

WELCOME TO LOUISVILLE METRO INTERGROUP (LMI)

**The Service Meeting for Louisville,
Southern Indiana, and
Greater Kentucky Area Meetings**

WHERE MANY MEETINGS WORK TOGETHER

- ~ To carry the message to those who still suffer**
- ~ To help members grow their recovery**
- ~ To connect to the OA worldwide community**
- ~ To invite members and meetings to give service**

WEB: <https://louisvillemetrooa.org>

EMAIL: togetherwgb@gmail.com

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THE WHO, WHY, WHAT, WHEN & WHERE OF INTERGROUP SERVICE

WHO belongs to Intergroup?

Meetings in a geographical area send representatives and financial support to form an “intergroup” meeting that provides services that no one meeting could provide by itself.

WHY do meetings find an Intergroup meeting beneficial?

The focus of a “regular” OA meeting is on personal recovery, sharing, and OA literature or speakers. Meetings are not a time to plan or finance workshops, retreats, public outreach, or sending representatives to region or world meetings. By connecting to the intergroup via the intergroup representative each meeting remains true to its focus on personal recovery but also participates in a wider OA outreach.

WHAT service work does the Intergroup do?

Intergroup work falls into three ever widening circles.

1. Work that keeps the intergroup organized and functioning as it observes guidelines, assesses needs, sets goals, and recruits people from intergroup and its area meetings to plan and carry out activities.
2. Work that supports the recovery of current OA members through retreats, workshops, special occasions such as Unity Day and Thanksgiving, and communications.
3. Public outreach work to carry the message to those who still suffer.

WHEN & WHERE does Intergroup do this work?

Intergroup meets once a month on the third Monday of the month at 7:00 PM.

In July 2020 Louisville Metro Intergroup voted to meet by Zoom on a regular basis.

ID: 959 2359 4508 Password: 839181



Intergroup officers and committee chairs meet as needed to prepare for the 3rd Monday meeting.

The Communications Committee of Intergroup works throughout the year to keep the OA community updated through email blasts and website updates.

Every September Intergroup develops an illustrated calendar of tasks and events to carry out in the coming calendar year. Throughout the year, intergroup representatives and officers and members from the meetings work together to fulfill the commitments on this calendar.

LMI 2023 Calendar

LOUISVILLE METRO INTERGROUP (LMI) -- 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND MONTHLY MEETING AGENDAS

Month	2023 OA EVENTS Intergroup (LMI), Region, World	Agenda Items for LMI Monthly Meetings
January \$\$\$	LMI meeting Jan 16 World OA birthday weekend - Jan 20, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report on prior fiscal year Approve the budget for current year Disburse excess funds to Region & World Report on November gratitude mtg Plan for World Unity Day Report on Abstinence workshop
February 	LMI meeting Feb 20 World Unity Day – Sunday, Feb 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize plans for World Unity Day Finalize workshop topics Retreat report an plans
March 	LMI meeting Mar 20 Region 5 Assembly (location TBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Unity Day Review Liability Insurance Policy Establish a member survey committee use Google Docs in 2021
April 	LMI meeting Apr 17 Workshop (TBD) World Service Business Conference - April 25-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Region 5 assembly Decide on Workshop Reminder about upcoming nominations; encourage representatives to consider running for office
May 	LMI meeting May 15 LMI 2023 Survey begins Derby in Kentucky!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on World Service Business Conference Update on Workshop Plans Distribute Member Survey
June Nominatol	LMI meeting June 19 Workshop (TBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate LMI officers for July election (co-chair, treasurer, regional rep.)
July 	LMI meeting July 17 Region 5 Summer Conference Call (TBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer suggestions for World Sponsorship Days Elect LMI officers (co-chair, treasurer, regional rep)
August 	LMI meeting Aug 21 World Sponsorship Days – Aug 18-20 Workshop Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Region 5 Conference Call Confirm attendees for Region5 Convention Discuss 2023 survey results Establish Committee Chair for Workshop Retreat Report and Plans
September 	Two-Hour LMI Planning Meeting Sept 18, 7 to 9 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review progress on 2023 goals/priorities Review feedback gathered from fellowship Set goals/priorities for 2024 Develop calendar for upcoming year Update on Workshop
October 	LMI meeting Oct 16 Region 5 Fall Assembly Oct ?(location TBD) Retreat Oct. 13 – 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Region 5 Convention Vote on calendar for upcoming year Remind meetings of World IDEA Days; Update on Workshop Reminder of Gratitude meeting
November 	Workshop (Abstinence) LMI meeting Nov 20 LMI Annual Gratitude Meeting – Nov 23 *World IDEA Days - Nov 17-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hear requests for changes or additions to next year's budget Remind meetings of Annual Gratitude Meeting Remind meetings of 12th Step Within Day; offer suggestions on how meetings might commemorate Report from Retreat Committee Report from Region 5 Assembly
December 	World 12 th Step within day – Dec 12 WINTER HOLIDAYS – No LMI Meeting	No mtg, but subcommittees meet to audit the books, and draft the budget

