

Mid-Hudson Intergroup Inventory – November 3, 2019

December 2, 2019

This summary was prepared by me, Mary T., a “third party”, who was invited to facilitate the inventory for the Mid-Hudson Intergroup (MHIG) on Sunday, November 3, in New Paltz, NY. We utilized the Intergroup/Service Board Inventory format suggested on oa.org (<https://www.oa.org/pdfs/IntergroupInventory.pdf>), supplemented by information from the recent Region 6 Intergroup Renewal Officer Training Workshop (sponsored by the R6 Intergroup Outreach (IGOR) Committee) including, but not limited to, samples of agendas from Westchester United IG, and information about the functions and structure of intergroups from various pages in the **OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities** (particularly pp. 33-38, and OA’s service structure on p. 65). http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=8D31346A27E74C8D8A9C43C406C64EBB

Approximately 12 people attended the entire session (plus or minus one at a time), which ran from approximately 2:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., including several 10-minute breaks. MHIG had done a wonderful job of inviting the “entire” area membership to the meeting, meaning that the audience attending were not simply the regular intergroup (IG) Reps and Officers, but included OA members from regular meetings. The IG officers who had attended the R6 Training session had brought home the message that the “intergroup (IG) membership” is not limited to those who attend the monthly intergroup meeting. This new thought pattern was discussed in some detail prior to the actual inventory beginning to encourage those members to recognize that their voices were equally important in all discussions. There is no They in OA—only We and Us.

The majority of those present were or had been IG members, but several “guests” did attend and actively participated in the discussions.

In both the inventory discussion and summary, I occasionally shared ideas or information from my own experience as the former two-term chair of my local IG, as well as my position as the former two-term R6 Coordinator (and mentor of the Intergroup Outreach Committee); this allowed me to stimulate some group dialogue for further discussion down the line. As I mentioned in my opening remarks to the attendees, this is much like a personal Step 4 & 5—“a commercial fact-finding process”. We look for the “damaged or unsalable goods” and we also look at what’s working. Steps 6 & 7 (the “steps” that follow this inventory: the member survey, the new incentives and projects) are about change.

On November 3, MHIG and I identified and discussed what seems to be useful and working, and found other areas that could be holding the group back from growing and thriving (Steps 4 & 5) and we also started some brain-storming about how to change some of those. MHIG can now take the results of this inventory and decide for yourselves, what to change and what not to change, and know that there is always help to make any changes.

For this summary I have changed the question numbers from the OA Intergroup Inventory format downloaded from oa.org to sequential numbers from 1 to 59. This should make it easier to reference questions in the discussions to come.

There are eight (8) Addendums to this Inventory:

1. Addendum 1: a summary table of *Strong Points, Could Do Better, Definitely Needs Improvement*
2. Addendum 2: some strategic, operating plans and suggestions from a R6 Intergroup Renewal Process and other sources for your consideration and utilization
3. Addendum 3: Excerpts from my opening remarks & other comments
4. Addendum 4: Intergroup Renewal Process (actual excerpt taken from the R6 IG Officer Training Workshop in Albany, Sept. 19-20, 2019)
5. Addendum 5: What IS Westchester United InterGroup? (WUIG)
6. Addendum 6: WUIG Call to Service

- 7. Addendum 7: WUIG Year End Pitch 2018
- 8. Addendum 8: PIPO *Flash* Newsletter (see page 2 for Blitz information)
- 9. Addendum 9: Sample Flyer for Sponsor Training Workshop

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service to MHIG and to OA...the program that saved my life.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary T

1. Are we satisfied with the function of our IG? If not, why not?

While almost half of the room were mostly satisfied upon polling, it was a mixed bag, with many not expressing an opinion (1 mostly satisfied, 2 kind of dissatisfied, 2 Not enthusiastic, 3 No Opinion). Comments included:

