



Together We Can

Summer 2019

newsletter@oa-dcmetro.org

Health Care Professionals Outreach

Members of the Sunday 9:30 Holy Cross Hospital meeting have formed a committee to increase outreach to local health care professionals (HCPs). **All OA members are welcome and encouraged to join.** The committee meets monthly by teleconference to discuss strategies to communicate OAs message to those who likely interact with still-suffering compulsive overeaters.

The committee is identifying resources and tactics such as:

- Gathering resources available from oa.org
- Identifying conferences and institutions to target

- Exploring ways to reach out to HCPs in their offices
- Creating a mechanism of accountability for individual members to speak with their own providers

Have an idea? Contact Tom A (thadamsjr@gmail.com) to get involved.

Interested in an immediate outreach opportunity to carry the message?

The Washington Senior Wellness Center is asking for a volunteer to come speak with its clients and give a presentation about what OA is about. Contact Ms. Dhameera at 240-614-9755

WSO NEWS

WSO checklist

- ✓ Subscribe to the final year of Lifeline
- ✓ Update your group's contact email address with a generic, transferrable one
- ✓ Increase your group's suggested donation to \$5

Lifeline magazine will publish and mail its final issue in November 2020. After 55 years as our "Meeting on the Go," offering stories of experience, strength, and hope for recovery through OA's Twelve Steps, Lifeline magazine and its online format, *oalifeline.org*, will be discontinued at the end of 2020.

Today, print and online subscriptions number about 5,000 total, serving only 8% of our

membership at a deficit of approximately US\$50,000 per year.

OA remains committed to giving members a venue to share their stories of recovery, so a new online successor to Lifeline will be announced at a future date.

Effective since May 2019, registered groups and service bodies must provide the WSO with a "generic" email address (one that is kept by the group or service body itself and not by the member giving service on the group or service body's behalf). This change will help the WSO maintain communication with a group or service body if a member steps down from service, and will make rotation of service a little easier. It also helps OA comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, the new data privacy law in the European Union, which requires the use of generic contact information for this kind of communication. (*continued*)

DC Metro Intergroup Inventory

Region 7 representative from New Jersey came to help us conduct Intergroup Renewal. This inventory had 3 parts:

1. A look at the function of the intergroup of service board
2. 12th-step work within the fellowship
3. Carrying the message to the still-suffering compulsive overeater

The discussion touched on a number of topics: unity with diversity, historical IG meeting attendance, level of recovery in meetings, meeting communications and accessibility, newsletter, financial accounting.

The purpose of the inventory was to ask what are we doing now? What can we do dif-

What happened?

ferently or better as it relates to our primary purpose of carrying the message to compulsive overeaters who are currently in and outside of the rooms?

Some questions were easy, some were hard. We just answered with honesty, tolerance, patience, and kindness and they were written down. The region representative compiled all of the inventory comments and provided some suggestions.

Takeaways from Intergroup Inventory

An IG without a clear mission and plan is forever lost. Have clear strategic goals (your mission) and projects to help fulfill that mission. **The OA Handbook that we used clearly spells out an IG's purpose – to help those still suffering inside and outside of OA.**

Laying out a plan to do that gives meaning to an IG, gives it value, and value attracts people who want to help do meaningful work.

Consider some or all of these 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. Increase outreach activities, especially to health care professionals.

Next, write out the activities that you will be doing to help fulfill the strategic goals. Activities could be running Back to Basic Workshops (how to get abstinent and how to get started) or workshops on all of the Steps,

sponsor training and sponsor banks. All aimed at helping people strengthen their personal recovery and encouraging sponsorship.

Remember, DC Metro's value is measured by its usefulness to its members and meetings. Usefulness is your main product. Carlene has been given a sample agenda from current IG to assist you here.

You are probably thinking "But we don't have the people!" Of course not - because you may be expecting them to come to you. Why should they if you're not doing anything worthwhile? **Don't expect volunteers. Go and recruit people in recovery to carry out the projects.** Just like you called and emailed to invite people to participate in the inventory.

Auditors note: Members feel more useful when they have a specific vision or statement of purpose and goals with actions. What will build your overall membership and in turn build attendance at your IG? Ours is a program of attraction. What attracted you to OA?

It was so exciting to be part of your inventory process! The large group attending your inventory session is evidence of the great resources you have in your membership.

Newcomer corner

Reflections and observations from our most important members

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

Newcomer: March 2016 I went to a small meeting 1 or 2 times, but didn't mesh well with that or the sponsor I had then. I came back the Sunday after thanksgiving.

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

I did feel welcome.

What made you come back to OA?

A close friend with 30 years of recovery in AA. After talking with her about her recovery, I was convinced to give it another try. This time I went to more than one meeting. The first meeting felt the same.

How did you find out about OA?

I've been struggling with an eating disorder for a long time, and a family friend taught me about her experience in AA.

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

In the beginning I thought it was going to be a cure-all because I now have the proper motivation. Currently, I'm looking to have a group of people to connect with, and the support and consistency of the community of people with eating disorders.

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

So far, it was helpful for someone to call me to give advice before a trip. It really helped my weekend go better than it would have otherwise. That was a gift.

Is there anything confusing about the program or the meetings?

At first, the We Care list was really confusing. The only thing that is ambiguous now is how to find a sponsor, but it doesn't seem too complicated. Oh, and the steps. How do those work?

WSO News (cont.)

New definition of recovery: Removal of the need to engage in compulsive eating behaviors.

New suggested contribution of \$5 per meeting. As far back as the 1970 WSBC, a time when all administrative functions of the WSO were performed by volunteers, there was discussion about the fact that member contributions were not enough to sustain the work carried out by the WSO. In those days, OA did not suggest a contribution amount. So, the Board of Trustees decided they were going to be brave and added a suggested contribution of \$1 for members attending meetings.

\$1 in 1970 is equivalent to \$6.59 today, but inflation is not the only reason for increasing the suggested contribution to \$5. Our statistics and surveys show that we have main-

tained a level membership base for the past ten years. The WSO is not only expected to support the current Fellowship but also to raise awareness so those who still suffer can find OA when they are ready. These endeavors cost money and are more reliant on technology than they were even a decade ago, when the suggested meeting contribution was last increased to \$3. The Board of Trustees and WSO staff do their best to use available low-cost methods to achieve our goals, but there is more to be done.

While \$5 may not be possible for all our members, it may be possible for some, and what better place to share your generosity? Your contributions not only support your group but are also passed on to support all service levels. Each level will benefit from an overall increase in contributions. True humility is asking for what you need. OA needs to thrive, and we need you to help.

