

What is Intergroup Renewal?

The following is taken from Region 1's Website
<https://www.oaregion1.org/intergroup-renewal.html>

- **Leadership:**
 - Strong recovery is the first requirement of OA leadership.
 - Clearly, the most important thing I can do each day is to try to help another compulsive eater, and the first and most important part of that is to be an example. I need to be living the 12 Steps before I can help another suffering compulsive overeater.
 - First comes my own recovery. If I'm not living the 12 step program of OA, including being abstinent, working the steps, passing it on, etc. I am not going to be a good leader in OA.
 - Role modeling is a big factor in leading, facilitating, getting cooperation and most importantly - attracting people to intergroup. Humility, gratitude, self-respect, and confidence are everything. We lead by following – 3rd Step
- **My Own Recovery Comes First**
 - If I feel OK about my own recovery, then I need to do an inventory of my own assets and liabilities as they pertain to leading a group of disparate compulsive eaters.
 - What aspect of relationships do I need to work on? Thin skin? Self-centeredness? Controlling? Intolerance? Emotionalism?
 - What new skills do I need to cultivate, if any? Not just emotional, but administrative as well.
 - What do I need to work on changing in me, or adding to my assets?
 - Do I have any attitudes about OA or different philosophies in OA that I need to reframe?
- **Acceptance, Patience & Tolerance**
 - All important in Intergroup leadership is acceptance, patience and tolerance toward all.
 - I need to stop any judging and criticizing, instead accepting, opening my mind, and being flexible.
 - I need to cultivate gratitude and humility.
 - Intergroup leadership is a great training ground for relationships!
- **Literature Quotes about Leadership:**
 - "...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, p. 106
 - "Trust God and focus on service." - Voices of Recovery, August 14
 - "A leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us naturally want to back him up and help him with his job.
 - When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own - well, he really isn't a leader at all. - As Bill Sees It - The A.A. Way of Life, p. 224.
 - "All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness." - Alcoholics Anonymous, 3rd edition, p. 567.
 - Good leaders lead by example, service, organizing, energizing, informing, training and asking questions
- **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 IG'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!
- **Good Leaders in OA:**
 - Take no credit. It's always the group. "I help organize and energize, but other people do all the work, not me!"
 - Are always wearing 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 it 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.
- **OA leadership is about waking up and organizing the gratitude in grateful people.**
 - What? An Intergroup Inventory, sort of a 4th step for your service body.
 - Why? It's the first step in the renewal process. The answers to the inventory questions naturally lead to the question of what we can we do about the issues raised, and help refine the structure and mission of your Intergroup.
 - An Intergroup inventory, followed by member surveys, is critical to raising awareness, arousing interest and helping people identify and take ownership of the Intergroup. It helps us become a true "we." The ultimate goal is to bring all members to the point of understanding that we are all part of Intergroup and Intergroup is part of us, whether we go to Intergroup meetings or not.
 - Invite every OA that the Intergroup serves (not just the Intergroup regulars). This helps build enthusiasm throughout your organization and allows the "we" to become solid, so everyone knows they are part of Intergroup.
- **How?**
 - Start with the Intergroup Inventory form from World Service. Find it at <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/IntergroupInventory.pdf> everyone, and then gather as many people as are willing to work through the questions in the document.
- **When?**
 - It's most effective to have a special session totally devoted to the inventory. It is best not to just do a little at each Intergroup meeting. Schedule a time that is likely to allow the most participation, but don't let perfect be the enemy of good enough.
- **And then what?**
 - Meet. Remind everyone to participate with honesty and objectivity and with a spirit of patience, tolerance, kindness and love.

- There will be disagreements, and (almost always) disagreement and a diversity of opinions lead to the most creative and useful ideas. Go through the questions. Summarize the results.
- **Create action plans from those results.**
 - Publish the summary and action plan widely. Ask everyone what they think. This is, in essence, the member survey.
- **The basic question is:**
 - “How can Intergroup help you?” Follow up after you get reactions and responses to the action plan.
- **Intergroup Renewal**
 - Surveys IG inventories followed by member surveys are the most critical part of raising consciousness and awareness, arousing interest in doing something, building a cause with which people can identify and eventually take ownership of.
 - It becomes a true “we” or “our” OA. Intergroup inventories and member surveys touch every member and raise awareness of Intergroup in a positive way.
 - After summarizing the results of the inventory, the next step is action plans.
 - One of those action plans has to be to publish the results of the inventory to the membership and then ask them what they think.
 - That’s the member survey which is basically, “How can we (IG) help you?” Organizations stick around for a long time if they are “learning organizations.”
 - That means they have a mechanism in place to get continual feedback from “customers,” and to learn from the feedback their customers give them. These organizations make adjustments, keep up-to-date, do new things.
 - Lack of attendance at intergroup is feedback.
 - Non-attendance is the same as a written survey. If an Intergroup learns nothing from that, ultimately it fades away.
 - Member surveys are the grass-roots tool for getting member involvement and eventually ownership for OA’s health in their area.
- **Surveys:**
 - Establish communication with the groups.
 - Help build community with a “to and from” flow.
 - Generate interest.
 - Stimulate service.
- **Focus Intergroup efforts on the highest priority needs of groups and members.**
 - Become the basis for
 - Strategic Plans: long range objectives
 - Operating Plans – current year’s priorities and budgets.
- **Now what?**
 - Talk to your Intergroup Team
 - Contact Region 5 to schedule some time
 - We are all in this together!