

# The Northern Lights Newsletter

The Voice of AAI

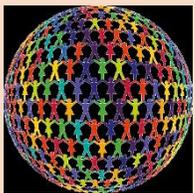


March 2016

## In Gratitude

It's already March! St. Patrick's Day, shamrocks, all things green. My husband was about 1/16th Irish but on St. Patrick's Day he was 100% Irish and besides wearing green and buttons that declared things like "Kiss me, I'm Irish, he would affect and Irish accent and insert "faith 'n begorra" somewhere in every conversation. I'm not sure why I thought of that today. I never knew what it meant, but I was probably led by HP to find out. Can you believe it means "sure and by God?" Wow, isn't that just go along perfectly with the other thing I've been thinking a lot about lately which is service. We know that when asked, we say "sure" because service is a way to, as the tool tells us, give back what we have so generously been given and to say thank you to our HP for bringing us to this program of recovery.

My list of "service" for today includes sewing Bluebird badges on my granddaughter's vest, taking a walk with a neighbor, and getting some copies made for IG use. It is so easy to give service when service doesn't stretch my abilities or preferences. And, I thank HP for giving me the opportunity to do those service tasks that are fun and easy. But I have to remember to ask HP to open my eyes and heart to the hard things people ask of me - speaking at meetings, chatting with folks after church services, setting up and taking down tables and doing the dishes after soup supper at church, and giving up my favorite TV show to take an OA call. I know



that it's in accepting the hard service that I grow, spiritually and emotionally -- please HP give me the courage to grow so I can be of maximum use to you and my fellows.

Yours in fellowship - Paula Z.

## OA Alaska on Twitter

At the February Intergroup meeting AAI passed a motion to develop a Twitter feed. For some of us, that sounded like something that would hang on the back porch full of millet or sunflower seeds to help the little birds get through winter! But it is actually a service that sends out little bits of information (tweets), and you can see those brief updates on the OA Alaska website on the right hand side of the home page. If you click on one of those little icons it will take you to the Twitter page for @OaAlaska (which is the name of our Twitter account). There it says: "*This is an account serving Overeaters Anonymous in Anchorage Alaska. Its purpose is to share information to members regarding announcements.*" This is a new way for us to find out if a meeting location has changed. It is not intended to be for the posting of opinions or discussing our recovery. And in keeping with the 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition, we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication. More guidelines on the Twitter feed are being developed by the AAI Technology Committee. You can subscribe to receive tweets by following the link on [oaalaska.org](http://oaalaska.org) or by going to <https://twitter.com/OaAlaska>. Kudos to David for volunteering to set this up!



Twitter link on OA Website

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***Keep Reading!***

## Implementing an Action Plan

Denver OA hosted an Action Plan Workshop in 2011, which we used for our February 20, 2016 workshop in Anchorage. To listen to the podcasts on action plans go to [oadenver.org/define-your-action-plan-workshop/](http://oadenver.org/define-your-action-plan-workshop/). The podcasts are listed by presenter's names: Tom, Jean, Nancy and Robin.

We started with Tom's podcast on procrastination and perfecting the "Art of the Start." He encouraged us to think small, get out of perfect, and make each effort actionable and attainable. Most importantly you need to perfect starting; by setting reasonable goals of 15-30 minutes, finishing on a positive note and planning your next start. His most profound statements was, "if you start enough times, you will finish," telling his listeners not to worry about finishing, only worry about starting.

Jean's podcast was quick and to the point, she shared on choosing new vegetable recipes. Her point was to break it into manageable steps. For some people she had too many action items. It was clear action was a personal journey like every other tool.

Finally we listened to Nancy, who talked about her propensity for making every project too large and elaborate. Her old way of managing Action Plans would have included a year-long plan (if she had even finished), colored markers, and fancy paper. Now she is advocating for one simple action at a time. By example Nancy talked about preparing food; she found she wasn't cooking and managing her food well because she wasn't dealing with the food in her refrigerator. Her simple action was to clean her refrigerator once a month.

We also incorporated some of the idea from Robin's podcast in the discussion (she talked about exercise and implementing a reasonable plan in her life). Robin suggested that action plans should include: God, not comparing yourself to others, willingness to do things differently, your sponsor, prayer, a starting point, honesty and action.

Our group worked through some different actions each person wanted to undertake, barriers they had

to success and a few suggested steps that they might consider with HP, and their sponsor. We found the podcasts and worksheets helpful, but listening and talking as a group took us to a much better level of understanding.