World Service Office Convention – **August 21-23, 2023** (Orlando, FL.)

*International Day of Experiencing Abstinence

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF LMI MEETING REPRESENTATIVES

Guardianship Responsibilities

1. Developing and approving an annual intergroup calendar to schedule service opportunities for the coming year
2. Overseeing the money the member meetings entrust to Intergroup by
 1. Approving an annual budget
 2. Reviewing the monthly budget reports and the annual audit
3. Voting to elect Intergroup officers, committee chairs, and region and world service representatives
4. Voting on any changes to the bylaws or policies and procedures
5. Serving as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts

Communicating Responsibilities

1. Communicating needs and suggestions of their meetings to Intergroup throughout the year
2. Reporting out to their meetings by making announcements about Intergroup, Region, and World activities, news, and resources
3. Representing the group conscience of their meetings when voting on intergroup decisions

Community-building Responsibilities

1. Inviting people and meetings to share in service projects
2. Offering service to lead, co-lead, or oversee the planning and execution of workshops or other events on the calendar
3. Welcoming newcomers to Intergroup meetings the same way a newcomer is welcomed to any OA meeting
4. Being available by email to receive intergroup communications

Intergroup-building Responsibilities

1. Over time, many Intergroup Representatives become elected Intergroup officers or appointees approved by Intergroup to take on special tasks
2. Intergroup asks any meeting whose representative has become an elected or approved official to send a new representative to Intergroup

Tab 1

INFORMATION FOR MONTHLY LMI MEETINGS

- LMI meeting script
- *Overeaters Anonymous 12 Steps
- *Overeaters Anonymous 12 Traditions
- *Overeaters Anonymous 12 Concepts
- *Overeaters Anonymous Prayers

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LMI Meeting Script

ZOOM Meeting Format - Louisville Metro Intergroup (LMI) (Developed 1/25/2023 by new co-chairs Barbara and Alex)

Good evening and welcome to the once-a-month meeting of Louisville Metro Intergroup. My name is _____ . I am your co-chair and your leader for this meeting.

In July 2020 Louisville Metro Intergroup voted to meet by ZOOM on a regular basis. We encourage you

- to find and use your mute button during the meeting
- use the “blue hand” symbol or wave your hand when you wish to add to the discussion
- unmute to speak, then re-mute to listen

Once a month, representatives from meetings in Louisville, Southern Indiana, and the State of Kentucky come together to do service work that no one meeting could do by itself. Our Intergroup meeting differs from regular, weekly OA meetings because our purpose is to plan and execute SERVICE PROJECTS that carry the message of Overeaters Anonymous to people inside the rooms and to the public. We see the work we do as being responsible for:

1. Keeping intergroup organized
2. Providing support to new and existing meetings, to all current members and other OA service bodies
3. Providing public outreach and avenues of welcome for newcomers

We ask now that you mute the audio on your ZOOM connection as we join in the Serenity Prayer, followed by the OA Responsibility Pledge.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

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

Is anyone attending tonight’s meeting as a new representative or as a visitor? Welcome! Please introduce yourself.

You are welcome to stay online after the meeting. We will be glad to answer any questions you may have and arrange for you to get further information.

