

Service Group Support Committee
July 21, 2019
3:30-5:00pm

The meeting opened with a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer.

Attendance:

Akia, Washington, D.C.*
Alan, Vacaville, CA
Daniela, Sydney, Australia
Dave M., MA/ Central FL
Deme S., CA*
Gracie, Sydney
Jennie, Sydney, Australia
Joanna, Australia
Linda B., London, ON, Canada
Lizia, Sydney, Australia
Lou, Rochester, NY
Mac M., San Francisco*
Nicky, New Zealand
Pam K., Toronto, CA* (Chair)
Paul B., Wareham, MA
Roberta, Philadelphia, PA
Roz H., Amelia Island, FL*
Sharon, CA (Southern)
Sherry, Cape Coral. FL
Shirley, ME*
Tara, PA
Trish, Rochester, NY
Vicki R., Sacramento

* identifies member of the core WSI Service Group Support Committee

Welcome from Pam K. from Toronto, the new WSI SGSC chair.

This is YOUR Call – let's make the most of it!

Pam reviewed the Service Group Support Committee's call topics from the last year:

- Weblinks review
- Getting started: what worked, what didn't, what's working now (Philadelphia)
- Successful strategies for getting press coverage for your information session (Massachusetts)
- WAI LSG report – 2 California LSGs talked about their initiatives
- Health Care Slide Show presentation
- Local Service and Fellowship Building in Australia
- Health Fairs: How to find them, how to work them (Massachusetts & Maine)

Pam brought the group the following questions:

What of those topics did you find useful? What would you like to get from these calls? Are there topics you're interested in going forward, and what do you need from the Service Group Support Committee?

Gracie from Sydney, Australia:

It's important to reach people – every member of the fellowship should know this call is happening through their WSI rep. Does the board have a spreadsheet of all the conference calls for all the FA-WSI committees and when they happen? We should bear in mind overlapping meetings and scheduling calls for compatibility with different time zones. The current structure of the call works well, with alternating months between LSG reports and intergroup reports. Repeating topics will be helpful, especially PI committee topics like the health care presentation and brochure, connection writing workshop, etc.

Pam K. agreed to bring up the topic of a spreadsheet to track all the FA calls at the next board meeting, and said that the core committee is talking about an announcement that would get out to everyone.

Linda B., London, ON, Canada

Came to the last call because she wanted ideas about getting the word out about their new meeting. As a result of hearing fellows from Australia talk on the last call, the meeting hosted an information session. They put up flyers and gave trifolds to churches and contacted the local radio station. The information session had 16 people attending and 3 newcomers. Although no one started the program, they felt a seed had been planted and hearing the experience of the Australian group was just what they needed to get started.

Joanna, Sydney, Australia:

Having an Australian number makes it easy to attend this call; on some other WSI calls the Australian number hasn't worked.

Pam K. agreed to bring this feedback to the next board meeting.

Mac M., San Francisco, CA:

Heard that the health care presentation had been updated, would like to see it presented again.

Roz H., Amelia Island, FL:

Supports the idea of having a way to see all the FA calls.

Deme S., CA

Suggestion from a fellow to choose a smaller group of LSGs to report out in slightly more depth on each call, instead of having every LSG report every time. The LSGs could be asked to submit a one-line summary of what they're working on so the chair/core committee could rotate who discusses what and when.

Akia, Washington, D.C.:

Suggestion to have a site where the LSGs can post agendas and meeting minutes; they have one in D.C. now and it could be a topic for a future call.

Review of the Local Service Group Guidelines and Recommendations

Akia's role, in addition to representing the Washington, D.C.-area LSG, is chair of the subcommittee that reviews the Local Service Group Guidelines and Recommendations. Akia reviewed the document and called out the bullet points that are the most helpful. The document can be found on the website by searching "Local Service Group Guidelines."

The Local Service Group Guidelines and Recommendations is a document put together by fellows sharing their experience on starting a local service group. The document is structured as 15 questions and answers. A majority of the questions are logistical (ex. how to know when to form an LSG, how to know when to meet).

