



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 24 Issue 5
May 2024

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

Table of Contents

Step 5, Tradition 5, Concept 5.....	1
Progress Not Perfection.....	2
The Unhappiness Monster	2
I'm Not in the Results Business.....	3
I Was Triggered	3
Empathy and Love.....	4
My Action Plan.....	4
OA R2 REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! ..	5
My Thermostat Got Turned Down.....	6
The Best Teachers.....	6
There is Hope!	7
Abstinence is Easier	7
Ask Jean	8
Meetings & Events.....	8
Intergroup Information	8

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



I go to meetings to hear and see how God is working.

Yesterday's food won't feed me today.
Yesterday's abstinence won't keep me abstinent.

Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

C H A N G E D
Choosing Honesty Allows New Growth Each Day

I cannot expect ongoing abstinence without a major change in how I'm living.

I thought I could figure it out...*wrong!*

I need to be connected to the love of giving back and the joy of helping others.

The two most important things in recovery are **WILLINGNESS** and **ACTION**.

Discomfort is a wise teacher.



Celebrate
May Day!

Wednesday, May 1st,

3:30 – 5:30 PT

Zoom ID: 822 2374 9762

Passcode: 121212

In honor of May Day's tradition of celebrating service and the beautiful season, join us in hearing speakers share how Step 12 has made their lives beautiful!

For more information, contact Diane T at sinnerinrecovery@gmail.com

PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

While sorting through some old files recently, I came across an old OA folder that contained my very first 4th Step, much to my horror. Suppose I had died and one of my family members had read it – ugh!

My 4th Step contained many pages of resentments and fears about family members, friends, co-workers and others who had crossed my path.

I had made a list of people I resented or with whom I felt angry, then listed the cause and how it affected me. The important part came last – my part in it.

The work I had done on my 4th Step amazed me. So many resentments! I laughed as I read some of them. And felt sad when I read others.

I couldn't even remember some of the people I had listed, but they must have seemed important seven or eight years ago.

As I read that inventory, I could see the progress I had made through the years. And that I no longer held resentments toward the people on that list. I had released many of the fears that had held me captive. I no longer feared people or felt ashamed of my actions.

It amazed me that my "deepest, darkest secrets" no longer owned me. And that I've freely told many people about them. Only through looking at my past could I see the progress I had made. And that I hadn't done it perfectly. I had just done it.

The OA program is about making progress. And overcoming this killing disease. One day at a time!
-anonymous

5th Step Promises

Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.

We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe. AA p75

STEP
5
INTEGRITY

2

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

The Unhappiness Monster



When I am facing any problem, my starting point is realizing that the APPEARANCE of the situation.... how the situation APPEARS TO ME...is not the truth.

If I'm unhappy, nothing I see is guaranteed to be what I think it is, according to my perception. My ability to see the true from the false is "offline," although the lights on the control panel are still flashing.

Appearances are created by me by the Unhappiness Monster inside me. And then I believe it to be reality. That's why my recovery is not based on those "appearances."

My recovery is not based on the accuracy of my description. What I am describing in my 5th Step is a set of delusions so that my sponsor can help me discard them.

And that is why spending two years with three ring binders of paper on Step 4 is useless. It would be much better to spend a month or two and produce thirty pieces of paper... since the only point of the pieces of paper is to produce a bonfire with them.

And a small quantity of loose leaf paper burns easily. Three ring-binders, not so much. The danger of my using a ton of wordiness in my 4th Step inventory is that it can turn fantasies into fortresses.

My solution lies in the simple hope that I am utterly wrong. On that basis, my first sensible question is:

What do You want me to do today?

From that starting point, the actual Truth can come out. It can't be wrestled from my world of delusions. If you shake my delusion tree, no real apples will fall out.

Instead, I must let this world pass away. And then the next appears automatically.

-anonymous



I Was "Triggered"

I no longer say *I was triggered*. I now say what really happened. A person did or said something or I learned a piece of information. I determined *very quickly* that this did not follow my script.

I overreacted because of my irrationality and immaturity. This produced a wave of anger and fear. I then started to *think obsessively* about the incident. By doing so, I fostered more anger and fear. I blamed the person or the information for my emotion. And I decided to retaliate or run. What can I do instead?

I can recognize immediately that it does no good to bark at every passing car. I can start praying right away and allow the wave of emotion to pass. This takes fifteen seconds. Then I can analyze the situation calmly and determine whether it requires a response.

