



## July Chair Report

Hi everyone. I'm sure you are all busy with your summer plans; time with family and friends, camping, fishing, walking, biking, gardening and so much more. Hopefully lots of program, HP and Step Work too. ☺

Our last meeting was in May and it was coupled with the **Intergroup/Meeting Renewal Workshop**. It was great to see Beverly Montgomery again, our Region 1 Chair and the facilitator for this process. She was fun, insightful and interesting and the process went well. Here is a quick overview of what we did. We hope to have sessions posted on the website by fall.

- Region 1 started the Renewal Process because Intergrups and meetings (throughout Region 1) were showing declining membership and attendance. Their goal is to go to every Intergroup in a two year period to help with Renewal.
- **They found through research that Intergrups need to focus their efforts on two things:**
  1. **Of course you have business to conduct**
  2. **But the majority of time and energy should be focused on "Carrying the Message"**
- **Next look at the use of time, energy, and money** (Anchorage Area Intergroup did that last year)
- **Weed out activities that don't serve that purpose** (We reduced meetings, paperwork, and requirements that committee members had to come to Intergroup meetings).

(Continues on page 6)



## Upcoming AAI Events

- Sept 16** – Intergroup: Noon-1:30 - Oasis
- Oct 13-15** - Region One Conference in Seattle
- Oct 21** – Intergroup: Noon-1:30 - Oasis
- Nov 18** -Intergroup/Idea Day Workshop: 9am - 4 pm - Mt Vernon Commons
- Dec 16** – Intergroup: Noon-1:30 - Oasis

## Region One Convention

The Region One Convention is scheduled for October 13-15 2017, in Seattle WA. Meet your OA fellows from the Pacific Northwest for sharing and renewal!

<http://www.oaregion1.org/region-1-convention.html>

### In This Issue...

- What If I Don't Believe In God? ... p. 2
- Step 7 ... p. 3
- Simple and Sane ... p. 3
- For Newcomers ... p. 4
- Men in OA ... p. 4
- Step 8 ... p. 5
- Chair Report, cont. ... p. 6
- OA Contacts ... p. 7
- Meeting Directory ... p. 8

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## Happy Summer!

This morning I looked over all my 12 Step journals, looking for something to share. What I came away with was a deep appreciation for all the ground I covered in five years of being a newcomer. There were so many topics and areas of my life and life history that were addressed through working the 12 Steps, guided by loving sponsors and my Higher Power. Sort of like digging up land for a new garden, planting seeds, pulling weeds, and watching new flowers slowly emerge and blossom! This work has helped me to:

- Understand things in my life that I am truly powerless over
- Identify what is unmanageable in my eating patterns, foods, relationships, and in my life in general
- Renew and deepen my trust and relationship with the God of my understanding
- Learn to let go of things I can't control, including a lifetime's accumulation of worries and fears
- Learn to face and apply loving understanding to things within myself that I was ashamed or afraid of
- Develop a more loving and accepting relationship with my body
- Clear out and heal old resentments and make amends for my wrongdoings
- Make some big changes in my life to support a healthier lifestyle and healthy relationships
- Learn what some of my patterns are and how I developed them, as well as better awareness of my strengths and weaknesses
- Learn how to live one day at a time, guided by a loving Creator

Without you, my fellow OA's, none of this would have been possible – together we get better!

With gratitude - *Cynthia, Anchorage*

## What If I Don't Believe In God?

“The spiritual experiences and beliefs expressed by members of Overeaters Anonymous are as varied as those found in society at large. Some members have spiritual orientations; still others have come to OA with a history of religious conflict or do not accept the concept of God.

Working the OA program of recovery is a highly individual process. We don't all think alike. As stated in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, page ix, “Our common bonds are two: the disease of compulsive eating from which we all have suffered, and the solution that we all are finding as we live by the principles embodied in these Steps.” This is what unites us in OA. Differences regarding a spiritual concept, or lack thereof, need not keep us from working the program. As the Third Tradition states, if we have

***“I think we naturally assume people who call themselves atheists or agnostics are not spiritual people. Therein lies the basis for confusion.” –  
(What If I Don't Believe in God)***

the desire to stop eating compulsively, there is a place for us in OA. Therefore, we need not explain or defend our individual beliefs even if they differ from the majority opinion.”

Open-mindedness is our watchword, as we read in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*. “OA doesn't tell us we have to believe in God—only that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. All in all, the experiences of those who work this program with their own concept of a Higher Power show that this program does work regardless of one's personal interpretation of that power. Clarity, peace of mind and growth are some of the many byproducts of OA's recovery program. When we stay in the program and apply these principles in keeping with a personal understanding of a Higher Power, these

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rich rewards are ours! These are certainly good reasons to “keep coming back.”(pp. 13-14)

Reprinted from <https://oa.org/newcomers/how-do-i-start/program-basics/atheists-agnostics/>

### *Step 7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*

“First, we are not asking God to remove our shortcomings so that we can be better than other people. This kind of self-righteousness would be a step backward in our journey to recovery. Self-righteousness motivates us when we find ourselves looking down on others who are not working the twelve steps, whether they are people outside of OA or newcomers to our Fellowship. As we take step seven, our goal is not to make ourselves more moral than others. It is simply to draw closer to being the people God intends us to be. We pray to be made new, not for our own gratification, but so that we may be more useful instruments of our Higher Power.

Second, it often happens that a shortcoming isn’t removed immediately, or it returns after being gone for a while. Every one of us has experienced struggles with some of our character defects, even after praying for their removal. The existence of the struggle is not a sign that we lack humility...Real humility about our character defects carries with it *acceptance*. We accept that each defect, as painful to us as it may be, is a part of who we are. With humble acceptance we can quietly say to our Higher Power, ‘I am this way, and only with your help can I change.’” (Excerpt from *OA 12 and 12*, pp. 60-61)



### **N**orthern Lights On-Line

You can download both full color and printable versions of *The Northern Lights* at [www.oa-alaska.org](http://www.oa-alaska.org). If you would like to receive *The Northern Lights* via email, send an updated email address to [snowmagnolias@yahoo.com](mailto:snowmagnolias@yahoo.com).

## Simple and Sane

After more than five years in OA, I can look back and see the grace of my Higher Power in the early actions of my sponsor when she immediately suggested we work through *The Twelve-Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous*. One of the earliest benefits of our work together was that I became aware of how much time, energy, and effort I’d been giving away to food and food-related behaviors.

As a food addict and compulsive overeater, it was my common practice to pore over cookbooks, read grocery ads, watch cooking shows, talk about recipes with friends, and bake for others. A huge percentage of my waking time was devoted to food. My denial about this was gradually revealed to me through our Step work. I didn’t readily give up what I believed to be innocent hobbies or acts of kindness, such as making delectable foods for my family and friends, which made them happy. But those same behaviors kept me in the food and kept me very, very sick.

Although I can’t think of anything that came quickly or easily for me within the OA program, God has helped me replace addictive food behaviors with simple and sane activities that support my abstinence. Now, God helps me pick a few simple recipes each week that fit in my food plan and are healthy, delicious, and appealing. That is enough. The act of food planning has slowly become more matter-of-fact, more mechanical. Over time, food has lost a lot of its emotional significance. I count all this as nothing short of a miracle.

Ultimately, this practice yielded the mysterious gift of abstinence, a sane and serene way of living. It took five years of trial and error for me to get abstinent and keep abstinent. Now, I know that all the practice is worth it, whether the progress is quick or not. Practice makes progress! Practice makes abstinence! — *Kris I., Puyallup, Washington USA* (Reprinted from [www.oalifeline.org](http://www.oalifeline.org))

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## **7<sup>th</sup> Tradition: Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.**

In addition to paying for your meeting's rent, newcomer packets, and other group expenses, your group's donations keep our bookstore, intergroup office, web site, OA retreats, and workshops going - as well as supporting Region 1 and WSO. Thank you for giving generously!

## **For Newcomers**

What you won't find at OA meetings are:

- Weigh-ins
- Packaged meals
- Dues
- Fees
- "Shoulds"
- "Musts"
- Judgment

If you decide that you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms. Whatever your circumstances, we offer you the gift of acceptance. You are not alone anymore. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home!

What you will find at OA meetings is:

- Acceptance of you as you are now, as you were, as you will be.
- Understanding of the problems you now face — problems almost certainly shared by others in the group.
- Communication that comes as the natural result of our mutual understanding.
- Recovery from your illness.
- Power to enter a new way of life through the practice of the Twelve-Step recovery program, the belief in a power greater than

yourself, and the support and companionship of the group.

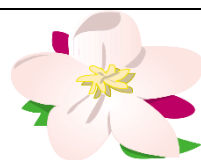
(Reprinted from <https://oa.org/newcomers/how-do-i-start/what-to-expect-at-an-oa-meeting/>)

## **Resources for Men in OA**

Did you know that the Region One website offers links to resources for men in OA? These include:

- Men's Contact List and Google Group - open to all men in OA, regardless of location. This document also lists phone meetings registered as of June, 2017.
- Pamphlet from OA - To the Man Who Wants to Stop Eating Compulsively
- Phone Meetings - use the "Find a Meeting" feature on the OA website. Click on the Special Focus drop-down menu to get a list of phone meetings for men in OA.
- Podcast on the OA website - An Interview with Charles
- Podcast on the OA website - An Interview with Bob
- Recordings from the Tuesday night Men's Focus Phone Meeting (access online or via phone)

Visit <http://www.oaregion1.org/recovery-resources.html> for more information.



## **A Step Ahead**

Stay up-to-date! You can access WSO's Quarterly newsletter at <https://oa.org/documents/>

**Share Your Recovery** - Send your *Northern Lights* articles to [snowmagnolias@yahoo.com](mailto:snowmagnolias@yahoo.com). The next deadline is September 10, 2017. Write about any topic of your choosing, and we especially would like to hear your newcomer story. Please send a Word document with minimal formatting.

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## OA Lifeline Welcomes Articles

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 and compulsive food behaviors. Send your letters to:

Lifeline  
PO Box 44020  
Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020  
or email [myoung@oa.org](mailto:myoung@oa.org).

Topics for January's Lifeline - Due: 9/15/17

### My OA Birthday

January 20, 2018, marks the celebration of OA's 58th birthday. Share a story about your OA birthday, how it was celebrated and its meaning for you.

### How OA Changed My Life

Describe your life before and after being in OA, including your physical state. How is life better in recovery?

### ***Step 8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.***

"Having just put down the food, taken inventory, and had our defects of character removed, we can test the new clarity our HP has given us to consider the costs and benefits of moving forward or staying at Step 8. Let's look at them.

#### **STAYING PUT**

##### **Costs**

- I'll eat again because I'm not growing spiritually and I'm not completing the program of action that's known to work
- My relationships won't improve or change
- I'll still feel discomfort about the harms I've caused

##### **Benefits**

- I won't have to admit I've been or done wrong

- I won't have to face fears or anger and rejection
- I won't have to give up control of the situation

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

##### **Costs**

- I'll have to swallow my pride
- I'll have to summon courage from HP to face my fears
- I'll have to accept the outcome, whatever it may be

##### **Benefits**

- I'll be growing spiritually and taking out insurance against eating again
- I'll feel freedom from self-resentment about the harms I've done
- My relationships and life circumstances will improve
- I'll feel self-esteem for following through on something difficult
- Other peoples' lives may change for the better because I've have broken the negative cycle between us

Seems pretty straightforward. We exchange a little discomfort for a truckload of blessings. This is exactly why the promises we read at most meetings are found in the ninth step—because we can't get those promises without cleaning up our side of the street. Only then do we receive the entirety of the spiritual bounty that OA promises us."

