

# Freedom from Bondage

November 2016

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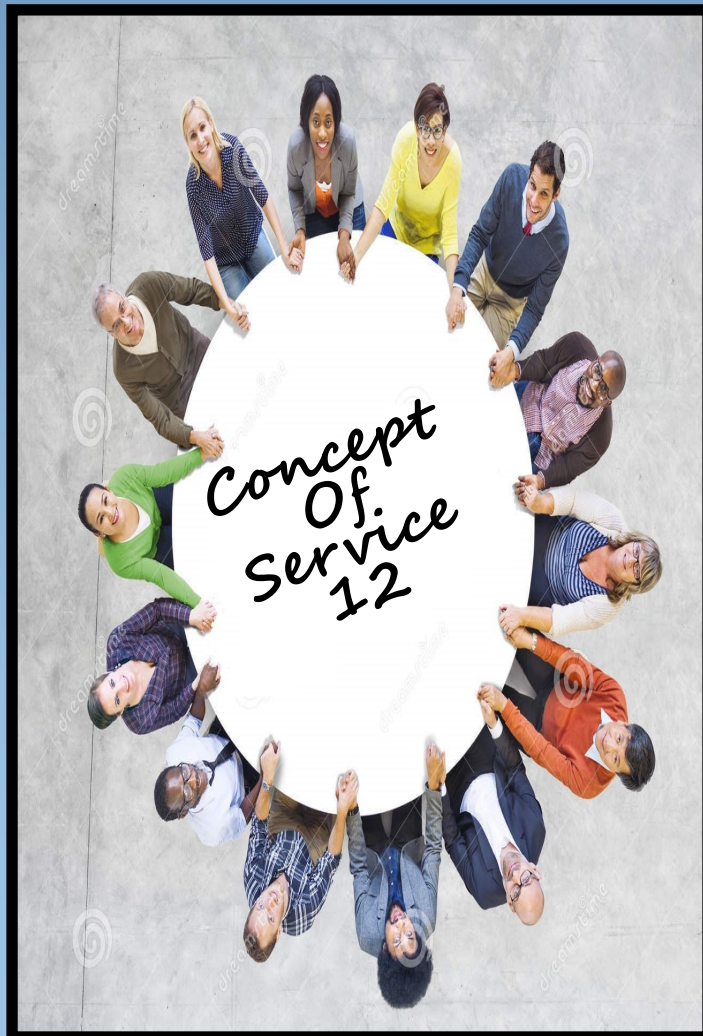
**Next Region 5 Assembly**  
**March 10-12, 2017 in Merrillville, IN**

**Save  
The Date**  
Region 5 Convention  
October 20—22, 2017  
Greater Cincinnati Intergroup

**Spring 2017**  
**Freedom from Bondage**  
**Topic**

**Preserving Unity**  
**in the Midst of Change**

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# From the Chair

The wonderful pamphlet – “The Twelve Concepts of OA Service” – is a great guide as we seek to give service to the fellowship. Did you know that the 1999 World Service Business Conference adopted a policy which suggests that the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions be read at the beginning of each OA meeting and requests that Intergroups, service boards and regions read the Twelve Concepts of OA Service? *“Regular reading of the Twelve Concepts of OA Service at meetings of service groups will hopefully result in our trusted servants becoming increasingly familiar with the ideals expressed within them.”*

As I begin my term as the Chair of Region 5, it is my goal to be the best trusted servant that I can be with God’s help. I have a lot to learn and I know that I will be seeking help from a lot of people who know so much more than I do about how best to be of service. One of my main goals will be to continue to encourage members of our fellowship to give service. Together we can do what we could never do alone. Service at every level is needed to keep our fellowship strong so that we can continue to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share our compulsion.

Concept 12 of OA Service is filled with great guidance. Please take some time to read the whole pamphlet. I would like to comment on section (c) which says – *“No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority.”* I am a trusted servant – I am not in charge. There is work that I need to do to fulfill my obligation to the fellowship, and I ask God to help me to do that, but we all have work that we need to do – in our meetings, at the Intergroup meetings and within Region 5. I look forward to working with you towards the goals that we determine in the coming years.

