

The Northern Light Newsletter

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January 15, 2015

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup
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Our Voices

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

All the mind's activity is easy, if it's not subjected to reality.
--Marcell Proust

Reflections on our first step and tradition . . .

Some have asked me, "Why do you keep coming to meetings? You don't look like an overeater." I can understand why they ask me this. I am at a healthy weight. I interact with people in healthy ways (generally). I keep attending OA meetings because they offer 1) catharsis to talk about problems, which seem to occur all the time; 2) fellowship with people who, like me, are in recovery, NOT overeating; 3) offering hope to the still suffering people who haven't "gotten it" as far as refraining from unhealthy foods, unhealthy amounts, and unhealthy relationships"; 4) My healthy weight and healthy relationships are happening BECAUSE I keep coming back, keep maintaining, keep working the steps, and keep doing service.

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** All material included in this newsletter is selected from within the OA Fellowship, including OA publications and/or OA program related submissions from members. Personal stories express the experience of the individual members and not of OA as a whole.

**Note from the editor: Thank you to all who have submitted articles, reports, and even a cartoon to this first issue of 2015, as well as those who persevered and helped me through another opportunity for growth! Once again, I learn that together we can do what we could never do alone. Indeed!

--Nancy

Because for me, OA has been the surest way for me to access the power of God in my life, that I may be effective, I plan to keep coming back for a loooooong time.

--Anonymous

Admitting I'm powerless is still difficult even after years in OA. It seems like I'm admitting I'm weak. And I am! Admitting takes honesty. Admitting I'm powerless takes humility. Being powerless over food seems like foolishness. It's not like some of the other things a person could choose to satisfy feelings with. I like to be in control of people and my environment. To admit that I'm not is freeing. I can allow my Higher Power to control what I cannot. Thinking I'm in control is not living in reality.

Thank you for being there OA!

--Anonymous

Lately it seems like a similar message is coming to me from many directions. My dear friend in Colorado talks about learning to open to grace in the midst of her suffering, a Buddhist I know shares her Tonglen practice, my therapist keeps reminding me to breathe with my intense emotions, and in my email inbox friendly inter-dimensional beings send channeled messages about the alchemy of the heart. And, of course, there's OA. At every

meeting, we read that the first step is to let the pain in, and then we find out we are not alone in it. The gist of the message my universe seems to be repeating, is that that here on Earth, in this moment, we have the opportunity to be a part of a miracle. We can be vessels for the transformation of the hurt and heaviness of life. It is simple, not easy. When we breathe in the trouble, the horror, the pain of our lives, accept our total lack of control over it, and give it to Love, to divinity, with a sigh, it comes out changed. Now, woven through the ugliness and distress, shine strands of unconditional love and compassion.

Really truly accepting what is, the awfulness of my compulsive eating, the running from feelings, the physical fullness masking spiritual disconnection, the isolation, the hopelessness, the pain and fear about my powerlessness over food, really accepting that, letting it in, breathing it in, giving up the pretense, that is the first step. Opening to the support that is available from all dimensions, from my OA buddies, from my HP team, and from myself, too, incredibly, transforms it. It doesn't necessarily morph into something precious. Still, somehow it becomes something that flows, like the in breath followed by the out breath, or the blood beating in my heart, or the beginning of a song.

-- A. Nonie Mouse (Anonymous)



--Lorraine W.



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Step One – The First Step of Freedom

My journey for freedom began with my admission of Step One. Early in my recovery, I was struck by the sentence in the Big Book that says in the chapter, “There Is A Solution,” “But this man still lives, and he is a free man.”(26) That is what I wanted. I wanted freedom from the obsession to eat compulsively. I wanted to be able to go anywhere on earth that others go without having a desire to eat compulsively. Little did I know that by admitting that I was a compulsive overeater that I was taking my first step in recovery, my first step on the road to freedom. Each of us is on a spiritual journey, letting go of “self,” freeing ourselves of the burdens of our ego and all that entails. It includes aligning our will with God’s, thereby expressing these principles in all our affairs. Each step asks me to sacrifice my best thinking and motives (my ego or self), to let go of those personality traits that don’t work for me and others, to identify my character flaws and ask for them to be removed, so I can become an instrument for God. The more I let go, the more free I become. I must let go of the one to obtain the other. I must let go of the life I lived so that I can live this way of life.

In the Big Book, we are told that, “If we are painstaking about this phase of our development [(Step 9)], we are going to be amazed before we are half way through. We will know a new freedom and a new

happiness.” (83) Another promise is that we will know peace of mind and serenity. I am comforted that no matter how far I have fallen in my eyes and the eyes of others I will be able to see how my experience can help and benefit others, that there was a reason for it to happen, and that I can grow and learn from the experience. It isn’t a “bad thing.” I can use every situation as a means of growing up. Oh, what a freedom! I don’t have to torture myself with my past.

Yes, admitting that I was powerless over food-- that my life had become unmanageable was my first step on the road to freedom. It was my initial attempt to reach out to my Higher Power; breaking the shackles of self, relieving me of my bonds, being restored to sanity, and getting strength and direction in my life. It was my first venture into the sunlight of the Spirit. Admitting and accepting the fact I am a compulsive overeater, getting abstinent, allowed me to tap into a power greater than myself. Every day that I practice these principles, stay abstinent, and let go, I improve that connection with God. Yes, and that is what I want; I want freedom from my self and compulsive overeating so I can experience the continual conscious contact with my Higher Power.

--Anonymous

Upcoming

UNITY DAY! Happy Birthday, OA!

Yes, we celebrate our 55th year the third Saturday of January!!! A Big Birthday Party Weekend Celebration will be held in LA, the city where OA was born, and of course, we can also celebrate in our own meetings. Read more at <http://www.oabirthday.com/>

February's theme for The Northern Light will be an Attitude of Gratitude.

Consider: How does gratitude look, sound, feel in your life? How has your understanding of gratitude changed since being in program? How has a dark time transformed into a gift? How does gratitude support your recovery? If you're thinking about submitting, please do! We welcome writing, sketches, cartoons, and pictures!

Submit to Nancy at oanewsletter@oa-alaska.org by February 15.

In addition, Lifeline is always looking for submissions and accepts letters/articles, artwork and photos (no faces, please) for publication. More information is online at <http://www.oa.org/lifeline-magazine/monthly-topics/>

2015 Lifeline Topics: for July (Deadline: 3/15/15)

Generally Speaking

Write on any topic that is meaningful to you.

for August (Deadline: 4/15/15)

- **My First OA Meeting**
What finally got you to your first OA meeting? What do you remember most about your first OA meeting?

- **Strong, Healthy Meetings**
What are the hallmarks of a strong, healthy meeting? What practices and principles can members encourage in their meetings to strengthen them?
- **Meeting Inspiration**
Share your favorite meeting moments and best ideas for meetings full of fun, love and recovery.

The WSO staff creates Lifeline from OA members' letters. Monthly topics are suggestions. You may write about any subject important to your recovery from compulsive eating. Send your letters to Lifeline, PO Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 or email to <http://overeatvmweb1.inetuhosted.net/contact/>

Ask-It Basket

Question:

People ask if I've worked the Steps with a problem I am having, but I don't know what they mean.

Answer:

"Working the Steps" newsletter from Houston metro intergroup: suggests answering these 12 questions.

1. I am powerless over _____. How does this make my life on manageable?
2. Came to believe that God (Higher Power) can restore me to sanity. Explain.
3. Made the decision to turn _____ over to my Higher Power.
4. Inventory. What is my part in this? List 2 fears. List 2 resentments.
5. Admit to God/HP, myself and another person (Who?) my character defects, fear, selfishness, resentment that contributed to the situation.

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6. I am entirely ready to have God/ HP remove these character defects: _____
7. I ask God/HP to remove: _____
8. Made a list of persons I have harmed because of this problem. Person? ____ How have they been harmed? (Include yourself).
9. How can I make amends to each person on this list including myself? Make the amends and consider ways to make a living amends so as not repeat this behavior.
10. Continue to take inventory...what specific actions can I take to do this?
11. What specific actions can I take to establish or re-establish conscious contact with my HP?
12. What spiritual awakening (new insight) have I had as a result of working these steps on the specific problem?

