



# Public Information Newsletter

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“ Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers



## Contents

Regional Actions...*on the radio...making a display*...[page 2]

Group Actions...*meeting revival...Reykjavik*.....[page 5]

Individual Actions...*always ready to share*.....[page 7]



## Feedback

If you have individual or group actions to share or if you have ideas that could be taken forward by the PI Committee please let us know; we are always looking for new ways to carry the message. We are also looking for new members for the group so please consider this service opportunity – please email us at [oapi.nwig@gmail.com](mailto:oapi.nwig@gmail.com).



Always to extend the hand and heart of **OA**  
to all who share my compulsion; for this I am **responsible**

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## Regional Actions



### Introducing the BRAND NEW North West Display Banners

A huge thank you to the PI Committee, in particular Chris, for designing our new North West Intergroup banner stands! I know it wasn't easy trying to source artwork that had OA approval and then ensure it was of a high enough quality to be printed that large. All your hard work paid off and I'm delighted with our new PI stands. Cheryl brought these to National Assembly and we displayed them either side of the registration desk which was in a public part of the hotel.

With their being weddings and other events happening at the same time over the weekend there was a large footfall of people who saw the banners. Being on the registration desk I had the pleasure of hearing OA member compliments about them and also being approached by a few non-OA members to ask more about us!

For PI events in the future I think these banners will prove invaluable! Well done PI Committee and keep up the brilliant work.

Sam



The banners will be stored by a member of the PI Committee but each North West group can request use of the banners for any upcoming events.



### OA fellows sharing recovery on BBC Merseyside Radio



[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0511d7c](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0511d7c)

Every evening Linda McDermott brings you all the chat, culture and nightlife from Liverpool in the late show.

Hi my name is Cheryl and I am a compulsive overeater and amongst other things am giving service as a member of the PI Committee for the NWIG.

I am, as part of the day job a regular guest on the Linda McDermott Monday late night show on BBC Radio Merseyside. She is on every night Monday to Friday 10pm until 1am and I am a regular guest on the Monday show, sometimes I will cover on the other nights depending on the availability of other regulars. There are 4 guests on Mondays show usually female and we are known as the "Monday Madames" I am never sure where that name came from but it's not to do with any ability to be a super stroppy Madame (which incidentally I can be given half a chance and particularly where food is concerned). As part of her Monday schedule, every other week she does an hour slot with the resident Doctor James Kingsland OBE, where he talks about topical issues such as the seasonal flu jab, hay fever and takes questions from the listeners. James is the Senior Partner in a General Practice in the North West of England; and devotes half time in clinical practice and half time in national advisory roles and for company boards. He is the clinical lead for the National Primary Care Network and President of the National Association of Primary Care (UK).

Chatting to the Doctor off air on one of his nights, he was working with the stats for rising obesity in children under 10 compared to 10, 20 years ago, and I started talking about the group OA I had heard about. He became interested as did Linda so I seized the moment and asked if they would like to do a slot where we discussed this group and perhaps invited some of the group to come along and talk about the charity OA, specifically to help the recovery for fellows with eating disorders.

That conversation took place about 6 months ago, but on Monday 20 November 2017 at roughly 10 30pm we did over an hour slot with the Doctor and 2 volunteers talking about the addiction, OA, the rise in eating disorders and general talk about the complexity of obesity. We could have gone on longer but the Doctor had surgery to run in the morning. The 2 volunteers were amazing they were brave, clear and it was inspiring to hear them talk about their own personal journeys in OA (at the end of this piece the volunteers have added their own thoughts and feelings about how they felt it went on the night). You have to bear in mind Linda's show is the most listened to late night local radio show outside London and attracts nearly 250,000 listeners not just from Merseyside but North Wales, Manchester, Lancs. and a lot of ex pats outside the UK. If you didn't manage to hear the show, then you can catch up on BBC iPlayer for up to 30 days after the show.

Personally, I didn't contribute to maintain my anonymity but I have to say that was really hard I kept wanting to chip in, I was bursting with pride listening to OA and the individual journeys, let's hope the message reaches out to many and gives them a chance to come to OA for a solution.

It went so well that Linda has offered OA another slot in January as many of the listeners struggle with added weight or eating after the Christmas food excesses. The PI Committee also ran an advert in "The Liverpool Echo" to coincide with the programme. The PI Committee is planning further events throughout next year to get the message out to all areas within the North-West IG region.

The final words are from our two OA interviewees.

"This opportunity to give service was an amazing one but in many respects, on reflection, no different from any other chance to give back what I have been given, gratefully. Giving service helps strengthen my recovery and work steps 1,3 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 & 12: to see Traditions 11 & 12 in action and to practice working on handing my defects of resentment, self-centredness and fear acknowledged, faced and handed over. I truly believe that my HP reached out to the HPs of others who are still suffering. So with my HP what was there to fear? Only fear itself."

