



# Together We Can

Fall 2017

[newsletter@aa-dcmetro.org](mailto:newsletter@aa-dcmetro.org)

## Our Intergroup in Action!

### Silver Spring Health and Wellness Expo

*On Friday, September 15, 2017 from 12pm to 6pm, our DC Metro Intergroup sponsored a table at a wellness fair in Silver Spring, MD. Peggy organized our effort and shared her experience....*

I had my doubts about coordinating the fair and wanted to back out numerous times. But then I was reminded that I did not have to do anything alone, and HP was in charge.

I contacted the Region 7 outreach chair and before I could ask for help she offered to drive down from PA to be at the fair all day and bring a table. We talked many times and she was instrumental in guiding me through the process.

Together we developed a plan. She also reminded me HP was in charge. So with my growing 'to-do' list, I began to plan. Many days, I just couldn't do any work on the fair, because of my fear. My sponsor reminded me I wasn't in charge of the outcome and the day would be what it would be. About a week before the event I was worried about the weather, as if I could control that!

What if it rained? What if it was so hot that it would be uncomfortable? I checked out tents....Way too expensive.

The day came and the weather was nice, but on the warm side. We picked out a spot that had shade from trees and benches to sit on. More worries came. What if nobody came to the table? What if the music was too loud?

It was. Again, my sponsor reminded me I wasn't in charge of the outcome and the day would be what it would be. HP was in charge.

I used the Yahoo Groups to ask for volunteers for service. The service just kept pouring in:

- The flyer was designed and posted it on the home page of the intergroup website.
- Copies were made of the flyers and brought to different face-to-face meetings which encouraged more people to volunteer.
- Copies were made of the Where and When's, old newsletters and of the men's virtual OA meetings.
- Old *Lifeline* magazines and gently used literature were donated.
- The Intergroup literature chairperson advised me about the kinds of literature to take.

- The volunteer from Region 7 also guided me on the types of literature I needed, how to put together "grab and go" packets, and to include basic kinds of literature, business cards, and Where and When's. We put them on the table and put out information for professionals, clergy and young people.

- Business cards were designed.

- A table was picked up and brought to display the literature.

- Even though I grew up in Silver Spring, I drove to the site and checked out the parking and bathrooms.

- Help arrived to help carry stuff from the car and get everything set up.

- The Region 7 volunteer set up the table cover and the new Region 7 board. It was beautiful. I think that is what attracted people to the table.

- Volunteers showed up for service to staff the table.

- The intergroup treasurer walked me through reimbursements, which was a task for her, because figuring out money is not my strong point.

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On October 15, 2017, 33 men and women joined the DC Metro Intergroup for the workshop focusing on relationships and the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Our Intergroup regularly sponsors workshops on various topics to help OA members strengthen their program and recovery.

## Intergroup workshop: Relationships in Recovery

I recently attended the Relationships and Recovery Workshop and wanted to share my experience and gratitude.

I discovered OA about ten years ago in another state but am coming back after relapse. The first thing I noticed was how many people attended! While I have been to a variety of meetings in the area, many people were new to me. The workshop presenter made me think and reflect on so many things in my life and program.

She challenged me to think about the primary purpose of

some of the relationships in my life. What is it supposed to be? What is the reality?

I learned how the traditions are a powerful tool when dealing with other people. A day hadn't passed before I used an interpretation of a tradition to understand that it is my co-worker's job to get her needs met, not mine.

Another message I heard at the workshop was that I need a support system, not a support person. It is often difficult for me to connect with others in program. In the past, after I did

make a connection, I often stopped there and did not continue to reach out to others. A sponsor likely cannot meet all my needs, so I need to take a risk and realize we are in this together.

As Tradition One reads, "We are not alone. We are connected to our fellow human beings. Our emotional and spiritual health depends upon the health of our relationships."

—Barry

The speaker, a long-time OA-er with over 30 years in program, shared her experience, strength, and hope!

For many of us, after putting down the food, we realized we had equally challenging difficulties with many of our relationships: family, work, and even when interacting with total strangers on a day to day basis.

As an example, I can now check in with Tradition 4 as

part of my toolkit; Tradition 4 states "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as whole." During the workshop, for me, this translated into, "each person is responsible for his or her own emotional health."

I interpret this as having the autonomy to engage self-care as necessary and to responsibly communicate what my needs are to others in my relation-

ships. This is the responsibility to give up unstated expectations and the autonomy to free myself from the resentment that would inevitably follow from making another person responsible for my emotional health.

Thanks to all of those who provide service to the DC Metro area!

—Carlean

The workshop was insightful and provided practical application for real life situations and relationships. I found it to be transformative. It helped me identify my part in relationship difficulties and gave me some things to work on.

—Sharon C

*(Silver Spring Expo cont.)*

Throughout the day, around 40 people came to our table, a majority of whom wanted to learn more about OA. I left at 6 and turned it all over. Volunteers worked the last 2 hours, closed up the table, and packed up all the literature which was then returned to me.

HP was there every step of the way. And as it began, it ended.

Lessons learned:

TURN IT OVER, ASK FOR HELP, AND ACCEPT WHATEVER AND HOWEVER IT COMES.

Because HP is in charge.

