



**OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS®**

Virtual Services Committee

OA VIRTUAL NEWS

4th Quarter 2018 – Vol. 8

“Using Virtual Services to Connect Wherever You Are”

Thoughts on Our Theme

Hello, my name is Dora, I am a compulsive eater and since April 2018. I've given service as the Virtual Services Trustee. I have lots of love and gratitude for OA's virtual meetings. They truly save my life every day and I can find recovery anywhere around the world.

I've been in Overeaters Anonymous for eight years and I've been abstinent since my very first virtual meeting eight years ago.

The most wonderful experiences I've had are when I visit other countries through virtual meetings. I've shared with people in the USA, China, Japan, Spain, many members in Region 9, and of course Brazil! I can listen to the message that saves my life by simply installing a new app or making a phone call. There are people outside my country that I've never met but have come to love—I know their voice. I can experience recovery after a share from a person whose face I many never see, but I can know her or his heart and feel the warmth of their wonderful virtual hugs.

I came to OA through virtual meetings—they are where I am at home, where I've had both difficult and wonderful days. Yes, sometimes I need to go to a meeting because I am feeling strong in my program and accepted, sometimes because I am not fine and need support, and most of the time because I want *to carry the message*.

When I carry the message it's sometimes in another language; it is in the language of the heart.

I've had difficult moments when staying connected in OA made the difference: when my lovely father passed away I went to a virtual meeting that night and I felt loved. Another time I received an e-mail that was from an OA friend who lives in another country, that lifted my spirit. My OA community makes it possible that I don't eat over my pain.

I've gone to virtual meetings when I'm on holiday where there are many binge foods available—I need to be connected with my OA family. I've gone to virtual meetings while at the airport waiting to go to OA's World Service Business Conference and was afraid about flying and the trustee elections.

Virtual Services are very important in my life and giving OA service is too. Giving service at my Friday night virtual meeting is a blessing! Updating an OA website is fun!

And the gratitude? Gratitude is the best word to express my feelings about Virtual Services. The more I do, the more I want to do. My life and abstinence depend on this OA virtual world.

—Dora P., Virtual Region Trustee
oavirtualseervices.org

“OA Virtual News” is the quarterly newsletter of the Virtual Service Conference Committee of Overeaters Anonymous. The newsletter presents experiences and opinions of individual OA members and is not to be attributed to Overeaters Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Overeaters Anonymous or by the VSCC. Comments, suggestions, and articles sharing your personal experience, strength, and hope of recovery in the OA fellowship are encouraged. Articles submitted will not be returned and are subject to editing for clarity, brevity and anonymity.

Drive Time

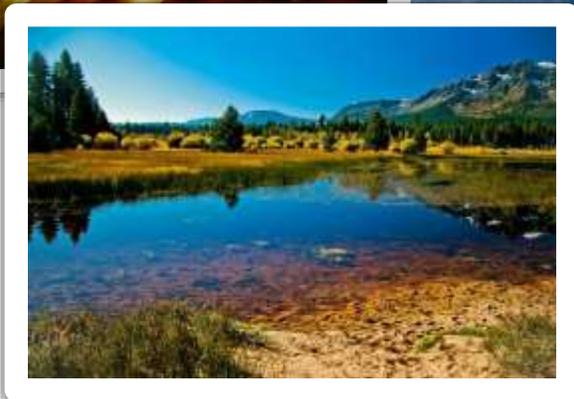
I live in one of the most beautiful places in the world: the Carson Valley in Northern Nevada, just over the mountain from California. From my front porch I have an awe-inspiring view of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Jobs Peak—a 10,000-foot mountain peak that is simply spectacular. Our valley is considered a high mountain desert, with lots of sagebrush and pine nut trees.

We are also fortunate that stunning Lake Tahoe is just on the other side of the mountain. In less than an hour, we can be at one of the most perfect playgrounds in the world. Just last night I was at Sand Harbor, a favorite for visitors and locals because sandy beaches are rare in our rocky mountain high. We kayak, hike, swim or walk on the beach whenever we want. Last night I attended a play at the outdoor theater with the added spectacle of the full moon over the lake. We are truly blessed.

