

## **Diversity Committee Statement for MWI website**

We wish to celebrate our diversity in all respects. As we grow in awareness and acceptance of our differences and commonalities, we better serve newcomers and existing fellows alike. As we continue our recoveries and spiritual journeys, MWI encourages members to consider how to make our rooms safer and more welcoming for all.

See a few ideas to get you started below:

- Designating an official “newcomer” greeter at your meeting will help ensure all newcomers are welcomed.
- Making a goal to chat or talk to newcomers before connecting with fellows you already know can help avoid unintentional biases impacting which members receive attention.
- In in-person meetings, ensuring locations are wheelchair accessible and a variety of seating options into the circle may aid people with physical limitations.
- Noticing how often meeting attendees are called on can help ensure your meeting is an inclusive space. If you notice someone is often overlooked, make a point to call on that person. Consider making a motion to remind people to call on everyone equally. Pay particular attention if there are folks who are more likely to experience discrimination in the rooms.
- Putting your pronouns next to your Zoom name may make individuals whose gender identity is often incorrectly assumed feel more comfortable specifying their pronouns in your meeting (e.g., they/them, she/her, he/his).
- If you see an issue (e.g., one member singling out another member based on a particular characteristic in a negative way), reach out to the affected member after the meeting to let them know you noticed and support them. If a particular tradition or principle was violated, consider raising it in the meeting or making a motion to read the tradition as a reminder.
- Add the OA Unity with Diversity Policy to your meeting’s format. This policy recognizes the existence of individual approaches and different structured concepts to working our Twelve-Step program of recovery.
- Recognize that anyone may share at meetings regardless of individual approach or specific food plan. The OA “Where Do I Start Pamphlet” (p. 17) states, “No OA members shall be prevented from attending, sharing, leading, and/or serving as a speaker at an OA meeting due to choice of food plan, (WSBC policy 2000a)... Remember that the Twelve Step program of Overeaters Anonymous, and not any particular plan of eating, is the key to long-term recovery from compulsive eating.”

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