When my ass is on fire, the problem is not the fire starter. It's the fact that my ass is flammable. Being "triggered" is due to my selfishness and self-centeredness.

My values have to change. When my values change, my reactions start to calm down. And I can start to respond maturely and rationally to incoming data.

-anonymous

Recovery doesn't mean that my problems go away... It just means that I now have the tools to deal with them!!



I'm Not in the Results Business

When I came to OA, I was in bad shape. And I soon found that I could get relief by sharing at meetings. Other people propped me up and told me everything would be fine.

But sometimes on the way home from the meeting, sometimes the next day, I would be in as bad a state once again. So I'd go to another meeting, carrying my fear, my low self-worth, whatever was bothering me.... hoping to leave it there. I didn't realize that my ten-ton problem was tied to my ankle.

Relief and recovery are not the same. Relief is a temporary lift. Recovery involves a permanent change.

I spent many years in OA seeking relief, but not recovery. And I've seen many friends who fell into the same trap and relapsed. Sadly, I see a lot of people who "cannot or will not" take the actions set out in the Steps as a program of recovery.

I spent so much time NOT in recovery while attending OA meetings regularly. And I can share with you what my "blocks" were to working the program.

1. I didn't believe overeating was particularly dangerous.
2. I believed because I hadn't picked up the food for a while, I was immune to the first bite.
3. I didn't believe I needed to maintain and grow a spiritual experience.
4. I believed I could rely on warning signs to get me to take vigorous action.
5. I believed going to meetings was enough without taking vigorous action.
6. I believed God was not powerful enough to keep me abstinent.
7. I didn't believe God could solve my super-complex life problems, and I thought I'd wait until I had handled everything myself first.
8. I was scared that working the Steps would be really painful.
9. Plain old fear.

And today I am learning that I am not responsible for whether a particular sponsee "gets it," makes a decision, and gets on with working the Steps. I get into trouble when I try to force this, rather than letting God demonstrate, through me, what He can do.

Whether they will hear the message or refuse to hear it, I try to make sure the door is always open, and I let them walk through it – or not. Ultimately, another person's willingness, or lack of willingness, is not for me to fathom. I'm not in the results business. But God is.

-anonymous

Questions & answers Meeting

ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OA PROGRAM ARE WELCOME AT THIS MEETING

Thursdays 2:00 pm PT

Meeting ID: 829 7899 5772
Passcode: 656170

What am I supposed to eat?
Why talk about God?
Is there a cure?
How do I stop a craving?
What does "recovery" mean?
What is the "allergy of the body"?

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
OTTAWA DISTRICT INTERGROUP

Empathy & Love



I was secretary at a recent OA meeting. And after I shared a bit about the night's topic, we opened up the meeting for participant shares. Everything went fine. And it was easy to relate to my fellow OA's as they shared their thoughts and feelings. That is... until it was time for "P" to share.

I tried not to cringe outwardly. But inside, I felt myself contract. She was a regular at this meeting. And had been in and out of OA for more than ten years. Despite regular attendance in the rooms, she's never been able to string together more than a couple of months of abstinence.

My addict mind started churning as she began to speak. "What's the matter with her?" I thought. "Why can't she get it? Whatever she's doing, it's not working." Everything she said pushed my buttons in one way or another.

Then she started to cross-talk about what others had said. And then she went on and on about all the trouble she had gotten herself into. Finally she closed by saying "You know, if you're doing that kind of self-destructive behaviors, it's because you just don't love yourself. And with that, I'll pass."

I relaxed as the next person started to share. And I tried my best to stay in the moment and to pay attention to each person as they shared. So I'm not sure exactly when I figured out what "P" had ACTUALLY said.

It sunk in more and more. And by the time I arrived home, I was struck with a wave of compassion. Because her unmistakable message was "I don't love myself: that's the problem." And that's something I can totally relate to.

That problem is at the core of ALL my character defects. It's why I never felt comfortable in my own skin. Why I felt I needed to eat over everything. And what finally brought me to OA.

It was in OA that I learned to rely on a Higher Power who loves me unconditionally, even as my ego tells me I'm not worthy. But I've heard people in OA say they will love you until you are able to love yourself. While I can't make anyone "get" this program, I can choose to love them.

My experience with "P" has shown me that I am better able to love people when the storm of my judgmental mind settles down. When I understand and empathize with them, instead of criticizing and condemning them.