The downside to all of these natural amenities is that we aren't exactly an urban destination. My house is a lovely forty-five-minute drive to the lake but also a long, slow drive to my daily work in Carson City. That can get old and tiring, so I've turned my drive time into my spiritual training time. I use that 90 minutes a day, coming and going, to listen to OA literature on Audible or to podcasts that I download and play back in the car. Since becoming part of the Virtual Services Conference Committee, I've also learned about the huge wealth of treasures the Virtual Intergroups and Service Boards have available in the form of recorded meetings.

I love my local, face-to-face meetings—I attend two local meetings, but when I'm in the car and driving through the Valley, past coyotes stalking through pastures, eagles and hawks soaring overhead and stunning mountains touched with early snow—I love tuning into other meetings to hear my daily dose of experience, strength and hope.

—Karen B., VSCC Delegate Co-Chair
Northern Nevada Sierra Intergroup, USA



What the OA East Coast Sunrise Phone Meeting Means to Me

Hi, my name is Evangelyn and I am a grateful compulsive overeater. I first came to OA in the fall of 1977. I had one purpose in attending those early meetings; to lose weight, and I did. I was told at that meeting to get a sponsor, take a piece of paper with a list of foods on it, only eat the foods and amounts on that list, call my sponsor every day and Keep Coming Back. I lost weight, stopped coming back to OA, and then went back to doing exactly what I had been doing. Of course, the weight came back on and then back I came to OA.

The beginning of 1980, I stopped coming and going in and out of OA. I had short periods of abstinence and much longer periods of doing all those things I'd done previously like bingeing and purging, taking diuretics, over exercising and going on extended fasts, except, by now I had stopped taking amphetamines and seeing a Diet Doctor. I truly believed that I would never have a sustained period of abstinence, yet I would continue to attend OA meetings because deep down in my thoughts I did not want to give up on the idea of never being abstinent. I also really wanted to go to the World Service Conference some day and I knew delegates needed a year of abstinence.

I believe there are no coincidences, only consequences of God working in my life. I have another friend who says "It's not ODD, it's GOD". In December of 2008 God brought me to the OA phone meetings. I was at an Intergroup Meeting when I saw a flyer for an OA phone meeting holiday marathon. When listening to the marathons, I found out about the East Coast Sunrise Meeting. Now, my brother had told me that when he first came to AA his sponsor told him to not drink alcohol and attend a meeting



every day for 90 days. I remember thinking maybe I can put together 90 days of abstinence. I didn't make it to 90; I think I made it to 87 days and stinking thinking got in the way of my abstinence. I called in to the Sunrise Meeting the next day, shared my disappointment in myself, the sadness I felt, and unlike the other times in my life when I broke my abstinence, this time was different. I have never gotten so many OA calls in one day as I did that day. That was March 16, 2009.

In the Spring of 2009 there was an anniversary celebration for the Sunrise Meeting where the founders of the meeting shared how and why they started the meeting. I always remembered how exciting it was to be on that meeting. What a joy to have been able to be on the meeting this year April 7, 2018 when the Tenth Anniversary was celebrated and the original founders were able to join us again.

I have experienced some major losses since I originally joined the Sunrise Meeting. I have also had some exciting travel opportunities and many joys during this time. The support, love, and understanding that I get via my many friends on the Sunrise Meeting is unbelievable. I am so grateful to be a part of this fellowship and particularly this meeting.

—Evangelyn R., VSCC Delegate
712 VSB of Overeaters Anonymous

My Virtual Life

Hello my name is Dawn and I'm one of you. Compulsive with my food and so many other things too.

About a year ago my whole life shifted in a very virtual way. My job of more than twenty years became portable, meaning that we now conduct all our meetings in public spaces or by phone, and projects large and small are emailed and cloud shared. This shift towards technology has been happening for a long while, but with the advent of smart phones having an office became obsolete—an unnecessary expense. So, we are now completely virtual.

I was ready, willing and able to move my office into the dining room of our tiny condo, and after more than a year of scanning, uploading, recycling and shredding, more than thirty years of documents are now stored in 'the cloud'! I think I'm unpacked—mostly. It seems in some ways a never-ending task to compartmentalize and digitize so much history, because just as you think you've finished, more is uncovered in the institutional archeology.

There is freedom though, truly a great amount of freedom—many days I work in my jammies and sometimes I work late into the night when I'm in the groove. And when I need a change in scenery I can take a short walk to the sofa, or drive to a coffee shop and armed with my laptop, I can work away. The world is my workspace, as long as I have Wi-Fi; and I can take a day or afternoon off when it suits me, as long as I complete the various tasks and duties assigned.

