



WINTER 2017

# STEPPINGSTONE

*Newsletter of the Baltimore Area Intergroup  
of Overeaters Anonymous*

HOTLINE 443-475-0443

BAIG Website: <http://www.oabaltimore.org>

Region Seven: <http://www.oaregion7.org>

## *From the Chair - Karen B.*

I have been asked to write about **The Twelve Concepts of OA Service** – the third group of twelve precepts that help guide compulsive overeaters on the path of recovery. The three I will review in this article are:

3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision –making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

These three concepts apply to all members and service arms of OA. From a group conscience to the World Service Business Conference, these Concepts apply to all groups that make decisions for OA.

From the most basic decisions (for example at my home meeting we had to figure out who would open the meeting space when our 'key person' had a change in work schedule. We couldn't hold a group conscience meeting mid-week, so an email was sent to the regular members and a decision was made. The group trusted that the decision would be in the best interest of the group as a whole and the meeting was opened up for the subsequent meeting), to votes by the WSBC, trusting those who have been chosen to serve OA in any capacity allows someone in an office to actually perform a task rather than having to go back to the greater group every time an issue arises.

Concept Five focuses on equality of opportunity. This does not mean that anyone can do anything in OA just because we are all equal. It means that any OA member who fulfills the standards set by a group for a position is eligible to be elected by that group to serve in that capacity. For example, a group might want to set minimum abstinence lengths for someone who wants to be a group treasurer. Some groups ask that you be a regular attendee at a meeting before voting at a group conscience meeting for that group. BAIG Officers, Committee Chairs, Region Reps and World Service Delegates must

meet both service and abstinence standards before they can be elected to an office.

Once the standard is met, participants are equal members of the deliberative group. You may have heard of "Robert's Rules of Order" – this is an exhaustive study of how organizations may operate in as egalitarian a way as possible. Most of our service bodies use it to provide a framework to our meetings. It provides structure and disciplines to address issues without excess rancor. Every qualified member has a voice and their opinion is as valid as the other members of the group. Although a subsequent vote may not support a person's opinion, the ability to participate makes that vote (possibly) more understandable.

That said, sometimes groups make decisions that create dissension. This is the focus of Concept Five. Sometimes a member is unable to attend a meeting where a decision is made and feels that their opinion would have changed a vote. There is nothing (except, perhaps a group rule) to prevent someone from raising the issue at a subsequent meeting for a re-vote.

Then there are situations when a member feels that a group made a decision in which a tradition or policy might be ignored or other members' rights are being infringed upon. For example, a group cannot define abstinence by mandating a specific food plan. If a member experiences that, he may return to the group for a subsequent group conscience. If that doesn't solve the problem, he can approach his Intergroup, Region or even the World Service office. This doesn't mean that every time a member has an issue with a group decision that he should escalate the objection. It also doesn't mean that the member with an objection will always be supported. If a member misunderstands something, it can be an opportunity to educate the membership.

Recently a question was posed because a member was upset because their group chose to change their group status from

(Continued on Page 3)

Please submit your SteppingStone articles, quotes, poems, or stories on any OA related subject to [www.steppingstone@oabaltimore.org](mailto:www.steppingstone@oabaltimore.org).

## OA Workshop on Twelve Steps

Baltimore Area Intergroup is sponsoring a 15 session workshop designed to help participants achieve and maintain abstinence through all 12 Steps of Overeaters Anonymous.

### All Sessions

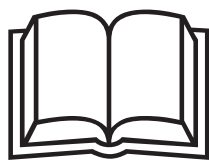
Tuesday Evenings through March 21, 2017  
7 - 9 p.m.