- **Mostly satisfied (1):**
 - Need more people but we're doing a great job with what we have
 - The people here do a lot of work and keep OA working
- **Kind of Satisfied (2):**
 - Did get the Speaker List going
 - Need just a little more help to get the job done
 - No intergroup reps but the core fills in and does a lot
 - The rest of the membership doesn't even know what the core group does
 - Enthusiasm isn't there for MHIG that used to be here
- **Mostly Dissatisfied (2):**
 - No enthusiasm to turn around attendance
 - Need to reach out to newcomers to let them know what intergroup does—most don't know
- **No Opinion (3):**
 - Have to abstain from the vote; I'm here to see if I'm satisfied or unsatisfied
 - I'm new
 - I'm here to get involved

Facilitator's Note: Last year the Chair went to all of the meetings to try to get IRs to come to MHIG; no one came. This question led to the discussion of "What is the definition of intergroup?"

2. Have we ever taken an intergroup inventory? If not, why not? If so, what were the results?

- Not really, don't believe we have; maybe 10-12 years ago
- Did something WSO sent out years ago but not like this

3. What is the purpose of our intergroup? Why does MHIG exist??

Responses included:

- Strengthen MHIG so we can help the groups
- Be of maximum service to myself and others
- To carry the message to those still suffering, in and out of the rooms...*What message??*
- Annual retreat & minithon
- I thought it was more administrative, as a go-between WSO and Region Six and the groups

Facilitator's Notes: I went over the WUIG agenda which lists our standing committees and ad hoc committees. I

referred to the mission of IG's, reading from the **OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities** on p.33

(http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=8D31346A27E74C8D8A9C43C406C64EBB). While the functions are listed in #2 on p.33, the mission of IGs are detailed further in the paragraph above: "Intergroups... may manage administrative functions, such as meeting lists, hotlines, and websites, but their primary purpose remains the same as every other group or service body in OA—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers (Tradition Five). **This includes those still suffering both inside and outside of OA** [emphasis mine]. Intergroups are in a unique position to help those still suffering within OA. A few representatives working together on an intergroup... committee can organize recovery events, such as Unity Day, IDEA Day, retreats, and conventions, which may benefit large number of members."

The Handbook further outlines the useful functions of an intergroup (p.33):

"Intergroups/service boards often handle such responsibilities as:

1. Acting as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service as specified in the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.
2. Creating and maintaining intergroup/service board websites. A majority of people coming to OA now find their way to a meeting through oa.org or a local intergroup's website.
3. Maintaining OA listings in local telephone directories and handling telephone and mail inquiries.
4. Training to supplement sponsorship: Sponsoring and arranging workshops, marathons, and other special events aimed at education, informing, and helping members strengthen their personal recovery, since everything in OA begins with personal recovery [underlining mine]. We refer to this as training to supplement sponsorship.
5. Publishing regular newsletters or bulletins to keep groups informed about each other and about upcoming OA events, distributing up-to-date directories of all nearby meetings and providing other necessary information.
6. Handling public information requests from local news media, arranging radio or TV public-service announcements or programs about OA, and furnishing OA speakers for outside organizations.
7. Maintaining contact with health care professionals in fields related to OA.
8. Speaker Bank: Arranging a system for groups to obtain abstaining OA speakers.
9. Helping to find sponsors for new members [Temporary Sponsor Bank].
10. Maintaining a stock of OA literature and OA-approved AA literature for sale. Some groups and individuals also purchase literature for themselves directly from bookstore oa.org.
11. Sending representatives to regional assemblies and delegates to the World Service Business Conference, OA's annual business meeting [financial assistance is available at both region and world service levels].
12. Maintaining an office, if there is a need and local groups can support it financially."

Facilitator's Note: I can visit MHIG to offer a Sponsorship Training Workshop to help "train the trainers" so that they can then begin providing the same service locally to increase sponsorship.

4. Do we have a Statement of Purpose or Bylaws?

- Yes. The IG Mission Statement is spelled out in the Bylaws.

