

The Northern Lights Newsletter

The Voice of AAI



April 2016

Spring Cleaning

I love, love, love the comics section of the newspaper. Some, like Lola and Pickles, make me chuckle, and others, such as Baby Blues and Zits, help me recall the “interesting” years when my kids were babies, boys and then teens. But the comics can also be thought provoking.



“Wow” is right! Does this exchange remind you of any conversations you’ve had with your sponsor? I sure have had conversations like this.

Spring has officially sprung and maybe it’s time for me, like Earl, to do a little more shedding of my character defects and foibles - I guess I will never get to the point when a good spring housecleaning isn’t necessary. Luckily I don’t have to clean up my messes by myself. I’ve got a great sponsor, OA buddies, and an HP - all willing to help me identify my messes and lead me to solutions. April just happens to be the fourth month - a perfect time to do some serious 4th Step work to see if I have any “fears, doubts, worries, bad habits, negative thoughts, insecurities ...” that need to be cleaned up. HP works in mysterious and humorous ways. Before program, I could not have conceived of a HP who has a sense of humor and nudges me to do his will on the Comics page. Isn’t that just too marvelous!

And --- speaking of marvelous -- marvelous things are getting accomplished by your Intergroup. Eureka! We have finally found a conference room that’s available on Saturdays and have scheduled the May 7th Intergroup meeting for 1:15 at the MTA office in Palmer. It’s been pretty frustrating not being able to find a venue in the Valley. So, my Valley Fellows, we can’t wait to see you fill the chairs on May 7th. Lots of great stuff to be discussed at that meeting such as the Outreach Committee’s proposal for a mailing to health care professionals, suggestions for changes to the website by the Technology Committee, and (hopefully) final approval of the 2016 budget, which will help us plan activities and expenditures for the rest of the year.

Yours in Fellowship,
Paula Z, Chair

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Keep Reading!

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PO Box 200341
Anchorage, Alaska 99520
oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org

STEP 4 *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

Searching Out Shame

In OA, we rely strongly on AA literature, and we are truly blessed to have it. I am infinitely grateful to AA and its founders and members. I do find, however, one critical difference between alcoholism and food addiction that, once addressed, finally gave me the freedom of back-to-back abstinence that eluded me for decades. Members of AA can walk away from alcohol. As hard as it must be, they can find new activities and new friends. With the support of their program, fellowship, and higher power, they do not have to engage with their substance again. The Step Four inventory in AA literature focuses on fears and resentments and has been enormously helpful, but there is a critical difference for me as an overeater that requires additional probing in my personal Step Four inventory.

My food addiction is not to individual foods but to eating itself. I have to go head-to-head with my addiction three times a day. In order to do that abstinently, I have to delve deep. I believe strongly that my food struggle is an emotional struggle. I cannot be in emotional discord for long without it leading to a food struggle. Since I have to engage with my addiction every day, it puts me on very shaky ground to be in a state of emotional “dis-ease.”

I recently heard a helpful metaphor: If I wanted to replace the blades in a blender, I’d obviously have to turn the machine off. But would I then put my hand inside it? Of course not, because it might turn on if still plugged in. I’d first be sure to disconnect the power source, or the blades could start spinning and I could get badly hurt. Disconnecting the power source is key. So I had to ask

myself, “What is the power source of my compulsion?” For many OA members, the power source of our compulsions is not just fear and resentment, but shame, which is rooted in the codependency that developed in our dysfunctional childhoods. Shame is my power source. If I don’t address it, the power can kick on again with the slightest trigger. Before I healed my shame, for example, a critical comment by a co-worker or supervisor was enough to send me into relapse. Trying to abstain without understanding the power of shame was like trying to stop the blender by only pressing the off button. It invariably kicked on again and cut me with a relapse. My experience is that I only became able to abstain peacefully and consistently when I began a searching and fearless Fourth Step journey into my shame and codependence. I then began to enjoy the greatest gift of all: comfort in my own skin. This comfort is glorious and precious in itself, and it has protected my abstinence, one day at a time, for over five years.

— Leslie O., Broad Brook,
Connecticut USA (*Reprinted from OA
Lifeline, April 2016*)



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

Registration is now OPEN!

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

Keep Coming Back

Last year I wondered if I should keep coming back. I talked to my Higher Power about it. I continue doing what I know to do till I get an answer. Shortly after I had this question I was in a meeting. The reading was a story. At the end, the writer said that we need to keep coming back. I know we hear the phrase so often but that day it was the answer for me. So I keep coming back. Now there are newcomers and I realize that if others hadn't kept coming back there wouldn't have been a meeting for me. It's so wonderful to be there to see others getting recovery too. Thank you OA! Thank you HP! – *Anonymous*

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.

