**Announcement - Public Information/Professional Outreach (PIPO) Committee**

 If you’ve been following our recent committee articles, you may recall that in July, NFI’s Professional Outreach Committee took the initiative to mail out to a local Bariatric Physician (3) letters of testimony from OA members who have had personal experience with bariatric surgery and are currently working the OA 12 step program to deal with the emotional and spiritual reasons they turned to the food. Along with the testimonial letters, we included a copy of WSO Professional Folder containing (3) pamphlets geared to the Professional that includes information about OA and the 12 Step program.

 In the next week, we will reach out to the Physician for feedback; answer any questions; and get a sense of willingness on the Physician’s part to allow a couple of our Committee members to meet with his/her post-op bariatric patients and talk to them about how OA has helped them and continues to.

 Next item on our agenda is participation in the 2nd Annual Recovery Fair taking place on Sat., Sept 24th, 10:30am-1:30pm, located at St Johns County Health & Human Services Building. The event is open to agencies which would like to showcase their substance abuse services and/or mental health services. *We are super excited to be approved to host a table at this event!* We will be providing OA pamphlets and literature; will be available to answer questions; and share our personal experience, strength and hope.

 Recovery fairs provide a very valuable community service and to top it off, other than a $10 table rental fee, there will be NO COST for non-profits to participate. Although NFI provides our PIPO Committee with funds set aside from group donations, events such as this allows us to maximize our funds to do additional public outreach service work. Also, there is no admission charge to the public and the organizers promote attendance by providing carnival games and other activities for children and families free of charge.

 In addition, we’ve begun plans to contact public and/or private Institutions that host Eating Disorder Units. Our primary purpose will be to discuss the possibility of them inviting us in to their facility to provide pamphlets, literature and meeting lists to their patients. You may not be aware, but things of this nature can be quite difficult. We must be hyper vigilant and proceed with extreme care in explaining that our program is NOT in competition with professionals; that we are a self-help group that can be a positive *addition* to the professional treatment they are providing. Our primary goal, however, would be to answer questions that the eating disorder patients may have about the program; and maybe even host a meeting.

 If I may make another pitch…. Our Professional Outreach Committee currently consists of (3) members. It would be of great benefit to have additional members to help on our committee. We have some other ideas and goals we’re looking forward to. Although this service is a labor of love, none of us do service work full time….

 We would also appreciate hearing any new idea(s), suggestions and/or comments from anyone.

For more information about the PIPO committee, and/or to volunteer time to help on the committee, please contact: Nancy K at: npklei@gmail.com.

In loving service,

Nancy K

NFI PIPO Chair