



Including Regional Victoria and Tasmania

# Welcome to Intergroup Orientation Manual

## OA Responsibility Pledge

"Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion. For this I am responsible."

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## WELCOME TO INTERGROUP

Hello and welcome to OA Melbourne Intergroup, including Regional Victoria & Tasmania (IG). We're glad you have chosen to give service at this level, and want to help you become familiar with IG, what members do, and how the meetings function.

Intergroup is a service body where groups and members, mostly within our geographical area (the states of Victoria & Tasmania, Australia) can communicate efficiently and make decisions to reach out to those who still suffer from compulsive eating.

Each group that is affiliated with IG elects one representative from their group to represent their group at monthly intergroup meetings. Each representative is given one vote in the making of decisions. IG maintains a website ([www.oa.org.au](http://www.oa.org.au)), disseminates information to the public and professionals, arranges events and convention/retreats for members, and sells OA literature.

The monthly IG meetings are run by Robert's Rules of Order. (Refer to the appendices in this doc. for more information)

IG is made up of Executive Committee members, Core Committee Coordinators, Intergroup representatives and Ad Hoc Committee Coordinators.

If you should have questions along the way, please do not hesitate to contact one of us or another Intergroup member. The service you are giving at the intergroup level helps OA reach out to those who suffer from compulsive eating.

Yours in service,

*Intergroup Executive Committee*

## WHAT IS INTERGROUP?

A Group Conscience meeting that addresses business and other matters affecting the groups & members within our area.

## WHAT IS THE INTERGROUP PURPOSE?

The primary purpose of Intergroup is to carry the Overeaters Anonymous (OA) message of recovery to compulsive overeaters and those with compulsive food behaviours by being guardians of and fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, and to serve the members and groups in its geographical boundaries and affiliated groups outside those geographical boundaries.

## WHEN IS INTERGROUP?

Intergroup meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month (except January) from 8am-10am on zoom.

We hold one meeting per year on a Sunday instead of the Saturday as per our Policy & Procedures doc. The month in which this occurs is decided by the intergroup as a whole. If the date of any meeting is changed or a meeting is cancelled, it is decided by a vote at an earlier Intergroup meeting and all participants are notified through the Minutes. **Be sure the secretary has your email address.**

We also hold 2 Bi-annual General meetings – 1 in March and 1 in September

## WHO ATTENDS INTERGROUP?

You do!

Now that you've been elected to serve at Intergroup, you are required to attend the Intergroup meetings on the 2nd Saturday of each month and the Bi-annual general meetings in March and September. It's your opportunity to give and receive information about the service activities of Intergroup, and be an active participant.

If you are a group rep who cannot attend on a particular occasion, please ask your group to nominate an alternate representative (proxy) from your meeting to attend that month instead.

You will not be alone at Intergroup. You will be one among many. Here are the other members and committees you will meet along the way:

### IG Representatives:

Group reps are the vital link between affiliated groups and Intergroup. Reps bring information to IG about their group, participate in group conscience discussions and vote on behalf of their group. Following IG, the rep reports the outcomes of business matters discussed at IG to their group, distributes event news and flyers, etc. and informs fellow members about service opportunities available on committees and positions vacant.

## **IG Executive Committee**

The executive committee works together to facilitate decision making between IG meetings as required, and in urgent or crisis circumstances. They are responsible for ensuring IG compliance with the law and legal responsibilities as an Incorporated Association and ensure administrative tasks are undertaken on behalf of the IG.

The exec is comprised of:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Region Ten Representative/s (RR)
- World Service Business Conference Delegate (WSBCD)
- Ex-Officio positions – exec members may continue to serve IG for 12mths after their term to assist continuity of service. They do not continue in their role but do have a voice and vote.

## **IG Core Committees**

Core Committees fulfil essential, ongoing tasks necessary for the welfare and operation of IG. The 4 core committees are:

- Literature
- PIPO – Public Information and Professional Outreach
- Website
- Events

## **IG Ad Hoc Committees**

Ad Hoc committees are created to assist in the fulfilment of tasks as the need arises. They are a wonderful opportunity for members to give service over shorter timeframes when they are unable to commit long-term.

