

March 2011

Together We Can

A publication of the NYS Capital District Intergroup

*This issue's
special
focus is on
Service*

Step 12

***Having had a
spiritual
awakening as
the result of
these Steps,
we tried to
carry this
message to
compulsive
overeaters
and to
practice these
principles in
all our affairs.***

.....

***As OA's
responsibility
pledge states:
"Always to
extend the
hand and
heart of OA to
all who share
my
compulsion;
for this I am
responsible."***

What has service meant to *your* recovery?

Change is Possible As someone who's just recently started to do service, I notice a few repercussions of it that stand out. One, is that it's changed my view of myself a little bit; I've gone from having no clue about what the service positions are and what they consist of, to being one of the people who does them. It's similar to going from expecting my first baby to becoming an experienced parent, to whom other people could turn for help and advice. Maybe eventually I'll become one of those people who puts a ton of time into service, I don't know, but that will be another point along the journey. Change is possible, progress is possible. If I can make changes in my relationship to the group, maybe I can make other changes, like learning to work my program better and leave old destructive patterns behind.

Another thing service is useful for is simply accomplishing something. As a depressive person, I know it's always good for me to take action, and however I might be feeling on a particular day, if I perform a task, I can take some satisfaction in that.

Finally, service is helping me claim my seat. I have trouble being physically present with people and feeling like I deserve my share of space and the air I take up on this earth, and as awkward as it is, service makes me deal with being present in the room and being known. I know it goes back to early shame, and in many ways I feel like OA is making me relive a lot of that but with a chance to make it all turn out better. ***B.H.***

A Deepening Connection From a personal point of view I thoroughly enjoy participating in Intergroup both as a representative of a meeting and group visit coordinator. Making phone calls asking people to participate in the trips, organizing material to bring, discussing a presentation, the drive down and back (the meeting after the meeting) all contributed to a deepening feeling of connection to OA. I felt involved and energized in my commitment to the OA recovery program. I have had conversations and interactions with wonderful people I never would have met otherwise. ***F.G.***

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My Disease Tells Me to Isolate I've been in recovery for over 11 years and I've done all kinds of service; Lifeline rep, PO Box key holder, contact person for a meeting, to name a few. They required little time and effort. The most challenging and most rewarding service I have done was being the chair of the committee for the Albany Marathon Chair. My disease tells me to isolate from others; that I'm not worthy of being a part of this; that I'll fail everyone and I would fall flat on my face; that I won't be able to gather people together to create something good. So it was challenging to turn my back on my disease and ask for guidance from my higher power who told me that I could count on her and others to make this work.

It was rewarding because it allowed me to get past my fears in the warm, safe, environment of Overeaters Anonymous. Because it was a big effort, it required me to allow others into my world.

In the end, was it a perfect marathon? No, it wasn't, but it was a pretty darn good one. It turned out so well because so many people were committed to it and I learned it's about progress, not perfection. Working on the marathon truly brought home to me the saying, *I put my hand in yours and together we can do what we cannot do alone.* **G.H.**

A Reason to Show Up The last two years I had a regular service commitment as meeting treasurer. Every week when I thought about skipping the meeting, that commitment kept me coming back. Even on the days I had to miss the meeting, the commitment forced me to reach out to a fellow member to ensure that service was done. It was difficult to give up but important to allow someone else to perform the job after my term was up. Sure enough, now there are weeks when I shrug and think – maybe I don't have to go... That is scary for me.

Service has kept me coming and the more meetings I get to the stronger my recovery has been. I have made deeper friendships, tapped into skills I didn't know I had, and learned some lessons about asking for help. I now make sure I have service commitments in more than one meeting. It may be the only reason I am sitting in the room some days, but that is better than staying away. **M.S.**

**New York
Capital District
Intergroup
Meetings**

**March 12, 2011
April 9, 2011
May 14, 2011
June 11, 2011**

**All Meetings
are held at
10:10am
following the
9:00am meeting
at the VA
Hospital in
Albany.**

**Each OA
meeting may
send two
representatives
to Intergroup,
but you do not
need to be a
representative
to attend. All
are welcome!**

More about Service...

Making Promises to Others Service has been a lifeline to OA for me. I have always been a lot better at keeping promises to others than those I make to myself. Likewise, I keep commitments to others. Service is one of those commitments made to others. More than once I have been ready to quit OA. The reasons don't really matter. I was giving up. Usually, the only thing that kept me coming back was some sort of service commitment, either at the meeting level or to Intergroup. I had *promised* to do something. So, I planned to stay in OA only so long as it took to finish that commitment. At one point, I had completed all my OA commitments, and I had even let my sponsorships dwindle to one lone sponsee. What I noticed was that the more I detached from OA, the worse my food got. Eventually, of course, I was in relapse. I came back and resolved to stay. To strengthen that resolution, I started taking on services commitments again and making promises to others. As my program got stronger, so did my abstinence. Clearly, service is absolutely vital to my recovery. It keeps me connected. It is a lifeline. **K.T.**

What's going on in Intergroup?

Meeting Outreach: Group: this activity aims to make all our meetings more aware of the functions our Intergroup is currently engaged in, and of upcoming events. This is especially important for meetings in communities further away from the core area of Albany-Schenectady-Saratoga. By reaching out to these other meetings we can strengthen the OA message and encourage them to become a more active part of our Fellowship.

