



4th Quarter 2019 – Vol. 12

“Communicating Across Lines: Languages, Time Zones, Meeting Formats, Oh My!”

Communicating Across Lines

Hello everyone, I am Dora and I have served as your Virtual Region Trustee since 2018. This theme reflects my life in OA, my life at the OA service. Since I could understand the theme, I began to think about it. Since becoming a trustee, I am outside my comfort zone all the time, but my life before OA was terrible, uncomfortable, and giving service is a pleasure, although sometimes it is difficult.

Some years ago (2017) I was invited to share about Unity with Diversity and recovery through the virtual meetings. It was easy because I never understood that what I had experienced was different because my recovery was through virtual meetings. For me is just a kind of meeting that is possible for me. While I am writing here, I know that I will attend my virtual meeting inside my house. I will listen to the message that saved my life since I arrived in OA and it isn't different. Virtual meetings are my comfort zone. I am leaving my

comfort zone when I go to a F2F (face to face) meeting. I do this to carry the message, because I can help someone that is suffering as I was when I arrived in OA. For me when I go to a virtual meeting or a F2F meeting it is to listen and carry the message and I don't feel that I am different from those who recover through F2F meetings. I am a compulsive eater who needs to work the steps and use the tools, one day at a time. One of those tools is my virtual meetings.

In OA service my comfort zone always was giving service at my virtual meetings (CCA Online Virtual Intergroup), of course it is easier expressing myself in my language when I don't need to be afraid if this is the correct preposition or verb... or if my pronunciation is correct. Since I was a child, I spoke Portuguese. I began to study English only to give service for OA. My comfort zone is not only about language, it is also about giving service at these meetings which is what I have done since I arrived in OA in 2010. It is easy and comfortable. But my HP leads me to learn more, and



“OA Virtual News” is the quarterly newsletter of the Virtual Region 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. Comments, suggestions, and articles sharing your personal experience, strength, and hope of recovery in the OA fellowship are encouraged, as well a technical expertise. Articles submitted will not be returned and are subject to editing for clarity, brevity and anonymity.

to give more service at the World Service level was His plan, not mine. Thy will, not mine, be done.

After two years in OA I received the call to give service beyond the group level, and I never stopped. I was a WSBC (World Service Business Conference) delegate for 5 years, Virtual Service Conference Committee Delegate Co-chair and then, I received the call to give service as trustee.

And about the language? How could this be? It is a difficult road because it is another language and my English has lots of mistakes. Sometimes I think maybe an American trustee who speaks English and who knows more of the virtual meetings could be a better trustee than me? But no, when I remember that the pamphlet *"If God Spoke to OA"* I can read: *"God didn't ask for doctors ..."*

I know that I need to know English to give this service, but I don't need to be perfect. I can carry the message the best I can to the virtual meetings because I love these meetings. I am in recovery through these meetings and I really believe that virtual meetings in OA work. Is it my comfort zone? No, but it is where my HP has me now and I just accept. If being outside my comfort zone is where God wants, I will be there. It is one day at a time.

Going to meetings and speaking English with lots of mistakes isn't comfortable, but my life of eating wasn't comfortable either. I choose to be in OA and give my best service.

As a health professional, sometimes I am not in my comfort zone, because I know that I have a disease and sometimes I open my anonymity to a patient because I understand that I will carry the message. And I feel gratitude when I do this.

—Dora P., OA Virtual Region Trustee
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e-WORKSHOP series
Every "2nd Sunday of the Month"
3-4:30pm EDT (-4HR GMT)
(after Nov: EST -5HR GMT)

VIRTUAL REGION WORKSHOP ROOM

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| 10/13 | Online & Non-real time meetings |
| 11/10 | Recovery through the Holidays |
| 12/08 | Service & 12 Step Within |
| 01/12 | Newcomers |
| 02/09 | Men in OA |
| 03/08 | Body Image |

<https://zoom.us/j/557696207>
One tap mobile:
+17207072699,, 557696207# US or
+16465588656,, 557696207# US (NY)
(Meeting ID: 557696207)
Arrive 10 min. early for basic zoom online orientation tips!



Come together once a month for rotating topics, speaker qualifications, brainstorming and sharing ideas that WORK!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
oavirtualregion.org/events/workshops/
email: (BJ) workshop@oavirtualregion.org
(Carolyn) vicechair@oavirtualregion.org

Suggested workshop contribution \$5
oavirtualregion.org/region/seventh-tradition/



Crossing Lines

The Ones We See and The Ones We Don't

We have a program that helps us to grow spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally, but we can still have blind spots. If acceptance is the answer, can we accept those with different beliefs that don't agree with ours? Is it possible that some idea I grew up with or heard in my early days in program may not be true after all?

