

# **2015 World Service Business Conference**

## **Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 27 – May 2, 2015**

### **Dorothy Martin & Jill Meier**

Approximately 190 delegates and trustees attended the 2015 WSBC. There were 22 different countries represented: Israel, Ireland, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Denmark, Greece, USA, Brazil, Italy, Columbia, Mexico, Canada, Venezuela, Scotland, England, Sweden, Costa Rica, Austria and France.

**Workshops** (full report of workshops will be available on the OA.org website in the near future.)

#### **How the Miracle of Abstinence is Supported by the Fellowship**

Purpose: To discuss how the Fellowship we crave replaces our need to use food and how the relationships we form in OA support our abstinence.

- 1) How does being involved in my OA community support my abstinence?
- 2) Do I understand that the Fellowship, while important, is only a part of the solution?
- 3) How do I welcome others to participate and become involved in OA? What examples do I set?

When I'm involved with my community I don't feel alone anymore, I am with my family. I have people to call when I need help. The people are the fellowship and the Steps are the program! I invite others to join me at intergroup meetings and at region assembly. I offer to carpool. I show how doing service is part of the program and how it can be fun.

#### **How the Miracle of Abstinence is Supported by Using the Tools**

Purpose: To discuss the benefits of using the Tools and how they support the miracle of abstinence.

- 1) How does using the Tools support working the Steps?
- 2) Which Tools will I use today to maintain my abstinence?

This is a Twelve-Step program, not a Nine-Tool program. The tools are the handrails of the steps and we use the Tools to work the steps. All of the Tools are important even if we don't use every Tool every day.

#### **We Receive the Miracle of Abstinence by Practicing the Spiritual Principles of the Program**

Purpose: To discuss the spiritual Principles associated with the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.

- 1) How does practicing these Principles strengthen the miracle of abstinence?
- 2) We've all heard "We practice these principles in all our affairs" in Step Twelve and "principles before personalities" in Tradition Twelve. Give some examples of ways you live by these principles.
- 3) How do the Principles of the Twelve Concepts help us apply the Steps and Traditions in our service work?

The principles are found in Tradition 5, p.147 in the Twelve and Twelve. These principles need to be practiced in ALL my affairs – that includes relationships. At meetings, one needs to hear about the principles rather than the problems. How do my actions reflect the principles? Principles saves lives. Principles is where we live the program. What principles am I practicing today? "The sunlight of the spirit" can be found in the principles.

#### **The Miracle of Maintenance: How Continued Abstinence and Working All Twelve Steps Keeps Recovery Fresh**

Purpose: To discuss the necessity of working through all Twelve Steps to achieve and maintain the miracle of abstinence.

- 1) Why is the continued use of all OA Twelve Steps necessary to maintain the miracle of abstinence?
- 2) How do I weave OA into the fabric of my life?
- 3) What are the ways I keep my recovery fresh?

Steps 10, 11, and 12: Do step 10 daily and live in gratitude. Food is not the problem; it is the lack of control of food that is. At "minimum practice", we analyze. At "maximum practice," we take action. If an issue comes up, do a Tenth Step immediately – if not, then it would be like leaving a bad cut untreated for 3 days – a band aid vs amputation!

#### **One Abstinence, Many Food Plans That Lead to the Miracle of Abstinence**

Purpose: To honor the diversity in food plans while maintaining unity.

- 1) What is the difference between a plan of eating and abstinence?
- 2) How can we honor Tradition One with diversity in food plans?
- 3) Is a plan of eating necessary to maintain abstinence?

One needs to be abstinent on all three levels: physically, emotionally and spiritually. A food plan works the physical aspect of the disease. What someone else is eating is none of my business. There can be as many food plans as there are members in program. A plan of eating is necessary but doesn't have to be complicated. See the new workshop on oa.org.

## **The Miracle of Abstinence Within Intergroups/Service Boards**

Purpose: To discuss how working beyond the group level can support an individual's abstinence and ways to encourage members to participate.

