

OA Region 6 Intergroup Handbook



INTRODUCTION

[Return to Region 6 Home Page](#)

This handbook was written to share our experience, strength and hope regarding starting and developing an intergroup, and to also provide some suggestions on methods for building and strengthening an intergroup by increasing participation in the intergroup. At each meeting of the Region 6 Intergroup Committee we often heard the same problems, issues and concerns about keeping people involved in an intergroup or getting more involved at the intergroup service level. To keep from reinventing the wheel and to allay confusion, it was thought that much of this could be written down in a handbook which could then be shared among interested members.

During the process of developing the handbook, the Region 6 Intergroup Committee developed an outline listing all that an intergroup does and divided sections among the committee members to research and write on these topics. Our region trustee and a general service trustee supplied copies of the efforts of two other regions that we used to meet our own goals for the handbook.

This handbook reflects the experience, thoughts and opinions of the Region 6 Intergroup Committee, as well as other regions in OA, but does not necessarily reflect OA as a whole. We hope that it will be helpful to intergroups within Region 6.

To order another copy of this handbook contact: Region 6.

NOTE: This material is for use only within the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS PREAMBLE

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experiences, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over food - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs

Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Permission to use the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Service, Inc.

THE TWELVE CONCEPTS OF OA SERVICE

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

2. The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The Right of Decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The Right of Participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by tradition and by OA Bylaws Subpart B.
8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the World Service Office.
9. Able trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs, and consultants.
12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
 - a. no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
 - b. sufficient operating funds, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
 - c. no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
 - d. important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by substantial unanimity;
 - e. no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
 - f. no OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government and
 - g. each shall always remain democratic in thought and action

Permission to use the Twelve Concepts of Overeaters Alcoholics Anonymous granted by OA World Service, Inc.

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service gives an ordered set of service principles specifically applicable to OA.

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service may be considered from two perspectives; first, as practical guidelines for world service and second as a purposefully ordered set of spiritual principles enlightening to all who seek to serve. One woven cord of primary purpose joins the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts; they are guidelines to carry the message.

The Twelve Steps are spiritual principles applied in our individual recovery. The Twelve Traditions are the spiritual principles applied in our groups. The Twelve Concepts of OA Service describe the service structure of OA and the spiritual principles which may effectively relate servants to their work and to each other.

PREFACE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to offer suggestions and information to help answer some of the many questions that arise concerning intergroup, region, World Service and the World Service Office. Everything contained

herein is suggested only. It is the spirit of cooperation within an intergroup and open communication with the groups it represents that make it work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Appreciation is expressed to the members of the Region 6 Intergroup Committee, and other members of the Fellowship within Region 6, who shared their personal experiences and commitment to this handbook. In addition, Regions Five and Eight need to be recognized for granting permission to use some of the information in their Intergroup Guidelines Booklet, and Southeast Overeaters Anonymous Region Eight Intergroup Handbook. Other information came directly from the SOAR Eight Policy and Procedures Manual and The World Service Group Handbook. This was the result of the efforts of many.

INTERGROUP

DEFINITION OF AN INTERGROUP

An intergroup is an association of Overeaters Anonymous groups in a given geographical area. The size of the area to be served is decided by the intergroup itself. In order to be effective, members should not have to travel long distances to intergroup meetings and functions. An intergroup's primary purpose is to provide service for a number of local groups and better information about OA in a particular community. In so doing, it fulfills at the local level OA's primary purpose - to carry the message of recovery to the still suffering compulsive overeater. By consolidating and coordinating outreach efforts, the intergroup can accomplish what one group or individual could never do alone. A successfully functioning intergroup is a fulfillment of the Ninth Tradition: "OA as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

An important service an intergroup provides for its member groups is representation at regional assemblies and the annual World Service Business Conference, where intergroup delegates adopt policies, participate in committee work and approve literature. It is the channel through which information is exchanged between local OA groups and the region and world levels. Intergroups consist of officers, intergroup representatives or alternates, committee members, regional delegates, World Service delegates and visitors. Each member OA meeting usually elects intergroup representatives and alternates to represent their meeting at intergroup meetings.

It only takes two OA meetings to form an intergroup. Expenses incurred in running an intergroup vary depending on the services the intergroup decides to offer. An intergroup can start out small and inexpensive. All it requires is a name, a mailing address (a post office box is preferable), a statement of purpose and operating procedures. An intergroup may wish to expand its services as it grows.

REASONS FOR FORMING AN INTERGROUP

We form an intergroup to enable us to carry the message to those who still suffer in ways that individuals or groups cannot. Here are some ways in which an intergroup can carry the message and serve local OA meetings:

- Maintain a phone service for newcomers and members seeking meeting information.
- Maintain listings in the telephone books of areas served.
- Respond to mail inquiries and route them to local groups.
- Publish newsletters, and keep groups informed about OA events.
- Distribute up-to-date meeting directories.
- Publish listings of meetings in newspapers.

- Provide World Service with group registration information.
- Assist newly formed groups by donating start-up literature kits, and/or seed money.
- Sell OA approved literature.
- Hold workshops, marathons, dances, retreats, conventions, fund raisers and special events.
- Respond to inquiries from professionals in the fields of health, counseling, and education.
- Send delegates to regional assemblies and World Service Business Conference.
- Assist meetings with group inventories.
- Provide speaker lists for groups, and provide anonymous speakers for radio and TV interviews and talk shows.
- Assist meetings with problems (disruptive members, controversies).
- Coordinate a Twelve Step Within Committee, or Public Information Committee etc.
- Donate to region and World Service.
- Submit articles to regional newsletter or the World Service Publication, "A Step Ahead."
- Offer Twelve Step outreach to homebound overeaters.
- Hold public information events at health fairs.
- Mail OA meeting lists and literature to community organizations.
- Provide speakers for schools and colleges.
- Rent billboards to advertise OA phone number.
- Provide OA literature at professional conferences.
- Place OA announcements on bulletin boards, churches, synagogues, hospitals, schools, etc.
- Run OA Public Service Announcements on radio and TV.
- Offer outreach to new or isolated meetings.
- Donate OA books to libraries and schools.
- Maintain an OA audiotope and videotape lending library.
- Inform new groups about methods to obtain OA literature.
- Support meetings in their adherence to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

SERVICES AN INTERGROUP PERFORMS

As evident from the previous list, an intergroup can perform many services. What each intergroup can do will depend on the number and productivity of volunteers, amount of funds available, and

local needs. Not all intergroups have or need offices. The key is to *"KEEP IT SIMPLE"* and *"EASY DOES IT."*

Read and discuss the ideas in this handbook among yourselves and with other experienced OA members and do what you can for today. Just because one intergroup has an office, does not mean you have to have one right away, or at all.

Some of the more important services are discussed below:

ANSWERING SERVICE/TELEPHONE

This is one of the most basic and important services an intergroup can perform. The type of answering service or system used depends on what is available in your area and what resources are available to your intergroup. The main consideration is for the intergroup to put a listing for Overeaters Anonymous in the local telephone directory. It enables the newcomer or visitor to the area to locate a meeting. The telephone number can be printed on the back of OA literature distributed in your area, used in newspaper announcements of meetings and special events, listed with the chamber of commerce, placed in libraries and shared with community agencies who might be able to refer people in need of our program. It is also possible to rent a billboard to advertise the number and OA services, as well as listing the number on public access television channels.

Systems used by different intergroups include:

- Some intergroup have the resources to hire a 24-hour answering service which has a copy of their meeting list. They ask the caller where they would like to attend a meeting. The answering service will give them the meetings in close proximity and contact numbers for persons in their area to get directions and more information.
- An answering service that takes messages only. Someone has to call the service to see if there are any messages and then return the call to the people who left messages. A member usually checks the messages several times a day.
- An answering service that connects the caller to a member who is available to answer questions.
- An answering machine that gives the caller a brief message or list of meetings for that day. The machine may also give the number of an OA member for the caller to contact.
- The telephone is answered by a volunteer member and/or employee who is working in the OA office. The telephone may be put on a recorder when the office is closed.
- Telephone calls may be answered by members in their homes through the use of a "call forwarding" feature which is available in some localities. A telephone located in the OA office or a member's home is coded to ring another OA member's number.
- Purchasing a telephone service that has provides voice mail menu options (such as 1-10). These options send the caller to designated phone mail messages, which can include meeting list information, general OA information, telephone numbers of contact names, etc.

These various options have been used alone or in combinations. A single intergroup may start with one method and change to another method as circumstances change. There is no perfect method. Problems can arise with any method listed. What works well for one intergroup may not work for another. Keep an open mind and consider all the options and resources available.

MEETING LISTS/DIRECTORIES

Most intergroups prepare a meeting list or directory as their initial service. Some intergroups publish a separate meeting directory, some incorporate them in their newsletters. The lists usually include:

- Meeting day
- Time
- Location
- Contact name and phone number

- Directions to the meeting location
- Type of meeting (Step Study, Beginner, Discussion, Speaker, Young People, etc.) may also be indicated
- Special situations, such as availability of child care or handicapped accessibility
- World Service, region and intergroup telephone numbers and addresses
- World Service identification number for the intergroup and OA meetings
- Date the list was updated
- Names and telephone numbers of intergroup officers

These are all great ideas and provide valuable information to OA members and newcomer alike. To be a useful tool, meeting lists should be updated every 1-3 months and include the date it was updated. Other information often incorporated with the meeting list include: intergroup services, OA Preamble, intergroup purpose, other intergroup addresses and phone numbers, Serenity Prayer, and the definition of an OA group.

