

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS REGION 5



Convention 2014

Abstinence is the Key

October 31, November 1 & 2, 2014

A lot of excitement is growing as we get closer to the October 2014 convention in Columbus, Ohio. Double Tree by Hilton, the rooms will be \$105.00 per night with up to 4 in a room. Fridges are first-come, first-served basis. 175 Hutchinson Ave., Columbus, OH 43235.

OCTOBER 1, 2014 DEADLINE for REGION 5 CONVENTION ONLINE REGISTRATION, after that date, registrations will be at the door.

If you are printing out the registration, be sure to print, fill out and mail in both pages!

If you have any questions or want to help:

region5convention2014@gmail.com

Eileen 614-595-5584 or

Paul 614-905-1019

NOVEMBER ASSEMBLY an International Recovery event! November 7-8, 2014. **Region chairs from around the U.S., and the world will attend and share at this assembly. Come attend as a delegate or a visitor to be part of Region 5 business in action and to hear leads from Region Chairs including Chairs from Israel & New Zealand. Visitors may attend for free, but must register and there is a fee to participate in lunch.**

To register for assembly, visit region5oa.org.

SUBMISSIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE OF FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE ARE DUE BY OCTOBER 30, 2014.

PLEASE SEND TO CASPOOHBEAR@AOL.COM

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 1, 2014 DEADLINE for REGION 5 CONVENTION ONLINE REGISTRATION

OCT. 31- Nov. 2, 2014: REGION 5 CONVENTION COLUMBUS, OH

Nov. 7-8, 2014: **Region 5 Assembly**, Merrillville, IN

March 13-14, 2015: **Region 5 Assembly**

April 27- May 2: **World Service Business Conference**, Albuquerque, NM

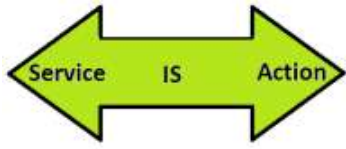
July 11-12, 2015: **Region 5 Assembly**

Sept. 11-13, 2015: **Region 5 Convention**, Chicago, IL

Nov. 6-7, 2015: **Region 5 Assembly, NOTE DATE CHANGE!!!**

May 2-7: **WSBC**, Albuquerque, NM

Sept. 1-4, 2016: **World Service Convention**, Boston, MA



I joined OA and immediately started serving in my regular meetings. Then someone asked me to think about serving at SNI (Chicago's Suburban North Intergroup). I agreed and attended several meetings. Before I knew it, I found an opportunity to be the editor of the Winging It Newsletter. The previous editor did a wonderful job handing everything over to me and taking time to explain what to do, as it was very intimidating. I have been so blessed by serving on the newsletter. One way is that I get to recruit writers. This helps me to meet people and ask for them to share their talents. This helps my recovery because I am not isolating and I am getting to know other people. The next way is to write some of the articles myself. I have really enjoyed this and I have asked and received God's guidance about what to write. This connects me with my HP, which is always a good thing. I hope to one day have a committee of people interested in helping with the newsletter so they can have the opportunities for service that I have had. I really want to give away what I have been given in program because that is what brings me the most joy in OA. To see newcomers come to meetings and immediately get plugged in warms my heart because I know it will help them to recover. And lastly, I love that everyone has opportunities in OA to serve at the group, intergroup, and region levels and maybe someday attend WSBC or even become a trustee. Our theme for this year is action and service is action when you step out and serve the body of OA. Service is not scary; it makes me grateful, humble and abstinent.--Kym C.

Action to help the Region

Being a region rep has broadened my horizons, allowed me to get to know more people with stronger recovery than I know locally, understand how the business of an organization can be run with Robert's Rules, and how to humbly disagree or get input that changes my perspective. It is a safe place to practice being proactive and assertive. It has given me confidence to share my views without being offended by differing views, learning how better to put into words my thoughts about a subject--to try to see different sides of a question. ~Region Delegate

TAG: YOU'RE IT! We want to see how our fellows work this tool. If you would like to share how you work Action Plan into your recovery, please send your story to caspoohbear@aol.com.