But, there are things in this virtual life I had not anticipated. Along with the magnitude of task of cataloging thirty years of insanity in the cloud, I have found that the boundaries in my life have become blurred. For instance, my family never really knows when I'm working—I could be texting with a friend, responding to a business inquiry or coordinating volunteers for an event. It all pretty much looks the same as I type away madly on my smartphone. When I am at home

I am not always in 'home mode' and that can be confusing for me and for them, so it has been necessary to redefine boundaries—not so easy for me. When I get frustrated about a project or person or situation with my work, there is no watercooler to congregate around to express my feelings and gather support, and this is the place where I've found a growing place for my recovery in OA's Virtual World.

For the past six years I've gone to at least three face-to-face meetings a week; I am truly blessed to have so many meetings available to me. But, in the past year OA Facebook Group Meetings have been my lifeline. I can easily go to a meeting on my phone, computer or tablet from almost any location day or night. I take a break. I read, reflect, and respond—when I feel ready. Have you ever been in a face-to-face meeting and knew you had something to share, but you didn't know how to say it? To be very honest, I have a slow processor, so one of my favorite things about these non-real-time meetings is that I can return to that very moment, to that particular share, and say what has bubbled up in my heart once it's had time to percolate. It's amazing!

These are truly wonderful meetings, and I am very grateful for all those who do service to support them. They have become an integral part of my virtual life.

—Dawn K., VSCC Delegate
Central Florida Intergroup, USA





Close to Me, Always

My name is Marcela, and I'm a recovered compulsive overeater.

The first time I called in to a phone meeting, I was 18 months sober. The morning after my last binge, on February 22nd 2011, I didn't feel sober anymore. I became a member of 'A Vision For You' phone meeting, which is my home group. I've been recovered and abstinent for the last seven years and five months.

I'm 58 years old, I'm 5'4". My top weight was 211 lbs. and lowest 78 lbs. I've been diagnosed with the whole spectrum of eating disorders and now I live in the realm of 125 lbs. with a fluctuation of 2 lbs., give or take.

I live in Boston, but was born in Mexico City, so I'm bilingual. Six years ago, a woman from Spain asked for my help and we started a virtual meeting through a phone app that allows recordings. I thought we were going to be just a few Spanish speakers working the program but this morning, we were 373 members. Three years ago, 18 of us met face-to-face in Mexico for a Big Book weekend. It was such a hit, that

we repeated the experience the year after. This time, twice as many showed up. Since then, I've been to the Dominican Republic, Mexico City, and I'll be visiting Costa Rica in October, to study the Big Book for a weekend. We all stay in touch through virtual meetings, and since we don't meet in "real-time", people leave their recordings and I listen to them whenever I have the time. I wake up at 5 am and get ready for the day by listening to the recordings that the members from Spain have recorded, and during lunch time I listen to some more. Before I go to bed at night, there's usually 20 to 25 minutes more worth of sharing.

I'm still very active in my home group in English, and we have also met three times for Big Book study weekends. Many virtual meetings have become "hybrids," a combination of face-to-face, phone calls, and phone apps. My meetings might be virtual, but they've opened the door to The Great Reality, the Vision that my HP has always had for me: A life without hunger, a quiet mind, and a serene and slim body.

—Marcela M. "A Vision For You"
Edition in Spanish, Secretary



Enjoying Virtual Meetings Wherever You Are

One wonderful thing about our virtual meetings is that if you have access to technology, a power source, and a connection (to internet, Wi-Fi, phone signal) no matter where you are or what time zone you are in, you can get to a meeting online, by phone, or by non-real-time connection. At home in a storm, on vacation, on a business trip, you can get a virtual meeting. What a change from when I first came into OA in 2004. Back then all I knew about were face-to-face meetings and if there was a bad winter storm, the meeting might be canceled because of a state of emergency. I learned about phone meetings in 2005. In those days there might only be one or two phone meetings a day. Unlike today where there are several “free” phone meeting providers in the US. Back then every phone meeting had a treasurer to request 7th tradition donations because the phone conference services had to be paid monthly and if something happened to the treasurer or their credit card then you didn't

have a meeting! I know because I was one of those phone meeting treasurers; I stepped in to help when a meeting went dark.

