



The *NEW* Beacon

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BUSINESS HOURS:

Monday 10am-2pm
Tuesday 10am - **5pm**
Wednesday 10am -3pm
Thursday 10am - 2pm
Saturday 10am-2pm

Closed Sunday and Friday

Contact us at:

beacon@aaworcester.org

WE'RE OPEN!!!



The office at 100 Grove St is now open!

PLEASE NOTE:

Masks are now MANDATORY due to the surge in Delta variant Covid.

We are currently hiring for part-time workers. Must be available evenings. Call Brandy at the office for details.

Our current hours are Monday 10-2, Tuesday 10-5, Wednesday 10-3, Thursday 10-2, and Saturday 10-2.

We are closed Friday and Sunday.



Bookie Exchange

**Every second Sunday of the month starting
July 11, 2021 6:00pm**

**Open to all - book your group or Treatment
Facilities commitments!**

Zoom ID: 994 0438 4915

Passcode: Bookie2021

Meeting Lists

We will not have printed meeting lists until September at the earliest. With meetings changing every day, they would be obsolete by the time we get them from the printer!

Purchasing Options

Now that the office is open, pick-up at my home is no longer available. You can order online and have it mailed to you (incurs a shipping charge), order and pay online and pick up at the office, order online and pick up and pay at the office. Of course, you could always come in and grab your items and pay at the desk - we'd LOVE to see your smiling faces!!

Masks NOT Optional

Masks are NOT optional at this time, but we DO have masks and hand sanitizer available when you first walk in.

In Other News...

If your group changes from online to hybrid or in-person, please have someone fill out the form found on our website:

www.aaworcester.org

Worcester Area Intergroup Steering Committee and Delegates Meetings will now be hybrid!! We will be in-person, but also have Zoom open on-site!

District 25 website!!

District 25 has a new website up and running!!!

<https://www.aaemassd25.org/>

What would YOU like to see in The Beacon? Articles written by members, jokes, puzzles, Anniversaries, etc.? Let us know!!

Email: beacon@aaworcester.org

Online AA Here to Stay

Back before World War II, the English could rightly claim that “The sun never set on the British Empire.” Today the same can be said about online AA.

We will keep on saying it after the war against Covid is over.

There are English-language online meetings somewhere in the world 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as meetings in languages ranging from Amharic, Danish and English to Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. The number is growing.

Here in the Worcester area, there are currently 74 online meetings, 285 in-person meetings, and 67 hybrid (online and in-person) meetings, according to Brandy H., the Intergroup office manager. Even though the number of local online meetings is falling as more in-person meetings reopen, the total number of Worcester-area meetings has grown by more than 200 since Covid hit, she added.

The number of online meetings is still growing internationally. The Online Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous (OIAA) gets more than 1,000 queries a week from people all over the world about AA in general and online meetings in particular, according to Mary M., a member of the group’s Listkeeping Committee. The majority of the requests come from the US, South Africa, and Canada.

OIAA can help you connect to more than 5,000 online meetings around the world through its website, <https://aa-intergroup.org/>.

The meetings are not limited to Zoom. Miranda, a member of the OIAA Public Information Committee says there are a variety of platforms. “There are Zoom/Skype, voice/text chat, email, discussion forum, and telephone meetings listed in several languages and many time zones throughout the world.

“We ‘handle’ no specific platform. We simply list meetings after they have gone through a vetting process.”

Zoom is the most popular, Mary M. says, “but also is the most fraught because of security issues and inexperienced group leadership. We encourage passwords or waiting rooms, but not everyone accepts our recommendations.”

Online meetings are not simply a response to Covid. Mary M. says that even before Covid hit in March 2020 “we had about 110 online meetings listed in our OIAA directory and about 60 members. Today, we have over 5,000 online meetings listed and have some 350 members. Some of those members are Intergroup Representatives (IGRs) or alternates. Others are individual, nonvoting members.”

Because of encompassing all the time zones, monthly business meetings are via email and last 24 hours.

Members “live around the world and across the USA,” she adds. “It’s amazing work, really, when one considers how much we do to carry the message. Just today, I wrote to people in Canada, the UK, Spain and 7 or 8 people in the USA looking for meetings, literature, a sponsor, how to deal with a relapse, and so forth.”

Like a growing number of AAs, online meetings are an important part of Miranda's sobriety: "When I got sober in 2001-2002, I was a regular at a forum site called Staying Cyber that uses a WebWiz forum package, modified for the site. It began as a simple email meeting.

"I live in Vermont and at the time I had a young child and lived in a rather remote area. The site was instrumental for me getting and staying sober as any in-person meeting involved a lengthy drive and a babysitter, something I couldn't manage every day. Online AA was available to me anytime. The site had members from all over the world."

On a personal note, online meetings were important to me in early sobriety, too. Shortly after I got sober in 1987, we moved to a mountain community. The nearest in-person meeting was 30 miles away along two-lane mountain roads. It ran only three days a week; next closest meetings were 75 miles. In 1988, I found an International live chatroom meeting that kept me going. A man I met at that meeting was a sober Australian Muslim living in Jakarta, Indonesia. We would have long private chatroom conversations about God, and as long as we didn't refer to him as either Jesus or Allah, we found we were talking about the same loving and caring Higher Power. As we all know, none of this existed when Bill and Bob started out. But Bill was open to whatever technology would help spread AA's message. As he wrote in a November 1960 article in Grapevine: "A vast communications net now covers the earth, even to its remotest reaches... Therefore nothing can matter more to the future welfare of AA than the manner in which we use this colossus of communication."

Online meetings actually started more than 34 years ago, according to the OIAA's homepage:

“The first AA meetings online used Bulletin Boards and were around 1986. Email groups started forming in the early nineties and the development of the worldwide internet rapidly fueled the growth and variety of groups... the AA community is constantly connecting and finding new, creative ways to communicate the experience, strength and hope of recovery in Alcoholics.”

AA may not be changing, but the meetings are. Like many other AAs, Mary M. sees online meetings becoming a permanent part of the AA way of life. “Just as we no longer meet in members' homes,” we've made other changes to remain relevant.

“Bill Wilson never dreamed that the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, would be available on a smartphone via e-pub, but AA did not reject e-pub because he didn't.

“I have all of my AA literature on my android phone. It goes everywhere with me, making it available at any moment I might need it.”

OIAA began on February 24, 1996, after a group of AA members discussed the need for online meeting support at the 1995 International Convention in San Diego.

If you are interested in OIAA, check out <https://aa-intergroup.org/about-aa/oiaa-members/join-oiaa/>.

The Cyber Sot