Being in phone meetings allows me to hear people from other states and even other countries. I can see that there are people who work their program differently than I do but who are still abstinent. Some people eat things that I don't, or say different prayers, or use different meeting formats, but somehow, they haven't been struck down by divine thunderbolts or gained 400 pounds overnight in doing so. I can continue to do what works for me with guidance from

my sponsor without crossing the lines we have set down that are the boundaries of my abstinence. I can accept that others may do things differently but is it only token acceptance and do I think that what I do works better somehow (well, it does for me)? Have I grown in wisdom while shrinking in clothing size? I'd like to think so. Is there more work to do? Always!

It has been pointed out that OA is different from other 12 Step programs because while AA people don't drink alcohol and NA people don't do drugs, OA people still have to eat their meals every day. What we do and how we do it may vary, but in the end, we still have our Steps and Traditions to guide us and it is within those lines that we can find unity of strength and purpose. May our Higher Power (however we define that power) continue to help us along the road to recovery and acceptance one day at a time. The lines that unite us are greater than those that divide us and I pray that we may all come to see that.

—Jean B., 90 Day Phone Meeting Intergroup

The Virtual Twelve Step Within

We have a new committee that hopes to reach out to those still suffering from within. Our Virtual Region, (VR) Twelve Step Within, (TSW) committee was formed. We are sending out a monthly E-Blast to help anyone who needs our help. There will be little helpful activities or information that is helpful links to get you back on track. We have held our first workshop on "Recovery from Relapse", and we hope to do more.

We've created a survey for our members to fill out to help us better serve you. We want to be there for the still suffering with and struggling with relapse. If you didn't get a chance to take the survey please email: secretary@oavirtualregion.org.

We would like to host more "Recovery from Relapse" meetings at different times and dates, so please let us know what you prefer. We are open to having joint meetings that speak different languages provided someone is there to translate for us. If you would like to request our help in a special way please let us know. We Care and we are here for you.

—Lee R., TSW Committee



2019 OA PHONE MARATHONS

712-432-5200 PIN: 4285115#

Meetings Every Hour from 8 a.m. to 12 Midnight ET

Sponsored by the 712+ Telephone Intergroup

Wednesday, October 9th — Yom Kippur

Forgiving Ourselves and Others

Monday, October 14th — Indigenous Peoples' Day & Columbus Day

Remembering Where We Came From – Step 10

Sunday, October 27th — Diwali

Believe in Yourself-Let Your Light Shine

Thursday, October 31st — Halloween

Take Off the Mask! (It's OK to Be Vulnerable)

Monday, November 11th — Veteran's Day

From Fear to Faith to Courage

Sunday, November 17th — I.D.E.A. Day

Staying in the Now

Thursday, November 21st — Thanksgiving Day

Alive, Blessed, Grateful – Step 11

Thursday, December 12th — 12 Step Within Day

Be A Messenger – Step 12

Monday, December 23rd — Hanukkah

What is the Condition of Your Spiritual Recovery?

Tuesday, December 24th — Christmas Eve

Miracles of Recovery

Wednesday, December 25th — Christmas Day

Happy, Joyous, and Free

Thursday, December 26th — Boxing Day & Kwanzaa

Gifts of the Program

Tuesday, December 31st — New Year's Eve

Reflecting on Our Recovery

Wednesday, January 1st — New Year's Day

Every Day is a Fresh Start with Step 1

No abstinence requirement to serve as a moderator

2019oamarathons@gmail.com

Want to share your 'virtual stories' of experience, strength and hope or announce Virtual Events in OA Virtual News?

Email oavirtualnewsletter@gmail.com Subscribe to OA Virtual News: <https://oavirtualregion.org/oavirtualnews/>

Communicating Recovery Collectively

'Hybrid' OA meetings? One, two or maybe three meeting formats all rolled into one day and time slot. I purposely put the word 'Hybrid' in single quotes because this is an evolving new trend and OA is in the process, and I think this will be an evolving process, to understand how Hybrid meetings spiritually and rightfully should be accepted into the fold.