The following quotes are from 2013 delegates about their experience at WSBC:

- *"I've been at WSBC for two years, and this experience has definitely strengthened my program. The workshops are wonderful, the process of group conscience inspiring, and I have skills from WSBC that I can bring back to my intergroup and groups that will strengthen recovery at home. People should be lining up for this service!"*
- *"I have greater respect for all workings of OA. There is no "we and they", just one big "us." I feel as though I am responsible for what I do here at Conference and it has an impact on OA as a whole. I have been changed in my attitude of gratitude. I am so grateful to the people who give their time and experience at this level of service. Also my global view of OA has flourished."*

For more quotes from the 2013 delegates, go to oa.org "A Step Ahead," 1Q, 2014

Service at the Region level is a lift to my recovery. It energizes me to bring back new ideas to our IG and inspires me to do more in my own personal recovery. Also, it makes me realize that we are not alone on this journey and there are so many others walking this path of service in recovery. ~Anonymous

Simplicity Project

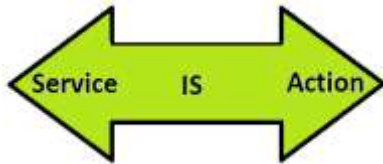
Consider a card you keep with you to refer to in tough times. WSBC 12th Step within committee is suggesting an index card with 4 quadrants, for example God, Abstinence, Service, and Action. These are reminders to bring you back to the part of your recovery you want to connect with when struggling.

My Action Plan Commitment

Okay, so summer is half over... but half of it remains. I want to use this opportunity to commit an action plan.

I have one meeting I can attend per week that is a mile away. I can drive 70 minutes on two other days to get to meetings, or I can drive 110 minutes to 12 other meetings. I know there are meetings throughout our region that are struggling to get and retain members. Attending a meeting is a form of service in my mind. I am, quite frankly, jealous of those of you who have meetings that are only 20 or 30 minutes away, and I'd like to think if I had that opportunity I'd attend at least 2 or 3 meetings a week.

So with these last few weeks (or hopefully months) before the snow flies again, I commit to driving to at least 2 meetings other than my weekly "home meeting." ~CS



Giving is Receiving

My recovery began in another 12 Step program in which I was very involved in service beyond the group level. After I came into OA, and as a reward of recovery, I went back to school and changed careers. My new career was much more demanding especially emotionally and spiritually so I didn't feel I was able to continue in service as I had in the past. I always yearned to get more involved in OA but the timing was never right.

About 3 years ago I moved and was unemployed while the local OA community was considering revitalizing our Intergroup. I got involved and served as the representative from my home group. We are small and mighty here in Southwest Michigan having only 8 meetings – one of them new and launched as a result of this intergroup renewal. Other reps and I went to all the meetings in our area encouraging them to elect a rep and participate in our Intergroup. Most of them did.

This commitment helped me get around my new community, meet people and become part of the local fellowship. It strengthened my abstinence and fulfilled that long held yearning to be more active and give more service in OA. From that grew my involvement in Region 5 and WSBC. It has been such a rich rewarding experience for me. It proves the adage that giving is receiving. Now I'm back to work full time and my term is expiring. It is interesting how HP provided exactly what I needed when I needed it. I am grateful for the gift of service in my program. ~Deborah K.

Being a part of the Group Conscience of OA

When I was asked to run for Intergroup Chair 4 years ago, I was stunned. I had the basic qualifications but was concerned that what I had to give was not adequate. If elected, I would also become a Region 5 Representative and a Delegate to the World Service Business Conference. I'd visited Region 5 Assembly as a visitor before I ran for IG Chair, and I was increasingly and more profoundly moved by the dedication and singleness of purpose I found in those present at the meetings. The thought of dozens of people giving their weekends for the greater good of OA, missing time with family and friends away from home to serve their Intergroup and Region, was almost overwhelming.

When I attended my first Region 5 Assembly and World Service Conference, it hit me that I was part of the Group Conscience of our Intergroup, Region, and of OA as a whole. What a humbling honor that is! To know that I have been entrusted to speak on behalf of those who elected me is a remarkable privilege and cannot be taken

lightly. Top on my gratitude list every day is that trust and privilege.

