



# A Healing Journey

## through the 12 Steps and 12 Principles

### COURAGE

#### Principle of Step 4

#### *From Our Literature*

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”  
Spiritual Principle - Courage

“In Steps Four and Five, we learned *courage* and *integrity* as we faced the truth about our defects of character. Applying these Principles in all our affairs means we are no longer ruled by a fear of admitting our mistakes. We have the integrity to show the world our true selves. No longer needing to appear perfect, we can live more fully, having the **courage** to face up to our mistakes and test our strengths in the challenges of life.”<sup>1</sup>

*“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference”*<sup>2</sup>

“I quiet my heart and am free to listen to what my God would say to me. Sometimes, He just soothes my feelings by allowing me to tenderly feel His love within the stillness of my heart. Sometimes He gives me the willingness and the courage to face people and situations with the truths I need to express to them. Always, I am refreshed and renewed for finishing my day without the need for overeating, secure in the knowledge that I am loved.”<sup>3</sup>

**“Those of us who have completed Step Four have found that taking this searching and fearless moral inventory was one of the most loving things we have every done for ourselves.** As we took an honest look at the past, we began to understand ourselves better. That understanding was the beginning of emotional healing. Many of us had lived our lives up to this point with a secret feeling of shame. We carried deep in our hearts the feeling that we were worthless or insignificant. Often, this shame stemmed from unresolved guilt over mistakes we’d never fully dealt with. We had never faced our wrongs honestly and acknowledged them, so we were left with feelings of shame or guilt. Writing our Step Four inventory has enabled us to begin cleaning up the messes of the past so we can start life over, afresh.”<sup>1</sup>

“Ideally, we take our Step Four inventory after we have stopped eating compulsively, so that we have the clarity of mind to be thorough in our self-examination. By having a plan of eating, working with a sponsor, and using all of OA’s other Tools we are better able to become and stay abstinent, one day at a time, while doing our Fourth Step.”<sup>1</sup>

Each of us who completes a Fourth Step inventory in OA finds it essential to our recovery and a major factor in changing our lives. As we reach the end of Step Four, we discover that a promise made in Our Invitation to You<sup>3</sup> has begun to be fulfilled. We are “moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience”<sup>4</sup>.<sup>1</sup>

September 21

*“We lop away, that bearing boughs may live.” William Shakespeare*

If I kept the same ideas with which I came to OA, where would I be today? Values I acquired as a child and still follow today need questioning. The child I once was can no longer run my life. I want to give up what no longer serves me—the escapes and fantasies, the fears and the need to control. The changes that have come about since I arrived in OA are evidence of growth and hope for a still better life. If love and friendship, spontaneity and closeness are to be nurtured, dead branches must be cut away.

Working this program helps me distinguish what I no longer need from what is important, to cut away old beliefs so that new truths may be revealed and a light and useful spirit may grow strong.

For today: Cutting away old growth to make room for the new is what steps four through ten are all about. Am I doing it?”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions  
Step Eleven. © 2018 Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Serenity Prayer

<sup>3</sup>Voices of Recovery, July 16, ©2002 Overeaters  
Anonymous Inc.

<sup>4</sup>For Today ©1982 Overeaters Anonymous Inc.

# Paso a Paso



## Paso Cuatro Coraje

No me considero una persona que tenga mucho valor. Todo me da miedo. Pero yo no fui así siempre. Recuerdo que cuando era niña vivía despreocupada. Era, incluso, un poco atrevida. Recuerdo provocar a un primo mío que era más mayor y más fuerte que yo. No se lo que estaba pensando. Según mi adicción a la comida fue avanzando, también lo hicieron mis miedos y preocupaciones. Acabé teniendo bulimia, ansiedad y ataques de pánico. Aunque ya no tengo bulimia y mis ataques de pánico son poco frecuentes, todavía tengo ansiedad crónica.

Cada vez que tengo un problema pienso que es el fin del mundo y que tengo que estar todo el rato pendiente del problema hasta que se resuelva. Mi última preocupación es un error en mis impuestos. Pedí ayuda a un especialista, pero no quiero esperar. Quiero hacer yo misma los papeles y estar en control de la situación. Esto la verdad no me da mucha paz. Hablé con una persona del programa y me dijo que lo dejara en manos de los especialistas. Aquí es donde pienso que me falta el valor. Valor para vivir la vida sin estar todo el rato preocupada por lo que va a pasar.

