



OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®
SEA TO SKY INTERGROUP

January 2019
www.oaseatosky.com

Surrender is letting yourself move to the next chapter in your life.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

INTERGROUP NEWS & EVENTS

A new idea for the “5th week”. The Cloverdale meeting is studying an OA Concept in months where there is a fifth week. The Concepts guide the practice of service within OA. You can read the 12 Concepts here: <https://oa.org/groups/service-bodies/guidelines/twelve-concepts/>

Thursday Thrivers (130 pm on Thursdays) are looking for speakers for the third Thursday of the month. If you are interested in being of service, contact Patti at 604.323.3783.

Upcoming Intergroup Meeting: Intergroup meets on the last Saturday morning each month. The next meeting is **Saturday, January 26th**. Everyone is welcome: 10 am at 1630 Edinburgh Street, New Westminster. Accessible.

➔ **Did you know we have phone buddies available 24/7?** You are not alone in OA. We have Intergroup Phone Buddies available if you need to reach out. Our phone buddies are:

- ☎ **Christa S** – 778-870-0831 (call or text; 24 hours)
- ☎ **Gail L** – 604-299-1115 (call only; 24 hours)
- ☎ **Tim C** – 778-835-6469 (call or text; 24 hours)



REGION 1 EVENTS & NEWS

🔊 The podcast from the December 12th Twelfth Step Within virtual meeting with a special guest speaker from Montana is now available for download on the Region 1 website. <https://www.oaregion1.org/audio-recordings.html>

A **Young People’s Special Focus Meeting** is starting by phone, hosted by the Alaska Intergroup, on Thursdays at 7 pm (Pacific). Dial 605-472-5395 and enter code 378978# to join!

Lake Country IG’s “Put Down the Food” Workshop is **January 12** in Spokane, WA. See Region 1 Event page for info.

The **LA OA Birthday Party** is **January 18-20** at the LAX Hilton. Info: <https://www.oalaig.org/oa-birthday-party/>

Seattle Intergroup’s Winter Retreat is **February 1-3** at Camp Huston, Gold Bar, Washington. More information here: <http://www.seattleoa.org/winter-retreat-registration/>

Oregon Intergroup’s Serenity Retreat at Twin Rocks will be **March 15-17, 2019**. See www.oregon-oa.org to learn more.

North Cascades Intergroup Spring Renewal Retreat will be **April 5-7** at Camp Casey on Whidbey Island, WA. http://oa-nci.org/images/2019_NCI_Retreat_Flier_1_.pdf

➔ **The Vancouver Island Intergroup retreat** is **June 7-9, 2019** in Nanaimo. Details: <http://www.oaviig.org>

The next **Region 1 Assembly and Convention** will be in **Portland, Oregon**. The Assembly is October 16-18, 2019 and the Convention will be October 18-20. Plan to attend!



WORLD SERVICE NEWS

The 4th Quarter edition of **A Step Ahead**, World Service’s newsletter is out, with articles on creating strong meetings, about young people in OA and the “Ask It Basket” column. You can read it here: <https://oa.org/files/pdf/asa-q4-2018.pdf>

OA’s helpful relapse-prevention document **“Been Slipping and Sliding? A Reading and Writing Tool”** is now updated with page references for the OA 12 & 12, 2nd edition. **Support your abstinence with these 30 prompts to help you work your program.** <https://oa.org/files/pdf/Been-Slipping-and-Sliding.pdf>

Upcoming phone marathons are listed on the “Virtual Events” tab here: <http://www.oavirtualseervices.org>.

NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS NO MORE

Am I still telling myself I can fix my life, my food, and my relationships, through self-will alone?



In the Big Book’s “Because I’m an Alcoholic”, a fellow shares this: “Europe hadn’t proved to be the change that would repair my life, and I started west again. It was in Cambridge that I pronounced my first resolutions about cutting down – **New Year’s resolutions I recycled for a dozen years** while my drinking and my life kept getting worse. Alcohol had enslaved me. I was in bondage to it, although I kept assuring myself that drinking was a pleasure and a choice.” [Big Book, p. 340].

If I keep recycling and rebreaking my New Year’s resolutions around weight, exercise and food, my life will get continue to get worse too.



OA offers a different solution than relying on my own unsteady will power. Instead of making useless New Year’s resolutions I will break before Valentine’s Day, I choose to update my Action Plan for 2019 and commit to it daily by email with a friend in OA. –Anonymous

➔ **Want to work on your own Action Plan for 2019?** There’s an article in our November 2018 newsletter to help. Check it out here: <https://oaseatosky.com/newsletters-literature/>

LIFE SAVING ONLINE OA RESOURCES

To me, there's nothing like a good, face-to-face meeting. I feel I'm blessed to live in Metro Vancouver, where there are many in-person meetings available. Online resources have also been a life-saver.

When I first learned of OA, I carried the shame that often comes with untreated compulsive eating. I was afraid of walking into a room of strangers, not knowing what to expect. Without OA's online resources, I might never have walked through the door that first time and found the recovery I have today. These three online resources have helped immensely on my journey in the program.



➔ **Online Meetings** - <https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/>

My first few OA meetings were online. In those meetings, I started to learn about the program and have my questions answered, behind the safety of my computer screen. This gave me enough confidence to walk into my first face-to-face meeting, where I was welcomed with open arms.

