



# 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 11**  
**November 2023**

*“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 11: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE:** Spiritual Awareness Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out.

**TRADITION 11: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE:** Anonymity Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion: we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio films, television, and other public media of communication.

**CONCEPT 11: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE:** Humility Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.

## Overheard at Meetings



If you focus on the weight, you will lose the recovery; if you focus on the recovery, you will lose the weight.

Experience + mistakes = wisdom.

If you like everyone you’ve met in OA, you haven’t been to enough meetings.

Abstinence is never owned, it is rented. And rent is due every day.

Wisdom is learning to let go when you want to hang on. Courage is learning to hang on when you want to let go.

To get physically fit, you have to move. To get spiritually fit, you have to sit still.

The problem with isolating is that you get such bad advice.

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**  
SACRAMENTO VALLEY INTERGROUP

*Thank-A-Thon*

**THANKSGIVING DAY**  
**THURSDAY, NOV. 23, 2023**  
**IN PERSON MEETING AT THE**  
**CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL AWARENESS**

**1275 STARBOARD DRIVE,**  
**WEST SACRAMENTO, 95691**

**SPEAKER MEETINGS**  
**AT 9 AM | 10 AM | 11 AM | 12 PM PT**

*Hosted by the Thursday Meeting*

**VOLUNTEERS FOR SECRETARY OF THE MEETINGS, OR SPONSORSHIP BY OTHER MEETINGS ARE WELCOME.**

**SARA N. (916) 769-4266 FOR INFO**



## Stepping Off the Ghost Train

Do I believe that the drama that goes on in my mind is real? It produces emotions, just like the emotions I feel when I watch a video. I feel sick or frightened, or whatever. But my mind is the ultimate source of my emotions, even when disturbing stuff is going on externally. I have to be receptive to the "disturbance" for the train of dominos to start falling. And because my emotions "feel" real, I can point to your criticism or your actions and judge the drama itself to be real.

Before I came to OA — and for years afterwards — I was on a ghost train. Strapped in. Totally absorbed in the horror. Shuttled from one painful experience to another. The whole time bedeviled by sets of emotions prompted by what I THOUGHT they represented.

*"Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body." (BB p.23). My problem is my perception of what I am experiencing. "So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making." (BB p. 62) What's worse is that once I realize that my thoughts are the problem, I become so identified with them, I can't choose not to think them.*

I would remember past hurts and humiliations and bring them into my present. And then they would become my filter for whatever was going on. The information I learned in therapy was invaluable. But for me it was not enough.

I am so grateful to the people in OA who have shown me how to dis-identify with the tons of junkyard thinking. This is the process they taught me:

- (1) Catalogue the thinking and behavior to be discarded.
- (2) Discuss with others — not as a wounded victim, but as an amused observer.
- (3) Forgive everyone and everything.
- (4) Make amends to everyone I've hurt.
- (5) Rely on God in thought and action.

My goal is to abandon "SELF," whatever the form. And on a good day, I get to step off the ghost train and stride out into the world.

-anonymous



No matter how deep  
your bottom was...  
it only takes  
**12 STEPS**  
to get out.



## How Beautiful Life Can Be

I binged primarily to ease my conscience and forget. The more I ate, the worse it got and the more I had to eat. Every day became that much harder to live through. And I began to take a look at myself. What had happened to the shy, lonely wallflower? I had never been very happy, but now it was unbearable.

I'd managed to eat my way through all my friendships. I had no one in the world to talk to. With increasing guilt and never-ending depression, I was too weak to continue this day-by-day suicide.

Thank God I heard about OA. So I found a list of meetings. I had no idea what would happen. I just knew I didn't want to live if my life was going to go on like it was.

Today I'm counting my blessings instead of my troubles. When I walked into the friendly atmosphere of my first OA meeting, I knew I was where I belonged. Here were people who had thought and felt as I did. Here was the understanding I'd been searching for all my life. These people were my friends, and I felt their sincere interest in me. With these new doors opening up to me, I was able to make the eventual decision to stop overeating, a day at a time. Because I too was a food addict. And with this came the only real freedom. The freedom of truth.