Ayer limpié mi caja de Dios de los papelitos escritos con distintos problemas. ¡Se me habían olvidado! Después de limpiar puse el nuevo asunto en la cajita. Me doy cuenta de que no puedo aceptar que habiendo hecho todo bien, porque soy muy perfeccionista y cuento hasta el último céntimo para declarar en mis impuestos, alguien se haya equivocado y arruinado todo mi trabajo. Ahí me viene la autocompasión, ¿por qué me tiene que pasar a mí? Recuerdo una oradora de OA que se pasaba todo el rato preguntando por qué al poder superior, hasta que un día se dio cuenta que el por qué no era tan importante.

Mi mente siempre busca cosas complicadas y el programa es co-mo usar detergente para limpiarla. Puede que no tenga valor para vivir sin miedo, pero se lo puedo pedir a mi Poder Superior. No puedo encerrarme en un armario para evitar que no me pase na-da. A veces no voy de viaje porque me da miedo ir en avión, pero sin salir de casa me surgió el problema de los impuestos. Tengo varias formas de responder a mis problemas. Puedo comer y olvidarme de todo, puedo obsesionarme, tener ansiedad y dolores de cabeza, y también puedo pedir ayuda y esperar con paciencia sabiendo que mi poder superior no me ha abandonado y que un día cuando vaya a limpiar mi cajita de Dios, ni siquiera me acuerde del problema.

-anónimo

## Step Four Courage

Courage. I don't consider myself a person who has much courage. Everything scares me. But I wasn't always like that. I remember that when I was a child I lived carefree. I was even a little daring. I remember provoking a cousin of mine who was older and stronger than me. I don't know what I was thinking. As my addiction to food progressed, so did my fears and worries. I ended up having bulimia, anxiety, and panic attacks. Even though I no longer have bulimia and my panic attacks are rare, I still have chronic anxiety.

Every time I have a problem I think that it is the end of the world and that I have to be aware of the problem all the time until it is solved. My last concern is a mistake on my taxes. I asked for help from a specialist, but I don't want to wait. I want to do the paperwork myself and be in control of the situation. This really doesn't give me much peace. I spoke to a person from the program and she told me to leave it in the hands of the specialists. This is where I think I lack courage. Courage to live life without worrying all the time about what is going to happen.

Yesterday, I cleaned out my "God Box" - the little box filled with slips of paper on which I'd written down various problems. I had completely forgotten about them! After clearing it out, I placed my new issue into the little box. I realize that I simply cannot accept that - despite having done everything right (for I am a true perfectionist who accounts for every last penny when filing my taxes) - someone else made a mistake and ruined all my hard work. That is when self-pity creeps in: "Why does this have to happen to me?" I am reminded of an OA speaker who used to spend all her time asking her Higher Power "why," until one day she realized that the "why" wasn't nearly as important.

My mind is always seeking out complications, and the program is like using detergent to cleanse it. I may not have the courage to live without fear, but I can ask my Higher Power for it. I cannot simply lock myself away in a closet to ensure that nothing ever happens to me. Sometimes I forgo traveling because I am afraid of flying; yet, even without leaving the house, the problem of taxes arose. I have several ways of responding to my problems. I can eat to forget about everything; I can obsess, suffering from anxiety and headaches; or I can ask for help and wait patiently, knowing that my Higher Power has not abandoned me - and that one day, when I go to clear out my God Box, I won't even remember the problem.

-anonymous

*"What I found in OA was courage, trust, and the infinitely comforting feeling that I was not alone."*

Finding Myself, Finding Recovery  
Diverse Voices: A Common Solution

# Upcoming Events

**Announcing an OA90 Sponsorship Workshop**



**S**ponsorship Workshop

Sunday April 14th  
11am to 1pm PST  
Zoom ID 837 1100 7258  
Passcode 041424

Our sponsors say it's time for us to sponsor

*But HOW?  
Who should I sponsor?  
They will have a panel for Q&A  
Maybe that will help!  
Lets get some tips*




**Challenges & their Gifts**

Members share challenges HP allows and the gifts of recovery on the other side.  
Q&A and shares to follow

Sun April 29  
10:00am - 12:00pm PT  
Passcode: 830252

specialeventsoa@gmail.com

podcasts:  
oanyc.org/oapodcasts



**Coming Back to OA**



Tues - April 21  
4:30 - 6:00pm PT

Join us for a supportive workshop where we explore *relapse* as an opportunity to return to Overeaters Anonymous and regain hope.

