

# Region One Resources

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[oaregion1.org](http://oaregion1.org) has many resources for recovery!



**Audio from Convention and Other Events** - Check out our growing virtual speaker collection [oaregion1.org/audio--speakers.html](http://oaregion1.org/audio--speakers.html)

**Board Blog** – The Region Board is blogging! Go to [oaregion1.org/board-blog](http://oaregion1.org/board-blog).

**Board Outreach Visits** – We want to visit your intergroup! Two Board members will lead your workshop, marathon, or retreat on a topic chosen by your intergroup. Travel costs are paid by Region One. Fill out an application at [oaregion1.org/documents.html](http://oaregion1.org/documents.html)

**“Connections for Recovery”** – We want to help you CONNECT to others in recovery and service. Don’t work your program in isolation or feel you have to “go it alone” at your intergroup or meeting. Contact your Region One Liaison or email [board@oaregion1.org](mailto:board@oaregion1.org) to ask for help.



**Convention** - This annual event is a fantastic weekend of connection and recovery inspiration, with keynote speakers, OA meetings, topic workshops and FUN!

**Events** – List your OA event or get information about other events in Region One at [oaregion1.org/events.html](http://oaregion1.org/events.html)

**Facebook** – Like “Region 1 Overeaters Anonymous” to get event reminders, links to recovery inspiration, and program wisdom on your newsfeed.

**Intergroup Liaisons** – Each intergroup and Project Team has a Board Liaison, who shares information and resources to help your Intergroup or Team thrive. Liaisons are listed at [oaregion1.org/contact--liaison-list.html](http://oaregion1.org/contact--liaison-list.html).

**Intergroup Renewal** – The purpose of an intergroup is to provide support for its groups and members in carrying the message of recovery. Learn more about this simple and amazing process of focusing intergroups on Tradition 5 work at [oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html](http://oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html)

**Journals** – Daily writing prompts for morning and evening review, using the Big Book as a guide. Available at [oaregion1.org/store/c1/Daily-Journals-for-Compulsive-Eaters](http://oaregion1.org/store/c1/Daily-Journals-for-Compulsive-Eaters)

**PIPO Funding** – Region has money to help your intergroup with Public Information and Professional Outreach projects: [oaregion1.org/documents.html](http://oaregion1.org/documents.html).

**Region One Trustee** – Our Trustee is available to answer questions or lead workshops about OA Service, Traditions & Concepts and provide resources and information from World Service. Email [regiononetrustee@gmail.com](mailto:regiononetrustee@gmail.com).

**Speaker List** – Would you like to be on the Region One speaker list? Need a speaker for your OA event? Email [mal@oaregion1.org](mailto:mal@oaregion1.org) for more info and a copy of our current speaker list.

**Recovery Resources** – We’re building a page on our website with recovery resources, arranged by topic! Check it out at [oaregion1.org/recovery-resources.html](http://oaregion1.org/recovery-resources.html)



**Representative Support for Assembly** – Our goal is to have ALL of our Intergroups represented at Assembly. There is financial support available from Region One. All Intergroup Chairs will receive an email about Representative Support. Email [treasurer@oaregion1.org](mailto:treasurer@oaregion1.org).

**Virtual Sponsorship** - Are you looking for a sponsor or sponsee, but can't find one in a face-to-face meeting? Fill out an application at [oaregion1.org/sponsorship.html](http://oaregion1.org/sponsorship.html).

**Website** - our website is FULL of information and resources for personal recovery and service. Explore at [oaregion1.org](http://oaregion1.org)

**Website Support** – contact [webmaster@oaregion1.org](mailto:webmaster@oaregion1.org) if you'd like to be part of our Intergroup Website Tech Support Team. We meet once or twice a month on Zoom, or as needed, to help with website tech and to give feedback on overall look and function of your intergroup website. Beginners and experienced webmasters welcome!

**WSBC Delegate Support Funding** – Be a part of the group conscience of OA as a whole—send a Delegate from your Intergroup to World Service Business Conference! Applications for Region One support to WSBC 2020 are available on our website and are due by October 1, 2020. Email [bdfs@oaregion1.org](mailto:bdfs@oaregion1.org).

**Yahoo Group** – This loop is for sharing news that will benefit all members of Region One. Get “in the loop” by sending a blank email to: [oaregion1-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:oaregion1-subscribe@yahogroups.com).

# 2021 Application for Region One Board Outreach Visit

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## *Let's Get a Date on the Calendar!*

The Board has enjoyed visiting many of our intergroups in the past several years, offering Intergroup Renewal presentations and recovery workshops. It has been wonderful to share recovery and service with our members, and we're ready to set dates for next year!

Has your intergroup participated in Intergroup Renewal? If not, we'd love to lead you through this amazing process of discovering and meeting the needs of your local membership. We can also offer an "Each One, Reach One: Share the Hope!" workshop or a topic of your choice.

### Here's what we can offer:

- Help creating a timeline, structure and content for the event
- Two Board members will visit for the weekend (Friday arrival, Sunday departure) OR we can be available on Zoom
- We can include these topics in our presentation:
  - **Intergroup Renewal (IGR) or an IGR "refresher"**
  - **How each member, meeting and intergroup can "Share the Hope"**
  - **And/or any recovery topic chosen by your intergroup**
- Region covers Board travel costs to and from the event
- Proceeds from any Intergroup raffles, registration, etc. are retained by the Intergroup.

### We ask the Intergroup to:

- Provide meeting space
- Create a flyer to get the word out about the event (we can help with this)
- Help us plan and tailor the event to your members' needs
- Invite members from nearby intergroups to attend
- Allow Region One to offer journals for sale.

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We hope you'll invite us to visit! Please talk with your intergroup and complete the following:

Intergroup _____	Preferred dates (month, day, year): _____
City/State/Prov _____	First choice _____
Contact name _____	Second choice _____
Email _____	Third choice _____
Phone _____	Zoom/in-person/either? _____
Last year your IG hosted R1 _____	Preferred topics _____
Comments _____	

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Please return this form to [board@oaregion1.org](mailto:board@oaregion1.org) or Region One, P.O. Box 23235, Tigard, OR 97281, USA.

Electronic fillable form available at [oaregion1.org/documents.html](http://oaregion1.org/documents.html)

# Region One Speaker Recordings

*Instant Experience, Strength & Hope!*

Check out our growing collection of speaker recordings at [oaregion1.org/audio--speakers.html](http://oaregion1.org/audio--speakers.html)

Topics as of August, 2020:

