

# **OA World Service Business Conference (WSBC)**

## **May, 2012**

## **Greater Seattle Intergroup Delegate's Report**

Thank you for sending me to represent you at the OA World Service Business Conference (WSBC) in May, 2012. This was my second year attending. Your Seventh Tradition contributions made this possible.

I was one of about 200 delegates meeting in Albuquerque to represent OA Intergroups from all over the world. Greater Seattle Intergroup (GSI) sent two delegates.

As with all OA events, the primary purpose of WSBC is to carry the message that there is recovery from compulsive eating to those who still suffer – inside and outside our rooms. According to our OA pamphlet, “OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities,”

*This Conference represents the collective conscience of OA as a whole and makes decisions and recommendations on business and policy matters.*

In this report, I’m going to pose and answer some questions that you may have about what we accomplish at WSBC – how it affects individuals, groups, service bodies (e.g., Intergroup), and, of course, compulsive eaters who know nothing about OA. I’ll also discuss how my participation in the Conference and my role as your WSBC delegate continues throughout the year.

Is it a good use of your 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions for GSI to spend about \$2000 to send two of us to Albuquerque for five days? This is what your Intergroup representatives decide each November when they elect delegates for WSBC the following May.

### **Who gets to be a delegate?**

Intergroups elect the delegates. Qualifications for being a delegate are willingness to serve both at the Conference and throughout the year, being currently abstinent for a year, and having given two years of service (at any time) above the group level, e.g., Intergroup rep, Intergroup committee chair or member. Delegates are elected for two-year terms, and may be elected again to serve an additional two years, but then must take a break in service. Rotation of service – encouraging others to step up to be delegate – is very important. Each intergroup can send delegates to WSBC based on the number of meetings affiliated with that Intergroup. Because there are over 40 meetings that affiliate with GSI, we could send three delegates.

### **Beyond attending the Conference, what are a delegate's duties?**

A delegate represents the wishes of their Intergroup in voting on the business of WSBC while also keeping in mind the good of OA as a whole – OA unity, respecting diversity. A delegate also carries the message to OA members in their Intergroup area by being available to speak, visiting meetings, talking about the help individuals and meetings can get from OA World Service (WSO). In addition, most delegates serve on a World Service committee throughout the year, starting at the Conference itself, such as the Literature, 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within, Finance, Web Technology, Professional Outreach, Youth in OA, By-Laws, and so on. Delegates also represent their Intergroup at the Region 1 Assembly, held annually at the end of September in conjunction with the Region 1 Convention.

Locally, I am available to speak at any meeting. I would also like to visit as many meetings as possible to talk about what we do at WSBC, how the OA World Service Office (WSO) supports members, and to hear any of the meeting's concerns, ideas, and so on. If there are significant concerns, I would communicate them to OA World Service (WSO). (Of course, each meeting's Intergroup representative's job is to be the conduit of information, suggestions, and concerns between GSI and the meeting they represent.)

My job is also to let GSI know about news from WSO – new literature available, strategic plans for initiatives to carry the message, and so on. An example of this is the unpopular message I carried that meetings need to read AA material directly from the original AA text, e.g., reading “The Promises” directly from page 83 in the Big Book instead of from a piece of paper. (I am available to explain more about this if you'd like to ask me.)

I should also encourage you to make sure your meeting's contact information is correct on the OA.ORG web site. I hearby do so. Eventually our local meeting directories may be derived from this information. And it's on OA.ORG that newcomers and visitors are most likely to find out about a local meeting – hopefully, with correct information as to time, place, and contact person.

### **Who writes OA literature?**

WSBC delegates who are chosen to be on the Conference Literature Committee (CLC) write new and revise existing OA Conference-Approved literature (meaning the WSBC delegates voted on it), such as the revised pamphlets, “To the Newcomer,” “Sponsor’s Guide to the Twelve Steps,” and “Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite.” The WSO BOT assembles books like “Lifeline Sampler” from Lifeline articles. Since this is not OA Conference-approved literature, the BOT can bypass the CLC process to create this literature.

I have served on the WSBC Conference Literature Committee (CLC) for the past two years. During my first year as delegate, I was part of the sub-committee who re-wrote the pamphlet “Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite.” I then worked on the sub-committee responsible for creating a downloadable file of daily study questions to accompany our “For Today” daily reader. If the OA Board of Trustees likes our work, the proposal to accept this document as part of our OA-approved literature will appear on the WSBC 2013 agenda, and delegates to that Conference will vote -- yes or no.