- 1) How important is abstinence at the intergroup/service board level? Are abstinence requirements needed?
- 2) How does serving on intergroups/service boards help preserve the miracle of abstinence?
- 3) What are some ways that intergroups/service boards can help members who are struggling?
- 4) What are ways to increase the health of the intergroup/service board?

As we grow spiritually, we lose the need for prestige. Abstinence is important and must come first, but different service positions may require different lengths of abstinence. Sometimes an abstinence requirement might keep one from breaking their abstinence and having to step down. Intergroups and service boards are in the best position to organize workshops, retreats, etc. for their members. Recovery from Relapse meetings are often well-attended and can keep members in program while they become abstinent. Get more members involved in what happens at intergroup and they may be more likely to attend themselves. Hold a step or tradition meeting before or after the intergroup meeting. Invite others to attend and carpool together.

## **All About Conference**

Purpose: To provide delegates the opportunity to hear experienced members discuss the workings of Conference and have their questions and concerns answered; to facilitate an orderly Conference by reviewing parliamentary procedures.

This session was primarily for delegates attending their first conference. Dorothy was considered a Green Dot as it had been many years since she last attended. The session was very informative and helpful. They went through the binder explaining sections, they encouraged everyone to attend committee meetings and to take care of themselves because of the demands of the schedule. In addition, they explained how the center microphone worked during meetings.

## **Strategic Planning**

Purpose: To update the Fellowship on the strategic planning process.

- 1) How can groups and service bodies participate in the Strategic Plan in their own areas?

Jill attended this workshop. The attendees formed groups and brainstormed about how their groups/intergroups help members attain and maintain abstinence.

## **Forum: There's No Place Like OA: Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Recovery!**

Purpose: Take a trip back to the Land of Oz and help Dorothy experience the necessity of taking all Twelve Steps in order to recover. As Dorothy confronts obstacles that could prevent her from taking each Step, delegates will be asked to act as her sponsors, offering her suggested solutions to each obstacle so she can move on to the next Step. Dorothy learns she had the answer (Higher Power) inside her the whole time, and she doesn't need a wizard to find a new way of life in OA.

Each table was given one Step, and worked as a team for 12 minutes to help Dorothy (Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz, not Dorothy, the WSBC delegate from NH Intergroup) overcome an obstacle. Dorothy's table worked on Step 3: "It is one thing to turn my will over to this HP, but MY LIFE? Won't I become a robot?" The "Step 3" table worked on explaining the leap of faith required. Jill's table had Step 5. "Maybe I could admit them to myself and to my HP, but to another person? What will they think of me? They might lock me away!" The "Step 5" table discussed how we feel less alone when we share our secrets. Each table shared their solutions so that Dorothy from Oz could move ahead with her program of recovery. It was amazing to witness what can be accomplished in a short amount of time when maintaining focus on a single purpose.

**OA Meetings:** There were approximately 20 OA meetings scheduled throughout the 6 days (3-4 daily). Quotes heard:

- I'm a lifer
- Being overweight is but symptom of my disease
- My resources come from within
- My ex-wife was food....I had to go through a divorce to get well.
- For today, I eat to live.
- In program, I receive the gift of identification and then the gift of hope
- I need to change my reaction to \_\_\_\_\_.
- "Did you give it to God?".....GIVE IT TO GOD!
- Stay in your right place – get out of your ego!
- Abstain from perfectionism, negativity and feeling like I have to start over
- Don't run away from a feeling. Sit down and have a "heart to heart" talk with it – like you would a real live person – eye-to-eye! ...and then tell it to take a hike!! I'm only as sick as my secrets!
- I've stopped asking my Higher Power for patience! And patience isn't one of the spiritual principles!

### **Significant Information in Officers Reports:**

1. All OA literature is periodically reviewed. Starting in 2013, the OA 12 & 12 came up for review on the Strategic Publications Plan. No date has been set for completion of review. It is interesting that delegates from 6 time zones are working on this.
2. This year, trustees led monthly virtual workshops available on the podcast page of the OA website (OA.org.).
3. The OA website has been updated.
4. Lifeline magazine is short 3153 subscriptions of the 10,000 goal in order to be fully self-supporting.
5. Two bequests were made and placed in the General Fund: \$100,000 from our foundress, Rozanne and \$15,000 from former Region 6 Trustee, Mary Rose.
6. All OA literature is available in e-reader formats except the workbooks, which are downloadable PDFs.
7. OA literature has been translated or is in the process of being translated into twenty-nine languages in forty-two countries. The three new languages OA literature is being translated into are Korean, Lithuanian and Chinese.