Some of these committees include but are not limited to:

- Budget/finance
- Intergroup Documents Review
- Bylaws
- Convention
- Outreach
- Newsletter
- Fundraising

## **Observers**

Any member of Overeaters Anonymous is welcome to attend the intergroup meeting and may have a voice in group conscience discussions.

We encourage interested members to join a committee and to promote service on committees at meetings to encourage others to participate in this type of service.

## INTERGROUP: A VISUAL REPRESENTATION



## WHAT HAPPENS AT INTERGROUP MEETINGS?

At Intergroup meetings we come together to attend to business matters effecting the groups and members we represent.

We follow an agenda and practice the principles as we move through each item.

As this is a business meeting, we observe some but not all of the practices that we do at our regular OA meetings.

At Intergroup, generally speaking:

- We ID at the beginning of the meeting but not each time we speak.
- We raise hands and wait to be called upon by the Chair to speak
- Everyone is encouraged to have a voice in matters under discussion
- We follow Robert's Rules of Order (refer appendices p.15) to facilitate ease of business
- We ask questions about things we've read in service reports and bring new ideas to the table.

If any new decisions need to be made we hold a group conscience discussion and vote, or plan to hold that discussion for the following meeting, or as soon as all the relevant information is available. This enables us to make the best decisions for the members we serve.



## INTERGROUP MEETING ETIQUETTE

At Intergroup we observe healthy practices just as we do at our regular OA meetings. These include:

- No crosstalk – we don't interrupt members sharing/speaking
- We don't refer to what another member has shared, with one exception – as this is a business meeting, we may need to ask a question if we need more information, to understand or to gain clarity before voting

Online meeting:

- We use the raise hand function when we want to speak and wait until the Chairperson invites us to unmute and speak

Face-to-face

- We raise our hand when we want to speak and wait until the Chairperson invites us to speak

[Guidelines for a Group Conscience Meeting \(oa.org\)](#) (link to guidelines for groups that contains helpful reminders for us to apply at IG as well)

## WHAT PART DO I PLAY?

In the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous, we are all encouraged to do what we can, when we can.

Just as in our personal recovery, the bulk of the action takes place in-between meetings.

### **Before IG meetings:**

Write and email your service report to [oa.melb@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melb@gmail.com) at least 1 week before IG. (See 'Service Reports' below)

Read other service reports in the pre-reading doc that will be emailed to you with the agenda. Be prepared so that you can participate in an effective group conscience.

### **During IG meetings:**

Put distractions aside and be present. Participate in discussions - listen, ask questions, have a voice.

### **After IG meetings:**

Take any action that you agreed to do for IG. Share IG news with your fellows – event flyers, save the dates, etc.

### **Between IG meetings:**

Reach out to your fellows practicing service at IG. Keep the dialogue going about the ways we are carrying the message to those who still suffer.

If you get inspired about new action, prepare a motion in readiness for the next meeting. (*Refer to appendices section below on how to do this*). Email the Chairperson asking for your new item to be added to the agenda.

## **SERVICE REPORTS**

Please write your reports in font **Arial 12** and send them through as a **word doc** NOT a PDF file. This makes the task of copy/pasting reports into the minutes easy for the Minute's Taker, thanks.

See below for what to include in your report.

### **Group Rep Reports**

Please note that if you are unable to attend the meeting, please send your report and it will be shared at the meeting and included in the minutes. You can also send a proxy representative to attend and vote on your group's behalf (this person must be elected by your group).

Suggested headings for Group Reps to use in monthly reports:

- Approx. group numbers
- List of filled service positions
- List of vacant service positions
- Group conscience conducted this month (Y/N)
- Highlights/Update
- Any issues/questions to raise at IG

### **Other position & Committee Reports**

- Outline of the activities performed during the month
- Any questions for IG that will help you be clear about your service actions
- Motions to be discussed relating to your role or committee's role/purpose

## 4 KEY DUTIES OF ALL INTERGROUP MEMBERS

As members of Intergroup we serve within the safe bounds of, and are always guided by, the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA and the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

It is important for members serving at Intergroup to understand, however, that we are also bound by Australian law when serving others in an organised committee. Fortunately, these requirements as laid out below, do not conflict with the Spiritual Principles of our Fellowship.

