

WSBC - April 25-29, 2023

Concepts of Service: The Heart of Fellowship

WSBC DELEGATE REPORT FOR CNMI – SHORT VERSION

I wrote a long version of my report that includes details about all the happenings at the workshops, committee meetings, Literature Q&A and business meetings. I honestly knew very little about *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service*. I learned a lot and heard a lot of wisdom from what was shared at all these workshops. I wanted to pass it on to anyone interested. The long version is indeed very long and I don't expect everyone will have the time or want to read it. I would encourage you to scroll down and see if anything piques your interest though. The debate surrounding some of the motions was quite interesting and reflects the diversity of thought in our Fellowship.

Some of the key issues that were front and center were diversity in OA (or the lack thereof), difficulties for non-English speakers to access translated OA literature, our aging Fellowship and the need to attract young people, differences in opinion on what OA- approved literature should include, gender identity issues, and the explosion of the Virtual Region and how this affects other regions. I looked around at the conference and saw a lot of older people. Many of the delegates had been in OA for decades and are now 60+. There were very few People of Color and a lot of White folks. A recurring question throughout the week was “how do we attract and welcome underrepresented populations to OA?” I was happy to see each and every person at the Conference. It was wonderful to see how the format of the business meetings (*Robert’s Rules of Order* and our own *Standing Rules*) allowed for any person to voice their opinion or ask questions. So many times, listening to the Pros and Cons helped me understand a particular motion in a different (better) way. In one of the workshops, the speaker said that “the CON is often more important for us to hear than the PRO”.

Another new term I heard was “program diversity” i.e. how there are many different ways to practice the Steps and Traditions, our recovery program. I noticed specific-focus meetings advertised on the bulletin board “Atheist/Agnostic OA Meeting” and “Secular OA Meeting”. I also heard a person share at a workshop that she felt discouraged and loss of hope “I feel like we are kicking God out of OA”.

All delegates sign up to be on a WSBC committee that will meet throughout the year. I chose to be on the Young Persons Committee. We met for two long sessions. It was pretty funny to see so many old people on this committee! Luckily, the committee cochair is an actual young person and very dynamic.

Consent Agenda: These are motions voted on as a block without discussion or debate. There were 11 Proposals voted on the Consent Agenda. I am not going to mention them as they are mainly “housekeeping” motions. You can always refer to my long version.....

Reports: Judy H. the chair of the board of trustees (BOT) shared that OA usually has a loss of \$US50,000/year at WSBC. This year, delegate registration was increased to help with this. Meg M. Treasurer said that donations were down in 2022 compared to 2021. Sarah Armstrong, Managing Director said that in 2022, the number of OA meetings worldwide, including virtual meetings, averaged 6,467 in over 75 countries, with 339 service bodies. **Karen B., Conference Planning Committee reported that in 2024 we will have a virtual observation available for the whole conference but it will be face-to-face.**

Proposed Literature Motions: *Diverse Voices: A Common Solution* was adopted. This will be a large pamphlet. DeDe DeMoss, editor at WSO, had said that it basically was too short for a book and too long for a pamphlet. **Sponsorship in OA: Guiding Others Into Recovery** was defeated. The main objection here was that it had left out the *Thirty Questions*.

New Business Proposals:

B) Create a public relations policy by combining all PR policies currently listed in the Business Conference Policy Manual. **Adopted**

A) The substitute motion would create a policy to avoid the use of acronyms and abbreviations (where possible) in all OA official documents and communications. The acronym for Overeaters Anonymous, “OA” and OA literature would be exempt. **Adopted**

C) The substitute motion would allow service bodies to obtain permission to translate and/or print OA literature using the current licensing process. **Adopted**

E) The substitute motion Part A. changed the meaning of open meeting to “Meeting with visitors (Open) and closed meeting to “Meeting without visitors (Closed). **Adopted.** Part B. adds the word “Specific” to *Focus Meeting*. It also adds the word “Specific” to *Topic Meeting*. **Adopted**