God has blessed me by bringing into my life a Hybrid meeting with three components. The Zoom Room (virtual component) allows the face-to-face (land-based component) meeting, held in Minnesota, to join ESH and it also incorporates an interpreter for the American Sign Language component. Who knows? Could we add a bilingual component and make it

four meetings in one? It's just a thought. But in this developing technological world we must think outside the box to be as inclusive as God helps us to be.

Dear Lord, thank you for giving me a chance to experience five, so far, various ways and meeting formats to communicate during OA meetings. Face-to-face, Phone, Zoom Room, WhatsApp and a Hybrid meeting to name them. Or is it really six meeting formats? Including the bilingual.

Yes, Hybrid can and does mean different things to different people. Some are even afraid. I ask myself, God what is the next right thing to do? Are Hybrid meetings one meeting or two meetings or three

meetings rolled into one? Or are they really at least two OA meetings on the same day and time?

The needs of the virtual world are so much different than the needs of the face-to-face world—that's a story for another time. Who are we (World Service Business Conference) to restrict the virtual component from affiliating with a virtual intergroup of a Hybrid meeting and the land-based component affiliating with a land based in a group?



Whether each component existed (land based or virtual) on their own or were birthed from imagination and resourcefulness how can we (WSBC) force them to only affiliate with one intergroup? What are we afraid of? Does not each component have every right to have their voice heard and vote count?

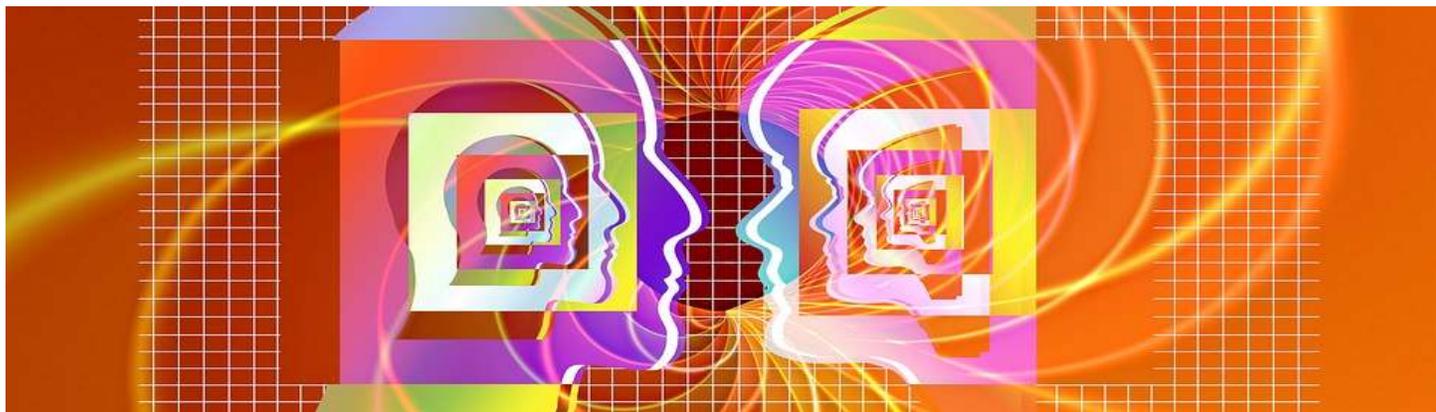
Is OA trying to fit a square peg into a round hole?

Is it not pretty clear that the land-based meeting, the Zoom Room meeting, the American Sign Language component, each have a right and responsibility to be heard?

So where am I going with all these questions? The 12 Step program that I work, that the face-to-face meetings work, that the virtual meetings work, that the American sign language deaf OA members work, all ask us to be honest, to keep an open mind and to be willing (to do whatever it takes).

How will OA world service business conference embrace, accept, integrate hybrid meetings?

—Deborah R.



Promotion at OA Meetings

Dear friends, as trustee I received many e-mails about some meetings that are making promotions to attract the newcomer and others to their meetings. Saying things like, “Go to that meeting, there you will lose weight. Go to that meeting, there you will find recovery.”

This is a difficult situation because some of these are registered meetings, and in some cases, this is actually a break in our traditions. Why?

Tradition 11 reminds us that our public relations policy is based ‘on attraction rather promotion’. *OA’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, 2nd edition, page 157* states “we publicize OA without promoting it”. If someone goes to a meeting trying to promote another meeting as the best meeting, this is a tradition break.