— CJ M. Region 5 Chair

## Concept of Service 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, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA’s prudent financial principle;
- (c) No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
- (d) All 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 each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

I put my hand in yours, and  
together we can do  
what we could never do alone



## From Legalese to Understanding: The Twelfth Concept of OA Service.

The twelfth concept of service starts with: "*The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:*"

I really like the phrase that we work the steps to learn how to not commit suicide and the traditions to not commit murder. By extension then the concepts of OA service teaches us how to not commit genocide. This is especially undeniable with the twelfth concept, which reminds us that to remain faithful to the spiritual roots of our program, we need to be cautious and maintain a few simple boundaries. When we act in a manner that exceeds these boundaries, we put ourselves in danger for controversy, conflict and drama. I know that when I have found myself embroiled in drama with other group members, my spiritual program has been seriously affected. Focusing on drama is very distracting from the things we need to be focusing on.

The twelfth concept defines the boundaries that will keep us safe from our worse inclinations. By saying the concepts teach us not to commit genocide, we mean that we are not doing anything to damage our groups or OA. The principle behind this concept is the idea of "Guidelines" and it starts by saying that our spiritual foundation is best protected by keeping to six fundamental boundaries. Keeping within these limits will keep us safe.

These boundaries are:

- a) It is our responsibility to keep our Ego's in check. We do not lead or direct; instead we are performing service. This boundary protects us from our own worse selves, by ensuring we keep the right perspective on service. Service is a way of giving back what we have gained from recovery. As such we limit it by rotation of service.
- b) Money invites controversy and other troubles, so we prevent this by keeping only what we need in our treasuries.
- c) The only authority our fellowship has, is that of our loving God, as he expresses himself through our group conscious. Remembering this help's those of us who are doing service keep our Ego's in check.
- d) Every voice, opinion, idea, suggestion, and criticism is valid in OA. We make all of our decisions through voting, after listening to every person who is willing to contribute. Our decisions are always made keeping in mind that our unity is most important.
- e) No member who has taken on a service position, should use the position to harm others or OA as a whole. This boundary protects our members from those individuals who use their service positions in inappropriate ways. Yet, we also need to keep in mind that, when this does happen, we approach this person with love and understanding. We all make mistakes, so we must have compassion, tolerance and care to support each other, including the individual who has crossed our boundaries.
- f) Our groups should remember that service positions are about the service and not about governing. Our committees and service bodies do the work and our members make the decisions, even if it is through their representatives. Keeping to this boundary protects our organization unity by keeping our committees and service bodies focused on getting the work done and not on controlling and directing the organization. God will take care of our organizations direction as long as we get out of the way and let him.

The upshot is that we treat each other with respect and tolerance, and always coming from a place of love. While our traditions teach us how to act well in relationships, the concepts of service extend that functioning well in business settings. It is easy to think that I know better than other people and that is where I always get myself in trouble. We always need to keep these boundaries in mind as we conduct the business of OA. Petty controversies can only serve to get in the way of our unity.

—Joel I., Central Ohio Service Intergroup

## **Concept 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;**

### **Selflessness**

In my 30+ years in OA, I've never known anyone who said, "I want to be rich and important so I think I'll become the Leader/Queen/Dictator/King of Overeaters Anonymous." Still, generally speaking, we are people seeking a sense of control instead of surrendering to our powerlessness. Our second tradition reminds us that our only authority is a loving Higher Power and that "*our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.*" Clause (a) of Concept 12 adds support to this tradition and brings it into all levels of service.

One of the things we do to ensure that no one person, committee or service body gains too much power is to limit how long someone can serve in one position. This prevents people from deciding for instance, that our current Region Chair is doing a good job so let's just let her keep doing it for the next 10 years. If we were to do that people, including this long-term chair herself, would likely lose perspective and begin to overly rely on that person and the chair would likely begin to exercise too much authority and we would lose our sense of group conscience as our governing principle.

When I first got involved in service beyond the group level, there was a team of leaders who worked well together and many of the reps knew each other well. Someone new who seemed not to have the seal of approval of those currently serving wanted to candidate for a trusted servant position. She met all the stated requirements so they of course could not prevent her from doing so, although they did seem to both endorse someone else and exude subtle resistance toward the newcomer. Because of the traditions and concepts, the process had to be followed and the newcomer made a very strong impression on the voting body and was elected. She has gone on to serve faithfully and well for all the years that position allows. Then, when her term is complete, it will be time for someone else to be duly elected by the reps; not up to entrenched leadership to endorse a chosen successor.