F) The substitute motion changed “allowing any member to share ~~his or her~~ their experience, strength, and hope in meetings...” to “**allowing members to share their experience, strength, and hope in meetings...**” **Adopted**

I) The amended motion adds the word “specific” before *focus meetings*. **Adopted**

K) Rescinds the policy that the WSO provides service bodies with website templates. **Adopted**

M) Increases the cap on annual individual OA donations from \$US5,000 to \$US7,500. **Adopted**

P) This proposed to remove a policy that has been fulfilled. The policy had established an ad-hoc committee to research the best means and costs of improving OA’s “front door” on our website. **Adopted**

S) The amended motion would add two new recovery chips to what is currently available: year 45 and 50. (current chips are 1-20, 25, 30, 35, 40) **Adopted**

T) The original motion removed AA Conference-approved literature from the *Statement on Approved (OA) Literature*. They added “the current edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*”. **The substitute motion added to the original motion “and the AA book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*”.** The substitute motions was **Defeated**

U) Adds the following to our *Statement on Approved Literature* “Although groups may choose to focus on one piece of OA-approved literature, individuals and groups are encouraged to use any and all OA-approved literature.” **Adopted**

V) This motion sought to establish a digital OA lending library that would provide equal access to the most essential OA literature. **An amended motion asked that this amendment be referred to the BOT.** **Adopted**

Bylaw Amendment Proposals:

2, 3, and 18) On the Consent Agenda

1, 5-10, 15) Were withdrawn (I believe time constraints)

11, 12, 16 and 17) We did not get to these

Proposal 4: This motion removes the word “special” from special-focus service boards. **An amended motion added the word “specific” to “focus service boards”.** **Adopted**

***The following two proposals were the most difficult to understand. They were basically the polar opposite of each other. There was not much time to devote to these proposals and there was much confusion amongst the delegates. Proponents for both proposals were very passionate and emotional when speaking about it. It was very important to “both sides”. It was a very difficult one to vote on. See the long version for more details.**

Proposal 13: This would give intergroups affiliated with a national service board (NSB) the choice of affiliating with the NSB’s region or choose to remain in the currently assigned region. **Adopted**

Proposal 14: This would have intergroups affiliating with a NSB affiliate with the NSB’s region. **Defeated**

New Trustees: I wrote more about where they were from and questions asked of them (long version). I was thrilled to see one of the nominees was someone I have known for years in program from Region 3 (CO) Michael K. He introduced himself as “abstaining and maintaining for 47 years”. The other nominees were Gary D., Betty J.(BJ), Meg M., Beverly M., and Lee R. They were all voted in. I was impressed with each of their resumes and speeches. Judy H. will step down as chair as her term is completed.

The Unity With Diversity Committee distributed a survey for those who wished to participate. It had a lot of personal questions on it relating to age, years in program, health, race, religion, gender identity, sexual preference etc. They plan to do this every year and keep track of the results (read more about it in the long version).

The Business Meeting closed with a green dot ceremony (first WSBC). Thanks were given to all the volunteers and planners, the chair and the BOT. The meeting closed with the Serenity Prayer in Swedish.

I felt so proud to see all the volunteers from CNMI, many traveled a distance to get here. I am grateful for all the volunteers from other states as well. Thank you Kathy for doing a super job in rounding up everyone! I was a mentor to a green dot this Conference. She was a great blessing to me for many reasons. In her words, we became fast friends. I met a whole lot of new people from all over the world. I listened to them and they helped me see things through different lenses. That is the beauty and the joy of being at this Conference. I would recommend it highly. Maybe you will be our next delegate?!!

Saturday night was a dinner followed by a skit, a speaker and a dance. Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as delegate for this WSBC. I welcome any questions or comments.

Leonie W. Alternate WSBC Delegate

catlaw98@gmail.com