Grace COE

"I was humbled to be asked to represent OA on the Radio, like Donna Summer! I was a little fearful and worried about what to say, but then I went to meetings and heard what I needed to hear, the meeting topics were: overcoming fear; step 11; then Tradition 5, our primary purpose is to carry the message. I also met a fellow with experience who suggested reading traditions 11 and 12, which really helped. I procrastinated over choosing a fake name, trying to be perfect about it, but then let go, and chose one that was good enough! I did pause and connect, meditating and praying before taking part which really helped ground me and feel connected. I managed to let go of my fear of not being good enough, saying the wrong thing, and saying too much. The intuitive thought came to me to just listen, be present, and engage. Also, that whatever I did say would be what I was meant to say, that I don't need to be the judge of whether I have said the right thing: that I will say whatever I was meant to say; and that took the pressure off. It was wonderful to be a part of it, and to share my experience, strength and hope, plus my passion around the subject of obesity. I'm really grateful to have been able to take part in this opportunity for growth, and I wanted to share what I got from the experience and how it has helped me grow in my recovery. "



## Group Actions



### Share – starting a New Meeting

I am Alex and I am a compulsive overeater. I relocated back to North Wales nearly 4 years ago after a stint of living in London and Cardiff. There had been a meeting in Bangor which had closed not long before I moved back. At that time of moving it wasn't clear whether we would stay in the area; and I felt fully charged in my recovery from the amazing fellowship I had experienced in the cities. Without an OA meeting to go to initially I found fellowship in other 12 step meetings but I started to struggle with the food. I tried to get to intergroup and was told I needed to have a meeting to be an intergroup rep (of course!). I was starting to find that, although my food was abstinent, my mind was not. I was beginning to lose my recovery and I was finding it very difficult to find ways to reach out. Once I realised I was beginning to spiral downwards I knew I needed to start a meeting.

I found a venue that was sympathetic; I invested some of my own money in paying the first month's rent ahead of time and I made posters (which I translated into Welsh). I contacted the fellows from the meeting that had closed and some of them came. We used the official script and for the first couple of months we either used podcasts or skyped in speakers and combined that with reading from OA literature. The meeting established itself enough to have a group conscience and it started to find its own identity. Some weeks no one came and I sat there; just myself and my higher power; some weeks we were 5 or 6 people. Some key newcomers came and asked me for sponsorship. This was beginning to get exciting! Last year we decided to change venue from a therapy centre to the Quaker Meeting House and this was a great boost to us spiritually. There are 5 regular attenders now and 2 of my sponsees are on step 9 – which means in no time at all we will have 3 people able to sponsor; it feels like we are on the threshold of a new dawn because when newcomers come now they have a choice of sponsors and variety in the message. It has taken 2 and half years to reach this point.

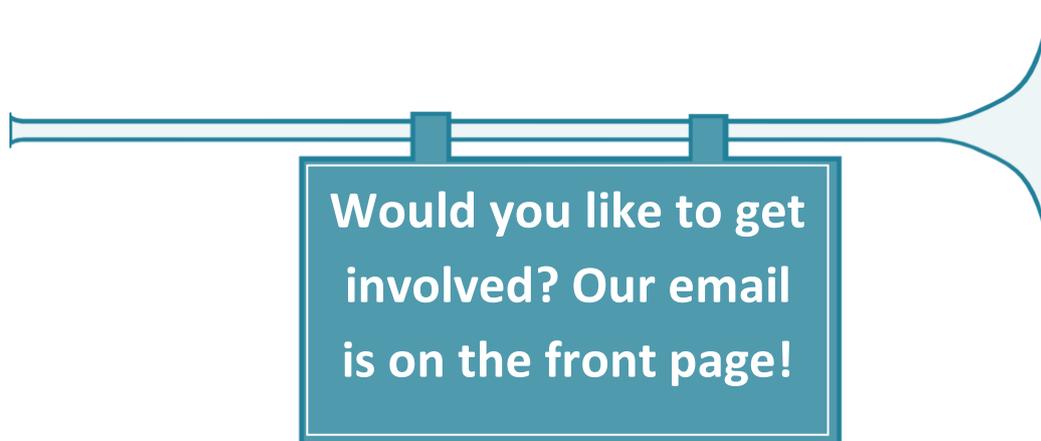
At a recent Intergroup meeting I was asked "how can Intergroup support you as a loner?" and I was completely at a loss as to what to say; I think there is something very beautiful and supportive to have been asked... and at the same time my head and heart felt full from the work that it has taken to bring the meeting to the point it is at now. I really want more support but have no idea what to ask for! That same meeting I put myself forward to be the North West of England (and North Wales!) Intergroup rep for Region 9 which was meeting this November in Reykjavik, Iceland and to my delight was voted in. That trip to Iceland was the immeasurable boost to my recovery that I have been praying for. To be amongst people with long time abstinence, whose eyes shine and hearts are open with the joys of being in recovery; for whom recovery from overeating is a real pleasure; it fired me and lifted me and reaffirmed both my faith in my God and myself. It also felt a real validation that my recovery to date – although imperfect – is good enough.

