



## Sea to Sky Intergroup Newsletter

Volume 174  
February 2018

The opposite of addiction isn't abstinence, it's connection.

FELLOWSHIP, LOVE & UNDERSTANDING

## INTERGROUP NEWS & EVENTS

All members are welcome to attend our **Intergroup meeting** on **Saturday, February 24, 2018** at 10 am, 1630 Edinburgh Street, New Westminster. Free street parking. Accessible.

**Fill 2018 with a great service opportunities!** There are several Intergroup opportunities open now and more opening in June. Contact Carlos, our intergroup chair, if you're interested in being of service. Carlos is at [vancharles2011@hotmail.com](mailto:vancharles2011@hotmail.com).



**CONGRATULATIONS!** Some special abstinence birthdays are being celebrated! Stepping Out has upcoming birthdays: Jan 13 Frankie (9 years), Sherry G. Feb 3 (25 years), Calen Feb 17 (2 years) and the West End Recovery has an upcoming birthday: Feb 16th Chelsea (1 year). Fantastic work, all! Yay!! It works if we work it!

**Spread the Message:** send your group's good news to [seatoskynews@gmail.com](mailto:seatoskynews@gmail.com).

**The Oasis meeting in Burnaby is closing February 1<sup>st</sup>.** Thanks to all those who worked so hard to create this meeting and keep it open. A reminder that we members keep the doors open and the lights on for newcomers. Support your local meetings with your attendance in 2018! Our local meeting directory is online.

The **Coquitlam meeting**, among others, are using a Greeter to help welcome newcomers and returning members. The Intergroup Newcomers Committee recommends this as good practice and the feedback from meetings is very positive!

## REGION 1 EVENTS & NEWS

**North Cascades Spring Renewal Retreat, April 6-8, 2018** at Camp Casey Conference Center on Whidbey Island, near Coupeville, WA. Registration by March 1st is US\$135. Info: Allen at 360-678-9358 or [allen@taylor635.com](mailto:allen@taylor635.com). The registration form is available on [oaseatosky.com](http://oaseatosky.com) under "events".

**Sunlight of the Spirit Retreat, May 18 - 20. 7th Annual Central Oregon OA Retreat.** Suttle Lake, Oregon. US\$175 by May 1st. <http://www.centraloregonoa.org/retreat>

Save the date! **Vancouver Island Intergroup Retreat**, June 8-10.

## 'WELCOME TO OA, WELCOME HOME'

These two lines in "Our Invitation to You" mean a lot to me. The word "home" implies a "safe haven" and also being part of a family. Overeaters Anonymous has proven to be BOTH of those to me. (I had no idea it was what my lonely heart had been wanting all along!)

I became "related" to others not by blood, but by the pain, trauma and the experience of compulsive over-eating and compulsive food behaviours. MY greatest wound turned out to be YOURS, too. The feeling I suddenly belonged somewhere was an unearned gift. Slowly, I learned I could be taught how to become an EMOTIONALLY-contributing member of society, if I were willing to make OA my home base. What a mercy.

I loved the "family" values as well, embodied in a 'design for living'. **The 12 Steps showed me it was possible to live WITHOUT the sneakiness, isolation, resentments and obsessive thinking I'd "valued" before OA.** As it turned out, I just needed the example of seeing NEW values being modelled for me; the proverbial "light behind the eyes" told me what you now valued in life.

**If a home and family offer a secure foundation to operate from...I knew I'd found that secure base in OA.** The twelve steps that continually re-shape my character are not easy to do, but seeing how they continually reshape YOURS has always motivated me to do the work. It happens time after time, year after year; I see us all getting re-birthed and re-parented.

On page 62 of the Big Book, Bill W. wrote, 'Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are his agents. He is the Father, and we are His children.' **Well, having lost my father at 15, I was really open to having someone play a parenting role. I also (strangely enough) liked being told what MY role in life was. (I liked learning that I HAD one!)**

I liked the family "ancestry", too; that so many others had been re-parented before me! **I liked the sponsor / sponsee tradition, and how it had been passed on and on, down through the years. There was a great sense of history here!**

So, it was wonderful to read that I was "home" in Overeaters Anonymous... because that's exactly what my heart was telling me then, and still tells me today. *-In appreciation, Wendy C*

**Subscribe to your Newsletter** by following our blog on the OA Sea to Sky website ([www.oaseatosky.org](http://www.oaseatosky.org)). **Contributions** to the Newsletter are very welcome! Please contact Jennifer at [seatoskynews@gmail.com](mailto:seatoskynews@gmail.com). Your newsletter is printed the week before Intergroup (the last Saturday of every month) and also published online ([www.oaseatosky.org](http://www.oaseatosky.org)). Opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong to the contributors and may not represent our Intergroup or OA as a whole. This month's masthead image is full of love and gratitude for free wallpapers on Google. Lol. Together we get better!

## UNITY DAY SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24



Unity Day is celebrated on the last Saturday in February at 11:30 a.m. PST. This day recognizes the strength of the Fellowship worldwide. OA members pause to reaffirm the strength inherent in OA's unity. If you are unable to attend a meeting on Unity Day, we invite you to take a moment at 11:30 am PST, along with other OA members around the world, and remember that you are not alone.