-- from "Working the Steps"
newsletter, Houston metro intergroup

News from AAI and Region 1

AAI Officers

Executive Board

ochair@oa-alaska.org Randy
ovicechair@oa-alaska.org Crystal
otreasurer@oa-alaska.org Jody L
ocorrsecretary@oa-alaska.org Wendy H
oaminsecretary@oa-alaska.org Jody J

Board

onewsletter@oa-alaska.org Nancy
oliterature@oa-alaska.org Dave
oregion1delegate@oa-alaska.org Alice
owwsodelegate@oa-alaska.org Open

Standing Committee Chairs

oaretreat@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_special_events@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_publication@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_oasis@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_twelfth_step_within@oa-alaska.org
Mary Ann
oa_outreach@oa-alaska.org Tanya
oa_lifeline@oa-alaska.org Sue
oa_finance@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_policies_procedures@oa-alaska.org Cassie
oa_technology@oa-alaska.org David
oa_archives@oa-alaska.org Open
oa_librarian@oa-alaska.org Open

Region 1 Report

January 2015

The R1 quilt square will be mailed on Jan. 12. Our Intergroup will need a volunteer to create a square based on the theme, "12 steps Into the Light". The packet will arrive at our PO Box. It will be assembled into the quilt.

There are many sponsee applicants on the Region 1 virtual sponsorship page of the website, & almost no sponsors. Please consider going to oregion1.org/memberservices/sponsor application. Be a virtual sponsor.

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup will provide personnel & hours of service at the 2015 Region 1 Convention for the 2nd year in a row. Consider attending the convention in Bend, Oregon, September 18-20.

7th tradition: OA has historically been maintained by literature sales, which are down because of computer availability of literature. Each member is asked to at least donate the price of a cup of coffee (\$5 if possible) through 7th Tradition.

In 2015, you can tune in to 13 free podcasts presented as virtual workshops to learn how to work all Twelve Steps. Start now by [clicking here for a special holiday podcast](#) and preview of the workshops in the year ahead. Workshops, starting with “step zero” on January 4 and Step One on January 11, will continue on the second Sunday of the month through 2015. All workshops will be posted at <http://www.oa.org/oapodcasts/#workshops> and you can get the full 2015 schedule on the Datebook calendar at <http://www.oa.org/datebook-calendar/>. To get the workshop, dial 424-203-8405. Pin is 925619#. Can also be heard a week later on podcast. Aired at Noon Pacific time.

At oa.org: download how to plan a workshop on "Plan of Eating vs. Abstinence". Includes usable power point, leaders' guide, in PDF.

Lifeline needs stories. Go to oa.org/lifeline. (See list of upcoming topics on p. 4 of this newsletter.)

A public info poster is available at oa.org in full color, interactive, w tear-off tabs: Step One Public Information Poster.

Join the Region 1 yahoo talk group. Go to yahoo.com. Get a yahoo email address. This is a spot to learn about steps & traditions. Marjorie has spoken there about "forbidden topics" (for example, crosstalk).

There is still time to apply for registration at the next World Service convention, WSBC . Information online at oa.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice, Region 1 Delegate

AAI Chair Report

January 3, 2015

I want to congratulate everyone who was elected to a position of trust on the AAI Board and Committee Chairs. I am blessed to have been elected to a second term to serve as your AAI Chair. Tradition 2 reminds us that everyone who serves, whether an IG Chair, Committee Chair, Group Representative, group Secretary, or any elected position is a trusted servant. Only God, or our Higher Power, is our ultimate authority, which is expressed in our group conscience. We are not leaders and we don't make any decisions. Members, elected to positions of trust, are directly responsible to those we serve. We serve you.

