



# TOGETHER WE CAN

Publication of the DC Metro Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

## WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE -- HIGHLIGHTS

1. There was an addition to the definition of abstinence:

### *Statement on Abstinence and Recovery*

Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors **while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.**

Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.

2. The new tool voted in last year was retained and also retained its original name of Action Plan, rather than being switched to Plan of Action. The **text for Action Plan will be put in the brochure Tools of Recovery** when it is reprinted (placement before Anonymity and Service) - and will be added as an addendum to current copies - is as follows:

### **Action Plan**

An action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions, both daily and long-term, that are necessary to support our individual abstinence and emotional, spiritual and physical recovery. While the plan is ours, tailored to our own recovery process, most of us find it important to work with a sponsor, fellow OA member and/or appropriate professional to help us create it. This tool, like our plan of eating, may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted as we progress in our recovery.

For example, a newcomer's action plan might focus on planning, shopping for and preparing food. Some members may need a regular fitness routine to improve strength and health, while others may need to set exercise limits in order to attain more balance. Some of us may need an action plan that includes time for meditation and relaxation or provides strategies for balancing work, personal interactions with family and friends, and our program. Others may need help to organize their homes; deal with their finances; and address medical, dental or mental health issues.

Along with working the Steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance and manageability into our lives. As we use this tool, we find that we develop a feeling of serenity and continue to grow emotionally and spiritually while we make measurable progress one day at a time.

3. The pamphlet called **Recovery Checklist was revised**, mostly by changing the word "you" to the word "I" - which has the effect of personalizing the list.

Here's a url where you can see the changes:

<http://www.oa.org/pdfs/Recovery%20Checklist%202011.pdf>

**Summer 2011**

www.oa-dcmetro.org  
Infoline: 301-460-2800

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Intergroup Meetings**

**Sept. 10 10:30 a.m.**

**Oct. 15 10:30 a.m.**

Holy Cross Hospital  
First floor ed. wing  
1500 Forest Glen Rd  
Silver Spring, MD

### **Weekend Workshops**

**Sept. 11-Sunday**

**2-4 p.m. Workshop on  
Action Plan Tool**

**Friendship Terrace near  
Tenleytown Metro**

See [oa-dcmetro.org](http://oa-dcmetro.org) for flyer

**Oct. 15-Saturday**

**1-3:30 p.m.**

**Website Workshop  
Holy Cross Hospital, 1<sup>st</sup>  
floor, ed. wing**

**Dec. 11-Saturday**

**Post-IG, afternoon  
workshop on what IG can  
do for you and what you  
can do for IG  
Site TBA**

4. The delegate body voted **not to eliminate an early brochure called "If God Spoke to OA"** . While the language is somewhat archaic and certainly religious, many felt that it still speaks to enough of us to be valuable. It's also worthwhile to look at another OA pamphlet, "Person to Person" - which some feel is a good replacement: Person to Person speaks of the value of service. Currently the sales of both of these are low. You might want to order copies from the World Service Office to share at your meetings.

Here's a link to a pdf of "If God Spoke to OA":

<http://www.oa.org/pdfs/If%20God%20Spoke%2011.pdf>

5. The delegate body voted **NOT to provide videocasting/webcasting of the 2012 WSBC meeting**, with the major reasons for opposition being that there is no way to assure anonymity and security 100%. Some delegates who work in the information technology field spoke about this.

6. Inspired by a wish expressed by Rozanne S., the delegates voted to change her title from cofounder to **founder of OA**.

7. **A new brochure - A Common Solution: Diversity and Recovery** - was approved.

Here's a link to a pdf of the text:

<http://www.oa.org/pdfs/A%20Common%20Solution.pdf>

8. There was also a lot of discussion about **whether or not to retain an OA approval label for a lot of AA literature** that some meetings like to use in their formats; **the decision was to continue to allow** this rather than narrowing down just to the OA Big Book and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

P.S. In early Aug. 2011, the World Service Office announced the print availability of several new brochures.

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## REGION 7 APRIL 2011 DELEGATE REPORTS

The DC Metro OA Intergroup was able to send four delegates this time.