100 Pounders

Abstinence

Body Image

Food Plan

Gratitude

Guilt and Shame

Keynote Speakers from Region One  
Conventions & Assemblies

Living in Program/Maintenance

Prayer and Meditation

Principles

Public Information & Professional Outreach

Recovery Stories

Relapse

Spirituality

Sponsorship

Surrender

Tools

The Twelve Steps



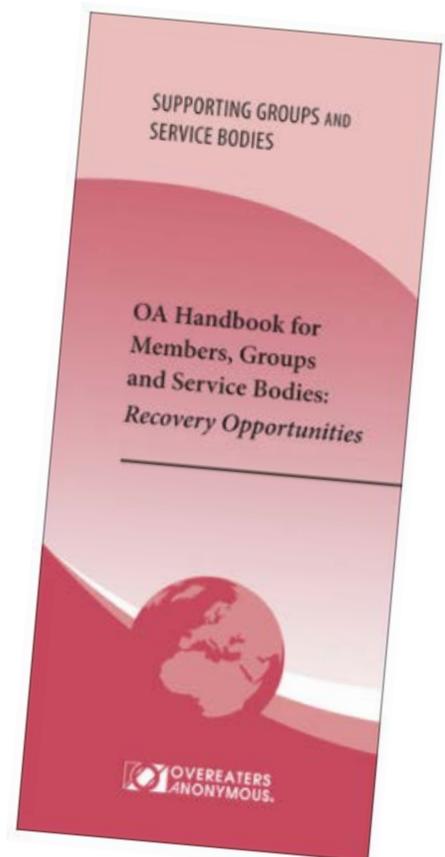
Experience, Strength & Hope from Past

# I n t e r g r o u p   C h a i r s

- *Informal shares to support you in your service* -

## RESOURCES & SUPPORT

- Ask the previous chair to serve as an ex-officio chair for a period of time to ease the transition.
- Get a copy of *How to Be an Effective Trusted Servant*: [oa.org/pdfs/trusted\\_servant.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/trusted_servant.pdf).
- At each intergroup meeting, spend a few minutes reading from the pamphlet "*OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies*." By reading a few pages at each meeting we finish the whole pamphlet about once a year, and each month we learn something new.
- Be familiar with your intergroup Bylaws and Policies. These are often referred to and should be available for all attendees.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help! Just like our recovery, we won't always know what to do.... ASK! Ask the previous intergroup chair, ask your region officers/trustee, ask your sponsor.... just ASK!
- OA websites have lots of awesome ideas. Check out [oa.org/documents/](http://oa.org/documents/), as well as other region and intergroup websites!
- Build your OA Community! Reach out to other intergroups in your region to see what they do. Contact another region's chair and ask to be connected to a couple of experienced intergroup chairs.
- Often the Serenity Prayer will get you past some tricky moments.
- Have basic bylaws, perhaps drafted from the WSO website:
  - [oa.org/pdfs/bylaws\\_overview.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/bylaws_overview.pdf)
  - [oa.org/pdfs/sample\\_ig\\_bylaws.docx](http://oa.org/pdfs/sample_ig_bylaws.docx)
- Keep your intergroup details up to date with WSO: [oa.org/pdfs/igregform.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/igregform.pdf)
- Familiarize yourself with the basics of Robert's Rules of Order. These come in handy when running business meetings— they'll help you stay on time and get through agenda items faster.
- Make sure your intergroup is CONNECTED to your region and to World Service! Send Reps to Region Assembly and Delegates to World Service Business Conference. Your intergroup's participation with strengthen OA as a whole, AND it will strengthen your intergroup.



## MEETING BASICS

- Have reports and minutes due and sent out in advance, so meeting time doesn't have to be taken up with these items. **Use meeting time to discuss projects or for committee breakout meetings!**
- A good agenda:
  - Is published in advance of the meeting
  - Is clear about what will be discussed, and the time allotted to each item
  - Allows for group input / interaction
- Respect members' time by starting and closing the meeting on time.
- Use the Traditions and a simple system of Robert's Rules to keep the meeting focused and peaceful.
- Be patient, flexible, honest, and open-minded. Know that everyone there has the good of OA in their hearts. Listen well. Let go of your ideas and let others "do it their way." Guide rather than direct. Suggestions go a long way.
- Have a time when intergroup reps can bring up questions or share about their groups.
- Create a one-page summary after each meeting, with the "bare bones" info you want to be conveyed to the groups. Catchy colors / clipart etc. are useful.
- Live and breathe by the Traditions! Ask your region board to present a Service/Traditions/Concepts workshop.

## RECOVERY, RECOVERY, RECOVERY!

- Remember our Primary Purpose in all things you do. Ask yourself and the group frequently if what you're doing or thinking about doing will help the still-suffering compulsive eater. Don't get bogged down in administrative tasks and lose focus of the bigger picture of why we exist as an organization.
- Keep the focus on personal recovery. Work on your own recovery. Encourage your officers and committee chairs to work on their recovery. The intergroup won't be effective or attractive if recovery is not present among those in leadership positions.
- Concentrate on what intergroup can do to help meetings carry the OA message of recovery.
- A good way to learn how the intergroup can help foster recovery is by doing an inventory and a member survey. It's important to discover the unique needs of YOUR intergroup. (Check out the R1 Intergroup Renewal Handbook at [oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html](http://oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html)).
- Don't do things because "that's the way they've always been done" or because that's what your predecessor did—keep putting all actions through the litmus test of "does this help us carry the message?" You may encounter resistance if you decide to change things. Refer to the Traditions, especially Tradition 5, to help guide your actions and responses.
- Do make abstinence important; do create abstinence requirements for service. Abstinence requirements should be stated in the bylaws.
- Don't fill the agenda with business! It's wonderful to have program-focused presentations, as well.
- Bring recovery to the intergroup meeting to help you lead by example: have a speaker share their story before or after the meeting, pair the intergroup meeting with an OA meeting or workshop, etc.
- Hold a recovery event on the same day as the intergroup meeting. This brings service and recovery together and sends a very basic message that service is part of our recovery. Members

It's all about  
Primary  
Purpose!

who want the workshop may attend the intergroup as a visitor—this is good way of introducing them to service. Try to cover the Traditions and Concepts as part of some of these workshops.

- Spend five minutes of the intergroup meeting having your officers share on what they are doing to strengthen their personal recovery.
- Spend a few minutes in prayer and meditation before chairing the intergroup meeting.

## ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION & SERVICE

- Approach your role with a sense of pride and enthusiasm! You play a key role, and members look to you for meeting consistency and support. Be the cheerleader—make people feel welcome and glad they came to the meeting!
- Ask members for help in setting up the room prior to the meeting.
- Ask sponsors to expect/recommend/ask their sponsees to give service at the intergroup level. At least try. Or go to a meeting, just to check it out.
- Ask members to give others a lift to the meeting – this encourages participation and fellowship.
- Recruit your OA buddies at the meeting level to come support your intergroup efforts. This will be especially important if you are trying to implement changes.
- Acknowledge and appreciate everyone who comes to intergroup, AND those who are not able to attend, but take other service positions and help keep groups going strong! We are ALL part of intergroup!
- Make intergroup meetings interactive, rather than just the board talking. Ask for input, ideas and solutions.
- Ask for help with small tasks. Our intergroup has a listing of “Service in Small Packages” on the agenda, with the last item being “Does anyone else need help?” Offering small service opportunities allows people to feel a part of and try service, even if they’re not up to holding an office.
- How to fill empty service positions: Ask people personally. Encourage them to use their ES&H and let them know others are available to help them as they learn. Let others know that giving service is AMAZING for your recovery!
- Be as inclusive as you can: [oa.org/pdfs/UnityWithDiversityChecklist.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/UnityWithDiversityChecklist.pdf).
- Give everyone who wishes a chance to share. Some are reluctant—try to find ways to help them feel safe speaking up. That’s not always easy.

## WORK AS A TEAM WITH YOUR BOARD

- Support one another in personal recovery.
- Work with your board to create a vision or theme for the year. Will you choose the Principles, Traditions or a one-word theme of “Unity”?
- Check in with people in service positions—ask them how it’s going and if they need help. If someone is overwhelmed, get them help, even with small parts of their job. Make sure people know they have backup and they will have an alternative to stepping down.
- Remember—you’re not alone. Learn to delegate!
- Meet with your fellow board members to discuss how things are going and what new directions you want to explore.
- Have regular board meetings prior to the intergroup meetings to share updates and ideas.



## MAKING DECISIONS

- Use Robert's Rules more or less depending upon group size. When it gets contentious, use them a bit more. Remember that a group conscience deliberation and decision includes HP.
- Look for solutions in the "grey area" rather than in the "black and white." Ex: "Let's try this for two months and see how it works," rather than "Let's make a new Bylaw about that right now."
- Look for the spiritual solution to issues.
- Check out the consensus guidelines: [oa.org/pdfs/consensus.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/consensus.pdf).
- Be enthusiastic about service, carrying the message, and resolving issues with the Traditions.
- Don't make a decision until you hear all sides.
- Help the group move along to a decision, especially on minor items. Sometimes we can debate even the smallest issues for a long time, and that can get frustrating. However, sometimes issues are very important to people, and there are strong feelings involved. It's important to know when something needs more time, thought and discussion. It's usually okay to postpone an item of business until next month.
- Sometimes we run out of time to reach consensus at one intergroup meeting. Very few decisions need to be made urgently. A long-time member suggested that a close vote means there is no consensus. It does take more time, but it is well worth it in the long run.

