



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.

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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 5: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Integrity
Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

TRADITION 5: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Purpose
Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

CONCEPT 5: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Consideration
Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.



Overheard at Meetings

Nothing is so bad that a binge won't make worse.

When I'm pointing my finger at you, Three fingers are pointing back at me.

The problem is emotional.
The symptom is physical.
The solution is spiritual.

Gratitude turns what we have into enough.

Stopping in the middle of the Steps is like getting off the table in the middle of an operation.

A high tolerance for pain is not an asset here... **SURRENDER!**

The reward for our work is not what we get, but what we become.



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/donate.html>

MORE INFO

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

Step 5 No Longer Eaten Alive

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Well, here I am at Step 5. I have waited a long time to get this relief. I've bottled up every little fear, resentment, judgment, self-hatred... you name it. Deep inside they wriggle around in my stomach like a pile of crazed, squirming worms. When I eat compulsively, I want to bury those horrific feeling worms in a landslide of food, but they keep poking back up to the surface. So I do it again and again. If only I could feel REAL relief! But there's so much of those negative feelings inside me that I can't imagine I'll ever feel better.

Now that I've worked the first four Steps, I've been able to inventory those nasty secrets that plague me. I know each and every one of them by name. I know exactly how they affect me. In Step 5 I get to read that inventory aloud to God and to one other person.

Even though I am dreading it, I do it. And as I do, something curious happens. I start to laugh. I cry. I groan at the repetition. No matter what, I am feeling these feelings in a safe way. And the sound of them is evaporating into the air.

Finally, my reasonable, abstinent self can process them without the food fog and the fear. The inventory I am reading is an objective one. Just the facts. I start to understand that I can let go of these feelings. That I can let go of the idea that I am irreparably broken. I see in full color the futile way I have lived my life up until now.

By the time I finish reading it, I have heard a great deal that is objectionable. I also observe that my listener has not run off screaming in fear or turned her back on me. If she says anything, it is usually "me too." In the end, I find out that my foibles and flaws are merely human nature. And that I can forgive myself if God can.

In fact, as I complete Step 5, I can see the outlines of what life in food-sobriety is like. I see that in Steps 6 and 7 the slate will be wiped clean by my Higher Power. And I am so ready for that to happen! I feel ready to look at the people in my world as equals. I want to cast aside the fear and self-loathing that keeps me from being helpful to others. I want to be reliable and trustworthy. Someone who thinks of others and not just about myself.

I see that Step 5 has given me the hope that God will turn all my defects I've just read into assets that will allow me to be uniquely helpful to other compulsive eaters.

-anonymous



Seeing My Part

When I arrived in OA, I was full of anger, resentment, blame, guilt, and a lot of other negative emotions. When someone did a "wrong" to me, it was his or her fault and never mine. Everything that happened to me was not my fault. I was always the innocent person being hurt. But I found out that in Step 5 I had to look at my part in the pattern, I didn't get it. I wasn't responsible for other people treating me badly and doing wrong things. I had no part in what they did to me.

My sponsor helped me work that 5th Step. And when I looked carefully, I saw my selfishness, self-centeredness and dishonesty. And when I was finally through sharing my 4th Step with my sponsor. I felt so much lighter.

Afterwards, I kept sharing at meetings about how much Step 5 meant to me. It taught me so much about myself. I had been blind to my defects. Through this process I learned to accept and love myself for who I am. Not as a bad person but as a sick person recovering in this program.

Step 5 has helped me find natural happiness. I used to rely on others to make me happy. And I felt resentful if they did not fulfill my expectations. Now I have a smile on my face when I interact with others.

These days, when I feel angry or resentful at a person or situation, I sit down and ask myself *What is my part?*. I have a very honest higher power who never fails to let me know. Then I can make amends if I need to. If I have trouble letting go, I turn to page 417 of the Big Book and read about acceptance. Until I accept everything as it is, and not how I want it to be, I have to keep praying to my HP for acceptance. I can't change anyone except myself.

I have worked all Twelve Steps now, and I still maintain that Step Five was the best Step I ever worked. It was a real eye-opener to the true me. It also gave me freedom to let go of the past and live in each minute of the day, enjoying life to the fullest.

-anonymous

May Zoom Classes

Hosting Basics

Wed May 3
1:00 pm PDT

Zoom Security

Thurs May 4
1:00 pm PDT

Tech Support Drop-In

Sun May 7
12:00 - 3 pm PDT

No registration is necessary.
Go to <https://oasandiego.org>
for the room link.

