



THE MESSENGER

REGION SIX ASSEMBLY - September 20 — Albany, NY



Message from the Chair...

Hi, my name is Karin, and I am a compulsive overeater. This is the first article I've written for the Messenger. I was appointed R6 Chair in May for an interim position ending Sept. 20, so this may even be my last article. I have been in this fellowship for 14 years now and it has changed my life. God willing, I will celebrate 12 years of abstinence on Sept. 13 of this year. I have lost 60 lbs but I have gained so much. I thank God for my abstinence and recovery of all 3 levels – physical, emotional and spiritual. I am truly grateful for this way of life.

Service has always been an important part of my recovery. I really believe that we can't keep what we have if we don't give it away. I like to do service. I enjoy working with others; it enhances my program. A few years ago I started going to Region as the rep for the Ottawa Intergroup. I liked going to Region – traveling to the states, spending time with other OA members, becoming informed about OA activities around the region, maybe even doing a little shopping. I started to get more involved doing service with the convention committee. It's great to get to know other members and learn how they do things in their area.

Last year, I took it a step further and applied for the vice chair position. Although I was excited about the possibility of doing service at this level, I was also intimidated. I became the vice chair in Oct of 2002 and have enjoyed working with the R6 Board and getting more involved in region business. Then in May of 2003, I was appointed Chair. I was and still am willing to do the service, but not quite sure what I have gotten into. It's been a learning process for sure. It can be overwhelming at times, though usually because of procrastination. But like anything else we do in OA, we don't have to do it alone. Help is available. I sure never thought that I would be the R6 Chair, but I see that it is a great opportunity for growth.

I believe as an addict that one of my core issues is 'believing I'm not good enough' (BINGE). That's why I ate – feelings of inadequacy, not measuring up, lots of self-pity and negativity. I often hear members share about the same thing. That's why I need to go to meetings – to relate and to let go of this 'stinking thinking'. Thank God that I am not alone.

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Trustee's Corner...

Dear Fellow Region 6 OA members,



My name is Dexter and I am a compulsive overeater. At my last visit to the doctor, I weighed in 93 lbs. less than when I joined OA, March 10, 1992. The most important change in my life is not the weight loss or freedom from compulsive overeating but the life-transforming and life-sustaining connection to my Higher Power that I found through working the 12 Steps. My Higher Power has given me a life which is mostly "Happy, Joyous and Free" as promised on page 133 of the *Big Book*.

This is my first article as your region trustee and I find a continuing thread with my last article as region chair. In that article, I was confronted by my character defect of needing to maintain the illusion of control. Now, I am confronted with a different kind of control issue, one that appears to be related to my wider OA responsibility. As trustee, I respond to Traditions issues throughout Region 6. The most frequent issue has been related to control concerns: control of how intergroups write their bylaws; Traditions concerns where meetings are controlling their members; sponsor/sponsee concerns where sponsors control their sponsees; personality concerns relating to control of methods of recovery; in general, people wanting to control something outside themselves, whether it be sponsees, sponsors, meeting formats, dominant personalities, apparent Traditions breaks, etc.

It is somewhat ironic that the very bylaw requirements for which I worked now come back to haunt me with their control issues. The requirement for intergroup registration procedures that started while I was Delegate Co-chair of the WSBC Bylaws Committee is now a somewhat thorny issue for me to handle because of its obvious goal of controlling the way an intergroup writes their bylaws. I now see my extensive history of OA bylaws committee service at intergroup, region and the WSBC as being driven largely by my personal character defect of trying to establish control and control procedures. I thrived on either making rules or amending them and understanding them. I have come to understand that my need for control stems from fears on my part of being out-of-control, perhaps with food, perhaps with life itself. These fears can only be resolved by surrendering them to my Higher Power; they can only be resolved by looking for what I can change within myself, not by looking outside to see what rules I can put in place to create the illusion of control.

Trying to understand God's will for me and for OA as a whole, I focus on the First Tradition that states, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on OA unity." It occurs to me that we probably have lost more members by trying to control them than we have by failing to provide newcomers with the one, 'true', OA. This attempt to control people is always a focus on something outside ourselves and is a barrier to unity. Surely we can all unite in our common problem, the inability to stop shoving food (or not shoving any food for fear of bingeing) into our mouths... and our common solution, the 12 Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Perhaps in this unity we can stop trying to control those around us, including the way we work the Steps, the food we eat, and those who share at our meetings.