## EASY DOES IT!

- Don't be scared! We're all in this together and none of us is in charge! Just because you're the intergroup chair doesn't mean you know more than the person next to you. We can't do this perfectly, but you were willing to take on a leadership role...it may be new to you, but that's how we develop new skills.
- Handling the time commitment: God put you in this position to use your talents, but also to keep it simple and in balance. Ask yourself "How important is this?" or "Are babies dying over this?" Watch the time commitment and learn to say "no" nicely.
- Don't forget Rule 62 - never take yourself too seriously!
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Don't let your service work replace your recovery work.
- Don't despair when others do something differently or "not as well" as you do. Learn to let go and let others do tasks their way.
- Remember why you stepped up to do this awesome service and know that HP equipped you with what you need to lead.
- HAVE FUN!!!



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# Intergroup Secretaries

*- Informal shares to support you in your service -*

## RESOURCES & SUPPORT

- Read the minutes section of Robert's Rules.
- If there a manual or binder for your service position, use it to follow timelines of tasks for which the secretary is responsible.
- Have a proof-reader for content and grammar.

## DO THIS BEFORE THE MEETING

- If you must miss a meeting, find a sub to do the minutes.
- Keep all important papers in a binder, but don't keep every piece of paper your group produces!
- Ask the Chair for an agenda, and use it to prepare a template for the minutes.
- Keep the Secretary's binder up-to-date with updated Bylaws, Policy & Procedures, etc.
- Streamline your service—take the minutes from the last meeting and “save as” the new date, then change the names of people who attended, etc. It only takes a few minutes to do the minutes that way. Why reinvent the wheel?
- Keep things organized and easily accessible for members. Set up a Google Drive with folders for each meeting so that board members and intergroup reps can grab the minutes and PDF handouts from those meetings on their own.
- Keep updating an attendance spreadsheet so that when it's time for nominations for board members and World Service and Region Reps, it is clear from the spreadsheet who is eligible to run and who is not (example: needing six meetings attended in the last two years). This will greatly help the Nominating Committee with their task of seeking out volunteers to serve on the board.



## THE BASICS OF TAKING MINUTES

- Doing minutes in real-time on a computer word processor helps get the job done quickly.
- You can take minutes by hand or with a computer, but using a computer is generally quicker than writing and you can have everything completed by the end of each meeting.
- If you have to, record the meeting, but don't try to type it all in real-time.
- Take brief notes during the meetings, capturing all decisions and action items.
- Listen well at the meeting, and be patient.
- Ask for clarification at any point during the meeting to make sure you have recorded correctly.

- Highlight action items so they stand out: **Action item for Jenny: Order 12 copies of the Big Book.**
- Record the wording of motions accurately, as your minutes are the memory of your intergroup. Repeat the motion to make sure it is worded correctly before it is voted on. Record the name of the person making a motion.
- Summarize long discussions—every word does not need to be recorded, only key information.
- If there was a long discussion with a conclusion that did not end in a motion/vote, verbally summarize the conclusion for the group so everyone can be on the same page.

## ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED

- Ask for clarity at the meeting for any motions presented so that these can be accurately recorded.
- If folks are speaking over one another, get the attention of the Chair and ask her to stop all discussion, or call for the Serenity Prayer.
- Ask for a twenty-second pause between topics.

## DO THIS AFTER THE MEETING

- Don't wait until the night before the intergroup meeting to prepare the minutes because (a) your clear memory of the meeting will help you prepare accurate minutes, (b) your Chair needs the minutes to help prepare the agenda for the next intergroup meeting, and (c) you'll save yourself from stress knowing that you've fulfilled your commitment on a timely basis.
- Send your draft minutes to the board and other key members for edits. Send an updated copy after making corrections, this time copying all group reps and intergroup committee members.
- Publish in PDF or html format; not everyone will have Word or whatever program you use.
- Keep a copy of the minutes, finance report, and other important documents each month. Keep an electronic copy of minutes.
- Usually "taking notes" is different from "writing minutes." Take notes during the meeting and write up minutes afterward. Notes are just memory joggers. **Minutes, in contrast, need to communicate what happened to people who weren't present.**
- Don't flood intergroup reps with emails; collect information in a folder and send out all information at once, unless it is urgent. Aim for two emails a month; one a week before the intergroup meeting to send the agenda and minutes, and announce the meeting; the second email includes the draft, unapproved minutes as soon as possible after intergroup.

## CORRECTIONS TO THE MINUTES

- Be sure the Chair has reviewed the minutes in advance.
- Don't take corrections personally—it's okay if your minutes need edits.
- Set aside ego when it is time for the vote to approve the minutes. Remember your job is one of service, so if there is a better way of capturing a topic in the minutes, concede. On the other hand, if someone wants to change history, remember that you have responsibility for the meeting record and you must stand your ground (politely and without ego) if you are certain of your minutes.



- Sometimes members will disagree with what was written. Remember that you are recording what occurred and not editing based on what people believe should or should not have happened.

## HOW TO HELP YOUR INTERGROUP CHAIR...FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CHAIR

Secretaries make a real difference in helping a meeting run smoothly, so that we can focus on the agenda. You can help me by:

- Sending out reports, minutes, reminders, etc. a few days in advance of the meeting, so that everyone can read in advance and be prepared.
- Keeping minutes short—record motions exactly as stated / passed, and include the term of service for any election (I promise we'll have to go back and look for this!)
- Arriving at the meeting 15 minutes early to ensure materials are available to attendees.
- Sending out draft minutes within a few days of the meeting to a small group of people who have agreed to help proofread, then, after corrections, sending the new draft out to the whole group.
- Sit next to me during the meeting, so you can let me know if you need clarification--if you need it, you're probably not the only one.
- Help ensure that our documents are up to date -- when we hold elections, please update the list and include the terms of service; when we update the bylaws, please ensure the document is updated and the webmaster receives a PDF to upload.
- If we're not already doing so, help us establish an online place to store our records, such as DropBox or Google Drive.
- In short -- help us be organized! 😊

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Be ok with not participating in the meeting
- Don't procrastinate in writing up the minutes after the meeting.
- Stick to your service term length. It's a commitment to be a secretary, and training a new secretary every month or two can cause stress and confusion within the group. Likewise, going beyond your term will not allow the position (and associated growth) to be available to other members. Mentor your group's next secretary! Work alongside them for their first two meetings so that they can ask questions and get familiar with how things are run and where papers can be found.
- Don't strive for the "perfect" minutes. Just do them.
- Don't try to do absolutely everything yourself. Ask for help when needed! We're only human! 😊
- Don't be afraid of making a mistake—it can be corrected easily!



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# I n t e r g r o u p T r e a s u r e r s

- *Informal shares to support you in your service* -

## RESOURCES & SUPPORT

- Spend time with the previous treasurer to learn the system, and call them with questions.
- Avoid hauling around a box of old files—scan and store documents in the Cloud.
- The OA website offers excellent resource pages for treasurers:
  - [oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/treasurer-materials](https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/treasurer-materials)
  - [oa.org/pdfs/ig\\_treasurer\\_guidelines.pdf](https://oa.org/pdfs/ig_treasurer_guidelines.pdf)
  - [oa.org/pdfs/budget\\_guidelines1.pdf](https://oa.org/pdfs/budget_guidelines1.pdf)
  - [oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/guidelines/](https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/guidelines/)
  - [oa.org/files/pdf/Fundraising\\_Guidelines-Rev-2017.pdf](https://oa.org/files/pdf/Fundraising_Guidelines-Rev-2017.pdf)

## REPORTING

- Go to all intergroup meetings during your tenure, and report financials at each meeting.
- In addition to your spreadsheet, include a “narrative” report that gives an overall picture of the intergroup’s financial status. Communicate concerns, if appropriate, but also share gratitude for the financial support of groups which have donated.
- Publish a monthly or quarterly list of donations received from groups. This provides a receipt, increases transparency, helps catch any errors made in crediting deposits to the appropriate group, and raises awareness of contributions to service bodies. You can publish this list in your local newsletter, your intergroup email loop, or (at least) have it available at intergroup.
- Don’t take questions about money personally. Sometimes being the guardian of the funds makes that person a bit prickly. It helps to remember that the money is not solely the responsibility of the Treasurer.