And I can better understand when I learn to listen. To really, really listen.

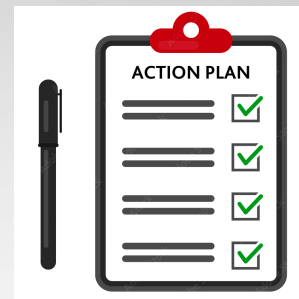
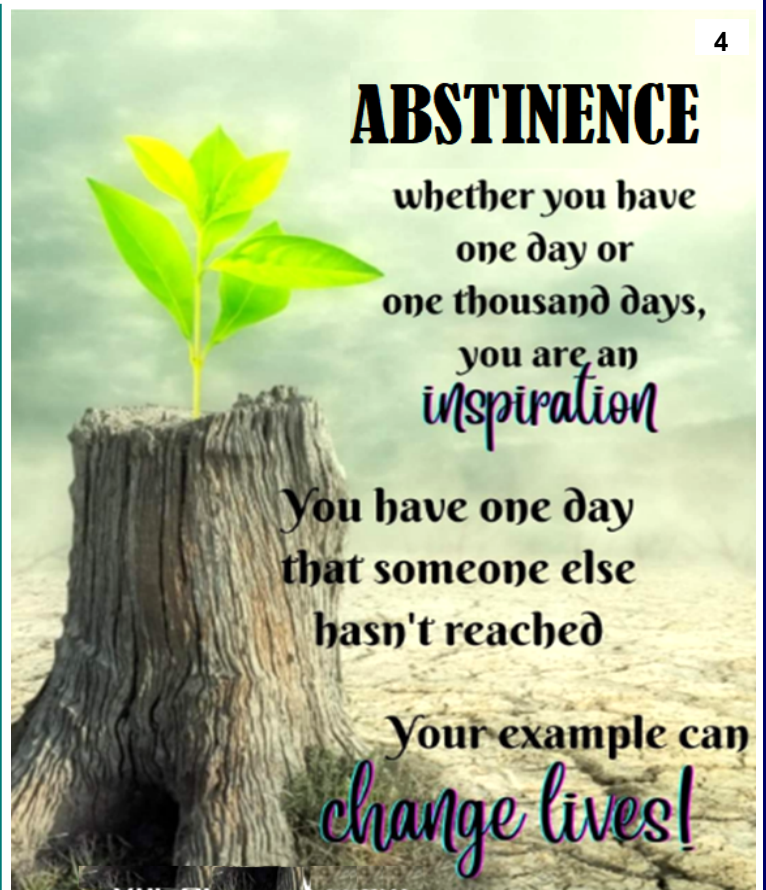
-anonymous

ABSTINENCE

whether you have
one day or
one thousand days,
you are an
inspiration

You have one day
that someone else
hasn't reached

Your example can
change lives!



My Action Plan

- I attend at least three meetings a week.
- I commit my food each day to my sponsor.
- I work Steps 10 and 11 each day.
- I read from OA literature each day.
- I sponsor others.
- I do OA service at the meeting and Intergroup levels.
- I continue making my amends.
- I make sure to warmly greet newcomers.

-anonymous

Fabulous Workshops

Awesome Speakers

Registration is NOW OPEN!

Keeping Spiritually Fit

Recovery and Health Challenges

Recovery From Relapse

Aging in Recovery

FAQ for Virtual Attendees
CLICK HERE
<https://tinyurl.com/virtuallfaq>



Listen to the Convention Singalong
CLICK HERE
<https://tinyurl.com/conventionsong>

July 12-14, 2024
R2 OA Convention

Sacramento Style!

Attend on ZOOM



Attend in person

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CLICK HERE

<https://www.oar2.org/upcoming-convention.html>

My Thermostat Got Turned Down



We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people...

(BB p.52)

These words remind me that I have more problems than food. That the food is only a symptom of a more pervasive disease.

When I stopped compulsively overeating, I began a lifetime process of recovery from unruly emotions, painful relationships and unmanageable situations. This process is too much for me without help from a Higher Power and my friends in the OA fellowship.

When I began working the Steps, many of these tangled threads unraveled. But little by little, the most broken places of my life straightened out. One day at a time. And almost imperceptibly, I began to heal.

Like a thermostat being turned down, my fears diminished. I began to experience moments of contentment. My emotions became less volatile. I am slowly becoming part of the human family once again.