### **Significant Information in Committee Reports:**

1. Virtual Services is working to increase 7<sup>th</sup> tradition. The average contribution is still very low but has doubled since the previous year.
2. A new OA piece of literature, Taste of Lifeline, has been approved and may be out as early as July 2015.
3. Finance Committee stated that 7<sup>th</sup> tradition was down this year. They are updating the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition pamphlets and promoting the use of an automatic recurring contribution program to increase donations at face-to-face meetings as well as virtual meetings.
4. Professional Outreach Committee developed a Quick Quote sheet for professionals and how to talk to professionals: Do's, Don'ts and Tips

### **Committee meetings:**

Dorothy attended the Bylaws Committee. After brainstorming, the committee formed five subcommittees who will work on the following:

1. To develop a PDF handbook for service boards and a format for Policies and Procedures for those who need to clean up their bylaws and/or policies and procedures. Hopefully a PDF will be created on OA.org.
2. To work on creating a bylaws pamphlet
3. To work on the possibility of creating Region 11 which will encompass virtual meetings
4. To work on/study the issue of anonymity and its importance in this age of electronic media. What wording needs to be added to this policy to protect members' personal anonymity?
5. To study the procedure to switch from one region to another

Jill is a member of the Conference-Approved Literature Committee. OA's publications manager explained the literature development process. Three new literature proposals were reviewed, and one will be recommended to the Board of Trustees to go forward. It was proposed by the Young Persons in OA Committee and would be a collection of member stories about body image, sexuality and relationships. Five subcommittees were formed to work on various pieces of literature. The subcommittees determined their preliminary short and long term goals for the year.

### **Business meetings:**

#### **WSBC Proposed Literature Motions A-A, A-B, A-C:**

These were reviewed on Wednesday evening in a Literature Q & A from 8:30 to 10:00 pm in order to facilitate the passage of the three revised pamphlets when they were brought up for a vote. On Thursday, they were granted the Conference Seal of approval (hopefully all literature will be available for purchase by the end of summer 2015):

OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: This pamphlet tells what we belong to and provides us with a sense of place.

A Program of Recovery: This pamphlet explains to potential members what OA offers and provides them with the "Fifteen Questions" so they can decide if OA is for them.

A Guide for Sponsors: This pamphlet offers guidance and support for sponsors. It answers questions on why, when and how to be a sponsor. The appendix lists 30 questions to help newcomers begin working the Steps.

**WSBC New Business Motions/Bylaw Amendments (see [www.oa.org/pdfs/wrap\\_up\\_report\\_15.pdf](http://www.oa.org/pdfs/wrap_up_report_15.pdf) for full report)**

Proposals A, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 were simple “housekeeping” motions and were adopted all together by consent agenda.

Proposal B about involvement in WSBC conference during the year was adopted after an amendment which stated that “Service on a committee is expected and the commitment should be maintained throughout the following WSBC.”

Proposal G about adding language to the OA Preamble was adopted as amended. The last sentence of OA’s preamble now reads: “Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.”

Proposal H was withdrawn by the Board of Trustees who had submitted it. Upon further consideration they felt the proposal was unnecessary.

Proposal I was adopted and thus the WSBC Final Conference Report will be made available electronically.

Proposal J was adopted after an amendment that eliminated the word “badge” from the proposal. From now on “World Service will display the name “Overeaters Anonymous” on all displays, banners, and other signage at World Service events. This does not apply to badges.”

Proposal 7 failed to change the percent of registered groups that have to respond in order to make a bylaw change.

**Region Trustee Elections:**

Region 3: Vicki from Utah ran unopposed and was re-elected for a second term.