I have already been privileged to participate in three visits this year. Each meeting varied widely in the number of members and level of involvement in OA activities, but at all of them we were welcomed with enthusiasm and interest.

This committee, like all the other Intergroup committees, is not restricted just to Intergroup representatives. Hopefully your representative has brought back to your group the Intergroup chart with all the committees listed and their roles and responsibilities. If you are looking for something to strengthen your abstinence or jumpstart your commitment, I highly recommend getting involved to whatever level you feel comfortable.

If anyone is interested in going on a "road trip" to visit some of our sister meetings, please give me a call and I would be happy to tell you more.

**Faye G. 235-1110
Group Site Visit Coordinator**

More News From Intergroup?

Intergroup is growing! Are you ready to grow with us? Increased participation allows us new opportunities for activities supporting all OA recovery groups.

What a year it's been!

- Phone calls to more than 50 of you allowed us to offer a complete ballot of service position nominations for the first time in years. Representation from our meetings has doubled the size of our NYS Capital District monthly Intergroup meetings.
- A fall marathon was successfully planned and held, the first such Albany event in years. Over 45 members attended from throughout our region and speakers included OA members from our area as well as those traveling from Manhattan and Brooklyn.
- During "The 100 Calls Project" members made a call to someone they hadn't seen at a meeting recently.
- Intergroup volunteers have traveled to Saratoga, Vermont, Hudson, and Schenectady to keep the lines of communication open and encouraged participation. Additional visits are planned for spring.

And we aren't done yet! We have a lot planned for 2011!

- Come join Intergroup members and participate in whatever way you can! We are looking for volunteers for Outreach, Nominations/Participation, Social Activities, 12th Step Within, Special Events, Pubic Information, Financial Advisement, and Technical Support. Remember *service* is a tool of recovery.
- Our Financial Advisement Group has launched to suggest ways in which our Intergroup might spend its funds to best meet the needs of the compulsive overeater who has found OA and those who are still suffering.

"Hope Springs"
Marathon
Saturday, April 2, 2011
9am – 4pm

Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church
624 N. Broadway, Saratoga

From Lifeline....

Keeping the Road Clear - I live in a small town. I am thankful we have a couple of strong OA meetings in this town and a wonderful Step-Study meeting in the neighboring town. The neighboring meeting is my home group because at first I did not want people in my hometown to recognize me as an overeater. Of course now I don't care. The local meeting has 20 to 30 regular attendees. The neighboring group has eight to 10 regular members, up from three or four in the last year, and it's growing. I concentrate my service efforts within that group, since they gave me my initial support and need more helping hands. My home group discussed group-service work and the possibility of hosting a share-a-thon, even though we are small. We also addressed the concept of community service to make OA more visible to still-suffering compulsive eaters so they can find us without the obstacle (or excuse) of not knowing where we meet or how to contact us. One group member contacted the local papers and placed meeting notices with times and locations. Most papers consider such notices public-service announcements and place them free. This service is quick, easy and far-reaching. Several group members and I have dedicated ourselves to placing OA information cards on the bulletin boards we pass. The information cards (available through the WSO) include local meeting times and places, OA's Web address, and the first name and phone number of a group member able and willing to accept phone calls. We call ourselves the Bulletin-Board Babes. Our concept of service is to reach out to the community and keep the road to OA clear and obstacle-free for those still suffering from the disease of compulsive eating. For this we are responsible. *S.C., Peterborough/Keene, New Hampshire (reprinted from Lifeline Sept/Oct 2010)*

Dates to Remember...

April 1-3 – 4th Annual OA Retreat “Sexuality and Intimacy in Recovery” sponsored by the Intergroup of Ithaca and Corning (email mcf3@cornell.edu for more info)

April 9 – “Hope Springs” Saratoga Area Marathon, 9am – 4pm, Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church, 624 N. Broadway, Saratoga

April 9 - Region Six Assembly, Best Western, Western Avenue, Albany
(Recovery Meetings 8:15pm Fri & 7:30am Sat – Executive Room)

April 25-30 - World Service Business Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico USA

September 24 – Region 6 Assembly, Best Western, Western Avenue, Albany

October 21-23 - Region 6 Convention, Crowne Plaza White Plains New York

November 19 - International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA)

December 12 - Twelfth-Step-Within Day

We're on the Web!

Check It Out:

nycd.oagroups.org

Meeting Lists

OA Information

Inspiration

Event Calendar

Links

World Service

www.oa.org

Region 6

oaregion6.org

Editorial Policy

Together We Can is the newsletter of the New York State Capital District Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous.

Submissions will appear with the author's initials unless otherwise requested.

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The opinions expressed are those of the individual writers and not those of NYSCD IG or OA as a whole.

Please address all submissions and suggestions to the editor.

Maureen W.

Togetherwecan15@yahoo.com

Next Newsletter Topic – Spirituality!

What keeps you Inspired, Grounded and Connected?

Send Submissions Now! Deadline May1st

About Our Organization...

The NYS Capital District Intergroup provides support to OA members and groups within the greater Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Saratoga and Glens Falls area.

NYSCD INTERGROUP

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