The happy element of my new service is that I am getting to meet more OA members through the phone calls and emails that come to my attention. These give me the opportunity to share my own experience, strength and hope and hopefully begin new friendships.

I welcome your comments on this article and any other concerns you may have. Contact me by phone at **(845) 657-6915** or by email at **dexterj@ulster.net**. I look forward to hearing from you to tell me how I may better serve you in my new role as your trustee.

Yours in service,
Dexter Jeannotte, Region 6 Trustee

Chair's Message (Continued)

I have been feeling 'not good enough' about being the Chair. I seem to have many expectations of myself, and fears that I'm not living up to other's expectations. By writing out step work (which I did after attending that meeting), talking to my sponsor and praying, I am able to recognize and admit my defects (pride, expectations, mind reading, dependency, self reliance, fear, self centered and self condemnation). Yes, I am new and inexperienced at this position but I am willing to try. I trust that I am good enough. I trust that God will take care of me and provide the tools. God won't give me more than He and I can handle together. I've learned that Higher Power never fails.

So my new service position has already given me an opportunity to grow and to learn more about myself. Service does help to keep me abstinent which I am so grateful for.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve.

Sincerely

Karin Rhodes, Region 6 Chair

krhodes@sympatico.ca / 613-828-4413

Be Grateful and Do Service

I came to OA 17 years ago on Jan 28. I was very sick emotionally, spiritually and physically. I came in for the physical recovery not even having a clue about emotional and spiritual recovery.

I lost my weight (130 lbs.) within 9 months, came off of insulin and high blood pressure medication. I felt great but lived in a lot of fear in those early years. My sponsor reminded me daily of the need to be grateful for all of the good in my life and to do service when asked.

After 15 years of abstinence my health started to fail. Having found a loving Higher Power, I was able to stay out of a mental hospital for 15 years. The next two years were still very trying for me. I had to take medications that caused me to gain weight and slow me down physically.

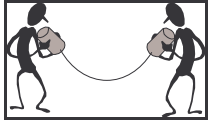
People (well meaning, I am sure) confronted me about my weight gain. I wanted to leave OA because I felt I wasn't credible anymore. But I stayed. I continued to be as active as possible, and do service in this program whenever possible. I prayed harder to my Higher Power and realize today that I have a very strong healthy program.

Please don't judge others. You don't walk in their shoes. I would be dead today if I stopped taking my meds or left OA. There is room for all of us as Tradition Three quotes - most organizations have a list of qualifications for membership - but in OA we have only one requirement: a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Jerry B. (Salem, MA)

MBI Treasurer

Communication Committee



- ★ Victor (Bronx IG), Acting Chairperson. Five members were in attendance.
- ★ We discussed contents of the Region 6 web page which included Intergroup addresses & phone numbers, events such as marathons & retreats, and the Messenger newsletter.
- ★ All meetings are listed on OA World Service’s website, so they been removed from the R6 website.
- ★ We voted to disband this committee effective immediately because it is no longer needed.
- ★ The responsibility of managing the current website will be passed on to the Board.

★ The committee evaluated whether to continue and develop a Policy & Procedure statement calling for R6 board or R6 Assembly approval of content & content changes (except for items listed in a guideline to be updated by the webmaster (i.e. intergroup retreats, etc.), or disbanding the committee and turning the web site over to the R6 board for control of web site content per existing WSO guidelines and/or R6 board approval. In the latter case, the R6 board needed to develop a procedure for designating a webmaster either as a board member or reporting to the board. If a part of the board, the policy & procedure statement (if the committee was retained), required much effort to build in guidelines consistent with WSO guidelines in part. Also, the mandated board or assembly approval would result in long delays prior to content revision.

★ Thus, **the committee unanimously decided that the simplest solution was to disband.**

★ Since efforts to create the web site are complete, the board can solve the problem of defining the role and office of webmaster.

★ Respectfully submitted, Victor (Bronx IG) Acting Chairperson; Sue S., secretary.

A Morning Prayer

God, today is a new day for me, and with you, it can be a day of abstinence.
With You, I can handle anything. I ask for Your protection from anyone
or anything that may interfere with my abstinence.

I am asking now for Your protection, in case at some time during the day my
desire to compulsively eat becomes stronger than my desire to abstain. I know
that I am powerless over food and my life can become unmanageable again.