(1) Sharon: I had no idea what I was signing up for as a Delegate at the Region 7 Assembly. Honestly, I thought that I would be a warm body in a large group of people and that I would get lost in the number of people. I learned that I was doing a great service for OA and for the Intergroup. The experience certainly enriched my OA program and I came to understand just how important it is for OA groups to adhere to the Twelve Traditions. At the Assembly, I learned that the Twelve Steps prevent suicide, The Twelve Traditions prevent homicide, and the Twelve Concepts prevent genocide. For me and fellow sufferers this work is far too important to allow this program to die. I did important work through attending and volunteering with Committees and learning about presenting an abstinence workshop.

The Committees that I became a part of were the 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within, Outreach and Region 7 Convention Planning. As a Committee Member, I wanted to volunteer because I found the work meaningful and exciting. So, I volunteered to work on subcommittees for each of the Committees that I joined.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

continued

**Region 7 Business  
Assembly  
Sep. 16–18  
Reading, PA**

**Region 7 Convention  
Fri.-Sun., Nov. 6-8  
Ocean Front Holiday Inn  
Ocean City  
See <http://oaregion7.org/>**

**IDEA Day  
(International Day  
Experiencing Abstinence)  
Sat., Nov. 19  
afternoon – time TBA  
site – TBA  
IG-sponsored**

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**Some Twelfth Step  
Principles**

Honesty  
Hope  
Faith  
Courage  
Integrity  
Willingness  
Humility  
Self-discipline  
Love  
Perseverance  
Spiritual awareness  
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The purpose of the 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Committee is to strengthen Overeaters Anonymous by sharing information and ideas to generate recovery within the fellowship. During its meeting, we set goals to resurrect the Speaker Contact List, to get the word out about 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within information that can be found on the Region 7 website, and to spread word about the Travel Scholarship, which is a stipend of up to \$75 per trip, provided by Region 7, to cover the cost to have speakers travel to meetings within the Region. I volunteered to assist with the rebuilding of the Speaker Contact List by collecting names and contact information from Sponsors who are interested in speaking at meetings, leading a workshop, or serving on a panel.

The purpose of the Outreach Committee is to carry the message of recovery through the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions to members of the professional community, including all institutions, so as to better reach the compulsive eater who still suffers. During its meeting, we set goals to review and suggest changes and/or additions to the Region 7 website and to review the current guidelines for use of the Public Display Board and to make changes as necessary. I volunteered to assist with the website.

The purpose of the Region 7 Convention Planning Committee is plan the Region 7 Convention. During its meeting, we set goals to Survey Region 7 regarding having a 2013 Cruise convention or having an extra Cruise event and to attain speakers, decide upon a registration vehicle, and finalize the workshop speaker format for the Region 7 Convention in 2011. In addition, we discussed various items related to the planning such as workshop formats, meeting formats, costs and workers at the convention. I volunteered to get speakers for the workshops and to collect gift baskets from the meetings within our Intergroup.

I learned valuable recovery information at each meeting that I attended. For example, at the 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Meeting, I learned about tools available through Region 7 and other intergroup websites to help me to keep my abstinence as well as valuable information for my fellow sufferers who may be in relapse. The Outreach Committee has provided an elaborate display board that can be used at events such as major medical or health conventions or other association events to carry the message about OA. A lot of planning and activity goes into preparing for an R7 convention. At the business sessions, I learned how Parliamentary procedure can be useful at service board meetings and how the Twelve Traditions help us to keep our meetings focused on service.

(2) Sealani: For this, my second R7 business assembly, I didn't stay at the hotel but at another representative's home, with four of us OAers having our fun and challenging meal plans traveling with us for the weekend. Really, it was often quite funny. However, while 5 of us went, it turned out that DC Metro OA IG has gone from 44 registered groups to 39 – so we were only "entitled" to 4 representatives. As the "old-timer" of the group, and as a person who likes equality in all things, I suggested that at any meeting where there was more than one of us, that the two people have one vote.

