

The Northern Lights Newsletter

The Voice of AAI



February 2016

OA's Responsibility Pledge

In February we always think about Valentine's Day, of course, but February could also be the Month of Service - *"Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible."*

When I first heard the OA Responsibility Pledge, in that pink cloud period of recovery, I thought that it meant that I was charged with "spreading the good news" to my family, friends, and the person buying a gallon of that cold stuff at the grocery store. Luckily my sponsor pulled me back to earth and told me that this is a program of attraction and my touting the benefits of OA would not be very attractive.

As a more seasoned member (isn't that a nicer term than long-timer), I read the Responsibility Pledge as a reminder that no matter how much recovery I have (or think I have), I'm still just a compulsive overeater and as a responsible member of this fellowship I need to extend my heart and hand of OA by giving service to my home group or at the intergroup level so that together we all can recover.

Your Intergroup needs you - as a group rep, or a committee chair, or a committee member, or to take on short term specific tasks. Currently we're looking for someone to be the Retreat Chairperson for our fall retreat. Our bylaws require a yearly financial audit and so we're asking for someone to review the 2015 financial records. Several standing committees are without Chairpersons and I know that the Chairs of our active committees would so enjoy having you volunteer.

Please consider giving service for the good of your recovery and for the good of the recovery of all

your fellow OAs, especially during this heart month.

In Fellowship, Paula Z.



Upcoming Events

Workshop February 20, 2016

Topic: Action Plans
Alaska Regional Hospital: Ivy Room - Main Floor
Saturday, February, 20, 2016, 1:00-3:30 pm.
Call Jody W for information

Unity Day, February 27, 2016

This day recognizes the strength of the Fellowship worldwide. On the last Saturday in February, at 11:30 a.m. pacific standard time (10:30 a.m. Alaska time), OA members pause to reaffirm the strength inherent in OA's unity. Join your Fellows at the 9:00 meeting at St. Mary's Church as we pause and join hands with the rest of the Fellowship worldwide in reaffirming the strength of our program.

Next Intergroup Meeting

March 5, 2016, 12:00-1:30.

Please join us at the OASIS.

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An Invitation from Whitehorse

I was so grateful to be able to attend the Anchorage Intergroup Retreat in October. I live in Whitehorse, YT and am part of the One Aurora Group. We are the only group for hundreds of miles and it can be quite isolating. I've reached out to connect to the Anchorage intergroup a few times and have been grateful for the warm reception I have received from everyone. I especially wanted to thank Randy for his continuing correspondence and Gail for her help facilitating the logistics of me attending the October retreat. The retreat was fantastic and really helped deepen my recovery and my understanding of the 12 traditions.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all by brothers and sisters from Alaska to the One Aurora's Annual Retreat March 11, 12, & 13th at Takini Hotsprings Hostel in Whitehorse, Yukon. "How Sharp are the Tools in your OA Toolbox?" Join us with a guest speaker as we work through the Nine Tools of Recovery. Please contact oayukon@gmail.ca for more info.

Coming Soon...Member Survey

Watch your email in the coming weeks for a new OA Member Survey. We value your input to make Intergroup responsive to your needs!

OA Unity Day

February 27 11:30 a.m. PST — (last Saturday of February)

This day recognizes the strength of the Fellowship worldwide. On the last Saturday in February, at 11:30 a.m. pacific standard time, OA members pause to reaffirm the strength inherent in OA's unity.

A Long and Winding Road

After 7 months of continuous, delirious, progressive, revelatory, step work I was a newbie who had the Program by the Tail. It was the answer I had always sought, in spades...and it was so easy! I could not believe that after 50 years of being overweight and up and down the scale that I had found the answer – the simple, clear, straight forward, unambiguous twelve steps. All I had to do was follow them...and that had been easy.

I knew it was time for OA when I found myself eating...again... when I really wanted to *not* be eating. I had dabbled in OA 30 years ago, and then maybe 20 years ago, working the steps, on my own. No sponsor for me. But, this time was different. I was ready. Really ready. Ready for doing whatever it took. Going to any length.

Before an OA meeting was available, I had already attended three AA and an Alanon meeting. I asked for and got a sponsor at the end of my first OA meeting. I dove into my step work assignments and mini miracles, awakenings, ah ha moments flowed at the pace of commitment.

The weight dropped off so fast it scared me. Scared me enough for me to add back enough food to slow my weight loss. That was the first glitch. More came along, trials like the dark of winter, a long held dream worked for and longed for - dashed, followed by a dear relationship crumbling, all the while I was hanging on to abstinence and step work but losing my grip.

Daily prayer, keeping my side of the street clean, calling my sponsor, reading, going to meetings. Abstinent days fewer and farther between. Weight creeping back. Dark clouds of depression and sadness gathering overhead. Suiting up, showing

up. This is real life. I guess that early stuff must have been the pink cloud. I miss it.