-anonymous

MATCHING CALAMITY WITH SERENITY

**Dealing with Challenging
Life Circumstances**



**Sun – May 5
11:00 am – 12:00 pm PT**

**Meeting ID: 814 1231 6478
Passcode: 560931**



I was the person who did not believe in the “progression” of my disease. So I played at OA for about four years before I surrendered and accepted responsibility for myself.

Yes, I realized I needed to get abstinent... and stay abstinent. And that I had OA to go to. But I wanted OA members to hand me abstinence on some kind of painless, effortless platter.

Many OA's I've met in recent years totally “get” their compulsive overeating. But too few understand the difference between abstinence and recovery. I can't expect recovery without a major change in most aspects of how I live my life.

Weight loss was my goal at the beginning stages of abstinence. Along with finding a boyfriend. And this is where the Fellowship turned out to be a major source of support and encouragement.

During my first tries at abstinence, I figured I was unique. I think many of us have traveled that same rocky road. The key for me was to get into gear, but stay out of the driver's seat at the same time.

I personally feel strongly about getting a good sponsor. To me, a sponsor's worth can't be measured on some kind of evaluation scale. My good sponsor was a woman who could relate with me. Who believed I would some day make it. And in spite of my sick resistance, she guided me toward getting active in the group.

She took me to different meetings, and I got nothing from it. She suggested I sign up to be the timer, and I laughed. A year or two later, after more experimenting and more binges, I agreed to be the meeting timer. I didn't know it then, but I was on my way.

People commented on what a good job I did as the timer. My ego was getting a face-lift. And my sponsor was watching.

After about a year of continued abstinence, and using my sponsor and the group for support, I was asked to secretary a meeting. It came at a good time. It seemed as though they were saying “We're proud of you, and this is our vote of confidence.”

Yeah, I know – you could call this pride on my part. And pride can't be all bad. It wasn't for me. I dove into the responsibility of being secretary. And it was a godsend.

My sponsor stood off to the side, and I think she secretly beamed. Actually, she was beaming for OA. For without it, we might both still be bingeing.

-anonymous



If my childhood is my problem,
I might as well give up now,
because it's over
and cannot be changed.

If other people are my problem,
I might as well give up now,
because they can't be changed either.

**IF I AM MY PROBLEM,
there is hope.**

I used to argue with the program.
The cockroach arguing
with the exterminator.

-anonymous

Hot Topics

Sun May 5

11:00 am – 2:00 p.m. PT

Two recovered speakers will share on some of our favorite topics:

- Top Tips for Newcomers
- Relapse
- Powerlessness
- Body Image
- The Spiritual Experience

Plenty of time for Q&A and open sharing.

Meeting ID: 839 6420 8304
Passcode: 052024

Info: Ilene W. (908) 803-4846



is Easier

I have ALWAYS looked for “an easier, softer way.” Before I could accept my illness, I tried to prove I was a “normal” eater. That I could occasionally eat for purely social reasons. Which was *IMPOSSIBLE!* Thankfully.... I finally discovered that for me, abstinence is easier.

When I'm abstinent, I get to eat good tasting, nourishing food at mealtimes... one day at a time..
When not abstinent, I eat junk I really don't want. And I can't stop!

When I'm abstinent, I get to be hungry at mealtime and enjoy my food.
When I'm not abstinent, I wolf down everything in sight, with no way to stop, until I feel full and sick.

When I'm abstinent, I get to feel good regardless of my size or weight. I wake up feeling thankful, looking forward to a new day, free from the bondage of the scale.
When I'm not abstinent, I wake up feeling fat, dreading the day and punishing myself with the scale that gets to “decide” how I feel about myself that day.

When I'm abstinent, I get to choose clothes that look and feel good.
When I'm 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 I'm not abstinent, I go to bed feeling stuffed and hating myself.

When I'm abstinent, I get to live life, enjoy my family and make rational decisions.
When I'm not abstinent, I isolate from family, friends and other people. And I go around feeling fat and miserable.

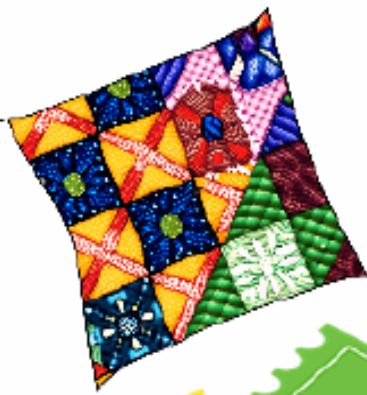
When I'm abstinent, I get to feel positive emotions and I have the desire to make contact with a Power greater than myself.
When I'm not abstinent, I have only negative emotions, and I feel that nothing, not even a Higher Power, can get in.