Make no mistake about it: serving above the group level is demanding work. It doesn't put cash in my wallet, but it buys me abstinence, gives me a sense of belonging to the world of OA in a most profound and meaningful way, and provides me with a means to pay a small portion of the debt I owe to OA and all of you for the life you returned to me in far better shape than it has ever been. And it is not all altruistic. My sign says, "WILL WORK FOR RECOVERY!"

As long as we are willing to serve, wherever we serve, we keep the doors open for us and those who follow us. Whatever service you do, THANK YOU! Without humble servants, there would be no OA.

~Vickie N. , Cleveland Central Intergroup Chair, Region 5 Representative, Region 5 Newsletter Chair and WSBC Delegate

Action to help meetings

When oa.org revamped the website, the "Find a Meeting" section switched a default. It used to be that the default for Open/Closed was "Closed." Now it is "Open." This means members of your meeting may be unaware it is listed as Open. You might consider taking the action of reviewing/editing your listing at your next group conscience meeting.

According to oa.org :Open Meeting: Open to OA members and non-OA visitors. All meetings are considered open unless otherwise indicated. Closed Meeting: Restricted to those who desire to stop eating compulsively (OA members and others who think they may have a problem with food).

Discussion at Assembly brought up these thoughts:

- Professional students are often required to attend a "12 step meeting" and are guided to look for Open meetings of any fellowship. If they show up here, they picked us for a reason.
- Meetings can designate in their format how they wish for visitors to identify themselves or participate, and members can choose how much or if they will share in the presence of a visitor.
- Anonymity statement may be stressed in the presence of guests if it isn't already.
- What better way is there for professionals to see recovery than to experience it first-hand?
- One meeting welcomes guests as newcomers, with a newcomer packet, meeting list, hugs, time for questions after the meeting, etc.

WHAT HAPPENS IN MERRILLVILLE

SHOULDN'T STAY IN MERRILLVILLE!

July 2014 Assembly Reports from committee chairs



12th Step Within: Speaker list is updated.
~ Shirley L., 12th Step Within Chair



Intergroup Outreach: Past Lifelines were distributed to Intergroups in attendance.



Nominating: There will be elections at the November assembly for Region 5 Chair and Treasurer. Find the Application for Officer link on region5oa.org in the left column under Region Forms; qualifications are listed on this form. There are links to Chair Day in the Life and Treasurer Day in the Life in the right column under Assembly Documents. The Responsibility and Duties of Region Officers are listed in the Policies and Procedures, pages C-5 through C-9. If you or someone you know might be qualified, willing, and able to serve the region in one of those positions, or if you have questions, please contact Susan M. (susan.m.oa@gmail.com, 847-710-8823).



Bylaws: Committee requests that amendments to the bylaws be suggested to bylaws committee for review, rather than going directly to assembly.



Finance: Our current treasurer won't be running. We will elect a new treasurer this fall.



Webmaster: The Region 5 website is being upgraded from version 2 to 3 of the content management system. Watch for changes. If you have any questions or comments about the new site please contact me at craig@1751partners.com or use the comment button on the website.

In recovery,

Craig R. Webmaster



Convention:

Abstinence is the Key, Columbus, OH
Oct. 31, Nov. 1 & 2, 2014.

Ruth is convention chair for 2015 which will be in Schaumburg, IL, Sept. 11-13, 2015.

Convention committee is updating the convention timeline and added convention to the OA.ORG Datebook. ~Ruth W. 2015 Convention Chair

Writing exercise

Question:

Are you completely honest with your sponsor so they can help you? What's your experience when you've not been honest with your sponsor?