I do believe that You will relieve my compulsion and restore me to sanity.
Please help me to know Your will for me today and give me the
willingness to carry it out. I turn my will and my life over to You.

Intergroup Committee (5 Present)

Appointed Zazu from Fairfield/New Haven IG as committee chair; Priscilla (Mass Bay IG) Secretary.

Past Business:

1. Get e-mail contacts for intergroups and weed out those that don't exist -- Zazu
2. Quilt to be raffled at a future Region Six convention -- each group donates a square -- Bill from Nassau County IG will coordinate and will check with Region One
3. Send out flyers to all IGs specifying breakdown for donations of 60%-30%-10%) -- Zazu put together an excellent sample
4. Only 17 IGs from this region have sent in corrected updates to World Service -- get others in IG to send out similar postcard that WSO sends to us.

New Business:

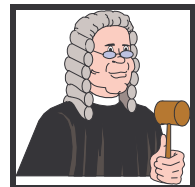
1. Make motion to combine Intergroup and Outreach committees to form IGOR committee. Amend Policy 013 on Scholarship to read new committee name IGOR. Amend policy 013 to increase funding for scholarship.
2. To inform all intergroups of scholarship fund.
3. We need to find out about doing the mailing that Outreach Committee used to do.

Discussed: How to get groups interested in attending Region and excited about Region.
How to make sure you get something back to us so that we know who to contact.

Priscilla Maher (Mass Bay Intergroup), Secretary

Bylaws Committee

Reviewed process for creating an appendix for Board Members & Committee's specific details. Decided to leave this with Martin and to follow up with him.



Agreed to provide various forms to be included in the Policies and Procedures Appendix:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Application for Scholarships | 3. Reimbursement form for delegates & Board Members |
| 2. PI Blitz form | 4. Form for submitting motions to the Assembly |

Short-term goal: Creating an Appendix.

5-year goal: Review all Policies & Procedures with respect to WSO Policies & Procedures, as well as other resources for conformity, conciseness, clarity of Region 6 policies & procedures. Assigned 6 policies & procedures for review & recommendations before the Fall R6 Assembly.

Maralene French, Committee Chair—maralene@earthlink.net

Ann Warner, R6 Parliamentarian (Ex-Officio member) anniona@comcast.net

Karin Clough (scribe) karinc@meridianassociates.net

Mary Ann Flansburg

Convention Committee



Marilyn, Chairman (9 members present)

- www.oaregion6.org -- flyer on website.
- Marilyn read the purpose and policy of the convention committee.
- Karen, chair of 2002 convention, reviewed last convention
 - Generated approximately \$17,000 (~600 attendees). The biggest money-maker (\$2000) was the raffle – Committee asked member groups to contribute gift baskets -- had 25 baskets (theme baskets, 1 men's basket). Ruffled off 1/4 of them Friday (then discarded extra tickets.) Had another raffle Saturday for 1/2 of the baskets. Ruffled the final 25% of baskets on Sunday
 - all tapes & albums sold out -- Karen worked well alone as chair -- \$1700 being donated to WSO
- Marilyn reported on upcoming convention in Niagara
 - 30 people registered to date -- more fallsview rooms were made available
 - 17 rooms booked before 30th -- separate registration for hotel and convention
 - 90 rooms for 31st and 1st -- Costume Ball Saturday night in Niagara
 - 10 rooms reserved for 2nd -- Need keynote speaker tapes submitted today
 - Remind all to talk up the convention -- 11 tapes have been submitted for Niagara Falls
 - Reviewed requirements for keynotes and how committee actually chooses speakers (hotel, meals & transportation are provided for keynotes)
- **Cape Cod chairs Paula and Barbara spoke about 2004 convention**
 - March 2, 2003 - First meeting to organize 2004 convention. Minutes given to Marilyn (Chairman)
 - Logo will be a lighthouse; "lighting the way to recovery"; colors will be blue, yellow, & white
 - projected budget for raffle and registration are in the meeting minutes given to Marilyn
 - Looking for people for talent show Friday night
 - Saturday night Masquerade Ball
 - all committees and chairs in place (different IG's represented)
 - Will have mask-making workshop before the Ball
 - looking into merchandise, sweatshirts ("B4OAI8")
 - sessions will be recorded and CDs & tapes will be available
 - next Cape Cod convention meeting is slated for October 20, 2003
 - discussion on committee member's abstinence: suggested 3 months abstinence
 - 2 nights/5 meals single occupancy (\$402) /double (\$261)/ triple (\$229)/ quadruple (\$206)
 - single rates \$129 before or after convention (\$10/night for refrigerator)
 - registration rate is \$25 prior to August 15, \$35 thereafter
- Need volunteer host for 2005 convention. Proposal to be submitted by Fall 2003 assembly
- Evaluation form from convention: committee to create a form for future conventions. Marilyn asked for a volunteer to create evaluation form for Niagara. Barbara (Cape Cod) offered the evaluation form from Danvers. Linda (Southern Tier, NY) volunteered to work on it with Marilyn.
- **Strategic plan for 2 years and 5 years**
 - long and short term goal is fundraising through conventions to make profit for R6 to support region and spread message of OA to newcomers.
 - Switch one meeting to speaker meeting for 5 weeks— Tape speakers and submit tapes
 - Karin from Ottawa will ask her IG to host convention in 2005
 - we'll continue to encourage intergroups to sponsor conventions
 - support Intergroups to sponsor more one-day events and weekend retreats to prepare for larger scale of hosting of conventions
 - Convention committee to provide support for hosting committees