Facilitator's Note: As we discussed, based on the changes that occur as the result of the implementation of the inventory and subsequent member survey, MHIG might consider reviewing and amending the Bylaws to ensure

Mid-Hudson Intergroup Inventory – November 3, 2019

they do not hamper the function of the group; Bylaws are there to make things easier, not to tie our hands. The only suggestion that I had was to change the word “above” (the group) in ARTICLE IV, Section 6-F.3, to “beyond”. We also discussed that there are only abstinence requirements for the Treasurer, WSBC Delegate, and the Region 6 Rep.

5. Do we use Robert’s Rules of Order and our bylaws during our business meetings?

- Mostly no.
- MHIG uses group conscience and consensus to make decisions.

Facilitator’s Note: MHIG Bylaws ARTICLE VIII, Parliamentary Authority, Section 1 says that “The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern this Intergroup in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Twelve Traditions, OA, Inc., Bylaws, Subpart B, or any special rules of order this Intergroup may adopt.” I’m not sure whether that means that the Bylaws need to be amended or not since you don’t use Robert’s Rules by default...I don’t understand the wording of the Bylaws; it might be broad enough to leave you open to use consensus without a problem.

6. Do the Twelve Traditions take precedence over “Robert’s Rules” in our intergroup’s bylaws?

- Mostly yes.

7. Do intergroup bylaws and policies protect and/or extend the tenure of certain “trusted servants”?

- Bylaws require rotation of service but recently/lately the positions end up rotating among the few people on the Board; have been limited to the current members who are there
- Since the decision to take this inventory and go through with the membership survey and the renewal process, the Board decided to forego the November elections this year and stay in their positions for one more year to minimize change during this period, with the exception of one recent resignation.

8. Does our intergroup dictate or suggest?

- This isn’t really applicable since the intergroup doesn’t often have personal contact with the individual groups.
- The increase in voluntary contribution (to \$5) was not communicated by MHIG directly
- Communication is generally done by flyer as a “suggestion”; \$5 might have been included as part of another flyer

9. Are we incorporated? Do we have a nonprofit tax status?

- Not incorporated
- non-profit status

10. Do we set realistic short- and long-term goals?

- MHIG doesn’t really have goals
- Meets every other month; discussion about possibly having a Zoom meeting in-between face-to-face meetings
- Current board doing mostly administrative functions with the exception of the retreat (a long term goal)
- Funds some minithons
- Recently set up speaker bank (short term goal)
- Issue of “lack of support from the groups”, coupled with abstinence requirements, seems to weave through discussions.

Facilitator’s Notes: Discussion continued to define goals and priorities: “If you build it they will come”...the idea that “usefulness is IG’s main product”.

Goals are objectives and inspire action. Not having clear, distinct goals that everyone can identify leads to drift

and lethargy; a reactive organization rather than a proactive one. Goals will keep our attention focused on where we want to go; they will “pull” you toward your vision rather than “pushing you”.

An important reminder: Intergroup goals need to be based on group conscience. This can be started based on your membership survey initially; what do the members say they want and need? Then MHIG reps can brainstorm on the strategic goals from this list, and subsequently, the best way to meet those goals for 2020. Leaders may lead and suggest, but unless everyone is involved in the process, there will be no ownership by the members of MHIG.

Once the strategic goals of MHIG are defined the priorities can be set each year which will help to meet those goals during the coming year (ie., retreat, workshops, attracting & retaining new members, Step studies, bookets, etc.).

For example, in WUIG our goals are:

- 1) help members strengthen their personal recovery
- 2) increase the number of sponsors
- 3) increase the number of newcomers
- 4) help those in relapse
- 5) inspire people to give more service

The strategic goals remain more or less constant in my experience, but the type of priorities and activities which help WUIG to meet those goals may change each year, depending upon what MHIG/membership chooses to focus on, which, in turn, is based on available resources.