## WORLD SERVICE NEWS

WSO seeks input from all intergroups, including ours. You can read the details in the current issue of *The Step Ahead* newsletter found on oa.org at <https://oa.org/files/pdf/asa-q1-2018.pdf>.

 **New:** OA e-books are now available through Apple iBooks!

## STEP 5: NOT EASY BUT WORTH IT

**April P** writes: I recently finished Step 5 with my sponsor. I've done a Step 5 before, but it's been over a year since my last one. It was hard. REALLY hard.

Those of us who have done a Step 5 recall the absolute dread of having to admit to another person all the things we've done and everything that's been done to us. It's scary and, yes, the first time I did Step 5, talking about it was the hardest part. **This time around, the hard part was digging into my resentments, my old beliefs, my fears, and my other problem areas to reveal the reasons behind my defects of character. In other words, doing the emotional work.**

Every day of my life I've done work in some form or another, but it's usually either physical, mental, or some combination of the two. When I work my program, something more is demanded of me: I'm required to engage spiritually and emotionally. **While the spiritual work is complex and still fairly new to me, I find the emotional work much harder - probably because I've been actively avoiding it for years by numbing-out with food, Netflix, and a host of other distractions.**

Doing the emotional work is incredibly uncomfortable. It is in this space where I find that my self-esteem is in shreds, that fear runs my life and that having persistently high expectations of myself and others leaves me feeling worthless and lonely.

If I could somehow avoid this work, I would - but that's not how Program works. **Without doing the emotional work, I can't heal; if I can't heal, I'll continue eating compulsively. There's no way around it - it MUST be done if I am to recover.**

While I feel emotionally exhausted from this process, I acknowledge that I have now taken a huge step forward in my recovery. **By unearthing the reasons for my defects and connecting back to a time in my childhood when they weren't an issue for me, I am able to imagine myself living happily without them once again.** It is at this point where I can become entirely ready for my Higher Power to remove all these defects of character.

The emotional work is some of the hardest work we'll do in our lives, and I applaud each and every one of you for your effort in this area. These are simple steps. But they are not easy. -*April P*

➔ **Have you ever gone to OA's Birthday Party in LA?** ➔  
Send your memories in for a future newsletter!

## ♥ LOVE AND VALENTINE'S DAY IN OA

Valentine's Day is a fickle holiday - or rather, its celebrants are. In years when gifts and attention were lavished upon us, we felt special and loved, and the day was great. **On occasions where our loved ones forgot to bring us a token, or we were despairingly single, we sulked in jealousy and self-pity.** This was Valentine's Day (and often, other days) for many of us before we found recovery in OA.

**In OA, we learn that our own well-being does not depend upon the actions of others.** We can be abstinent and grateful every day simply by working the Steps, maintaining conscious contact with a Higher Power, and carrying out that Higher Power's will to the best of our ability each day. Thanks to the OA program, we can now feel and demonstrate greater love for ourselves and others, without needing external validation.

**Self-love and self-acceptance are often unexpected results of Step 5.** As we share all of our flaws with God and another human being, we find unconditional acceptance, and we realize that we're okay. We are, in fact, human. Freed of the need to cling to our secrets, we gain "humility, fearlessness and honesty," (BB page 73) and at last "[we] can look the world in the eye." (BB page 75)

In Step 9 and 10, we practice cleaning our own side of the street. We gain the courage and clarity to do the right thing - even when it's hard - without expecting anything in return. **We act with love by treating people well, and by seeking to help them rather than to change them.**

In Step 12 we learn that "[t]o be vital, faith must be accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action," (BB, p.93) and "[a] kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be." (BB, p.97). Our love for others must be as unconditional as it is for the OA newcomer. Just as our recovery depends on working with other compulsive overeaters, so too it depends on looking for the ways we can be helpful to those around us.

All this work for others does not mean we should allow ourselves to be damaged in the process. The Big Book stresses that, although we should go out of our way - sometimes to great lengths - to help others, it shouldn't be to the detriment of ourselves or anyone else. Ensuring that our own spiritual condition is strongly intact keeps us fit to help others.

The following excerpt from the **Prayer of Saint Francis** [Ed. Note: a.k.a. the Step 11 Prayer] eloquently shows how we can practice orienting ourselves to act with unselfish compassion:

***Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted; to understand, than to be understood; to love, than to be loved.***

When we live focused on helping others, our resentments miraculously fade. Life takes on new colours, no longer dulled by our old, narrow focus on ourselves. We see less of the flaws in people and more of their good qualities. We can approach each day and each situation with a light heart, for we are no longer bogged down by our desire to control everything to our favour. Instead, we are "thinking of what we [can] do for others, of what we [can] pack into the stream of life," (BB, p.86). That is greatly satisfying. - *Alicia D*

**Further Resources:** ♥ <https://seacoastoa.org/2016/02/14/3-suggestions-for-staying-abstinent-on-valentines-day/> ♥

"Infantile love follows the principle: I love because I am loved.  
Mature love follows the principle: I am loved because I love."  
- *For Today*, February 14