

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup
P.O. Box 200-341, Anchorage, AK 99520 (907) 279-1942
For Submissions: destinydiamond2000@hotmail.com

The Northern Light

May/June 2014

ANNOUNCEMENT

What: Region One Convention

When: September 19-21, 2014

Where: Hampton Inn, Bellingham WA

Sponsored by: Region One Intergroups of Overeaters Anonymous

Inspired by: Higher Power

Service opportunities abound! Please contact Ruth D, V-Chair @ 208-659-9606/vchairr1@gmail.com and Paula W, LCI IG Chair @ 208-618-9297 or gndnit@aol.com

Check our Region One website: www.oaregion1.org

HOW SERVICE IMPACTS RECOVERY

Each day, we can be open to opportunities to serve our OA groups, families, and friends. As we give out more and take in less, we gain new satisfaction and self-respect.

Show me where I may serve, Lord

From Food for Thought

Share From the Members

I have never considered 'being of service' one of my strengths. While I'm caring and compassionate, I'm also quite stingy with my time, a character defect I've had for some time now. However, my sponsor recently reminded me that doing "Service" is as simple as being **quiet when others are sharing, reading at meetings, and sharing ourselves**. If I can do these things when I attend a meeting or on an outreach call, or even listening without thinking or interrupting while others are sharing, I am being of service.

From Anonymous in Alaska

"Clean House, Trust God and HELP OTHERS."

A way of living, which really works. So service IS recovery in my opinion. In the OA Fellowship the most important service we can do is to achieve and maintain an abstinent way of life and share how that is/has happening/happened. The simple services of face-to-face meetings by just showing up, helping set up chairs, sharing, and helping with clean up fueled my early recovery when I had such low self-esteem I didn't think anyone could want or need my help.

Growth in recovery has helped me learn to TRUST the promptings of my Higher Power on the level of OA service I am able to do now. Thank goodness for computers. Living in remote Alaska offers its unique challenges to find ways to do OA service but it amazes me daily what service opportunities come up when my heart is willing. Growth in recovery also frees me to serve in the ways my Higher Power has gifted me instead of ways that lead to anger, resentment, fear or negative feelings. Being one among many. Remaining teachable. Service becomes a true avenue of JOY in recovery.

Hosting OA workshops and retreats are great ways to give OA service. Being willing to serve on Intergroup or World Service committees are great ways to give service. Writing articles for the newsletter are a way to give service. And at this point in time I'm happy, JOYous and free serving in my little corner of the world today. Yay, God/HP and the Fellowship of OA. Thanks for letting me share.

Big OA Hugs and Prayers,

From Anonymous in Alaska

I don't know if I truly now how service alone impacts my recovery because I have been told in program since the very beginning to stay in service, to say yes when someone asks for someone to help in the meeting and so I have never been in program without being in service. I do know that during this time of pain and struggle in my life one of the reasons I have found myself to be continually abstinent and still calling my sponsor even when I can't go to meetings, that service has given me a reason to stay and a way to give back what others have so lovingly given away to me.

It has taught me how to be loving and selfless in my family and outside my family and there is nothing I need more than the opportunity to share my recovery and continue to grow in program. Being of service has given me a loving voice that I didn't know I had, given me a chance to find a way for me to fight for the principles of the program that have become near and dear to my heart where before I had troubled silence.

I hope I will continue to not only have the chance to be of service at the group level as well as keep learning about the program at Intergroup and even higher, to better know myself as well as my fellows.

Thank you!

Anonymous in Ak

How Service Impacts Recovery: My experience has been that service profoundly affects my recovery. The Big Book says we are undisciplined, self-centered, resentful, and full of fear. It's hard to argue that one! Service helps to combat each one of those character defects by helping me practice it's opposite.

Agreeing to do service means I am going to have to show up when I am supposed to, so I begin practicing the discipline to do so. I made plenty of commitments before program, but rarely followed any of them through - always offering a handy excuse du jour for each one. I continued to judge myself by my intentions, but my actions painted the picture the world saw. Service helped me develop discipline - and one of my favorite quotes for it is: Discipline is remembering what I want. I want to be a person of my word. I want integrity. I want to be there for others. Service helped me do those things.

As Center of my Own Universe, I rarely considered how my actions might affect others, unless it might affect how they thought of me - ha ha - me, again! Getting out of my own head and turning the focus on others helped me become more compassionate and helpful rather than self-centered. Service work - chairing a meeting, putting out literature, serving on intergroup - is great practice for putting myself and ego on the back burner and work for the good of the group. I need service to change the channel in my brain to something else.

A big part of recovery is letting go of our resentments, and how can service help there? As I did my Step Work and inventoried resentments, I discovered I wasn't all I thought I was! I had some defects of character - some quite pronounced. I realized I was part of the human race, and I was a mistake maker. I had only been able to see that quality in others! Service helped me again in grasping the concept that we aren't all perfect! We are broken people volunteering our time and energy to tasks to help other compulsive overeaters. I began to have compassion for others, to encourage them, and to listen to members who I might not have liked so much. And in humbling myself and doing the mundane things that needed to be done, I could stop judging and become one of the many.

Finally, service helped me with the pervasive fear I learned I had. The OA 12 X 12 intimates that if we can't win, we don't want to play; if we aren't the best, we withdraw; it is all or nothing for us. There were tasks and duties and service positions that I KNEW I would never be able to do or would qualify for in OA. But as

I gained experience and lost weight, as I worked the steps and took actions, I found myself learning to do things I couldn't before! I have learned to delegate, to ask for help, to say yes and to say no. And I continue to practice these new skills because I am clumsy with them, and that's okay. OA is a safe environment to learn new skills.

But there is one other supreme benefit to service I haven't even mentioned: it has kept me safely in the middle, away from the fringes where I could wander off and not be missed. In this light, service has not only positively impacted my recovery, it has saved my life. My disease continues to offer extra food as the solution, and I continue to waver in my ability to stay surrendered, but service is a constant to keep me coming back and keep me safe! Thank you, God and OA and service!

From Anonymous in AK