



# VALLEY VOICE

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*We publish Valley Voice for your information and enjoyment. Any mistakes you may find are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone and some people are always looking for mistakes.*

## FROM OA HOW COMMITTEE CHAIR LAURA—HOW IS HOW?

HOW stands for "Honest, Open-minded, and Willing". HOW-OA is one specific way in which to work the OA program. It offers a specific food plan, specific guidelines for sponsors, specific questions in working the Steps and recommends how many phone calls to make a day and how many meetings to attend a week. HOW-OA focuses on using the Tools of the Program and following a weighed and measured food plan that requires complete surrender in order to work the Steps. It's like a big circle: Tools, Food Plan, and Steps working together to support emotional, physical and spiritual recovery from compulsive overeating.

OA has many wonderful resources for weighed and measured food plans. The Dignity of Choice pamphlet has many to choose from. We are also free in OA to create our own personal food plans. A food plan is a tool of recovery. How an OA

member interprets and uses their food plan is based on individual need. In HOW-OA those following the HOW food plan are all using the same food plan. This creates a sense of shared experience and support.

We have always been one program; all are welcome at all meetings.

So what has happened to HOW in the Sacramento Valley Area? Most of the HOW groups now reflect our HOW members themselves, a hybrid of concepts and food plans. What unifies us is the OA program. We have always been one program; all are welcome at all meetings. The only requirement for OA membership is the desire to stop eating compulsively (Third Tradition).

Weighing and measuring is one approach to a food plan. It helps with portion control, but it isn't what everyone needs. Grey sheet, HOW, and 90-day are all examples of weighed and measured food plans. OA does not recommend or endorse the use of any particular type of food plan. Food plans are

simply a tool that can be used to work the OA program.

Abstinence is defined by OA as "refraining from compulsive overeating" and the individual applies it to their personal program. Some Compulsive Overeaters define their food plan as their abstinence, but this does not work for everyone. The beauty of OA is that we are each free to create a personalized program that works for us. By using the Steps and Tools of OA we can all recover.

HOW-OA is still here and can help any OA member wanting to use a weighed and measured food plan. Everyone is welcome at all meetings, whether using a weighed and measured food plan or not. Most meetings have altered their verbiage to focus more generally on OA and less specifically on HOW. HOW-OA sponsors still exist and remain available at meetings to help anyone wanting to work the HOW-OA program.

**THE SIMPLE APPROACH TO THE 12 STEPS!**

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

-Author Unknown  
STEPS

The Overeaters Anonymous Journal of Recovery

**STEP 6**

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

**TRADITION 6**

An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

**WSO NEWS**

- Dec 12th has been declared Twelfth-Step-Within-Day to encourage outreach to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors.
- Amended definitions of abstinence and recovery:

Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors

Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step Program

**A NEW SEASON**

"Behold," He said. "I am making all things new."  
And everywhere are signs of renewal –  
But spring doesn't tread lightly; it is not gentle.

The seed explodes in order to grow.  
Its tender sprout heaves against the world  
To lay roots, to reach through dark toward light.

The wind whips old boughs and branches.  
And those unable to birth new life, break –  
They are swept away without ceremony.

Take heart, my soul –  
This season of transformation requires courage.

- Phoebe D

*Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Editorial Policy**

The deadline for copy is the fifteenth of the month for the following month. Payment cannot be made for material. All articles must be signed and when published will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request. The Valley voice reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Send submissions to: oanewsletter@sacvalley.org.