



Valley Voice

The Sacramento Valley Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous (SVIOA) serves the greater Sacramento Valley, Sierra Foothills, and Northern Nevada Sierra, including Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Carson (NV), Colusa, Douglas (NV), El Dorado, Inyo (NV), Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sutter, Stanislaus, Washoe (NV), Yolo, and Yuba counties.

Vol 23 Issue 4
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“Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion: for this, I am responsible.”

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STEP 4: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Courage
Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

TRADITION 4: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Autonomy
Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

CONCEPT 4: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Equality
The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.



Overheard at Meetings

I didn’t realize who I was until I stopped being who I wasn’t.

Hang on, let me overthink this.

I saw what happened to my mom. I never thought it would happen to me.

I overate because I didn’t want to feel.

I’m in charge of actions. God’s in charge of results.

A sponsor’s job: lead a sponsee to God, who will solve all of their problems.

When we try to control our eating, we have already lost control.

I overate because I did not want to be me.



You’re Invited to an
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS BIG BOOK BIRTHDAY BASH
Celebrating the 84th Anniversary of its Publication!

Everyone invited to listen and/or share on favorite passages in the Big Book and how use the Big Book in recovery!

Sat – April 10
4:00—5:00 p.m. PT

Meeting ID: 817 4195 8563
Password: 048782
Phone: 1-646-558-8656

Hosted by Ocean & Bay Big Book Celebration Meeting

Info: John (860) 304-7220



Suffering is Optional

Even after twenty years of abstinence, I remained stuck with resentments I could not get rid of. And they kept cropping up in different forms. It was only when I came to grips with Column 3 of my Step 4 inventory that I learned how to adjust my attitudes.

When I get upset, it means I haven't gotten my own way. My demands have not been met. Those demands are how I think the world should look and behave. And my plan can be divided into seven areas.

(1) What others think of me (**my pride**); (2) Who I think I am (**my self-esteem**); (3) How others behave (**my personal relationships**); (4) How others behave with sex (**my sex relations**); (5) What I want; my dreams (**my ambitions**); (6) What I need (**my security**); and (7) My financial security (**my pocketbook**).

There isn't a demand that does not fit somewhere into this. So when I have a resentment, I can use it to find out what my design for the world is... or how I have been playing God.

If I'm judgmental about a client for exploding over a minor flaw in my work, my pride is affected: I want clients to think I'm the best there is. If I'm disappointed in a sponsee for not following suggestions, my self-esteem is affected: I have failed.

If I'm resentful that a friend talks endlessly on the phone, my personal relations are affected: Don't waste my time on meaningless chatter. If I'm crushed because someone I like won't sleep with me, my sex relations are affected: If I'm attracted to you, you must want me back!

If I'm jealous because a friend gets to fly around the world for work, my ambitions are affected: I want to be a jet-setter. If I'm pissed off because the neighbors are noisy again, my security is affected: I need somewhere quiet to live so I can sleep well and function properly in my life.

If I'm furious because my computer broke down after just a year and needs replacing, my pocketbook is affected: I work hard for my money and should not have to spend a penny more than absolutely necessary.

It's pretty clear from doing a few of these that I have a whole slew of demands which are largely nonsensical. The more demands I have, the unhappier I will be. If I want to be happy, I have to drop my demands.

A very large proportion of my inventory boils down to the world not following the elaborate screenplay I have written. The truth is even if the world complied, I would not be happy.

So even when stuff happens, my suffering can be reduced by fostering an attitude of gratitude for all the things that are going well. Having faith that God will look after me. And accepting that pain is part of life.

-anonymous

STEP 4: COURAGE

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."



Step 4 is called an inventory: *"a searching and fearless moral inventory."* To tell you the truth, I was really scared to work this step. It meant taking an honest look at all my character traits, both good and bad. Peeling back the curtain and exposing it all.