## ORGANIZATION and TRANSPARENCY

- Don't panic—it doesn't take that much time to be a Treasurer, contrary to popular belief.
- Have a budget! It may be very simple, but it keeps track of your income and spending plans. At the end of the year, review spending and income and adjust next year's budget accordingly. Check out [oa.org/pdfs/budget\\_guidelines1.pdf](http://oa.org/pdfs/budget_guidelines1.pdf).
- Keep records up to date, daily, if possible. Make deposits as soon as possible. Pay bills and reimbursements even sooner. Keep all receipts and statements reconciled weekly at the very least. Keep double records as a safety net. Treat monies carefully, it's important.
- Make being treasurer a part of your OA program: set aside a time each week to record 7th Tradition contributions and pay bills -- don't wait to balance the account until the day before intergroup.
- Carry envelopes. People often want to give checks or cash to Treasurers, and it is easy to get confused. If someone wants to give you money for intergroup, give them an envelope and have them write the amount, meeting number, and any other relevant information on the outside of the envelope. Always double-check amounts when you're given cash.
- Use QuickBooks or similar software.
- Use a simple Excel spreadsheet to create the monthly report. Do a spreadsheet for the whole year. That way, it is easy to fill out each month.
- Organize and document as if there were a possibility you might not be available for the annual audit.
- Keep your landlord happy. Don't be late on rent.
- Always make copies of all checks and deposits.
- Make all money as transparent as possible. Record all transactions in the check register.
- Give the chair a copy of the ongoing check registers every month.
- Don't skip doing a bank reconciliation monthly. Mistakes are picked up when the check book balance and the bank balance don't match.
- Keep a spreadsheet of member group contributions for accuracy and efficiency.
- Every monetary transaction should be identified by group number, as well as group name. Make sure all checks written to Intergroup, Region and World Service have the correct meeting or service body number written on the check. Otherwise, the donation will not be credited properly, which will cause confusion and extra work for others in OA service. Double-check group numbers at [oa.org/find-a-meeting/](http://oa.org/find-a-meeting/).



## **BUDGETING & AUDITS**

- Have a budget!
- Communicate budgeted amounts to members about to incur expenses on behalf of intergroup.
- Ask for volunteers to audit the books once a year. Don't assume everything is correct; confirm it! This is an easy and relatively painless experience, and lets everyone know the status of the funds.

## **SECURITY & BANKING**

- Check with your bank to assure that the signatories on the account are current. Remove folks who are no longer authorized to sign checks from the account.
- Be sure to have the intergroup's incorporation papers or other paperwork on its existence and structure, like bylaws, when changing signatories on accounts. Call ahead to the bank to find out what they need to change signatures. They often need both the outgoing and new treasurer present to complete the change.
- Don't assume the bank is always correct; question the bank if you find a problem.
- If you accept 7th Tradition via PayPal, deposit the money into your intergroup checking account right away. Don't keep a PayPal balance. It's not necessary, and can lead to confusion. When you transfer funds, check the online bank account a few days after making a transaction; don't assume the transaction went through.
- Get a liability insurance policy for your intergroup.

## **ENCOURAGING 7TH TRADITION**

- Encourage the 7th Tradition—read articles on the importance of sustaining the fellowship and carrying the message of recovery, become familiar with the 7th Tradition in the OA 12&12, write an article about the 7th Tradition in the local newsletter. Contact groups who have not contributed in a while to see if there is anything you can do to help encourage contributions for all levels of the fellowship. Offer a 7th Tradition workshop.
- Don't use regular OA meeting time to discuss intergroup money issues.
- Encourage members to set up an Automatic Reoccurring Donation (ARC) to World Service. This is easy to set up at [oa.org/contribute/](http://oa.org/contribute/).
- Members can also use their own online banking to set up a regular contribution to OA World Service, Region, or Intergroup.
- Acknowledge and express gratitude for donations received.

## **ROTATION OF SERVICE**

- When a treasurer is going to rotate out, start "grooming" a qualified candidate or two several months before the election on how to be a Treasurer and on how easy it is to do the work. Let them know you will be available to help.
- Be positive about your service position – it is easy for people to feel that the Treasurer position is very difficult and that they would never be able to take on this service. You have an opportunity to encourage and mentor someone in this service when your term is complete.

Experience, Strength & Hope from Past

# OA Event Coordinators

*- Informal shares to support you in your service -*

## RESOURCES & SUPPORT

- Look at other intergroup websites to find ideas for events.
- Find speakers by listening to online audio, or ask your region for a list of speakers.
- Follow the OA Event Guidelines at [oa.org/files/pdf/OA-Events-Guidelines\\_2017.pdf](https://oa.org/files/pdf/OA-Events-Guidelines_2017.pdf)
- Find event resources at [oregon-oa.org/event\\_calendar/event-resources/](https://oregon-oa.org/event_calendar/event-resources/)
- Ask your intergroup or service body to provide "seed money" for events.
- Check out the event formats at [oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/resources/workshop-formats/](https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/resources/workshop-formats/)

## THE "EVENT BOX"

- Plan to attend events and offer to help with setup, etc. Bring a bin with extra supplies.
- Let the hosting group know they don't have to purchase XX and XX because you'll be bringing these items with you. Give them a list of supplies already in the event box.
- Consider asking your intergroup to purchase a sound system. It's hard to have a successful event if the speakers cannot be heard. Sound systems intended for the spoken word don't need to be expensive. Train a few people to run the sound system and ask them to help with this at events.
- Consider purchasing a device to record speakers. Ask for a volunteer to edit the recordings using a program like Audacity.

## ENCOURAGING GROUPS TO HOST EVENTS

- Keep electronic resources on your intergroup website -- checklists, past event flyers, workshop outlines, etc. Let hosting groups know they don't have to "start from scratch."
- Help the group publicize their event, remind them to bring flyers to intergroup and other events leading up to their workshop.
- Help groups say "yes" to hosting by asking at least six months ahead of the desired date. That way they know they have plenty of time for planning.
- Ask meetings to host events, and then be a "resource person." Support the group in any way you can and be responsive when asked for input, but allow them to take ownership of their event.

## CHOOSING A LOCATION

- Choosing a venue must happen *early* in the event planning—all other details are moot until you have a place to hold the event!
- Make sure the location is easily handicapped accessible. Ask someone with mobility issues to help you create an accessibility checklist.
- Consider food needs—will it be necessary to travel a distance to obtain food? That will slow down return from lunchtime.
- Consider parking availability and public transportation access.



## BIG EVENTS!

- Divide tasks between numerous groups or intergroups; identify the major categories of help needed, and ask groups or intergroups to take on an area of need.
- Consider using an event planning company to negotiate hotel contracts to get you the best rate. They are paid by the contracted hotel.
- Don't rent things like easels from hotels -- a one-day rental for these items will often cost more than purchasing the item outright.
- Do some research online before negotiating hotel contracts. Google the phrase "how to negotiate an event contract with a hotel." Many items that are standard in hotel contracts are routinely negotiated out, but you have to know to ask. Ask for extra concessions, such as event planner points, which you can use toward another event.
- For reoccurring events, develop an RFP (Request for Proposal) form outlining your requirements, and get proposals from a number of hotels. Create a manual to help others who will host this event in the future.
- Ask for a late checkout for your event planning staff—they're the ones who will still be at the hotel at 2 pm on Sunday afternoon! ☺
- Get lots of helpers for your OA event -- this not only lets people feel useful, it will keep you from doing everything yourself. Ask for help EARLY in the event planning process. **If someone offers to help, say YES! :)**
- Expect that the team putting on the event may become stressed and feel overwhelmed -- everyone wants very much to do a great job, but most of us are not professional event planners. Check in with your team to see who needs help, say thank you often, and let them know that things don't have to be "perfect" for the event to be helpful to OA recovery. Consider holding a meditation meeting before the event to help everyone get centered.
- Utilize the tool of Action Plan, and use it to set clear actions and completion dates.
- Seek out someone who has chaired a similar event and ask them to share their experience, strength and hope.
- Nothing is more important than your abstinence. If it doesn't support your recovery and abstinence, turn it over and let others do the service.