Submitted by Tricia, Southeastern CT—Secretary: 860-42-3736

Public Information Committee (11 in Attendance)

Each member summarized Intergroup activities since the last Assembly:

- **NYS Capitol District:** Health fair at a local college and Cornell cooperative's nutrition conference, OGS for NY State, and dieticians' conference. Members asked to bring in old Lifelines to distribute at health fairs, along with literature and books for events. Want to talk to Albany College of Pharmacy students. Tailor info specifically for professionals. Also include welcome coins.
- **NYC Metro:** Revamped! Expanding use of website. Meeting lists free. Hiring telephone/office manager. Health fairs, some work in prisons, hospitals.
- **Bronx:** Growing thanks to local cable TV. Members coming and staying; seeing good physical recovery. New meeting in bariatric practice. Info packet with 15 questions and meeting lists for health fairs & newcomers. Received copyright approvals for reproduction of literature. New idea: Show ads before movie trailers. Short on people power to do the work.
- **Westchester:** Attended convention last November. Interim sponsor program. Took part in addictions conference and PI blitz proposal. Placemat in diners -- future.
- **Western Mass:** Special meeting with new PI chair; got help for her. Health fair at local college. Submitted PI blitz proposal for today's assembly.
- **Ocean & Bay:** Started meetings at local colleges; Provided newspapers with OA info; health fairs.
- **Brooklyn Unity:** Newspaper ads for sharathons (with qualifiers and raffles). Ensure meeting lists and website are accurate. Got funding for PSA through PI blitz proposal.
- **North Shore:** OA business cards with local phone number. HIPM/PI are combined. Have packet for health care professionals. PI night with speakers & film -- helps members recommit to their own program. Sharathon has two workshops on sponsoring to help newcomers. Provide accurate directions to meetings.
- **Rochester:** Website, accurate R6 website information. PI night being planned. Speakers at professional healthcare meetings.
- **South Coastal:** updated all free advertising; health fairs at high schools. Mailed 200+ packets to health care professionals. Sharathon advertised in media. Advertised in "Living Well" section of paper. At Massachusetts Service Board meeting discussed "call me" cards, made up by individual IGs and groups.

Other initiatives: talking to special events people at newspapers; improving answering services; hold open house at marathons. Be sure to take advantage of the postage-paid privilege for the Courier from World Service -- contact them for more details. Some IGs have come up with some of their own funds; some did special collections at meetings to raise their own PI Blitz funds. The World Service PI committee is responding to the author of any article on eating disorders that they see. We reviewed the correspondence that Mark G. had sent on this.

For approved PI blitz proposals, be sure all paperwork is completed in order to receive from R6 treasurer. Will be approved here and by group. You need quotes from vendors or invoices for vendors to be paid directly by R6 treasurer.

Proposals discussed today totaled \$142 over the \$3000 budget; Mark dropped that amount from his proposal to stay on budget. Tina moved to adopt all 3 proposals, with the proposal from the 7 IGs in eastern Mass reduced by the exact amount to bring the total to \$3000. Unanimously approved.

We completed our 2-year and 5-year Strategic Plan and closed with the Serenity Prayer.

Georgia W., Greater Rochester, NY, IG

Finance Committee



Ed Stuhr, Committee Chair; Sid Bass, Treasurer; Patrick Moran, Moravian IG.