However, this was not to be. The structure of the region dictates that there need to be set representatives, that only one person be the "visitor" for the entire time. This was quite a bubble-burster from my plan. Fortunately, one of our group quickly volunteered to be the "visitor" for the weekend.

A "Jump Start" meeting started off Saturday; that meeting was filled with games, questions, and explanations. Jump Starts are actually fun, and at the same time informative.

## OA e-groups

DC Metro IG has its own e-group on yahoo, and Region 7 has its own e-group on Google groups.

Keep up with what's going on and share your ideas and questions.

To join, contact Linda S. for the IG e-group ([lindas@capaccess.org](mailto:lindas@capaccess.org) / 301-294-0566) and Mike B. for R7 ([MikeB1Bear@gmail.com](mailto:MikeB1Bear@gmail.com) / 410-467-7472).

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## Being Inclusive

**Have your meetings added to the introductory statements in their meeting formats the following language about diversity?**

"As we extend the heart and hand of fellowship to those who still suffer, **let us be mindful of OA's Unity With Diversity Policy, which respects our differences, yet unites us in the solution to our common problem.**

Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting. Are there any compulsive overeaters here besides myself? "

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## Listen Up!

Check out the new podcast at <http://www.oa.org/podcast/>. It is a reading of the revised Tools of Recovery pamphlet.



The first committee meeting I attended was the Unity meeting. Apparently, there is a publication called *InterGroup Insights*, and a discussion was had about whether or not the task of writing it belonged to the 12<sup>th</sup> Within Committee. By the end of the meeting, it was decided that each person in this Unity meeting would write a brief article about some aspect of "Unity within Diversity" in the program. Money was to be budgeted for the distribution of this newsletter to all the Intergroups and their members in the fall.

After an interesting buffet lunch during which a person "qualified" about her recovery, I attended the Ways and Means Committee meeting. [Qualification is when someone tells her (or his) story at a meeting.]

Ways and Means. Key points:

1. Region 7 is getting non-profit status in Delaware.
2. Since R7 had a good deal of unspent funds, a decision was made to send World Service \$1,000.
3. 10<sup>th</sup> Step Journals "have been selling like hot cakes." (Direct quote.)
4. However, bags and pins were not selling. The group (with one dissenting vote, mine) decided to give away the bags to the R7 delegates. (This brings up an issue that I would like discussed at the next business conference – no items be purchased without the approval of the majority of the Ways and Means committee.)
5. An article will be written by a committee member for the next *Region 7 Speaks*, (which is a newsletter that R7 puts out.)

I next attended the Intergroup Chairs meeting. This is an informal meeting, not actually a committee, where the IG chairs come together to discuss issues and solutions. Needless to say, much of what was discussed was how to keep members engaged in service.

On Sunday, there was one general meeting for everyone. Unfortunately, our "volunteer" visitor was not allowed to sit with the rest of us. Our Metro Intergroup delegates were quite vocal about our objections and what that meant that a visitor could not sit among us. I understand the need for structure both in program and on a much larger level, but this particular "rule" seemed to me to say, we don't trust you that you won't vote on things.

The most fascinating part of the Sunday Business meeting was a Mock World Service Business Conference Motion Session. Contrary to what I expected, a motion was passed to put in the literature: "Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program." [Note: This was later officially passed as well at the spring 2011 World Service Business Conference.]

Finally, a few words irked me, and I suggested the following feedback, from now on: Use Chairperson instead of Chairman; religious institution instead of church; and person instead of "man."

An interesting time was had by all.

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"..."

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The opinions expressed are those of the writers, not of the OA DC-Metro Intergroup or OA as a whole. Please send submissions to [newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org](mailto:newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org). The editors reserve the right to edit any material submitted.

## Next World Service Convention

Cleveland, Ohio  
Aug. 29-Sep. 1  
2013

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## R7 Delegate Reports cont'd

(3) Ellie: My experiences varied greatly throughout the weekend although ultimately it was very powerful. To begin with, the Region 7 Business Assembly met at Rehoboth Beach in Delaware, MD, and the Henlopen Hotel where we stayed is right on the water. Spiritually speaking, it was such a gift to be that close to the ocean on a mild, somewhat overcast spring weekend. Although the business assembly kept me quite busy throughout the weekend, I still had time to walk along the boardwalk and let the ocean, the breeze, and the warm temperatures tend to my spirit.