ROLL CALL AND CHECK-IN’s

(All Group Representatives please take notes to take back to your meetings)

I will now call out your names as they appear on my zoom screen. When I call your name, please introduce yourself by the meeting you represent or the LMI office that you hold. If you are a meeting representative, please choose one of these three descriptions for your meeting: 1) growing, 2) holding steady, or 3) in need of support. As we introduce ourselves, our intergroup secretary _____ will check off our attendance and take note of meetings in need of support.

BRIEF READINGS

Intergroup is the once-a-month service meeting of the OA community. Service is so important in OA that it is one of OA's nine tools as well as the spiritual principle of Step 12, which _____ will now read for us:

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.

Read the Concept of the month as requested in our Bylaws (page 7)

MONTHLY OFFICERS REPORTS (Meeting host will bring up the reports as needed)

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (AMY)
2. TREASURER'S REPORT (Lori)
3. WSO REPORT (Debbie SP)
4. REGION 5 REPORT (Kathy, Barbara)

Volunteer Service Position Reports

1. Communication and Web Site Administrator (Sharon)
2. Meeting List Coordinator/Zoom Captain (Kathy)
3. Newcomer Advocate (Harriett)
4. Outreach Advocate (Suzy)
5. Retreat Report – needs and plans (Traci)

REFERRING TO OUR ANNUAL CALENDAR

I now turn the meeting over to _____ to lead us through a look at our calendar and a discussion of the specific items on tonight's agenda. (i.e. workshops, retreats, etc.)

(Meeting host brings up Calendar and then our Goals)

2nd Co-chair takes over: Let's look at our calendar and agenda to remind us of what items we completed from last month, any tasks we need to do tonight, and what preparations we need to make for coming months.

This past ___ (day of week), I sent out an email with specific items we need to act on tonight. Let's go to those now. (After working through the agenda, the floor is opened for:)

OPEN FLOOR FOR NEW BUSINESS OR SHARING UNTIL 7:55 PM.

Please raise your blue hand or your own hand if you have comments or suggestions on IG's work or announcements or requests from your meeting. Please note that we will defer any suggestions or motions that make significant changes to Intergroup's bylaws, policies, or expenditures until the following month.

THE 7:55 PM WRAP – UP (Lead co-chair will continue for the wrap-up)

It is now 7:55. Let's review the announcements we will take back to our weekly meetings. What do you think is important to tell the meetings?

8:00 PM CLOSING – The Serenity Prayer, or another prayer of the leader's choice.

(Updated May 15, 2023)

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.

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 non-professional, 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.

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service with their Spiritual Principles

1. **Unity.** The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. **Conscience.** 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. **Trust.** The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. **Equality.** The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. **Consideration.** Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. **Responsibility.** The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. **Balance.** 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. **Delegation.** The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. **Ability.** Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. **Clarity.** Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. **Humility.** Trustee administration of the 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) **Selflessness.** No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
 - (b) **Realism.** Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
 - (c) **Representation.** No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
 - (d) **Dialogue.** All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, by vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
 - (e) **Compassion.** No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
 - (f) **Respect.** No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

PRAYERS AND PROMISES

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the Serenity, to accept the things I can not change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.

Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always!

Seventh Step Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

Eleventh Step Prayer

Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace; that where there is hatred, I may bring love; that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness; that where there is discord, I may bring harmony; that where there is error, I may bring truth; that where there is doubt, I may bring faith; that where there is despair, I may bring hope; that where there are shadows, I may bring light; that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted; to understand, than to be understood; to love, than to be loved. For it is by self forgetting, that one finds. It is by forgiving, that one is forgiven. It is by dying, that one awakens to Eternal Life. Amen.

The OA Promise

I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.

Tab 2

2023 LMI MEMBERSHIP

- [List of Meetings, Directions, and Contact Persons*](#)
- [List of LMI Officers, Region and World Reps, Committee Chairs and Intergroup Reps*](#)
- LMI Ways to Communicate

*These items are available during monthly meetings, and are subject to change. Our current meeting list is available here: [Louisvillemetrooa.org](https://louisvillemetrooa.org)

Louisville Metro OA – Ways to Communicate

Check out the Website www.louisvillemetrooa.org

The website provides information about all LMI meetings, events, and publications as well as helpful links to the Region and World. Newcomers find their way to OA through the website and current members keep informed about what's happening.