Responses:

- Sometimes I forget to let my sponsor know of changes to my food plan or plan of action. This has resulted in new food creeping into my food plan and becoming problematic. It has also allowed me to vary my food or action plan on days I don't speak with my sponsor, something that can start me on the slippery slope to relapse.
- Yes I am completely honest. That is the only way they can help me. I have had other sponsors with whom I didn't open up to, which led me to believe they had all the answers. My sponsor helps me see what I can do, what's going on with me.
- I don't lie to my sponsor overtly, but sometimes lie by omission. The omission isn't always intentional. Sometimes I don't know what is bothering me. I am not good at identifying emotions. I seem to only have two – happy and angry. If it doesn't fall into that category, I don't recognize it. If I don't discuss things, my sponsor cannot help me. She is not a mind-reader.
- Yes, if I don't share it, I'll wear it. Once I admit something to my sponsor I've not become willing to accept it. If I'm not honest, it gets worse and worse, harder and harder to accept and move forward.
- If I am not honest with myself, I cannot be honest with my sponsor. Being honest with my sponsor opens the communication door and begins the recovery.



Public Information/ Professional Outreach (PI/PO)

~Alison B.-W., PI/PO Chair

Last month my dentist asked if I would be willing to talk with a second year dental student who was doing a survey on women’s health as related to dental care. As I fit the profile, a woman over the age of 31, I said yes. During my discussion with the student, she asked many questions about my history, my life, and my nutrition. I happened to mention that I was in Overeaters Anonymous and was maintaining my current body weight for over 8 years. I told her about abstinence and the spiritual solution and all about OA in general. As with many OAs in recovery, we tend to take much better care of our teeth after we become clearheaded through abstinence. When I completed the survey, she told me “You are now a part of medical history!” I mentioned to her, that as a dentist, she was in a unique position to observe the general health and size of her patients. Whether they were overweight or underweight or average weight would be immediately apparent to her as they sat in her dental chair; as well as their dental health. I told her about oa.org and the newsletter for professionals, The Courier. In this small way, I took advantage of an opportunity that was presented to me to “carry the message.”

Denise O. Chair of Region 5 has asked the PI/PO committee to take on a new project. That project is to get as many healthcare professionals as possible to sign up to receive The Courier. One way to do this is for each of us to take a copy of The Courier, 15 Questions, All About OA and our Local Meeting List to each one of our healthcare providers. This is one small contribution that each of us can make to “Carry the Message” and to ensure our own continued abstinence and growth in recovery. We can also talk to our Intergroups and get our local PI/PO Committees involved in this project. Maybe the committees would be able to pay for the literature packets out of their yearly budgets. If we don’t tell our healthcare professionals about OA, who will? How many lives might be saved by this simple service? Here are some examples of Intergroup actions and projects to “Carry the Message:”

Orange County Intergroup has a “sticky note” campaign. Sticky notes with the local website and phone number for OA are posted throughout the



area. The notes ask in large letters: **Is Food a Problem for You?**

Cleveland Central Intergroup’s PI Committee has had a similar campaign using business cards, which has been well received.

Milwaukee Area Intergroup did Diner Placemat Ads; they got the idea from a group in New York via oa.org. One of the Chicago Intergroups developed a database of churches; they have started to send out information about open meetings to the churches. Need more ideas for PI/PO? **Go to oa.org.**

WSO provides support for PO Committees participating in “trade shows” (called “Obesity Summits” or “Obesity Symposia” by hospitals). Some funding, reduced cost literature, and a display board are provided. Contact your Region 5 Trustee, Linda J. at region5trustee@gmail.com for more information and guidance.

Let World Service help!

OA is the best thing that has ever happened in my life – it has saved my life – and because of this fact there is nothing I wouldn’t do to support our organization and to carry the (our) message! I am proud to serve – and especially serve above the group level! It is an honor! I feel a part of something very, very special! The 12 Step program is ordained by God – the God of the universe. ~Anonymous

WHAT WOULD YOUR SPONSOR SAY?

By Region 5 Delegates at March and July 2014 Assemblies

Sponsee: I'm having trouble with this issue in my life. People ask if I've worked the Steps on it, but I don't know what they mean.