Today we have meetings that we couldn't have imagined fifteen years ago, phone meetings almost every hour of the day, online meetings, free contact with people in other parts of the world. Now we don't need to pay a conference service for our phone meetings (but we do have to pay our own phone bills). I can see the return of the phone meeting treasurer with the creation of our new virtual region and more virtual intergroups asking for donations. We can't pass a basket over the phone, but if we want OA to be able to keep listing our meetings (and there are more and more of them), we need to be part of the financial support network as well as the service structure.

I can hear people saying: OA doesn't charge fees for membership and if we can go to a meeting for free, why should we pay for it? Why not pay for virtual meetings with virtual money? Sorry, that will have to wait a few more years. Meanwhile, world currency hasn't yet been invented but OA is all over the world and supporting the organization is another way we can give back and help others who can't give yet.

Remember, even free services have a cost somewhere and if we want virtual meetings to continue to grow, we need to support them. What was your junk food budget?? Think about it the next time you go on a virtual meeting.

—Jean B., VSCC non-delegate member
Mass Bay Intergroup, USA (yes, I'm treasurer)

Virtual Suggestion Box

A member asks, “When moderating phone meetings how can I encourage people to do service by reading the steps and traditions, and foster sharing during meetings?”

—Send Suggestions to virtualregiontrustee@gmail.com



Telephone Meetings Saved My Program

Thank you to all those who do service on the virtual services! These telephone meetings are life-saving to those who need meetings of Overeaters Anonymous over and above local face-to-face meetings.

Personally, I foolishly left OA for fifteen years. At the time I left there were no telephone meetings, but when I returned seven years ago and called in to my first phone meeting I could not believe it! It was almost like a local face-to-face meeting and I didn't have to leave home!

About two and a half years ago I took on a service position in the 712 VSB structure and became the Moderator Coordinator for a regularly scheduled phone meeting. It is a lot of work at times, but worth the effort. Service is very important to my program. I started out moderating and continue to moderate at times. I encourage you to do service by moderating—you can be a regular or a backup moderator for your favorite meetings.

I gained dashboard privileges about a year and a half ago for the meeting I coordinate. This helps keep the meetings safe and orderly in the event of a disruption.

I cannot say enough good things about virtual services and the phone meetings of Overeaters Anonymous. I am to this day grateful for the phone meetings. I can dial into a meeting and share in times of temptation to overeat; even off-hours there are usually meetings available.

Thanks again OA virtual services and to our newly transformed virtual intergroups! You provide life-saving services through the telephone conference calling lines every day!

—Margie L., Savannah, Georgia, USA
712 VSB of Overeaters Anonymous



2018 OA PHONE MARATHONS

712-432-5200 PIN: 4285115#

No abstinence requirement to serve as a moderator
2018oamarathons@gmail.com

Monday, October 8

Columbus Day / Native American Day
Keep Coming Back

Wednesday, October 31

Halloween—Removing the Masks of Fear
Resentments, Dishonesty, and Self Centeredness

Sunday, November 11

Veteran's Day—Having the Gift of Courage

Saturday, November 17

I.D.E.A. Day—The Rewards of Abstinence

Thursday, November 22

Thanksgiving Day—Having an Attitude of Gratitude

Monday, December 3

Hanukkah—Rededicating Ourselves to Our Higher Power

Thursday, December 12

12th Step Within Day—Loving Each Other in Recovery

Monday, December 24

Christmas Eve Day—The Dawn of a New Spirit

Tuesday, December 25

Christmas Day—Experiencing the Joy of the Promises

Wednesday, December 26

Kwanzaa / Boxing Day
Sharing Our Experience, Strength and Hope

Monday, December 31

New Year's Eve Day—Progress not Perfection

Tuesday, January 1, 2019

New Year's Day—Awareness is the First Step

Virtual Suggestion Box

A member asks, “Are there any vegetarian friendly meetings being held virtually?”

—Send Suggestions to virtualregiontrustee@gmail.com



The 4AM Solution

Hi! I'm Karen and I'm a compulsive overeater.

When I am stressed I wake up at 4AM. I don't know why and in all my fifty-five years I have never been able to go back to sleep once I wake up. In the past, before recovery began, I would get up and start eating. By the time the rest of the household was up, I could do a lot of damage.

