

# **BYLAWS OF THE GREATER HEARTLAND INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

***As approved November 2023***

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Greater Heartland Intergroup Inc. also known as GHII.

## **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of Greater Heartland Intergroup Inc. of Overeaters Anonymous is to carry the message of recovery to those with the problem of eating compulsively, by fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service; and to serve and represent member groups and/or intergroups.

### **A) Twelve Steps**

The Twelve Steps suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous are as follows:

- 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 affairs.

### **B) Twelve Traditions**

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous are:

- 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.

C) Twelve Concepts

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service are:

- 1) The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
- 2) The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
- 3) The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
- 4) The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
- 5) Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
- 6) The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
- 7) 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.
- 8) The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
- 9) Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
- 10) Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
- 11) Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.
- 12) 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 any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERS**

### ***Section 1 – Membership***

Membership of the intergroup (IG) with voice and vote includes the following:

- A) The IG officers (chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer)
- B) Intergroup representatives (IRs), which consist of one member from each group.
- C) World Service Business Conference delegates.
- D) Region representatives.
- E) Committee chairs.
- F) Board members at large

Each member has one vote even if that member serves in more than one capacity (e.g., as committee chair and as an IR.)

### ***Section 2 – Qualifications***

- A) Qualifications for group membership in an intergroup: A land-based intergroup is composed primarily of groups within its region or groups within its geographical proximity. A virtual intergroup is composed primarily of virtual groups. With permission, a land-based group may affiliate with a virtual intergroup and a virtual group may affiliate with a land-based intergroup.  
Each intergroup has the autonomy to determine which groups may affiliate with it; that decision should always be guided by OA Traditions and Concepts.
- B) The Intergroup endorses the definition of an OA group in Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V, Section 1, as written and as it may be amended by a future World Service Business Conference.
- C) These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:
  - 1) As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
  - 2) All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
  - 3) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
  - 4) As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
  - 5) It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.
  - 6) A group may be formed, as set forth in Article V, Section 1, by two or more persons meeting together, either
    - a) in the same physical location (land-based);
    - b) through some form of electronic device (virtual); or
    - c) both.

### ***Section 3 – Intergroup Group Representatives***

- A) Intergroup representatives (IRs) will be selected by the group conscience of the group they represent.
- B) The duty of the IR is to represent the group at IG meetings and to serve as a contact to carry communications between the IG and the represented group.

## **ARTICLE IV – THE INTERGROUP (IG) BOARD**

### ***Section 1 – The Intergroup Board***

- A) The board consists of the following officers: chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer.
- B) The IG board may also include other positions such as World Service Business Conference delegates, regional representatives, or board members at large.
- C) Meetings shall be chaired by the chair of the board. In the event the chair is unable to chair any meeting, the vice chair will lead the meeting. In the event the vice chair is not available, the secretary will chair the meeting and a volunteer will take meeting minutes.

### ***Section 2 – Nominations to the IG Board***

Nominations to the board may be made from the floor at the time of election. A nominating committee may be formed at the discretion of the IG board.

### ***Section 3 – Qualifications for the Intergroup Board***

To qualify for election to the IG board, an individual must:

- A) Be working the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service to the best of his/her ability.
- B) Have six months of current abstinence except as follows (each person shall be the sole judge of his or her abstinence):
  - 1) World Service Business Conference delegates must comply with the abstinence and length of service requirements in the OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3c 1). Current requirements are one-year current abstinence and at least two years of service beyond the group level.
  - 2) Region representatives must comply with the abstinence and length of service specified in the Region 3 Bylaws, Article 5, section C.
- C) Be a regular member of an affiliated group.

### ***Section 4 – Election of Board Members***

- A) Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of election.
- B) Nominees must be present at the election meeting. For election, the candidate must receive a majority vote of ballots cast.
- C) Voting will be by ballot or electronic means.

### ***Section 5 – Term of Office***

- A) The term of office for a board member is 1 year starting on January 1.
- B) Board members may serve no more than 5 consecutive terms in the same position. A member may serve again after a leave of 1 year from the position.
- C) Once elected, a board member may not serve also as a group representative at the intergroup.

### ***Section 6 – Responsibilities of the Intergroup Board Members***

- A) Serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts with respect to the functions of the intergroup.
- B) Perform the duties of their offices in accordance with IG policies and procedures.
- C) Serve as guardian of IG funds; participate in an annual financial audit.
- D) Provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and information among member groups.

### ***Section 7 – Primary Representatives / and Delegates***

According to the requirements for the number of affiliated meetings set by Region 3 and the World Service Business Conference (WSBC), Greater Heartland Intergroup shall select the maximum number of Representatives to send to Region 3 and the maximum number of Delegates to send to the World Service Business Conference to serve alternating, two-year terms. If we fall below the requirements to send at least two Representatives/Delegates, then one Representative or one Delegate each shall be selected to serve a two-year term.