(Excerpted from:

<https://seacoastoa.org/category/step-8/>)





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## July Chair Report, Continued

### To accomplish the changes for meetings and Intergroup they suggested these six activities:

- 1. Leadership Focus:** Focus is on recovery and your primary purpose.
- 2. Intergroup Inventory:** What do the members think (AAI did this 2.5 years ago, we could do another if there is interest?)
- 3. Conduct surveys:** From the survey focus on the needs and wants of the members. (Last year we started to offer more workshops, and focusing all of our efforts on how to help members. We are looking to keep changing and growing, so please help us with lots of input.)
- 4. What is the Mission of Intergroup as a whole:** Region 1 did the same process. They went with Tradition Five: **Meaningful for Members;** “Be the Message/Carry the Message/Inspire Recovery.” They condensed that sentiment to “**Inspire Recovery.**” Which the workshop adopted as our Mission for the Renewal process and for our Intergroup (at least for this year).
- 5. Strategic & Operating Plan:** Once you figure out what you want to accomplish, you need to have specific plans in place to create the changes. Beverly instructed us on how to start the process.
- 6. Targeted response to members and meetings:** Creating useful, short term, feel good activities that members and meetings feel they want for their recovery. Those actions should be useful, targeted to your primary purpose, and recovery.
- 7. Project Teams:** from the initial six items you are to create project teams, instead of committees. This will inspire more people to be a part of the process, adding their contribution in a specific way. Focusing on smaller specific tasks.
  - a. We did two Project Teams. Here is a quick overview of what we decided. I apologize if I

didn't get this exactly right from my notes. Each team will give us more info later.

### Newcomer:

- Newcomer resources
- Meeting lists for welcome packet
- Names of members, phone number and emails that newcomers will receive in their welcome packet
- Encourage meetings to reconfigure their meeting slightly when a newcomer shows up: to help the newcomer better understand what's happening, answer questions, and by inviting them to contact members and come to additional meetings.
- Add a Newcomer Meeting each month or each quarter. Was a suggestion from Beverly

### New Technology Meetings

- Find a meeting to host a Skype meeting
- Beverly has people who will call in from other places
- Get equipment into place
- Create a flyer
- Six month expansion after the initial meeting successfully creates this format.
- Technology list on the website to assist members in finding information and meetings.

### To accomplish Project Team Goals Region 1 has posted an interactive Goal Sheet for the team to use:

[http://www.oaregion1.org/uploads/1/4/0/4/14047174/goals\\_form\\_updated.pdf](http://www.oaregion1.org/uploads/1/4/0/4/14047174/goals_form_updated.pdf)

Those of us participating felt this process was successful and the two teams are working on their projects and hope to have tools and information out to the membership by late summer, early fall.

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## July Chair Report, Continued

Look for financials, minutes from the May meeting, and updates. We will also post links for men's meetings from Region 1.

Thanks to everyone who helped put the workshop together. Kathleen, Beth, Janet R, Charlotte, Janis and more. Special thanks to Beverly for coming to Alaska! Hope you have a lovely summer and continue to reach out in program. *Jody*

## On-Line Resources

**Visit OA Alaska On-Line**

[www.oa-alaska.org](http://www.oa-alaska.org)

**OaAlaska Twitter Feed**

<https://twitter.com/OaAlaska>

**Subscribe to OA Lifeline**

<http://www.oalifeline.org/>



### OA Contact Information

Anchorage Alaska Intergroup/ OASIS (Office)  
4105 Turnagain Blvd Suite D-1  
Anchorage, AK, 99517  
[www.oa-alaska.org](http://www.oa-alaska.org)

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

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

### 2017 AAI Board

**Chair** –Jody W  
**Vice Chair**- Aaron  
**Recording Secretary**- Kathleen  
**Treasurer** –Janet R  
**Correspondence Secretary** – David A.  
**Literature** – Beth  
**Newsletter Editor** - Cynthia  
**Region One Delegate**-Paula  
**World Service Delegate**-Open

## Alaska OA Meetings List Needs Updating

Whenever there are changes, please update your meeting information by emailing [bish.aaron@gmail.com](mailto:bish.aaron@gmail.com) Thank you!