A Simple Approach

1. There's a power that will kill me.
2. There's a power that wants me to live.
3. Which do I want?
4. Using examples from your own life, understand that selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear control your actions.
5. Tell all your private, embarrassing secrets to another person.
6. Decide whether or not you want to live that way any more.
7. If you want your life to change, ask a power greater than yourself to change it for you. (If you could have changed it yourself, you would have long ago.)
8. Figure out how to make right all the things you did wrong.
9. Fix what you can without causing more trouble in the process.
10. Understand that making mistakes is part of being human. (When you make a mistake, fix it, immediately if you can.)
11. Ask for help to treat yourself and others the way you want your higher power to treat you.
12. Don't stop doing 1 through 11, and Pass It On!
-anonymous

it works
WORKS
if you
WORK IT



2023 OA Region 2 Convention

Save the Date!

July 7-9, 2023

Recovery:
Putting the Pieces Together



* In Person or Hybrid (en español tambien)

* Fun, Fellowship, Recovery

* Invite your friends

* Website & Registration Coming Soon



The War is Over: You Lost!

The more I tried to fight the food, the worse it got. I called in air support: books, diet plans, nutrition classes... anything I thought might soften the enemy's will to fight another day. But instead, I became completely demoralized. And the food continued to advance on me, unstoppable, no matter what I threw at it.

I tried calling in the heavy guns: doctors, counselors, hypnotists, psychologists, diet gurus, knowledgeable friends and family members. I had seen other people get better with outside help. But my heart sank when I saw that my experts' heavy weaponry did little more good than my own.

In desperation, I dug a trench around my position. I threw away my favorite foods, swore off, isolated from the outside world. But that didn't stop the food either. I thought the nightmare would never end. I was totally overwhelmed. Bloodied, wounded, and out of ammunition, I stumbled into OA. And that's where I discovered that the enemy was never the food. The enemy was inside the lines all along.

I had fought on the physical and emotional plane, but OA showed me that recovery happens on the spiritual plane. *"When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically."* (BBp.64) I could continue to keep fighting this losing battle, but when I accepted that my compulsive overeating had a spiritual solution, then I finally came to realize that war itself was not the answer.

I had to give up the idea I could win at all. After so much humiliating defeat I knew I needed a better leader, which is my Higher Power. Once I gave control over to God and let go of the idea I had to fix my problem alone, I suddenly found that my enemy had begun a retreat. But I have a cunning opponent, so I cannot let it lure me into complacency.

As I continue to work the 12 Steps, the enemy's retreat continues. As I attempt to expand my spiritual life, it remains at bay. But it is always lurking over the next rise, sending scouts to probe my weaknesses and my defenses. As long as my defense is God, I'll be okay.

-anonymous



I have spent many years wondering what was wrong with me and feeling like a failure. I always felt "less than." I've spent my life doubting my abilities, comparing myself with others, and I always came up short. I now know these feelings fueled my need to comfort and numb myself with food.

By working Step 4 and giving it away in Step 5, I learned a lot about myself. I discovered I've spent most of my life being angry and resentful and didn't even know it. I worried all the time that people would find out the "truth" about me: that I was dumb. Thanks to working the Steps, I no longer have to eat over it. I'm starting to work through my resentments and fears. It's not easy. But I can face them now. I no longer have to turn to food to comfort myself around my feelings.

I still have a lot more 4th Step work to do. And even though it scares me, it also gives me hope. I have a lot more to learn about myself. And I look forward to getting free of the shackles of my self-imposed prison. I have hope that my life will get better. I have a sponsor and an HP who wants the best for me. I have the fellowship, a community that understands me, loves me and accepts me without judgment. These are the gifts of the program and the beginning of a new and different life.

-anonymous



My Emotions: A 4th Rate Navigation System

When I use my intellect to devise a plan to feel good, the results are that I rarely felt good. But what's my alternative? I navigate by Principle. I use my emotions as an early warning system for possible errors in my thinking. Then I turn to God for the next right action to take.

So how do I navigate by Principle? My guiding principle (BB p.128) is giving rather than getting. In every situation, I ask myself: *What can I give?* The guidance behind this guiding principle comes from God. And it is only there that I can find the strength to follow through. And in order to give, I need to practice self-care so I can fit myself to be of maximum service to others (BB p.77).

To live by my emotions is to live like a five-year-old. I can dress up the consequences with fancy words all I like, but it's essentially immature. The OA 12 Step program is about growing up. About developing my character rather than my personality.

But this is what is offered to me if I practice the Principles of the 12 Steps. The results I experience when I live by Principle are peace, power, happiness and a sense of direction.