The last two paragraphs of OA's long version of the Action Plan sum up the idea nicely:

*"For example, a new comer's action plan might focus on planning, shopping for and preparing food. Some members may need a regular fitness routine to improve strength and health, while others may need to set exercise limits in order to attain more balance. Some of us may need to an action plan that includes time for meditation and relaxation or provides strategies for balancing work, personal interactions with family and friends, and our program. Others may need help to organize their homes; deal with their finances; and (or) address medical, dental, or mental health issues.*

*Along with working the steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance and manageability into our lives. As we use this tool, we find that we develop a feeling of serenity and continue to grow emotionally and spiritually while we make measurable progress one day at a time." – oa.org*

(Thank you to Jody W. for presenting this workshop and for this summary. Look for more action plan tips in April's [Northern Lights](#). – Editor)



**World Service Convention 2016  
September 1–4**

**Registration is now OPEN!**

<https://oa.org/members/events/world-service-convention/>

**Step 3** *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.*

### Power Surge

At my home meeting, a member shared a story about wanting a specific food and not being able to stop herself from going to buy it. While she was putting on her coat, she said a prayer. “God, if you want me to not eat this, you’re going to have to help me.” When she arrived at the shop, there was a sign on the door: “Closed—no electricity.” Hearing this story had an immediate and profound effect on me. I realized I’d never completely surrendered my food. I write it down, call it in to my sponsor, weigh and measure it, but I’ve never given it to God. Maybe that’s why I still struggle when I enter the grocery store? Or why the newest fad diet always grabs my attention? Could it be the reason why I want something to eat when my spouse is snacking in the evening? After leaving the meeting, while riding home with another member, I realized I didn’t want to struggle anymore. I was ready to surrender my food to God. So I visualized holding my food in my hands, lifting both hands up above my head, and saying, “Here, God, I give you my food.” What happened next was amazing. I felt as if a huge weight was physically lifted from my shoulders. I felt 10 pounds (5 kg) lighter. More important, I stopped struggling. The food stopped calling out to me. From the beginning, I had the willingness to do what was necessary. It was surrender that made the difference.

— Norinne M., Fort Myers, Florida USA

*(Reprinted from Lifeline, Overeaters Anonymous, March 2016)*

#### **Virtual Sponsors Needed!**

The Region 1 virtual sponsorship committee is desperately seeking virtual sponsors. The website for signing on is [oaregion1.org](http://oaregion1.org). Next click on "current member services" and the option to click on sponsee application or sponsor application comes up. Fill out the application and send it.

### *Overeaters Anonymous Preamble*

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.

### Always Hope

Our meeting responded to a discussion question from an issue of Lifeline: “What would you say to a still-suffering compulsive overeater?” One day at a time, through the program and other recovering overeaters, our spirits begin to shine through the clouds of loneliness and isolation. Keep coming back. The miracle will happen for you too. There is hope. There is always hope. No matter what level of despair or pain you are experiencing and no matter how bleak your future seems, there is hope. This is a program of action, so focus on what you can do. Can you call someone? Journal? Read literature? Get to a meeting? Be of service? Pick something and then do it. Hope will glimmer on the horizon like the rising sun as you take action in this program. “God could and would if he were sought” (Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed., p. 60), so keep coming back. You’re worth it. You too can discover freedom from food obsession, one Step at a time. Try different meetings. Find someone who has what you want and ask them to be your sponsor. We love you already. Without a doubt, there is hope. The

promises speak of this hope, which will become real. — A.K., Tempe, Arizona USA (*Reprinted from Lifeline, Overeaters Anonymous, March 2016*)

**Next Intergroup Meeting**  
**April 2, 2016**  
**12:00-1:30.**  
 Please join us at the OASIS!

**Tradition 3:** *The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.*

### Desire and Beyond

Many a member has said that if the requirements for membership in OA were more stringent than “a desire to stop eating compulsively,” they probably wouldn’t have felt qualified to be at a meeting. Unfortunately, this unique requirement—the only requirement in our entire Fellowship—is often used to avoid being “made” to do anything else that makes somebody uncomfortable, like having a food plan, being accountable to a sponsor, working the Steps, or realizing that abstinence comes from continuous action, not just a desire. A desire is the beginning of a process, but a desire alone will not accomplish very much in OA. The Third Tradition ensures that anyone who wants to can attend an OA meeting, but I don’t believe it was intended to be the standard to which one aspires to attain abstinence, or to effectively fulfill our primary purpose, or to insure the continuing wellness of our beloved Fellowship. For six years, I slipped and slid. I’d get some abstinence, then become complacent and backslide. I’d “tighten my food up,” only to renege on my new commitments. I was alternately attracted to people with solid abstinence and repelled by them as rigid perfectionists who sang the shrill song, “I don’t eat no matter what.” They must have been cheating or lying, I thought, since nobody could possibly get and stay abstinent. Such was the state of my willingness to act upon my feeble desire. My desire stopped being the answer