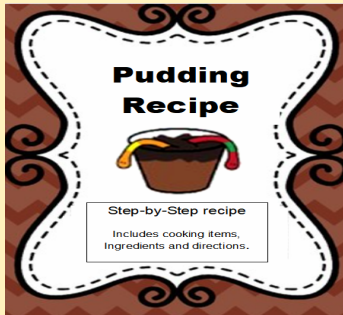
My sponsor used to say to me, "If I could only paint you a picture of how beautiful life can be without the food..." I wanted so badly to see the picture as it was in her mind. Well, now I'm living it. And trying to paint it for others.

OA has become a way of life and a design for living for me. It has brought about a discovery of an inner being, an awareness of God. I wouldn't give it up or trade it for anything. And the only one who can take it away from me is me - by taking that first bite.

-anonymous

Thankfulness is  
the beginning of  
gratitude.  
Gratitude is the  
completion of  
thankfulness.  
Thankfulness may  
consist merely  
of words. Gratitude  
is shown in acts.





## Proof of the Pudding

Sometimes there is a lot of talk in OA about the right way to work the program, or the wrong way to work the program, or how to “do” recovery. When I started this journey, the key question seemed to be “Which people in OA have what I want? What path did they follow?” Then that became the path I chose.

The question later on, after I’d been trying this approach for a few months or years, or have completed all the Steps, is “How well is this actually working out for me?”

So here are some questions I asked myself that helped me make this question really practical:

1. *Has the path I have followed given me continuous, contented abstinence?*
2. *Has fear been relieved?*
3. *Has resentment been relieved?*
4. *Have guilt and shame been relieved?*
5. *Am I more happy?*
6. *Am I more joyous?*
7. *Am I more free?*
8. *Has this path made me more useful?*
9. *Am I now more focused on what I can give rather than what I can get?*
10. *Is my conduct kind and loving in my home, my occupation, and my affairs?*
11. *Is this path one that allows for continuous growth?*
12. *Do I have hope?*

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. If I have carefully followed instructions, and the pudding still tastes bad, I need a different recipe.

-anonymous



EVERYONE GROWS AT THEIR OWN RATE  
TRY TO HAVE PATIENCE WITH  
YOUR PROGRESS

## STEP 11 SPIRITUALITY

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

3



*“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God...”*

I don’t know about you, but I’ve always been meditation-challenged. I have had the hardest time just sitting still and quieting my thoughts without being interrupted by the “committee” in my head. Out of desperation, I did some research on what I could do to “work” this Step. The good news is that apparently there is no “wrong” way to meditate!

### Spiritual Meditation

may include elements of silent, spoken, or chanted prayer.

### Mindfulness Meditation

practicing actually being present in the moment.

### Movement Meditation

focusing on my body in motion (walking meditation, walking the dog, playing golf).

### Focused Meditation

focusing my attention on whatever I am doing (eating; exercising, washing dishes).

### Visualization Meditation

choosing an image that creates a good feeling (ocean waves; flowers, clouds).

### Chanting Meditation

focusing on the sound of words or music.

-anonymous

## Facing Life on Life’s Terms

It has taken me a long time to recognize the fact that most of my problems are of my own making. All the while that I was blaming other people, bad luck, and God’s disapproval of my actions, the difficulties I had grew beyond my ability to solve them myself. I was lost and I didn’t know which way to turn.

Through prayer and meditation I have come to understand that the true problems I have are within me – my character defects and shortcomings – and that the solution lies in the actions I take, not in the thinking I do.

The constant practice of the Eleventh Step gives me the courage to face life on life’s terms by first facing myself and asking God to remove my defects and shortcomings. By seeking and obeying God’s will, I replace my fears with faith and continue to move ahead on my spiritual path.