Now I have my Tools of Recovery, and one of the most powerful tools is meetings. No, there's not a bunch of crazy cowboys meeting at 4AM here in Nevada—wouldn't that be a hoot?

My meeting is online and I attend on my phone from the cozy comfort of my bed.

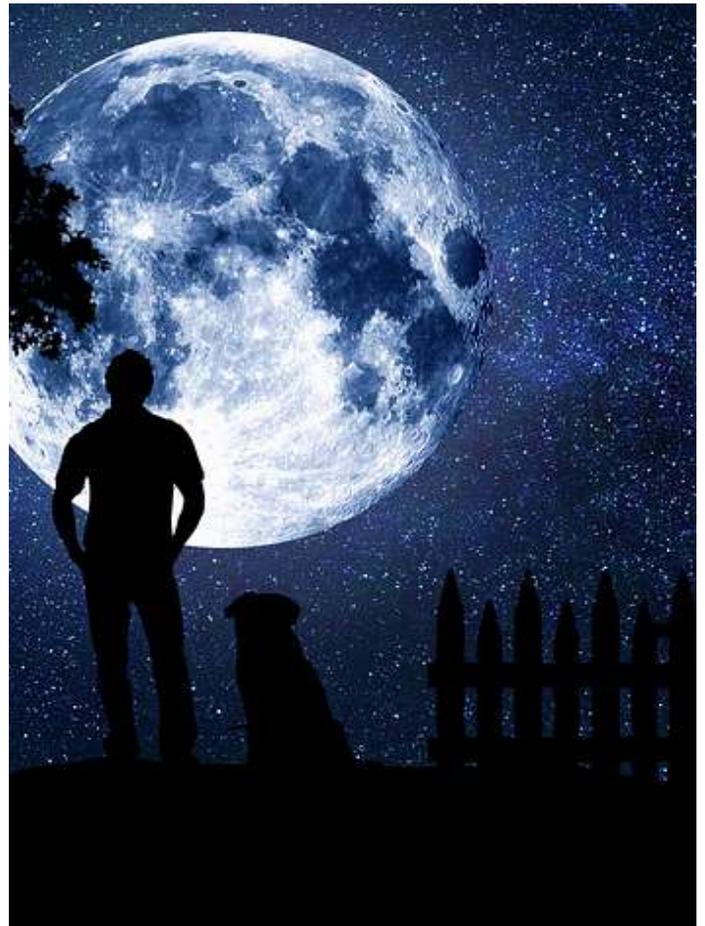
Holding the phone, I watch as each person shares, then see the blast of support coming in the form of ((nods)), ((relates)), ((hugs)), ((ODAT)) and more. It gives me such comfort to realize that the seventeen people in the meeting are also awake, also struggling with the same problems I face every day.

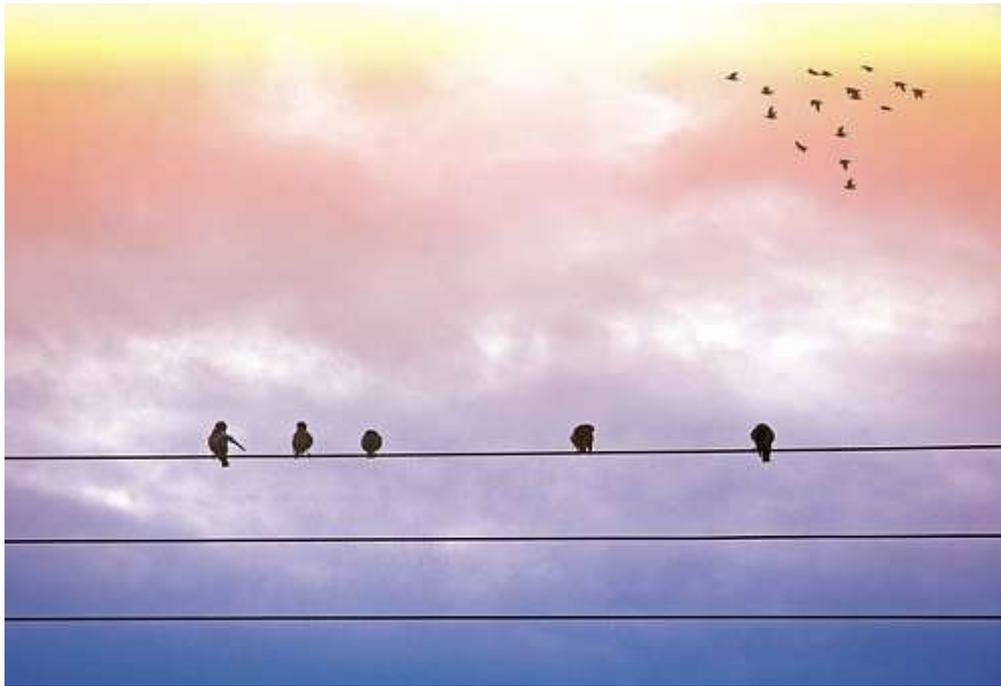
Scheduled meetings go on several times a day and are led by someone—just like face-to-face meetings. We have 7th tradition and share about the tools and OA literature.