These are the Australian legal requirements for anyone serving others in an organisation:

1. Duty to act in good faith and for a proper purpose.
  - In the best interests of the association
  - Within the powers given to the Intergroup
2. Duty to act with reasonable care, skill and diligence.
  - Take your role as an Intergroup member seriously
  - Make appropriate use of any skills and experience you have for the benefit of the association
  - Give sufficient time, thought and energy to any tasks you have undertaken and to decisions you are required to make
  - Monitor the affairs, activities, strategic direction and financial position of the association
  - Understand the association's current financial position at all times, in order to ensure that the financial affairs of the association are managed responsibly
  - Prevent the association from continuing to incur debts if you know or suspect that the association cannot meet its debts when they fall due
3. Duty not to misuse information or position while in the role and after leaving the role. A member must not make improper use of:
  - The position held or information obtained through the position held to either:
    - Gain an advantage for yourself or any other person or group beyond the purpose of the association
    - Cause detriment to the Intergroup
4. Duty to disclose and manage conflicts of interest.

**RESOURCES**

**“Principles Before Personalities”**

## The Spiritual Principles of OA

	STEPS	TRADITIONS	CONCEPTS
1	Honesty	Unity	Unity
2	Hope	Trust	Conscience
3	Faith	Identity	Trust
4	Courage	Autonomy	Equality
5	Integrity	Purpose	Consideration
6	Willingness	Solidarity	Responsibility
7	Humility	Responsibility	Balance
8	Self-Discipline	Fellowship	Delegation
9	Love for Others	Structure	Ability
10	Perseverance	Neutrality	Clarity
11	Spiritual Awareness	Anonymity	Humility
12	Service	Spirituality	Selflessness; Realism Representation; Dialogue; Compassion; Respect

## Twelve Steps

The Twelve Steps are the heart of the OA recovery program. They offer a new way of life that enables the compulsive eater to live without the need for excess food.

The ideas expressed in the Twelve Steps, which originated in Alcoholics Anonymous, reflect practical experience and application of spiritual insights recorded by thinkers throughout the ages. Their greatest importance lies in the fact that they work! They enable compulsive eaters and millions of other Twelve-Steppers to lead happy, productive lives. They represent the foundation upon which OA is built.

### The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

## Twelve Traditions

[230-The-Twelve-Traditions-of-OA-2019.pdf](#) (Link to the long-form traditions pamphlet)

The Twelve Traditions are the means by which OA remains unified in a common cause. These Twelve Traditions are to the groups what the Twelve Steps are to the individual. They are suggested principles to ensure the survival and growth of the many groups that compose Overeaters Anonymous.

Like the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions have their origins in Alcoholics Anonymous. These Traditions describe attitudes which those early members believed were important to group survival.

### The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Permission to use the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

## The Twelve Concepts of OA Service

**Concept One** The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

**Concept Two** The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

**Concept Three** The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

**Concept Four** The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

**Concept Five** Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

**Concept Six** The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.

**Concept Seven** The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.

**Concept Eight** The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.

**Concept Nine** Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.

**Concept Ten** Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.

**Concept Eleven** Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.

**Concept Twelve** The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:

- a) No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
- b) Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
- c) No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
- d) All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
- e) No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
- f) No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

## 7th Tradition Pamphlet

[SeventhTraditionPamphlet.pdf \(oa.org\)](#)

## OA Handbook for Groups and Service Bodies

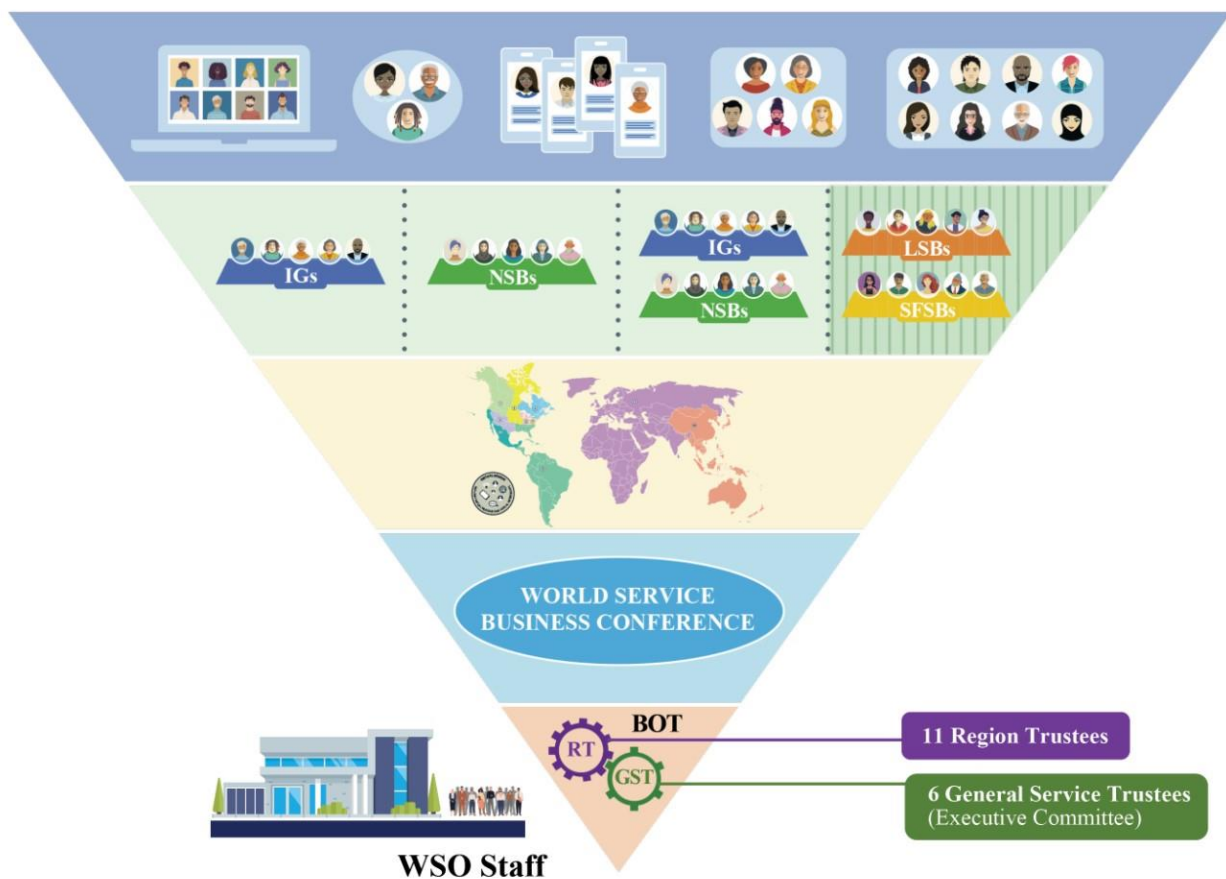
[OA Handbook 2019.pdf](#)

## Diagram of the Structure of OA

OA consists of:

- Groups
- Intergroups and Service Boards
- Regions - OA is a worldwide fellowship and Australia is part of Region Ten
- World Service
- Board of Trustees and Executive Committee

## OVERALL SERVICE STRUCTURE





## APPENDICES

### Guide to Robert's Rules of Order and Motions

#### Guiding Principles:

- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times. Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

#### What is a motion?

It is an idea/suggestion that Intergroup take a certain action.  
Keep the spiritual principles and IG primary purpose as the focus.

#### Preparing a motion

Layout as follows:

Motion What is the specific action I want IG to take? Be precise.

Proposed by who is suggesting the action – is it you, a few members or a group?

Rationale Why?

Purpose How will this serve the still suffering compulsive eater? Directly or indirectly?

Action Plan If the motion is carried, what specific actions will need to be implemented and by whom?

Cost: How much will it cost? Awareness of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition responsibility

#### Example:

Motion That Melbourne Intergroup cease renting the Punt Road, Windsor office at the conclusion of the current lease.

Proposed by the OA Melbourne Intergroup Inc. Executive Committee

Rationale It's not financially viable, it's used less than 20 hrs/month, a survey of members indicates preference to use resources in other ways

Purpose make better use of 7<sup>th</sup> tradition funds to carry the message

Action Plan Inform agent, inform groups, inventory items at office, arrange alternative storage for essential items, arrange painting, etc. for end-of lease 'make good'.