- Hold regular planning meetings, with an agenda and notes for each meeting. That way people can review what was accomplished and what is yet to be done. Ask people to volunteer for each item on the to-do list, then gently ask them to report their progress. That way leadership is shared and more people can own the process.
- Consider telling people they don't have to attend committee meetings once they have their assignment and are working on it. This helps people not feel over-committed.
- Don't forget to attend the event yourself! Especially for conventions, it's easy to get so involved in managing the event and forget to attend any of the workshop sessions. Ask team members which workshops are most important to them, and arrange coverage so that everyone gets to participate in the recovery portions of the event.

## TIPS FOR A FUN EVENT

- Ask for volunteers to be “greeters,” to give a warm welcome to participants as they arrive.
- Adults learn by doing, not by listening. How can you engage people? Small groups? Writing? Shy people or newcomers may share at their table, but not in a larger setting.
- Offer a variety of activities that will be helpful for different styles.
- Set an interactive tone with “pop-up” sharing—ask a question and ask people to just call out their one word or short phrase answers. This can get people engaged quickly and is easier for many people than coming up to the microphone.
- Involve people by asking them to do a reading.
- Consider a short, humorous skit at the start of your event.
- If you want people to mingle, give every person a number when they arrive, with their table assignment. This will help people get to know their OA fellows from other areas.
- Include newcomers in planning an event, but keep their contribution limited to one area, so they are not overwhelmed.
- Don't expect everything to be perfect!



“The principle of *service*, which underlies OA’s Twelfth step, can now guide our actions both inside and outside the program. Here, we experience the great truth that when we let go of our need to control people and simply allow our Higher Power to serve others through us, we receive an abundance of joy and strength.”

*OA 12&12, Second Edition, page 86.*

# Intergroup Renewal: What is It?

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The following information is an excerpt from the Region One Intergroup Renewal Handbook, available online at: [oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html](http://oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html).

Simply put, Intergroup Renewal (IGR) is the process of turning Intergroups into training organizations to supplement sponsors—providers of opportunity for strengthening personal recovery. **In essence, Intergroup Renewal moves Intergroups toward being primarily focused on Tradition 5 work.**

Tradition 5: “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.”

This refocus on helping members with their recovery has a “ripple-effect” throughout OA as a whole. Here’s why:

**Increased personal recovery**

**= more sponsors, more service**

**= more newcomers attracted and retained**

**= OA growth**

**= carrying the message to more suffering compulsive eaters**

## Intergroup Renewal Model

Basic requirement for getting started: A dedicated **leader or core of leaders** living in recovery; people who walk the walk and talk the talk and attract through their physical, emotional and spiritual recovery.

1. Intergroup **inventory**.
2. Membership **survey**.
3. Create the “cause” based on results of inventory and membership survey.
4. **Recruit**. Go out and talk to other members in physical, emotional and spiritual recovery to get them to buy into the cause; one-on-one conversations with people in recovery from as many different meetings as possible.
5. Kickoff meetings to talk about what to do about the cause. As many members as possible. Everyone has a voice. Common cause.
6. Establish a clear **vision** (based on inventory and survey and other information).
7. Establish a clear set of **goals/priorities** (to work toward vision).
8. Set a clear set of **activities** to accomplish the goals.
9. Set **responsibilities/commitments/accountability** – with a budget for each.
10. Through this process a “team” has been created. Individuals have “ownership” because they have been involved. Individuals have a high stake in carrying out their commitments as well as the team meeting its overall objectives.
11. **Distribute information** (newsletter/email) to ALL members and meetings explaining group conscience determined vision, goals and activities planned, appealing for everyone’s involvement. One possible theme: Freedom isn't free.
12. Set a clear beginning and clear ending of the plan, for example the calendar year.
  - **Review progress** at each intergroup meeting/articles in newsletter/other channels.
  - Celebrate achievements -- have fun!

## Intergroup Refocus Example

**Vision:** High Value Intergroup that:

1. Serves Membership and Attracts
2. Strengthens OA as a Whole

**Strategic Plan:** Priorities:

1. First Priority: Create training/educational activities/opportunities to help members recover or strengthen their recovery. Supplements sponsorship. Helps close sponsor gap. From more personal recovery comes more sponsors, more attraction, more retention, stronger Intergroup and OA.
2. Second priority (but required): ongoing Intergroup administrative tasks, e.g., meeting lists, hotlines/answering service, PI/PO, representatives to Region & WSBC, Unity Day, IDEA Day, etc.
3. Third priority: Proactively train/teach/assist meetings on administrative matters, e.g., formats, organization (job descriptions), group conscience, job descriptions, treasury, inventories, etc. This would facilitate and increase member service at the meeting level, strengthen meetings, and facilitate ease of movement from group service to Intergroup service.

**Goals:**

1. Help members strengthen their personal recovery
2. Increase the number of sponsors
3. Increase the number of newcomers
4. Increase the retention of newcomers
5. Help those in relapse
6. Inspire people to give more service
7. Increase outreach and public information activities

**Action Plans to Achieve Goals:**

1. Working and living the steps workshops
2. Create local literature booklet: "How I Got Abstinent and Stayed Abstinent"
3. Marathons events – IDEA Day and Unity Day
4. Quick Step Study groups
5. Retreat on sponsorship training
6. Monthly one-hour sponsor training meeting

### Good leaders in OA:

- Create an atmosphere for honest communication. We need to be able to courteously tell each other what we are thinking about the issue at hand -WITHOUT FEAR. This is a value system set by the leader. The leader's patience, tolerance, kindness and love sets the tone. Without this, people are always worried about looking stupid or being criticized.
- Motivate by creating a compelling vision.
- Facilitate, but don't micro-manage, within the framework of the Intergroup's vision and goals and OA's Steps and Traditions. All activity should in some way be related to the vision and goals.
- Allow for mistakes, and are available to help an individual or committee overcome obstacles when they need help. Be an ex-officio member of every project team, but a member of no project teams!
- Take no credit. It's always the group. "I help organize and energize, but other people do all the work, not me!"
- Always wear their recruiting hat, on the lookout for recovery and skills that could be useful to Intergroup.
- Help people volunteer to do things they love. They will give their time to do things they love, or which they feel could be really useful to OA or to members.
- Treat intergroup meetings as an event, focused on helping groups and members, where there is a high return-on-investment for attendees.
- Are PASSIONATE! Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm. Leaders cultivate gratitude in themselves and others that is just waiting to be paid forward! OA leadership is about waking up and organizing the gratitude in grateful people.

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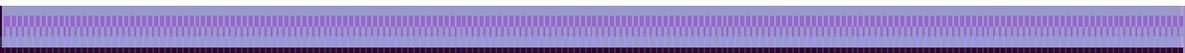
OA leadership is about waking up and organizing  
the gratitude in grateful people.

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The value of intergroup is  
measured by its usefulness to  
members and meetings.

Usefulness is our main product.



# FOCUS ON PUBLIC INFORMATION / PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH

Members were asked to share their experience, strength and hope on the following questions:

1. What is one action you have taken to carry the message that has worked for you, and that you felt good about doing?
2. What opportunities do you see in your area for carrying the message?
3. Can you share your "thirty-second elevator pitch" about OA?



Here is a summary of the information shared:

1. Pat introduced Public Information and Professional Outreach resources. There are many on OA.org. She suggested using a search engine to find them more easily. She will post the list of PI resources on Region One Yahoo groups. There is a Professional Outreach Manual available from the OA bookstore.
2. One area has a local spirituality newspaper. They run community groups ads monthly for free. OA is included.
3. One member looks for opportunities everywhere she goes and she is ready with the "OA WORKS" business card to which she has added local info and OA.org.
4. One person's elevator speech (timed to coincide with how long it takes the elevator to reach the floor of the person who just asked you "what is OA?"): *"I had a lifelong problem with food but I have found a solution and recovery in OA."*
5. Another member in Canada connected with the local Eating Disorders Resource Group. OA was offered as an option for therapists to offer to their patients who struggle with food related issues.
6. Step Studies for members, but especially newcomers to focus on the Steps more directly so they can understand what people are talking about at meetings more readily. This has helped newcomers stick around.
7. Another member has sent letters directly to the five dietitians practicing in their town, introducing OA and offering OA as a resource.
8. Another member noticed that the AA magazine The Grapevine was carried by the local library. They have put in a request to include OA's Lifeline in the periodicals collection.
9. In another location, PI/PO meets with six mental health counselors to offer OA as a resource. Additionally, they presented to the local college's Social Work students about how OA works.

10. The follow-up approach using The First 12 Days in OA flyer is helping retain newcomers. It makes sense to do the work to get people to walk in the door if we help them stay around for their recovery.
11. Another member (and brand new PI/PO chair) is a new mom. She has joined a number of Facebook groups for new moms who share support and info to navigate this brand new role. When a mom shares such comments as "I can't stop eating", this member *private messages* her to offer the help of OA.
12. In another area, the mental health community has been very receptive to outreach from OA members.
13. Good old fashioned but helpful bulletin boards in grocery stores and new ideas like placemat ads are being checked out in another Intergroup.
14. Greater Seattle was recently involved in IG Renewal. They decided to take the IG on the road and visit their more remote meetings, bringing Professional Outreach and PI resources to help these meetings thrive. They have been well received.
15. There are two loops that have been set up by the PI / PO conference committee. They are meant to share info among all OA service bodies on what's working in this vital area.

**For Public Information (PI):** To join, just go to <https://groups.google.com> and search for 'OA PI' to find the group. Then follow the instructions on screen. If you have any difficulties, you can click on the link to contact the group owner for help. Please note, you do not need to have a Google account in order to join the group.

**For Professional Outreach (PO):** It is a two-step process. Kindly email: [infoandinvites@gmail.com](mailto:infoandinvites@gmail.com) to ask to join. Then, once you are added to the group, you can then post your news and info. The PO Loop address is: [oa-profoutreach@googlegroups.com](mailto:oa-profoutreach@googlegroups.com)

**Need more ideas for PIPO?**

Email [carryingthemessage@oaregion1.org](mailto:carryingthemessage@oaregion1.org).

Ask your intergroup discuss PIPO projects to help carry the message in your area!

# Professional Outreach/Public Information (PIPO) Application for Funding from Region One

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See Region One Policies & Procedures, Section 5.5 (printed on the back of this sheet) for full guidelines.  
Email application to [board@oaregion1.org](mailto:board@oaregion1.org) or mail to Region One, P.O. Box 23235, Tigard, OR 97281.

Intergroup(s):

Contact Person (name, phone, email):

1. Complete description of the proposed project, including how the proposal was developed, any research done on locations, demographics, and prices:

2. Target audience and projected number of people to be reached:

3. Project timeline, including starting and proposed ending date:

4. Proposed method of measuring results:

5. Will any project materials be useful to other Region One intergroups?

6. Total cost of project:	\$
Less Intergroup / other funds available:	\$
Amount requested from Region One:	\$

Intergroup Chair Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

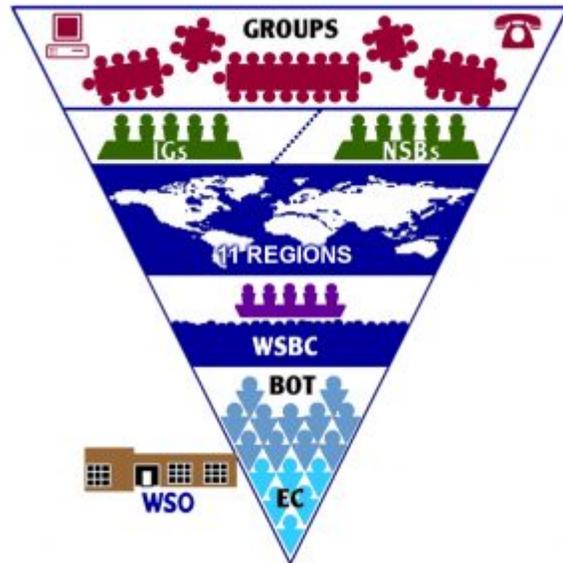
## **5.5. PUBLIC INFORMATION/PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH GRANTS**

- 5.5.1. The Region One budget shall include a line item for Public Information grants, the amount to be voted on at each year's Assembly.
- 5.5.2. A single Intergroup, or coalition of Intergroups (service bodies), may make application for grant funds by submitting a request for such funds through the Public Information/Professional Outreach Committee.
- 5.5.3. Proposals shall be in accordance with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.
- 5.5.4. Written proposals shall be submitted to the Public Information/Professional Outreach Committee and must include the following:
  - 5.5.4.1. The identity of the proposing service bodies, including the signature of the Chair(s) and contact information for the person responsible for the project.
  - 5.5.4.2. A complete description of the proposed project, including how the proposal was developed, any research done on locations, demographics, and prices.
  - 5.5.4.3. The target audience and projected number of people to be reached.
  - 5.5.4.4. The projected total cost of the project, including direct and indirect costs, the amount the service body intends to cover or receive from other sources, and the amount of the grant requested.
  - 5.5.4.5. A projected timeline, including the starting and proposed ending date of the project.
  - 5.5.4.6. A proposed method of measuring results.
  - 5.5.4.7. Whether any of the project materials may be useful for other Region One service bodies.
- 5.5.5. When written proposals are approved by the Public Information/ Professional Outreach Committee, they will be forwarded to the Treasurer.
  - 5.5.5.1. Requests of under \$200 which fall within the line item budget for Public Information/ Professional Outreach grants may be approved by the Treasurer.
  - 5.5.5.2. Requests of over \$200, or if the request would exceed the budgeted amount for Public Information grants, shall be forwarded to the Board for approval, and, if necessary, a budget override.
  - 5.5.5.3. Receipts for all monies spent shall be forwarded to the Treasurer in accordance with Region One policies.
- 5.5.6. The project's Chair will keep the Public Information/Professional Outreach Chair advised of the progress and status of the project. The Public Information/ Professional Outreach Chair will include this information in their quarterly reports to the Board. Within 30 days of the close of the project, a final report shall be submitted to the Public Information/Professional Outreach Chair and the Board, and all remaining funds will be returned to the Region One treasury.

# The Remarkable OA Service Structure and our Primary Purpose

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“OA’s “Inverted Pyramid” describes our unique service structure. Unlike a traditional business that has tiers of managers directing those “below” them, OA’s Board of Trustees is accountable to those at the region, intergroup/service board, and group levels. Therefore the “higher” the position a trusted servant holds, the more people to whom the trusted servant is accountable. Our primary goal is to serve those in the Fellowship as we progress in the recovery process.” – *OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Service Bodies*, p. 65. Note: At the 2018 WSBC, Delegates voted to add a Virtual Region – Region 11 – to OA!



## Interesting...but what does that mean for me, my group, intergroup and region?

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Look again at that last sentence: “Our primary goal is to serve those in the Fellowship as we progress in the recovery process.” That means that the purpose of every one of those service bodies—and the goal of the OA members in those service positions—is to help those above it on the diagram progress toward recovery!

## Wow! That’s a lot of people pulling for me in my recovery!

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Yes! Have you heard about OA’s Strategic Plan? It’s completely focused on bringing recovery resources to the entire fellowship. The Strong Abstinence Checklist, 12-Stepping a Problem Worksheet, Working the Steps Workshop book, and those *amazing* podcasts on oa.org are all results of a Strategic Plan dedicated toward strengthening OA for all of us.

## What can I do to help the fellowship?

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You absolutely *do* help the fellowship by abstaining and carrying the message of recovery in your meetings, family and community. You play a vital role by being a sponsor, helping others abstain and work the Steps.