The beauty of this program is that no matter how grim it seems at this moment, there is always the next moment, and HP will always be there. My membership isn't revoked if I don't make my goals, I'm not out-of-the-club if I have a bad food day. I am not shamed, embarrassed, guilted, or lectured if I ate what is not on my plan. I just get to start again, the very next moment, right now, again.

I like the expression, "When you lose, don't lose the lesson." Even though I can never lose OA, I have looked at the struggle and asked, "What is my lesson?" Well, if I ever had a doubt, I am very clear now that I AM a compulsive eater, which is actually a very valuable piece of information. It helps make it perfectly clear that I cannot do this alone. - J.W., Wasilla.

Step Two

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Loving Restoration

When I heard Step Two read aloud at meetings, it used to bother me. "Restored to sanity?" I thought disbelievingly. "I can't point to a time when I ever was sane! What sanity is there to restore me to?" Indeed, I behaved very insanely before I came into program, which was ten years ago when I was 13 pounds (6 kg) heavier than I am now. I used to sneak food and hide wrappers; plan to eat just one, but finish the whole box; and bring home several days' worth of binge food and eat it all in front of the TV at one sitting.

Also insane were the mental games I'd play. I'd fixate on food at every party and ignore the people attending. I'd deny myself "bad" food for a while, trying to feel "pure." Then I'd throw self-control out the window and dive in. When I was angry, sad,

or upset, I'd drown the feelings in food before I ever had a chance to feel them.

Once I entered OA and started working the Steps, I was sure I didn't want to be restored to that state. So how could I work Step Two? Then I remembered another meaning of "restore." I have friends who bought a house over a hundred years old, and they set about restoring it. Not only did they fix broken stairs and replace missing roof shakes, they did more. They pored over books and catalogs to understand how their house might have been intended to look when it was designed. They researched paint colors and molding trims. They scoured antique sales to find just the right furniture to go inside. They lovingly hung curtains and found linens to match. They didn't care whether their house originally had those things; they wanted to make it the best it could be.

This is how God is restoring me. God is not just fixing what's broken, but lovingly giving me all the comforts and beauty he wanted me to have all along. I'm being restored to a much better state than I've ever been before.

— Joan P., Mountain View, California USA
(Reprinted from *Lifeline*, February 2016.)

Ask-It Basket

"How much time do you think a member should dedicate to service in order to be healthy and balanced? How do I reconcile OA work with time for my family, friends, job, and exercise?"

What healthy and balanced service looks like is personal to each OA member; it depends on individual circumstances and how service impacts life's manageability. Tradition Four reminds us to strike a healthy balance between responsibility for ourselves and responsibility to each other.

My first and best service is to get and stay abstinent. I must keep my abstinence first, or I will lose what I love and the gifts I've been given. Doing what I need to do regarding a plan of eating and working

the Steps to keep spiritually fit is my top priority. After that, I look to things that support my recovery, like sponsoring and doing service at my meetings. I have been taught that if I want to keep what I've been given I need to give it away. Your question suggests you may feel like an over-doer or an under-doer when it comes to service. Talking to a sponsor who knows about your recovery, family, and work life may be helpful in creating an action plan that sets a sane and sound ideal for service. If your service commitments are making your life, or the lives of people who rely on you, unmanageable, then perhaps it is time to try something different. If you have time in your life to give more, ask for the support of your family and friends and take their needs into consideration. Then, volunteer for something that fits your availability.

OA's Responsibility Pledge states "Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible." There are many ways, large and small, for an OA member to do service. I'm sure if you look within and ask for help, you will find the healthy balanced service that suits you and your personal situation.

— Members of the (WSO) Board of Trustees provide answers to Ask-It Basket questions. To read previous Ask-It Basket questions and answers, visit oa.org/membersgroups/servicebody-support/ask-it-basket-and-archive/. (Reprinted from *Lifeline*, Feb. 2016)

March Newsletter Articles Sought

Your voice and experience can help other OAs. March topics are Action Plan and Step/Tradition Three. Submit your articles by Feb. 28 to Cynthia at oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org. (Please use plain text with indents for paragraphs, no special formatting.) *Lifeline* is always looking for submissions and accepts letters/articles, artwork and photos (no faces, please) for publication. More information and monthly topics are online at: <http://www.oa.org/lifeline-magazine/monthly-topics>

Standing Committees Need Your Help

All of AAI's Standing Committees need members. Please consider serving on a committee, a fun way to meet your fellow OA's and strengthen your recovery. Please email Paula Z. oachair@oa-alaska.org or the committee chair listed on the OA Website for more information.