The proposed 2003-04 budget was examined and discussed. For the last three years, conventions have produced a significant net profit. However, there is no guarantee this will happen every year.

I. As we look toward the next fiscal year (Sept 2003), the Finance Committee recommends that the R6 Board NOT approve any PI Blitz proposals presented between Sept-Nov. until AFTER the November convention when the financial picture is clearer.

- II. The committee discussed its strategic plan:
 - 1. 2-year goals
 - a. Stay solvent
 - b. Continue to support R6 committees and R6 efforts to attract new members
 - c. Develop a statement of policy & procedure for the Policies & Procedures Manual
 - 2. 5-year goals
 - a. Stay solvent
 - b. Continue to support R6 committees and R6 efforts to attract new members

III. Raise the prudent reserve (\$18,000) to more closely reflect the annual budget. This topic was considered but no decision was reached.

IV. Develop a policy & procedure statement for the Finance Committee to be included in the R6 Policies and Procedures Manual is needed. No specific tasks or deadlines were established.

Ed Stuhr, Chair (MetroWest IG)

TOGETHER WE CAN

Region 6 Convention - Sheraton Fallsview Hotel - Niagara Falls, Canada

October 31st to November 2nd, 2003

**Are you willing to come together to recover?
If so, get strength from the natural power of Niagara Falls.
A weekend of marathons, workshops and speakers cascading experience,
strength and hope as well as the 12 Steps your way.**

For more information contact:

Anne S. 905-689-8814	a.sherwood@sympatico.ca
Bob A. 716-877-2971	rangelino@worldnet.att.net
Loretta G. 716-838-2414	lorettagucwa.@adelphia.net

For copies of the registration form go to: www.oaregion6.org

Twelfth-Step-Within Committee



There are 49 intergroups – Suggested we each contact 5 IGs to see if they have a 12 Step Within committees. Will contact them & contact Ginger by June 1st. She will contact them by June 15th, then again August 1st.

Passed out 12 Step Within Question Sheet, two fliers for Call-athon, and Relapse Survivor list.

Prue is contact for R6 Speakers List. Qualifications: (1) 1-year continuous abstinence and involvement in OA (2) speaker to focus on the 12 Step Within Recovery. Go back to intergroup to see who would like to be on speaker list. Contact Prue. Get name and number.

12-Step Within Questions for Your Home Meeting

1. How does your group help those in relapse?
2. Do members in relapse leave your meeting, deciding not to return?
3. Does your group want more resources to help those in relapse or those who stop attending meetings?
4. What can Intergroup do to help?
5. Would you send someone in relapse to a Recovery from Relapse meeting?
6. How do you carry out what works for you?
7. How do we keep the journey going towards a Spiritual Experience?
8. Would you or your group write a recovery from relapse story for Recovery Lines?
9. Have you ever been in relapse and what did you do to recover from relapse?
10. What do you think helps you keep your spiritual experience alive?
11. What can you do to get out of relapse?
12. What did you do to get back into the 12-step way of life?

Ginger (Chair)

Region 6 12-Step-Within Committee (TSWC)

Last Saturday, I attended the 12-Step Within Committee meeting at the Region 6 Assembly in Albany. We set goals like getting the handbook to all groups and intergroups. We encourage members to make phone calls to members on the 12th of the month. We will keep checking with IGs in our region to see if they have the book, and a 12-step within committee. I will be bring a flier made by Metro West and distribute it at World Service.

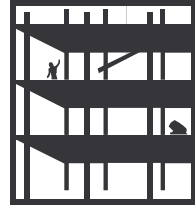
A retreat on Sept. 12-14 on Cape Cod had a 12-Step Within meeting as part of the format. We did the steps as outlined in the BB, as well as some creative things. I heard that Canada holds workshops like this. Let's tell each other what we are doing with the 12 Step Within Committee. Metro West has a list of sponsors that they use to help members who are having difficulty. They also used what they call "care-confrontation" with members of the program. Western Mass Intergroup shared some fliers that they made. They have been very active this year. These experiences are great. We all have to keep in touch. We need a network to share ideas.

Sharing what we do helps motivate others to do something with their groups. Montreal will put on the play in the near future. We discovered that New York has been active also. Every Region should have a TSWC to promote sharing within the fellowship all over the world. From Region to intergroup to meetings and to our members. We all benefit in the long run.

We had a great day at the region conference.