Over the years I have been a part of many different kinds of organizations. I have seen some of them falter because they don't have the kinds of traditions and concepts we are fortunate to have in OA. The things this one cautions against happen all too often when fallible humans find their egos unchecked. I am grateful that our leaders, trusted-servants, saw these warning signs and developed principles by which we can be protected from our individual or collective defects of character. These principles help us to live lives of selfless service which strengthens our individual recovery and our fellowship as a whole.

—Deborah K. Southwest Michigan IG

I am a young OA member, but have been in program for a long time. Although many members volunteering for service roles are my seniors, this guideline helps me to know that if I work the program, (follow the twelve steps and twelve traditions, maintain a level of abstinence, and attend meetings regularly) I am going to be given the same service opportunities as all other OA members. So far I have experienced no intimidation or dissuasion in this program to step down from service because of my age.

My experience has been quite contrary to feeling exiled. I have felt a sense of gratitude and welcome from other members who are glad to have a fresh perspective or more helping hands. Other members may have more experience when it comes to specific topics such as finance, media, communication, or policy, but I feel valued just as much as the next OA member who gives service. My higher power wants me to help in any way that I can, and the rotation of leadership assists in removing the fear that I may not be good enough or that I will never have an opportunity to serve on any board, committee, or represent any specific group within OA. For this, I am grateful.

-Montana W. Kalamazoo, MI Southwest Michigan Intergroup

## Concept 12: The Spiritual Foundation for OA service ensures that:

**(b) Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;**

### Realism

Let's get real: Money can't help carry the message of OA recovery when it's sitting in an intergroup checking account. OA's prudent financial principle reminds our service groups to always maintain enough operating money to fulfill commitments to members and a prudent reserve--but no more than that.

Too many times I've heard intergroups argue about holding or releasing accumulated funds. Just yesterday an OA member with many years of recovery and service was asked what to do about a large intergroup treasury. "Get rid of it!" she said. "Get that money where it can help a compulsive overeater."

My home group set aside a \$300 scholarship fund to use at a retreat we never actually did. We held that money in the bank for years. Finally, by group conscience, we contributed it to World Service. I thought about that belated decision when I attended WSBC last spring. I befriended a fellow compulsive eater from Brazil and wondered if the contribution we finally made helped translate any OA literature into Portuguese. These money decisions have very practical implications.

The 12th Concept helps us move from financial insecurity and fear to financial **realism**. Money can be so complicated and triggering for us in service situations. A realistic perspective on when it is needed here and when it is better donated there, is a gift of OA recovery.

--Karen G Turning Point IG

Concept 12 addresses the spiritual foundation of OA. Its purpose is to make certain assurances. Part B tells us that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve result in a prudent financial principle. This principle is **Realism**.

Maintaining fiscal responsibility is a real, tangible principle. This means we have to be self-funding through our own contributions.

The options for financial 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition giving include:

- Contributions made at your face-to-face meetings. That money is used for rent, literature, and workshop expenses. In addition some of that money may be shared with your local Intergroup, Region 5 and World Service
- Contributions may be made directly to your Virtual meetings, Intergroup, Region 5 and World Service directly.

—Gerri M. CHI-WIF IG

## Group Financial Tips

### What is a prudent reserve and how do we establish one?

A prudent reserve is an amount of money set aside that can be used to meet operational expenses if contributions decrease. The WSO has a policy for their prudent reserve "*not to exceed one year's operating budget plus outstanding liabilities plus one-time capital expenditures.*" Each service body can establish its own prudent reserve policy. It's common for a prudent reserve to cover a three-month period. Refer to [Budget Guidelines for Service Bodies](#) and [Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Service Bodies](#).

### How often should I distribute excess funds to other service bodies and WSO?

Your group should decide this, keeping in mind their prudent reserve requirement. Many groups have chosen to send donations quarterly. Often, donations are split using a 60/30/10 formula, with 60% of contributions to Intergroup/ Service Board, 30% to WSO, and 10% to Region. As with frequency of contributions, this is a matter for your group conscience.