World Service Business Conference

WSBC takes place May 2–7, 2016. If you are interested, please review the WSBS agenda questionnaire at <https://www.oa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Agenda-Questionnaire-Letter-Instructions-16.pdf> and forward any comments you have to oachair@oa-alaska.org by February 20. Paula and the AAI Executive Committee will be completing the survey on behalf of AAI for submission to WSBS by Feb 27th.

Updates Needed

Meeting Secretaries please update your meeting and contact information by emailing oawebmaster@oa-alaska.org. Thank you!

Tradition Two

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. Unity does not mean uniformity. In OA we learn we can disagree with other people on important issues and still be supportive friends. We listen to others with open minds, and we learn to express ourselves without insisting that everyone must do things our way. As we practice these new skills we begin to better understand ourselves and others. It becomes easier to find ways of doing things which meet everybody's needs. (OA Twelve and Twelve, p. 115)



as e-book on Kindle and Nook. Order at bookstore.oa.org.

<i>AAI Officers</i>	<i>Email Address</i>	<i>Name</i>
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New Book - *Taste of Lifeline*

A collection of stories from the pages of Lifeline magazine, *Taste of Lifeline* features more than 100 personal stories by OA members writing about their challenges and recovery and how they work the OA program. Included are stories for newcomers; stories about recovery from relapse; stories about long-term recovery; stories from international members; "Welcome Home!" OA's beloved story of outreach to compulsive eaters around the world; and many more. Also: *Taste of Lifeline* has journal questions to complement each chapter so you, your sponsee, and your group can use the Tool of writing to find and strengthen your recovery. Also available

Important OA Information

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup PO Box 200341 Anchorage, Alaska 99520 (907) 279-1942 (800) 279-1942 www.oa-alaska.org	Oasis (Office) 4105 Turnagain Blvd. Suite D-1 Anchorage, AK	Region 1 PO Box 23235 Tigard, OR 97215 http://www.oaregion1.org/	WSO PO Box 44020 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 www.oa.org
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Together We Get Better – Keep Coming Back – It Works When You Work It!

ANCHORAGE ALASKA INTERGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE 02/02/2016

To update a meeting send the information to oawebmaster@oa-alaska.org

Anchorage

(907) 279-1942 or (804) 279-1942

Day	Time	Address	Type	Contact (907)
Monday	Noon	Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.	AA Big Book	Wendy 382-5682
Monday	6:00 pm	OAsis Turnagain Arts Bldg. 4105 Turnagain Blvd, #D1 (in back)	AA Big Book	Tanya 317-7451
Tuesday	5:30 pm	OAsis Turnagain Arts Bldg. 4105 Turnagain Blvd, #D1 (in back)	OA/HOW	Meg 248-0300
Wednesday	Noon	OAsis Turnagain Arts Bldg. 4105 Turnagain Blvd, #D1 (in back)	Writing and Sharing	Paula 830-2815
Thursday	6:30 pm	Lutheran Church of Hope, 1847 W. Northern Lights Blvd	There is a Solution	LauraBeth 631-2321
Friday	Noon	Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.	AA Big Book & OA Book	Rachel 632-3236
Saturday	9:00-10:30am	St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Lake Otis & Tudor	AA Big Book	Twyla 444-7251
Sunday	9:30 am	Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.	As Bill Sees It. VOR & For Today	Candy 350-5255, Jean 345- 9805

Mat-Su

Day	Time	Address	Type	Contact (907)
Monday	Noon	Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd	Big Book	Terri 376-3227
Wednesday	6:00 pm	Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd	Topics	Gail 357-4644
Saturday	9:30 am	Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd	Big Book	Brenda 240-6331
Sunday	6:00 pm	Palmer: St. Michael's Parish, 432 E Fireweed Ave, in the office, the Knights of Columbus Rm.	Speaker/ Topic	Randy 745-7485

Homer

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Contact (907)</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>5:30 pm</i>	<i>Homer United Methodist Church, 770 East End Rd. Knitting Room, upstairs</i>		<i>Julie 235-6696 Nancy 399-5944</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>Noon</i>	<i>Homer United Methodist Church, 770 East End Rd. Knitting Room, upstairs</i>		<i>Julie 235-6696 Nancy 399-5944</i>

Kenai

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Contact (907)</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>5:30 pm</i>	<i>URS Club, Suite #71, in the Old Sears Mall</i>		<i>Ellen (518) 884-9936</i>

Fairbanks

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Contact (907)</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>5:30 pm</i>	<i>Fairbanks Lutheran Church 1012 Cowles St</i>		<i>Beth 457-6222</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Noel Wien Library 1215 Cowles St In order to preserve anonymity, there is no lettered sign identifying our group. Please check for picture of owl on back of someone's chair.</i>		<i>Beth 457-6222</i>