Awareness of our Primary Purpose and the inverted pyramid service structure tells us what we can do whether we are participating in our home group’s monthly business meeting or sitting on the Board of Trustees. *Most of the work we do in OA should be focused on providing recovery opportunities and resources to our members—carrying the message.* And, that’s exciting, fulfilling work!



I've found that by stepping down, people do step up. If I keep doing the job, it can take a long time for someone to step forward.

7. I'm in a small intergroup, where we basically rotate positions among five people. It's difficult to avoid service! It became necessary for me to say no, and for several years we didn't have a full board. One thing I've had to do for myself to maintain balance is to take on no more than one service position at any one time. If you're not doing service at all, YES is the answer, but if you are already doing service, it's important to maintain balance.
8. If someone hadn't *asked* me to do service, I wouldn't have started doing service.
9. I discovered recently that I had replaced my spiritual program with a service program. I felt like I was doing the "program" because I was doing "service." I am challenging myself to not try to find my worth in volunteering for everything so that people will "like" me. I'm learning boundaries, choosing how to spend my time, and checking my motives before taking on new service.
10. Maintaining balance is difficult for me. I have a million great ideas and limited capacity. It's easy for me to get excited about new projects, but better for me to be focused. When I come up with a new, great idea, it might be better for me to see if there is someone else who is interested in taking on that project. I can also struggle with not asking for help. I'm capable of a lot, but that doesn't mean I shouldn't be asking for help. I should be sharing service with others. Service can be broken down into pieces that can be shared with others. That helps me, and it helps another person get involved.
11. Procrastination can make it so I don't enjoy my service. I need to work my program around this, and ask for help. "Slow and steady" helps me maintain balance in service and helps me enjoy what I'm doing.
12. A lot depends on my attitude, in service as well as the rest of life. I'm grateful to OA and want to give back, but I can get busy and crabby sometimes. I can work my program around my involvement in OA service. What attitude am I bringing to my service?
13. I was recently feeling that I was "spread too thin." I had more than one service position, and knew I should give up something. I realized that pieces of one service really fed my soul. I needed to hold on to that service and let go of the other. It felt good to make that decision based on what is best for me.
14. I've held many different service positions over the years. I believe lots of OAers can do positions they aren't sure they can do, and I've spent a lot of time over the years mentoring people so that they can see they can do particular jobs.
15. It's important to know when to let go. Sometimes it's ok to leave a position open. Sometimes we are surprised that people *will* step up and help.
16. I have to remind myself that I alone am not running the show. Sometimes I get a wild notation that if I don't do something, nothing's gonna happen! But my Higher Power is always there, working with me. That means to me that if it's my HP's will that a meeting continue after I've stopped a

particular service, then it will continue. If it doesn't, that's my HP's will. It's been helpful for me to let go of the results in OA service.

17. Why I got into OA service? I wanted to know how OA worked, and to be around committed members.
18. Balance? I keep reevaluating my priorities. When I feel burdened or resentful, I think of some way to re-balance my tasks.
19. How to help others in service? I watch for overworked members and support them if they tell me they can't keep up. I ensure members know what is expected of their role, especially in terms of time, and get help for them wherever possible. I encourage members who are fearful of service to try it out in "baby steps."

Thank you, everyone, for your shares on this topic!

**Need more ideas on SERVICE?**

Please email [chairr1@gmail.com](mailto:chairr1@gmail.com).

I would love to hear from you!

# Let's Talk about Strong Meetings!

We can be intentional about strengthening our OA meetings. Here are some "conversation starters" for your next group conscience meeting:

1. What is a "strong meeting" for you?
2. If someone told you their meeting was struggling, what specific suggestions would you offer to help them strengthen their meeting?
3. What actions might you be willing to take to help a struggling meeting or to strengthen a meeting you attend?



## Resources for Building Strong Meetings

**The Strong Meeting Checklist** - [oa.org/files/pdf/strongmtgchecklist1.pdf](https://oa.org/files/pdf/strongmtgchecklist1.pdf). Ask your meeting to set aside time to review this checklist and create an Action Plan for strengthening the meeting, based on your observations. Review the list again, but this time ask members to think about their personal contribution to the meeting. For example, "Does the meeting start and end on time?" becomes "What can I do to make sure our meeting starts and ends on time?" Revisit the checklist and your Action Plan, looking for progress, in three months.

**The OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Service Bodies** - [bookstore.oa.org/](https://bookstore.oa.org/). Get a copy of this invaluable pamphlet, which covers topics such as "What Does a Group Secretary Do?" and "How do Good Groups Get Better?" and "How to Keep Them Coming Back." (Newcomers, that is!) It may seem at first that some of the ideas are intended for larger meetings, but read the pamphlet with an eye toward what is possible for your group. Think you don't need a group Secretary? Try it for a while! You might be surprised to find how much having a Secretary strengthens your meeting.

**The OA website** – [oa.org/](https://oa.org/) is full of amazing resources! Check out the Group Support page at [oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/group-support/](https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/group-support/). Bring a new voice into your meeting with an OA podcast from [oa.org/podcasts/](https://oa.org/podcasts/). Make sure your meeting information is *always* up-to-date so that World Service can send you important information AND so newcomers can find your meeting. If something changes, edit your meeting details at [oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/meeting-changes/edit-a-meeting/](https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/meeting-changes/edit-a-meeting/).

## Other Ideas for Making Meetings Stronger

- Help your intergroup put on a workshop about building strong meetings.
- Go to a meeting you've heard is strong....watch for things you could bring back to your meeting.
- Go to one more meeting than you "need" to per week, just to share HOPE and carry the message.
- Be part of your meeting's "core group." Show up early and attend the business meetings.
- Read the Traditions in the OA 12&12, then answer the italicized questions at the end of each chapter.
- Set aside time each October – the 10<sup>th</sup> month – to do a 10<sup>th</sup> Step on the strength of your meeting.
- Focus the meeting on a strong topic by providing each member with a slip of paper on which the Promises, Principles, Serenity Prayer or other short quote is copied. Ask for shares on that topic.
- ...What ideas do you have for strengthening your meeting?

## FOCUS ON STRONG MEETINGS

Members were asked to share their experience, strength and hope on the following questions:

1. What is a "strong meeting" for you?
2. If someone told you that their meeting was not doing well, what specific suggestions would you offer to help them strengthen their meeting?
3. What actions might you be willing to take to help a struggling meeting or to strengthen a meeting you attend?

Here is a summary of their shares:

1. Meetings I consider strong are fully self-supporting. There is rotation of leadership, long-term abstinence and lots of sponsors. If your meeting is not doing well, I'd say get connected – if you're not connected to intergroup, get connected. If you're not connected to region, get connected. An action I could take to help a meeting is to go and share my experience of service, because I know how important it is to me in having a strong program. And the strong meetings I attend are the ones where lots of people are involved in service. There are lots of different ways to do service, but I think what's especially important is sponsorship and service above the meeting level.
2. A strong meeting for me always has to do with people willing to be honest with themselves, and to tell the truth about what's going on. It's been my experience that the more someone is speaking up to say what's going on, where they are, which requires a lot of humility and willingness – on a spiritual level it seems to go out in some waves and other people end up calling them. I was involved with a meeting that was always just two or three people for several years. We were always teetering on the edge. We talked about wanting to do public information, reaching out to doctors and others that might encourage people to come to the meeting, but I believe it's always a spiritual thing, a God thing. There's a reason why some meetings don't make it. But one of the issues is having people who are willing to commit. In our meeting, for years there were just three of us. We came no matter what. We hung in there. One thing that strengthened us was that we got on a text string. We were always communicating with each other – "who's going to be there today?" or "I'm running late." We texted each other with what was going on during the week. The more we kept this up, and the more we kept being willing to show up – the waves went out there. Our meeting now has six to eight people on a regular basis now. You keep doing what you can. You need people with good abstinence, too, and strong sponsorship.
3. My home meeting is rural, with a growing elderly population and people have moved away. The meeting is dwindling. One of the things I started just today was to have it be a call-in meeting through [freeconferencecall.com](http://freeconferencecall.com) as well as a face to face meeting. I'm hoping that will strengthen our meeting.



