OA as a fellowship do?

We would love to hear from R2 reps throughout the region. *What has your intergroup or meeting done to attract a more diverse representation of compulsive eaters to OA?* Please share your group's experience, strength, and hope in *Growing OA With Diversity*, by writing to [diversity-chair@oar2.org](mailto:diversity-chair@oar2.org). If this is an issue that concerns you or your group, please join our committee at the Fall Region 2 Assembly.

Your humble servant,

April

Chair, Diversity Committee

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### **Reflections on working being in a committee and being in virtual OA**

Service in the young persons committee has improved my recovery by keeping me at the vanguard of program-- researching into how we might use the virtual world to weave together more young people recovery, even if it's in the smallest baby steps. We had a vision to create a virtual OA group chat so that people could reach out to fellows or offer service to fellows at any time, across the world. This path of inquiry led me to

discover that group chats already exist and it may be possible to receive OA approval for them.

It is a blessing to be in community with people who think it's normal and sane to aim for a life "beyond my wildest dreams." I can share with fellows how this promise is indeed coming true without fear that anyone would judge me for daring to be so optimistic. I can talk about God openly without worrying I may infringe upon people's particular ways of relating to God. A disagreement with a program friend led us to do our own 9th steps, which has in turn led to a relationship built on deeper respect than before. There are some ways of living only 12 steppers understand.

I am grateful to get to come to these assemblies as the admin assistant, and each time I "mess up", I get an opportunity to make an amends and take the next right action, skipping the old self-hatred and fear part. It's ok for me to be growing still. As I grant myself that permission, I find myself granting it automatically for others, too.

Much love and aloha from Hawaii,

Phoebe