# Newcomer Corner

## Reflections and observations from our most important members

### **Together We Can: When did you attend your first meeting?**

*Newcomer: I attended my first OA meeting in late June, after returning from a four-day “Overcoming Food Addiction” retreat for women in Towson, MD.*

### **How did you feel at your first meeting? Were you welcomed?**

*I felt welcomed at my first meeting, but it was a little awkward because there were only two other women.*

### **Is this the first time you've joined OA?**

*This is my first time in OA, although I attended a meeting a few years ago with my daughter.*

### **How did you find out about OA?**

*I've been aware of OA for decades but I never thought it would apply to me. When my daughter joined three years ago, I thought, “This is great for her – she definitely needs it, but I don't think I'm really a compulsive overeater. And sticking to a food plan is so limiting! I could never do that!”*

### **What did you think OA would do for you, if anything?**

*My takeaways from the Relationships and Recovery workshop by tradition*

**Our common welfare should come first...** The goal is mutual support. Relationships are not all about me!

**...There is but one ultimate authority, a loving God...** Neither individual has all the answers in relationships. Both are servants without the job to tell the other how to live.

**The only requirement ... is a desire to stop eating compulsively.** We offer unconditional acceptance in OA meetings and personal relationships.

**Each group should be autonomous...** In my relationships, think long-term: Will this action affect

my friends, my partner?

**Each Group has but one primary purpose...** The purpose of relationships is as in our meetings: to share my experience and life in support of others to live life on life's terms.

**...Lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us...** Stay focused on individuals, not some outside interest.

**Every OA Group ought to be fully self-supporting...** I should not expect others to rescue or cater to me.

**OA should remain forever non-professional...** Everyone has his or her own higher power and it's not me. My job is to love and support, not give advice.

*My first thought is that OA would help me stick to my food plan, separate my emotions from food, and lose weight. I've gained an increasing awareness that there are many more benefits, such as having a calmer approach toward life's little challenges. (I haven't faced any big challenges since joining OA.)*

### **What made you want to come back?**

*My determination to lose weight for health reasons and my increasing awareness that I have an eating disorder; plus, the feeling a sense of community in OA and receiving the support of many people.*

### **Is there anything confusing about the program or the meetings?**

*People use a lot of insider jargon at the meetings. For example, at first I didn't understand what group conscience or “work the steps” meant. There are also a number of faux pas that a newcomer can make – I've done it a couple of times.*

### **Is there anything you wished had been different when you first joined?**

*No.*

### **Has your life changed for the better since you've been in OA? How?**

*My life has changed for the better, although I still feel like a beginner, getting into new habits and trying to make them the new normal. There have been so many minor and major victories along the way. For example, enjoying a 4th of July party and a family birthday party without breaking my abstinence. And I've received wonderful support from my husband and best friend, which shows their unselfish love for me.*

**OA, as such, ought never be organized...** There is no power structure in relationships, everyone has equal value.

**OA has no opinion on outside issues...** It is not ‘my way or the highway’ in relationships.

**...Attraction rather than promotion...** Recovery is contagious. I need not preach, but demonstrate acceptance and compassion.

**Anonymity is the spiritual foundation...** Practice stepping back to reflect and remember UNITY in my relationships. Should I take a wider point of view than my own?

—Janis

## DC OA Intergroup

[www.oa-dcmetro.org](http://www.oa-dcmetro.org)

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## New meeting!

- **TAKOMA DC**
- **Thursdays, 7 PM**
- **Seekers Church, 276 Carrol St NW (Across from Takoma Metro)**
- **Ring bell at front door**
- **Contact: Pamela 703-261-4404**

Lifeline quote of the month: **“What matters is what I am willing to do, not what I am wanting to do, hence, it is not called ‘wantingness’”** ~September 2017

Get more inspiration from *Lifeline*, OA’s international magazine, an indispensable “meeting-on-the-go.” *Lifeline* is available both as a print magazine and as an online magazine. (Subscribe [here](#))

# Intergroup News

**Next intergroup meeting: Sunday, December 10, 2017 from 12:30-2:30pm**

**Holy Cross Hospital, 1500 Forest Glen Road Silver Spring, 20910**

### Upcoming events:

**Baltimore IDEA Day: Nov 18, 2017, 9:15am** walk at Lake Montebello; 10:30am registration-3:15pm closing  
 Good Samaritan Hospital, 5601 Loch Raven Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21239, 2nd floor of the O’Neill Building

**NOVA IDEA Day: Nov 18, 2017: 2-4pm**, Westover Baptist Church, 1125 Patrick Henry Dr, Arlington, VA 22205

**12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Day, 12/12: Want to help the still suffering compulsive eater?** Suggestions will be posted on the IG website after IDEA day.

### CALL FOR SERVICE:

- Attending IDEA day? Take notes and send a summary to [newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org](mailto:newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org)
- Several area meetings do not have regular intergroup representation. IG operates a number of activities designed to help our local meetings flourish. *Without representation, our groups are not fully self-supporting.*

## CryptOAGram

In this phrase, one letter is substituted for another. Use apostrophes and the length and formation of words as hints.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

G N T L T X J O X P G K Q G P O J X O F Q R  
 G N Q G Q D O C I K Y X P W T F P G T D Q J G  
 C Q S T V O L X T

Answer to last CryptOAGram: THE GRASS IS GREENER WHERE YOU WATER IT