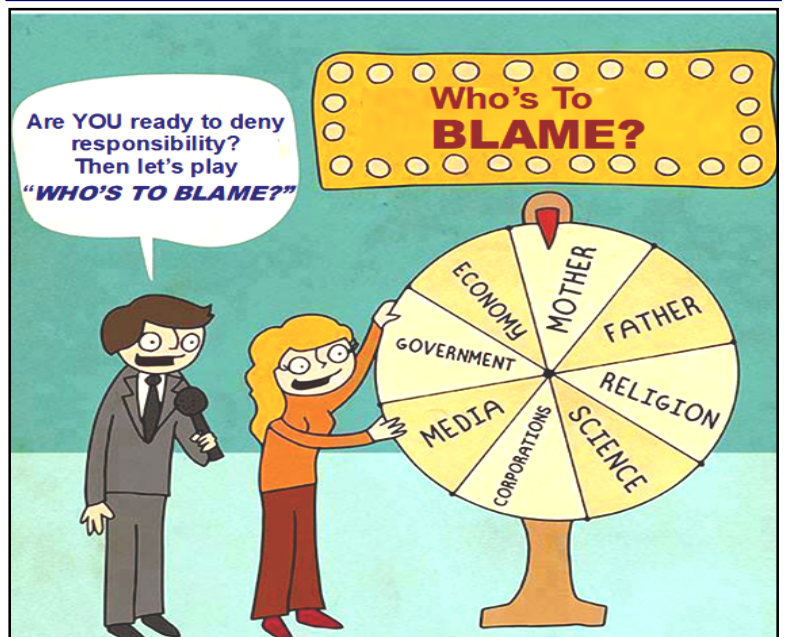
Little by little, I began to get a glimpse of childhood wounds and traits I had picked up along the way. I started to feel things I had been numbing with food for decades. And I tackled the internal programming that had kept me in bondage for so long.

I had to dig deep. I shed layer after layer of pain, lies, shame and anger. I had to allow courage to rise and be completely honest with myself.

When I finally completed my first 4th Step I felt a huge relief. I realized I had squared my shoulders and faced a lot. And I slowly began to heal.

I began to look at myself with a new perspective — a more loving and compassionate perspective. And I finally got to the guts of who I am: a beautiful and courageous soul!

-anonymous



It's Not About the Weight

I did not come to OA because I had a weight problem or because I liked food too much. I came to OA because I have problems with my feelings, my thoughts, my relationships, my hurt, my pain, my confusion and with God.

It turns out that my weight and my eating are only symptoms of my spiritual life that is in a state of utter chaos... where I grasp for each straw – each new weight loss plan or exercise regimen – just as quickly as the last one slips away.

I must face the truth: that the OA program is designed to bring about a deep and revolutionary change in my being, my total self – to straighten out the jumbled mish-mash of my inner workings. There may be other ways to lose weight or control my desire for food, but what is all that worth without a little peace of mind?

Take me: a big fat miserable, angry, discontented compulsive overeater, and remove my excess weight, and what do you have? A little skinny miserable, angry, discontented person.

When I fix my insides, my outsides will take care of itself. So why then am I fussing about food plans and abstinence and all that stuff? This is the real twister.

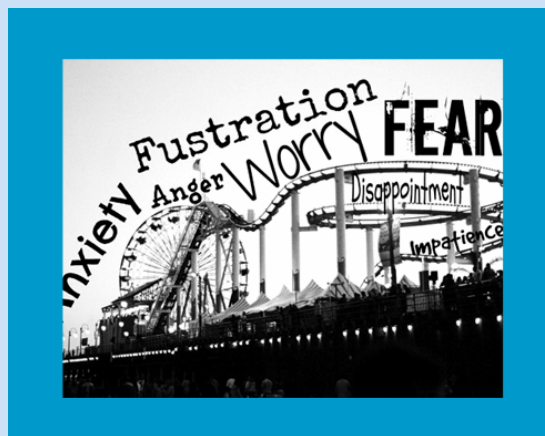
As long as I keep my face mashed down into the mire of my food addiction, day after day, month after month, I will never have the CLARITY OF MIND required for the self-searching, gut wrenching honesty it takes for me to be successful in this program.

For me, OA is really NOT about the food or the weight... but I have to love myself enough to decide I am worth just one day without overeating.