Zoom meeting ID: 839 6623 4095  
Password: 829102



**ABSTINENCE WORKSHOP**

What is abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous?  
How do you build & maintain strong abstinence?

- Speaker Panel
- Breakout Rooms
- Q & A
- Fellowship

Sunday  
April 26, 2026  
12:00pm PT

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

To register scan the QR code, or save this flyer as a PDF and click the link.



<https://forms.gle/cwGdjYE37yJKSd22A>



## Life After the Binge Stories from OA Members

### Crucial Step

I had been in Overeaters Anonymous for almost three years and had lost 130 pounds. My relationship with God was the most important part of my recovery. I truly believed that God was removing my obsession with food. Then it happened. Relapse. I started gaining a little weight and became consumed by the fear of regaining it all. I expressed this fear to many OA friends. While I will always be grateful for their constant friendship during this trying time, I was unable to accept their help.

***I felt hopeless, but I kept showing up at meetings several time a week.***

The problem was that I had stopped believing in Step Two, and was totally unwilling to practice Step Three. During the next three years I gained back all my weight plus a little extra. I felt hopeless but I kept showing up at meetings several time a week. Often I considered not going because I was afraid newcomers would look at me and wonder if the program worked. Even so, I continued to go to meetings because I knew that OA and its principles were my only hope for a better life.

But what was wrong?

Finally someone suggested that I do a spiritual inventory. The seed was planted.

For weeks I considered doing the inventory, but I didn't know how to begin. I summoned the courage to ask the person who'd suggested it if she would recommend some issues I might address. I firmly believe God had placed this precious person in my life.

I followed some of her suggestions and was amazed at the outpouring of conflicts that existed between me and Higher Power. When I gave away my spiritual inventory, I realized that I needed to reevaluate my concept of God and determine what God could and would do for me. Until I took this Step, I was unable to believe that a Power greater than myself would restore my abstinence.

It was hard for me to develop my own concept of God, but once I did, I was able to turn over the extra food, the food thoughts, and my fear of dying from compulsive overeating. I have been able to stay abstinent one day at a time for nine weeks. I now want to be abstinent more than I want to overeat. This is truly a miracle from my loving Higher Power, because I was almost certain I would never experience recovery again. But God can and will do for me what I am unable to do for myself as long as I believe God alone has the power.

-Leavenworth, Kansas USA  
Abstinence, Second Edition  
© 1994, 2013 Overeaters Anonymous Inc



### "In All Our Affairs"

I'm either blessed or extremely lucky. I truly believe my Higher Power helped me to recover from my food addiction. However, He always held off telling me why He did so. Now I think I've figured it out.

In my 74 years on this earth, I kept getting diseases and challenges that have so far not killed me. Along with food addiction, I have had two major neurosurgeries for spinal disease, cancer surgery and now, total hip replacement surgery. Don't feel sorry for me. I'm leading a blessed life. My Higher Power has made it very clear to me that the reason I've been given this gift of longevity is so I can share my experiences with others. Does that sound a bit weird?

Six years ago, when I was lying on the operating room table at the cancer center waiting for my surgery, I asked my Higher Power to tell me why he gave me cancer. A month later I was in a cancer survivor group sharing my experience with other cancer patients.

It became clear to me that by using what I learned in my OA program, I was able to help other cancer patients as well as myself. The other cancer survivors were at first in awe of my "brilliance and expertise," as I came up with such unheard-of ideas as *getting a "cancer sponsor," making a "gratitude list," doing service in the cancer survivor group and reaching out and helping other cancer patients.* These actions work in OA, so why couldn't they be used by cancer patients?

