

Minutes of the Special 3/21/2015 WNY OA Intergroup (IG) meeting

WNY OA IG Chair Vicky H. opened at 9:03 with the Serenity Prayer. Mary K. read the 12 Steps, Amy K-S read the 12 Traditions, and Sue S. read the 12 Concepts. Attendees: Paulette H.; Liz O.; Sally H.; Judy G.; Leigh ; Sue M.; Janet M.; Mary K; Amy K-S; Sue S; Peter H. This was a special meeting because most of the regular business was tabled until next month in order to hear from Karin R (Region 6 Trustee).

Vicky H. opened by explaining that participation in IG is down, that at some of the region's weekly meetings we only see three people, attendance at all meetings is down in general, it's hard to replace service positions when people rotate out.

Karin R. said that she has been involved in IG renewal.

She said that Don C. from White Plains, NY (note: who came to WNY once for a spring retreat) has a whole IG renewal weekend program.

Go to www.aa.org and see what materials are available.

Take an IG inventory. Karin's IG took two meetings to do this. Here are some steps to take:

- Get the word out that an inventory is taking place
- Ask at the weekly meetings "How does IG currently serve you?"
- The topic should always be service, as in "How can IG serve you in the future?"
- You will find that there is a lot of misunderstanding about what IG does

ACTION STEPS

Each month, send in all reports in advance and have an agenda for each IG meeting (even with everyone getting the reports in advance and an agenda, the Ottawa IG meetings still take 90 minutes).

Each month, spend less time on the "busy-ness" of reading reports and more time on group issues, hearing from group reps, and inviting them to talk about issues and concerns. In other words, focus on the weekly groups; let the reps talk more at IG meetings.

Don't think that IG is the most important; the groups are the most important. IG is here to serve.

Use the results of the IG inventory to create a survey. Following the survey, once you know what people want, create a Tri-fold pamphlet titled "OA WNY Intergroup – What is it? – How can it help me?"

Karin's IG "borrowed" the pamphlet from Western MA. OA WNY can get an electronic copy

Move the IG meeting around the area (not so "Ottawa centric" in Karin's case)

When done, both the IG Chair and IG Treasurer go to weekly groups to hand out the pamphlet

Hold regular special events with a specific topic. Focus on the groups when thinking of events.

In addition to Public Information (PI), also have a standing "12th Step within" committee.

12th Step Within is not more important than PI. Both are equally important.

The IG secretary should also be the corresponding secretary. In fact, other positions might be combined to reduce the number of open positions. Combine the WSO (1 year abstinence) with the Region 6 (optional abstinence) rep. position. Make it one person.

WNY should be at the Region 6 meeting on April 18 and October 3, 2015. Karin R. says that if you go to Region 6 Committee meetings you'll learn a lot. And it makes a difference when you can connect to the larger fellowship as a whole. Before WSO business meetings discuss locally the topics that will be voted on at WSO. You can get a scholarship. Deadline is November 1st for April-May 2016 WSO conference

Send a copy of the by-laws to Karin to look over.

Get a copy of the OA Handbook to each meeting and service body In other words, try to get everyone a copy of the OA handbook (it may be updated in May 2015).

You can't ask for volunteers; you have to buttonhole someone. "Volun-tell" someone that they are doing a job. Don't just ask; tell them.

Create a special event on "Abstinence and Food Plans." There is a 3 hour PowerPoint presentation on www.aa.org. Also on the website:

- Strong Abstinence Checklist
- Abstinence Resource Guide
- Abstinence versus Plan of Eating
- Note in Ottawa they worked for a whole year on Abstinence.

Go down from two to just one "money event" (e.g. retreat) per year [Note this was met with resistance from IG]

Having said that, all Special Events should be fundraisers.

"12 stepping a problem" leads to Step 12 which leads to service

When emailing using lists, always use the bcc address line to protect anonymity

WSO may be working on an OA smartphone "app."

What are three things you'd like to see on that app?

Minutes submitted by Peter Hall, OA WNY Intergroup Secretary with input from Amy K-S.