It is important that as meeting list information is updated, any changes should be reported to World Service, e.g. new or discontinued meetings, changes in location, day, time, or contact person. The WSO maintains current information on all registered groups throughout the world and utilizes this information when inquiries are made. In addition, WSO provides mailings directly to group contact persons throughout the year, therefore, it is crucial that information is as current as possible. WSO mails quarterly computer print-outs of meeting information to your intergroup for verification.

Another service offered by Region 6, and many other regions, is internet (on-line) listings of meetings by state and town (Region 6's web site is: <http://www.oaregion6.org>). This information is obtained directly from the WSO current listing of meetings so, again, it is important that the intergroup inform WSO of any changes in meeting information.

Being that we live in the age of computers, and if your group is lucky enough to have access to one, you may find that forming a data base on local groups can save time and have many uses. You can pull up information from the data base for meeting list, mailing list, and a list alphabetically by city for the telephone service. Updating the data base updates all your lists at once and is a very efficient way to keep large amounts of information organized and current.

SPONSOR AND/OR SPEAKER DIRECTORIES

Directories of members within the intergroup area who are willing to sponsor members and directories of members willing to speak at other meetings in the intergroup area are sometimes compiled and distributed by intergroup and region. Some set qualifications for abstinence, others do not, depending on group conscience. The sponsors and speakers directory is provided only as a service. Intergroup does not endorse, approve, or recommend anyone on the list. Contact your chosen speaker for more information or references if needed. The speakers directory is sometimes used to obtain speakers for outside organizations, such as schools, community groups, etc., who request speakers for their meetings. When choosing someone to speak to outside organizations, keep in mind the person should have a knowledge of the traditions and policies of OA. Speaker and sponsor directories can be distributed in a newsletter or intergroup mailing. Names for the directory are obtained in various ways:

- Members may volunteer by giving their names to their intergroup representative who brings these names to the person responsible for maintaining the directory.
- Individual intergroup representatives are responsible for updating the directory which is then returned to intergroup.
- One person or a committee is responsible for keeping the directory current.
- A form asking for information may be distributed in a newsletter or intergroup mailing, and the information can be sent back to the person responsible for the directory.

HANDLING CORRESPONDENCE

Intergroups receive a variety of mail, some informational, some requiring an answer. Types of correspondence typically include:

- Flyers from other groups or intergroup.
- Requests for information about OA from outside organizations or from compulsive overeaters or their family members.
- Bills and group donations.
- Requests for information from another intergroup, region or World Service.
- Correspondence from World Service or region.

Our experience has shown that it works best for an intergroup to receive mail at a post office box. Individuals, meetings and offices may move or people may leave the program, when that happens, mail can go astray or be delayed. The smallest box available would be big enough. The responsibility for picking up the mail and dispersing it to the proper person, position, or committee must be assigned. Most times the secretary or corresponding secretary, or someone convenient to the post office is recruited. Some mail may require a group conscience decision before it can be answered; this would be considered at the next intergroup meeting. If it must be answered before the next intergroup meeting, procedures in your bylaws or policy manual will need to address what to do (for example, the executive board may need to act on it).

LITERATURE SALES/SUPPLIES

Some intergroups stock OA-approved literature and supplies to sell to member groups, to give quick access to literature and quantity discounts on orders. However, it does require a large outlay of money to get the initial stock. To begin, some intergroups have pooled orders from member groups. When ordering in quantity from WSO, a discount price is offered. Charging regular price for literature creates a profit which may be used to support intergroup or as a World Service contribution. The supplies are stocked in various ways according to the size of the intergroup:

Large intergroups that have an office often use it as a bookstore, selling OA approved literature in large quantities and filling book orders received from member groups. A list of OA approved literature is available from World Service Office.

Smaller intergroups often pool orders from member groups to obtain quantity discount savings. A due date is set, payments made. One person consolidates the orders and sends one check from intergroup to World Service. When the order arrives it is coordinated and distributed. This necessitates obtaining a storage area at a member's home, or in a locked storage space such as in a building where the meetings are held.

Methods for distribution also vary. An order blank is a key to record keeping, distribution and verification. Groups may pick up literature at intergroup meetings or at the location where the stock is stored. Some intergroups have found it helpful to require orders to be received prior to the intergroup meeting to avoid the disruption and rush of order filling during a meeting - this also helps maintain the sanity of the publications chairperson.

WSO is now offering "On-Line Ordering" of literature via E-mail (see below for E-mail address). The WSO catalog will be available at the site along with forms with which to order OA materials. These forms may be download when ordering through the customary means of fax or mail. In addition, direct on-line ordering will be available only for customers with credit cards. All credit card transactions, however, will be subject to a processing fee.

Sources of OA-approved literature:

World Service Office

6075 Zenith Court NE

Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87124-6424

Mailing Address for OA Literature, including eLifelin Subscriptions:

World Service Office

P.O. Box 44020

Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87174-4020

Numbers for both OA Literature and Lifeline Subscriptions:

Phone: (505) 891-2664

Fax: (505) 891-4320 (credit card orders only)

E-mail Address: overeatr@technet.nm.org

OA Web Site: <http://www.OvereatersAnonymous.org>

Source of AA-approved literature:

AA World Service

Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

NEWSLETTERS

Many intergroups publish newsletters. Formats and methods of producing and distributing are almost as varied as the newsletters themselves. It is strongly suggested to obtain guidelines for OA newsletters through World Service Office.

The purpose of a newsletter is just what its name implies - to pass on news. Intergroup news and events as well as the upcoming events in other intergroups, region, and news from World Service are usually included. Items of interest, help needed, service available, new meetings, meeting changes, all help keep the members informed. Short articles about happenings in the Intergroup, region or OA as a whole can be included as well as articles about different aspects of the program. Poetry is another form of expression used by some newsletters. The most important thing a newsletter does is disseminate organizational information and pass along a calendar of events.

Production and publication of newsletters can vary. Some are typed, some are typeset and printed. Some are reproduced by copy machines or computers. Some are produced by OA member volunteers and others are sent out to be done professionally. There is no "right way." The number of copies to be produced, machinery available, resources and size of newsletter must be considered when deciding which method to use, or whether a change from the current method is required. Cost per copy is usually the deciding factor, but manpower available is also a major consideration if the method used means more work for the intergroup. It is helpful to have newsletters reviewed by a group member who is well-versed in the OA Traditions before printing copies.

Formats range from a very slick professional-looking newsletter to a one page typed list of coming events and other items of interest. The format is determined by how much the intergroup conscience decides to spend, what resources are available, and what editorial talent is available. Many intergroups have found it helpful to keep the basic format the same for every issue, unless an improvement to the newsletter is being made. Some intergroups give the newsletter away as a service to the area, while others charge a small fee. Some even mail subscriptions.

Newsletters can be exchanged with other intergroups. Some intergroups send a copy of their newsletter to every intergroup in the region as a means of improving communication. Most send copies to the World Service Office, their region newsletter editor and the region trustee.

Care should be taken in regard to copyright laws. Intergroups should not print anything from other publications with or without copyright markings, including cartoons. Registered OA service bodies may reprint articles from "*Lifeline*" and "*A Step Ahead*" and the no-longer published "*WSO Notebook*" without permission, as long as credit is given, such as: Reprinted from Overeaters Anonymous "*Lifeline*", July 1992. Under the "fair use" doctrine of copyright law, OA allows individuals or service bodies to quote up to fifty words from copyrighted OA publications. Printing comic strips or excerpts from outside literature is a violation of Tradition Six.

Many editors include a statement: "Any OA Group is welcome to reprint any item from this newsletter. Pass it on." It is also sometimes stated: "The Newsletter is a publication of the XXX

intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. Any opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors, XXX intergroup or Overeaters Anonymous as a whole."

The World Service Office also distributes a variety of newsletters throughout the year to OA members and professionals. These newsletters include:

● "A Step Ahead", which is a quarterly newsletter that keeps OA members current on important information about the Fellowship and the WSO. This is distributed free of charge to all groups, service bodies and individuals on the OA voluntary mailing list.

● The "P.I. Piper", which is a public information newsletter chock full of ideas and PI stories from groups and service bodies all over the world.

● "One Day, The Young People's Way" is a newsletter by and for the young person who is recovering from compulsive overeating. It is distributed annually to the young people's newsletter mailing list and participants in the young people's pen pal program.

● The "Courier" newsletter is sent out annually to professionals who are in a position to refer clients to OA.

To receive any of these newsletters, an intergroup or member should forward their name and address to the WSO.

SPECIAL EVENTS: MARATHONS, RETREATS, WORKSHOPS, ETC.

Special events are held for various reasons but the main purpose is to share our experience, strength and hope. A secondary consideration is to raise funds for special intergroup expenses such as obtaining an office, initial stocking of literature, sending a delegate to World Service Business Conference or sending a representative to the region assembly.

If you decide to hold an event, please refer to "Guidelines for OA Events", available from World Service. These guidelines are published to insure adherence to the 12 Traditions of OA. Another preplanning activity might be to attend events in other areas for ideas. Talk to people who have planned or worked on events in other areas (region assemblies are a good place). Remember to take care in signing contracts. You can avoid costly mistakes by reading carefully and clarifying all questions before signing. Items to consider in holding a special event:

Facilities - The type of event and the attendance determine the facilities needed. For a retreat you will need overnight accommodations, for example. The number and size of rooms needed will help in deciding where the event can be held. Is there room to handle the amount of people you expect? Parking, rest room access, disability access, restaurants, meeting room setup, extra costs and restrictions on use of the rooms must be considered.

Date - Check with the *Lifeline* calendar, region newsletter editor and neighboring intergroup or even other 12 Step groups in your area for conflicts before setting the date. Avoid holidays and special community events. Attendance could be affected by any of these.

