



OA Region One

The Heartbeat of Recovery

www.oaregion1.org

Spring 2009

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Coming Events

(Detail information can be found at:
<http://www.oaregion1.org/Events/Events.htm>)

LAKE COUNTRY INTERGROUP ANNUAL RETREAT

April 24-26, 2009

Coeur d'Alene, ID

OA - NLI SPRING RETREAT

April 24-26, 2009

Edmonton, AB

A BIG BOOK WEEKEND WORKSHOP

May 1-3, 2009

Burnaby, BC

FLOATING ON FAITH

May 8th – 10th, 2009

Olds College, Olds Alberta

ANNUAL SUMMER HOW RETREAT

June 5-7, 2009

Gold Bar, WA 98251

HOPE IN OA OREGON MARATHON

June 13, 2009

Reedsport, OR

LAZY F RETREAT CENTER

June 26-28, 2009

Ellensburg, WA 98926

SUMMER SERENITY WEEKEND CAMPOUT

June 26-28, 2009

Lister Park (near Creston), BC, Canada

SUMMER 2009 REGION 1 BOARD MEETING

July 11, 2009

Victoria, BC

PILGRIM FIRS RETREAT

August 21-23, 2009

3318 SW Lake Flora Road, Port Orchard, WA 98367

2009 REGION 1 CONVENTION

October 23-25th, 2009

La Quinta Inn & Suites

Tacoma, WA 98421-2200

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Materials submitted cannot be returned nor payment made. We reserve the right to edit. Articles may be reprinted by other anonymous groups without permission but with credit given to the writer and this newsletter. Opinions expressed in the O.A. REGION ONE Heartbeat of Recovery reflect those of the writer and not of Region One or OA as a whole.

The topic for the Summer 2009 issue will be
 "Willingness." Please send writings to the editor
 by June 25, 2009.

Issue dates for 2009 are:

Date	Issue	Topic
July 1	Summer	Willingness
Sept 15	Fall	Spirituality

If your group or Intergroup would like hard copies (paper) sent to them in a bulk mailing please contact the editor via mail, email, or phone.

Please contact the Newsletter Editor for
 email/address changes, articles, and questions.

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Region 1 Committee Highlights

Computer Services – is looking for someone who is willing to setup and monitor a Yahoo Group for communication and events postings. **Please contact Janet W. at kayakjw@yahoo.com for more information.**

Region 1 Website Updates –

- The Region 1 Conventions will now be posted on the Tape Library web page in MP3 format for members to download.
- There is a new web page for Region 1 Board announcements. The link is listed on the main page and to the left of each page in the content list.

From the Board

Current announcements can be found at:
<http://www.oaregion1.org/Board/Board.htm>

Hi Everyone,

We now have a new secretary, her name is Stephanie Wright and she will be serving until October assembly at which time she will have the option to run officially for the assembly to vote on. We are so thankful for her willingness to serve our region, thank you to Stephanie.

We still need a co-chair and even if we had someone willing to serve until October it would really help us out. The main function of this position is the organizing of our board meetings including assembly and the completion of the assembly binder. There is a super group organizing Convention/ assembly this year, they bring tons of experience so I believe this position would be a great opportunity to get your feet wet doing region work without a huge amount of stress trying to learn everything due to the experience of the convention chair and committee.

One last item, **we still need an Intergroup willing to host the 2010 convention/ assembly!**

It was discussed that the intergroup hosting could use the same location that we are using this year or one that has been used in the past so that the hotel negotiations would be minimal. This is a great opportunity for an intergroup to bring people to their area and make some cash doing ways and means. A team of 5 people can do this job without too much stress although the more the merrier! I would suggest if you are considering this to consider how close you are to an international airport; the best attended conventions seem to be located close to an airport with lower travel costs associated. Due to the American dollar right now, a good central Canadian location would be fantastic, nothing against the American Intergroups just a little observation of the savings to all our US neighbors! So come on Vancouver Island, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Regina, it could be a lot of fun. Just think, if you host the assembly you will save on sending a delegate, and

possibly make some coin on ways and means if you get happening real soon. Am I inspiring anyone yet?

Lots of gratitude for everyone and please take good care of yourselves.

Yours in Service,

Debbie G, Region 1 Chair

Chair	Debbie
Co-Chair	Vacant
Treasurer	Holly
Secretary	Stephanie
Newsletter Editor	Martha
Trustee	Vacant

Income and Expense Summary for Q1 2009

Income Categories

Individual and Group Donations	2,070.01
Newsletter Donation	15.00
Event Proceeds (from 2008 Convention)	2,513.00
Interest	.57
Seed Money (return of Convention 2008 seed money)	2,681.03
Adjustments (PayPal Fees, Canadian exchange)	(119.62)
Total Income	7,159.99

Expense Categories

Assembly Expense	153.14
Board Meeting Expense	1508.26
Outreach Expense	613.18
Assembly Scholarships (2008)	400.00
Administrative Expense	20.00
Total Expenses	2,694.58

Funds on Hand 3/18/09 **\$14,177.98**

Note: The proceeds and return of seed money from Convention 2008 were expected to be received in Q4 2008, but were actually received in 2009.

2009 Upcoming Board Meetings:

July 11th, Victoria, BC

Contact information is now on the home page for Region 1 at:

www.oaregion1.org

Recovery Corner – “Growth”

Service, Self, and the Spiritual Solution



I've never led a retreat by myself and worried that I'd come off as unprepared and not be able to give anything to the group. I worried that I'd get lost, miss the ferry, get car-jacked or hit a moose. I was crossing the border into Canada – aren't moose everywhere? Who needs underwear to twist into a knot when you can twist your mind into one? I'd been at a retreat two years before where a woman in the audience confronted one of the leaders about her imperfect physical recovery. Would someone confront me the same way about some aspect of my recovery?

Was I comfortable doing this service? No. The drive was a long one and I was alone. I had to fill five half-hour sessions to cover the 12 steps and my story. I'd just completed another 4th step and was half way through my 5th, so those steps were easy. But 6-12? I had to work a bit more on what I was going to say.

I could only give what I had been given, and only to the level of my ability. I'd committed to this service and had to surrender to that commitment. I had to feel my discomfort and fear and take the next right step. So I packed, prepared, and found my passport.

Toward the end of the retreat, I found myself choosing to put aside worrying about my presentation, and deciding that it was now time to worry about my drive home. Odd, was I choosing to worry. The Big Book Of Alcoholics Anonymous refers to "those two pests, worry and indecision". What was that about? Another way to keep myself distracted? Under the influence of the illusion of control? Out of God's hands?

I also realized that I'd confused God with my Self for most of my adult life. I didn't trust God, describing a God that was once The Big Foot in The Sky, ready to stomp whenever I made a mistake. In fact, what was really stomping on me had been my own expectations and perfectionism, my Self, or my Ego, whatever you want to call it (it's all semantics, just like at OA business meetings). Self was trying to keep me fitting in with my environment, which had once been quite controlled and a tad crazy. But I've been master of my environment (as much as we can be, which isn't a lot) for a long time. And like compulsive overeating, which was a tool for coping, my Ego/Self, was getting too rusted to be effective and in fact, was broken. It's expiration date had lapsed. The safety of my Self had become, like my compulsive eating, a prison and a painful way of life. It was my self-imposed exile from the Spirit, a last ditch effort at complete control, a fear of letting go.

If my Self was not God, what was God? How could I get out of my own way and leave space for God? And then leave more space? Because the solution really is spiritual. I used to think that was too highfalutin and

religious, but damn, the Big Book was right again. The solution is spiritual. And we all get to define God for ourselves.

The Monday after the retreat I took the day off, pattered around the house, and played with the dog. I dreaded going back to work but when I arrived, discovered that I'd been assigned four hours per day of pleasant duties. A truck bumper on my drive in had my nickname scrawled on it in chalk. God was there, immediately letting me know that S/He/It was present.

I went to lead a retreat and left with gut-deep insights and answers, peace and clarity and a bunch of new friends. I am sure there is more for me - that still soft voice once told me so.

Cynthia W.

No Talking Food



One of the things we are urged to do in chapter 1 is to identify all foods and food behaviors that are troubling. Well, after 27 years in program, I think I finally got that nailed down.

Why did it take so long? It seems that as an addict I have to admit that I don't want to get rid of my substance.

In my new surrender/accept mode I have decided that amounts and substances are at root of my problem.

There are some "heroin" foods that never appear on my food program. There are amounts that never appear--giant, colossal and super-sized are not abstinent portions. My breakfast and lunch plates have been downsized.