I'm grateful to be in recovery for over two and a half years now.

I know that whether I am home or traveling, my meeting is traveling with me. I'm not alone anymore.

—Karen B., VSCC Delegate Co-Chair
Northern Nevada Sierra Intergroup, USA





A Bright Spot in Recovery

This morning I had the opportunity to participate in the Tenth Anniversary Celebration of the 6:45am Sunrise Meeting. It was wonderful and invigorating to hear from the members who founded the meeting. Due to a dear friend (who located my name on an early phone list) I now know that I have been calling into that meeting at least since 2009—the year after it was started. I don't know when it became my telephone home group meeting. I do know that I have called in daily for years, including when I have traveled outside of the country. This meeting continues to be an important part of my daily spiritual practices.

Telephone meetings have been an aspect of my recovery since the beginning. About two months into my abstinence and recovery journey, I had foot surgery and was homebound for five weeks. I called in to two to three telephone meetings a day. Not only did I maintain the gift of abstinence, I strengthened my recovery by listening to the experience and hope of so many different OA members willing to share their

journeys. I also made a number of friends—many who I still know, some whom I have met in person over the years.

This morning I read the *Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous*, (p. 89), “Life will take on new meaning. To watch people in recovery, to see how they help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will

not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.”

This is a fitting reading for me today and very profoundly articulates my experience as a member of the 6:45am Sunrise meeting and as a member of Overeaters Anonymous. For this I am so very grateful.

—Atiya M., North Carolina, USA
6:45am Sunrise Meeting of OA



Did you recently share a small gem of recovery wisdom or a carefully crafted story of experience, strength, and hope? That same story can help thousands of Lifeline

subscribers find and maintain their abstinence. Squeeze more service from your online writing by emailing your story to info@oa.org with subject “Lifeline” and enjoy a complimentary copy of Lifeline when your story is published.