Publicity - Events lasting more than one day can be publicized in *Lifeline*, and the Region 6 newsletter, *The Messenger*. Intergroup newsletters usually have a special events calendar. Check these publications for deadlines. Local newspapers and radios will make public service announcements without charge, and so will public access television. Another resource for publicity would be any of the many on-line computer services.

Type of event -

● **MARATHON** - A marathon is a series of continuous meetings held for one or several days. Meetings are scheduled all day and sometimes all night. The focus is to inform, educate and allow members an opportunity to share their experience, strength and hope. Marathons are sometimes held during conventions and retreats.

● **MINITHON** - a minithon is a meeting that lasts three or four hours, and varies from the regular meeting format in that it has a theme or is meant to celebrate a special occasion, such as a January 1 "New Beginnings" Minithon, or a Unity Day Minithon.

● **RETREAT** - a retreat is a get-away weekend where several days are designated for focusing on recovery in a secluded setting. Talks, workshops, and meetings are set up during the weekend. Speakers are scheduled, or a retreat leader is asked to speak and guide the members through the weekend.

● **WORKSHOP** - a workshop is a meeting on a designated subject to help inform and educate members in various areas of recovery. The length of a workshop varies, and sometimes

several different workshops run simultaneously.

Committees - If only a few are willing or available to work on the event, then the event must necessarily be kept very simple. A chairperson and possibly a treasurer are essential. The kinds and number of committees will vary, but may include some of the following:

Registration	Entertainment
Program	Tapes
Ways and Means	Hospitality (set up/clean up)
Publicity	Decorations (signs, banners)
Publications/Literature	

Speakers - If you invite a speaker from outside your area, it is customary to offer to pay travel expenses, food and lodging during his/her stay. This should be considered when setting registration fees. Speakers are chosen by group conscience. Region 6 Convention Committee has suggested that speakers for region events have been abstinent for one year and demonstrate recovery on all three levels. Sources for names include speakers bureaus, tapes from World Service Conventions, region business and recovery assemblies or other special events, the board of trustees and word of mouth. (Regional meetings are wonderful for this kind of networking). The World Service Business Conference has requested that intergroups not identify speakers on their flyers. If your speaker is a trustee who is speaking on their own recovery, they may not be identified as a trustee or member of the board. However, if the presentation is a Traditions workshop or if the topic is service, they may be identified as a trustee, or board member.

Financial - Considerations in calculating costs include:

Room rental	Decorations
Speaker Expenses	Entertainment
Publicity	Refreshments
Programs, name tags or other handouts	Other expenses

Estimate the cost and divide by the number of people you expect to attend. Be realistic in your estimates. Registration fees, or suggested donation, can be set to just cover costs or to provide additional money for service work. Most events have a higher cost at the door to encourage advance registration, as it is harder to plan for an unknown number of people. A set donation is usually charged to avoid passing the basket every hour. If a member cannot afford the registration fee he or she should not be turned away but may be asked for a donation they can afford. (This donation covers registration only, it does not cover meals or lodgings at a retreat, conference or convention).

One of the main things is to remember to *keep it simple*. If it appears that everything is going wrong and that the event is going to fail, *turn it over* to your Higher Power. God's will, not ours, be done.

SUGGESTED TOOLS FOR STARTING AN INTERGROUP

In order to start an intergroup, you'll need some tools. Here's a list to start with:

- Prayer (VERY IMPORTANT!)
- The Intergroup Starter Kit from the OA World Service Office which includes information on how to start an intergroup, an intergroup registration form, group registration forms, a copy of the OA "Group Handbook", sample bylaws and "Statement of Purpose and Operating Procedures," (See "Appendix" and refer to the OA publications order form.)
- Visit and correspond with other intergroups and region.
- OA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts of World Service (Refer to the OA publications order form.)
- The Region 6 Intergroup Handbook.

Other publications listed on the OA-approved literature list may also contain helpful information. Keep an open mind and adhere to our Traditions.

HOW INTERGROUP OPERATES

MEETINGS

Regular meetings may be held monthly or on whatever schedule the participating groups find most effective. It is advisable to meet regularly with sufficient advance notice to allow a majority of members to attend.

Before the beginning of the intergroup meeting it is a good idea to have a "Newcomers Orientation." During this time the new person is acquainted with the procedures and rules of order, as well as the different committees and their function. Some intergroups have intergroup representatives binders, which eventually are passed on to the new representatives and contain the intergroup bylaws, and other pertinent information.

CONDUCTING INTERGROUP MEETINGS

Most intergroups find the book Robert's Rules of Order helpful in conducting business meetings, but again this is a decision that only the participating groups can make. Most intergroups place more importance on group conscience than the technicalities of parliamentary procedure.

The following is how an intergroup meeting typically runs:

1. The chairperson usually opens the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.
2. The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts are read.
3. Officers' reports are then given:
 - a. The chairperson and vice chairperson give their reports on activities that occurred during the month.
 - b. The secretary reads the minutes of the last meeting and corrections and additions, if any, are made. Motion is made and seconded to accept the minutes.
 - c. The treasurer gives the financial report. Copies are available to the delegates and visitors. Corrections or additions are made if necessary. Motion is made and seconded to accept the report.
 - d. The corresponding secretary passes out anything that has come through the mail that is of interest, relays information on incoming and outgoing correspondence that took place, and announces events that are taking place in other regions.
5. Visitors and delegates are welcomed by the chairperson. Introductions are made by each delegate. They report what group they represent and any event they may be having.
6. Committees meet for a given amount of time.
7. Committee reports are then given. Each intergroup has different committees. Some examples would be: Public Information Committee; Professional Outreach Committee (HIPM); 12 Step Within Committee; Newsletter Committee; Bylaws Committee; Special Events/Activities Committee; Office Committee, etc.
8. Region and World Service representatives report on any news or events on the regional and World Service level.
9. Meeting list chairperson reports any changes in area meetings and distributes updated meeting lists to be given to their meetings.
10. Old Business.
11. New Business.
12. A motion is made and seconded to close the meeting.
13. The meeting is closed with the Serenity Prayer.

INTERGROUP REGISTRATION

Once your intergroup is formed, you must obtain an intergroup registration form from World Service Office. Return this form along with complete information regarding all of your affiliated groups. Your intergroup can then be officially registered and will be given an intergroup number which should be used on all literature orders and correspondence to World Service Office. Your intergroup will also need to submit a summary (or statement) of purpose and operating procedures. A sample is available from WSO for your assistance (Refer to "Appendix"). This

summary is necessary in order to comply with the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., Subpart B, Article VI, Section 2 - Registration, which states:

"Each intergroup shall be duly registered with World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous by submitting its bylaws and/or a summary of its purpose and operating procedures if bylaws have not been adopted yet, and by submitting full information on each group it represents."

BYLAWS

Once your intergroup is established, it will need to adopt its own bylaws. When this time arrives, be sure to write to the World Service Office for a free sample bylaws kit. Should you register delegates for World Service Business Conference, WSO will not be able to seat them without your bylaws or Statement of Purpose. Bylaws are rules by which an intergroup operates; they govern how an intergroup functions. It is necessary for an intergroup to have bylaws in order to obtain state and federal non-profit tax exemption status. A financial structure article which contains a dissolution clause should be included in the bylaws. Publications of the Internal Revenue Service are the final authority for preparing documents which will qualify your intergroup for tax exempt status.

The main consideration for bylaws is workability. If they are too restrictive, the meeting process can be hindered. If they are too vague, problems arise in interpretation. Many intergroups start their operation without bylaws, and write them to conform to how their intergroup functions.

Bylaws, like our program, work best when they are kept simple.

It is also of great assistance to write to other intergroups for copies of their bylaws, inquiring as to their tax exempt status. Some items in other intergroups bylaws may not apply to you or they may not apply yet.

Some items you might want to cover in your bylaws:

Disclaimer	Meeting Times
Name	Membership
Purpose	Board Member (Officer) Duties
12 Steps	Meeting Format
12 Traditions	Handling Elections
12 Concepts	Dissolution

It is usual for a new intergroup to appoint a committee to write and propose an initial draft. This draft is then discussed at an intergroup meeting, and changes are incorporated. A final draft is prepared and all intergroup representatives receive a copy for further consideration. Each article is discussed or amended, and finally the entire bylaws are voted on for approval. A copy should then be sent to World Service. Any later changes or amendments should also be sent to World Service.

SERVICE POSITIONS:

To ensure rotation of service, many intergroups have included in their bylaws the length of time that positions can be held, when nominations and elections of officers occur, and that elections are held on a regular basis. Bylaws may cite eligibility for service positions which may include being known for their judgement, stability, willingness and their faithful adherence to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Overeaters Anonymous. It may also be suggested that officers have a specified period of time of abstinence at the time of nomination and that if they return to compulsive eating, they will resign their position.