I spent most of my committee time with Ways & Means/ By-laws. To be honest, at times I felt overwhelmed in By-laws, where we amended the by-laws and revised the Policy Manual for Region 7. Yet, I could still clearly recognize and appreciate the tremendous service that our fellows are doing for OA in this committee (and throughout Region 7 and World Service). The Chair of the By-laws committee explained that By-laws and Policies allow you to run a meeting according to the structure of the traditions and concepts. This was a big discovery to me, that beyond the Steps and Traditions, OA has service concepts as well. At Region 7, I heard that the Steps prevent suicide, the traditions prevent homicide, and the concepts prevent genocide.

In Ways & Means, I felt right at home because I was with the money people. We talked about the Region 7 budget, and that many committees have budgeted money that are not being utilized. For example, there are Region 7 Business conference scholarships, and \$8000 has been set aside for these scholarships. (Our Intergroup has benefited from these scholarships.) Since money is not being used, we talked about (a) ways to continue to get the word out, (b) ways to make the scholarship application process more accessible to more group partake of it, and (c) ways to reallocate the \$ to committees who do need it and will use it. In other news, the Region 7 journals that sell so well within our local area/ meetings are booming elsewhere as well. We appointed a delegate to help make the Region 7 journals available for purchase on the Region 7 website, which is very exciting.

In closing, most of the pearls of my time at Region 7 Business Conference came about indirectly or as a byproduct. For example, prior to the Region 7 Business Conference, I was having difficulty with slips in my abstinence in two key areas: a snack item at my school that is not abstinent for me and "sips" of a beverage that my partner has at home each morning that is not abstinent for me. With only one exception, since I got back from Region 7, these behaviors/ slips have been lifted from me, without any conscious thought or effort. I truly believe it's a by-product of my time at Region 7/ my service. After the weekend at Region 7, I have wanted to give more time and energy to my program--calling my sponsor, prayer and meditation, the tool of writing. Of course, these steps and tools are always available to me,. What makes me and my motivations any different as a result of attending the Region 7 Business Conference? Honestly, I can't say. It just seems like the magic of service and the program. Another way I felt this by-product benefit from Region 7 was a conversation I had with my sponsor. I talked excitedly with her after the business meeting about a lot of different aspects not all of them positive, but my experiences overall. She shared her experience of being a delegate at the Region 7 Business Conferences, and one thing she said really resonated with me -- that she had never met a kinder, more welcoming group of people than the R7 board members. I realized that that was true for me, too. When I got off the phone with my sponsor, I felt such a love in my heart that I know stemmed from these experiences.

It is hard to find words to name it, but I do believe that that is what was coming through Region 7...and somehow trickled into me.

## SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SERENITY PRAYER\*\*

\*\*extracted from a (lost) reference.

GOD - with the saying of this word we are admitting the existence of a higher power.

GRANT - We are admitting that this higher power is an authority who can GASTOW or GIVE ME - We are asking something for ourselves. It is not wrong to ask for betterment of yourself, for improving your character people around you will be made happier. SERENITY - We are asking for CALMNESS, COMPOSURE and PEACE in our lives which will enable us to think straight and govern ourselves properly.

TO ACCEPT - We do not control conditions as they are right now. THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE - We are accepting our lot in life as it is. Until we have the courage to change any part of our lives we don't like, we must accept it and NOT ACCEPT IT GRUDGINGLY. COURAGE - We are asking for a quality of spirit to face conditions without flinching.

TO CHANGE - We are asking for conditions to be different.

THE THINGS I CAN - We are asking for help to make a right decision. If you have to make a decision, consider carefully the worst that could happen to you IF YOUR DECISION TO CHANGE DID NOT WORK OUT. If you can accept the worst and your decision will get you out of a rut, then proceed.

WISDOM - We are asking for the ability to form sound judgments in any matter.