Sponsor: I found the following tool to work the Steps on a problem in the "Working the Steps" newsletter from Houston metro intergroup:

1. I am powerless over _____. How does this make my life on manageable?
2. Came to believe that God (Higher Power) can restore me to sanity. Explain.
3. Made the decision to turn _____ over to my Higher Power.
4. Inventory. What is my part in this?
List 2 fears. List 2 resentments.
5. Admit to God/HP, myself and another person (Who?) my character defects, fear, selfishness, resentment that contributed to the situation.
6. I am entirely ready to have God HP remove these character defects: _____
7. I ask God/HP to remove: _____
8. Made a list of persons I have harmed because of this problem. Person? ____ How have they been harmed? (Include yourself).
9. How can I make amends to each person on this list including myself? Make the amends and consider ways to make a living amends so is not repeat this behavior.
10. Continue to take inventory...what specific actions can I take to do this?
11. What specific actions can I take to establish or re- establish conscious contact with my Higher Power?
12. What spiritual awakening (new insight) have I had as a result of working these steps on the specific problem?



Sponsee: I'm considering running for Region 5 delegate, but I'm not sure, any thoughts?

Sponsor(s): *Rotation of service is a good thing for OA and me both. Giving service increases my recovery and it helps me work my program. We are not alone.

*I get to see people I don't see at regular local meetings. I have friends I can call on from this whole region. I look forward to seeing them, and meeting newcomers. I more fully understand the work and dedication it takes to maintain and improve our program of recovery. Without service at this level and beyond, our program would suffer. It shows me we need each and every member.

*HP does not always choose the equipped but equips the chosen and willing. This is a chance to carry the message at the level "beyond our wildest dreams."

*If you meet the abstinence requirement and have the weekends of Assembly open in your schedule, it's definitely worth doing.

*Business meetings stretch my tolerance and patience. It's an exercise in "love and tolerance is our code."

* November 2014 Assembly will feature leads from Region Chairs from around the world!

* I learn patience, the ability to work well with many different people to achieve common goals – promoting abstinence and giving our services. I cannot let people's personalities get in the way of our accomplishing our purpose – to carry the message to those who still suffer.

* I gained appreciate for the wonderful organization I am a part of. The board members and reps are professional, caring and fun. I no longer think of Region and WSO as "those people;" they are personal to me and I feel like a part of them. I brought back information and inspiration to my intergroup.

WSBC Delegate Responsibilities

To answer a question about responsibilities of Region 5 World Service Business Conference (WSBC)

Delegates: The "job description" for WSBC delegates should be in the Intergroup's Bylaws or Policies and Procedures Manual since the Delegate is actually giving service to the Intergroup. The duties are not defined by World Service and are not in Region 5 Bylaws or OA bylaws. I suggest the following 12 steps for a delegate.

- 1) Delegates represent the intergroup at WSBC. The WSBC is the worldwide group conscience for OA as a whole. Decisions made at WSBC affect OA as a whole, Regions, Intergroups, meetings, and members. Issues are discussed that are crucial to our on-going ability to carry the message of recovery to those who need it.
- 2) Delegates explain the proposed motions, (Policy and Bylaw amendments), to the Intergroup that will be discussed at the upcoming WSBC. The Intergroup votes on which proposals they feel are important to be discussed at WSBC. The Intergroup can also give written comments on the proposals to the Bylaws Committee at WSBC for consideration. The Intergroup gives input to the Delegate on how to vote or amend the upcoming proposals.
- 3) Delegates vote on the proposed motions at WSBC. They also may propose amendments and ask questions in order to be an informed voter.
- 4) Delegates select a Committee to serve on at WSBC and until the following WSBC. Committees include: Bylaws, Conference Literature, Finance, Professional Outreach, Public Information, Twelfth-Step Within, Unity with Diversity, Web/Technology, and Young Persons' Conference Committees.
- 5) Delegates learn from and give input at workshops on topics that are relevant to OA as a whole.
- 6) Delegates learn from and give input at the Forum, where delegates brainstorm on a specific topic. The input is posted to the website for members to utilize.
- 7) Delegates also elect Region and General Service Trustees. Trustees are entrusted with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous, (Concept 6).
- 8) Each member, group and service body has a stake in OA. Conference is the one opportunity we have as "shareholders" to come together and question, chart and steer the course of OA.
- 9) Delegates may attend OA meetings with members who have strong recovery from around the world. OA Meetings are held morning noon and night to

strengthen our personal programs and the messages we bring back to our Intergroups.