-anonymous



Happy the absence of fear
Joyous living in gratitude
Free free of my obsession



Emotional Roller Coaster

If everyone who needed OA showed up, we would be bursting at the seams. Unfortunately, most never make it to the door. I believe I was one of the lucky ones. Not just because I found this program at such a young age. I feel fortunate that I found OA at all. My approach to food brought me to the jumping-off place described in the Big Book.

I'm convinced it was my time. My chance to live. And I took it. If there had still been joy in my eating or even a remote chance of the joy returning, I would not have stopped bingeing when I did.

No one who ate like I did wakes up on the edge of the abyss one morning and says: **Things look pretty scary; I think I'd better stop bingeing before I fall in.** I was convinced I could go as far as I wanted, and then climb back out when it wasn't fun anymore.

But what happened was I found myself at the bottom of the canyon thinking I'd never see the sun again. OA didn't pull me out of that hole, it gave me the tools to construct a ladder with the Twelve Steps.

Abstinence is nothing like I thought it would be. At first it was one big emotional roller coaster. My emotions were new and untested. And I wasn't entirely certain I wanted to deal with them. I cried when I should have been laughing. I laughed when I should have cried. Events I thought were the end of the world turned out to be gifts. It was all very confusing.

Slowly things began to even out. As I began to take the Steps of recovery, my role in the pitiful condition of my life became clear. And the two most important things that finally got me out of the pit were willingness and action.

I was willing to believe OA was telling me the truth. I wanted this thing to work. So I began to take the actions that were suggested.

-anonymous

Another Serenity Prayer



God, grant me the serenity
to accept the people I cannot change,
which is pretty much everyone.

And please give me the courage
to change what I need to change about myself,
which is frankly a lot.

It's better for me to focus on changing myself
than to worry about changing other people,
who I can't change anyway.

And give me the wisdom to just shut up
whenever I think that I'm smarter
than everyone else,
or that I alone have all the answers.

Basically, God,
grant me the wisdom
to remember that I'm
not You.

Amen.

-anonymous



Twelfth Step Within Workshop

Living the OA Promises

These gifts are available to all of us

Saturday, April 22, 2023
10:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. PDT

Be inspired by listening to speakers and participants share how the Promises enlighten their lives with inherent joy and freedom!

Zoom ID: 854 2974 9682
(no passcode)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/>

This workshop is offered by OA San Diego Intergroup's Twelfth Step Within Committee. No registration or fees. The 7th tradition will be observed. All are welcome! Questions? Please contact Elyesse at lsw@oasandiego.org

The Simplicity Project:

A Simple Idea to Help you Stay Abstemious!



<https://oa.org/app/uploads/2021/08/the-simplicity-project.pdf>

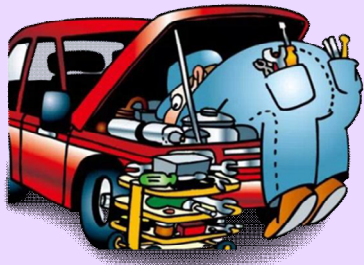
Change



Change is disruptive,
painful and difficult

Not changing is worse.

12 Step Mechanic



- Step 1: I had an "old clunker" parked in the driveway. I had just about given up on it, but decided to make a whole-hearted attempt to restore it.
- Step 2: I couldn't fix it, but I came to believe someone could.
- Step 3: I turned the car over to the Mechanic.
- Step 4: I took an inventory of all that was wrong with the "old clunker."
- Step 5: I shared the inventory with the Mechanic and someone else who was already being helped by the Mechanic.
- Step 6: I helped take off the old parts.
- Step 7: I let the Mechanic handle the rest.
- Step 8: We made a list of all the parts that were defective, and became willing to replace them all.
- Step 9: I admitted I hadn't checked the oil and fluids properly, or fixed the other things that were going wrong. It was my responsibility to take care of the car, and I had not. I wanted to help, but being unfamiliar with the process, I allowed the Mechanic to fix the things I couldn't and asked him to help me fix the things I could. The car turned out beautifully!
- Step 10: I checked the oil, fluids, tires, etc. more regularly, and when I didn't the engine didn't hummmmm.
- Step 11: I called on the Mechanic to help maintain the car, asking Him to fix it whenever there was trouble.
- Step 12: That Mechanic and I had become such close friends, we decided to take a trip across the country and stopped to help all who needed it along the way.