TO KNOW - We want to understand clearly a truth of fact. THE DIFFERENCE - We want to see things differently in our lives so there can be some distinction. We need to sense a definite value in sobriety (abstinence) over compulsive eating if we are to stay sober( abstinent).

(4) Molley: I was not abstinent when I attended the Region & business assembly (as a mentored delegate), and I had hopes of becoming abstinent as a result of the conference the way that Linda shared she had done (Miracle Cure, anyone?). Though I haven't had perfect abstinence since, I'm grateful to have attended the Region 7 assembly and know that it did help. In reflecting over the weekend, the feeling that stands out most is this: It was different from what I expected, in many ways worse, but I'm glad I went. It helped teach me that even though it wasn't butterflies and lilies all weekend, it was still worthwhile. Just like life. I don't have to win all the time like Charlie Sheen does to be content--to grow, love, and learn.

Here's a run down of the committees I attended: Website—this committee, by nature of what it does, is a subcommittee to every other committee. Yet there is not nearly enough time nor service available to do that. We continue our work via a monthly phone conference, aiming to make positive changes to the website. This experience has motivated me to add website review to our IG's agenda too.

Young Peoples—I am 24 years old. I joined OA a little before I was 22. As such, you'd think I'd have been jumping to get onto this committee, which defines young people as people 18-25 YO. Point of fact: I really wanted to go to the outreach committee since I'm IG outreach chair. But since another dedicated

committee member attended outreach, I stepped up to be DC's rep to the Young People's committee. I'm glad this happened. I realized how grateful I am to have found OA at my age and it would make me happy to see other people do so too, which is the goal of the committee.

Sharon and I attended the convention planning committee where we signed DC Metro IG up for some hefty service. I also attended the tail end of the IG chair meeting, which served as a potent reminder of why I am an IG representative. **If you read nothing else of this long report, please read this: we are doing valuable work.** Our purpose here is to spread the OA message of recovery. It is to help our meetings be strong. It is to help the members we come into contact with be strong. Recovering from our disease is much easier when we're surrounded by people dedicated to service pulling us up when we feel down and

vice versa. We always get back more than we put in. The goals Don includes in his IG's agenda are in the text box, his meeting principles are adjacent to this report. I would love for our IG to adopt our own set of goals. Also adjacent is a note he included to me when he sent me the goals.

Two last items to report on are my conviction that we as an intergroup must host more workshops and my revelation on the first tradition. First things first: Workshops have direct impacts on how much people recover. It sends people with stronger recovery back to their meetings and in turn makes those meetings stronger. Moreover, Region 7 will pick an intergroup that has hosted an abstinence workshop and that intergroup's spring assembly reps will be sponsored—our intergroup will save tons! It's a win-win situation.

Secondly, tradition 1 states that our common welfare comes first; personal recovery depends on OA unity. That means that, even when a group doesn't recommend that I share on experience, strength, and hope, I must. I must focus on the positive because that's what keeps people coming back to the meetings—hope, fellowship, and abstinence. Since I've been doing this, my recovery has grown stronger. If I don't want my "problems" to grow, I need to not focus on them and give them even more power. Thanks for letting me share!

#### Strategic Goals

1. Help members strengthen their personal recovery.
2. Increase the number of sponsors.
3. Increase the number of newcomers.
4. Increase the retention of newcomers.
5. Help those in relapse.
6. Inspire people to give more service.
7. Increase outreach activity, particularly to healthcare professionals.

#### One OAer's Meeting Principles

- OA has no power structure, only a service structure.
- IG "has no power to enforce rules on OA groups or individual members."(p.119, 12&12)
- Disagreement does not equal personal rejection.
- Diversity can be our strength.
- If we all agreed on everything, we wouldn't all be necessary.
- Keep our discussions within the spirit of "I love you, but I disagree with you."
- When the group conscience is reached, let there be unity.

"The meeting list above serves many purposes. Our discourse stays within the principles set down there. As far as the goals are concerned, they may seem pretty generic, but the key is that they were reached by group consensus. The most important thing: WE DO NOTHING THAT IS NOT IN SOME WAY RELATED TO THESE GOALS. This keeps us focused. "

*"Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible."*

– OA Responsibility Pledge