10) Delegates report the current state of OA and its direction for the future to Intergroups and groups.

11) Delegates receive a binder at WSBC to share with their Intergroups. In 2014 this 300+ page binder included General Information, the Policy Manual, proposed Literature and proposed motions, OA Inc Bylaws, and reports from OA Officers, Region Trustees, and Conference and Board Committees.

12) Delegates also share the Final conference Report with the Intergroup. This report contains all the decisions that were made at the Conference including all the new Literature that has received Conference approval and will be available soon after conference.

Request Support Funds

<http://region5oa.org/index.php/component/content/article/381-wso/wsbc/209-region-delegate-support-fund>

Region and World Service have funds to help struggling intergroups send delegates to WSBC. Region 5 has a WSBC Delegate fund of \$1000 total for intergroups to request financial assistance. An application is available on the Region 5 website. World Service also maintains a Delegate Support Fund totaling \$5000. A letter is mailed in July to all Intergroups and applications are due by Nov 1. Contact your Trustee if help is needed for the application.

Representation of our Intergroups fell below 40% in 2014, so Region 5 will also qualify to send delegates. Information on how to apply to serve as an at-large delegate for Region 5 is in the Region 5 Policy & Procedure Manual.

Other news

*Only a few of the meetings from the recently disbanded NEWIntergroup have affiliated with existing Intergroups.

**Overeaters Anonymous, 3rd Edition* should be available this fall.

If I can be of any further help please don't hesitate to contact me.

In service, Your Region 5 Trustee Linda J



Pause Pray & Check In

From the Chair....July 2014

Our theme this issue - "Action is Service – Service is Action." What does that mean to me? "Good question," as my sponsor would say, "have you written about that?" No, but we did recently talk about this very topic. So I guess this will count...as long as I share it with her. ☺

I had to look up the definitions – one variation for "action" is "a thing done;" for "service," I found "work performed by one who serves" and "a helpful act." So I guess technically, they could be the same. But what does it mean to me in OA?

One of my character defects is people-pleasing, so the old me would DO whatever I could to make *you* happy. I've always been a DOer...it's in my nature. If someone needed something done, I was your gal. Did I know how? Did it really matter? Would I have said NO, even if I didn't want to DO it? DOing was action to me and I was afraid you wouldn't like me if I said NO.

Now I'm in OA, in recovery, and gratefully abstinent. For me today, "action" means something done to keep me progressing in my recovery. It could be a phone call, a meeting, prayer, quiet time. (Right this minute, it means writing this article.) It can also be considered "service" if my action benefits our collective recovery...it's a "helpful act". (Maybe this article is helpful to you?) However, several years of working with my sponsor has taught me to always ask



this question - **WHAT IS MY INTENT?** Am I about to say "yes" because I'm a doer (selfish reasons) or because it is HP's (for me, that's God) will for me? I can easily become overwhelmed by service commitments *and* life; however, I'm then spread too thin and not really good to anyone. A changed behavior I continue to work on with my sponsor is to PAUSE & PRAY & CHECK IN with someone before I make a commitment. This gives me the opportunity to determine my intent. It's okay to say I have to pray about something first. It's okay to talk with my sponsor, the R5 Board, my husband, anyone else in OA first before I respond. It's okay to ask what's involved and what the time commitment would be, so I can make an informed decision. It's also okay to say NO...I can't do everything (my self-centeredness defect). My sponsor wisely points out that if I say "yes" to everything, I'm robbing someone else of the opportunity to serve and use the gifts God gave them. So my ACTION today is to continue to seek God's will on some "do I or don't I" questions; my SERVICE is to take the appropriate ACTION once His will for me becomes clear.

A quote from Montapert: "Do not confuse motion with progress. A rocking horse keeps moving but does not make any progress." Our goal is progress not perfection, my friends!

Have a blessed day of recovery!
~Denise O. Region 5 Chair

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