## Concept 12: The Spiritual Foundation for OA service ensures that:

(c) No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;

### Representation

My first thought was “I never feel qualified”.....I want to help but I’m afraid I won’t do it right. I forget that I am one of a multitude. I am not in charge; GOD is in charge. What keeps me from stepping up is “I want to get it right” or “They will find out how dumb I really am”. I realize that this is extremely self-centered, dishonest and selfish.

**Self-centered** ....Who do I think I am... I think I have to do everything myself without the help from anyone.

**Selfish**.....By not stepping up to help out. Am I in or out; involved or not; willing to represent my group or not. I need to step up instead of complaining that no one else is..

**Dishonest**..... in feeling “If I don’t do it perfectly, I won’t do it at all” when I really didn’t want to do it in the first place.

Many of us may think like that; however thank you God that they do it anyway.

It talks all of us to keep OA alive. May we be guided by God.

--Deanna B. Suburban North IG

Was I “in charge” of my life before OA? Yes! I knew what I wanted and I knew what you wanted (or needed) too. If you took my advice, you’d be great! The problem was me – I wasn’t in charge of anything except chaos and craziness.

If I live my life now according to OA’s spiritual principles, I am one of many. I do what I can which this day might be to lead a meeting. Another day might find me setting up chairs or answering OA calls. What needs to be done to keep OA around one more day??? Who’s the boss? Who will tell me what to do?

That boss is our fellowship and our Higher Power - Thank goodness!

—Anonymous

### Let people know about OA!

You can publicize your meetings in many ways. Here are a few suggestions.

- ◆ **Group Registration:** Make sure your group is registered with current information on the WSO
- ◆ **Bulletin Boards:** Post notices of OA Meetings and community boards in shopping malls, grocery stores, libraries, schools, waiting rooms, hospitals and other public places where permitted.
- ◆ **Classified Advertisements:** Many newspapers and neighborhood “shoppers” offer free listings to nonprofit organizations.
- ◆ **Ongoing Meeting Notices:** Some papers have a special section for community meetings.
- ◆ **Public Service Announcements (PSA's) on radio or TV:** A PSA is usually a 15, 30 or 60 second radio or television spot with a short message about OA and the phone number of the World Service Office and/or the local intergroup.
- ◆ **Press releases:** A press release is submitted when there’s some-thing newsworthy to tell the public.

For more information, contact your local intergroup or Region 5, or get the Public Information Service Manual from the WSO.

## **Concept 12: The Spiritual Foundation for OA service ensures that:**

**(d) All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;**

### **Dialogue**

Dialogue in OA should be crafted by humility. Constructive conversation involves perceptive listening, as well as thoughtful expression. When I am more concerned with getting my point across than hearing what others have to say, I am missing the point of productive discussion. If I am so convinced that my view is the only sensible approach to a problem, I am unable to hear God speaking through other people. An open exchange, tempered by humility, becomes a creative arena where unanimous decisions are not only possible but recognized as being graced by God.

— Carol D. Chicago Suburban SW IG

I am so grateful for the principles and wisdom found in our 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts. It is hard to imagine anyone wanting to live contrary to these guidelines!

Concept 12d is about dialogue.

When all I see is my perspective, the solution may seem obvious (my way), but may not be the best decision for the group, or even for me. Thank God that I am not in charge, nor is any other finite being.

I have seen the power of dialogue in a group conscience where everyone had an opportunity to share his/her perspective on an issue and the group unanimously choose what started as the preference of the minority!

We are different people with different perspectives, beliefs, fears, and experiences. That provides us with rich resources to use in exploring an issue. When we are open to share with and listen to each other, we can trust our Higher Power to guide us to an agreement. Even if the right path isn't immediately evident, we can agree to give something a try, then revisit the issue at a later date.

This dialogue promotes safe and happy relationships, not only in our OA meetings, but also in our families, and wherever else two or more people are involved.

Actually, I can use this principle all by myself! I frequently approach decisions with a variety of thoughts and feelings concerning the issue at hand. If I take time to explore those various sides of the issue, I can make a more informed choice.

And I can dialogue with my Higher Power to come to a better choice.

For me, this concept of dialogue means that there need not be us versus them; there can be winners without any losers. Together we get better!