Since WSBC 2012, I've been one of five members on a CLC sub-committee working on a new pamphlet – no title yet – that will serve as a guide for a small dedicated group of OA members to work the 12 Steps together in 15 intensive sessions. The intent of this pamphlet is 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within service – to especially help those OA members who cannot maintain abstinence by guiding them as a group through all 12 Steps in a short amount of time. This pamphlet got started in 2010 in the WSBC 12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Committee, but this year the WSO Board of Trustees decided that this guide should be a piece of OA literature, so its development was moved to the CLC.

Our sub-committee started work on this pamphlet at WSBC in May. We represent four different Regions in the USA and Denmark. We meet every few weeks via Skype and free conference calls where we use our group-conscience to agree on what we've written. It took us through June to decide on the basic format of this pamphlet – its intent, its “target audience,” the tone, the introduction – and how to approach writing the bulk of the content. Currently my part is a first

cut at writing the sessions covering Steps 1-3. Other members are working on the remaining steps. At our next call – and likely the one after that -- we'll discuss Steps 1-3.

Because of the meticulous OA literature development process, it's unlikely that this pamphlet will be ready for WSBC 2013 delegates to vote on. We aim for a group conscience – not just voting – at each level of approval. First, our sub-committee must agree on what we've written. Then we pass the pamphlet on to the CLC (about 20 members) as a whole. They may have suggestions that our sub-committee needs to work on, but if 75% of them like it as-is, it moves on for the Board of Trustees to consider. They meet quarterly. They may send it back to us with comments for more re-writing, or they may approve it as-is (edited by OA Publications) to appear on the next WSBC agenda for WSBC delegates to vote on.

### **What's the time commitment involved in being a delegate?**

Delegates spend 5-6 days (Tuesday or Wednesday through Sunday) annually in late April/early May in Albuquerque at the WSBC. In addition, they represent their Intergroup at the annual Region Assembly – Wednesday through Friday just before the last weekend in September.

In addition, they serve on both WSBC and Region committees that meet via conference calls throughout the year. As a member of the WSBC Literature Committee, I spend about 2 hours every 3 weeks or so on committee conference calls, and about 2-4 hours/week writing and reviewing literature in preparation for the calls. This past year I was the Region Scholarship Committee and that job takes about 5 hours 2-3 times/year to get in touch with Intergroups who haven't sent representatives to Region Assembly to let them know about Region Scholarships for that purpose.

Delegates are also required to attend GSI meetings – about 3 hours/month. And visit or speak at local meetings – about 3 hours/meeting.

### **Who decides on the business of the conference?**

The Intergroups. All business proposals and by-laws changes are sent to Intergroups early in the year. These proposals originate from individual members, Intergroups, Region boards, and WSO Board of Trustees (BOT) members. At a meeting before February, Intergroup representatives vote on whether each of these proposals should be considered at WSBC. Each must receive a 50% "Yes" vote of all the Intergroups voting (some don't) for it to be included on that year's WSBC agenda. For example, after Action Plan was adopted as a 9<sup>th</sup> Tool, there were proposals to add Exercise (and others) as a tool. This proposal didn't receive enough "Yes" votes from all the Intergroups voting, so it was never included in the agenda. This is how the group conscience process works from the Intergroup level up through the WSBC.

### **What decisions did the delegates make this year that affect me and/or my meeting?**

Some decisions were subtle and taken care of in one fell swoop. These are mainly "housekeeping" items like improving language in the by-laws. The delegates approved new and revised literature. The delegates decided which AA literature will be considered "OA-approved," making it OK to use or sell in meetings.

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This is pretty long. I think that's enough for now. I hope to address some of these other questions in our Intergroup Newsletter:

- **How does OA use electronic media to carry our message?**
- **What arenas are we – OA as a whole -- focusing on together to help carry our message? How was this decided?**
- **How can I make my voice heard regarding ways I think OA could be better?**

It is my pleasure and vastly contributes to my recovery to serve as your WSO delegate. Thank you again for electing me. If you have other questions you'd like me to ask WSO, write an article about, or attempt to answer, please get in touch with me. Or just email, call, or text to chat. Again, I'd love to speak at your meeting. I can talk about service – group, Intergroup, Region, WSO -- and/or tell my story.

Sincerely,  
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