-anonymous



## Teachable Moments

I have come to believe that an important element in building my abstinent life is what is left out. It seems to me that I achieve growth by leaving things out - when I don't say the accusing word, when I don't answer sarcastically. If I can only delay one second, maybe two, I have time to ask myself, "Do I really want to say that?"

I used to tell anybody who would listen how it was going to be my way or the highway. "Self-will run riot!" Now it's becoming easier to spot ego. And I work at getting me out of the way. I have discovered a new way to learn - by shutting my mouth and listening. Again, it's not so much what I'm doing as what I'm not doing. W.A.I.T (Why Am I Talking?). When I'm NOT talking. I'm open. I'm teachable.

I used to like to direct my children's affairs, offering advice when it wasn't wanted and directing their activities and behavior. I've thrown out my director's chair. Now, when I see one of my children heading on a certain course and I question the outcome, I keep my mouth shut and practice the Third Step.

Whenever there's a problem and I'm involved, I look to see what part of the problem I am causing. My sponsor advised that I'm usually about eighty percent of the problem - well, maybe sixty percent. But I'm the major part, you can bet on that. If I leave out the largest percent (me), there is hardly any problem at all!

All the people-pleasing activities I used to engage in, I can cut out now. That gives me time to do the truly helpful, gut-warming little things, just because they need doing and I truly care. I have time to work my program. I can sit quietly and really listen to people trying to communicate with me. My mind is no longer racing to find just the perfect quip or the story to top theirs. The eternal internal war I can do without, too. The fighting inside me is over, thank You God. And the most important item of all to leave out is the old, familiar foe, extra food.

-anonymous

### The 12 Steps



are **NOT** multiple choice !



Recovery is so much more than just losing weight.

The first miracle of my program was the freedom from the obsession with food. Can you imagine waking up and not having food on your mind?

The second miracle was ongoing abstinence in the face of anything and everything. Knowing that I can remain abstinent, no matter what, gives me a sense of security and comfort I never had before.

As fantastic as those two miracles have been in my life, it is the third miracle that has made recovery worthy of doing whatever needs to be done.

The third miracle is a sense of self, of who I am and what I am, and accepting myself as is. Acceptance of self is the greater miracle of all. It is okay to be me. I no longer need to seek perfection. I am allowed to be "just me." I am a human being, doing the best I can with what I have at the moment, and that is more than all right.

This is what working program the has given to me. I am worthy of recovery. We all are worthy of recovery and the miracles of program.

-anonymous

## Strategies for Ending Slipping and Sliding

A Zoom Workshop from OA San Diego Intergroup's Twelfth Step Within Committee



Want to stop slipping?

Want help saying "no" to that first bite?

Join us and be inspired.

All are welcome - newcomers - long-term, recovering members - folks in relapse or returning to OA.

Meeting ID: 854 2974 9682 (no passcode)

Questions? [workshops@oasandiego.org](mailto:workshops@oasandiego.org)

- WHEN? -

Saturday, November 11, 2023

11:00 am - 1:00 pm PT  
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm ET



## Spirituality

I came to OA mired in judgment, cynicism and negativity. Today, I am more often able to see that the world is perfect exactly the way it is. And that you and I are OK too. I can still get so caught up in my stuff that I miss the beauty that surrounds me. But at least I know it is there if I am willing to look.

Today I realize sooner rather than later that I am trying to run my own life. I have become more sensitive to self-inflicted suffering. A few years ago the adrenaline rush of self righteous anger used to feel good. Today it doesn't.

After my abstinence, my serenity is my most precious possession. I've learned through painful experience that without peace of mind, a happy fulfilling life is just not possible.

A holy man was asked to define spirituality. He said, "When you are hungry, eat! When you are tired, sleep!" More and more I'm coming to believe that life really is that simple.

As I continue to let go of the old complicated ideas, I get closer to the idea my Higher Power had in mind when he sent me here.