Good Samaritan Hospital  
5601 Loch Raven Blvd.  
Baltimore, Maryland

For more information call:  
Karen B. (646) 220-4185  
Terri B. (410) 459-9100

Texts to be used:

- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*
- *Alcoholics Anonymous*, Fourth Edition (the Big Book)
- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous*
- *Overeaters Anonymous*, Third Edition
- *Voices of Recovery*
- *For Today*



## 2016 Service Positions

Chair ..... Karen B.  
Vice Chair ..... Liz D.  
Secretary ..... Joanna W.  
Treasurer ..... Greg B.  
SteppingStone Editor ..... Nechama R.  
Webmaster ..... Mike B.  
Outreach Committee Chair ..... Sue B.  
12th Step Within Chair ..... Tania S.  
By Laws Committee Chair ..... Karen B.  
Region 7 Representatives ..... Nancy G., Blair I., Liz D.  
WSBC Delegate ..... Terri B.

## Contact Information

Chair ..... [chair@oabaltimore.org](mailto:chair@oabaltimore.org)  
Vice Chair ..... [vicechair@oabaltimore.org](mailto:vicechair@oabaltimore.org)  
Secretary ..... [secretary@oabaltimore.org](mailto:secretary@oabaltimore.org)  
Treasurer ..... [treasurer@oabaltimore.org](mailto:treasurer@oabaltimore.org)  
SteppingStone ..... [steppingstone@oabaltimore.org](mailto:steppingstone@oabaltimore.org)  
Webmaster ..... [webmaster@oabaltimore.org](mailto:webmaster@oabaltimore.org)  
Outreach Chair ..... [outreach@oabaltimore.org](mailto:outreach@oabaltimore.org)  
12th Step Within ..... [12thStepWithin@oabaltimore.org](mailto:12thStepWithin@oabaltimore.org)  
By Laws Committee ..... [bylaws@oabaltimore.org](mailto:bylaws@oabaltimore.org)  
Region 7 Reps ..... [region7rep@oabaltimore.org](mailto:region7rep@oabaltimore.org)  
WSBC Delegate ..... [wsbcdelegate@oabaltimore.org](mailto:wsbcdelegate@oabaltimore.org)

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**From the Chair** (Continued from Page 1)

“open” to “closed.” The member thought that this would prevent someone from attending the meeting because they weren’t a member of OA; they were just investigating if OA was something in which they wanted to participate. The member thought the meeting was closed except to existing members. It was an opportunity to explain that “closed” for this purpose meant that only people who have issues with compulsive eating may attend the meeting – whether or not they currently identify themselves as OA members. An “open” meeting is one where all visitors are welcome – for instance this is where a nursing student or a journalist might go to experience what an OA meeting is like.

Service provides us with an opportunity to grow in our recovery – sometimes we learn by participation, sometimes it means we have to voice our opinion that differs from others. For me, my recovery is about growth and change. That comes from participating in the process – of service; of recovery from compulsive eating.

Next month: Concepts 6 - 8

**Report From Your WSBC delegate:**

One of the highlights of the WSBC are the workshops that focus on recovery. At each session, my recovery is strengthened, and I learn something that I can share with others at meetings and one to one. The questions listed below were open for discussion as speakers shared their experience, strength, and hope on the responsibility of working all twelve steps. These questions can be used for journal writing, reflection, one on one with your sponsees, or at meetings for topics of discussion.

**Responsibility Of Working All Twelve Steps**

Purpose: To discuss the necessity and responsibility of working all Twelve Steps

**Questions:**

- How well are we carrying our responsibility of working all Twelve Steps?
- Have I woven all of OA’s Twelve Steps into the fabric of my life?
- What responsibility am I taking to carry the message to the next compulsive overeater?

There are as many answers to the above questions as there are members of OA. That is the beauty of the program; we all have our own path. I can only share what works for me. By the grace of my Higher Power, and the loving support of this fellowship, I am living a life beyond my wildest dreams. OA and working the steps has made it possible.

Terri B.