11. Does our intergroup have a need for regular steering committee meetings or board meetings?

- No. (The steering committee is your board; it was said that generally there is no need for the board to have meetings between the regularly scheduled MHIG meetings—no emergencies)
- Maybe MHIG could have intergroup meetings at local meeting sites

12. Are there frequent steering committee meetings for discussions and decisions beyond the purview of the entire group conscience?

- No

13. Does a select group make most of our intergroup’s “important” decisions?

- The board makes the decisions because board members are the only attendees at the MHIG meetings.

14. Is ours an exclusive club or an inclusive intergroup?

- Generally the only attendees at MHIG meetings are the board members; no one else shows up
- They are perceived as begging members to attend...a death knell.
- It is inclusive in that there are no abstinence requirements for any position other than Treasurer since it could exclude potential applicants in the current environment.

Facilitator's Note: While it is important to be inclusive and welcoming to those who are not abstinent or newly abstinent, and encourage abstinence by providing service positions with minimum abstinence requirements, it is equally critical to remember that we wear our disease and physical recovery is a large part in attracting and retaining new members to the OA fellowship. I, personally, did not come to OA seeking spiritual serenity and peace; I wanted to lose weight. There is a reason that one of our slogans is “I came for the vanity and stayed for the sanity.” Newcomers need to see physical recovery when they enter the rooms; it gives them hope and that is what helps them to return. There are abstinence requirements to do service as a Region Representative (6 months) and as a World Service Business Conference Delegate (1 year) so it is beneficial to an intergroup if they can have abstinent representatives for this reason as well. And it all begins with the MHIG board.

15. Are all our intergroup’s activities open to the scrutiny of each member of the Fellowship?

- Yes
- Minutes and finances are posted on MHIG website
- Guests are welcome and encouraged but none ever come to regular bimonthly MHIG meetings
- “I’ve never been to a meeting where I was invited to go to an intergroup meeting.”
- **However, at this inventory meeting there were as many guests as board members!**

16. How can we keep the WSO group registrations up-to-date?

- MHIG keeps WSO groups registrations current.
- Task assigned to the Corresponding Secretary and/or the Chair to maintain continuity
- Meeting information is verified with WSO and meeting contact

** * * Facilitator’s Note: When I was there, I neglected to point out the need for MHIG to keep a copy of their meeting list offline (not associated with oa.org) as a safety precaution in the event that oa.org’s meeting module ever suffers another catastrophic failure as it did in 2014 when all information was lost. When this happened, WSO needed to contact intergroups and region for meeting information to rebuild their database.*

17. Are committee meetings open to all members?

- Yes. There are active committees.

18. Are committees’ recommendations presented to the entire intergroup for consideration and deliberation?

- Yes
- But since there are no meeting IRs, the individual meetings don’t utilize the opportunity to have a voice in the discussion or a vote

19. Do we choose our service people with care and consideration, placing principles before personalities?

- MHIG utilizes everyone present at the MHIG meeting
- They take all volunteers!
- Although as I said, there are no abstinent requirements for leadership positions with the exception of the Treasurer.
- The creation of the Speaker Bank has been beneficial to the area.

20. Is anonymity honored within our intergroup?

- Yes.

21. Is an opportunity given to each member to participate in the intergroup’s activities?

- Yes.

22. Do we have a budget which includes a prudent reserve and contributions to region and WSO?

- Yes, there is a budget with a prudent reserve and they make specific, designated contributions.

