

OA World Service Business Conference Report
5/1/2017 - 5/7/2017
Albuquerque, New Mexico

The Unity with Diversity Desert InterGroup elected me to serve as InterGroup Delegate to the 2017 OA WSBC for which I am deeply grateful.

At WSBC 2017, there were 20 countries, 37 US states, and 7 Canadian provinces represented - truly a worldwide fellowship.

I arrived on **Monday** evening for the WSBC in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

On **Tuesday**, I participated in several workshops designed to support InterGroups including: Carrying The Message Worldwide: The Twelve Concepts of OA Service, Working in Harmony Worldwide: The OA Twelve Traditions and Worldwide Unity Through OA literature. In each of these workshops, recovering OAs shared how they use the concepts of service, the traditions and the literature to support their own personal recovery and our primary purpose of carrying the message to the still suffering compulsive overeater.

On **Wednesday**, the day began with the Forum, a unique gathering attended by most of the nearly registered 200 participants. This year's Forum was entitled: Amazing Recovery: Passport to Unity. We each sat at tables which were visited by unique members of OA sharing their unique way of working the program and highlighted the significant linguistic and cultural diversity of our fellowship, as well as various manifestations of the disease. Visitors came to each table who were not native English speakers so that members could hear how challenging it is for non-native English speakers around the world to hear the message of recovery when translations are so challenging. People had a chance to hear a member speaking in Hebrew and Icelandic which really brought the message home that we are truly a worldwide fellowship and need to carry the message to the still suffering compulsive overeater regardless of his or her native language (recovering is hard enough in one's native language!). We also heard OA members who shared unique stories of being anorexics, men in recovery, young people and members of the LGBT community, all to bring home the message that there is enormous diversity in our fellowship from which we each might learn. It was important to be reminded that, even though I might not be a member of a particular community, learning about them will help me to carry the message as a sponsor, fellow, IG rep and person who needs to work step 12 to recover.

Wednesday was also a day of day long Committee meetings where serious work took place.

I was assigned to the Unity with Diversity Committee and was placed on the Translations sub-committee. We spent the day working together to identify projects that could be accomplished within the coming year including modifying a PowerPoint presentation created by Region 9 about Translations so that it could be used by the entire worldwide fellowship. The focus of this presentation would be to make it easier for compulsive

overeaters around the world to have access to our life-saving literature so they might hear the message of recovery, as well as honoring OA policies and our common welfare which must come first. This sub-committee was visited by the Region 9 Trustee who shared what the experience had been in that region with special challenges for translations and experience regarding how we might make it easier.

On **Thursday**, I was grateful to start the day with a 7am OA meeting where everyone from Trustees to Green Dots (newcomers serving for the first time at WSBC) attended and shared their experience, strength and hope just like at a regular meeting. It was wonderful to see so many people from around the world committed to their personal recovery and taking time from a very full business schedule to keep first things first.

Next the WSBC business meetings in the full plenary began in earnest and spanned the day from 8:30 am to 5 pm on **Thursday** and **Friday**, and through **Saturday** afternoon.

Each business meeting was attended by delegates from around the world, representing more than 20 countries. In keeping with the theme of Growing Unity Worldwide, each Business Meeting session was started with the Serenity Prayer said by an OA in one of the many languages represented at the conference including Hebrew, Spanish, French, Swedish and Greek. I was exceptionally grateful to be asked to give this service as the UDDI Delegate, something I could have never imagined when I came into recovery in Greece just 8 years ago.

NB: A detailed Wrap-Up Report which includes a comprehensive listing of all business items conducted and voted on is presented here as part of this report:

<https://oa.org/files/pdf/Wrap-Up-Report-17.pdf>.

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Items of particular interest to the UDDI InterGroup include:

- Move to grant the Conference Seal of Approval to the revised manuscript *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*.
- A motion to include a 10th tool (Mindfulness) failed to pass.
- In order to keep the focus of all WSBC business on carrying the message to the still suffering compulsive overeater, a motion was adopted which requires all future motions to include, inter alia, "an explanation of how this motion will help carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer."
- Overeaters Anonymous will establish an ad hoc committee to consider the implementation/registration of a Spanish language service board (SLSB). The Spanish speaking Fellowship will work

with the BOT in order to establish how the SLSB will fit into the OA service structure.

- Overeaters Anonymous will establish a special fund to assist in translating OA literature, forms, correspondence, website, and other materials to languages other than English. Money contributed to this fund is in addition to the International Publications/Translations Committee's budget. The BOT will establish guidelines to allocate the funds.
- Move that the World Service Business Conference 2017 create a Sponsorship Day to be held annually on the third Saturday in August.

On **Saturday** afternoon after the completion of official business and the closing Green Dot Ceremony, I returned to the desert (missing out on the Saturday night banquet and entertainment.)

The minutes, all speeches, presentation/discussion items, committee reports, workshop reports, names of delegates and trustees, bylaws, and the Business Conference Policy Manual will be published in the Final Conference Report. The Final Conference Report (excluding full delegate names and contact information) will be available on the OA website in early August.

Finally, on a personal note, for years sitting in meetings, I heard members who gave service at this level and could not understand what all the fuss was about and what it had to do with my recovery! If you can imagine being in a 5-day business meeting, of people just like you committed to their recovery and willing to go to any lengths to keep it you, too, might be amazed by the awesome power of the 12 steps, traditions and concepts to help us do together what we could never do alone.

Submitted faithfully in service,

F.D.
UDDI
WSBC Delegate 2017