Region 6: Karin from Ottawa ran unopposed and was re-elected for a second term.

Region 9: Stella from the UK (United Kingdom) was elected for her first term.

**General Service Trustee Elections:**

Tina-from Region 6 was re-elected for a second term and Bonnie from Region 5 was elected for a first term.

**Other Notes:**

It was suggested that when subscribers finish reading a copy of *Lifeline* magazine, they leave it where a potential newcomer can find it, such as at a medical office. If other members can easily find issues at their meetings, it may keep them from subscribing themselves!

During the conference last year, the Seventh Tradition was taken once per day during the business meetings. This year, to save time, it was only passed around once, with a “threat” that if it was less than last year, it would go back to being taken each day. The amount collected was over \$5900, which was more than \$1400 over last year’s amount. This was a personal contribution, and delegates were reminded that not only were we missing our regular meetings and contributions, but we had a wealth of meetings available to us during conference week. The Seventh Tradition that was collected promotes the work of OA, and its purpose was not to defray the expenses incurred by holding WSBC!

Automatic Recurring Contributor program – Join or rejoin. Visit [oa.org](http://oa.org)’s “Contribute” page or call 1-505-891-2664.

Two new handouts, “Twelve Stepping a Problem” and “The Spiritual Principles of the OA Program” are available from the Documents section on the OA website, [oa.org](http://oa.org). They are included at the end of this report for your convenience.

Also included are a map of the OA regions and a description of the OA service structure.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to attend WSBC this year as your delegates. It has been a privilege to be able to give back what we have so generously been given to OA as a whole!

Yours in loving service,  
Dorothy and Jill

Attachments: Twelve Stepping a Problem: [http://www.oa.org/pdfs/twelve\\_stepping\\_a\\_problem.pdf](http://www.oa.org/pdfs/twelve_stepping_a_problem.pdf)  
The Spiritual Principles of OA: [https://www.oa.org/pdfs/the\\_spiritual\\_principles.pdf](https://www.oa.org/pdfs/the_spiritual_principles.pdf)  
Map of OA Regions: <https://www.oa.org/pdfs/oaregions.pdf>  
OA Service Structure: <https://www.oa.org/membersgroups/service-body-support/#OAstructure>



## Twelve Stepping a Problem

This writing exercise is an approach using the Twelve Steps of OA to deal with life's challenges without turning to food. Enhance your recovery by using this document individually or as the focus of a workshop.

- 1) I admit I am powerless over \_\_\_\_\_. How does this make my life unmanageable?
  
- 2) Do I believe that a power greater than myself can restore me to sanity? YES or NO  
If no, explain why not. What would recovery look like in relation to this problem?
  
- 3) Have I made a decision to turn \_\_\_\_\_ over to the care of God/Higher Power? YES or NO If no, explain why not.
  
- 4) Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself. List any fears, resentments, harms. What is my part in this?
  
- 5) Am I willing to admit to God/Higher Power, myself, and another person the exact nature of the wrongs that contributed to this situation? If YES, continue to number six. If NO, return to number one.
  
- 6) Am I entirely ready to have God/Higher Power remove these defects of character?  
YES or NO If no, explain why not.

- 7) Have I humbly asked God/Higher Power to remove my shortcomings? YES or NO  
(Refer to fears, resentments, harms in number four above.)
- 8) Make a list of all persons I have harmed because of this. (Include yourself.) How have they been harmed? Am I willing to make amends to them all?
- 9) How and when will I make amends?
- 10) Continue to take a personal inventory. What specific actions can I take today?
- 11) What specific actions can I take today to establish, re-establish, improve conscious contact with God/Higher Power?
- 12) What spiritual awakening/new insight have I had as the result of working these Steps on this specific problem?



## **THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF THE OA PROGRAM**

The Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service have principles related to them. They are listed here:

### **The Principles in the Twelve Steps (as listed in Step Twelve of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* of *Overeaters Anonymous*)**

Step One:	Honesty
Step Two:	Hope
Step Three:	Faith
Step Four:	Courage
Step Five:	Integrity
Step Six:	Willingness
Step Seven:	Humility
Step Eight:	Self-discipline
Step Nine:	Love for others
Step Ten:	Perseverance
Step Eleven:	Spiritual Awareness
Step Twelve:	Service

### **The Principles in the Twelve Traditions (as listed in the *Service, Traditions and Concepts Workshop Manual*)**

Tradition One:	Unity
Tradition Two:	Trust
Tradition Three:	Identity
Tradition Four:	Autonomy
Tradition Five:	Purpose
Tradition Six:	Solidarity
Tradition Seven:	Responsibility
Tradition Eight:	Fellowship
Tradition Nine:	Structure
Tradition Ten:	Neutrality
Tradition Eleven:	Anonymity
Tradition Twelve:	Spirituality

**The Principles in the Twelve Concepts of OA Service**  
**(as listed in *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* pamphlet)**

Concept One:	Unity
Concept Two:	Conscience
Concept Three:	Trust
Concept Four:	Equality
Concept Five:	Consideration
Concept Six:	Responsibility
Concept Seven:	Balance
Concept Eight:	Delegation
Concept Nine:	Ability
Concept Ten:	Clarity
Concept Eleven:	Humility
Concept Twelve:	Guidelines
	(a) Selflessness
	(b) Realism
	(c) Representation
	(d) Dialogue
	(e) Compassion
	(f) Respect



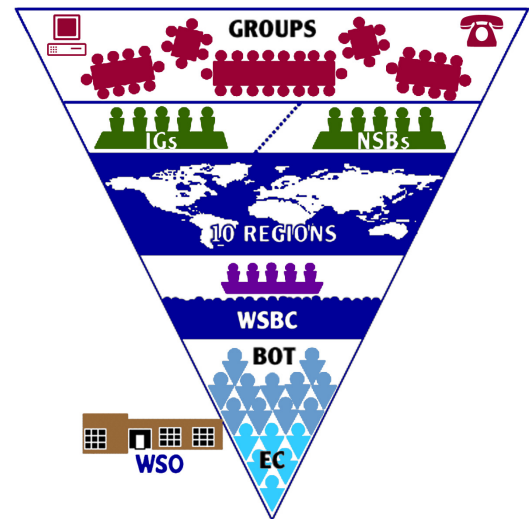
## Structure of OA

### Individual members

OA's diverse membership consists of more than 6,500 registered groups in over 80 countries.

### Groups

A group consists of two or more people. Each group practices the [Twelve Steps](#) and [Twelve Traditions](#) of OA, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service. No member of a group is required to practice any actions to remain an OA member or to have a voice at a meeting.



### Intergroups and Service Boards

Intergroups and Service Boards consist of two or more groups. Intergroups are usually formed of meetings within a general geographic area. Service Boards are service bodies that provide support for groups and/or intergroups that are not otherwise served within the existing service structure. This includes national service boards (NSBs), language service boards (LSBs), and virtual service boards (VSBs). NSBs serve groups and intergroups that speak one language (usually not English). LSBs serve groups and/or intergroups, usually in different countries, that share a common language. VSBs serve virtual groups (online or telephone meetings). If you are interested in starting an intergroup or service board, read [Suggestions for Starting an Intergroup/Service Board](#) for more information.

### Regions

OA has 10 regions worldwide that maintain direct communication with groups and intergroups/service boards. Regions sponsor local conventions and assemblies. Regional assemblies also nominate trustee candidates to serve on OA's Board of Trustees (BOT), whose members are elected at the [World Service Business Conference \(WSBC\)](#).

### World Service

The WSBC, attended by delegates from around the world, meets annually each May to conduct the business of OA and to elect the 17-member [Board of Trustees](#). The board acts on behalf of all members of the OA Fellowship. The World Service Office (WSO) works with the BOT to provide quality support and services to the entire OA Fellowship.

# Overeaters Anonymous Regions

Click on region name to go to region website



Note: These links are provided as a courtesy. Listing them here does not imply endorsement of these sites or any outside enterprise that may be referenced in these sites.