Now, online meetings come in handy when I need a meeting but I don't have the time to travel to one on the bus, or when I'm out of town visiting family. On oa.org, there are links to chat-room style meetings and video call meetings (these have Skype, Zoom, or Google in the website URL). There are also non-real-time meetings, where you can post your share and read others' shares any time. I belong to the **OA Heart-to-Heart non-real-time meeting on Facebook**, so I get to see members' shares throughout the day. Be mindful about anonymity on-line. [Ed. Note: OA's guidelines for online anonymity are here: <https://oa.org/guidelines/guidelines-guidelines-for-anonymity-in-the-digital-world/>]

➔ **Virtual Sponsorship**

<https://www.oaregion1.org/find-a-sponsor-or-sponsee.html>

A relatively new and exciting initiative is OA Region 1's virtual sponsorship program. With this program, OA members from around the world can be matched with a sponsor or sponsee, and then work together by phone, email, text, video calls, or anything that works for both parties. Through this program, I was quickly matched with a sponsee who couldn't find a local sponsor because there was only one small meeting nearby. I sponsor her by phone and it's truly been a pleasure.

The virtual sponsorship program is always welcoming more sponsors and sponsees. Just fill out a form on the OA Region 1 website and the virtual sponsorship team will contact you when they find a potential match.

➔ **AA Big Book Online**

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/alcoholics-anonymous

Don't have a Big Book yet, or left yours at home when you need it? No problem! Alcoholics Anonymous has made the 4th edition of the book available for free online. I often recommend this for new members who haven't purchased all their literature yet. – *Alicia D, Coquitlam* [Ed. Note: the AA 12 Steps & 12 Traditions book is also available for free online: https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions]

DEPRESSION & COMPULSIVE EATING



Winter can be a hard time of year for many of us. Less daylight, cold wet weather, and the aftermath of the holidays may see some of us working through feelings of depression. **Bill W, the co-founder of AA, was candid about depression in his lifetime.** As compulsive eaters, as addicts, many of us experience depression from time to time. When we feel depressed, we

may be tempted to isolate ourselves. However, if we do this, our depression may turn to despair and self-pity. Then, we are at much greater risk to pick up the food in a futile attempt to comfort ourselves.

We can't afford to let depression lead us back into the isolation of compulsive eating or compulsive food behaviours. Instead, we try to go about the routine of our lives using our Action Plans as our guide. We make meeting attendance and contact with our sponsor top priorities. Sharing with others about our feelings may let us know we aren't the only ones who have been depressed in recovery. Being of service takes us out of our heads. Working with a newcomer can work wonders for our own state of mind. And, most importantly, prayer and meditation can help us tap the power we need to survive depressive thoughts.

In 12 Step recovery, we are no longer fighting fear, anger, guilt, self-pity, or depression. We work our Step 4 and our daily Step 10's. We face our feelings head-on with our Higher Power's help and the support of the OA fellowship.

We practice acceptance and remember that difficult feelings like depression will unquestionably grow less in time, at least for a while. Rather than struggle with our current feelings, we accept them and ask our Higher Power for the strength to walk with them. **We accept outside help if we need to and we lean into the strength of our OA friends.**

🌍 **Meditation:** Just for today, I accept that my feelings of depression are here right now. I will talk openly about how I feel with my sponsor or another who understands. – *Anonymous*

WILLINGNESS AND REBELLION IN OA

I intended to do some more work around humility and Step 7. A God-incidence, however, got me thinking about willingness (which is really a form of humility) instead. How many times have you heard someone in OA say they are "willing to be willing but unwilling to act"? Or they are praying for "willingness"? When I hear this, my dishonesty meter rings. It's not about willingness, it's about the choice to surrender.



When I am unwilling, there is a dramatic surge in my feelings of rebelliousness. I don't want to do my Action Plan! I don't want to email my sponsor each night! It's not fair that I am a compulsive eater! I am a grown-ass adult! I should be able to do what I want! Okaay, but my rebelliousness adds this: "I should be able to do what I want" *with* no price to pay in terms of obesity, increased health risks, or damaged relationships. My attitude is childish: I want what I want when I want it. This is also classic addict thinking: impulsive, compulsive, and damn the consequences, I'll face regret later if I have to. Life doesn't work well that way, in my experience.

The mistake in my thinking has always been that I have a choice. I really don't have a choice if I want to recover. Surrender is the only way this program works. I am a compulsive eater. I do have this disease. I will wear my excess calories. My body will suffer physically as my heart does emotionally when I binge. The laws of the universe apply to me and my body. I am not special. There are no exceptions.

Bill W wrote in AA's *Grapevine* about choice. What he said resonates for me. He wrote:

🗨️ **Looking back, we see that our freedom to choose badly was not, after all, a very real freedom.** When we chose because we "must," this was not a free choice either. But it got us started in the right direction. When we chose because we "ought to" we were really doing better. This time we were earning some freedom, making ourselves ready for more. **But when, now and then, we could gladly make right choices without rebellion, holdout, or conflict, then we had our first glimpse of what perfect freedom under God's will could be like.** 🗨️ [Bill W., May 1960, c. 1988 AA *Grapevine*, *The Language of the Heart*, p. 302] – *Jennifer S, North Vancouver.*

Many meetings, many chances; few meetings, few chances; no meetings, no chances! Check out a 'new to you' meeting in the New Year.