The following are sample descriptions of duties for service positions that you may want to include in your bylaws:

Board Members

Chairperson:

- Acts as a guardian of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
- Is directed by intergroup
- Leads all regular and special meetings of intergroup

- Shall be responsible for establishing the agenda for all intergroup meetings
- Calls a special meeting of the officers in the event of an emergency or special situation. The officers shall decide on the proper course of action
- May represent the intergroup as a delegate to World Service Business Conference and/or as a representative to region
- May attend all standing committee meetings
- May be the co-signer on all intergroup checks

Vice Chairperson:

- Acts as a guardian of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
- Assumes the duties of chair in his/her absence
- Serves as liaison between intergroup and intergroup committees
- Is directed by intergroup
- May serve as an active member of the Bylaws Committee
- May serve as an alternate World Service delegate and/or region representative

Secretary:

- Records the minutes of intergroup meetings
- Maintains intergroup minutes and reports
- Provides copies of intergroup minutes to all board members and representatives. As a cooperative gesture, a copy of minutes may be sent to the regional trustee
- Handles all intergroup correspondence as directed by intergroup
- On expiration of his/her term, delivers all minutes and other property of intergroup to successor or chairperson
- Serves as alternate World Service delegate and/or region representative

Treasurer:

- Maintains a checking and/or savings account, if necessary, as well as accurate records of all contributions to intergroup and all disbursements of monies for the operation of intergroup
- Provides intergroup with monthly and fiscal year financial reports
- Signs all checks and money orders for the payment of monies which shall be directed by intergroup
- Insures the filing of all taxes
- On the expiration of his/her term an audit is to be held before all money, books and other property of intergroup are turned over to the successor or the chairperson
- May serve as World Service delegate and/or region representative

World Service Delegate:

- Acts as a guardian of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
- Represents intergroup at World Service Business Conference

- Acts as liaison between World Service and intergroup
- Receives and shares all World Service mail and contents of Conference binder
- Brings new publications back to intergroup
- Helps maintain current World Service registration information for groups and intergroup
- Solicits donations for World Service

Region Representative:

- Acts as a guardian of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
- Represents intergroup at region business and recovery assemblies
- Acts as liaison between region and intergroup
- Solicits donations for region
- Serves on regional committees
- Speaks at region business and recovery assemblies
- May serve as intergroup board member

Intergroup Representatives/Alternates:

- Represents group conscience of their group at intergroup meetings
- Acts as liaison between intergroup and their group
- Alternates serve in absence of intergroup representative

Parliamentarian (optional):

- Serves as consultant to intergroup concerning correct parliamentary procedure

Committee Chairperson:

- Volunteers who head committees formed by intergroup

INTERGROUP COMMITTEES

The following is a list of possible intergroup committees and their purpose.

Activities/Special Events Committee: The goal of the Activities Committee is to host activities that will promote fellowship, goodwill and recovery through abstinence. Activities Committees plan special events held for the purpose of sharing experience, strength and hope through working the 12 Steps of Recovery. A secondary consideration is to raise funds for special intergroup expenses such as sending a delegate to the World Service Business Conference or the regional assembly, initial stocking of literature, etc.

The selection of OA activities can be voted on through group conscience. Such activities may be open to OA members only or to OA members and their families. Intergroup-sponsored activities may include: marathons (especially on holidays such as Thanksgiving and New Year's Day), sharathons, retreats, dances, sponsorship workshops or family gatherings. (Refer to "Services an Intergroup Provides ... Special Events, Marathons, Retreats, Workshops, etc.")

Another suggestion for those planning events is to attend events in other areas for ideas and to speak to people who have planned or worked on events in other areas. Regional assemblies are a good location for learning about how to's and problems to avoid. Take special care before signing contracts. Costly mistakes can be avoided by careful reading contracts, asking questions and clarifying issues before signing.

Bylaws and Policy Committee: This committee writes the intergroup's bylaws and, once in place, is responsible for regular review of the intergroup bylaws to be certain they are in compliance with the Traditions (Refer to "How Intergroups Operate"... "Bylaws"). Intergroups vote on motions to amend, or change, the existing bylaws as required. The bylaws may be reprinted to include updates. The committee also makes the bylaws available for distribution on a regular basis and to new intergroup representatives as needed.

Some intergroups have found that a policy and procedures manual helps to clarify the intent, purpose and guidelines of the intergroup's standing committees. These should be updated, along with the bylaws, to reflect changes in intergroup policy. The time, place and length of intergroup meetings are set forth in the policy and procedures manual, as is attendance at World Service and regional assemblies and other general policies.

It is suggested to create a binder to be passed along from group representative to new representative which includes, among other things, the intergroups bylaws, policies and procedures, and the continuing effect motions. This section should be updated regularly by the Bylaws Committee.

Newcomer Orientation Committee: To increase representation and participation in intergroup, new meeting representatives and alternates are encouraged to attend a one-time orientation meeting given by the intergroup chair or other selected member. At these orientations, newcomers learn about the various committees and projects that the intergroup has, purpose and function of the intergroup officers, and can ask questions about how they can become involved in intergroup service. They may learn a little about parliamentary rules that the intergroup uses, especially those that will give the member a more immediate opportunity to add their voice to the intergroup meeting, such as point of personal privilege, point of information, etc. As newcomers to intergroup often feel a little confusion, this is a chance to greet and familiarize them with intergroup service.

In addition to newcomers orientation, some intergroups have found it helpful to create "New Members Introduction to Intergroup" binders. These binders should be passed on to new representatives by the old representatives at meeting elections. They could include things like:

- A copy of the current intergroup bylaws
- An intergroup meeting format
- A list of officers and their phone numbers
- A list of committees and present members and their phone numbers. Committees could also list their goals, and areas of focus
- Intergroup meeting minutes for the past month or two
- Upcoming projects and events
- Tips on giving an intergroup report

Newsletter Committee: The goal of this committee is to inform the local groups of all committee and intergroup activities and provide the opportunity for literary sharing through production and publication of an intergroup newsletter (Refer to "Services an Intergroup Provides"... "Newsletters".)

Office Committee: Those intergroups able to fund an intergroup office find it a valuable tool for providing a central location to help the intergroup's outreach activities proceed more easily. An office supports the coordination of intergroup activities and intergroup committee functions. Some intergroup offices are able to employ full-time or part-time staff who, along with OA member volunteers, answer the intergroup's telephone, provide meeting information to those interested in locating OA meetings and send out intergroup meeting directories. The office is a central source for information about upcoming OA events and outreaches. Office workers order, sell and distribute OA conference-approved literature. The office workers distribute the

intergroup's mail to various intergroup board members or committee chairpersons. The office may also provide contact names to the media, professional or an interested parent of a young person. Some offices have found that it helps that information about the program be brief and supportive, as OA volunteers and office workers respond to incoming calls. The office does not necessarily function as a counseling service or hot-line so much as it is a clearing house to refer people to meetings and to provide generalized hope that OA is available and the program works! While paid office workers may legitimately be OA members, according to our Traditions, it works very well for them to be non-members.

An Office Committee may be responsible for registering new intergroup meetings, making changes with World Service Office. The committee may oversee the development of a computerized database which will be used to create meeting directories for the intergroup. The Office Committee is involved in making decisions about the purchase of supplies for the office, for choosing office equipment and furnishings, including computers, facsimile machines, telephone services, copiers, postage scales, etc. If the intergroup's treasurer is a member of the committee, he/she can then be involved on a regular basis in the functions of the office and in helping to make decisions about intergroup office expenses. This helps to fulfill the treasurer's tasks when it comes time to make a yearly projection for next year's budget.

The committee may be involved in the hiring and managing of office staff by creating and updating the position job description and filling staff openings. They may work with a volunteer coordinator who trains OA members who volunteer to answer the phone, send out meeting directories and fill literature orders.

When members are traveling outside the local area, they can call the office looking for information regarding meetings from World Service's world-wide directory. This directory is available from World Service and encompasses meetings outside the local area and information about OA meetings in various states, cities, or countries. Meeting information can be photocopied and mailed out from the office. An intergroup office is an ideal location for the intergroup's archive which may include: newsletters, intergroup committee files, tax records, incorporation information, locally published news clippings about OA, etc.

The goal of the Office Committee is to help create and maintain a smoothly-run office which enables the intergroup to more easily carry the message of recovery.

Professional Outreach - or - Hospitals, Institutions, Professionals and the Military (HIPM) Committee:

The goal of this committee is to let medical, mental health, prisons and military professionals know what OA is and where OA is available. Depending on the needs of the local community, members may focus on medical or mental health professionals, or may specialize in educating prison officials. Help with starting a committee is available from the HIPM Committee at both the region and World Service levels. The HIPM Committee at World Service has produced a manual that is available from World Service entitled, "Hospitals, Institutions and Professional Service Manual." It includes many examples of contact letters, follow-up letters as well as formats for giving presentations to professionals.

A committee which plans a presentation may decide to provide a panel of speakers who can explain some facts about OA. Reassurance may be shared that OA is not in competition with professionals but is an additional resource for professionals and their clients. The panel may include several members who briefly share their experience with recovery on all three levels, keeping in mind the target audience, whether professional who are working with teenage girls or prisoners, etc. The panel might be prepared to cover the following items:

- OA is self-supporting through its own contributions
- We are not professionals, we share our experience, strength and hope
- One-on-one sponsors are one of the OA program's tools
- Although not affiliated with AA, OA is a 12 Step program similar to AA
- OA is not a religious program

- Literature and meeting directories are available (leave some with the intergroup phone number at the presentation)
- OA is a way to be free from the obsession of food and is designed for long-term weight loss and maintenance

If you decide to hold an event, please refer to "Guidelines for OA Events", available from World Service. These guidelines are published to insure adherence to the 12 Traditions of OA. Besides giving presentations, Professional Outreach Committees (or HIPM) may offer other types of educational services to the community, including: sending letters and including a local meeting directory, an OA pamphlet specially geared for health professionals. In addition, the World Service Office distributes a newsletter, "The Courier" which is sent out annually to professionals who are in a position to refer clients to OA. The "HIPM database form", available from World Service, can be distributed at meetings in your area. Individual members may then send WSO the names and addresses of individuals (doctors, counselors, nutritionists and other professionals) and institutions they think should receive "The Courier" and other information about the OA program.

The OA C.A.R.E.S. (Committed to Action for Recovery, Encouragement and Support) Correspondence Program was created by World Service for local members to serve as pen pals or sponsors by mail to incarcerated compulsive overeaters. An OA guideline for this correspondence program is available from WSO and will help generate discussion and explain the program.