Until I broke my anonymity and told the cancer group about my food addiction, none of them knew about any Twelve Step recovery programs. From then on, I've told everyone I have met in my cancer recovery about my food addiction and asked them to call me if they need any help dealing with cancer, especially if they are having trouble staying abstinent during this traumatic period in their life.

I firmly believe that the Steps of OA lay out a blueprint in which the principles of OA, such as service, are applied to ***all our affairs.*** And that includes our health issues. The satisfaction I get from helping my fellow cancer patients not only keeps me abstinent, but it helps me deal with my own cancer. Who knows? That may be the reason why God has kept me alive so long.

So, thanks to OA, I will keep sharing my experience as long as I'm able. How's that for in "***all our affairs***"?

- anonymous



Stories from  
**DIVERSE VOICES**  
A Common Solution©



## Finding Myself, Finding Recovery

### WHAT BROUGHT ME TO OA:

What brought me to OA? Half a lifetime of starving, dieting, purging, bingeing, over-exercising, self-hatred, self-harm, and the absolute unmanageability of my life. By the time I was 26 years old, I had spent twelve years struggling with a very active, all-consuming eating disorder, which led to a rotating cycle of food behaviors. I would strictly count calories for a period of time, then try eating a normal amount of food. Then I would binge, which led to vomiting or overexercising, and then go back to restricting. I had no idea that the starving was causing this cycle, and I had no idea how to stop. By the time I got to the doors of OA, I had been hospitalized and in treatment for anorexia, injured my back for the first (but not the last) time, spent a year purging in my office, abused drugs to suppress my appetite, lost friends, and, ultimately, thought about ending my life. I was also dealing with my sexual identify. I was not straight; I was not cisgender. I experienced too much fear and disordered obsession to accept either.

### WHAT I FOUND IN OA:

What I found in OA was *courage*, trust, and the infinitely comforting feeling that I was not alone. I found a sponsor, attended daily meetings, and used the tool of outreach. This led to the ability to stop purging, restricting (which helped me to stop bingeing), and hurting myself with excessive exercise. When I was able to cease practicing these behaviors, I discovered their origin. Denying any part of my identity activated my eating disorder. I realized that if I continued to suppress my sexuality and my true gender feelings, I would not be able to recover.

I found myself falling in love with the woman who is now my wife. My disease immediately told me, “*Let’s just relapse and go back to counting calories!*” Instead of listening to my disease, I texted my sponsor and shared these insane thoughts. While writing my nightly inventory, I listed three things my recovery gives me and three things relapse will take from me.

**“What I found in OA was *courage*, trust...that I was not alone.”**

When I found myself wanting to suppress and shame myself for being and wanting to come out as nonbinary, I used outreach and writing to process these complex feeling. Because of my connection to a loving Higher Power, I was able to tell my program friends my pronouns. I was able to lovingly correct fellows who misgendered me, even though it was uncomfortable and scary. I used the tool of meetings and shared about the connection between my anorexia and my gender dysphoria. This allowed me to see that my desire for a certain body type was not just about my gender identify, but that my anorexic voice was there too. I used the tool of service to revise meeting reports and reading to be gender neutral, so all fellows can feel included.

### WHAT KEEPS ME COMING BACK:

What keeps me coming back is the knowledge that, on my own, I will make my life smaller and smaller. It will shrink until it consists of nothing but counting calories, planning workouts, and triggering binges that come from restriction and ensuring unquenchable hunger. What keeps me coming back is this program: attending two to three meetings weekly, writing a Step Ten inventory daily, making sponsor calls weekly, and phoning fellows daily. This has given me the courage and the desire to find out what feels good for me and my gender expression and identify. The courage to say, “I’m going to try finding my chest.” The courage and willingness to playfully experiment with my pronouns and tell them to my mother. The courage to allow my gender to be as fluid and flexible as I am. Most of all, I keep coming back because it allows me to want and have a bigger and bigger life, one that is messy, gay, and nonbinary!

-anonymous



## Courage

**“*Courage* can be a silent act, a quiet work, a refusal—or an acceptance. *Courage* has no guarantees, or certain outcomes. It is a risk taken on an unknown path. *Courage* brings about change.**

**Growth is dependent on *courage*. Today I can risk, because I am not afraid to make a mistake. I am ready for change. I can make choices, not out of fear or recklessness, but out of a new willingness to resolve old problems, to rid myself of old ideas.”**

Abstracted from For Today, June 28th  
© 1982 Overeaters

Anonymous, Inc.