— Susan M. Region 5 Secretary

### **Overheard at the Region 5 Assembly**

- ◆ It's pretty cool when you are in a room and you realize everyone in it is abstinent.
- ◆ It is better to be kind than right.
- ◆ I got angry because I was thinking with my fat head. But then I learned to change my perspective. It turned out not to be what I thought it was and there was no reason to be angry. So instead I accepted and let it go.
- ◆ Before program it was all black, brown and grays. Program gave me colors. I love seeing colors. It's lovely to see how much color is in life. Relapse would just take all the colors away. I have to remember that.
- ◆ What program gave to me, was to hear the voice inside of me and to trust it. To calm down the committee in my head. And to know that I am going to be ok.

## What exactly is Substantial Unanimity?

How does substantial unanimity differ from a majority vote in a business meeting? The group conscience strives for unanimity (the state of being unanimous) through group enlightenment, spirituality and adherence to our Steps, Traditions and Concepts. What is the best way to get there?

The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership. Substantial unanimity means we only accept a decision made by a vote when it is clear that most of the members agree in unity. This is achieved by the group members through the sharing of full information, individual points of view, and the practice of OA's principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions with an open mind.

On sensitive issues, the group works slowly discussing the issue until a clear sense of its collective view emerges. Placing principles before personalities, the membership is wary of dominant opinions. Its voice is heard when a well-informed group arrives at a decision. The result rests on more than a "yes" or "no" count, precisely because it is the spiritual expression of the group conscience.

The term "informed group conscience" implies that pertinent information has been studied and all views have been heard before the group votes.

It is important that the minority voice always be heard; but it should be remembered that while the minority sometimes is right, it is just as often wrong. Unless the minority voice is decidedly persuasive or logical, it should be considered in its proper light - as a minority voice.

The group conscience - as expressed in Tradition 2 - is a powerful spiritual concept that makes it possible for people of different backgrounds and temperaments to rise above personal ambitions and unite in our common purpose: to stay abstinent and extend the hand of OA to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

The group conscience will - in the end - prove a far more infallible guide for group affairs than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise he may be. We don't need to depend overmuch on inspired leaders. Because our active leadership is truly rotating, we enjoy a democracy rarely possible anywhere else. So, we the members of OA can be certain that there is but one ultimate authority, "a loving GOD as He may express himself in our group conscience".

--Anonymous

## Concept 12: The Spiritual Foundation for OA service ensures that:

**(e) No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;**

### Compassion

When I had one and half years of abstinence, my family began an extensive remodel on my house. We were putting up a new outbuilding for my mother who moved in with us. Two weeks later, she entered into home hospice care. The stress was overwhelming and in due course I fell ill. My sponsor suggested that I drop all service positions and concentrate on what was most important. There was a time when my sense of self-worth was tied to what I did. My motto was, "I can handle it, no matter what". But as much as I would have tried, my abstinence would have suffered. Today, I can be receptive to a compassionate, respectful, dignified request to resign. My sponsor was expressing care and love for me, by doing so. By making this suggestion, she was helping me avoid a relapse. During the discussion of my situation, it became obvious that resigning was the right thing to do. It was taking care of myself, which is exactly what program has taught me to do. With my sponsors support and understanding, I got healthy and was able to take care of the things in my life that needed my attention. The love I felt from my sponsor enabled me to take the request in a positive way and not as a punishment .

— Juta R. Central Illinois IG

## Concept 12: The Spiritual Foundation for OA service ensures that:

and (f) No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

### Respect

Hmmm... Democratic in thought and action, what a novel concept. To me, that means that no single person or single committee is allowed to make decisions for the whole without prior authorization from the whole. The democratic process is the basis of our American organization and our OA organization. It is not a dictatorship or monarchy. The group conscience decides how OA proceeds in thought and action. Thank God!!! When issues in my life confound and confuse me, I can count on issues that arise in the fellowship to be resolved in a respectful manner. It's refreshing to know that group meetings, Intergroup meetings, Region Assemblies, OA Conventions and Conferences are conducted with the respect and dignity afforded by the democratic process which is bypassed in so many other areas of society. Only through discussion by the members and a vote are things determined. Respect of the process begets respect in service in OA.