### ***Section 8 – Additional Representatives / and Delegates***

Additional Region 3 Representatives/ and Alternates or WSBC Delegates/ and Alternates may be elected at the time of registration for any Region 3 Assembly or the WSBC, within Region 3 or WSBC guidelines of number of Representatives/ and Delegates allowed.

### ***Section 9 – Election of Representatives / and Delegates***

That we hold the election for Primary Region 3 Representatives at the same times as the election of Intergroup officers and that we hold the election for Primary WSBC Delegates in November to meet the WSBC January registration deadline.

Additional Representatives / Delegates / Alternates may be elected at any meeting when we decide to register and send Delegates/Representatives/Alternates to a scheduled meeting.

Elections for the primary Region 3 Representatives and World Service Business Conference Delegates will be held at the same time as the elections for Intergroup officers. Additional Representatives, Delegates and Alternatives may be elected at any meeting.

### ***Section 10 – Qualifications***

In addition to any qualifications set by Region 3 or the WSBC, Representatives, Delegates, and/or Alternates shall meet the same qualifications as those of the Intergroup officers and shall be subject to the same provisions for removal from office.

- A) The World Service Business Conference Delegate/ and Alternate shall have at least one (1) year of current abstinence, two (2) years of service beyond the group level, and meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3, and as required for election to the Board by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.
- B) The Regional Representative/ and Alternate shall meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Region 3 Bylaws, and as required for election to the board by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.

### ***Section 11 – Registering and Sending Representatives / and Delegates to Meetings***

Although elected, the final decision to register and send the Representatives and

(s)/Delegates (s)/ and Alternates (s) to any scheduled Region Assembly or WSBC shall be made at the time of registration for the meeting based on available funds and any other considerations the Intergroup members feel are appropriate. In the December budget meeting, the executive board will have an official count of the groups to assist with budgeting for region representatives and WSBC delegates.

### ***Section 12 – Vacancies and Resignations***

- A) If a board member has an unexcused absence from an IG meeting more than 6 times in one year, he/she will no longer be a board member.
- B) Any board member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the chair of the IG verbal notice.
- C) Any board member of this IG may be removed from office for due cause by a 3/4 vote of the ballot cast at a regular or special meeting announced for that purpose.

### ***Section 13 – Filling of Board Vacancies***

- A) Board vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote at the next meeting or special meeting of the IG after the vacancy occurs. Such persons chosen to fill said vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- B) A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the board shall meet the qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3.

## **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

### ***Section 1 – Meetings by Virtual Conference***

Members of the IG may participate in a meeting through use of electronic means, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another and have a way to participate in any voting. Materials presented during the meeting shall be made available to those participating virtually. Participation by IG members in a meeting in the manner provided in this Section constitutes presence in person at such meeting.

### ***Section 2 – Regular Meetings***

The IG will meet (either in person or virtually) monthly at a time and place designated by a majority of the voting members.

### ***Section 3 – Annual Meetings***

An annual meeting shall be held (in person or virtually) in the month of November for the election of officers.

### ***Section 4 – Special Meetings***

A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the IG board, or by a quorum of IG members, provided sufficient notice is provided to the membership.

### ***Section 5 – Method of Notification***

The IG will provide at least 7 days' notice with an agenda to each member group.

### ***Section 6 – Quorum***

The quorum for voting purposes shall be, at a minimum, 2 intergroup officer(s) and at least 3 other voting members.

## ***Section 7 – Meeting Procedure***

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The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Concept of Service for the current month shall be read at the beginning of each meeting.

### **ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES**

The board may establish committees as are needed for the welfare and operation of the intergroup. Each committee is responsible to the IG board.

### **ARTICLE VII – PRUDENT RESERVE**

The IG treasurer will maintain a prudent reserve of 6 months expenses to cover expected operational needs. Excess funds will be donated to OA service bodies as determined by the IG.

### **ARTICLE VIII – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Business will be conducted according to the parliamentary procedure outlined in the most current available edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised except when they are inconsistent with these bylaws or any special rules of order the IG may adopt.

### **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the intergroup. The proposed amendment must be communicated in writing to each member group at least 30 days prior to the voting meeting. Amendments to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA may only be made as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1.

### **ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION**

#### ***Section 1 – Deregistration***

In order to deregister, an intergroup must submit a written notice to the World Service Office, region chair, and region trustee and the Greater Heartland Intergroup board.

#### ***Section 2 – Disbursement of Remaining Funds***

When an OA group within Greater Heartland intergroup ceases operation, the money and literature will be returned to Greater Heartland intergroup via any board officer.

#### ***Section 3 – US Non-Profit with 501c (3) Status***

Upon the dissolution of this association, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the association, the remaining assets shall be distributed to the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous, or to a non-profit fund, association, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious and/or scientific purposes, and which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501c (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In accordance with Overeaters Anonymous Traditions, such non-profit fund, association, foundation, or corporation should be either the OA World Service Office or another OA service body.

No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever inure to be or be used for benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers, or other private person, except that the association shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the expressed purpose for which it was formed.