-anonymous

"The age of miracles is still
with us. Our own recovery
proves that!"

-Big Book, Pg. 153

I Cannot Recover Alone



After years of resistance... I finally came to believe that I cannot recover alone. In spite of the love I experienced as a kid, I never let people inside my life. All my life I lived the deepest of lies, not sharing with anyone my true thoughts and feelings. I built a wall of distrust around myself.

In OA, I faced the pervasive "we" of the 12 Steps. And I gradually realized that I can only protect my abstinence from outside hazards when I rely on the experience of other OA member who share their recovery journey through the 12 Steps.

The rewards of abstinence are as bountiful and as progressive as the disease they counteract. Among these rewards for me are release from the prison of uniqueness and the realization that participating in the OA way of life is a blessing and a privilege. A blessing to live a life free from the pain and degradation of compulsive overeating.

Filled with the joy of useful, abstinent living one day at a time, I am able to bring a message of hope, as it was brought to me.

-anonymous

Gratitude is
a
magnet to
life's
goodness.

One Day At A Time

I have been around OA for years trying to figure out how I could eat what I want, do the parts of the program I want and find physical, spiritual and emotional recovery! After my last EXPERIMENT at doing it my way, I decided to do it the OA way – **ONE DAY AT A TIME**.

I got a sponsor, went to meetings and agreed to abstain from sugar and white flour – **ONE DAY AT A TIME**.

I also had a plan of eating which required that I write down my food plan for the day and call it in to my sponsor – **ONE DAY AT A TIME**. It worked great!

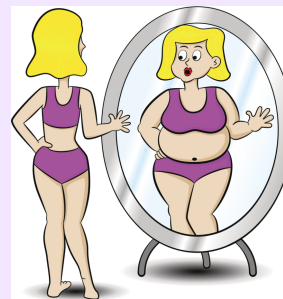
After a short period of withdrawal symptoms, I felt better physically than I had in a long time. I had wide emotional swings that I wanted to eat over. But I did some writing about them and talked them over with my sponsor instead of “picking up.” I felt a new freedom and for the first time real hope that I could recover from this fatal illness **ONE DAY AT A TIME**.

I knew that this disease was progressive because each time I felt a need to go out and feed my addiction, my relationship with food became more self-destructive. I feel grateful that my body does not feel toxic from overeating or from eating substances that will eventually kill me – **ONE DAY AT A TIME**.

I could not have done this alone. My fellow OA's were with me giving me encouragement and hope. My Higher Power was with me teaching me to use my intuition wisely. And I tried to the best of my ability to do the next right thing – ONE DAY AT A TIME!

- anonymous

Abstinence Is Easier



“When not abstinent, I wake up feeling fat and dreading the day.

I have always looked for the “easier, softer way.” Before I can accept my illness, I try to prove that I can occasionally eat for purely social reasons, for pleasure, for a “pick-me-up” or to pass the time. But for me, that’s impossible.

I am finding that abstinence is easier. When I’m abstinent I get to eat satisfying and nourishing food at mealtimes, one day at a time. *When not abstinent, I eat all kinds of junk I don’t really want — and I can’t stop.* When I’m abstinent, I get to be hungry at mealtime and I enjoy my food. *When not abstinent, I wolf down everything in sight.* When I’m abstinent, I get to feel good regardless of my size or weight. *When not abstinent, I wake up feeling fat and dreading the day ahead.* When I’m abstinent, I get to choose clothes that look and feel good. *When not abstinent, only my biggest, most hated clothes fit.*

When I’m abstinent, I get to go to bed feeling thankful that I abstained, “just for today.” *When not abstinent, I go to bed feeling stuffed, hating myself.* When I’m abstinent, I get to make rational decisions and do what I need to do. *When not abstinent, I isolate and go around in circles.* When I’m abstinent, I get to feel positive emotions. *When not abstinent, I have only negative emotions.*

Abstinence is easier because all I have to do is accept my disease and surrender —just for today. *When not abstinent, I am insanely willful. I feel deprived, envious and resentful.* Abstinence is easier because it releases me from the bondage of food and sets me free to live. *When not abstinent, I am locked in the prison of my food obsession, wanting freedom but looking only for more food.* God, please let me accept abstinence, just for today. And thank You for this easier way.