--Cutia B. Louisville Metro Intergroup

### Respect for "Principled" Members

I respect members who share where they are with their program with **Honesty**.

I respect members that show up at meetings to share their **Hope**.

I respect members' **Faith** in a HP because their faith inspires me to let go.

I respect members' **Courage** to work the Steps, especially Step Four.

I respect members with the **Integrity** to walk the walk.

I respect members showing **Willingness** to do the next right thing.

I respect members acting with **Humility** because they show me I'm equal to my fellows.

I respect members who learn **Self-discipline** through using the Tools.

I respect members showing **Love for Others** to those needing to learn to love themselves.

I respect members' **Perseverance** because this encourages me to keep coming back.

I respect members with the gift of **Spiritual Awareness** because this shows me the power of the Steps.

I respect members doing **Service** because this sustains OA as a whole and my program.

— Sherrie H. Louisville Metro Intergroup

### How To Be An Effective Trusted Servant

When we take on the responsibility of service there are principles that will enhance the service experience which are connected with both the Traditions and the Concepts. Our groups and service bodies do have business to conduct each time they meet. Understanding and practicing these spiritual principles make meetings more effective and benefits all members of OA.

**Stay Focused / Stay On Topic:** Respect everyone's time. Have an agenda and stick to it.

**Inform:** Come prepared with the information you want or need to share

**Be Considerate:** Listen carefully and consider all points of view.

**Voice Your Opinion:** Speak up. If you have a concern or an idea, put it before the body.

**Vote Your Conscience:** Vote for what you believe to be right, even if it is the unpopular or minority view.

**Represent the Group:** After a group conscience decision is made, show support for that decision when speaking as a member of the group.

**Avoid Rehashes:** Once a decision is made, give it the chance to succeed.

**Practice High Standards:** Build the organization by example. Practice the Principles.

**Be Effective:** Get the needed work done on the requested schedule before the meeting.

For more information see the OA PDF: [How To Be An Effective Trusted Servant](#).

## From the Trustee

### Intergroup and Group information

As always, if you are aware of any discrepancies between your group records and that on the OA website, please let me know and I can help you compare the information. Accurate information is critical for members, especially newcomers, trying to find meetings.

When reviewing your Intergroup Bylaws, under the definition of a group please be sure to remove the phrase,

~~D) Virtual groups (groups which replicate face-to-face meetings through electronic media) may be an Overeaters Anonymous group if they:~~

- ~~1) Otherwise meet the definition of Overeaters Anonymous groups;~~
- ~~2) Are fully interactive; and~~
- ~~3) Meet in real time.~~

At WSBC 2016, the delegates voted that virtual meetings are no different from face-to-face meetings and that the above points do not apply.

### New Literature and Resources

*The Twelve Traditions Pocket Guide* and *the Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide* are now available for purchase at the OA bookstore. We ran out of copies at the warehouse in Sept, but the book is now available for purchase again. Just a reminder, now that the Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide has been published, the use of all other Big Book study guides for compulsive overeaters should be discontinued. Many new or revised items have been posted to oa.org including:

- [Seventh Tradition pamphlet](#) This is available for free download
- [Guidelines for Anonymity in the Digital World](#) These Guidelines help to honor our Traditions and protect your own and others' anonymity when posting about your experience, strength, and hope online.
- [Guidelines for Health Fair Participation](#)
- [From Slip or Relapse to Recovery](#)
- [Carry the Message workshop](#). This workshop was written by the Region Chairs Committee and presented at the WSBC 2016 Forum. This includes a PowerPoint guide, a Things to Consider worksheet, and more than three dozen practice scenarios and situations.
- The Young Persons Committee posted a webpage on Facebook. To visit the Overeaters Anonymous YP social media Web page, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search "[Overeaters Anonymous YP](#)".

### WSBC May 1-6, 2017 in Albuquerque, NM

The theme will be "[Growing OA Unity Worldwide](#)". The first set of Conference e-documents is available on the World Service Business Conference page at oa.org. This first e-mailing included the Delegate Registration Instructions and Form and Sample Motion Instructions and Form. Delegate registration forms are due by Feb 20, 2017. New business Motions and Bylaw Amendments are due by Dec. 10, 2016. The agenda questionnaire is due from Intergroups by March 2. Please consider becoming a delegate for your intergroup to the 2017 WSBC.