23. Have we done all we can to provide an attractive and convenient meeting place?

- As much as possible so far.
- The IG covers a very large area so MHIG moved to another geographical corner when it became apparent that being more central was not encouraging member attendance and the board members were not centrally located, yet the only ones in attendance; they chose to meet closer to home.
- MHIG might consider alternating the meeting location with advance notice so that the membership could attend once things get underway.
- Perhaps have MHIG meetings at a local meeting location, varying the sites

24. Are we committed to participating in the region and world service structure?

Mid-Hudson Intergroup Inventory – November 3, 2019

- Usually, yes.
- Someone goes to R6 and WSBC

Facilitator's Note: Financial assistance is available from R6 for the R6 Assembly and the WSBC. 15 meetings (your current membership) entitles you to 1 Delegate at WSBC and 2 Reps at R6 Assembly. 16 meetings (if one more meeting opened) would entitle you to two (2) Delegates at WSBC and 2 Reps at R6 Assembly.

For R6 Assembly funding (due 60 days prior to the Assembly for which it is requested), use either of these forms:

1. http://oaregion6.org/wptest/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/r6_travel_scholarship_application_R6A20141117_en.pdf
2. http://oaregion6.org/wptest/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/r6_travel_scholarship_application_R6A20141117_en.docx

For WSBC funding, apply no later than Oct 1 using either of these forms:

1. <https://oaregion6.org/wptest/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/R6-WSO-Combined-Delegate-Fund-Application.pdf>
2. <https://oaregion6.org/wptest/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/R6-WSO-Combined-Delegate-Fund-Application.docx>

As of this date, **both forms** for WSBC funding must be completed and submitted to Region 6. Plans are in progress to combine the forms but I do not know when this will be completed. The plan is to modify the submission form at the Spring 2020 Region Six Assembly through a bylaw amendment motion so if that passes there will only be one form. The form will be found on the Region Six Assembly Documents page and still be due Oct 1, 2020. Go to <https://oaregion6.org/en/r6-assembly-2/assembly-documents/> and scroll down to Other Region 6 Documents to find the new document if the motion passes.

25. Do we make every effort to fund our representatives to regional assemblies and the World Service Business Conference?

- Yes, 100%
- Very generous membership

26. How often do our “trusted servants” say, “Trust me, I know what’s best”?

- Never. (not much, but we make amends when we do)

27. Is there a frequent need for quick decisions?

- No
- We email when we do

28. Is there a place on our intergroup’s agenda for open sharing and expressing group concerns?

- May not be on the agenda but it happens and is handled appropriately

29. Who decides how our intergroup spends money?

- MHIG group conscience makes this decision.

30. Do we see complete monthly financial reports, or just the general fund’s beginning and ending balance?

- Complete and thorough, detailed reports are available for review BIMONTHLY as MHIG meets every other month.

31. Does our intergroup have special savings accounts?

- No.

32. Are funds readily available, or are they invested?

- Funds are readily available; they are not invested

33. Is the prudent reserve really prudent, or is it a hedge against a worldwide recession?

- The reserve is for prudent expenditures.
- Covers 2 WSBC Delegates (haven't done that for years, so donated to WSBC Delegate Support Fund)

34. Are the requests for intergroup contributions consistent with expenditures shown on the financial reports?

- Yes.

35. How long has the treasurer been in control of the books?

- (2+2+1) years, and she is staying while the group completes the renewal process.

36. Are there multiple signatories on all accounts?

- Yes; checks require two signatures

37. Does someone other than the treasurer reconcile bank accounts?

- No.

38. Have the books been audited lately?

- No.
- Not a concern; saves receipts.

39. Do all the groups in our geographic area know about our intergroup and the services we provide?

- No, not really.
- This is one of the challenges that MHIG faces and will address with the IG Renewal process.
- 2 years ago they sent out "what we do" but got no response

*Facilitator's Note: This is an opportunity to borrow **What Is Westchester United Intergroup (WUIG)?** and customize the copy for MHIG (see Addendum 5) and send out MHIG's version of Addendum 7-**End of Year Pitch** (you can change the name...that was for internal use!)*

40. Do all the groups in the area belong to an intergroup?

- No. It seems that the only attendees at the bi-monthly intergroup meetings are generally the board members
- Meetings don't send IRs, and guests rarely attend (with the exception of this special inventory meeting where there were 6 board members and 6 guests).
- The average attendance at the IG meeting is 6 (just the board members).

*Facilitator's Note: There are 15 meetings affiliated with MHIG on oa.org and perhaps one (1) unaffiliated meeting listed in the area (I emailed Lori and Jeanette with information about this meeting on Nov 30). This is an opportunity to utilize something similar to WUIG's **Call to Service** form; feel free to "shamelessly steal" and customize for your own use...it's Concept 10 in action! (see Addendum 6)*

41. Do we keep in touch with groups who don't send representatives or contributions to intergroup?

- The minutes and treasurer's reports are posted on the website.
- There are newsblasts that go out
- They are normally contacted annually.
- The consensus is that there should be more contact, but not begging.

Facilitator's Note: This is an area for potential outreach and growth; a reminder that "There is no They in

OA—only *We and Us*”. Reaching out to non-participating groups via Evites to the MHIG meetings or personal outreach to the meetings, with a brief outline (the “elevator pitch” done in 2-3 minutes) of what MHIG has done for the membership during the year is a subtle reminder of Tradition 7 (we are fully self-supporting through financial and service contributions). This can be done verbally by a visiting IG rep, or by email blast, or a year-end, bullet-point summary, or a full-blown two-sided flyer (don’t forget the inexpensive printer I mentioned when I was there colorcopiestoday.com ...and, no, I don’t get a commission.) (see Addendum 7-WUIG Year End Pitch 2018)

42. Do we let all groups know how they can support the intergroup through service and financial contributions?

- Not really, but we should.

Facilitator’s Note on Question 42: It’s also important to educate the membership about the service part of Tradition 7; it’s not simply about the financial contributions. World Service also has a Seventh Tradition table top tent card available to download that some groups have elected to use; it can be found at <https://oa.org/files/pdf/SeventhTraditionTableCard.pdf>

43. Do we encourage the Seventh Tradition’s 60/30/10 contribution formula, making sure our area groups know about it?

- Yes.
- Also discussed that the 7th Tradition is not just financial; there is a Service component.

Facilitator’s Note: Ensure that your meetings have the correct Region 6 Treasurer’s snail mail address:

Region 6 Treasurer
P.O.Box 644
Peabody, Mass 01960

44. Do we inform all members and groups of the structure of OA?

- Not really; we could do more to educate about the upside-down pyramid with the members on top and the trusted servants below
- Also reminded to change the MHIG Bylaws wording for the WSBC Delegate (ARTICLE IV, Section 6, F-3) to read “Shall have one (1) year current abstinence and two years of service ~~above~~ beyond the group level.”

*Facilitator’s Note: The **OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities** (http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=8D31346A27E74C8D8A9C43C406C64EBB) is an excellent resource for this purpose. It is also available as a downloadable PDF.*

45. Do we sponsor OA workshops and marathons for OA’s in our area?

- Occasionally.
- There is an annual retreat
- In the past we have had minithons
- Minithons went from having someone at MHIG plan it, to having groups sponsor it and we would offer supplies and rent...now they are non-existent/dwindling

Facilitator’s Note: These are the opportunities that MHIG can use (based on the results of your membership survey and the subsequent priorities established from same via MHIG group conscience) to begin focusing your limited resources to help members strengthen their personal recovery and inspire them to give more service. Based on the focus your MHIG selects, there are turnkey workshops available on Abstinence, The Importance of Working the Steps, Abstinence vs A Plan of Eating...the list goes on! There are even skits available on oa.org. I’d be happy to help you when you’re ready if you’re interested.