1. What is a local service group and what is its purpose?
 - a. It is helpful for LSGs to keep their focus on reaching the still-suffering food addict
 - b. Even though 12th step work of supporting the current membership is important, this is not the primary focus of the local service group
4. How do you know when an area is ready to form an LSG?
 - a. It's time to form an LSG when members from different meetings are ready to collaborate on service
11. How do you let people know you're starting one?
 - a. Get the word out on a local level by calling people who do service
 - b. Talk with your sponsees and invite them to join
14. Is it okay for an area to have more than one LSG?
 - a. Yes, if there are people willing to do service and if the areas are close enough to collaborate
2. Who can join a local service group? Do you have to have 90 days of continuous abstinence?
 - a. To protect personal recovery, it's important for the member to speak with their sponsor especially when they have less than 90 days of continuous abstinence
5. Are there fixed service positions?
 - a. Best to rotate leader and note taker
 - b. Certain positions could be fixed (ex. phone list and phone tree coordinator, D.C.)
6. Does the LSG need to maintain a treasury?
 - a. If the LSG pays rent, money is collected to pay the rent and the rest is donated to the intergroup and WSI as outlined in the Seventh Tradition pamphlet
 - b. If you need money for a specific event:
 - i. If you're coordinating a health fair event, meetings can donate, and excess is donated as the Seventh Tradition
 - ii. If an area needs additional financial support for an event, the LSG can contact the intergroup or chapter
7. How often should a LSG meet?
 - a. Typically, the meeting should be 30-60 minutes and start and end on time, but there's no set frequency for meetings
8. Does each FA meeting need to be represented for a LSG to form?
 - a. It's not necessary that someone from every meeting be present, but information from the LSG should be disseminated to all the meetings
9. Do we need to take notes? If so, should they be circulated, how, and to whom?
 - a. Notes should be taken, distributed through email
 - b. An agenda is sent out a few days prior to the meeting, and meeting minutes go out that week
13. What language do we use to announce local service group meetings?
 - a. There is suggested language for LSG announcements in the LSG Group Guidelines and Recommendations

Sharon, CA (Southern):

This is her first call and she's a PI rep – is this the right call for her?

Akia said that there is a specific PI call separate from this call, but this call has a lot of helpful information for PI reps because Local Service Groups do a lot of PI work and there will be information a PI rep can use.

Dave M. recommended attending this call to see if it has helpful information, and perhaps hopping on an intergroup call. This call is good for hearing what fellows from other areas are doing.

Paul B., Wareham, MA:

If the purpose of the LSG is to reach the still-suffering food addict, how does that affect activities like fellowship days? Sometimes the still-suffering addict is someone who is in the fellowship but not yet consistently abstinent.

Pam K. clarified that the guidelines are going to be updated with an eye to building fellowship through service. If the fellowship is unified through doing service together, it enhances the newcomer's experience.

3. What types of activities do LSG's find especially helpful?
 - a. Contacting corporate wellness programs and working with Employee Assistance Groups

Trish, Rochester, NY

Suggestion to add that there is language for church bulletin announcements in addition to letters for faith community leaders and health care providers.

15. Since meetings have PI reps, what's the benefit to also having a LSG?
 - a. There's a benefit to having a group that supports the PI reps in the local area

In D.C. the LSG is breaking down the PI kit to make it less threatening to PI reps.

10. How do you keep the momentum going with your group?

In Toronto, members who were instrumental in forming the LSG seek input from newer members which makes the newer fellows feel empowered. They talk excitedly about what they've been doing and it's working well for them.

Pam K. asked Akia if the D.C. LSG reviews the Guidelines document; Akia says that they read the purpose of the LSG at every meeting, and they are going to review the entire document because there are a bunch of new members.

Vicki R., Sacramento, CA:

If the group goes over a document like the Guidelines or the PI kit, what does that mean for other projects?

Akia replied that there are usually multiple projects going at once, but reviewing a document can provide an opportunity for fellows to have a break between service projects.

