

January • February 2021



Share your Experience, Strength and Hope  
on a Step or Tradition - A Great Way to do Service.  
Service is Important to Abstinence and Recovery.

The 2021 Birthday Party will  
be virtual!  
January 16-17, 2021  
The 61st OA Birthday Party  
Weekend Celebration

[www.connecticutoa.org](http://www.connecticutoa.org)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- CT. INTERGROUP Meets
- 3rd Monday of Each Month
- 7-8:30 PM



CHECK SOME PODCASTS  
[avision4you.info](http://avision4you.info)  
Tabs for Recorded Meetings  
Click & Play

### ANNUAL JANUARY MARATHON

1-4pm. on ZOOM

Saturday, January 23

Practicing 12 Step Principles  
in all Our Affairs

ID 2517925996 Password principles.  
1-646-876-9923.

### QUICK STEPS

Cover the Twelve Steps  
in 5 weeks with 6 others.

For Info/To Register  
Sharon K. at 860 770-1557  
[skupiec@hotmail.com](mailto:skupiec@hotmail.com)

### Newcomer & Renewal Meetings

Wed. 10 am Bristol: Zoom

Wed. 7 pm Windsor: Zoom

### To Be Added to FRIENDS OF INTERGROUP

Announcements

Send an email to

[secretaryCTIG@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryCTIG@gmail.com)

### Connecticut Intergroup Announces a SPEAKER BANK

for OA members with  
60 days of abstinence or more,  
to speak on OA subjects.

## PRODUCTION:

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# KEEPING CONNECTED

860.840.2475 For Information

## OA Celebrates 61 Years!!!

The 2021 Birthday Party Weekend Celebration Will Be Virtual!  
January 16-17, 2021

<https://www.oalaig.org/oa-birthday-party/>

The founding of our program in 1960 is celebrated annually by the Los Angeles Intergroup as the main event to enhance recovery, raise funds, and highlight fellowship and service.

**OA by Rozanne S., 1962 -- Abstinence Enters.**

**OA's founder explains how the concept of abstinence emerged.**

*Eager for information about our early years, members frequently ask me:*

*"How did the idea of abstinence come into OA?"*

*Was it always the way it is today? How did it start?"*

Looking back, the years from 1960- 1962 were exciting for us. We were so impulsive, so eager to see our tiny Fellowship grow and establish a firm foundation. By 1962 we were united about the wording of our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. In other areas, however, we all had different ideas on how to achieve our common goals.

Consider food intake, for example. Before 1960 most of us had grown up counting calories. We had been taught that as long as we kept within our calorie count, we could eat all the barely caloric foods we wanted between meals.

Our problem was that while many of us had lost weight, even more were nibbling their way back to obesity. Others were sticking with their diets but crunching all day on the low-cal foods. Many just stayed fat, insisting they were only eating allowable foods between meals. Something crucial was missing. What was it? The Twelve Steps worked for our Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) friends; what were we doing wrong?

During those years I was going to AA meetings every week. Although I'm not an alcoholic, my understanding of the Steps and Traditions was so limited I believed I could learn more by attending AA.

In early 1962, one powerful AA meeting changed my way of thinking about eating. All through that meeting the speakers emphasized "abstinence" from alcohol. During the two years I'd had contact with AA, I had never heard sobriety referred to in that manner. It was a revelation!

Sitting in the back of that meeting, I thought to myself: "That's what's wrong with all of us in OA. We're not abstaining from food at any time of the day. We have to close our mouths from the end of one meal to the beginning of the next. Sometime during the day, we must 'abstain' from eating; otherwise we're feeding our compulsion."

## TOOLS OF RECOVERY

### *A Plan of Eating*

*Sponsorship*

*Meetings*

*Telephone*

*Writing*

*Literature*

*Action Plan*

*Anonymity*

*Service*



### *Connecticut Intergroup STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021*

- 1. Help members strengthen their personal recovery.**
- 2. Increase the number of sponsors.**
- 3. Increase the number of newcomers.**
- 4. Increase the retention of newcomers.**
- 5. Help those in relapse.**
- 6. Increase outreach activities especially to health care professionals.**

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Excitedly I brought my new approach back to OA. Some thought it was a breakthrough; others scoffed.

By spring of 1962 we counted nineteen OA groups, most of them in California. The OA office was in my little dining room, and I was the unofficial, unpaid national secretary. We had already had our first informal meeting of the Los Angeles area groups; now we agreed it was time to have a real conference of all OA groups.

Therefore, in May 1962 I sent out an Overeaters Anonymous Bulletin (forerunner of today's Lifeline) to all OA groups. It introduced secretaries and group starters to one another and mentioned the proposed Conference.

Then on page three of that first Bulletin came the announcement that would both unify and upset us for decades:

"Out of our regular visits to AA meetings and talks with our friends in Alcoholics Anonymous, we here in the Los Angeles area have discovered a concept that has revolutionized our way of thinking about our compulsive overeating.

"That concept is 'abstinence.'

"Abstinence means simply three moderate meals a day with absolutely nothing in between. It means also no 'meals' while we're preparing a meal and no 'meals' while we're cleaning up the kitchen afterward. In other words, total abstinence from compulsive eating!

"If for medical reasons our doctor has ordered more than three meals a day, then of course we would plan accordingly and know that anything outside that plan would be breaking abstinence. Of course, black coffee, tea, water, and noncaloric beverages of any kind are the exception to between-meal nibbling.

"Just as the alcoholic must totally abstain from alcohol to remain sober, so we have found we must totally abstain from compulsive eating to maintain our own kind of sobriety. We call those who have achieved this kind of sobriety 'abstainers.'

"There are no 'musts' to any part of the OA program. . . indeed our Twelve-step program is only a suggested plan for recovery. Therefore, we aren't saying that abstinence is a 'must'. We're only passing on to you what we have learned from our own experience . . . that with 'abstinence' from compulsive eating we have at last found the true meaning of sobriety for the compulsive overeater."

In 1962 this was a brand-new idea for us. Since the word abstain means "to stay away from," it seemed clear that to be abstinent in OA meant to stay away from compulsive overeating. How to do this? Since we must eat, the most logical method would be to eat only at mealtimes: That meant three moderate meals a day, more if health needs required them, and absolutely nothing in between.

Unfortunately, over time abstinence took on a new meaning, a corruption of the original. Instead of implying "to stay away from," it came to suggest the eating plan itself.

"What's your abstinence?" one member would ask another. What the person really meant was, "What's your eating plan?" With this confusion, it's no wonder the word abstinence has come to mean different things to different people.

Will the time come when we all understand that the concept of abstinence is the same for everyone . . . to stay away from compulsive overeating? Can we recognize that it is the eating plan which may be different from one person to another, perhaps different for an individual at various times in his or her life?

In 1962 my unexpected insight was difficult to grasp, even harder to put into practice. Today it is no easier, but we can meet the challenge. Together we can climb those Twelve Steps to recovery, abstaining from compulsive overeating one day at a time!

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