



TIDE POOL TIMES

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association's Monthly Regional Newsletter

April Wellness



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Update
Page 1

Tip Of the Month
Page 3

Monthly Spotlight
Page 3

Community Board
Pages 5-6

Upcoming Events
Page 6

Program Update

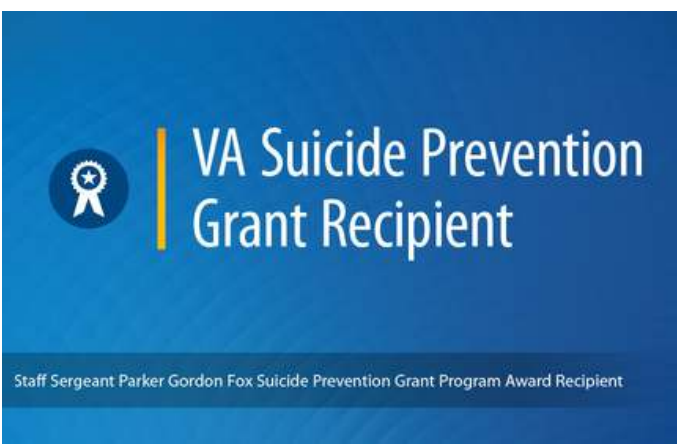
Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Project

March kicked off with a live technical assistance summit in San Francisco for the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Grantees. We got to see best practices, and methods fellow grantees are using to improve the lives of our enrollees in the SSG Fox Program. With all the current political unknown, it seems that life-saving programs for our Veterans will remain federally supported. We here at APIA aim to support our Veterans with culture and connection.

Our team has been working diligently to bring all of our women Veterans and active service members, as well as the wives of our enrollees to the Women's Wellness Gathering here in Anchorage in June. Our Staff Sergeant Fox team here at APIA can't wait to facilitate Mind Body Medicine at the Gathering as well.

Destiny will be offering Peer Support Services, and Amy and Jenna will be there with Healing Touch and Yoga. If you have yet to sign up for the Women's Wellness Gathering June 5-8, [here](#) is the link to the registration. Your SSG Fox team is here, and we want you to feel the hope this spring. Save the date for the ANCHR Gathering! July 10-13 out in Unalaska we look forward to another fantastic time of healing, culture and connection.

We offer weekly listening circles and yoga at the Anchorage Vet Center to all enrollees, as well as Gatherings in the Region. We offer case management, as well as Wellness boxes when you join the program. If you are interested in joining our program, please contact destinyk@apiai.org.



Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program Award Recipient



Photo Courtesy: Makenzie Fox

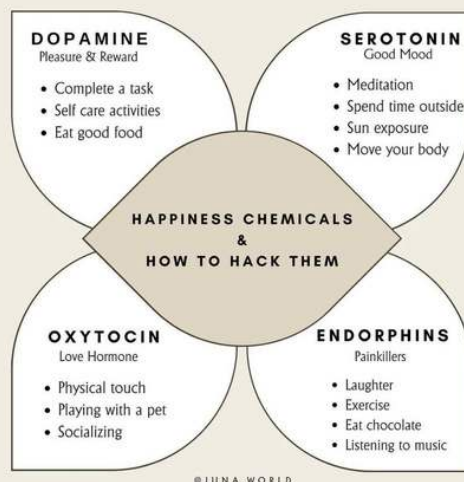
Photo Courtesy: Jami Creasey

Feel Better Now By Jenna Larson

T.S. Eliot once wrote, “April is the cruellest month”. The poem the quote is from likens April to the painful birthing process, the awakening of nature, and stirring of emotions inherent to coming out of the darkness of winter. There is no record of the poet ever visiting Alaska, but it’s as if he had. Anyone in the mental health field will tell you that spring is the most vulnerable and dangerous time for people suffering from depression. Our vitamin D levels are at an all-time low, as are our serotonin levels, which makes for an even deeper depression that makes us want to hole-up away from people. This is the very opposite of what our body and souls need during this crucial month.

