




OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Sea to Sky Intergroup
Newsletter
September 2018

Weaving the tapestry of our new lives – spiritual, emotional and physical recovery.

I PUT MY HAND IN YOURS...

INTERGROUP NEWS & EVENTS

All members are welcome to attend our **Intergroup meeting** on **Saturday, September 29, 2018** at 10 am, 1630 Edinburgh Street, New Westminster. Accessible with ample free street parking.

"OA Study Hall" is in session! Join our newest meeting focused on the tools of Literature and Writing on **Tuesday nights from 7:30 to 9 pm** at the Alano Club, 176 East 2nd (at St. Georges) in North Vancouver. Bring your OA literature, Big Book, or step study ... **One recent member commented, "This is the perfect meeting format for introverts!"** 📖✍️



Recent abstinence milestones were celebrated by **Kelly** and **Mellissa** (30 days) in North Van, **Rena** (9 months) and by **Fernanda** (1 year on August 10) in the West End. Congratulations!! This program works if we work it. Is someone in your home group celebrating a milestone in their abstinence? Send your good news to seatoskynews@gmail.com

REGION 1 EVENTS & NEWS

Upcoming OA Phone Marathons, from 5 am to 9 pm, dial 712-432-5200 and enter Conference ID 4285115#. **Monday, September 3**, "We Cannot Rest on Our Laurels"; **Monday, September 10**, "The Beginning of a Spiritual Awakening" **Wednesday, September 19**, "Making Amends"; **Monday, October 8**, "Keep Coming Back"; **Hallowe'en (October 31)**, **"Removing the Masks of Fear, Resentment, Dishonesty..."**

Greater Seattle Intergroup, September 14-16, "Big Book Weekend Workshop," Issaquah Holiday Inn, find the registration information here: www.seattleoa.org/bbworkshop_2018/

Vancouver Island Intergroup, Saturday, September 15, "Sponsorship Workshop," 10 to 4 pm, St. Paul's Church, 100 Chapel Street, Nanaimo, \$20 or by donation. Register by email at vancouverislandintergroup@gmail.com

One Aurora Meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon, October 19-21 Retreat. For info, please email Oayukon@gmail.com

Region 1 Convention, October 19-21, Spokane, Washington. More info is found here at www.oaregion1.org

WORLD SERVICE NEWS

Read the latest news from **World Service** – the new edition of *A Step Ahead* includes voting outcomes from the World Service

Business Conference, the new policy statement on bariatric surgery, and more. <https://oa.org/files/pdf/asa-q3-2018.pdf>

...EVERY MONTH ON THE 12TH

Need to build Step 12 into your Action Plan for the month? Here's a suggestion from Region 6: commit to a simple 12th Step Within call on the 12th of every month. Call a member who hasn't been seen in your meeting in a while. Call someone you've noticed drifting away from program. If we each make just one phone call a month, imagine the compulsive eaters we could reach!



Not sure what to say? Here are some suggestions: "Hello, is this _____? It's _____ from the meeting. I've been thinking about you and I'm reaching out to let you know that you are missed." Or "Hi _____, this is _____. Is this a good time to chat? I'm just checking in to see how your day is going." Or "Hello _____. This is _____. I haven't seen you in a while and wanted you to know that the meeting is still at _____ on _____ nights. We'd love to see you."

Make a call on the 12th of this month! Please remember OA's Tradition of Anonymity when making phone calls if you reach someone else in the OA-er's household. ☎️

THE ROAD TO RELAPSE...

What is the road to relapse? It may well be practicing the 12 Steps in reverse! If you're struggling, does this sound familiar?

12. Having let up on our spiritual program as a result of not doing the Steps daily, and putting our personal priorities ahead of carrying the message, we let our fellows fend for themselves and once again practiced our own ideas.

11. Let our conscious contact with God as we understood him lapse by not making time to meditate and praying only in emergencies for our will to be carried out.

10. Slacked off on personal inventory and when we were wrong, denied or hid it.

9. Forgot about finishing list of amends because it's in the past now, we are doing fine, we want to leave the past in the past and just move on.



8. Rationalized the harm we had done others by justifying that no one had been hurt by us more than we had been hurt by them and so we decided it's even.

7. Prayer is "I've Gotta Be Me." We decide it is more important to take some time to work on ourselves which includes loving and forgiving ourselves before we can love and forgive others

6. Become unwilling to see that there are defects of character that need removing.

5. Decided to once again stuff down deep inside ourselves all the harm we have done. Pride tells us we don't need to admit to ourselves, to God, and to anyone else that we did anything harmful; fear tells us we must not admit it.

4. Quickly cast a weak flashlight over our moral inventory and focused on what's wrong with the world and everyone else to avoid focusing on ourselves.

3. Made a decision to keep our will and our lives totally in our own control, because we don't understand God and think we won't get what we want.

2. Came to believe that we still have some good ideas in how to solve our problems and are unwilling to accept outside help from God or a sponsor.