-anonymous

A DAY IN OA STEP 8 & 9: FORGIVENESS AND AMENDS

Saturday, May 13 from 11 AM to 2 PM

ABOUT THE EVENT

- Speakers
- Breakout Writing Circles,
- Bring your lunch
- Drinks provided

LOCATION / DONATIONS

- IN PERSON ONLY
- Faith United Methodist Church
- 3600 J. St. Sacramento
- Off street parking lot
- Transit: #30 bus

- Suggested Donation: \$5
- No one will be turned away.
- Can also donate online:

<https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/donations-for-events.html>



MORE INFO

SARA: (916) 769-4266
HOSTED BY THE
THURSDAY NOON
SACTO MEETING

Easy Does It



MEETING LIST

<https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/meetings.html>

EVENTS

<https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/events.html>

Next Intergroup Meeting

Tues April 11

7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/98477821659>

Meeting ID: **984 7782 1659**

Passcode: **860953**



Intergroup Board

Chair	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Scarlet H	(916) 505-0360
Vice Chair	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Cary H	(530) 908-1230
Secretary	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Raven Y	(530) 917-4979
Treasurer	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Barbara E	(916) 799-9557
Region 2	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	VACANT	
Region 2	curteousb@gmail.com	Curt B	(510) 435-3246
Region 2	knightsby@att.net	Kathryn K	(209) 988-1172
WSBC	judylynch@surewest.net	Judy L	(916) 799-5804
WSBC	sdallama@mac.com	Les F	(775) 813-4076
WSBC	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	VACANT	
Webmaster	webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org	Phil K	(916) 768-4549

Intergroup Committees

Committee Title	Specific Tasks	Chair	Chair Email
Bylaws	Bylaws/Policy & Procedures Review/Update	Cary H	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org
Events	Events Support	Janet Mc	shortred55@hotmail.com
Group Support	Meetings/Zoom Support	Andrea A	athorup@pacbell.net
	Speaker List Maintenance	Dee	deetio@charter.net
Answer Phone	Answer Phone	Kathy K	kappybook@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Newsletter Editor	Gerri S	alohagerri@aol.com
Meeting List	Meeting List Coordinator	Dawn S	dawn.strickler@gmail.com
Public Outreach	Public Outreach Support	Nancy Mc	nancynandalion@gmail.com
Retreat	Retreat Coordination	Jan H	ron-janholm@sbcglobal.net
Special Population Focus	Special Population Support	---	
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Resources Maintenance	Katherine G	KATEJOE@msn.com

“
 May the Valley Voice
 serve as a lighted lamp,
 shining rays of hope and
 experience to illuminate
 any dark corners in your life.”

Food and Fellowship



Before program, I historically ate large quantities of sugar, which had huge chemical effects on me akin to a drug-induced coma. In my disease I decided I was my own best physician. I could “pull the plug” and detach from the world anytime I diagnosed my life as being too stressful, scary or uncertain. My other addictive foods weren’t too far behind in producing the anesthetizing effect I prescribed for myself.

The truth is I cannot recover without my Higher Power. I equally cannot recover without building and being part of a fellowship – which includes my fellow OA’s, my sponsor and my friends. The program of recovery allows me to feel sane and happily useful, which is new for me. Spending quality time with people is also new and unusual for me. And most days, my new life in recovery extinguishes my ravenous hunger.

For me, there is a clear relationship between which chemicals I put in my body, and how I physically, emotionally and spiritually relate to other people and to the world. The 12 Step program of recovery prescribes creating relationships - allowing people in and extending myself to others – as the additional “nourishment” I need. Doing it all myself, being my own doctor and black and white thinking don’t work for me. In OA I do not have to find answers in a silo by myself. Instead I take all the actions presented each day by my Higher Power to turn away from food to sedate myself. And I am building the relationships that I really need.

-anonymous