Typically, what I hear from my Veterans when we talk about our propensity to sequester ourselves from the world despite our deep need for connection, is that when we are depressed, we don’t want to bring others down. When people feel emotionally drained, we can get so low that we feel we can spread depression like the common flu. Believe me, I’ve felt this too. But luckily for us, science says otherwise.

Serotonin (the neurotransmitter that makes you feel more focused, emotionally stable, happier and calmer) is released when we connect with good people, and when we first meet people. It’s easier said than done to get yourself out there when you’re depleted, but as my grandma and Nike would say, “Just Do It”. Brush your teeth and go have coffee or lunch with a friend. Drag yourself out the door and walk around the block. Take a beginner’s dance class (connection AND movement with music!? It’s a triple whammy!). April can be a gentle awakening and a time of new beginnings. Let’s use science to our advantage, because when we feel like we don’t have control over anything in our lives, we know that we have control of three things, our thoughts, feelings, and actions. We can control our feelings by thinking and acting in ways that science says will help us.



THE VALUE OF HUMOR

We know it’s a Native Value that has gotten us through for millennia, but did you know that it has the capacity to change your brain? It’s phenomenal to think that the increase of endorphins in our brains that come from laughter have the power to relieve pain, reduce stress, and improve blood flow to the brain. Laughter strengthens neural connections, triggers the release of dopamine and serotonin, and enhances the feelings of pleasure and safety.

The popular adage, “laughter is the best medicine” originated through the words of king Solomon back in biblical times. Proverbs 17:22 states that “A cheerful heart is a good medicine”. Regardless of your beliefs and worldview, science backs it up.

We believe in the value of humor so much that we are looking at partnering with 1 Degree of Separation in the future. 1 Degree of Separation is a VA sanctioned comedy team steeped in the destigmatization of mental health. We hope you come to the ANCHR in Unalaska in July. But until then, please find the fun in life. laugh at a standup routine or even watch funny cat videos.

If you want to feel better, laugh! There is even a session in Mind Body Medicine that has people start to make the sounds of laughter and continue to do that until they are actually laughing and the synergy of the group laughing lifts the spirits of everyone in the room. Try it out! -Jenna



Photo Courtesy: Jami Creasey

Monthly Spotlight

My name is Kiana Holland, and I grew up in Eagle River, Alaska. I am a Registered Dietitian, and I completed my undergraduate and graduate degrees in Dietetics and Nutrition at the University of Alaska Anchorage. There, I also had the opportunity to work on food security projects and participate in nutrition research in rural Alaska. I met my husband in college, and we have a one-year-old son and two dogs! I enjoy activities such as baking, traveling, reading, singing in Anchorage Concert Chorus, and staying active by cross-country skiing and hiking.

Previously, I worked at Alaska Regional Hospital as a clinical dietitian, where I provided nutrition education for a wide range of medical conditions. I have since transitioned into my current role as the Food Sovereignty Program Administrator here at APIA! I am passionate about promoting community health and wellness and am looking forward to supporting food sovereignty projects in the region.



TIP OF THE MONTH



Spring cleaning is something all of us are familiar with. We clean out our closets, donate and toss the things we don't need anymore, and we do a thorough deep-clean of everything from the oven and baseboards to the cobwebs up in the dining room corner. Cleaning our homes, garages and yards are traditional this time of year, but what about doing a spring cleanse for our bodies?

Cleanses can be extreme, like the one I did last spring where all I ingested was water for three days (it's a cancer prevention thing), but it doesn't have to be extreme to be effective. It can be as simple as giving up sugar for Lent or drinking more water. It can look like eating vegetables instead of pasta or bread. It can look like taking a month without alcohol and learning how to make mocktails instead.

All of us have something we know we eat or drink that isn't helping us reach our health goals. Whether it's caffeine, sugar, alcohol, carbohydrates, or needing to drink more water, pick something to help your body cleanse this spring. Release the "all or nothing" mentality and make a small change that could have a substantial effect on your long-term health.