Public Information Committee: A Public Information Committee (PIC) helps to carry the message of recovery to the still suffering compulsive overeater. PICs use the media to provide information about Overeaters Anonymous to the local community. PICs are also vehicles for sharing OA's recovery with professionals and the general public through planned outreaches. The World Service publication entitled, "Public Information Service Manual" is filled with ways to set up such public information events. It includes sample formats and letters, and describes methods for carrying OA's message, working with the media while keeping within the traditions. With respect to the traditions, the Public Information Committee does not "sell" or promote OA but lets people know that Overeaters Anonymous exists and that help is available.

The work of Public Information Committees may also involve arranging for OA members to be available at booths in local health fairs. PICs may arrange to send speakers to speak to community groups and to employee assistance groups. Letters may be written to community groups that briefly and generally serve to introduce OA to people by letting them know we are here to provide information or speakers. Public service announcements giving an intergroup phone number can be sent to local television, radio and cable stations. World Service has information on sample press releases and camera-ready public service announcements for use by intergroups. Also available from WSO are "Twelve Steps to Getting OA's Public Service Announcement (PSA) Ads in Your Local Newspapers" and "Twelve Steps to Getting OA's Public Service Announcement (PSA) Aired on Radio and TV Stations."

Committee members can post posters or small-size bulletin board attraction cards which briefly describe OA and how to find meeting information. These can be placed at local supermarkets, coin-operated laundries, apartment complexes, etc. Examples of these attraction cards and posters are found in the OA publications catalog and are available from World Service. Listings in the local newspaper's "coming events" calendar can be obtained through the paper's public affairs division. Some papers also offer a listing for support groups. These are usually free. Press releases can be submitted to inform the media and public about something the intergroup is doing that is newsworthy. If the intergroup is planning a special event, such as a newcomers' night or a celebration of Unity Day or IDEA Day, sample press releases from World Service can be utilized. In addition, World Service has developed "Twelve Steps to Getting OA Press Releases to Your Local Media" to assist the intergroup. World Service Office also distributes a public information newsletter, "The P.I. Piper," which is chock full of ideas and PI stories from groups and service bodies all over the world. To be on the mailing list for this newsletter, an intergroup may forward its name and address to the WSO.

Some committees set up public information or newcomers' events which are public forums about OA. These events provide a panel of OA speakers who will tell their stories before a general

audience who are interested in learning more about the OA program. Such events are not regular OA meetings but rather opportunities to introduce OA to interested persons. At these PI events, the moderator leaves time at the end of scheduled discussion where the public can then ask panel members their questions about OA.

These PI events take time and planning. It is helpful to compile lists of media, write press releases or public service announcements or create flyers to announce the upcoming PI event. The committee may target a date that is perhaps three months ahead so that the word can be spread about the PI event through the media, through sending letters to professionals working with compulsive overeaters, writing articles in local newspapers or intergroup newsletters and making announcements at OA meetings.

As with all outreach to the community, special care needs to be given to protect personal anonymity at the level of radio, press and film, and to place principles before personalities in any work the committee does (Traditions Eleven and Twelve). Tradition Six states that OA does not endorse any outside enterprises, nor does OA affiliate itself with other organizations, individuals, treatment programs, etc. Tradition Eight reinforces that public information events present OA members who share their own experience with the disease of compulsive eating as laypersons and not as medical or psychological professionals. Tradition Ten, where OA does not have any opinion on outside issues, is also stressed at PI events. The goal is to speed the message about recovery in OA to those who still suffer.

Twelfth Step/ Twelve Step Within Committee: The goal of 12 Step Committees is to carry OA's message of recovery to the still suffering overeater. Some committees focus on conducting 12-Step work by bring the OA recovery message to those within the fellowship. Other committees focus on 12-Step work for those not yet familiar with OA, and still others focus on spreading the message both inside and outside the fellowship.

Sometimes it is necessary to bring the OA message to persons interested in OA by actually taking a meeting to a shut-in or housebound person. Intergroups often receive telephone calls from people who are interested in going to OA meetings but are unable to get to a meeting by themselves because they are too sick to travel, too large to get to a meeting or need transportation. The 12-Step Committee can arrange for a meeting to be taken to someone's home or room in a hospital or rehabilitation unit either for a short or an extended period of time. A family member or health care professional may call the intergroup to suggest a visit, but the committee needs to arrange a 12-Step visit or meeting only if and when the person being visited is in complete agreement.

Experience with a number of 12-Step meetings or visits shows that it helps to have several people with abstinence and recovery using the 12 Steps along with other members to give support during the visit. One example for a format of a 12-Step meeting is to follow the format for a beginner's meeting. This format begins with reading the OA Preamble, the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Sharing on OA's tools of recovery is next followed by one or more members giving their qualifications. If time permits, an open discussion follows. These meetings sometimes continue until the person can get to meetings on their own or ask for no more visits. Phone calls to these house-bound people can be suggested through intergroup. Having different people involved in follow-up meetings is important because of the benefits of hearing different experiences with OA recovery.

Another function of the 12 Step Committee is to offer rides to meetings for those without transportation. Ride lists can be passed around so those who regularly attend a specific meeting, and who are willing to, can add their name to the list. The ride list should clearly state that when people call the intergroup for rides, their name and phone number will be given out. These ride lists should be passed around regularly so they can be updated.

Some intergroups have produced audio tape qualifications where members share their stories of experience, strength and hope in OA. The 12 Step Committee arranges to have a number of people give one hour qualifications while being taped. Tapes are copied and made available for sale and distribution and care is taken to protect the anonymity of the speaker. OA's have purchased these tapes and used them when traveling to locations where there may be little or no OA recovery available.

Twelve Step Within: This committee serves to help those within the fellowship who may have relapsed to find support and encouragement from the OA community. Retreats and special events may focus on carrying the message to those who want recovery using the OA program. These retreats and events may include topics and themes such as "Working the 12 Steps" and "Living With Recovery." The 12 Step Within Committee for Region 6 will serve to provide an intergroup with help in starting up and making this committee function.

Young People's Committee: The goal of a Young People's Committee is to carry the message of hope for recovery from compulsive eating to those who are still suffering within the student body. Young People's (YP) Committees establish professional and credible relationships within schools. Responding to incoming calls from administration, faculty, sororities and dormitory personnel, they attend college and high school classes and student fairs. When the population is college-aged, it is possible for OA members to tell their stories and include experiences with bingeing, anorexia, bulimia, compulsive overeating and subsequent recovery in OA. Members relay that OA is not a diet club, that it is open to anyone who has a problem with compulsive eating. It sometimes is possible to send OAs who are under 25 years of age to speak. Otherwise, OA members can bring pictures to share what they were like as young people before coming to OA to help students understand and identify with the speakers. Literature is helpful to bring along, including meeting lists and OA pamphlets.

Outreach includes distribution of OA literature to the school libraries, nurse's station and the guidance department. Members call the health and nutrition teachers to let them know they can request an OA speaker to attend a class and speak about OA. Members share their experiences and inform students where OA meetings are available.

When invited to school health fairs, the committee can arrange with the school for a table where several members can stand with some OA literature. A banner that says "Overeaters Anonymous" is helpful. Members sometimes invent literature displays creatively using sewing pattern boards and velcroing or gluing the pamphlets for show. At these fairs, members briefly speak one-to-one and summarize what OA is as people walk up to the table. This is a place for the seed to be planted; for OA to be brought to the awareness of the public. It has been effective in bringing people into the halls of OA.

Additional help for Young People's Committees is found in manuals produced by various intergroups and at the Young People's Committee on the region and World Service levels. In addition, the World Service Office distributes a newsletter, "One Day, The Young People's Way." This newsletter is written by and for the young person who is recovering from compulsive overeating. It is distributed annually to the young people's newsletter mailing list and participants in the young people's pen pal program. Contact WSO to get on a mailing list.

Ways and Means Committee: The Ways and Means Committee for Region 6 can help provide ideas for fund raising so as to keep the intergroup solvent.

Intergroup special events are wonderful for fellowship and recovery, and the funds they generate can help groups and intergroups continue twelfth-step work. Fund-raisers, which include the use of OA literature, reinforce the program and help carry the message. Some suggested fund-raisers can include: OA or intergroup anniversary celebrations, merchandise sales, gratitude pledges (to celebrate OA birthdays, memorials or other occasions), etc. An OA guideline for fund raisers is available from WSO.

While selling literature may not be a large money-maker for intergroups, it is another of the many resources provided by intergroup.

INTERGROUP RECORDS

Intergroup records are important for future reference, for a group history and for use in obtaining a tax exemption. Accurate records are important. The records should be neat but they do not have to be complex.

Minutes do not have to be a verbatim account of a meeting. They should contain motions made, who made them and the disposition (pass, fail, tabled, etc.).

Items discussed and other matters of importance may be put in the minutes if desired by the intergroup. Most of us are not professional at taking minutes, but we do the best we can. Some intergroup secretaries have used tape recorders to aid in minute taking. The tape can be used as

a reference when typing or writing the official copy. Once the minutes are approved, the tapes should be erased.

Financial records grow in importance as the intergroup grows. If a simple ledger system is set up initially, it can eliminate some problems in the future. An accurate, detailed record of all receipts and disbursements should be kept.

Different intergroups use different methods to keep their books. Some have all money received and disbursed come out of the same column on the ledger. Others keep records of money received and spent by categories such as literature, delegate funds, newsletter, postage, office salaries, office expenses, etc. (Refer to: Sample "Summary of Cash Transaction" located in Appendix). The complexity depends on your needs and desires.