**2017 Baltimore Area Intergroup Meeting Schedule**

Good Samaritan Hospital  
5601 Loch Raven Boulevard  
Baltimore, Maryland 21239

- January 22 - Conference Room 1
- February 19 - Conference Room 1
- March 12 - Conference Room 1
- April 23 - Conference Room 1
- May 21 - Conference Room 1
- June 25 - Conference Room 1
- July 16 - Conference Room 1
- August 20 - Conference Room 1
- September 17 - Conference Room 1
- October 15 - Conference Room 1
- November 19 - Conference Room 1
- December 17 - Conference Room 1

**Upcoming Events**

**OA Day of Recovery for Overeaters  
Saturday, January 7, 2017**

**9:30am to 3:00pm**

Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation Center  
300 Market St., Saddle Brook, NJ  
First Floor Multipurpose Room  
For More Information  
Call 973-746-8787 [www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org)

**Happy Destiny Winter Retreat  
Star Lake Lodge, Bloomingdale, NJ  
January 20-22, 2017**

For More Information  
Call Bonnie F (201-657-3916)  
[www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org)

**Unity Day  
Saturday, February 25, 2017**

Hold the Date!  
More Information Soon

**Region 7 Assembly  
March 17-19, 2017  
Wyomissing, PA**

Hold the Date!  
More Information Soon

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## Successful Surrender

Most of us come to OA because we have a weight problem, and even though we continue to hope we will discover that perfect magic diet that will finally work while letting us continue to eat the way we have always eaten, most of us have learned that diets will never work for us. We compulsive overeaters have an addiction problem which is quite different from the type of weight problem that diets can resolve. We find that in order to stop eating addictively, lose weight, and maintain a healthy body weight, we need recovery from our addiction. OA shows us that recovery only comes when, as described in Step 3, we surrender our will and our lives to the care of a Higher Power, when we do the work that is described in rest of the Steps, and when we continue to work on Steps 10, 11 & 12 long-term. Weight loss and neutrality around food are a result of that surrender.

Anyone in OA who has been on a diet will tell you that binges and relapses are sure to occur if we don't take our addiction seriously. If you want to continue to address food in terms of carbs and calories rather than as an addictive substance, you will probably be better served at a diet club that offers group support. I hope my straight-talk does not offend you; I wouldn't want to mislead you because I care about you. I would not be dealing honestly with you if I did not express my true concerns. I guess the most important point I want to make is that OA, like all the other 12 Step recovery programs, is about developing and enlarging a relationship with a Higher Power, about relying on that Higher Power at all times for all things rather than relying on our addictions for relief. This relationship of reliance comes about as a result of working the Steps, and it enlarges as a result of living the Steps over time.

The Steps only work if we are forced to face the truths about ourselves, and facing the truth can only happen if our backs are against the wall and we have no choice but to look at those truths head-on. From this position of no escape, we learn to trust and rely on the Power that is greater than we are because we see clearly that we cannot rely upon ourselves, or any thing, or any one, else. As a result of trusting and relying on that Greater Power even once, we begin to learn that we can continue to trust and rely on Him, and we find that we no longer even want to trust or rely on any thing or any one else. The resulting neutrality around our addictive substance, in our case

food and food related behaviors, is a natural by-product of this spiritually transforming experience.

I want to share this experience that has meant so much to me, but I can only share it if you are willing to take a chance, if you are willing to go to any length to get rid of your addiction. When I came to the Steps, I was desperately willing. I was willing to take that risk, a frightening risk, but a worthwhile risk. All those recovered compulsive overeaters and alcoholics and drug addicts and gamblers and whatever else addicts took the risk, and, like it did for me (to borrow a gambling expression), it paid off for them, in spades.

I watched my grandchildren playing a game called "Trust" last week. They stood in front of each other and fell backwards and trusted that their siblings would catch them and not let them fall. Like them, we can learn to trust that our Higher Power will catch us and not let us fall, but we can only learn to trust by trying. When I contemplate all the ways and times we tried to catch ourselves, and we found that we fell much farther than we ever thought possible, I wonder what we have to lose.