In Good Health ~ Jenna



Photo Courtesy: Jami Creasey

Community Board



MIND BODY MEDICINE GROUPS FOR VETERANS

8 Weekly 2 hour Virtual Group Sessions

Fridays May 2nd - June 20th from 10am to 12pm AKST

Research based mind-body medicine strategies with remarkable benefits for physical, cognitive and emotional wellness.

Curriculum

- Week 1: Setting the Container, Breathwork, Drawings
- Week 2: Biological Underpinnings, Autogenics, Biofeedback
- Week 3: Meditation and Movement-Shaking/Dancing
- Week 4: Guided Imagery
- Week 5: Emotions
- Week 6: Eating, Nutrition, and Relationship to Food
- Week 7: Spirituality and Meditation
- Week 8: Reflection, Closing Drawings, Ceremony

Scan QR to Register:



Contact a Member of the SSG
Fox SPGP Team
Phone: (907) 276-2700
Toll Free: (800) 478-2742
Fax: (907) 222-4279



Alaska

ADRC

Aging & Disability Resource Center

April-May-June 2025



ADRC Brown Bag Education Series

You are invited to attend the FREE monthly Brown Bag Education Series presentations, hosted by the ADRC. The series is held once a month, on Tuesdays from 12:00pm-1:00pm on Teams. Contact Karla Wright at karla.wright@anchorageak.gov or call 907-343-7778 to receive an invite.

April 8 Susie Smith, Executive Director
Hospice of Anchorage

May 13 Donna Koecher, RN CNOR, Joint and Spine Navigator
Orthopedic and Spine Department, Alaska Regional Hospital

June 10 to be announced

This project is funded under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program, grant number AK-SSG-1461-22. The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the grantee and contractor(s) therein. They do not necessarily reflect those of SSG Fox SPGP.



WWW.APIA.ORG



Community Board (cont.)



April Friday Elder Gatherings will be held from 10am to 12 noon on the 4th, and 17th.
1131 E. International Airport Rd,
Anchorage

UPCOMING EVENTS

April is the month of...

Passover

Easter

Earth Day

April 1st

U.S. Airforce Academy Day

April 2nd

World Autism Awareness Day

April 13th

Palm Sunday

April 20th

Easter

April 22nd

Earth Day

May is the month of...

Mental Health Awareness Month

Labor Day

Mother's Day

June is the month of...

Father's Day

Did you know...

Chewing tobacco use can ruin your gums, teeth and more?

Here are Some of the Risks Chewing Tobacco can Cause to your Health:

- **Stained Teeth & Bad Breath** - Chewing tobacco can stain your teeth & tongue, as well as foul breath. Gross!
- **Tooth Decay** - Tobacco in Chew contains sugar & other chemicals which can damage your tooth enamel & increase the risk of developing cavities.
- **Gum Disease** - Chewing tobacco can cause gum disease, which leads to tooth loss.
- **Oral Cancer** - Chewing tobacco contains 28-cancer causing chemicals that can damage your mouth, gums, cheeks & lips. Chewing tobacco is also associated with Leukoplakia, a precancerous lesion on a soft tissue that can't be scrapped off. Results due to this condition can lead to Oral Cavity, Pharynx, Larynx, and Esophagus Cancer.



For more information, contact Caroline Nevak at (907) 222-4237 or email: carolinen@apiai.org



• APIA Local Health Clinic:

(907) 276-2700

• Behavioral Health Clinic:

(907) 222-9764

• Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line:

1-800-QUIT-NOW



Hop to it!

Schedule your screening today!

Egg-tra precautions save lives

APIA's Clinics:

Unalaska: (907) 581-2742

St. George: (907) 859-2254

Nikolski: (907) 576-2204

Atka: (907) 839-2232



For more information, contact Vivian Nguyen at viviann@apiai.org