Mid-Hudson Intergroup Inventory – November 3, 2019

- There is a **Welcome Back Workshop** Scholarship available (\$200) from the Region 6 Twelfth Step Within Committee <https://oaregion6.org/en/resources/12th-step-within/> and the workshop is a turnkey process which is downloadable
- The PIPO Committee will bring in and do a **Carry the Message Workshop** to your location; call or email Claire M (516) 509-9926 gabesblade@aol.com
- The Region 6 Trustee will visit at no charge to MHIG to present a **Steps, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop**; contact Beth B at region6trustee@gmail.com

46. Do we keep our meeting list current?

- Yes; again, there is a board member assigned to monitor this

47. Do we publish a newsletter for the groups in our area?

- Yes and it's available to all on the website
- It is also available as a subscription and is sent to those who subscribe

Facilitator's Note: I love your newsletter! Here is an opportunity to share experience, strength and hope with members and allow them to share their talents with each other. There are so many sources to use in your publication—WSO allows us to use (with acknowledgment) articles (not illustrations though) and Bits and Bites from Lifeline; and we can always utilize parts of OA literature with proper sourcing. There are also lots of resources at different IG websites, with their newsletters, and they are willing to share with proper sourcing as well. The newsletter is another way to share information with our members to help them improve their personal recovery. It can be just one page but it keeps MHIG in contact with the membership. It can be electronic only or you can do 4-color hard copy print for the price of black and white by using colorcopiestoday.com.

48. Do we maintain a stock of OA-approved literature for sale? Do we encourage subscriptions and written contributions to *Lifeline*?

- No
- The Literature/*Lifeline* Committee maintains a supply of approved books and pamphlets for distribution to new groups only, and for sale at Intergroup events. Obviously there is no need to encourage subscriptions to *Lifeline* since it will be discontinued in 12 months.

*Facilitator's Note: Please review the paragraph in the MHIG Bylaws, Article VI, Section 1-C, Literature/*Lifeline* to determine whether "...for purchase by groups needing reference materials." is still applicable or if it should be deleted. Also, does the committee itself still exist? At the very least, it would seem that portions should be reworded.*

49. Do we help new members find sponsors?

- No. This seems to be a definite area that needs improvement
- The discussion included the possibility of Temporary Sponsors just to get folks started; it is a much less daunting endeavor and MHIG can set up a Sponsor Bank.
- I am also available to return to MHIG to hold a Sponsor Training Workshop (see Facilitator's Note that follows).

Facilitator's Note: The IG can set up a temporary sponsor bank by collecting names at special events and retreats, with one person to manage the list, and/or each group in the area can have a Temporary Male and Temporary Female sponsor volunteer each month—a rotating position that doesn't place one person in a long-term assignment that buries them. That volunteer takes calls for that month and gets folks started, with the up-front discussion that it is temporary as the sponsee looks for someone long-term.

Another way to quickly move someone into sponsoring is to hold a Sponsor Workshop once a month for 45-60

minutes before one of your larger regular meetings in the area. In WUIG, this is typically targeted for individuals who have at least 30 days of abstinence and are working on their 4th step. The leader goes through a fairly structured, simple lesson on “How to Sponsor” through the first 3 Steps, using several OA pamphlets included in the Newcomer’s Packet and some handouts created for this workshop. The OA member is then “Stepped Up” at the next meeting as an available sponsor with a special coin which the meeting has purchased for this purpose. As I said, if you are interested, I can return to “train the trainers” (and others) and provide you with more information about the coin that we give out. Also see Addendum 9-Sponsor Training Workshop Flyer (it’s only 45 minutes here but we can make the workshop longer...this was a special event)

50. Do we arrange a system for groups to obtain abstinent OA speakers?

- Yes, MHIG has a recently created Speaker Bank

51. How do we help floundering groups?

- We don’t.

Facilitator’s Note: When you do begin to help them, I would suggest facilitating a group inventory as a starting point. The [OA Group Inventory](#) is found on [oa.org](#) (but the link seems to not be working at the moment—I’ve notified them). Another starting point is the [Strong Meeting Checklist](#) (this link works!)

52. Do we assist unaffiliated groups in nearby areas to form their own intergroup?

- Not really; don’t know of any.

