

*The following is excerpted from The Debtors Anonymous Manual For Service, 2011 edition, pages 53-54*

### **CHAPTER 3 – INTERGROUP SERVICE**

#### **A. *What is the Purpose of an Intergroup?***

Together we can accomplish what none of us could accomplish separately. This is the simple principle underlying the need for Intergroups. The primary purpose of any group is to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering debtor. In many instances, a group operating by itself cannot do this effectively. Thus, a group of 10 or 12 members would find it both expensive and difficult to undertake creation of a "hot line," or even a telephone line and answering machine, for inquiries by potential members. One group might not be able to take advantage of quantity discounts in buying literature from the GSO. These activities, so important in carrying the message, can be facilitated through creation of an Intergroup.

Beyond this basic and fundamental purpose, an Intergroup can serve as a clearinghouse for information. Groups can send representatives to general meetings of an Intergroup and share their experience, strength, and hope in carrying the message. New ideas and approaches can be exchanged. Groups can learn what is happening elsewhere in their area and share their knowledge and experience with new or struggling groups.

Intergroups can also provide opportunities for cooperation in fellowship projects beyond the capacity of any one group. Thus, many Intergroups sponsor days of sharing which enable debtors to come together and exchange their recovery, unity, and service stories. A day-long program with workshops and individual speakers and the opportunity for sharing over coffee or lunch can provide an inexpensive and helpful respite for the newcomer still struggling with his/her debting.

Public information is another function that an Intergroup can perform that might be difficult for an individual group. Contacting the local media and making them aware of the existence and purpose of D.A. is sometimes hard for a small group. The same is true for contacting professionals, such as therapists and clergy, to inform them about the help available in D.A. Intergroups can also schedule training sessions for group media or PI contacts, to share experiences in carrying the message to these people. Some Intergroups have purchased literature, particularly *A Currency of Hope*, to distribute to public libraries. In some states, members are trying to carry the message to those in prison (and other institutions) who, all too frequently, have struggled with earning and spending problems while outside the walls.

Intergroups also participate in the general service structure of D.A. Each

Intergroup is entitled to select one Intergroup Service Representative (ISR) to attend the annual World Service Conference (WSC). The ISR serves as the link between the Intergroup, the WSC, and the General Service Board and GSO. The ISR carries the opinion of the Intergroup on world service matters to the Conference and shares the results of the Conference deliberations with the Intergroup. Each Intergroup should try to create a spending plan to send its ISR to the WSC on a regular basis.

Some large Intergroups have opened offices, at which they sell D.A. literature at discounted prices, possible because of quantity discounts available from the GSO. Others have published local meeting lists that can provide more detailed and current information than is available from the D.A. Website.

Just recently, Intergroups have begun cooperating with the General Service Board in holding Regional Forums. In 2009-2010, these Forums were held in Boston, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles. They provide an opportunity for debtors throughout a wide area to come together with members of the General Service Board to share about the activities of the Board and GSO. Extensive opportunities are presented for Q&A sessions about D.A.'s finances, literature, and office operations and there are workshops on Intergroup service, the Traditions and D.A.history. These Regional Forums will be held in other locations in future years; it is hoped that a regular rotation throught the United States at a dozen or more locations over a four-year period will be possible. In the future, as finances permit, international forums may also be scheduled.