Send LMI an Email

togetherwgb@gmail.com is the LMI email address that answers inquiries from the public and handles correspondence with the LMI Communications Chair. This email address is answered by the LMI Communications Chair.

Join the LMI E-mail blast list

togetherwgb@gmail.com is the LMI list serve email that sends out announcements of LMI special events and meeting changes. Please send a message to this email address to be added to the list or to submit an announcement for the list. The LMI Communications Chair and Co-Chairs manage this account. All members on the list receive email announcements through BCC's (blind carbon copies) to protect anonymity.

Send LMI a letter or contribution through the US mail

- Louisville Metro Intergroup of OA
- PO Box 7223
- Louisville, KY 40257-0223

The LMI treasurer monitors the PO Box for contributions and the occasional bill. This is a good way for meetings to send in contributions!

Tab 3

LMI BYLAWS, POLICIES & PROCEDURES, AND INSURANCE POLICY

- [LMI Bylaws 2022](#) (approved by OA Region 5 Trustee)
- [LMI Policies and Procedures 2022](#)
- LMI Insurance Coverage

Louisville Metro Intergroup Insurance Coverage

For Your Information

LMI maintains an insurance policy that permits Intergroup and any of its member meetings to satisfy a landlord's request for proof of insurance coverage.

Background

Louisville Metro Intergroup and its member meetings hold their meetings in rented spaces. Rental agreements with supportive landlords make OA's recovery program possible. Intergroup and its meetings could not afford to maintain their own facilities. The upkeep of a building would burden any OA meeting as an "outside issue" of huge hassle and expense.

Most LMI meetings are held in churches, but a Catholic Retreat Center, two hospitals, an AA community facility, and a YMCA also support OA's program of recovery by providing meeting spaces for nominal fees.

Reputable providers of public space maintain liability insurance that protects their church or property in several ways. The insurance covers scenarios such as

- An LMI member lights a candle in her retreat room that topples, sets a bedspread on fire, and then the fire spreads throughout the building
- An OA member who does not have health insurance slips and falls in an icy parking lot and sues the facility for resulting medical expenses

We must remember that the generous landlords who support our recovery also place themselves practically and legally at risk as they support our mission by admitting us into their spaces.

Occasionally, an OA landlord will request as a condition of rental that the OA meeting or Intergroup assume a part of this risk by submitting a certificate that we, too, carry insurance for any harm that occurs to property by virtue of our meeting in that space (the fire scenario) or harm that comes to one of our people from being in that space (the uninsured injured person). The proof of insurance that the landlord will ask for is called "A Certificate of Liability Insurance."

The cost of this insurance to Intergroup is approximately \$350 per year to insure Intergroup meetings, all Intergroup sponsored retreats and workshops, and all the meetings that belong to Louisville Metro Intergroup. If your meeting's landlord asks "Does your meeting carry liability insurance?" the answer is "yes." If the landlord requires proof of insurance, send an email to togetherwgb@gmail.com and an LMI officer will arrange for our insurance agency to send a "Certificate of Insurance Liability" to your landlord. This is an easy procedure that can be handled by email.

Revised 1/27/2023

Tab 4

REGION AND WORLD

- *LMI Relationship with Region 5
- *LMI Relationship with the World Service Office
- *LMI Relationship with the World Service Business Conference

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LMI's Relationship with Region 5*

Region 5 of Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is made up of Groups and Intergroups in Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Southwest Ontario (Windsor to London), and the greater Chicago area/Champaign-Urbana/Decatur/Rockford areas of Illinois. We are one of 10 Regions organized to serve the world-wide fellowship of OA.

Our Region's purpose is to aid those with the problems of compulsive eating through the 12 Steps & 12 Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the 12 Concepts of OA Service, and to serve and represent the OA Intergroups and Groups from which we are formed.

How does Region 5 serve you?

- Practice and safeguard the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service of Overeaters Anonymous.
- Maintain direct communication and work with Groups, Intergroups, and other Regions.
- Provide a personal, immediate means of answering urgent questions from individuals, Groups, and Intergroups.
- Offer support, suggestions, and experience with difficult situations.
- Hold Region Assemblies twice a year and a Summer Conference call during which Intergroups Representatives and Region Board members meet to administer and conduct Region business. At these meetings, Intergroup Representatives share exciting and effective ways to strengthen abstinence and recovery, retain members, increase membership, and solve vital Intergroup issues.
- Provide funding assistance based on need to help Intergroups.
- Assist with startups including helping groups with literature and other costs.
- Send Representatives to Region Assemblies.
- Send Delegates to World Service Business Conference.
- Hold or attend Public Information and Professional Outreach event

LMI's Relationship with World Service Office (WSO)

What does WSO have to do with me? *

The WSO located in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, USA, works to provide quality support and service to the OA Fellowship. These services include worldwide OA meeting directories, a print and online magazine and quarterly newsletters, a website, public information activities, World Service Conferences and Conventions, and more than 150 literature and recovery related items.

How do I contact the WSO?

By mail: P.O. Box 44727, Rio Rancho, New Mexico 817174-4727 USA

By Telephone: 1-505-891-2664

Website: www.oa.org

LMI's Relationship with the World Service Business Conference

How Conference Delegates and Region Representatives Serve

1. What does a World Service Business Conference delegate do?

Delegates represent their service bodies at the annual World Service Business Conference, sharing experiences with other world service delegates. This Conference represents the collective group conscience of OA as a whole and makes decisions and recommendations on OA business and policy matters. The delegate is chosen on the basis of judgment, experience, stability, abstinence, willingness, and faithful adherence to the program of OA. (See OA Bylaws Subpart B, Article X, Section 3 on oa.org for more information on delegate requirements.).

The delegate's job is to:

- Keep the service body informed about what is happening with OA throughout the world and keep the WSO informed about the service body's problems and progress, needs and wishes.
- Receive and share with the service body all mail from the WSO, the yearly Conference Report, and other information and ideas from WSBC, including workshop subjects and any new or changed OA policies decided at WSBC.
- Inform the service body of any new or revised literature published by OA.
- Remind the service body about group registration and the importance of keeping the meetings database current.
- Keep fellow members informed about world service activities, such as public information campaigns and notifications from the WSO of articles and broadcasts about OA that may attract newcomers or generate inquiries.
- Be the VvSO's area contact person, often to

guide prospective members to a meeting and to carry the message as needed. A good delegate wholeheartedly abides by the spirit of our Twelve Traditions, especially the commitment to give service freely.

- Help the service body solve problems and assist in keeping the service body bylaws in compliance with OA Bylaws. To do this, the delegate may draw on the resources of the World Service Office, where the staff is ready to relay helpful OA experience from all over the world.

It is suggested that at least one of the delegates also serve as the region representative.

- from 2015 OA Handbook

Tab 5

RESOURCES FROM THE WSO

- *OA Group Inventory
- *OA Guidelines for Addressing Disruptive Behavior Affecting Overeaters Anonymous Meetings
- *OA Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature

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OA Group Inventory

It is suggested that a neutral, experienced OA member facilitate an inventory for a group or service body. Region boards can assist with finding members who can provide this type of support.

Use an entire meeting for an honest and fearless discussion of the group's weaknesses and strengths.

This inventory is divided into two parts. A is an inventory of the group as a whole; B is a personal inventory of a member's behavior in the group.

A. Group Inventory*

1. Does our meeting start and end on time?
2. Are all attending, including newcomers, greeted and made to feel welcome and accepted?
3. Does our meeting focus on OA recovery through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions?
4. Do we offer our own experience, strength, and hope, sharing the solution we have found?
5. Is the group contributing financially to all levels of OA service as per our Seventh Tradition?
6. Are sponsors available and identified at the meeting?
7. Does our group practice anonymity by reminding members not to repeat who is seen or what personal sharing is heard at a meeting?
8. Does our group follow a meeting format?
9. Is only OA-approved literature on display and for sale?
10. Does our group welcome and support individual members who use a variety of OA-approved literature?
11. Are group conscience meetings held regularly?
12. Are all service positions filled, and is rotation of service practiced?
13. Is our meeting information readily available, and is the World Service Office informed of all meeting details and changes so that newcomers and visitors can find our meeting?
14. Are cross talk and advice-giving avoided?