My emotions are not the most important thing. They are neither valid or invalid. My emotions just are. And any attempt by me to try to control them is like the tail wagging the dog.

When I remember to live by the Principles, I do feel good. What a great by-product!

-anonymous



Rocking, Rolling,... **RELAPSE!?!@#\$\$%&!**

Wed – May 3
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Three relapse survivors share how they currently prevent relapse and what they did to get back on track.

Meeting ID: 847 4745 7308
Passcode 796200



Rhode Island, Southeastern Massachusetts and Southeastern Connecticut

Sponsorship

A Getting Started Guide



DOWNLOAD

https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/uploads/1/2/2/0/122064306/sponsorship_guide.pdf

"Thank you, thank you, thank You! This material is the best thing I have ever read. It has given me the courage to sponsor. I feel I now am equipped to handle this important service. The resources that are included are excellent. I really appreciated the sponsor stories. I really feel empowered.

I read the Guide yesterday, and I had an immediate benefit as a sponsor. I now realize what my role really is. And I was immediately able to put it into action. I can see how I will benefit by coming back again and again to the Guide as a reference in the future.

I have been a sponsor for 2-4 people over the last 10 years in both OA another 12 Step program. Becoming a sponsor was terrifying. This Guide would have helped me so much. Relying on the experience of both my sponsors in my programs was and continues to be vital. This Guide gave me lots of new perspectives and information. I very much appreciated reading all the interviews with so many longtime sponsors who explained exactly how they sponsor. And they were all so different!

After reading the Sponsorship Getting Started Guide, I felt more confident in stepping up to sponsor. If it doesn't work out, it's OK. If they fail or leave, it is not because of me. If they succeed, it is not because of me. We are two people talking together, helping each other. I am at least one step ahead of the sponsee (to the extent of my experience). I have a sponsor who can help me. I have the OA community who can help me help the sponsee. I know already from calls made to newcomers that my stories help them. So the same should be true here also.



Sponsorship Bank



Are you an available sponsor?

Are you looking for a sponsor?

Call or text the SVIOA Sponsorship Bank
(707) 974-7649

Why aren't you sponsoring??

(1) No one wants someone as old/young/new in abstinence to sponsor them.

"Outward appearances are not inward reality at all." (BB p.48)
The ability for two people to connect derives not from any external factor but from an inward identification. How often have we heard someone who was nothing like us actually tell our story at a meeting!

(2) I'm willing, but no one asks me.

Sponsees are nervous about approaching sponsors. The phone weighs a ton. By your attitude and friendliness, you can create conditions where people feel comfortable to ask you to take them through the Steps.

(3) If God wanted me to sponsor, he would put someone in my life.

This is a variation on (2) above and has about as much validity as sitting at home expecting God to drop a job offer or a boyfriend into your mailbox!

(4) I am not cut out for sponsorship

The only qualification for sponsorship is having been through the process of the Steps yourself. "Showing others who suffer how we were given help is the very thing which makes life seem so worthwhile to us now." (BB p. 124) We do not need to make anything up; we share the experience and insight we have gained.

(5) I travel a lot.

Luckily, since the invention of the letter, the telephone, email, the Internet, Skype and Zoom, this is no longer a difficulty. You can even see your sponsee eyeball-to-eyeball when you are thousands of miles away.

(6) I carry the message through my behavior: I am a walking Big Book.

This is like saying "I make amends by staying abstinent." The best example of a walking Big Book is an active sponsor. Not sponsoring means you have not actually worked *all* the Steps.

(7) I carry the message by going to meetings and sharing.

Good! For how long? I go to around five meetings a week and share for 3 minutes on average. This gives me 15 minutes. If you're anything like me, your self-centeredness is not going to be smashed by 15 minutes a week. I am the kind of addict who needs to be useful to others on a daily basis in order to maintain conscious contact with God. Perhaps you are too.

(8) I do other service instead.

I do other service too, but not instead of sponsorship. Your experiences are unique to you and uniquely fit you to be of service to another OA fellow.

(9) I do not have time.

The reason I have work, study, family friends and time commitments is because other people gave their time freely to me. "I've got mine; thanks for everything; I'm off now," is a sign of ingratitude. Furthermore, when we work for our new Employer, we are amazed at how much more efficient we get.

(10) I do not enjoy it.

The quality of enjoyment lies not in the activity but in the actor. By shifting your attitude you can experience God working through you to help another fellow achieve what you could never have achieved on your own unaided strength.