Cost: \$cost of end of lease 'make good' and new storage facility

**It is always preferred that motions are considered, prepared and shared before the IG meeting.** This gives you the opportunity to thoroughly consider the action you are going to suggest and gives your fellow IG members time to consider the proposal and arrive at the meeting with their questions/responses ready for a group conscience discussion.

Usually, a member will bring a motion relating to their service role or that their group has discussed at group conscience and wants the Intergroup to action. However, any OA member can bring a motion to IG. The steps to do this are as follows:

1. Prepare the motion – ask for help if you need it
2. Request the item be added to the agenda
3. Email the proposed motion to [oa.melb@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melb@gmail.com) to be included in the pre-reading doc
4. The Chair will call on you during the IG meeting to present the motion

**At Intergroup, each motion goes through the following steps:**

1. **Motion:** The item is next on the agenda or a member raises a hand to signal the chairperson, then once acknowledged, states the motion.
2. **Second:** Another member seconds the motion (The seconder does not need to agree with the proposal but does need to believe it is an idea worthy of discussion and the IG's time) If there is no seconder, there is no further discussion to be had.
3. **Restate motion:** The chairperson restates the motion.
4. **Group Conscience Discussion\*:** The members discuss the pros & cons of the motion by raising hands and waiting invitation to speak from the Chair.

**Note:** No one may speak a second time until all who wish have had the opportunity to speak once. Everyone is encouraged to have a voice. We don't refer to what another member has shared, with one exception – to ask a question if we need more information, to understand or to gain clarity.

5. **Vote:** The chairperson restates the motion, and then asks members to vote using the 'tick or cross' in zoom reactions. Votes are counted.
6. **Announce the vote:** The chairperson announces the result of the vote (Motion is 'carried' or 'not carried') and then gives any instructions.

**\*Unanimous Consent:**

If a matter is considered relatively minor or opposition is not expected, a call for unanimous consent may be requested. The Chair may call for unanimous consent or if the request is made by others, the Chair will repeat the request and then pause for objections. If none are heard, the motion is carried.

**You may INTERRUPT a speaker for these reasons only:**

- o to get information about business – point of information - to get information about process or matter under discussion
- o if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. – question of privilege
- o if you see a breach of the Steps, Traditions or Concepts – point of order
- o if you disagree with the Chairs announced results on a motion – appeal
- o if you disagree with a call for Unanimous Consent – object

**Amending a Motion**

If you want to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion.

After recognition by the Chair, move to amend by

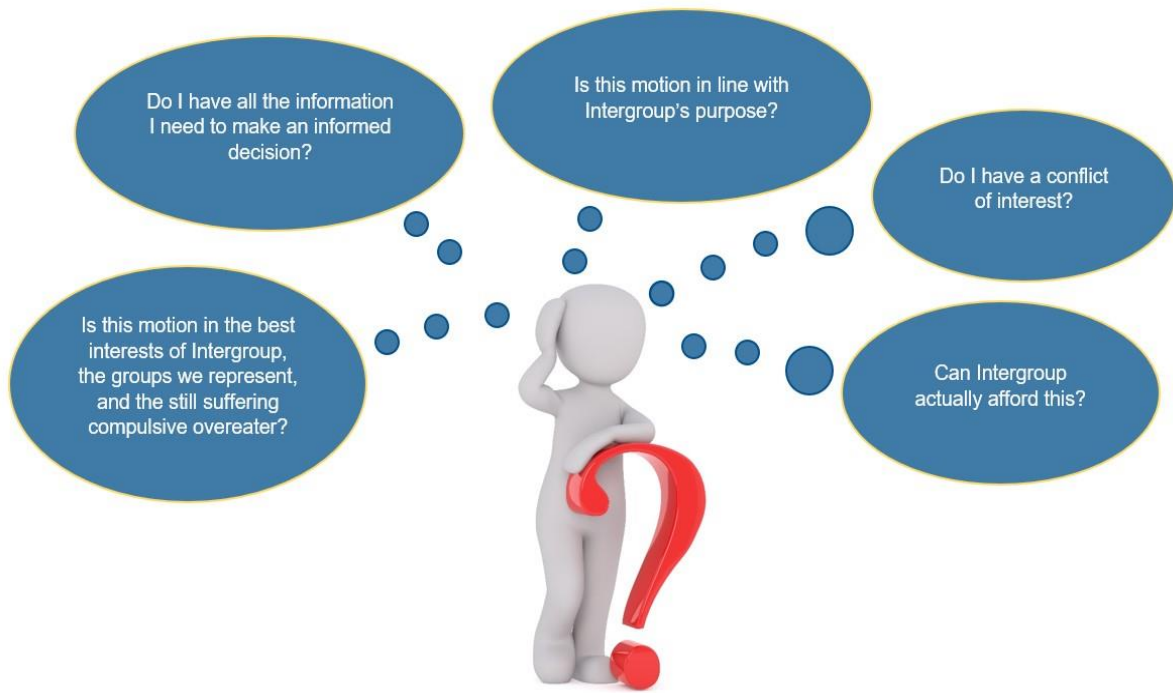
- adding words,
- striking words or
- striking and inserting words.