-anonymous



## How It Feels

### Alone

It is an emptiness that fills your core and eats away at the soul within.

### Sadness

It pours from the body and fills the room, it comes in waves that never cease to destroy the old sands on which they incessantly crash.

### Pain

Throbbing, Stabbing, Ripping apart the inner child who searches for something to fill the void she feels inside.

### Existence

A state of being in which life is a show you have been invited to watch from miles away.

### Hope

The light that flickers in the distance revealing glimpses of life as it will be.

### Courage

The drive to keep going when your world has fallen to shambles and you're left to pick up the wreckage on your own.

### Support

The warm tingle in your heart that appears during your darkest moments and reminds you someone cares and makes life worth living.

### Recovery

Devoting every day to creating a fire out of the little light flickering in the distance, and letting it burn... eternally melting the ice within.

-anonymous

CONTINUING OUR 12 STEP STUDY SERIES

Saturday, November 4th  
10:00 – 11:30 am PT

Westchester  
United  
Intergroup

## CLEANING UP & MAKING UP IN

## RECOVERY STEPS 6-7, 8-9

### MEETING LOGIN INFORMATION:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9146332988>

Zoom ID: 914 633 2988  
Passcode: 121212

### No Registration Required

1. Download workshop handouts\*
2. Have a writing implement handy
3. Bring a list of your top 2-3 prized defects of character and fears
4. Have the name of one person, place, or institution you have harmed or from whom you have taken something

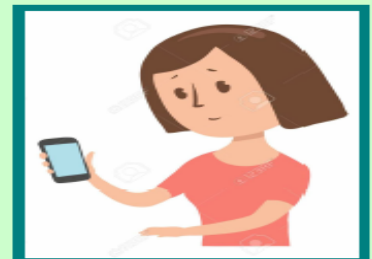


\*Workshop handouts will be available for download Nov 3-4 on [owestchesterny.org](http://owestchesterny.org) and at the beginning of the workshop

Have Questions?  
Email [maryt307@gmail.com](mailto:maryt307@gmail.com)

## You Are Not Alone

### PICK UP THE PHONE!



*No matter what you are struggling with,*

*help and hope are only a phone call away.*

# TWO THINGS

There are two things I've learned in OA. First, to surrender completely. I was fighting a losing battle with the food. I finally gave up. And through defeat, I won.

Second, to change myself. Because the world isn't going to change to suit "poor little old me." It's just that simple.

Whatever it is in me that led me down the food addiction road to misery, I no longer wanted any part of it. I spent six months in a treatment center because I could not live without the food. But today I have learned how.

Now I'm another cog in the wheel of this Fellowship. I've been given a second chance to be the kind of mother I've always wanted to be. And I have the greatest of all gifts: the return of my daughter and her love.

Yesterday I only existed. Without hope. Without anything but misery. Today I live with hope because I carry a message of hope to other compulsive overeaters.

This program works for these reasons. You want abstinence badly enough. And once you have it you share it.

-anonymous

If you can't meditate,  
pause before every sip of coffee.  
If you can't pray,  
simply say "thank you" before every meal.  
If you can't manifest,  
enjoy what's already yours.

**There is no spirituality rulebook.**



## Gift of Desperation

When I first came to OA, I heard people talk about the "gift of desperation" in meetings and wondered what the hell they were talking about. All I knew was that I couldn't stop eating, no matter what I tried. It didn't matter what I did, inevitably, I would pick up the food.

No one decides to walk into the rooms of OA because it looks like a fun way to spend the afternoon. Circumstances take us there. Some of us are there because our doctors warned us about the dangers of diabetes or refused to perform gastric bypass surgery until we took off some weight. Some of us are there because our partners gave us an ultimatum. I was there because other people wanted me to lose weight. But I found that while that reason worked in the short term, it never lasted longer than a few months.