LSG Reports:

Vicki from Sacramento/Foothills, CA

The group meets monthly, most recently they had 5 members in attendance and two others from outlying areas who don't attend but do participate in service projects. They are sponsoring 13 racks in

the area, placing trifolds on bulletin boards, posting meeting information in 10 small community papers, two people are working on updating FA meetings on EventBrite, and one meeting is also posted on Craigslist. In the fall they are going to be giving health care presentations with the slideshow for two professors, and they are working with a local area dentist to give a presentation for his staff of 15 (also in the fall). The group has discussed reading one service position per meeting from Document 7. They're going to read the PI position and they're going to strengthen their fellowship by understanding the service positions.

Mac M., San Francisco, CA:

The most recent meeting was July 13 with 8-9 fellows in attendance. The group brainstormed successful ways of bringing people to FA, areas where food addicts are, and ways to bring together the successful methods for bringing people to program and the food addicts who need to hear the message. Next month the group will look at the ideas they brainstormed and will choose their next initiatives based on those ideas.

Deme S., CA:

Contra Costa is working on trifolds and books in libraries. Two are on hiatus for the summer.

Jennie, Sydney, Australia:

There was a recent successful PI session with one newcomer. The meeting was early the day after a national election which may have affected attendance, but planning the event brought the fellowship together. They are approaching a local newspaper about advertising, and had radio advertisement for the PI event.

Daniela, Sydney, Australia:

There is no formal LSG at the moment; the group has been doing ad hoc projects together because it seemed like the advice for LSGs was to keep things informal. It sounds like the LSGs are formalizing a bit – is that the new direction from FA?

Pam K. replied that this issue is a topic of discussion for the core committee. Having a more formal structure is working for Toronto, Philadelphia, D.C., but it's more "informally formalized." Having too much structure was a problem in the past, but it seems like LSGs need a little more structure than they have at the moment.

Daniela added that she is interested in the idea of doing the health care presentation at local universities. She asked if there have been any issues with having the LSG meet via conference call instead of in person.

Pam replied that the Toronto fellowship meets 10 times a year by phone and twice in person, and that works for them.

Lou, Rochester NY:

Rochester and Buffalo have been collaborating at the local service level. At the last meeting they discussed having more of a formal structure with a Chair, Rep, and Secretary holding positions for a longer term to improve effectiveness and add continuity and accountability. They also discussed changing the frequency of the meeting. They will be doing a Rochester FA picnic to spend time together, and they're collaborating with other NY groups (Ithaca, Buffalo, Syracuse) to host a fellowship day on September 28. They're also planning a wellness fair.

Roberta, Philadelphia PA:

The group is in the process of planning the next fellowship day in September. They have just opened the LSG meeting to those who are an hour or more away by having them call in, which has added to the number of participants.

Pam K., Toronto, CA:

The group has been writing a local service group rep position description which they will eventually share with other groups; it's been working well for their fellowship. The position only requires that the person be willing to get the word out to meetings about the LSG, and it gets more people involved. They did a health fair recently, and got a handful of newcomers, a couple of whom have stayed. The health fair went very well and there was excitement for people to step up and do service. There's a discussion in the fellowship about whether to attend the National Women's Show in Toronto in September. The show is attractive in terms of attendance (35,000) but the fellowship wants to make sure that the show is a good fit for the fellowship.

Shirley, ME:

The Maine Chapter meeting was today. One meeting is setting up an FA booth at the local hospital where they have their meeting; it will be in the cafeteria used by hospital staff and visitors and they hope to do it twice per year. They checked out the idea with WSI PI, and they hope it will raise awareness within their community. The 8th annual obesity conference will be in Maine at the end of September, it is an expensive conference (last year was \$3,000) but it is a major medical conference and seems worthwhile. They're also prepping to create an online worksite so that committees can work together and collaborate online.

Akia, Washington, D.C.:

LSG met today; since there are new people who want to know more about how to do service, they are going to take on topics to help people get started like breaking down the service positions, in particular the PI service position. Once they understand it themselves, they're going to put out flyers and have a session about the position that's open to everyone in the D.C. area.

The meeting closed with a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer.