



# VALLEY VOICE

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 7

JULY, 2009

*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.*

## SURRENDER

## BY DAVID P. THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

"Pray for the willingness to surrender." "Surrender your ego." These are some of the suggestions that I heard as commands in my early days in the rooms, when I was confused and proud and stubborn. My understanding of surrender was: "Never! I will go down with this sinking ship; and I won't put my hands up and surrender. There will be no white flag above my life..." (I was brought up in a family headed by a Ship's Captain and came from a long line of career military.) "My understanding of surrender was: "Never! I will go down with this sinking ship...." Surrender. The word means to give in, doesn't it? I looked it up in the dictionary; I do that kind of thing now. It means "to yield something to the possession or power of another; to give oneself up, or to relinquish to some influence or emotion." When I first started attending meetings, I was certain I was in charge. But was I? Was I really in charge of anything? My life was

---

On mornings...when I acknowledge that I can only survive if I can admit I am not in control, for some strange reason, the day is easier, softer, gentler, and more serene.

---

unmanageable. I was overweight, in significant medical duress. My life, my body, my health were totally out of control in many different ways. Surrender? Never. There will be no white flags here. I will die before I give up. Wait, wait! Is that what I meant? It must have been, because that was exactly what was going to happen. If I continued down the path I was on, I would die. I would have a heart attack, and die, from this horrid disease that unites us all. I was right on one count. "Surrendering, relinquishing my way, has created a whole new world for me." Surrender does mean to give in, to relinquish to some other influence, to give in to and accept that some other influence or authority has a better way of being, a better way of existing. Surrendering, relinquishing my way, has created a whole new world for me. I would like to tell all about what has happened since I made a conscious decision to surrender but there isn't enough space on the page. I have turned my will over to the care of a Higher Power who has

a lot more sense and knowledge than I do. On mornings when I surrender and acknowledge that I am a Compulsive Overeater, when I acknowledge that I can only survive if I can admit I am not in control, for some strange reason, the day is easier, softer, gentler, and more serene. My ultimate reliance is on a Higher Power and that means someone much more qualified to run my life is now in charge. And I can tell you on the days when I wake up stubborn, on days when I wake up with my own ego going full steam ahead, the day simply does not work. Period. Amen.

---

*The art of living lies less in eliminating our troubles than in growing with them.*

*Bernard M. Baruch*

*Change and growth take place when a person has risked himself and dares to become involved with experimenting with his own life.*

*Herbert Otto*

*Heed the still small voice that so seldom leads us wrong, and never into folly.*

*Marquise du Deffand*

---

**FINDING WILLINGNESS, HONESTY, OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND MY HIGHER POWER**

Although many of the first stories in the Big Book describe sudden spiritual experiences, the onset does not always happen quickly for everyone. For some it is gradual, which is how it occurred in me. The elaboration in the "Spiritual Experience" appendix has helped me realize that my situation is not unusual, that many people have spiritual experiences in the same way. My "educational variety" of spiritual experience began with a willingness to accept that there was a Higher Power. This slowly developed into a belief in God, and I became willing to pray and meditate. I didn't know if my prayers were heard by anything, but I pictured myself releasing them into the universe. Like pitching a penny into a well, I had no idea where they went; what was important was that I made the effort. In the beginning, working on the basis that there was a God was

I didn't know if my prayers were heard by anything, but I pictured myself releasing them into the universe

an experiment for me. I proceeded only because I heard people in the rooms say it will work. Had they said it might work, I wouldn't have continued. So I tried it, and it did work. As I saw results from my willingness, I swung open the door that, up to this point, I'd only opened a crack. My willingness continued to grow, and my spiritual life grew along with it. It was on-the-job training for me, but it worked, and only over the course of a few months. Even though I felt cautious during this profound transformation in my thinking, I remained as honest as I could about the process, including my doubt and skepticism about the existence of God. This honesty has been key in the process of recovery for me. These principles of willingness, honesty, and open-mindedness are what I strive for to continue the recovery process, three words I wouldn't have ever used to describe myself before embarking on this journey.

Heather  
The Road To Recovery

*If we all worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true were really true, there would be little hope of advance.*

Orville Wright

**THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR**

Short comings and short goings.  
 What are my shortcomings?  
 Am I ready to have my shortcomings removed?  
 Am I able to ask that my shortcomings be removed?  
 Weighted down by shortcomings, how far can I go?  
 What are my limitations if I do not have shortcomings?  
 I think my goings would not be so short!

**STEP 7**

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

**TRADITION 7**

Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

**WSO NEWS**

- Financial assistance is available to translate literature. Applications due by 8-15-09
- Articles by and/or about teens are requested as well as articles on diversity and recovery
- A press release on summer travel and food addictions is available for use
- Please send in your ideas for activities for the new celebration day—Twelve Step Within each Dec. 12th. A special day to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering.
- A reminder of an amendment to the abstinence and recovery definition: Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of reframing from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the OA 12-step program.

**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.

Disclaimer: The opinions, events, quotes, etc., in this newsletter from individual OAs do not necessarily represent the views of OA as a whole. Nor is this material World Service approved. The Valley Voice is published monthly by the Sacramento Valley Intergroup. Other OA bodies may reprint without permission. Please site the writer and the Valley Voice as the source.