Many of us would like to think that no one in OA would ever steal money from OA, but it has happened. Intergroups should set up a system of checks and balances to safeguard against this. Some have one person record receipts and another verify them. Requiring two signatures on checks is a good idea. More than two people, usually three, should be authorized to sign so that if one person is not available, the business of intergroup can go on. Intergroup should carefully consider the qualifications of the person chosen to be Treasurer.

Records of member groups are important in determining how many delegates to World Service Business Conference or to region an intergroup is authorized to have. Group data on file with World Service is used for the count. When groups are added or cancelled, it is important that intergroups send notification to World Service on a group registration form (Refer to "Appendix"). Intergroups receive periodically, from World Service, a computer listing of all groups in their intergroup for verification and correction.

FINANCING AN INTERGROUP

Intergroups try a lot of things to keep themselves solvent. World Service has guidelines available for groups and intergroup on fund raising and maintaining a prudent reserve. Remember to abide by the Seventh Tradition. Frequently used methods include:

● **Contributions from member groups.** A prudent reserve of six-months operating expenses is the suggested amount for each intergroup to set aside to cover financial obligations in case the intergroup disbands. This should be the maximum in any group's treasury, as problems related to money can divert us from our primary purpose.

● **Contributions from members.** An individual can contribute up to \$5000 each year to each OA service body. In addition, a member of the fellowship may bequest up to \$100,000 in his or her will to WSO.

● **Publications sales.** For intergroup, publication sales are not usually big money makers. Usually receipts are enough to cover expenses. Quantity discounts and charging a small mailing/handling fee can net a small amount to help in carrying the message.

● **Special events.** Profits from special events such as retreats, workshops, dinner dances, fun nights, picnics, boutiques, raffles and rummage sales have all been used to raise funds for intergroup. As long as we do not violate the Traditions, there should be no problems. When an OA member donates something to intergroup which sells it to another member we are still being self-supporting. In some areas, individuals have gathered items for a rummage sale and donated the receipts to OA (the event is not advertised as an OA sale, they just do it on their own). For events, some groups set a fixed donation; others just pass the hat.

● Some intergroups collect a Seventh Tradition at their business meetings.

TAX EXEMPTION AND INCORPORATION

Many intergroups have found it valuable and/or legally necessary to file for tax exempt status. In some areas, TV stations require a tax exempt number before they will show our public service announcements. There is also an IRS requirement to file for tax exemption. A state tax exemption may enable intergroups to purchase supplies without payment of sales taxes and exempts intergroups from certain other taxes. The procedure varies from state to state. Contact your state's Department of Taxation for the necessary forms. The IRS is the proper source for official instructions about filing for tax-exempt status. IRS publication 557, "Tax Exempt Status for your Organization" and the instructions which accompany the application, Form 1023, provide

information and assistance in applying for and maintaining your tax exempt status. You might note that there are certain time restrictions on when to file your application.

Your state may also require a separate application for tax exempt status. Be sure to check with your state revenue service or treasury office for applicable forms and instructions.

For further help, we suggest you consult an attorney or accountant who is competent in the area of nonprofit exempt status for organizations. Please note, that individual intergroups must apply for their own tax exempt status, they cannot use OA Inc.'s World Service Office status or Tax ID number.

Some intergroups have also incorporated. This procedure also varies from state to state, but most are similar. Incorporating enables the intergroup's members to act legally as one individual. This way, acting as a corporation, the corporation would be responsible rather than the individual members. The best source of information is your state government. You might wish to contact a similar tax exempt, non-profit corporation and ask to see a copy of their papers of incorporation. Other sources of information include other intergroups within your state and members in your area familiar with the procedure. Members can usually do the paperwork themselves. A copy of your Bylaws will probably be required. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

HOW TO BUILD AND STRENGTHEN INTERGROUP

Attracting Intergroup Representatives

In order to have a strong intergroup you need to be able to attract group representatives from as many of your registered meetings as possible. Consider your line of communication to OA groups. How are your reports and information sent to the grass roots? The intergroup's corresponding secretary could send out minutes, committee reports, meeting agendas, updated meeting lists, and information on upcoming events to each group representative. Appoint someone to make phone calls to representatives that are not in attendance, inviting them to the next meeting. Ask them one on one for their assistance on a particular project.

Some intergroups have developed an "Intergroup Information Night." They send invitations to all intergroup representatives and to Group Secretaries with an agenda for the meeting. The invitations are followed up the next week with a personal phone call. Workshops could include topics such as "What Intergroup Does" or "Introduction of Officers and their Duties." Handouts could include group handbooks, updated meeting lists, a copy of your newsletter, speakers list, sponsor list, event flyers, and literature order forms. You could also offer a group problem solving brainstorming session. Send "We Missed You" letters to groups who don't attend the meeting, along with handouts.

For groups that are consistently without representation you may want to try having an active representative adopt the meeting. Attend their meetings, call members and one on one encourage them to join you at the next intergroup meeting. Delegate responsibilities to them; do not be afraid to trust others in service jobs. The way to groom trusted servants is to give them experience in

doing service. Rotation of service is important. Let others grow in program by giving and learning. It may be helpful for your intergroup to write a pamphlet to explain intergroup to new members. Send the pamphlet to new meetings and meetings that don't participate. You could also include recent highlights of intergroup activities and accomplishments. This information could be sent to all representatives, and be read at OA meetings. Concentrate on positive results when talking about intergroup.

Some intergroups have found it helpful to have representatives bring an OA buddy from their local meeting, encouraging them to participate. You may also consider sending seasoned intergroup representatives to OA meetings to speak about intergroup, its function, and to encourage

participation. Still others have found piggy-backing intergroup meetings with an OA meeting that already draws a lot of people or rotating meetings among different groups a great way to improve attendance. You might want to have a 'Good of the Order' time allotment at the end of the business meeting to give representatives the opportunity to bring up any issues they may be having at the group level, or ask any questions regarding the business meeting. Starting and ending your meetings on time is always a good practice. In any case, it is important to get

information out to members about intergroup, welcome them to intergroup meetings and encourage their participation.

How to Serve Groups in Outlying Areas.

In a large rural area, intergroup meetings could take place in a different town each month. After the intergroup meeting, a regular OA meeting could be held. Overnight housing can be offered by members to distant travelers to increase attendance to intergroup.

Intergroup Inventory

The inventory presented here is divided into three parts:

1. A look at the function of the intergroup.
2. Twelfth Step work within the fellowship
3. Carrying the message to the still-suffering compulsive overeater.

When you have completed the inventory you will discover that your intergroup has more strengths than you realized. After all, it takes commitment to be willing to do an inventory in the first place. You may also find some weaknesses. Just as in your personal recovery, appreciate your strengths. As for your weaknesses, remember that help is available to you, through your region trustee.

The following sets of questions are suggestions only. Their purpose is to evaluate the intergroup's present performance and to share some ideas from other intergroups about service.

Take a deep breath and good luck!

Part I: Preliminary Questions

1. Are we satisfied with the function of our intergroup? If not, why not?
2. Do we have a statement of purpose or bylaws? Are they updated? Has World Service been notified of the changes?
3. Do we use Robert's Rules of Order and follow our bylaws during our business meetings?
4. Are we incorporated? Do we have non profit tax exempt status?
5. Do we set realistic short and long term goals?
6. Does our intergroup have a need for regular Steering Committee meetings or board meetings?
7. How can we keep the WSO group registrations up to date?
8. Do we choose our service people with care and consideration, placing principles before personalities?
9. Is anonymity honored within intergroup?
10. Is an opportunity given to each and every member to participate in the intergroup's activities?
11. Do we have a budget which includes a prudent reserve and contributions to region and WSO?
12. Have we done all we can to provide an attractive and convenient meeting place?
13. Are we committed to participating in the region and World Service structure?
14. Do we make every effort to fund our representatives to regional assemblies and the World Service Business Conference?
15. Do we follow the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

Part II: Our Twelve-Step Within Work

1. Do all the groups in our geographic area know about our intergroup and the service we provide?
2. Do all the groups in the area belong to an intergroup?
3. Do we keep in touch with groups who don't send representatives or contributions to intergroup?

4. Do we let all groups know how they can support the intergroup through service and financial contributions?
5. Do we encourage the 60/30/10 contribution formula, making sure our area groups know about it?
6. Do we inform all members and groups of the structure of OA?
7. Do we sponsor OA workshops and marathons in our area?
8. Do we keep our meeting list current?
9. Do we publish an intergroup newsletter for the groups in our area?
10. Do we maintain a stock of OA literature and AA books for sale? Do we encourage subscriptions and written contributions to Lifeline?
11. Do we help new members find sponsors?
12. Do we arrange a system for groups to obtain abstaining OA speakers?
13. How do we help floundering groups?
14. Do we assist unaffiliated groups in nearby areas to form their own intergroups?
15. Do we address the special needs of our members, e.g., young people, handicapped, and try to find ways to meet their needs without isolating them?

Part III: Carrying the Message

1. Do we have a permanent address and phone number that is answered 24 hours a day?
2. Is our intergroup phone number listed in area phone books?
3. Are we reaching compulsive overeaters in our community through the following:

- meeting listings in local newspapers
- radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs); calendar notices
- newspaper and magazine articles
- bulletin board notices
- A literature in libraries
- special newcomer meetings
- speakers list for various community organizations
- other

4. Have we contacted the professional community to bring the OA message to the attention of the following:

- medical
- professionals
- physicians
- nurses
- dietitians
- nutritionists

- medical
- technicians
- psychiatrists
- psychologists
- counselors
- teachers
- social workers
- clergy
- military
- employee
- assistance
- counselors
- other

5. What are we doing to carry the message to the following institutions:

- schools
- prisons
- hospitals
- training facilities
- nursing homes and retirement communities
- other

6. Are there other alternatives to the present intergroup structure that might be more useful in meeting the area's needs? If so, what?