1. We decided that we "got this" and have no interest in compulsive overeating and binge foods. Now we have information, determination and fear, plus sit in on some OA meetings, we will be fine. – *Anonymous*

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY...

In fact, there's only twelve things we have to do to recover: 1. Admit; 2. Come to believe; 3. Make a decision; 4. Make an inventory; 5. Admit some more; 6. Become ready; 7. Ask; 8. Become willing; 9. Make amends; 10. Continue; 11. Improve; and 12. Carry this message.



If you're struggling, OA's helpful relapse-prevention document "Been Slipping and Sliding? A Reading and Writing Tool" is updated with page references for the OA 12 & 12, 2nd edition. Download your copy here: <https://oa.org/files/pdf/Been-Slipping-and-Sliding.pdf>

THE OTHER 14 HOURS OF OUR DAY

According to the AA Big Book, the point of the 12 Steps is "to fit us to be of maximum service to God and to the people about us." That's interesting! Many of us thought the point of the Steps was to ensure our abstinence from food and food behaviours. I know I did.

It turns out that the real goal of the 12 Steps is to establish a connection to a Higher Power. Once I have a relationship with the God of my understanding, the Big Book tells us, I can realize the 10th Step promises, which include the removal of the compulsion to eat (Big Book, p.85). However, I am also guaranteed that I will drift back into my addiction if I don't remain in "fit spiritual condition." To do that, I have to live the principles of the program.

If I want to be free from food, I cannot "take what you want and leave the rest" when it comes to living in the solution. I must be of maximum service and keep the spiritual lifeline to God open, lest I become a spiritual punchline.

To put it another way, my food plan isn't enough to get me through the day without taking that first compulsive bite. In fact, it mostly only helps me during mealtimes. **If the average OA sleeps eight hours and eats their planned meals for two hours, that means we have fourteen hours a day when we need a spiritual plan, not a food plan.**

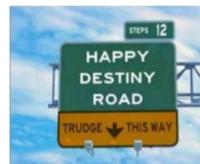


Of course, committing to and eating a food plan can be a spiritual activity. But it's those fourteen other hours that are killing me. The feelings and thoughts that arise out of the natural flow of human behaviour, the little disappointments or big, fiery rages. My binging, grazing, or mindlessly eating between meals are merely symptoms of what's going on in my mind and spirit.

In Step One, I told myself that my life (a.k.a. those other fourteen hours) is unmanageable. My only coping skill is eating. Well, I might have two or three: eating, drinking, smoking, for example. **I don't do life, life does me, and I try to manage my emotions by burying them in substances and behaviours.**

Those emotions don't really go away, they stay with me, often for years and years. I bring them with me into every encounter with another human being and into every conversation I have with myself. **Until I dump those free-radical emotions through the first nine Steps, I am vulnerable.**

Removing those objectionable feelings gets me pretty far, but I still can't sit idle while my disease continues to progress, even in the absence of compulsive eating behaviours. I must continue the process of ego-reduction, of becoming right-sized, that the Big Book talks about. Otherwise, my non-eating / sleeping moments will once again fill up with thoughts about myself and my little plans, emotional boobos, and harmful judgments.



Being of service to others provides me with a means to get through the tough stuff. By turning my attention outward, I avoid obsessing about what's inward. In addition, having made my connection with a Higher

Power, I now possess a source of wisdom and support. When I name a problem to God and ask for its removal or for the right words or actions to cope safely, I find a new way to live: **"To act on life rather than react to it,"** as our 12 & 12 describes it. I listen to my spiritual intuition and I let go of the control I want over my situations.

Following up on my spiritual intuition sometimes leads me to do one of the most intensely spiritual things I can do: to take an action I'm afraid of or avoid an action I desperately want to take thanks to the courage that comes from the faith I've learned in the 12 Steps. **And that is how I live in the other fourteen hours of the day.** – adapted with thanks from *Anonymous, Seacoast Intergroup, New Hampshire / Maine*



OA Sound Bites

This month's question... "What did you learn from relapse?"

🗨 You may as well keep coming back, because the addiction has and will catch up with you. - Karen, Recovery Club

🗨 From my last relapse I learned that I cannot live my best life - the one I deserve to live - if I'm in the food. - April, Shaughnessy

🗨 I had not really found an appropriate food plan. Now I finally have one that allows me to grow spiritually and physically. – Dalila

🗨 The momentary relief of eating leads to months of trying desperately to stop, and the relatively brief discomfort of refraining from eating leads to the much greater relief of the obsession. - Graeme, Fairview

🗨 I learned that I need to work my program like my life depends on it, because it does. - Fernanda, West End

Thanks to Alicia D, our reporter this month, and the members who shared. If you have a question to suggest for Sound Bites, let us know!

Struggling with a problem? Why not 12 Step it? A handy guide to applying the 12 Steps to any problem is available from OA World Service. Copies of the handout can be downloaded here: http://www.oa.org/pdfs/twelve_stepping_a_problem.pdf