Learning to Love Myself

What I have learned is who I am is not about the pounds I read on the scale. Who I am is a loving good kind daughter and wife that didn't cope well. The very best thing I can do for myself is to be as kind to ME as I have been to my loved ones. To remember that love of myself through my Higher Powers guidance will bring me back to where I deserve to be. The right place and time is now. – *Anonymous*

- ✓ Check out "How to be an Effective Trusted Servant" at https://oa.org/files/pdf/trusted_servant.pdf

More Action Plan Tips

From the podcasts that we listened to at the February OA Workshop:

- Perfect the art of the start
- Don't Worry about ending
- If you keep starting you will finish
- Plan your next start
- Don't worry about perfect
- Keep it fun
- Finish on an up note
- Keep it simple
- Find one task – do that
- Remember your successes
- Invite God in
- Invite your sponsor in
- Don't compare yourself to others
- Pray for willingness
- Be honest
- Get started

My Experience, Strength, Hope

Life: Full of this, that & the other, including disappointments, close calls, loss, work, opposition, as well as success, hopes, growth, love, friends, pleasure, comfort, and variety. Before program, the uncertainty of puberty sent me into insecure flights, with anxiety, cold hands, and tied tongue. Death of my father when I was small sent me into a situation where I became too grownup for my years. A child's tantrum sent me to scream, hit, or stuff my mouth with food. A seeming slight from a fellow worker sent me to resentments that lasted for many years, while I acted like all was well. So there was imbalance, ineffectiveness, addiction, violence, dishonesty, unresolved conflicts never-ending. I could look good on the outside at times, but either aggressive or pretending or uncertain on the inside. The first gift of program was the ability to
(Continues on p. 4)

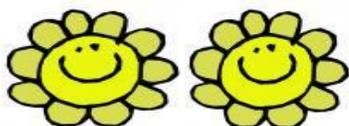
pause under stress of a temperamental child to say the serenity prayer. This returned me to balance and reason. The second gift was friends to call with whom I could be honest and actually admit hatred in my heart for a disabled person for whom I was caring (and then to heal that hatred). The third gift was abstinence, even though my then disagreeable husband was criticizing. In the face of death of my child, my abstinence remained because I had the gospel of OA to sustain me. Even with divorce and remarriage, my sponsor helped me to maintain the integrity of my commitment to abstinence.

If anyone is waiting to commit to getting a sponsor, or starting to work the steps, or go to a meeting, I offer this: Spiritual awakening, aid through trouble, help with recovery is HERE. God (or whatever you designate to be your Higher Power) can be found here. Delaying only prolongs dysfunction, weight gain, unhappiness. Join us. If not ready for total commitment, do what you can. – *Anonymous*

Check out our @OaAlaska Twitter Feed! <https://twitter.com/OaAlaska>
Or on our OA-alaska.org website...

Newsletter Submissions

Please send your articles to Cynthia B. oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org
Next deadline is May 6, 2016. Write about Step 5, Tradition 5, or other topic of your choice. Please keep formatting to a bare minimum to make my cutting and pasting easier. Thank you!



Resources from Region 1

R1 is here to help your intergroup thrive! Here is a sampling of resources available:

- Funds for PIPO (Public Information & Professional Outreach) projects.
- Workshops -- the Board travels around R1 as outreach, and will put on a workshop on the topic of your choice. Let us know if you would like to host the Board in 2018!
- Funds to help Delegates get to WSBC, and to R1 Assembly.
- Virtual Sponsorship -- sign up at <http://www.oaregion1.org/current-member-services.html>
- Event listings on our website -- email flyers to reg1trustee@gmail.com
- Our Trustee has funding from World Service to do Service & Traditions workshops around R1. Email reg1trustee@gmail.com.
- Conference call line -- a link to the call calendar is on our website homepage.
- 10th Step Journals -- soon to be available in "bundles" on our website. http://www.oaregion1.org/store/p9/Region_I_Journals.html
- Assembly this year will have an Intergroup Renewal focus
- Please watch for the Convention Package Raffle on the R1 website -- print tickets for your meetings - thanks! (*From the Region 1 Teleconference Summary, April 2016*)
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Service Needed – OA Intergroup has a very pressing service need for a new recording secretary, to record the minutes of our monthly meetings. Please consider giving service. Contact Paula Z. for more information.

Give Generously – Your 7th Tradition donation keeps our bookstore, intergroup office, phone line, web site, and OA retreats going, as well as supporting Region 1 and WSO.

Fall OA Retreat

OA Alaska will have its annual retreat in October 2016. Do you have time to organize or help with this retreat? We need a chairperson and committee members. Do you have ideas for the retreat? Please share them at an intergroup meeting. Together we get better!

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

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

WSO
 PO Box 44020
 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020
www.oa.or

<i>AAI Officers</i>	<i>Email Address</i>	<i>Name</i>
Chair	oachair@oa-alaska.org	Paula Z.
Vice-Chair	oavicechair@oa-alaska.org	Jody W.
Corresponding Secretary	oacorrsecretary@oa-alaska.org	Becky G.
Recording Secretary	oaminsecretary@oa-alaska.org	OPEN
Treasurer	oa_treasurer@oa-alaska.org	Janet R.
OA WS Delegate	oawsodelegate@oa-alaska.org	Open
Region 1 Delegate	oaregion1delegate@oa-alaska.org	Wendy H.
Literature	oaliterature@oa-alaska.org	Dave T.
Newsletter	oa_newsletter@oa-alaska.org	Cynthia
Webmaster	oa_webmaster@oa-alaska.org	Randy
12 th Step Within	oa_twelfth_step_within@oa-alaska.org	Open
Outreach	oa_outreach@oa-alaska.org	Tanya
Technology	oa_technology@oa-alaska.org	David A.



Next Intergroup Meeting: May 7, 1:15 at the MTA Office in Palmer. Please represent the needs of your OA group. We are here for all of us!

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ANCHORAGE ALASKA INTERGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

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
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Homer

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

Kenai

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

KEEP COMING BACK!