B. Determine your part in the group

1. Do I make a point to welcome new members, talk with them, and offer my phone number?
2. Do I sponsor new members?
3. Do I interrupt speakers or other members who are sharing?
4. Do I give my full attention to the speakers, the secretary, and other group members?
5. Do I ever repeat anything personal I have heard at meetings or from another member?
6. Do I put pressure on the group to accept my ideas because I have been in the Fellowship a long time?
7. Do I take part in meetings, or do I sit and listen?
8. Do I volunteer or willingly accept a group office (e.g., secretary, treasurer)? Do I offer to help set up, clean, etc.?
9. Do I criticize others in the group or gossip about them?
10. Do I insist on requirements other than those in Tradition Three, including telling others that they should use only specific literature, or they can't be in the Fellowship, or that they cannot use the services of health care professionals, such as psychologists or dietitians?

Guidelines for Addressing Disruptive Behavior Affecting Overeaters Anonymous Meetings

These guidelines have been developed through the experience of OA members and the Board of Trustees, who have contributed to their creation. They reflect OA Traditions and Concepts of Service as reflected in our OA Conference-approved literature. These guidelines are strong suggestions based on those who have gone before. They do not replace the local group conscience, but we encourage OA groups and service bodies to consider carefully before acting contrary to these suggestions.

The guidelines are designed to assist members in situations where an OA meeting (or meeting attendance) is being disrupted by the behavior of one or more members, within or outside a meeting, whether face-to-face or virtual. Fortunately, such disruptions are rare. The disruption can range from subtle, annoying behavior to dangerous behavior. Many times the behavior is unintentional. Here are examples of issues you may encounter in your meeting:

“My regular meeting is having a problem with a member who is disruptive. She speaks out of turn and argues with other people. People are worried and the group is losing members. What should we do?”

“My home meeting is having a problem with a member who acts in a threatening manner. People are afraid and upset; many are not coming back to the meeting. Short of legal action or contacting the police, does OA have a policy on how to handle difficult members?”

“One of our members has made inappropriate sexual advances toward another member. How should the member and the group handle this situation?”

“Some members from my home group are being particularly controlling with their spouses and specifically saying that, in order to be considered abstinent, members must stop taking medication and must follow a specific food plan. How can we deal with this?”

“Can we kick a member out of a meeting and/or out of OA?”

There are no easy answers. Although OA has no written policy on disruptive behavior, we can refer to our literature and the Traditions.

- From Tradition One in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*: “The unity of OA is a matter of life and death to us. However, unity isn’t always easy to maintain.... If we as individuals did not value the common welfare of the Fellowship above our own ... OA ... would lose the strength that comes from our union of many” (p. 92).
- From Tradition Three in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*: “Occasionally groups are plagued by members who disrupt the harmony of the meetings. Even these people are not permanently barred from the group and denied the chance to recover. Of course groups must protect their members from violence or harassment.... We have found that most personality problems can best be dealt with on a one-to-one basis”
- Tradition Five tells us that the primary purpose of every OA group is to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. Every member of the group has the responsibility, therefore, to keep that primary purpose in mind. If a member’s actions are disruptive or dangerous, the OA group not only needs to protect itself and its members, it must also make certain that the

primary purpose for which the group exists is upheld. If it doesn't, the meeting may fold and many may lose the opportunity for recovery.

How a meeting protects itself can cause conflict and controversy. Each situation is unique and should be evaluated individually. Discussing it at your group conscience meeting can help. You may find it helpful to contact your intergroup, service board, region, or the World Service Office to learn how others have dealt with such problems. A letter from the chair of the Board of Trustees to OA members, dated October 6, 2017, states, "In some cases the individuals who offer themselves as sponsors may go beyond the boundaries suggested for sponsorship.... They ought only to share or suggest changes that worked for them in their journey. Sponsors should not issue orders or make demands."

Alerting local groups, intergroups, and service boards or virtual service boards to potential problems helps them to be prepared if the disruptive individual shows up at another meeting. Be careful, however, to put principles before personalities (Tradition Twelve) and protect members' anonymity as well as confidentiality.