When I finally wanted abstinence for myself, I realized I was screwed. That was when I became willing to do anything to stop overeating. Sure, I had sat in OA meetings before, cynically watching these 'fakes' pretend to be happy. But I had never gotten off my opinionated ass and asked for help. I just assumed no one could help me because *my* overeating was different, and *they* couldn't possibly understand where I was coming from.

Something has changed though. I was finally completely beaten and somehow that spurred me into action. I asked for help, got a sponsor and worked the 12 Steps. I did what was suggested – even if I thought it was crap (and I often did).

Early in the program I did not see this desperation as a gift. It was more like a curse. But today, I realize that had I not felt as hopeless as I did, I might never have gotten off my ass and on the road of recovery.

- anonymous

Ocean & Bay Intergroup of OA presents



## Step 11 Two-Way Prayer Writing Workshop

Seeking to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power through prayer and meditation

**Sun Nov 5, 10:00am – 11:30am PT**

We will demonstrate a two-way prayer method, have a short writing time, offer guidelines on reflecting and then go into small breakout rooms to share our writing.

**Meeting ID: 828 6154 9717**  
**Passcode: 247365**

questions@oceanandbay.org  
<https://oceanandbay.org>

# MEETING LIST

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

# EVENTS

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

# NEXT INTERGROUP MEETING

7

Tues Nov 14  
7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

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

Meeting ID: **984 7782 1659**  
Passcode: **860953**

## Intergroup Board

Chair	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oachair@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Scarlet H	(916) 505-0360
Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	VACANT	
Secretary	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oasecretary@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Raven Y	(530) 917-4979
Treasurer	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oatreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Barbara E	(916) 799-9557
Region 2	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	VACANT	
Region 2	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">curteousb@gmail.com</a>	Curt B	(510) 435-3246
Region 2	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">caryyh2002@yahoo.com</a>	Cary H	(530) 908-1230
WSBC	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">judyllynch@surewest.net</a>	Judy L	(916) 799-5804
WSBC	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">sdallama@mac.com</a>	Les F	(775) 813-4076
WSBC	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">oawsbc@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	VACANT	
Webmaster	<a href="mailto:oa2rep@sacvalleyoa.org">webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Phil K	(916) 768-4549

## Intergroup Committees

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



Nominations are being accepted for OA Sacramento Intergroup Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster, Region 2 Rep and World Service Delegate. Click on this link for descriptions of each position: <https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/board-members>

Any member of OA may submit a nomination, but be sure the person you nominate agrees to run. Self-nominations are okay. Nominations are due by 8pm on Mon Nov 13<sup>th</sup>. Email your nominations to Scarlet H at [oachair@sacvalleyoa.org](mailto:oachair@sacvalleyoa.org)

For many who have found stable abstinence, service in OA has been a major factor in their recovery.

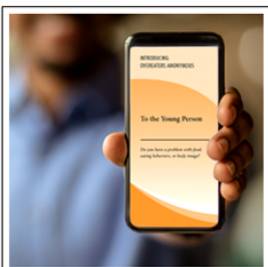


*May the Valley Voice serve as a lighted lamp, shining rays of hope and experience to illuminate any dark corners in your life.*

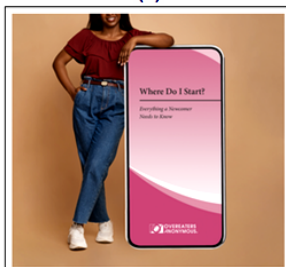


## NEWCOMER AND YOUNG PERSON PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE FOR FREE DOWNLOAD

(1)



(2)



(3)



(1) <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2023/01/to-the-young-person-do-you-have-a-problem-with-food-eating-behaviors-or-body-image-pamphlet-280.pdf>

(2) <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2022/06/where-do-i-start-everything-a-newcomer-needs-to-know.pdf>

(3) <https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/07/22222137/por-donde-empezar-wdis-spanish.pdf>