Bill Perrault, Co-Chair TSWC

Service Structure Committee



Margaret Ann Brady, Chair (Metro West IG); Lewis Greenstein (Moravian IG),
Chip Barsalou (W. Mass IG), Christine Morin (Montreal French IG)

We reviewed activities of the WSBC and R6 Service Structure committees.
Discussed the responses to the questionnaire mailed to all service bodies.

We talked about these main points:

- increasing flow of information to members, including translation of all R6 notices to French
- increasing participation at Region
- equalizing representation at Region
- addressing the "top-down" structure of OA

The committee brainstormed on ways to increase Regional participation.

- Change the ratio of eligible delegates to one per every 5 meetings instead of 1 per 10. This might increase R6 Assembly attendance. More people to do committee work and carry info and ideas back to their groups.
- Change the voting rules to one vote per intergroup, and ask delegates to caucus on motions. Representation across the region will be more fairly distributed.
- Stronger intergroups can buddy with smaller IGs to help them participate and be informed.

We discussed on how Region can help our French-speaking members get Region information. Possibilities include providing the French-speaking intergroups with translation software, or translating all R6 mailings (Messenger, reports, motions, etc.) prior to mailing, at R6 expense.

In the next six months this committee will take actions to draft proposal motions, as well as make recommendations to the WSBC committee through our committee chair.

Newsletter committee

Neil Rauch (MBI), Newsletter Chair

Time was spent developing formal policies & procedures to be submitted for approval at the Fall 2003 R6 Assembly.

Submit articles, topics of interests, suggestions or direct questions to neilrauch@comcast.net or via regular mail to Neil Rauch, 40 N. Main Street, Ipswich, MA 01938

For those who wish—The Messenger is available on the Region 6 website www.OAregion6.org

Demystifying the work of the 12th-Step-Within Committee.

By two members of the Region Six 12th-Step-Within Committee

Step 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 of our affairs.

What is the meaning of The 12th-Step Within?

In 1985 the World Service Business conference created the 12th-Step-Within Committee to address relapse and recovery of our members. Their goal was to strengthen OA by sharing information and ideas that facilitate recovery within the Fellowship.

The Region Six Assembly developed a supportive Policy (7-95, revised 9- 01) that the 12th Step Within Committee shall be:

- A. to enhance and increase membership retention at all levels of recovery.
- B. to further carry the message of recovery to the member who is still suffering.
- C. to reach out to past members of OA who have left the fellowship.
 - One might say that the 12th Step Within is working the 12th Step at all levels of recovery.

Here are examples of activities by the 12th-Step-Within Committee.

- Retreats or Sharathons focusing on recovery after relapse.
- Creating Call-a-thon fliers asking OA members to call people that they haven't seen for a while on the 12th of each month.
- Creating a sign-up contact list entitled: "Relapse Survivors".
- Writing articles on relapse survival for newsletters, Lifeline, etc.
- Creating a speakers' list at the Intergroup, Region, and World Service Boards.
- Intergroup members visiting and supporting a different meeting every month .

Twelfth-Step-Within program work is similar to the way AA members work their program. AA's go on "Commitments," visiting other meetings to share their stories and spread the word about 12th Step recovery. Many times the AA qualifiers are reaching out to alcoholics who may still be suffering and actively drinking. In OA, we travel to different meetings to qualify about our own recoveries. The tools of **telephone** and **writing** come into good use for 12th Step Within work. We also greet people at **meetings** to help keep the welcome mat out. Finally, we are willing to assist newcomers or a returning member looking for a **sponsor**.

As individuals, are we willing to go the extra mile to accompany a newcomer or a relapsed member who has returned to a meeting? Do we reach out within the fellowship to those who continue to struggle, being an active listener, not an advice-giver unless asked for suggestions? Will we commit to picking up the telephone to make outreach calls to someone we haven't seen for a while? Do we call newcomers who might need support after they have signed in at a meeting? Do we practice these actions as a part of our individual 12th Step recovery? These are some of the specific activities that may help clarify what 12th Step Within work is for the individual, as well as for 12th Step Within Committees.

Twelfth-Step-Within Handbook p. 2 (Available for \$6 at the World Service Office in Rio Rancho).