Clear guidelines in meeting formats (such as a statement regarding cross talk or safe practices in choosing a sponsor) can prevent most problems. Important guidelines may need to be repeated more than once during a meeting. Because virtual meetings lack face-to-face contact, it is critical to set guidelines based on principles prior to creating a meeting format. As our *Suggested Meeting Format* states, "The chair for each meeting has the discretion to suggest to anyone sharing that he or she is off-topic or is speaking too long."

When addressing a disruptive member, begin informally, one-to-one if possible. One or two members of the meeting may approach the disruptive individual to discuss the problem and look for solutions. Let the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions guide you. Always strive to place principles before personalities and treat others with kindness, patience, tolerance, and love.

It is best if the members approaching the disruptive individual are grounded in these principles. Any person is welcome at our meetings, but their disruptive behavior is not. Remember, we are dealing with inappropriate behavior. You might need to ask yourself how you would treat a sick person in this situation.

You might need to approach the disruptive person by phone. However you decide to approach the disruptive person, it is often helpful to have another member present to ensure your own safety. If a one-to-one approach is not possible, or if the individual is uncommunicative or uncooperative when approached, it may be necessary to hold a group conscience with the whole meeting or form a specific committee.

Be sure to provide an equal hearing for all. Ask everyone to pray for God's will and come to the meeting with healthy, tolerant, and supportive attitudes. Blame and accusations help no one. The meeting may decide that this individual should be asked to leave for the good of the group. While we cannot expel any person from OA, we can ask a disruptive member who is unwilling to change their behavior(s) to leave the meeting and stay away until the matter has been resolved.

This can be done while upholding Tradition Three; we are not denying the person membership in OA as a whole. If the disruption is significant, it may be necessary to state clear consequences, including registering a formal complaint with the police. Our Tradition of anonymity (Tradition Twelve) should never be used to cover up unsafe behavior of any kind.

Other Suggestions

In all cases, strong meetings can minimize opportunities for disruptive behavior. Do you have a strong meeting? Would your meeting benefit from doing a group inventory? Are you using the suggestions on the *Strong Meeting Checklist*? (See the list of resources at the end of this document.) You may already have procedures in place for dealing with disruptive behaviors. The *Suggested Meeting Format* provides wording, giving the chair of the meeting responsibility for dealing with such behaviors. Well-prepared group secretaries, leaders, or chairs—and an informed group conscience—are essential to the well-being of meetings.

If disruptions are subtle and reflect nonadherence to the group conscience or meeting format, consider holding a meeting on Tradition Two and/or Tradition Five. Discuss how the Tradition(s) has helped you in your recovery. A chair, moderator, or any other member can interrupt a disruptive person's share or outburst by calling for a five-minute break and using the Serenity Prayer to interrupt the disruption and refocus the meeting. A short break or a moment of silent reflection may help. These ideas may bring enough of a pause between the behavior and the continuation of the meeting to bring everyone back to focus on our OA recovery.

If the behavior includes approaching members (during or after a meeting) for inappropriate reasons, including sales pitches, sexual advances, or other unacceptable actions, group members may interrupt the behavior by joining a conversation that might morph into something else and redirect it. For example, if you have a member who habitually approaches younger newcomers as an available sponsor, whereas another member might be a healthier, safer option, members may interrupt and discourage the person known for this type of behavior.

If the disruptive behavior is subtle and primarily attention-seeking, take the person aside or offline, listen to their concerns, and ask how you can help. Share some of your own experience on how you got well, so the person may identify and find their own solutions. Remember the expression, "There but for the grace of God go I."

Most situations can be resolved within the group. However, if a person appears to be a danger to themselves or others, then it is appropriate to call the police. Police are trained to deal with such cases.

Sometimes a member is so distraught that they may need immediate attention. In a face-to-face meeting, it may be appropriate for someone to take that member aside to offer help. In a virtual meeting, a member may arrange to immediately contact the distraught person to work one-on-one offline while the rest of the group continues its meeting.

You can address disruption in virtual meetings by speaking to people privately. If this is not successful, discussion at the group conscience meeting may help the group find a way to approach the problem.

