

My Experience in Helping to Establish a GSA Intergroup
by Pat Murray
GSAWS Board Presentation, Oct. 13-14, 2007 at NYGSRU

Hello, my name is Pat. I am a compulsive overeater/food addict.

I was asked to write out a presentation of experience at Intergroup. This is the proposed structure that Esther Helga and I have tried to implement.

My experience at the level of G.S.R. which stands for Group Service Representative for the Bromley in Kent GSA face to face meeting held on Sundays and the formation of the first successful Intergroup in England., after two failed attempts.

Service for me as suggested in fellowship is a recovery tool which helps me to stay abstinent and also allows me the privilege and honour to do service for my fellowship, GreySheeters Anonymous.

I am going to outline a very Brief Description of the Service Structure.

If you can please imagine a triangle reversed with the wider aspect above and the point of the triangle pointing down. The wider aspect represents the key stone of the whole fellowship--that being the spirituality of the program and the people (us) of the program. Then the Formation of GSA Groups and meetings, Intergroup, and Service Conference and, ultimately, World Service Board. A Group Service Representative from groups to Intergroups and Conference Delegate from Intergroup to Service Conference. Now these are two very important key service positions and we would urge every GSA meeting to elect a GSR to have their comments, voices heard at Intergroup and Service Conferences.

You may ask why do we need to have these structures? Well, just to mention a few of these.

We are the body of the fellowship so that when we meet together we receive strength in our mission of fellowship GSA unity, Preamble, Group Purpose, Traditions, Steps, Sponsorship, Food Plan and Anonymity, just to mention a few.

GSA Groups: Where two or more people coming together for mutual help the group is the basic unit, that single group is one of many that meets in all parts of the world. The basic service positions Secretary who is the Leader, treasurer, GSR. GSR acts as liaison between the group and Intergroup.

The function of the Intergroup is for the group members to meet regularly to ensure adequate exchange of information about Service ideas such as group concerns, suggestions, voting on matters to go to Service Conference. Intergroup Delegate shares area experience and brings the views and the spirit of the fellowship to the Service Conference and back again to the Intergroup from Conference.

The Service Conference provides guidance for the Service Branches in service matters brought to its attention.

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The formation of World Service is a business committee composed of Officers and several experienced members to deal with questions of policy, public information and internal problems. The Board meets once a month on a conference call and once a year face to face here in New York. The reason for this is that the Board may take direction from the fellowship

These are four personal experiences of what did not work for us and what did work for us in establishing an Intergroup.

We let the GreySheet community know of the Intergroup meetings by emails, telephone calls, Greynet, and face to face. What did not work for us (first experience) we tried to elect officers to serve at Intergroup with a length of abstinence of 90 days back to back. Reasons it did not work for us: we were a small community and lost abstinence. What did work for us was abstinence requirement taken at community group conscience. 5 yrs. Chairperson, 1 yr. Secretary and 1yr. Treasurer.

Number Two: we tried to elect too many officers for example Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Information, Literature person. What now works for us is we again at community group conscience level elected to have, for the present, a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Number Three: What did not work for us: No consistency with the Intergroup meeting place. We tried rotating at home, GSA meetings and even a place where there was no established meeting. What is working for us now is that same venue for one year which is the Bromley group meeting place, good facilities, space, kitchen, easy to get to from London and the South Coast of England, and good free parking. Following the Intergroup meeting and lunch we have a spiritual meeting and workshops.

Number Four: What did not work for us: Treasurer not personally solvent so the donations got spent. What is working for us: We now ask the proposed person if they are financially solvent.

I will finish with these two last paragraphs. These were a quote to me very recently, very personally:

WE ARE FRAGILE AND NEED LOTS OF ENTHUSIASM AND SPIRIT TO ENCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF INTERGROUPS AND SERVICE CONFERENCE STRUCTURES.

WE HOPE THAT WE WILL ALL BE STIRRED UP, NOT SHAKEN, BUT STIRRED UP, TO DO SERVICE AT THESE LEVELS.

I am absolutely delighted to present Esther Helga from Iceland.