Facilitator’s Note: I went through an “Unaffiliated Meetings” list that I’d received in August 2019 as the former Region 6 Coordinator and noticed that there was one unaffiliated meeting that seemed to be in the MHIG area so I forwarded the meeting information to Lori and Jeanette on Nov 30. My apologies for not having done so earlier!

53. Do we address the special needs of our members, e.g., young people or the physically challenged, and try to find ways to meet their needs without isolating them?

- MHIG tries to include everyone
- Does see the need for a group geared toward anorexic/bulimics in the New Paltz area; difficult because of the transient nature of the students
- MHIG includes a symbol indicating handicapped access on the meeting list
- As the result of this inventory, one member is going to bring posters and pamphlets to the guidance office at her school!

54. Do we have a permanent address and phone number that is answered twenty-four hours a day?

- Yes. There is a hotline and the caller is given a name and number to call for each county.
- One member does get a call periodically from the hotline referral
- Not sure how the information is maintained and updated
- Don’t keep track of the volume of calls but the information is available

55. Is our intergroup phone number listed in area phone books?

- Yes
- MHIG is listed on the internet
- Listed in the directory of the Office of Mental Health in Ulster, Dutchess, and Orange counties.

56. Are we reaching compulsive overeaters in our community through:

- **meeting listings in local newspapers**—not really but has been in the past, though they are listed in a hospital paper in Middletown
- **radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs)** —No
- **calendar notices**—Sometimes

- newspaper and magazine articles—No
- news releases about special OA events—No
- bulletin board notices—Yes, post-its and tear-offs
- OA literature in libraries—No
 - *Facilitator's Note: There were 3 successful PIPO Blitzes that awarded funding for the Cape Cod IG, So. Coastal Mass IG, and Ocean & Bay IG to place OA books in the local libraries. This may be a project you would like to do in the future and get R6 funding to subsidize the majority of the cost for it. (See Addendum 8, page 2 for details, including funding application deadline info)*
- special newcomer meetings—Not anymore; one meeting had newcomer greeter
- speakers list for various community organizations—No

57. What have we done to bring the OA message to the attention of the professional community, such as:

- medical professionals
- physicians
- nurses
- dietitians
- nutritionists
- medical technicians
- psychiatrists
- psychologists: ✓ Last year MHIG had a table for therapists of anorexic/bulimic of Kingston
- counselors
- teachers
- social workers
- clergy
- military
- employee assistance counselors
- other

Facilitator's Note: The answer here, as in #56, was that little is being done because of lack of volunteers and momentum; it may be done on an individual basis when folks go to their own professionals though. Remember, everything stems from personal recovery so it seems that this is the place to begin, especially since we get about 15-20% of our newcomers through a medical referral. Also, the WSO offers funding for Professional Trade Show participation.

58. What are we doing to carry the message into institutions, such as:

- schools
 - prisons and detention centers
 - hospitals ✓ Former chair used to go to bariatric patients in hospitals to talk
 - training facilities:
 - nursing homes and retirement communities
 - other
- ✓ MHIG participates in Health Fairs at the Community College and Mt. St. Mary and at hospitals
- ✓ They notice that funding for these professional exhibits/fairs is drying up though; there aren't as many laterly

59. Are there other alternatives to the present intergroup structure that might be more useful in meeting the area's needs? If so, what?

- MHIG meets every other month...is this often enough to get things going again?
- Talked about rotating the location of the meeting with advance notice to include more members
- Possibility of having MHIG meeting at local meeting locations, varying the locations

Mid-Hudson Intergroup Inventory – November 3, 2019

- Discussion about [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us)
- Discussion during the Inventory also brought up increasing the focus on working the Steps, our message of recovery.
- Abstinence is at the heart
- Emphasis needs to be on the Twelve Steps
- People don't show up without getting a product; they will start showing up when they get excited
- Helping each individual with their recovery helps our recovery
- What can We do for You?
- Together WE Recover