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## Alaska OA Meetings

**Please check [oa-alaska.org](http://oa-alaska.org) for updates!**

Day	Time	Location	Address	Contact	Phone	Topic
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>						
Sunday	9:30 AM	Oasis (Intergroup Office)	4105 Turnagain Blvd. E	Mary Ann	907-345-8630	Literature Study
Monday	12:00 PM	Starbucks – Dimond	Corner of Old Seward Highway and Dimond Blvd	Aaron	907-529-6774	Literature Study
Monday	6:00 PM	Intergroup Office - Oasis	4105 Turnagain Blvd. E	Tanya H	907-317-7451	Big Book
Tuesday	5:30 PM	Intergroup Office - Oasis	4105 Turnagain Blvd. E	Meg	907-248-0300	OA H.O.W.
Wednesday	12:00 PM	Intergroup Office - Oasis	4105 Turnagain Blvd E.	Julie	907-	For Today, Writing
Thursday	6:30 PM	Lutheran Church of Hope	1847 W Northern Lights Blvd.	Mike	907-947-8881	Literature Study
Friday	12:00 PM	12100 Cafe	12100 Old Seward Highway	Aaron	907-529-6774	Literature Study
Saturday	9:00 AM	St Mary's Episcopal Church	2222 Tudor Rd	Debbie	907-301-4180	Big Book
<b>FAIRBANKS</b>						
Wednesday	5:30 PM	Fairbanks Lutheran Church	1012 Cowles St	David	907-687-2776	Topic
Saturday	10:00 AM	Back entrance off 2nd Avenue	1030 2nd Avenue	David	907-687-2776	Literature Study
<b>HAINES</b>						
Friday	11:00 AM	Human Resources Building	103 Third Ave S	Jennifer	907-766-2242	None
<b>HOMER</b>						
Friday	12:00 PM	Homer United Methodist Church	770 E End Rd	Angela	907-299-6404	None
<b>JUNEAU</b>						
Monday	5:30 PM	Faith Lutheran Church	2500 Sunset Dr	Patty	303-646-7182	None
Wednesday	12:00 PM	Unity Center	119 Seward St	Wendy	907-364-2240	None
Saturday	10:00 AM	Juneau Public Health Center	3412 Old Glacier Hwy	Leslie	907-586-3259	None
<b>KENAI</b>						
Monday	5:30 PM	URS Club	Kenai Spur Hwy	Ellen	518-884-9936	None
<b>KETCHIKAN</b>						
Saturday	3:00 PM	Pioneer Home	141 Bryant St	Lesley	907-225-3277	None
<b>PALMER</b>						
Sunday	6:00 PM	St Michael's Catholic Church	432 E Fireweed Ave	Randy	907-745-7485	Speaker/Discussion
Thursday	6:00 PM	St Michael's Catholic Church	432 E Fireweed Ave	Randy	907-745-7485	AA 12&12, OA Steps and/or Traditions
<b>SEWARD</b>						
Tuesday	6:00 PM	Seward United Methodist Church	321 4th St	PJ	907-299-3082	None



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Day	Time	Location	Address	Contact	Phone	Topic
<b>SOLDOTNA</b>						
Thursday	5:30 PM	Central Peninsula Hospital	250 Hospital Pl	Christine	907-322-2778	None
<b>UNALASKA</b>						
Tuesday	12:00 PM	Baha'i Center Unalaska	390 Bayview Ave	Rob	907-581-3109	None
<b>WASILLA</b>						
Monday	12:00 PM	Alano Club	901 Snohomish Dr.	Janis	907-441-5629	Big Book, OA Second and/or Third Edition
Wednesday	6:00 PM	Alano Club	901 Snohomish Dr.	Gail	907-357-4644	Topic
Saturday	9:30 AM	Alano Club	901 Snohomish Dr.	Randy	907-745-7485	Big Book, OA Steps and / or Traditions Study

*Keep coming back - It works when  
I work it and I'm worth it!*