Another thing I have accepted is no talking food. If something is in my kitchen and I'm aware of its presence, it probably doesn't belong there. There is some food that talks only if I say hi first.

For today food is not a toy, a diversion or a substitute for my life. I am old enough to remember the joke that when accosted by a robber who demanded "Your money or your life!" Jack Benny the comedian didn't answer. The robber repeated himself: "Your money or your life?"

Again, there was no response.

Exasperated, the robber screams the demand again.

This time the comedian replies: Wait a minute, I'm still thinking it over.

For years I thought my food or my life was a trick questions. For today I realize that my life means I have to keep food in perspective. There is no particular food that isn't able to be "off the table." Over the years, I've found out that a vegan diet serves me well and eliminates many of the problem food groups. For today I answer the demand, Your food or your life. I reply in favor of life. I love being able to eat appropriately and love life. My food supports my life, it is no longer my reason for living.

Tonic Seattle

Unity Day 2009 – Some Neat Things Said

SPIRITUAL UNITY



- Get as honest as you can.
- I'm not recovering by myself but with everyone who is in OA with me.
- Honesty and spirituality go hand-in-hand.
- Unity gets me out of self-centeredness.
- I replaced (excess) food with spirituality.
- I found the answer to the spiritual "hole" in myself with the 12 Steps.
- Every minute I sit in this (OA meeting) room my disease is being defeated.
- If I have enough curiosity to keep coming back, miracles begin to happen.
- I benefit from hearing others' views of God / Higher Power. Don't suffer from "tiny god" syndrome.
- My Higher Power believes that I can be abstinent every day for the rest of my life.
- One idea of a Higher Power: reality.
- My success in staying away from excess food is accelerated by my spiritual recovery.
- Self-will doesn't work for me. I need God / Higher Power.
- I was praying to God but I wasn't planning on all this work! Instead, God sent me to this 12-Step program.

TIDBITS FROM THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

- Consistency is a tool.
- I don't have to think – I just do the next right thing.
- Remember the Promises (on p. 83 of the AA Big Book).
- OA gives a new freedom and a new happiness (better than one we could have imagined).
- On hitting bottom: if we don't make a change, we won't live – or at best we'll be stuck where we are.
- We don't get thin by sitting next to someone at a meeting who's thin. We have to take action. We have to rightly right ourselves to God / Higher Power.
- Abstinence doesn't just happen to us; we have to do our part: Steps, tools, action.
- Humility is the nourishment that gives us serenity.
- Check out AA's "12 Steps and 12 Traditions" book for all kinds of promises made throughout the 12 Steps.
- Always be open to the possibility of prayer.
- Forgot to pray? Got out of the habit? Get back to it as quickly as possible!
- Step 12 is about the joy of living, where we ask no rewards (but we surely get them). We tell others about OA.
- This disease kills us if we lose our willingness to take the 12 Steps.
- We need to put our lives on a "give and take" basis.
- Love freely given surely gives us a full return.

TRADITION ONE PANEL

- I need service for me (my recovery) and for the fellowship.

- Tradition One helps us to get beyond ourselves and get along with people.
- I'm struck by the sanity of our meetings. We come "selfish" and end up caring for each other.
- These principles can be applied to any relationship.
- Curb those impulses – consider the welfare of the group as a whole.
- Committing to services gets me to show up...and I gain so much!
- Most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group.
- Unity helps us learn to live differently, outside of ourselves. It helps give us more moments of abstinence.
- What recovery is about is that emotions are finally available.
- If I am having trouble in my life, what is my part in the disunity of the issue?
- We who have found OA are the lucky ones who don't have to have this illness drive our behavior anymore.

UNITY AND ABSTINENCE

- Our desire to stop eating compulsively brings us together...as well as gives us freedom from negativity, illness, and regret.
- OA is a big tent with room for lots of styles of abstinent eating.

--- *An anonymous and gratefully recovering compulsive overeater from Maryland*

Growth in Program!



When I first heard this theme from Martha, my first thought was, can I share on my weight gain, we all had a little chuckle over it and yet, I believe I was serious, as I went to write this article I again found myself reflecting on this issue. Here it goes.