Abstinence is easier for me because all I have to do is accept my disease and surrender. And just for today, to not take that first compulsive bite.
When I'm not abstinent, I am insanely willful and I feel deprived, envious and resentful. I am insatiable, even though I know food cannot give me what I'm looking for.

Abstinence is easier because it breaks open my cocoon, releases me from the bondage of food and sets me free to live.
When I'm not abstinent, I'm locked in the prison of my food obsession, wanting freedom, but looking only for more food.

Dear God, please help me accept abstinence, just for today.
And thank you for this easier way.

-anonymous



Raffle Fundraiser



Please donate to the OA R2 Convention Fundraiser

Artwork

\$ Cash \$

Gift Card

Fitbit

Quilt

Gift Basket

Birdhouse

Air Fryer

Your Idea??

Contact Nancy Mc
(916) 698-0541

Convention Registration

MEETING LIST

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

EVENTS

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

NEXT INTERGROUP MEETING

Tues May 14

7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

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

Meeting ID: **984 7782 1659**

Passcode: **860953**

NASSAU INTERGROUP
WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

PRESENTS:

MON – MAY 6
4:00 pm PT

ZOOM SECURITY TRAINING



Starts
at
4:00 pm PT

*This training will help you
develop your ZOOM skills
and keep your meetings
safe and secure.*

TRAINING WILL
BE ON THE
FIRST MONDAY
OF
EACH MONTH

Basic and Advanced Zoom Security
Q & A at the end of the Presentation

JOIN ZOOM MEETING:
MEETING ID: 774-646-690
PASSWORD: 535356

Intergroup Board

Chair	ochair@sacvalleyoa.org	Scarlet H	(916) 505-0360
Vice Chair	raven.shasta@gmail.com	Raven Y	(530) 917-4979
Secretary	osecretary@sacvalleyoa.org	Kristen	(916) 792-0273
Treasurer	otreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org	Barbara E	(916) 799-9557
Region 2	oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Steve H	(650) 224-4094
Region 2	caryhh2002@yahoo.com	Cary H	(530) 908-1230
Region 2		vacant	
WSBC	judylynch@surewest.net	Judy L	(916) 799-5804
WSBC	owwsbc@sacvalleyoa.org	Cara D	(209) 329-9927
Webmaster	webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org	Andrea T	(916) 813-2836

Intergroup Committees

Committee Title	Specific Tasks	Chair	Chair Email
Bylaws	Bylaws/Policy & Procedures Review/Update	Raven Y	raven.shasta@gmail.com
Events	Events Support	vacant	
Group Support	Meeting/Zoom Support	Nici P	powersnici@gmail.com
	Speaker List Maintenance	Carla	carla_s@mac.com
Answer Phone	Answer Phone	Janet Mc	shortred55@hotmail.com
Newsletter	Newsletter Editor	Gerri S	alohagerri@aol.com
Meeting List	Meeting List Coordinator	Mary S	mfshea1@att.net
Public Outreach	Public Outreach Support	Nancy Mc	nancynandalion@gmail.com
Retreat	Retreat Coordination	Rick Z	rick@directdigitalcontrols.com
Special Population Focus	Special Population Support	Maddy H	madisinhinojosa@yahoo.com
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Resource Management	Katherine G	KATEJOE@msn.com

ASK JEAN



“We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.” (BB p. 84) How have you experienced this?

I always thought I was a clever, in-charge type of person. Able to diet and to lose the weight accumulated from binge eating. I was only clever enough to lie to myself about how much I was eating, and what I was eating over. When I hit rock bottom in COVID isolation, I reached out to OA, got help, and turned my life, eating habits, and my will over to my Holy Other- God. I let God be the smart One. The One to offer comfort, support and hope.

I couldn't ever do it on my own, although I tried for over 70 years. I experience the support of God through prayer, meetings, OA literature, tools, a super sponsor, music, meditation, writing and being open to the ideas and ideals of God. Intuiting God's ideas comes also through two way prayer conversations and writings. I experience God's help every moment of every day. I breathe in God's ideas and breathe out my will, thus being guided by a Holy Presence and not by food.



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