It was my experience of being a loner and of starting a meeting in a remote area that helped me to empathise with the fellows out there in countries where they are the only one, true loners! I empathised how hard it must be to not have literature in your mother tongue, how

hard it must be to stay positive and abstinent when there isn't anyone within half a continent to share your journey with. It humbled me and reminded me how blessed I am that all 12 step literature is in my language and that an hour and half is not so far to travel to a meeting if I need to; and we have technology and internet... and no one hijacks meetings, handcuffs members and steals the tradition 7 as happened recently in South Africa. The service of Region 9; which covers Europe, Africa, Middle East and some of Asia; inspired me so much that when I was nominated as Treasurer to Region 9 I felt my God give me the willingness to accept the group conscience and be voted on.

I returned from Iceland to my little meeting in Bangor with those shiny eyes and happy heart that recovery gives me. It was a delight to discover that "somehow" while I had been away the general level of abstinence in the meeting had increased. We are so connected. I feel a new sense of optimism and of serenity. My advice to anyone who is a loner wanting to start a meeting is to attend Intergroup and get support for your own recovery from people who have the shiny eyes and happy heart; the people who talk of miracles and show up for service. Remain connected to the people who demonstrate true recovery so that you don't end up feeling like you are top of a tree with no one around you (this is the disease at work!). In taking stock, myself, of the blessings I have here I am deepening into my appreciation of the miracles my God has gifted me. I could have cruised along in recovery in the big cities; relying on others to run the meetings. I had to revisit the gift of desperation to be reminded that I have recovery from the disease of compulsive overeating by the grace of my God and the twelfth step is not optional; it is a privilege and essential.

I am so grateful every single day for our lovely, sweet, spiritual meeting in the eaves of the Quaker Meeting House, my sponsees, my sponsor and fellows, to Intergroup for having the faith in me to send me to Iceland and for the "business class upgrade" I got (literally... and metaphorically in my recovery), for the opportunity to serve at a global level; using the experience, strength and hope I gained at a local level. Thank you for reading this and if you are interested in visiting Bangor we would totally welcome you; and if you want to know more about Region 9 and its invaluable work please drop me a line.





## Individual Actions



### Share – one member and how they Carry the Message

The little phrase Keep it Simple has just popped into my head and so I shall follow HP. Since the last newsletter I have:

- Had a mail from the consultant psychiatrist at The East Cheshire eating disorders clinic asking if I was still involved with OA! It was great to say yes and ask if I could be of any use. There are new staff and he has asked if I will go and speak with the team. Without hesitation or doubt I have confirmed I am delighted to be asked and await dates and times, trusting it will happen.
- Whenever the display board has a space I seek permission and pin a Bulletin card up. The venue might be a café, restaurant, library, hairdresser, spa, Pilates venue - I hold massive hope as each week the card goes. If I am spiritually low I have paranoia that the diet club who meet there are sabotaging!! Either way I am but the vehicle 😊
- During a GP consultation I talked openly about OA and the benefits I have found regarding a healthy body weight and asked if a folder of resources would be welcome. She was very interested and engaged and that is a pending piece of service.
- At Hospital recently whilst waiting for my appt my ears pricked up as I heard Bariatric! The Manchester Spire has a new hospital and I plan to be in touch with the team asking for an opportunity to share about OA.
- Working together with the Task force for the National Assembly some service gave opportunity to flag up OA i.e. the printers. Throughout the whole experience my gift of abstinence meant I was present and open to see when I could fulfil the OA pledge and primary purpose.
- The most recent PI was to let friends know that we were on the radio.
- I am poised, ready for my next God led PI chance as without OA I would be very dis-eased.

I wish all a Happy Joyous abstinent and free December with no need for resolutions!

Lots of love and huge gratitude

Suzi B xx

**If you find out/know of opportunities to carry the message but are unable to follow up yourself or would like support please contact the PI Committee – together we can.**

**DISCLAIMER: Personal stories in this newsletter express the experience, strength, and hope of the individual member and not of OA as a whole.**