Suggested Intergroup Inventory Format

1. Serenity Prayer.
2. Announce that today's meeting will focus on an Inventory of the intergroup. (It is suggested that copies of the intergroup Inventory be sent to each group before the slated inventory meeting date, to allow representatives to discuss questions with grass roots meetings. The representatives should jot down their answers to questions before meeting, so as to be prepared).
3. Read the 12 Steps.
4. Read the 12 Traditions.
5. Read the 12 Concepts of OA Service.
6. Work on one section at a time. Have group members give brief answers to each question, then allow 5 minutes of sharing on the question.
7. The group may feel frustrated at the time constraints of trying to complete this inventory in one meeting. Group conscience can decide to continue to the next session or set aside

- some time each meeting to work on a particular section. Be creative! Encourage continued discussion of the principles of the program and how they contribute to the health of a group. It is important for someone to take minutes of this meeting in order to record a summary of the group's answers and suggested course of action. The group may want to highlight areas where their intergroup is strong and where their intergroup needs attention. A list of short and long term goals can be developed from this summary.
8. End with the Serenity Prayer.

Intergroup Meeting Suggestions:

1. Develop a "Home Group" concept.
2. Combine your meeting list with those of nearby intergroups.
3. Stick to parliamentary procedure.
4. 15-minute topic discussion to begin every meeting (i.e. "How to run a business meeting," "How to do a group inventory," "How to increase sponsorship at meetings," "What is the job of an intergroup").
5. Send out surveys (what do groups want from intergroup).
6. Limit time of intergroup meetings.
7. Consider establishing a local service office.
8. Get an 800 telephone number.
9. "We Care" campaign to increase donations to intergroup.
10. Remember that personal recovery must come before using individuals to do the work of the intergroup (i.e. if someone is in relapse, we need to give them permission to stop doing service job and take care of themselves).
11. Fund people to go to region and World Service Conference.
12. Take away the mystery. Give lots of information about what goes on at intergroup, region and World Service Business Conference.
13. Donate to region and World Service.
14. Ask meetings for volunteers to participate in intergroup committees.
15. Don't overload your trusted servants!
16. Don't compete with other intergroups when scheduling events.
17. Adopt a group (offer speakers etc.).
18. Develop short and long term goals.
19. Decrease your number of committees rather than have members take on double and triple duties.
20. Develop a budget.
21. Communicate that region and World Service Conferences are dialogues which involve interchange (not passively receiving information).
22. Provide services for your member meetings (meeting list, sponsor by mail, workshops, telephone service, literature).
23. Make use of your regional trustee and regional board.
24. Trust your members.
25. It is the spirit of cooperation within an intergroup and open communication with the groups it represents that make it work.
26. Designate a "Fun Committee" (amusement parks, going to the beach) for your intergroup.

Suggestions for Representatives:

1. Read page 452 (last two paragraphs) from the Big Book on "Expectations."
2. Check your ego at the door! Ask yourself, "Is this my ego or God's will?"
3. When there is conflict in the meeting, stop and say the Serenity Prayer.
4. Watch for control (as opposed to leadership).
5. Participate in intergroup committees on a regional level.

6. Principles before personalities.
7. Submit articles to your newsletter and "A Step Ahead."
8. Know your bylaws, and update them yearly.
9. Ask your sponsees to go to intergroup.
10. Honor the group conscience (even if you disagree).
11. Make use of your regional officers and regional trustee.

REGION

DEFINITION OF A REGION

During the 1976 Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous in Los Angeles, the Conference delegates voted to adopt the concept of regionalization. There are ten regions serving OA world wide. Region 6 consists of Overeaters Anonymous meetings and intergroups from the following geographical locations: New York, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Central and Eastern Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The purpose of regionalization is to encourage unity within the region through communication on all levels and receive more input from groups all over the world. Regions also serve to set up a structure for screening and selecting nominees for World Service region trustee, giving us better and more equal representation. Regions also maintain a communication center within the region to offer assistance and support to all forming and functioning groups and intergroups.

Region membership consists of board members (chairman, vice chairman, secretary, treasurer, coordinator, parliamentarian and regional trustee), committee chairman (Bylaws, Policy and Procedure, Convention, Finance, Intergroup, Newsletter, Hospitals, Institutions, Professionals and Military, Public Information, Twelfth Step Within, Young People and Computer Services), and region representatives.

While other regions have different meeting schedules depending on their geography, the number of member intergroups, ease of travel, etc., Region 6 holds two business assemblies each year. The location varies but are within its geographic boundaries. Region 6 also hosts marathons and conventions as deemed necessary.

The benefits of participating in region's business and recovery events are many. You can meet OA members from your own area of the country who may share some of the same problems and joys you face in your city or state. You'll get ideas and catch the enthusiasm of recovery from OA members who are involved in service. You may also catch some of their program in action and get a chance to build up your intergroup, group and individual recovery.

REGION TRUSTEE DUTIES

The region trustee attends World Service board of trustee meetings several times a year, the region business assemblies and World Service Business Conference. He/She prepares reports on current World Service activities and information for region board meetings and assemblies. The Region 6 trustee conducts one-day or weekend service and tradition workshops upon invitation from an intergroup(s). The trustee also sets up displays at selected professional conferences.

Region trustees serve on World Service committees such as Publications, Bylaws, Conference Planning, Public Information, etc. They assist various service structures throughout their region to get organized and operating when asked. They answer correspondence referred from WSO or sent directly to them. They investigate reports of alleged tradition violations within the region. They report to the board of trustees on situations affecting OA as a whole.

GETTING HELP FROM YOUR REGION TRUSTEE

The first and most important thing is to let your trustee know you need or want help. Help can come through telephone calls, letters, personal visits or just obtaining and passing on requested information. It is part of the trustee's job to conduct service or traditions workshops for groups or intergroups. Group problems, tradition questions, questions on how things are done within a

group, intergroup, region or World Service and information on what other areas have done in a certain situation, are examples of the types of questions to which a trustee responds.

HELPING YOUR TRUSTEE

You can help most by keeping your trustee informed of happenings in your area. Send copies of intergroup minutes, new or amended bylaws, event flyers, newsletters and anything else you think might be of interest. You can help by responding to letters when they are sent to you and by passing on information to others in your area. You can help by asking questions; an informed group conscience is our strength.

Tradition Nine states that, *"OA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards directly responsible to those they serve."* The region trustee is part of one of these service boards and is directly responsible to you, the members.

REGION 6 BUSINESS ASSEMBLIES

Region 6 holds two business assemblies a year and conventions annually. The Region 6 business assembly represents group conscience of the region as a whole. Intergroups are entitled to one representative for each 10 groups, or part thereof, represented by said intergroup. All intergroups are entitled to at least one representative.

What happens at the region business assembly? On Friday, there is a board meeting that may be observed by the fellowship at large. On Saturday, the business meeting starts in the morning. For new region representatives/alternates, there is 'New Delegate Orientation' (prior to the start of business) to learn about using parliamentary procedure, committee work, and other unique aspects of the region assembly. The business meeting begins with roll call, adoption of standing rules and agenda. Following a lunch break, time is set aside for region committees to meet. Representatives are given a choice of committees on which to serve. The business meeting resumes after committee meetings with introductions, approval of minutes of last meeting, officer reports by chairman, vice chairman, treasurer, coordinator and trustee. Next are the committee reports on the progress since the last assembly and plans for the months ahead are given. Continuation of any old business from the last assembly and handling of any new business concludes the business meeting. With time permitting, there may be sharing on traditions or other topic, or general sharing.

Region 6 encourages intergroups to send representatives to the assembly to participate in the service work.

DUTIES OF A REGION REPRESENTATIVE

The following are some of the duties of the region representative:

- Attend region business assemblies (representatives or their alternates should be at all business sessions).
- Verify that Region 6 has the correct name and address for every region representative (RR) and alternates from their intergroup. Inform the region of address changes.
- Keep the region informed of happenings in your area. Don't assume that someone else is doing it -- duplicate information is better than none.
- Keep your intergroup and area groups informed of happenings at region and World Service. Region business assemblies are used as an interface between World Service and the intergroups. If information stops there, the lines of communication are broken.
- Take an active part in the activities at region assemblies. Serve on a region committee and voice your opinion on the issues. Every person is needed to help or Region 6 will fail to be effective in its primary purpose --- to carry the message.
- Voice the group conscience of your intergroup. RR's are also responsible to the region and to OA as a whole. Remember that what works best for one area may not be best for the region as a whole.
- Know and understand the Twelve Traditions. RR's are responsible to see that the traditions are being followed in their area. Violations should be brought to the attention of the region trustee and the region business assembly if they continue.

Region 6 requires that you register your representatives. You will find a Certificate of Eligibility Form in the Appendix. For further information on region representatives, see your *Group Handbook* published by World Service, Inc.

WORLD SERVICE

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AN INTERGROUP AND WORLD SERVICE

The relationship is basically one of mutual service. Just as the intergroup is meant to serve its member groups, World Service is meant to serve individuals, groups, intergroups and regions. To be effective, World Service needs cooperation and information from groups, intergroups and regions.

REGISTERING YOUR INTERGROUP

A "registered" intergroup is an intergroup which has sent World Service basic information about itself, a copy of its bylaws (or at least a statement of purpose and operating procedures if bylaws have not been adopted yet). Provided they conform to the Twelve Traditions, the reception and acknowledgment of the intergroup's bylaws makes an Intergroup "registered." World Service then assigns a World Service intergroup number to be used on all correspondence and checks. (See appendix for sample registration form).