Are you one of those people who are considered obese or overweight but walk an incredible program? Have you received the gifts promised in the promises found in the big book? Here is a little of my story and some things I have seen in OA and my thoughts towards it all. After my first step 4, I went on to lose 125 lbs in program. If you have not done your step 4, I would strongly encourage you to work with your sponsor to complete one, many miracles follow after this simply step. For me, it was a wonderful way to be, thin, going to the gym because I could, spiritually I was feeling quite connected to my higher power and emotionally I was healing. Then I found myself pregnant, with pregnancy and any other thing that effects my hormones, I gain weight fast. It has nothing to do with what I eat but is simply a body reaction. After 4 pregnancies and 2 successful ones I found myself at about 245 lbs, I went to reach a weight of 164 lbs at which time I had surgery, a tubal ligation to now weigh 204 lbs. As of last month I have been gaining little bits

of weight, the doctors have informed me that there is something not right in my body. Last month I tried a weighed and measured plan, not for the first time, and lost 7 lbs for the first time. It took 4 years to reach a health where my body would begin to once again loose the weight.

People might look at me and judge me because I am obese, I am not at my ideal weight, so this growth wasn't really in the plans of my recovery. Do I compulsively eat, no, do I overeat, no, do I work the tools, yes, do I follow the 12 steps, yes and do I live by the traditions, yes. Am I a program of attraction, yes. Do I consider myself a program of recovery, yes. I have heard members say, how can someone be in recovery if they are not at their ideal weight.? Our bodies are all different, our food plans are all different and due to that fact, we are all going to be different sizes when we are in recovery. So many people I talk to, back down from doing service, a tool in our program, because they do not feel they are worthy because they are still overweight. My question to everyone is simple, are you compulsively overeating, because the last time I checked that was what we came to OA for, a desire to stop eating compulsively. If you are still eating compulsively, whatever that looks like for you, then you have some work to do and thankfully we are a fellowship that is here to support you, you are not alone. If you are obese, and you are not compulsively overeating and you have honestly looked at this, then do not let your weight hold you back. The last 4 years of my life have been very hard in this area, I would say things to myself like, I am not worthy to do blah blah, because I am once again fat. For most of us we see thinness as a solution to all of our problems but what I have learned is that program is the solution to all of our problems, we have 12 steps that guide our way, we have traditions that teach us how to behave and we have tools to keep us connected and maintained. Never be your own judge, let your higher power do that and trust that you are a gift of creation, fat or thin, you are beautiful in your own right.

Deb G.

12th Step Within – Lifeline Article

MEMBER RETENTION TIPS – *Lifeline* March/April 2009, pg 7

Here are some suggestions to encourage member retention:

1. Name your meeting something special (for example, Hand-in-Hand or Saturday Survivors).
2. When the meeting opens, state the meeting time and length (for example, "We meet on Tuesdays from 3 to 4 p.m.").
3. Encourage fellowship after the meeting (for example, over lunch or coffee).

4. Give others your telephone number, especially newcomers and returning relapsers.
5. Call others when you arrive home from that night's meeting, or call them the next day.
6. Offer to meet with newcomers and others before the next meeting.
7. Call others the night before the meeting.
8. Ask for hugs.
9. Wear name tags with or without phone numbers (have scraps of paper and pens easily available). Consider switching name tags at the end of the meeting so you can call that person during the week.
10. When you give your number to others, clearly state the best time for them to call.
11. Dine with fellow OA members.
12. Have a hotline number available that gives contact numbers.
13. For the intergroup meeting, commit in the bylaws to a specific length of time, and add a Traditions study for 30 minutes after the meeting.
14. Encourage sponsorship, and offer the corresponding pamphlets free to non-sponsored OA members (*A Guide for Sponsors* and *A Guide to the Twelve Steps for You and Your Sponsor* are available from WSO).
15. Plan a speaker meeting (where the speaker is not limited on share time), using the *Suggested Meeting Format* (available from WSO).
16. At the beginning of the meeting, read the Traditions and accompanying questions (found in the OA "Twelve and Twelve"). Don't study them; just read them slowly for inner inventory.
17. Buy the OA "New-Prospect Card" from WSO, put your phone number on it, and give it to newcomers; include the best time to call.

–*Edited and reprinted from Sunsteps newsletter, Miami Dade Intergroup, October 1999*



**Support Lifeline –
Lifeline is OA's meeting on the go. Give
service to this meeting by subscribing to
Lifeline. Thank you!**

www.oa.org/subscribe_online.html