SPRING ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP– PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Workshop at the Spring Assembly in Albany was presented by Mark G (S. Central IG) of the Public Information Committee. He challenged us to come up with PI promotions if we had \$3000 to spend on them. The following were suggestions offered by the various breakout groups:

Group 1

- Create date book giveaway
- Give pamphlets to health care professionals
- Use phonebook for addresses to send literature
- Host a Public Info. meeting and invite the public
- Provide literature to Welcome Wagon
- Have a food health fair
- Create an OA cook book

Group 2

- Ads on sides of buses/inside subway cars (include website/phone number)
- Cable TV ads
- Target families & friends of compulsive overeaters with OA fliers
- Create an insert in playbills at theaters and concerts
- Create form for new people to indicate where they heard about OA
- Supply Lifelines to local libraries with IG address and phone number
- Give Lifeline subscriptions to doctors and dentists

Group 3

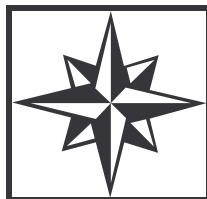
- Taxicab roof signs
- Ads in sports venues
- * minor league baseball
- * swim pools/ice rinks
- NASCAR in New Hampshire
- Ads in local yellow pages
- Put signs/ads in high auto-traffic areas
- matchbox/matchbook ads
- skywriting
- mall advertising
- America Cup sails

Group 4

- ads in papers (movie, food, TV sections)
- Chamber of Commerce / Welcome Wagon
- newspaper inserts
- story/flier with before & after pictures (faces blanked out)
- paid local TV ads
- ad on movie screens
- video

Group 5

- Post ads on grocery checkout receipts, or on diner/restaurant placemats
- PI night



“Life will take on a new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends -- this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.”

(Big Book, P.89)

The Anatomy of Two Recovery From Relapse Meetings

Recently, Mass. Bay Intergroup initiated two meetings that were specifically designed for individuals who have been struggling to get abstinent, particularly long-timers to OA who have not experienced consistency with their physical recovery.

After 3 months for the first (less for the other), both meetings are robust, and generating a great deal of buzz locally. The second meeting had 40 members present at its very first meeting.

These were the steps taken that helped create what seems like a model for success:

- 1) Begin with a core of at least six abstinent members who are committed to attend the meeting for 3-6 months.
- 2) Circulate fliers and email notices for at least two weeks prior to the first meeting.
- 3) Have someone capable of booking strong abstinent speakers with experience in physical abstinence and recovery from relapse (at least 1 year).
- 4) Create a format the keeps the meeting on track. These two meetings start with the leader sharing for 10-15 minutes (no more) on their recovery from relapse. Thereafter they read a passage from our literature on recovery from relapse, and members are requested to devote their sharing to that topic. (The Twelve-Step-Within Committee's Handbook is a great tool).
- 5) At the very first meeting, emphasize the importance of creating a healthy meeting. Have the core group prepared to mentor others in how to fulfill service positions. Develop a phone list right away. And find someone willing to represent the group at the local intergroup meeting. If they don't meet an abstinence requirement to vote at intergroup, they can still attend and report back to the group as an observer.
- 6) Don't give in to the temptation to control the flow of the meeting as it happens. Trust that a well-written format and indirect guidance will empower members to stay positive. Your quiet presence in support of the meeting says a lot.
- 7) Most importantly, have sponsors available at the meeting. This is critical. Bring a list of volunteers willing to sponsor if there aren't enough abstinent members at the meeting.

If you would like assistance setting up a meeting of this type, please contact

Bill (978) 454-7423, Neil (978) 312-1301, or Prue (508) 485-7227.

Believing I'm Not Good Enough = B.I.N.G.E.

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New Newsletter Committee Chairperson needed

Holy smokes, I was having such a good time, I forgot that my 2-year term is up. If you get excited over recovery-related events; if you feel that more people would support region if they knew more about it; if you like to write even a little bit, you can become a vital part of Region 6's legacy of service as the next editor of the Messenger.

Believe me, I never had any experience creating newsletters before this, and it has been a labor of love (emphasis on love) to get the hang of this. I'll be happy to help the next victim, errr, recipient of this great honor, get up to speed. I intend to continue supporting the Messenger as a contributor to future issues.

The Messenger comes out twice yearly. It is bulk mailed to all Region 6 OA meetings after it is printed professionally. The process can be spread out as much as you like between issues. I take several days, usually several hours at a time.

Please feel free to contact me with questions before the Region Assembly in September, or sit with me during the committee meeting and I'll share all the gory details. Hey, this could be your 15 minutes of fame!!