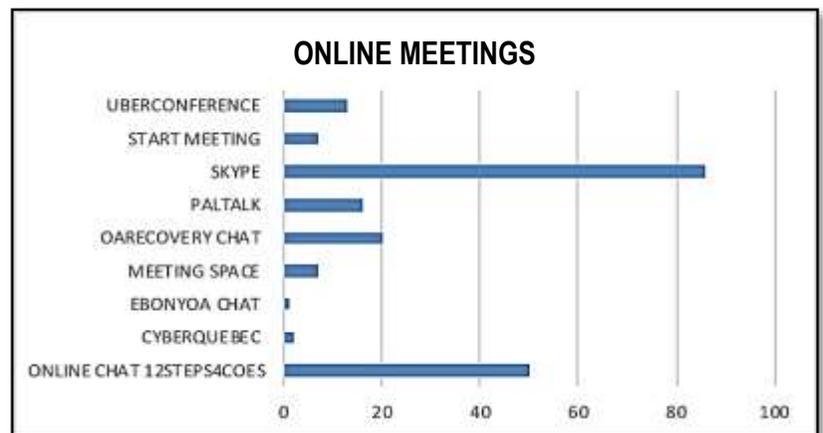
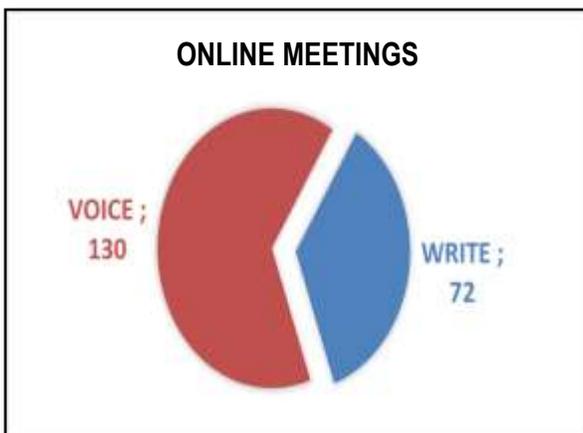
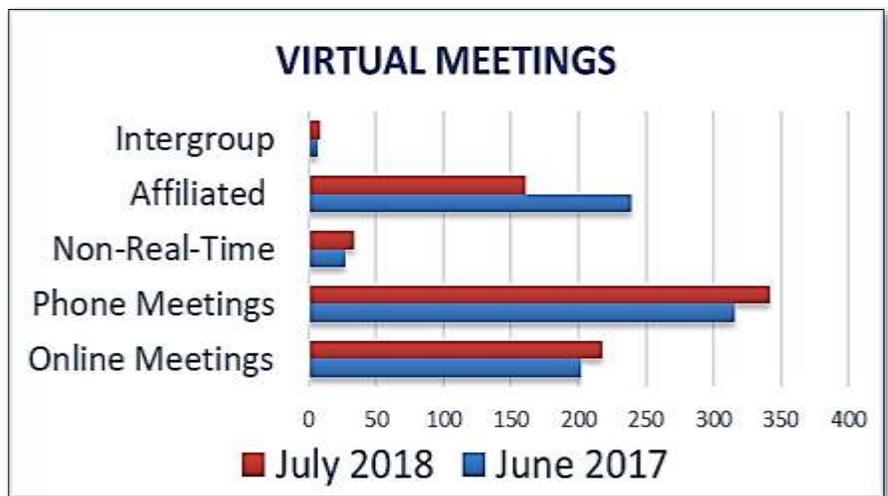
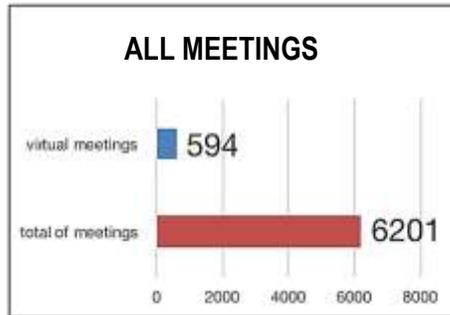
Our Virtual Region, Intergroups, and Meetings!

Our region off to a good start! We now have 594 meetings in total and we are 9.5 % of all OA Meetings. Of the virtual meetings, phone meetings are 57%, online meetings 37% and non-real time meetings 6%. Our region is growing!

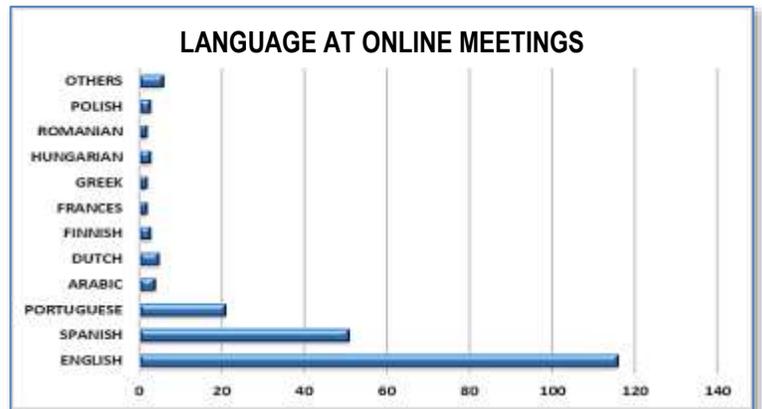
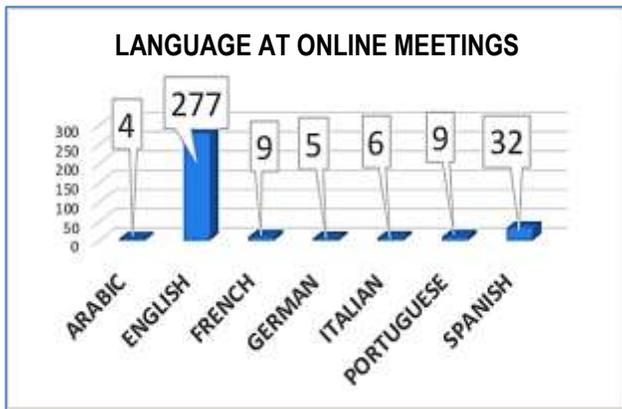
At this time only 161 meetings are affiliated with virtual intergroups and perhaps this is the moment for your unaffiliated meeting to consider affiliating with a virtual intergroup, or maybe create an intergroup!