**Substantial Unanimity**

In OA we strive for substantial unanimity when making decisions – more than a simple majority. If the numbers in favour of a motion are not substantial, it may mean that more information is required before a decision can be made. The Chair may call for the matter to be deferred so that all necessary information can be gathered. Refer to the twelve steps, twelve traditions and twelve concepts of OA service for more information and the spiritual principles that are our guide in making decisions.

- + All motions and results will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- + Any motions carried that result in ongoing action, will be recorded in the 'Intergroup Policy & Procedures' doc.

## CONSIDERING A MOTION - VISUAL



## **DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS:**

**IG:** Intergroup (also may be referred to as The Service Body)

**WSO:** World Service Office - Overeaters Anonymous Headquarters, located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**WSBC:** World Service Business Conference- serves as the collective conscience of the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. Held annually in April or May, this week-long meeting is attended by delegates representing OA intergroups and service boards around the world. It is held to elect trustees, amend bylaws, adopt new business policies and provide information to delegates through presentations and workshops on issues that affect OA as a whole.

**WSBCD:** World Service Business Conference Delegate

**RR:** Region Representative (Region Rep)

**EXEC:** Intergroup Executive committee

**CC:** Core Committee – Literature, PIPO, Events & Website

**CCC:** Core Committee Coordinator (such as Literature Committee Coordinator)

**ACH:** Ad Hoc Committee

**AHCC:** Ad Hoc Committee Coordinator (such as Finance/Budget Committee)

**IR:** Intergroup representative (Group Reps)

## **OA PROMISE**

I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.

From I Put My Hand in Yours ©1968...1995 Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. All rights reserved

## INTERGROUP EMAIL ADDRESSES

The following descriptions are a guide only as to who to contact. If in doubt, please email the secretary who will forward your email to the appropriate position holder.

**Chairperson:** for matters relating to agenda items, IG meetings format, assistance with preparing a motion, the executive committee, etc

[oa.melbchairperson@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbchairperson@gmail.com)

**Vice-Chair:** support for IG reps, Policy & Procedures and Bylaws enquiries

[oa.melbvicechair@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbvicechair@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** general member enquiries, updating IG member contact details, updating group details (new secretaries, etc), how to start a meeting and more

[oa.melb@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melb@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** for information relating to bank deposits, reimbursements, IG financial transactions, the budget – including Budget/Finance committee matters

[oa.melbtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbtreasurer@gmail.com)

**Region Ten Representative:** for information about Region Ten, latest news, service committees to participate in, etc

[oa.melbregionrep@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbregionrep@gmail.com)

**World Service Business Conference Delegate:** for information about the WSO business conference and WSO news, resources available from the WSO

[oa.melbwbsbcd@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbwbsbcd@gmail.com)

**Website Committee Coordinator:** to update meeting information on the website, join the website committee, report technical issues with the site and all other website matters

[oa.melbwebsite@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbwebsite@gmail.com)

**Literature Committee Coordinator:** all literature enquiries, sales/purchases, etc

[oa.melbliterature@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbliterature@gmail.com)

**PIPO (Public Information/Professional Outreach) Committee Coordinator:** to join the PIPO committee, enquiries about public information opportunities

[oa.melbpipo@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbpipo@gmail.com)

**Events Committee Coordinator:** to join the events committee, enquiries about planned events, etc

[oa.melbevents@gmail.com](mailto:oa.melbevents@gmail.com)