-anonymous



The mind that created the problem cannot solve the problem

To me this is a total relief. I used to think I was unhappy because of circumstances. I am never unhappy because of anything external, anything anyone says or does. When I am unhappy, it's because of my mental reaction to circumstance.

The idea that my problem centers in my mind explains why every once in awhile... despite years of experience... I think it's a good idea to take that first bite. Self-knowledge fails me every time. Which is why I need something greater than my mind to keep me abstinent.

If you say something terrible to me, I can be upset only if I take it personally. Every piece of suffering has been self-inflicted. Every time I think about it and feel resentful, it's me recalling it... not you repeating it! This is the SELF-imposed crisis it talks about on page 52 of the Big Book. My troubles (my disturbance) is of my own making (p.62), no matter what the circumstances. And the solution is ALWAYS God.

The only things I lack are direction and power. And my experience tells me I cannot consistently produce direction and power using my own mind. But, to find God, I have to be willing to dis-identify with my own thinking. The God of Reason (BB p.54) is the only major block. As I start questioning my own ideas... since they don't work...my cathedral to despair starts to tumble. And what shows up is the huge, huge sky.

-anonymous



Learning How To Listen

My first sponsor told me that I could begin to practice Step Eleven right away. I didn't need to wait until I had worked all the other Steps. Up until then, prayer for me meant asking God for things I thought I needed. "God, please give me....." But my sponsor had me stick with the basics.

I prayed the Serenity Prayer and the prayers for Step One, Two and Three – preferably on my knees. Sometimes it was just, "I can't. God can. I think I'll let God!" The Third Step Prayer also became crucial: "God, I offer myself to Thee.... May I do Thy Will always!" (BB p. 63)

After awhile, I became curious about how I could add meditation to my program. I attended a guided meditation where we wrote to God and talked to him like he was our best friend. And then we sat silently for about five minutes and listened. As ideas came into our minds, we jotted them down.

As a beginner, sitting for five minutes felt like forever. At the end of the session, we went around the room and people shared the messages that maybe God had sent. We were asked to share our writing with our sponsor or another person who could be objective to help us decide whether to act on any guidance we received.

After awhile I started to love my morning time spent with my Higher Power. It gave me incredible peace and serenity as I dealt with the ups and downs of my life. It was not my willpower or self-discipline that enabled me to go from 300 pounds to 140 pounds and stabilize at this weight.

My healing has been a miracle and a gift from my Higher Power who speaks to me through my sponsor and through the literature. And prayer and meditation have made a tremendous difference in my life. Thank you God. And thank you OA for saving my life.

-anonymous



recovery inspires shared experiences

Sunday, May 7 Offers 2 Speaker Panels

1 "Parents with Munchkins"
Achieving and maintaining abstinence while raising small children.

first hour — 3 speakers

2 "Abstinent Under Pressure"
Achieving and maintaining abstinence in a stressful work environment.

second hour — 3 speakers

3 The Church of "Me, too"
We will save time at the end for personal shares or questions for the speakers.

JOIN US VIA ZOOM

ZOOM ID: 947 2125 9974
PASSWORD: 810562

JOIN US VIA PHONE

Find a dial in number at:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/zoomconference>
For meeting ID, enter "947 2125 9974 #"
For participant ID, enter "#"
For password, enter "810562 #"

Sunday, May 7, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm PST

MEETING LIST

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

EVENTS

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

Next Intergroup Meeting

Tues May 9

7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

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

Meeting ID: **984 7782 1659**

Passcode: **860953**

Sponsor to New Sponsee



"I don't have time to help you stay sick ... but if you want to get better I'd be glad to help."

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. ”



Service Keeps Me in Program

Giving service keeps me out of my own head. Doing service for others enables me to be useful. That gives me a positive feeling. When I do service, I feel like I am part of the group rather than an observer looking in from the outside. When I first came into program, doing service was a way for me to connect to people. I have a disease which makes me want to isolate and I'm usually very shy. But people who hear me now don't believe it.

I also used to weigh over 250 pounds. I am now half that. Being the secretary at the meeting, talking to newcomers, being an Intergroup Rep for my meeting — all of these are opportunities for me to connect with other people. I leave the meeting knowing I am among friends. If I weren't giving service, I wouldn't still be here.

-anonymous

Would Your Meeting Like to Sponsor an Event?



SOME IDEAS: Attitude of Gratitude, Tools in Action, The Traditions in Daily Life, Sober Eating, Relapse to Recovery, No God, No Problem (Atheists & Agnostics), Cleaning House (Step 6 & 7), Newcomers, Sponsorship, **Other? Contact**

Janet Mc (716) 418-9465 or: shortred55@hotmail.com