### How Can I better Love Myself and my Body as I am?

- \* Look and see the radiance of love and joy through your body and spirit.
- \* Appreciate the miracle of yourself as a living being.
- \* Continue to work towards a healthy body weight. Not for the purpose to beautify, but to enhance and support the miracle of your being, and the incredible person you are.

anonymous

### OA Gave Me the Courage to Risk a Long-Term Relationship

I came into OA at the age of 22, weighting 300 pounds. I felt accepted, understood, loved, and welcomed at my very first meeting. I also met my very best friend in that first meeting. We've been best friends for twenty-two years and still talk every day, I got spirituality and willingness right away and quickly lost over 100 pounds.

Without my fat as a shield, I felt vulnerable. For the first time, men noticed me. I became promiscuous and I was always asking people if I was fat. I relapsed and gained back all the weight I had lost, plus more. For a long time, I could not stand to look at myself in the mirror—a large part of why I ate is because I was bullied and called ugly in school. I believed it.



Today, no matter what weight I am, I can look at myself in the mirror and say, "You're beautiful, and I love you." I have been in a wonderful relationship for nine years now. We love and support each other and lift each other up as we go through life's ups and downs. We plan to get married soon. But I never could have been in this wonderful relationship without OA

OA gave me my self-esteem and confidence. I went through many bad relationships with men who were mentally, verbally, emotionally, and physically abusive before I found the right guy, (flaws and all). I thank God every day for letting me be alive and well. I found love and lasting friendships in OA.

-anonymous  
Body Image, Relationships, and Sexuality  
©2020 Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

### How I Quit Stonewalling Step Four

God must love the challenge of working with hardheads because so far H.P. hasn't given up on me. I spent my first year in Overeaters Anonymous and, before that, three years in Al-Anon stonewalling the suggestion that a written inventory would aid my recovery. During this rebellious period I took mental inventories in all kinds of places - for example, standing over the kitchen sink washing dishes. Then I conveyed them to my sponsor on a share-as-you go basis. It seemed a fine system. I kept hearing "written" is best, but I clung to my own ideas.

Then I heard a gifted speaker sum up the underlying attitude of people who procrastinate in taking a written inventory: "*Fear says I dare not; pride says I need not.*" *Wrong*, my head screamed. Sure, I had defects; but fear wasn't a biggie for me. Maybe a little pride, but certainly not the inventory-blocking kind. I laugh now at the con job involved in this thinking. The deception, of course, affected no one but me.

The "fear and pride" quote haunted me until I finally decided to write a fourth-step inventory and be done with it. Still, excuse after excuse delayed my acting on this half-hearted decision. I thought, "I'll never finish... Where should I start?... What's the right way so I don't have to do it twice?... Where shall I keep it?... What if someone reads it?" A small, quiet voice inside said, "It doesn't matter how. Just do it."

I took out my notebook and wrote, even though it wasn't what I thought I should write: no past history or list of defects, simply what was causing me anxiety at the moment. The next day I reread what I'd written and began again, this time putting down similar feelings and behaviors from the past. I learned a little about myself that day. I was encouraged and enthused as I glimpsed the benefits of inventory writing.

Quick thinking may be great in its place, but it is a handicap when it comes to in-depth inventory taking. Writing slows down my thought processes and enables me to back track over the thoughts I have expressed on paper. This increases my self-awareness far beyond what was possible over the kitchen sink. As I wrote, I could see threads weaving through my life, all connected to certain key defects. These defects were causing me a great deal of pain.

I learned the importance of taking a positive attitude when writing an inventory. It fosters humility to gain an honest understanding of myself—to see both my positive and negative sides and put the whole in perspective with God and the world around me.

Since that first experience, much of my inventory writing has been a God-given accident. Often a letter to an OA friend turns into an inventory, I haven't lost a friend yet. On the contrary, it is through my friends' love and acceptance of me in spite of my "craziness" that I am able to love myself even when I'm feeling squirrely.