I had something to lose! I lost almost 40 pounds. I lost my juvenile sense of entitlement. I lost the childish notion that I am the center of the universe. I lost a lot, but I gained much more. I gained Steps to rely on when I find myself feeling those self-centered emotions, self-pity and entitlement and resentment and fear. I can look at those feelings straight on now; I can know that they are warnings that my contact with my Higher Power has slipped and those same Steps that brought me in touch with my Higher Power in the beginning will bring me back in touch with Him again. That Power greater than myself can and does remove those dangerous sentiments and can and does realign my focus to being what He would have me be, as long as I am willing to let Him. Now I can accept the realities of my life and let go of the delusions and fears that plagued me and kept me eating addictively and behaving destructively. Now I can look outward toward what I can do to make life better for those around me, and, in the process, life becomes infinitely much better for me, too. So, if you want to live free of fear, free of self-pity, free of resentment, free of food addiction, filled with Power, fellowship, and usefulness, find a Sponsor like I found, one who will guide you through the Steps and help you to find a life outside yourself, according to the Will of a Power greater than yourself. Honestly, what have you got to lose?

Nechama Reizl T.

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Mike B.'s Notes

OA World Service Convention  
Los Angeles, CA 2010



BINGE = Because I'm Not Good Enough

Decision + Inaction = Illusion

"Surrender" means following a new set of rules that I did not create.

Disease = All I want is a little more than I'll ever get.

Prayer: "God, if this is your will, please show me how to do this."



When my family misses me because I'm going to a meeting, they miss the person I've become because I go to a meeting.



Unconditional love and support trumps all. Everyone is included.



I don't care how fancy your tools are. If you don't build steps, you aren't going anywhere!



We lose the desire for prestige and credit. We serve in gratitude. The principles of OA are fail proof.

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Personal Service

This is a story about OA members doing service in an unusual way. This is also a story about unconditional love and acceptance.

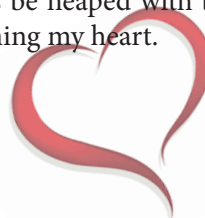
My spouse and I are separated and I moved to a different city. I had only been there a few months and had no family I could spend the 8-day-long Passover holiday with. My children live elsewhere and were not able to come visit me. Passover has a lot of emphasis on food and special kitchenware dedicated only for that holiday. I couldn't bring everything from my old house when I moved and it would have been stressful and expensive to replace everything. Needless to say, I was feeling very low. I bought the minimal supplies for my home that I needed just to get by for the week.

My new OA friends saved the holiday for me. One invited me for the first weekend, two nights and two days, arranging for me to sleep over! I didn't need to worry about walking home late at night after the ceremonial seder meals or inconveniencing anyone. Then, another friend invited me to stay in her home for the second weekend of the holiday for "as long as I wanted." I thought I might go home after one night and one day, but I was so warmly received that I decided to stay for another dinner and another night. A third OA friend hosted me for lunch on the final day of the holiday.

I had the joy of friends and privacy when I needed it. I met some new people, other guests, who are sure to become friends. Both homes had children who were engaging and wanted me to play games with them. That made me feel really special. I did not feel alone and was able to stay abstinent.

Keeping to my food plan could not have been easier. I was able to have weighed and measured portions. They pre-weighed my portions as they did for themselves. I could eat with no concerns of looking odd and nobody questioned me why I didn't eat desserts. Then, they thanked ME for making THEIR holidays so special!

Service can be done in many ways, from setting up chairs at a meeting, making phone calls, or taking someone else's welfare to heart. May my new OA friends and their families be heaped with blessings for sheltering me and gladdening my heart.



A Grateful Member

## Baltimore Area Intergroup OA Meeting Directory\*

\*Subject to change - check [www.ia.org](http://www.ia.org) for the most up-to-date meeting calendar

### Sunday

#### 5:15 PM Towson Speaker Meeting

Calvary Baptist Church  
120 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Towson 21204  
Side Entrance - Basement  
Tania (443-660-8299)

#### 7:00 PM "Hour of Power-Mixed Format" Bel Air

Upper Chesapeake Medical Center  
500 Upper Chesapeake Drive, Bel Air 21014  
Terri (410-459-9100)

### Monday

#### 7:00 AM Rise and Shine Baltimore

Good Samaritan Hospital  
5601 Loch Raven Boulevard, Baltimore 21239  
Conference Room 2 South  
Joe (410-829-6307)