### Other news

More than 1,100 OA members met in historic Boston, Massachusetts USA, for OA's 2016 World Service Convention, "Recovery: The Trail to Freedom!" It was very exciting to see so many people from all over the world. Seventeen countries were represented. The next World Service convention will be in Orlando, Florida USA, from August 20–23, 2020. Please join us!

I'm available to present talks on Service, Traditions, and Concepts, Abstinence, and Strong Meetings. My expenses are covered by WSO. Just let me know when you would like to have me visit. The Region 5 Board is also available to do this service.

It is truly an honor to serve as your Region 5 Trustee. Thank you for your support.

— Linda J. -Region 5 Trustee

## Best of the Intergroup Share

### How to get OA members to participate more

- ◇ Created a bookmark with Group representatives at the intergroup meeting where they brainstormed the top ten reasons to participate in Intergroup. The bookmark was printed and then distributed to all meeting to hand out to members.
- ◇ All service committee service position can be done as a buddy system. So there are always two people sharing the responsibility.
- ◇ Hold a roll call at the intergroup meeting and when a meeting is not represented ask someone to attend that meeting to encourage them to participate.
- ◇ Listen to the members concerns, why they don't participate and then make changes that will encourage them to participate.
- ◇ Send all motions to group meetings for group conscious before the next intergroup meeting. When people feel like they are part of the bigger organization then they are more likely to participate.
- ◇ Communication is key: A website is important for people who want to come to OA for the first time. Internally however use email blast, newsletter, and your group representatives.

### Prudent use of money

- ◇ Only the budgeted amount of money should be held in an intergroup treasurer. The rest should be distributed in the standard way.
- ◇ Retreats should have their own bank account and money made from one retreat should be used to seed the next years retreat. Anything above the last year's budget should be distributed.
- ◇ Members should never be given a free ride as we are self-supporting and paying for a member to attend a retreat or convention can be considered pay and can bring controversy to OA. Paying for members to attend will be setting a precedent that can lead to trouble later down the road.
- ◇ Intergroup can give money to a retreat / convention planning committee but only as a loan.

### Workshop Successes

- ◇ Slipping and Sliding Workshop – Based on the OA.org format of the same name. Concentrated on relapse prevention.
- ◇ Post events and flyers on the Region 5 website "[Upcoming Events and Calendar](#)".

## Intergroup Tech Tips

**Online File Storage.** There are many services that your Intergroup can take advantage for little or no money. With such a service, you can keep your files separate from your personal files. There is no copying or transferring files when rotating services. Files can be shared publicly through links on your website or in emails. Emails don't need to have large attachments. You can a link in the email to the file. Service positions can access the files anywhere including with their mobile devices. Keeps a safe and secure backup of all files. Files are not accessible by the general public.

**Email distribution services.** When you send email to your membership many email services will prevent the email from going out, considering the email spam. Email distribution services help you keep your membership list and send out each email separately. The distribution service provides an email address which you send emails to. The service then automatically sends the email out. The administrator controls what happens to replies. They can be distributed to group members or just to the sender. Email distribution services are an effective and simple way to enable group discussions or intergroup communication.

**Email accounts.** It is suggested that Intergroup service position have dedicated email accounts. Most online email is free today and offer the same service. The benefit of this keeps emails separate from personal emails. Most other online services requires an email account. Thus when rotating service they transfer easily to the new member doing service. Email accounts can be set up to forward email to personal accounts for ease of use. For more information or assistance in getting these tasks done, please contact the Media Committee chair by email at [R5MediaCommittee@outlook.com](mailto:R5MediaCommittee@outlook.com)

# Announcements & Service Opportunities

## DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

Region 5 has a Speaker/Sponsor List?

It is dynamic and confidential.

See the Forms page on the Region 5 website ([region5oa.org](http://region5oa.org)) to:

- Request the list
- Apply to be on the list
- Update your information on the list

## Public Information / Professional Outreach

Region 5 has \$500 budgeted for Public Information /Professional Outreach. Please email Lynn at [lynnhilly2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lynnhilly2@sbcglobal.net) to request funds.