once I realized that recovery was about taking suggestions, commitment, principles, and personal integrity. Until I understood at a deep personal level that I was different from people who ate what they wanted without hating themselves, my problem continued unabated. When I accepted the spiritual consequences of my eating, and the totality of my absorption in it, I found the willingness to convert desire into action and began to make progress. Today, after more than ten years of continuous abstinence, I sing the praises of physical recovery and service as a formula for keeping a willing OA member moving forward in recovery. OA became an international entity because people sublimated their egos, undertook tasks that forced them outside their comfort zones, and endured extreme emotional challenges. Without diligent, daily effort, our recovery and OA’s credibility will suffer. Undertaking a difficult action to attain or maintain abstinence is a desire to be a living example of the best that this program has to offer. — Neil R., Baltimore, Maryland USA (*Reprinted from Lifeline, Overeaters Anonymous, March 2016*)

### Have An Idea You’d Like to Share?

The topic for April’s newsletter comes from this month’s *Lifeline*:

Struggles, Stresses, and Setbacks: How do you handle “life on life’s terms” in recovery? What has been your recovery experience during major life challenges such as death of a loved one, divorce, changing jobs, or moving? How have you maintained abstinence while grieving? How did you learn to keep coming back no matter what? If you relapsed, how did you get back on track? What has helped you remain abstinent over the days, weeks, months, or years?

❖ Or write about Step/Tradition 4

Please send your articles and anything you would like to see as topics for future newsletters, to Cynthia B. [oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org](mailto:oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org) Deadline is April 4, 2016. Please keep formatting to a bare minimum to make my cutting and pasting easier.

### 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](mailto:oachair@oa-alaska.org) or the committee chair listed on the OA Website for more information.



<i>AAI Officers</i>	<i>Email Address</i>	<i>Name</i>
Chair	<a href="mailto:oachair@oa-alaska.org">oachair@oa-alaska.org</a>	Paula Z.
Vice-Chair	<a href="mailto:oavicechair@oa-alaska.org">oavicechair@oa-alaska.org</a>	Jody W.
Corresponding Secretary	<a href="mailto:oacorrsecretary@oa-alaska.org">oacorrsecretary@oa-alaska.org</a>	Becky G.
Recording Secretary	<a href="mailto:oaminsecretary@oa-alaska.org">oaminsecretary@oa-alaska.org</a>	Jody J.
Temporary Treasurer	<a href="mailto:oa treasurer@oa-alaska.org">oatreasurer@oa-alaska.org</a>	Janet R.
OA WS Delegate	<a href="mailto:oa ws delegate@oa-alaska.org">oa ws delegate@oa-alaska.org</a>	Open
Region 1 Delegate	<a href="mailto:oaregion1delegate@oa-alaska.org">oaregion1delegate@oa-alaska.org</a>	Wendy H.
Literature	<a href="mailto:oa literature@oa-alaska.org">oa literature@oa-alaska.org</a>	Dave T.
Newsletter	<a href="mailto:oa newsletter@oa-alaska.org">oa newsletter@oa-alaska.org</a>	Cynthia
Webmaster	<a href="mailto:oa webmaster@oa-alaska.org">oa webmaster@oa-alaska.org</a>	Randy
12 <sup>th</sup> Step Within	<a href="mailto:oa twelfth_step_within@oa-alaska.org">oa twelfth_step_within@oa-alaska.org</a>	Open
Outreach	<a href="mailto:oa_outreach@oa-alaska.org">oa_outreach@oa-alaska.org</a>	Tanya
Technology	<a href="mailto:oa_technology@oa-alaska.org">oa_technology@oa-alaska.org</a>	David A.

### Important OA Information

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup  
 PO Box 200341  
 Anchorage, Alaska 99520  
 (907) 279-1942  
 (800) 279-1942  
[www.oa-alaska.org](http://www.oa-alaska.org)

Oasis (Office)  
 4105 Turnagain Blvd. Suite D-1  
 Anchorage

Region 1  
 PO Box 23235  
 Tigard, OR 97215  
<http://www.oaregion1.org/>

WSO  
 PO Box 44020  
 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020  
[www.oa.or](http://www.oa.or)

### Updates Needed

Meeting Secretaries please update your meeting and contact information by emailing [oa webmaster@oa-alaska.org](mailto:oa webmaster@oa-alaska.org). Thank you!



**ANCHORAGE ALASKA INTERGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE 03/02/2016**

To update a meeting send the information to [oawebmaster@oa-alaska.org](mailto:oawebmaster@oa-alaska.org)

**Anchorage**

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

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

**Mat-Su**

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

**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>

*Keep Coming Back!*