#### 10:30 AM Columbia Medical Pavilion at Howard County

Health and Wellness Center  
10710 Charter Drive, Columbia, MD 21044  
Tricia (410-489-0033) or Ruth (410-740-6955)

#### 6:00 PM Columbia Serenity Center

9650 Basket Ring Road  
(off Stevens Forest off Broken Land Parkway) 21045  
Gar (301-829-8218) [Gar@saccocpa.com](mailto:Gar@saccocpa.com) - HA

#### 7:30 PM "A Vision 4 You" Big Book Study

7310 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore 21208  
Parking and entrance on left side of building  
Nechama R (443-717-1829) - HA

#### 7:30 PM "Beginners and Strugglers" Bel Air

First Presbyterian Church  
Main Street & Broadway, Bel Air 21014  
(main building basement)  
Michelle (410-937-7500) - Call about HA

#### 7:30 PM Catonsville

Salem Lutheran Church  
905 Frederick Road, Catonsville 21228  
Naomi (443-838-7970) - Call about HA, Bus 2

### Tuesday

#### 12:00 Noon St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

7834 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore 21224  
Bob (410-335-7748)

#### 7:30 PM Pikesville "Abstinence First"

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Room 227  
7401 Park Heights Avenue, Pikesville 21208  
Parking lot on Slade Avenue  
Neil (410-318-6737) - HA, Bus M5

### Wednesday

#### 6:15 PM "A Vision 4 You" Big Book Study

Columbia Serenity Center  
9650 Basket Ring Road, Columbia 21045  
(off Stevens Forest off Broken Land Parkway)  
Bekah (617-966-2790) - HA

#### 7:00 PM Big Book Study

Bel Air 1st Presbyterian Church  
224 N Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014  
Basement, Room B  
Building attached to sanctuary  
Nancy (443-987-8044)

#### 7:30 PM Columbia Serenity Center

9650 Basket Ring Road, Columbia 21045  
(off Stevens Forest off Broken Land Parkway)  
Naomi (443-838-7970) - HA

### Thursday

#### 7:30 PM Columbia Serenity Center

9650 Basket Ring Road, Columbia 21045  
(off Stevens Forest off Broken Land Parkway) 21045  
Carol (410-551-1149) - HA

#### 8:00 PM Search for Serenity Group (Mixed Format)

Church of the Redeemer Room 41  
5603 N. Charles Street off Norther Parkway  
Towson, MD  
Tania (443-660-8299) - Bus 11, 44

### Friday

#### 5:30 PM Baltimore City (speaker on first

Friday of month and post-meeting fellowship)  
First English Lutheran Church  
3807 N. Charles Street at 39th Street, Baltimore 21218  
Enter on east side of building  
Mandy (410-825-1782) HA Bus 8, 11

### Saturday

#### 9:30 AM Columbia Serenity Center

9650 Basket Ring Road, Columbia 21045  
(off Stevens Forest off Broken Land Parkway) 21045  
Kathy (410-312-2742) - HA

#### 11:00 AM Baltimore City

First English Lutheran Church  
3807 N. Charles Street at 39th Street, Baltimore 21218  
Enter on east side of building  
Annette (410-825-4639) - HA, Bus 3, 11, 22

#### 11:00 AM Lutherville Step Meeting

St. John's Methodist Church  
216 W Seminary Avenue, Lutherville 21093  
Phyllis (410-653-2284) - HA  
[lucindaruby@gmail.com](mailto:lucindaruby@gmail.com)

Abbreviations: HA=Handicapped Accessible,  
Bus Number=Accessible by MTA bus routes  
For Online or Telephone Meetings: <http://www.ia.org/meetings/find-a-meeting-online.php>

If your meeting information changes, notify the World Service Office (WSO) at [www.ia.org](http://www.ia.org)  
in the Meeting Registration/Change Information Section. In addition, call or email Nechama  
R at (443)-717-1829 or [nechamareizl@gmail.com](mailto:nechamareizl@gmail.com)