SERVICES PROVIDED BY WORLD SERVICE

- Assists intergroups and groups in getting started.
- Provides OA publications, publications catalog/order forms, tapes and films.
- Provides OA Guidelines to insure adherence to the 12 Traditions of OA.
- Provides information on other groups, intergroups and regions.
- Provides information about the intergroup and its groups to those inquiring about OA in that area.
- Publishes board of trustees (BOT) minutes, a financial statement and *Lifeline*, our monthly magazine of recovery.
- Provides a means of contact with World Service BOT members.
- World Service committees provide guidance to your committees and a host of networking opportunities.
- Provides information about special events like retreats and conventions to the whole OA membership.
- Hosts World Service Business Conference annually.
- World Service sends representatives to set up displays at selected professional conferences.
- Inserts OA public information ads in selected publications.
- Provides internet access via web site (<http://www.overeatersanonymous.org>).

SERVICES INTERGROUPS PROVIDE TO WORLD SERVICE

- Provide updated, accurate information on the intergroup itself (address, phone numbers, officers and their addresses and phone numbers).
- Provide updated, accurate full meeting information: date, time, place, etc., contact name and secretary's address and phone number for each member group. Groups themselves may be in direct contact with World Service or may choose to go through the intergroups.

- Provide information concerning intergroup events for publication in the *Lifeline*, OA's magazine of personal recovery and service.
- Send delegates/alternates to World Service Business Conference each year.

SHARING INFORMATION

Why is it important for intergroups to send information to World Service? World Service is constantly saying "*help us to help you help others.*" The basic task we all perform is carrying the message of recovery. When intergroups share information fully, World Service is better able to respond to letters and calls seeking information. These inquiries come to World Service from all over the world.

GETTING HELP

How does World Service help an intergroup get started? By passing on the experience, strength and hope of other intergroups who have also successfully struggled to get started. World Service has an Intergroup Starter Kit which contains meeting formats, literature and more. They are anxious to provide any additional help and will gladly respond to calls and letters for further information. The function of World Service is not, and cannot be, to order groups to form an intergroup (Tradition Three), but rather it seeks to provide encouragement, suggestions and assistance.

INQUIRIES TO WORLD SERVICE

World Service receives many inquiries that they answer by sending a welcome letter, appropriate pamphlets about OA and information about nearby groups and/or intergroups. World Service then forwards the name and address of people making an inquiry to one of the other service bodies. In other areas the names may be forwarded directly to intergroups. In our region, the respective Region 6 committee chairperson forwards the letters to appropriate committee members in each state, who forward the letters to the closest intergroup or group. That way, a person or institution asking about OA gets a second, personal contact from someone in their area.

WORLD SERVICE DELEGATE(S)/ALTERNATE(S)

World Service delegates represent intergroup at the annual World Service Business Conference (WSBC) and share experience with other World Service delegates. Whenever possible, at least one of the delegates should attend at least one region business assembly before attending a WSBC.

Each intergroup is entitled to send delegates(s) in proportion to the number of registered groups belonging to the Intergroup (one delegate for the first 15 registered groups, or portion thereof, belonging to the intergroup and one additional delegate for each additional 15 affiliated groups or portion thereof). Each intergroup may send at least one delegate. Delegates and alternates should be registered with World Service by mid-January of each year to receive pertinent mailings from World Service. For further information on World Service delegates, see your *Group Handbook* published by World Service.

WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE

World Service hosts the annual World Service Business Conference (WSBC) each year. The WSBC represents the group conscience of OA as a whole and makes decisions and recommendations on business and policy matters.

The Business Conference begins midweek, but many of the delegates begin arriving early for sightseeing, visiting with old friends or to avoid the effects of jet lag. Many delegates, especially "Green Dots" (first timers at the Conference), are encouraged to ask an experienced delegate to be their conference sponsor because the schedule can be so confusing during the several day conference. Rooms are provided for meetings and meditation at the Conference hotel. Some delegates never leave the hotel the entire time.

The Conference schedule begins with workshops, including an orientation especially for first timers. Workshops and presentations are scheduled throughout the Conference.

Delegates are encouraged to attend and participate in meetings of the committees on which they serve. Most of the Twelfth Step work that World Service does comes out of these committee

meetings and the work that members do after they go home. You're a member of your committee until the next Conference.

Region 6 schedules a region meeting during the Conference to cover Region 6 concerns, meet other delegates from our region and provide support for our delegates. The main business meetings include such items as bylaw changes, approving OA literature and books, electing trustees and setting new policies and procedures for OA worldwide. One can really see parliamentary procedure in action.

Outside the business and committee meetings, the OA commissioned films may be shown, OA meetings are held and, sometimes visits to the World Service Office are scheduled. Saturday night is for fun with a banquet, entertainment and a dance (delegates are guests of World Service and may pay for others to attend as their guests). The World Service BOT meetings are held both before and after the Conference meets and are open to observation by OA members.

The Conference adjourns on Sunday morning after committee reports and emergency new business. The end of Conference is always stirring as working together so closely for several days brings delegates very close to one another. As they part, delegates are aware, more strongly, of the ties that bind the fellowship worldwide.

THE SEVENTH TRADITION

Every service body is more or less concerned about money to meet expenses. For groups, money goes for rent, supplies, literature, and more. Generally, after group expenses are covered each month and a prudent reserve is maintained, each group contributes the rest of its Seventh Tradition collection and other funds to intergroup, region and World Service. Contact WSO for a pamphlet on the suggested division of contributions.

Intergroups pay for answering services, newsletters, mailings, region business assembly representatives and World Service Business Conference delegates' travel expenses, possible office expenses, and so on. When the intergroup has covered all monthly expenses and a prudent reserve is maintained, the intergroup contributes the rest of its Seventh Tradition and other funds to region and World Service. Contact WSO for a pamphlet on suggested division of contributions.

Region has expenses for assemblies, board travel, committee work and representation at professional conferences and conventions to carry our message to the professional community, etc. After expenses, Region 6 contributes a percentage of monies to World Service.

World Service has many expenses such as a large office facility, office staff, board expenses, literature for answering inquiries, World Service Business Conference expenses, World Service Convention, to name a few.

We cannot stress strongly enough that World Service, region, intergroups and even your own groups are financed by your contributions. Please help keep these service bodies working to help you and those who are still suffering.

CONCLUSION

We hope the preceding suggestions and information will help answer some of the many questions that arise concerning intergroup, region and World Service. Everything contained in this booklet is suggested only. It is the spirit of cooperation within an Intergroup that makes it work. Strive to get as many groups as possible participating and involved. It is healthy for them and for the Intergroup. In special events, areas of service, business meetings, committees, etc., try to share the responsibility so that each group can take part, as so that no one gets overloaded and burned out on service. This can only be achieved if all groups consider each other's needs. The key word is **UNITY!**

Our best thoughts are with you. Remember that the Twelve Steps guide us to personal recovery, the Twelve Traditions ensure the well being of the groups, and the Twelve Concepts will be the guide for doing service on a broader level.

Appendix

OA GROUP REGISTRATION/CHANGE FORM – U.S.



INSTRUCTIONS

New Group: For any group that has never been registered with OA-WSO; complete sections A, C, D, E, F and H.
Change: To change current group information; complete sections A, B and any other applicable section.
Cancellation: To remove group from WSO registration; complete sections A, B, C (city and state only), G and H.

Please print clearly with dark ink. Keep one copy for your records; make additional copy for your intergroup if required. Groups outside the U.S., please use the international version of this form.

Return to: World Service Office,
 P.O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho,
 NM 87174-4020 USA

For information: 1-505-891-2664
 Fax: 1-505-891-4320
 E-mail: overeatr@technet.nm.org

A New Group Change Information Cancel group

Effective Date _____

Submitted by _____

B **GROUP NUMBER**

Note: Always enter your group number unless yours is a new group. Enter last five digits only.

C **Meeting Location**

Meeting Place _____

Location Address _____

City _____

State _____

D **Meeting Day & Time**

Meeting Day _____ Meeting Time _____ : _____ AM PM (Circle One)

E **Meeting Contact**

First Name Only _____ Area Code _____ Telephone No. _____ - _____

F **Secretary/Permanent Mailing Address**

Area Code _____ Telephone No. _____ - _____ *Note: Full names and addresses are published within the Fellowship only. WSO needs this information so that vital OA correspondence can be mailed to registered groups.*

Full Name _____

Street Address or Post Office Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code + 4 _____ - _____

G **Former Secretary**

Name _____ Telephone (_____) _____ *Note: Fill this block only if a new secretary is reported above.*

H **Intergroup Information**

Do you belong to an intergroup? Yes No

Do you wish to change affiliation? If so give new IG name:
 _____ No. _____ Region _____

Note: Intergroup changes should be submitted on an Intergroup Registration Form, which is available from the WSO.

By submitting this form to the WSO, your group is agreeing to comply with Tradition Three and Bylaws: Subpart B, Article IV. Please see reverse side of this form.

What is an OA Group?



TRADITION THREE: *The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.*

Please take time to review the points below which define an OA group. Only those groups which comply with this definition may be registered with the World Service Office. (Bylaws: Subpart B., Article IV)

1. As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA.
2. All who have a desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
3. No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
4. As a group, they have no affiliation other than OA.
5. A group may be formed by two (2) or more persons meeting together as set forth in Article IV, Section 1.

Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

Return this form to : World Service Office, P.O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87174-4020
For Information: 1-505-891-2664; FAX: 1-505-891-4320; E-mail: overeatr@technet.nm.org

APPENDIX A-1

7/97

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To contact Region Six, direct e-mail to: webmaster@oaregion6.org