The new region board is working to create bylaws, create a framework to receive contributions, and preparing to have its first assembly. After WSBC 2018 all Virtual Service Boards were changed to Virtual Intergroups and now it is necessary to change their bylaws and/or statements of purpose, so they will have a voice and a vote at the first region assembly.

We need to think about how to address hybrid meetings in the Virtual Region. According to WSBC, a virtual meeting may affiliate with either a land-based or virtual intergroup if the intergroup will accept them. We have some that are land-based meetings with phone or online connections, and there are other meetings that are strictly phone and online meetings. Online meetings are more difficult to track the type of meeting. Studying the OA data base, I could find voice chats 64% and written 36%. The most frequent type of voice meeting is Skype with 86 meetings.



Languages Spoken at Real-Time Meetings



Virtual Intergroups

We have nine Virtual Intergroups with 135 affiliated meetings (there are some virtual meetings affiliated with land based intergroups). We have one Virtual Intergroup in Portuguese, two in Spanish, and the others are in English. WSO changed the registration of these groups after WSBC 2018 and they were asked to create a new SOP and Bylaws as a Virtual Intergroup.

Number	Meetings	Link
09656	The Non-Real-Time Virtual IG	4 https://www.facebook.com/groups/1027489100760210/?ref=br_rs
09657	Global Online IG	4 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09657&submit=true
09658	Perseverancia IG	3 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09658&submit=true
09659	12 Step 4 COEs IG	38 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09659&submit=true
09660	OA HOW Two-Hour Format Phone Meeting IG	6 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09660&submit=true
09661	712 IG of Overeaters Anonymous	61 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09661&submit=true
09662	Ebony Overeaters Anonymous IG	2 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09662&submit=true
09663	Spiritual Fitness and Serenity IG	8 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09663&submit=true
09664	CCA Online IG	9 https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=3&sort=ASC&ignumber=09664&submit=true

Many members have asked ask me why form a virtual intergroup? I am working hard to let them know how all of our meetings are stronger when they work together.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dora P., Virtual Region Trustee

OA VIRTUAL INTERGROUPS

NAME & NUMBER	WEBPAGE & E-MAIL	ADDRESS	LANGUAGE
12step4coes IG (#09976)	http://www.oa12step4coes.org marianne.praise.him3@gmail.com	100 Campus Ave #424 Lewiston, ME 04240 USA	English
OA HOW Two-Hour Format Phone Meeting IG (#09979)	http://oahowmeetings.squarespace.com oahowmeetings@gmail.com	-No Mailing Info- Seattle, WA USA	English
Spiritual Fitness & Serenity IG (#09980)	www.spiritualfitnessandserenity-oa.com sfsvsboa@gmail.com	PO Box 1073 Huntington Beach, CA 92647 USA	English
Perseverancia IG (#09981)	anasofiaavelez@gmail.com	Cra 85a No 47dd-49 Edificio Torre Ibiza-Codigo Postal 050033 Medellin, Colombia	Spanish
Global Online IG (#09982)	emmajanelek@gmail.com	Dorpstraat 30 2381 Zoeterwoude NE, Netherlands	English
CCA Online IG (#09983)	www.ccaonline.com.br doramap@hotmail.com	Rua Conselheiro Moreira De Barros, 159 Sala 36 Taubate, 12010-080 Brazil	Portuguese
712 IG of Overeaters Anonymous (#09984)	http://oaphonemeetings.org chair@oaphonemeetings.org	3328 Highland Ln Fairfax, VA 22031 USA	English
Ebony Overeaters Anonymous IG (#09985)	surfsupnowgirl@yahoo.com	C/O V Lee 320 Forrest Pkwy Crestview, FL 32539 USA	English
The Non-Real-Time Virtual IG (#09656)	www.facebook.com/groups/1027489100760210/?ref=br_rs		English

The OA Responsibility Pledge: “Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this, I am responsible.”