Technology can also be helpful. Phone meetings often have access to an internet interface or "dashboard" that allows meeting moderators to mute or remove a disruptive caller from the meeting. In virtual meetings, make sure that a moderator with access to the dashboard is familiar with the Traditions and only mutes, drops, or blocks a caller after other methods have failed. Online meetings have options such as private messaging and "gag" commands. Moderators can remove a member who is cursing or spamming and offer a public explanation.

Remember, a member is never permanently banned from a meeting (Tradition Three).

Resources

- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition* (#990-2)
- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* by Alcoholics Anonymous
- *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* (#330) • *OA Group Inventory* (download at oa.org/document-library under “Group Resources”)
- *Strong Meeting Checklist* (download at oa.org/document-library under “Group Resources”)
- *The OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities* (#120)
- *Suggested Meeting Format* (download at oa.org/document-library under “Meeting Formats”)

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Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature

These guidelines have been developed through the experience of OA members and the Board of Trustees, who have contributed to their creation. They reflect OA Traditions and Concepts of Service as reflected in our OA Conference-approved literature. These guidelines are strong suggestions based on the experience of those who have gone before. The guidelines do not replace the group conscience of local OA members, but we encourage OA groups and service bodies to consider WSO carefully before acting contrary to these suggestions.

Overeaters Anonymous supports the development of literature where current OA literature doesn't fill a need. Locally produced literature may include stories of personal recovery unique to specific geographic areas, languages, or cultural groups. While the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are the common ground of all OA members throughout the world, stories that demonstrate our diversity can help individuals achieve recovery.

Locally produced literature may also include material for public information or professional outreach efforts in a specific area, or OA recovery-oriented literature. OA newsletters have their own specific guidelines, *Guidelines for OA Newsletters*, available at oa.org/document-library under "Guidelines."

In the spirit of unity, the following guidelines are offered to assist in the development of locally produced literature.

1. Locally produced literature should be developed, reviewed, and approved by a service body beyond the group level, except for newsletters, meeting lists, flyers, posters, letterhead, and business cards.
2. The OA logo may be used only with written permission. Submit the "Permission to Use the OA Logo" form, available on the Copy Requests page at oa.org, to the World Service Office to start the process. The group or service body name must appear under the logo.
3. If developed for sale, the literature may be sold *only* within the Fellowship.
4. We recommend the sponsoring service body check the copyright procedures and guidelines on the Copy Requests page at oa.org for an explanation of what literature requires written permission to reprint and what does not. To reprint excerpts from literature not listed as available to registered groups and service bodies for reprinting without written permission, submit the "Reprint Permission" form to the World Service Office (WSO).
5. Include the following disclaimer on the cover page of each piece of literature: "This literature has been locally produced by [service body name here]. The content reflects the experience, strength, and hope of our local members. It is not OA Conference- or Board-approved and does not represent OA as a whole."
6. We recommend that the OA Responsibility Pledge be included in all published locally produced literature, social media, newsletters, and bulletins.
7. Upon completion of the literature's development, prior to publication, send one copy to the region liaison and one copy to the WSO. If your service body has not received permission to use the OA logo yet, this copy should be sent with a "Permission to Use the OA Logo" form for permission to publish the literature with the logo.
8. When publishing either local OA history or the history of OA as a whole, ensure that the information is accurately presented. Guidelines to support the development of local OA history, *Suggested Guidelines for Writing the History of Your Local OA Area*, are available at oa.org/document-library under "Guidelines."

9. Literature should not judge programs in other areas or compare them with the local program.
10. Review literature carefully to ensure it upholds our Traditions.
11. If the literature includes personal stories of recovery, it is recommended that diverse stories by multiple authors be included.
12. Create a committee of three to four currently abstinent members to oversee the literature development or review process. This committee should bring their recommendations to the sponsoring service body for approval.
13. "Local literature should be considered temporary and discontinued when OA literature approved for general use is available to cover the topic" (*Statement on Approved Literature adopted at the 2010 World Service Business Conference, amended 2012*). To read the full Statement, see the *OA-Approved Literature List* at oa.org/document-library under "Guidelines.")

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