Another tradition that is affected is Tradition 10. It doesn't make sense for someone to create controversy at a meeting by saying that another meeting is the best meeting to lose weight or to find recovery. *OA’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Tradition 10, page 151* says “the OA name never be drawn into public controversy”, I understand that to mean no controversy both outside and inside our meetings.

While we are thinking about traditions and this kind of promotion, I would like to remember Tradition 2, “*For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*” What can a meeting do about this sort of problem? Tradition 4 that “*each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.*” When someone makes promotion from another meeting (without the group’s permission) they are breaking the tradition of autonomy, each group is autonomous but the other groups are autonomous too.

How can we have a solution to this kind of recurring problem? I suggest that meetings have a group conscience discussion, so the members may decide if want to allow members from other meetings to make this sort of promotion. “*...a loving God may express himself in our group conscience*”.

Our Tradition 5 reminds us: “*Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers*”

—Dora P., OA Virtual Region Trustee
virtualregiontrustee@gmail.com

Contribute to Your Virtual Region at <https://oavirtualregion.org/region/seventh-tradition>



REGISTER YOUR MEETINGS!!!!

In the virtual world we have many groups calling themselves OA meetings when actually they are not an OA meeting. To be an OA meeting it is necessary accept the WSO agreement and officially register your meeting at this page: <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/meeting-changes/add-a-meeting/>

To be sure that the meetings you are attending are registered OA with World Service, please go to oa.org using this link <https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/>, here you will find all your OA meetings!

As you see below, official OA meetings are only those meetings that are affiliated with OA and that accept this WSO agreement:



By submitting this form to the WSO, your group is agreeing to comply with Tradition Three and the OA Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V as stated below.

TRADITION THREE: The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

ARTICLE V – OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS GROUPS

Section 1 – Definition

- a) These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:
 - 1) As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
 - 2) All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
 - 3) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
 - 4) As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
 - 5) It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.
- b) Virtual groups (groups which replicate face-to-face meetings through electronic media) may be an Overeaters Anonymous group

Section 2 – Composition

- a) A group may be formed by two or more persons meeting together as set forth in Article V, Section 1
 - 1) by two or more persons meeting together either
 - 2) in the same physical location (land-based); through some form of electronic device (virtual);
 - 3) or both.

If you need any help about a group that is using our OA name (trademark) and OA literature (copyright) please ask them to register as an OA meeting or don't use our trademark.

I am available to help.

—Dora P., OA Virtual Region Trustee
virtualregiontrustee@gmail.com

OA VIRTUAL INTERGROUPS

| NAME & NUMBER | WEBPAGE, E-MAIL & FIND-A-MEETING LINK | LANGUAGE |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| The Non-Real-Time Virtual IG (#09656) | www.facebook.com/groups/1027489100760210/?ref=br_rs Find-A-Meeting Link | English (Translatable) |
| Perseverancia IG (#09658) | anasofavelez@gmail.com Find-A-Meeting Link | Spanish |
| 12 Step 4 COEs IG (#09659) | http://www.oa12step4coes.org marianne.praise.him3@gmail.com Find-A-Meeting Link | English |
| OA/HOW Two-Hour Format Virtual Meetings Virtual Intergroup (HVIG) (#09660) | https://www.oahowphonemeetings.com oahowvsb@gmail.com Find-A-Meeting Link | English |
| 712 IG of Overeaters Anonymous (#09661) | http://oaphonemeetings.org chair@oaphonemeetings.org Find-A-Meeting Link | English |
| Ebony Overeaters Anonymous IG (#09662) | surfsupnowgirl@yahoo.com Find-A-Meeting Link | English |
| Spiritual Fitness & Serenity IG (#09663) | www.spiritualfitnessandserenity-oa.com sfsvsboa@gmail.com Find-A-Meeting Link | English |
| CCA Online IG (#09664) | www.ccaonline.com.br doramap@hotmail.com Find-A-Meeting Link | Portuguese |
| Despertar Abstinente IG (#09665) | www.ccadespertarabstinente.com.br Find-A-Meeting Link | Portuguese |
| Café Abstinente IG (#09666) | www.ccadespertarabstinente.com.br Find-A-Meeting Link | Portuguese |
| R9 WhatsApp Group Conscience Committee (GCC) Virtual IG (#09668) | Find-A-Meeting Link | Varies |
| The 90 Day Phone Meeting Virtual IG (#09669) | Find-A-Meeting Link WELCOME to our newest Intergroup! | 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."