Our responsibilities include being informed. We need to know and understand our 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, our Bylaws and Policies and Procedures, Robert Rules, and the basic OA structure. However, it isn't enough to know the principles involved, we must act on them, to guide us, but further, to safeguard those principles. We are the guardians of those principles. We includes you. Together we must hold dear the principles that bind us. Further, we must be informed about the questions (motions) placed on the agenda. Only then can a group conscience be conducted.

AAI is coming of age. We are growing and changing. AAI has purchased a conference telephone to help reach out to groups outside the Anchorage area, so we can better serve those meetings. We have an 800



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number, hotline, email system, and web site to help carry the message to potential OA members, to assist them in finding us, and to communicate with existing members and groups. We are writing policies and procedures so to reduce confusion, reduce officers “making decisions,” prevent yearly revisiting issues and protocols, preserve AAI traditional ways that have worked for us in the past, and clearly spell out our responsibilities. Lastly, we are discussing using templates to assist officers and to preserve what AAI has decided in reports, minutes, newsletters, and other documents.

Again, our January AAI meeting has a full agenda. Hopefully, everyone has had a chance to read through the motions and documents and discussed them with their group. I look forward to serving you and serving with the AAI officers and group representatives.

Humbly submitted by

Randy S
Chair

from AAI Bylaws/Policies and Procedures

ARTICLE IV, Section 3 - Responsibilities of the Intergroup Board

The responsibilities of the Intergroup Board are to:

1. Serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts with respect to the functions of the Intergroup board.
2. Perform the duties of their offices in accordance with Intergroup Board policies and procedures.
3. Serve as guardian of Intergroup board funds; requesting an annual financial audit.
4. Provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and information between member groups.

ANCHORAGE ALASKA INTERGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

Anchorage

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Contact (907)</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>Noon</i>	<i>Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.</i>	<i>AA Big Book</i>	<i>Kathy 330-9442</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Lake Otis & Tudor</i>	<i>AA Big Book</i>	<i>Tanya 317-7451</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>5:30 pm</i>	<i>OAsis Turnagain Arts Bldg. 4105 Turnagain Blvd, #D1 (in back)</i>	<i>OA/HOW</i>	<i>Meg 248-0300</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>North star Hospital 2530 Debarr Rd., Private dining room, past seating area.</i>	<i>Steps/Trad/Lit</i>	<i>Sue 333-1669</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>6:30 pm</i>	<i>Lutheran Church of Hope, 1847 W. Northern Lights Blvd</i>	<i>There is a Solution</i>	<i>Carolyn 279-1942</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>Noon</i>	<i>Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.</i>	<i>AA Big Book & OA Book</i>	<i>Rachel 632-3236</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>9:00-10:30am</i>	<i>St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Lake Otis & Tudor</i>	<i>AA Big Book</i>	<i>Twyla 444-7251</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>9:30 am</i>	<i>Kaladi Bros., 6921 Brayton Dr.</i>	<i>As Bill Sees It. VOR & For Today</i>	<i>Candy 350-5255, Jean 345-9805</i>

Mat-Su

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Contact (907)</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>Noon</i>	<i>Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd</i>	<i>Big Book</i>	<i>Jody 376-3593</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Gail 357-4644</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>9:30 am</i>	<i>Wasilla: Alano Club Snohomish/Fishhook Rd</i>	<i>Speaker/Topic</i>	<i>Brenda 240-6331</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>Palmer: St. Michael's Parish, 432 E Fireweed Ave, in the office, the Knights of Columbus Rm.</i>	<i>Speaker/Topic</i>	<i>Randy 745-7485</i>





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ANCHORAGE ALASKA INTERGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE (cont.)

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>

Overeaters Anonymous Quote

Can we guarantee you this recovery? The answer is simple. If you will honestly face the truth about yourself and the illness; if you will keep coming back to meetings to talk and listen to other recovering compulsive overeaters; if you will read our literature and that of Alcoholics Anonymous with an open mind; and, most important, if you are willing to rely on a power greater than yourself for direction in your life, and to take the Twelve Steps to the best of your ability, we believe you can indeed join the ranks of those who recover.

from "Our Invitation to You," Overeaters Anonymous®, Inc. World Service Office, www.aa.org