4. At our meeting, what is helping us is that everyone participates. At each meeting everyone reads, everyone shares. We have ongoing contact with each other, we work our programs together. I think if anyone needed help they would find people willing to get together so they could open up.

We have this strength in our group, the action of listening to each other really helps. Participation is the biggest thing. It's working for our group, we're getting better and better. We've also tried to rotate things that we do – right now on the fifth meeting of the month we have a speaker meeting, not necessarily someone from outside the meeting. It can be someone from our group. The idea of keeping something going here is really a big privilege for us.

5. We have about a 300-mile wide intergroup. I became Chair in February, and my goal was to get to every meeting. So far I've made it to ten, so there are a few left. I try to bring another OA member along with me on these visits, and now some people from the Mountain meetings are coming down to the Boise meetings that I recommended to them. Their meetings are only two or three people. But I think that that cross-pollination has been really positive. We're having a workshop next week, and I'm going to encourage our meetings if they're going on vacation, or making a day trip, go to one of our other meetings. It has been such fun to get to and encourage the smaller meetings. Now they feel they have a face and a name from intergroup. People are driving two to four hours now to get to a different meeting. So we're getting fresh faces, fresh stories.
6. For meetings not doing well, I'd suggest that you host a Skype speaker meeting. It will connect you with the rest of the region and you'll get an opportunity to see what it is that you have to offer. I know that the meeting that recently hosted the Region Skype meeting is benefiting from that experience.
7. If your meeting is a "hybrid" (face-to-face with call-in option) meeting, you can go to the OA website and edit your meeting details at [oa.org/add-a-meeting/edit-a-meeting](http://oa.org/add-a-meeting/edit-a-meeting). Add the call-in number and access code into the meeting notes. This would make it visible to everyone. You could also ask Region One to put this information on our website, and you can post a notice on the Region One Yahoo Group. Use the "Tupperware Bowl" method to help hear people who have called in on a cell phone – put the phone in a bowl and it will amplify the sound. You can also have sharing around the circle, in order, passing the phone so that the person on the phone can hear all the shares. Put the caller on speaker phone so the meeting can hear them share.
8. We have a secretary who has lent some structure to our meetings, and for some reason, this has really helped. We now have a sign-up calendar for leading the meeting, so the leader has (hopefully) given a bit of thought and preparation to their share. The leader shares for five minutes, and the format asks that they share specifically on how they use the steps, traditions and tools to abstain from compulsive eating. Sponsors are identified. The format asks those willing to stay five minutes after the meeting to help someone work out a plan for abstinence for the day.

9. I read an article in Lifeline that suggested actually assigning a person to follow up with newcomers. We realized that none of our meetings were doing that – we had no plan for follow-up. We gave them our phone numbers, but we know that ninety percent of the time they didn't call. At one of my meetings, we now have a person assigned to call that newcomer during the week. When we all had the responsibility, no one called. We were missing the opportunity to encourage them.
10. One thing that I find myself saying sometimes when I don't think a meeting is very strong, is "Geez, I don't hear anyone sharing about xxx. Then one day I realized that I was saying that, but that I wasn't making those kinds of shares, either. If I thought that people should start sharing more about recovery or how they worked through specific problems, instead of being critical of others, that I should be sharing that kind of thing, and that other people would probably follow. Maybe I should do the thing I'm being critical of others for not doing. And, about newcomers, sometimes I've called newcomers in their first week, they don't have a question. I just offer to share my experience if they do have any questions. People have been very receptive.
11. We go over the Strong Meeting Checklist in my meeting every six months.
12. My home meeting got stronger when we started doing a Big Book study the 2nd and 4th Tuesday during the meeting time. When we finished the study, we started over, listening to tapes of Joe and Charlie's Big Book study every 2nd and 4th Tuesday leaving half an hour of the meeting for group sharing. (This share was received via email).
13. Here is another suggestion I have especially for small meetings, in small towns. I suggest using a rotating format – do a step study one meeting per month; a Tradition study one meeting per month, a podcast speaker meeting once a month, and a literature meeting - check out the pamphlets or Lifeline magazine to read and share about. If there is a 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the month have it be leaders choice or something else. I attended a very strong 3 person meeting for years with a podcast speaker at every meeting – all 3 of the people had more than 10 years in program but just couldn't seem to grow. Then due to some unforeseen circumstances we changed the location and all of a sudden this meeting has grown to having 7 – 10 people on a regular basis. Those of us who used to come, still come and sometimes we sit back and marvel at the growth.

### **Want more ideas on strong meetings?**

Ask your meeting to set aside time to discuss these questions or the Strong Meeting Checklist. Posing these questions can raise awareness and be a 10<sup>th</sup> Step for a meeting.

# Strong Recovery and Member Retention Check List

Developed by the 2019 Strong Recovery Project Team of Region One OA  
Links updated August 2020

- \_\_\_ Ask a newcomer if it would be alright to call them.
- \_\_\_ Make 3 outreach calls to struggling members or a newcomer.
- \_\_\_ Ask a newcomer or struggling member to coffee.
- \_\_\_ Apply to be a Virtual Sponsor. [oaregion1.org/virtual-sponsorship.html](http://oaregion1.org/virtual-sponsorship.html)
- \_\_\_ Start a speaker meeting to help encourage newcomers.
- \_\_\_ Speak or share your story at a meeting.
- \_\_\_ Thank 3 people for their hard work at helping “carry the message of strong recovery”
- \_\_\_ Do the From Slip or Relapse to Recovery Worksheets with someone.  
[oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/From-Slip-or-Relapse-to-Recovery.pdf](http://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/From-Slip-or-Relapse-to-Recovery.pdf)
- \_\_\_ Encourage someone to do service.
- \_\_\_ Share your experience, strength and hope with a newcomer.
- \_\_\_ Help on a retreat or workshop committee.
- \_\_\_ Hold a 12 Step Workshop with a small group or sponsee.  
[bookstore.oa.org/pc\\_product\\_detail.asp?key=D7B6AEEA18764C6F9C7CF1CDDAF80866](http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=D7B6AEEA18764C6F9C7CF1CDDAF80866)
- \_\_\_ Do the 12 Day Temporary Sponsorship with a newcomer. [oa.org/group-resources-list/temporary-sponsors-newcomers-first-twelve-days/](http://oa.org/group-resources-list/temporary-sponsors-newcomers-first-twelve-days/)
- \_\_\_ Read Carrying the Message - Do's and Don'ts Guidelines. [oa.org/carrying-the-message/](http://oa.org/carrying-the-message/)
- \_\_\_ Do the Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise with struggling member or newcomer. [oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/strongabstinencechecklist.pdf](http://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/strongabstinencechecklist.pdf)
- \_\_\_ Go through the Slipping and Sliding 30 Days with a sponsee or someone struggling.  
[oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/Been-Slipping-and-Sliding.pdf](http://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/Been-Slipping-and-Sliding.pdf)
- \_\_\_ Call a newcomer, an old-timer or someone you haven't seen at meetings.
- \_\_\_ Share the Simplicity Project with someone. [oa.org/app/uploads/2020/01/tsw\\_simplicity.pdf](http://oa.org/app/uploads/2020/01/tsw_simplicity.pdf)

# Virtual Sponsorship

Do you need a sponsor?

Are you an available sponsor willing to help someone via phone, email, Zoom, or FaceTime?

To help members unable to find a local sponsor, Region One offers “**Virtual Sponsorship.**”



**REGION ONE  
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

How does it work? Submit an application as a sponsor or sponsee. We will try to find a “match” and share contact info so you can talk and decide if you’d like to work together.

For more information or to fill out an application, visit:

[oaregion1.org/sponsorship.html](http://oaregion1.org/sponsorship.html)

Or email [VirtualSponsorship@oaregion1.org](mailto:VirtualSponsorship@oaregion1.org)

# Together We Can!