## Group Info

Make sure your group info is **up-to-date!** Update your group's meeting details and secretary contact

info by going to Edit a Meeting at [oa.org](http://oa.org). First search your meeting; then click "Edit Details" to update your group's information. WSO uses your info to keep Find a Meeting current so that members can locate a meeting in their area.

## Region 5 needs Technical Experts

Are you tech savvy? Do you know someone tech savvy in OA? We are compiling a list of tech savvy OA members within Region 5 to serve as resources for OA members and service bodies. Please send in your contact info to [R5MediaCommittee@outlook.com](mailto:R5MediaCommittee@outlook.com)

## Phone workshops and podcasts on "Service and My Recovery"

The series of phone workshops and podcasts on "Service and My Recovery" are held the second Sunday of the month at 2 pm central time. The phone number is 424-203-8405 and the access code is 925629#. The past workshops are available as podcasts at <https://oa.org/podcasts/>. Recently posted podcasts include: "There are no musts...but is it good for OA as a whole? (Tradition and Concept 4) and "Always to extend the heart and hand of OA" (Tradition and Concept 5).

## A Step Ahead

The Fourth Quarter 2016 issue of A Step Ahead was published in mid-October. Read it to catch up on recent news, including:

- The recent success of the 2016 World Service Convention
- The new theme of World Service Business Conference 2017
- Important information about the Delegate Support Fund and Automatic Recurring Contributions
- New support for virtual meetings and service bodies
- A social media presence for OA young persons
- New recovery resources from the WSO

Read the [interactive color edition](#) or print it in [black and white](#).

## Make an ARC to Strengthen OA Worldwide

It takes only a few minutes to set up an Automatic Recurring Contribution but the message will carry for a year or more to still-suffering compulsive overeaters around the globe. Join hundreds of your fellow OA members and sign up to make monthly or quarterly contributions with your credit or debit card. Contributing is easy with ARC!

# Announcements & Service Opportunities

## Men's Phone Meeting

Men, if you would like to connect with other men in OA, please add your name to our Google Group. The email address is OA4men@oa-brandywine.org. Please provide your name, email address and telephone number. In addition you may indicate that you would like to be added to the Outreach List to either make or receive outreach calls from other men. You may also indicate whether you would like a sponsor or be willing to sponsor.

We are also looking for men who would be willing to lead a meeting with the current abstinence requirement being 15 days. We will provide leaders with a format for the meeting. We are also looking for speakers with 90 days of current abstinence.

The initiative for encouraging men to become more active in OA came from a Special Focus Group of men held at the World Service Convention in Cleveland, August 2013. In May 2014 we began to have phone meetings every other Tuesday from 7-8 PM ET with a special focus on men.

Currently, we have about 170 men in our Google Group and over 140 men on our Outreach list. Recently, we have registered our telephone meeting with WSO. **We meet from 7-8 PM ET every Tuesday evening.**

**The dial-in information is:** 1-712-775-7031 PIN - 242990669#

Men, please join us. Together we can do what we cannot do alone!"

### From OA.org:

Meeting #: 55337  
Meeting Phone Number: 712-775-7031  
Pin #/Instructions: 242990669#  
Follow Phone Prompts  
Day: Tuesday  
Time: 7:00 PM

Contact Name: Rick  
Contact Phone: 484-364-6414 EST  
Open/Closed: Open  
Special Topic: Speaker  
Special Focus: Men  
Additional Notes: \*6 to mute/unmute

## Links:

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

[The 12 Steps](#)

[The 12 Traditions](#)

[The 12 Concepts](#)

[Region 5 2016 Convention](#)

[R5 Board & Committees](#)

[Region 5 Calendar](#)

[A Step Ahead Newsletter](#)

[OA Podcasts](#)

[Breaking Out of Relapse Video](#)

[Body Image Literature Project](#)

[Virtual Workshop on Step Ten](#)

[PIPO Funding Request](#)

[R5 Intergroups](#)

[R5 Links](#)

[Submit to R5 Newsletter](#)

[R5 Resources](#)

[Find a Meeting](#)

[R5 Assemblies](#)

[Donate to OA](#)

[R5 Forms](#)

[WSO Events](#)

[Lifeline](#)

[Get OA Literature](#)