Amazement, gratitude and love overwhelm me when I think about what OA has done over the past eight years. Where it all began for me was the decision to do without the excess food for just one day. It was the best decision I ever made. It wasn't easy at first, but looking and feeling as I did at 200 pounds wasn't easy either.

Today I see so many blessings in my life. I maintain a 90-pound weight loss. Food is no longer an obsession. My relationships with family friends and co-workers keep improving. I am so glad I didn't settle for half-measures and become a one- or two-stepper. Instead, I use everything OA offers me to make my life better inside and out.

September 1982—*Lifeline Sampler*  
© 1985 Overeaters Anonymous

**IF YOU WANT SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER HAD,  
THEN YOU MUST BE WILLING TO DO SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER DONE.**



To be  
healed in  
Body, Mind  
and Spirit

## “The Best Is Yet To Be”

Growing Together  
in Program



Now that I have passed my fifteenth year with Overeaters Anonymous, I pause to reflect on the many benefits I have derived from our program and those that continue to unfold.

When I took the first step, these many years ago, I admitted my powerlessness over food, my emotions and my disease. Today, I still have to confront this powerlessness, accept it and go on from there.

I have learned that no matter how discouraging it may seem, no life situation is permanent and inevitable. Through OA, the door to change is always open.

I, a woman who never in the world would have let you know how I felt, can now express my feelings. Secrecy was the chief symptom of my disease: I had a secret world in which I did my secret eating. The day this world began to disintegrate was the day I started opening up to people.

Where once I ran to escape myself, needing to be surrounded constantly with noise and excitement, I now meditate and find strength in silence.

Gradually I have assimilated the words of the Serenity Prayer. I find myself bending more readily to what I must accept. And when I need courage to face the hard challenges, it is usually there. Often, it turns out that what I need is the *courage* to fail. The lessons I have learned from failure have, in the long run brought me rewards surpassing those of easy successes. To know this is to realize that I have not really failed.

I have learned that it is easier to dwell on what is right than what is wrong, and that positive thoughts establish a pattern of positive action.

I have learned to be flexible in all things including abstinence. It has been said that when a person falls, it is less likely that any bones will break if one is relaxed. If on the other hand one is tense and rigid, a fall may well fracture an arm or a leg. So it is with abstinence. If I am flexible, I know that I can begin again; that a break in abstinence is not unforgivable; that I always have a chance. It is my spiritual condition that is important, not what I eat.

I have learned that OA is not a diet program, a reducing program, a twenty-one day program or any other kind of program except a one-day-at-a-time program. I refuse to project my abstinence beyond this twenty-four hours.

I have learned that if I cannot accept myself fat, there is no way I will accept myself thin. I accept myself exactly as I am, *where* I am, knowing that with all my imperfections, I am the best me I'm capable of being today.

Because I can now “go with love,” I tell everyone I sponsor to do so. There isn't a human alive who can resist a positive affirmation of love. I can only give love when I see you through the eyes of love. It doesn't matter if you are unable to respond. Sending is my business; receiving it yours.

I have learned the art of listening. I can now hear you. Listening is a way of loving.

I have learned, after years of yearning to be a part of someone or something, that I belong to a community. Although I was married for forty years to a man I loved, I still felt I did not belong. I found that is impossible to have a sense of belonging when one is alienated from one's real self. With acceptance of myself and this Fellowship of loving men and women, I find a common belonging and a common goal with them and with all of life.

I have learned that there are no coincidences in my life. I am put in the right place at the right time by my Higher Power. I no longer have to live the program by myself. The guidance and direction I once longed for and despaired of attaining are mine for the asking.

I have learned that I am worth saving. Once, when I heard an AA speaker say that, I couldn't understand it. Today, worth and dignity are elements in my life that I cherish.

Today, I can give to others what the program has given to me. I must give service to my group, to the intergroup, to my region and to World Service. It is only by giving that I can hope to keep the gift of the blessed program.

These fifteen years have been the happiest, most fulfilling, most “learning” years of my life. Above all, I have learned gratitude.

Only in Overeaters Anonymous is it possible for me to believe, with Robert Browning, that as I grow in the program, “***the best is yet to be.***”

## Footwork

The other day a friend and I were sitting on a park bench. She was saying that her food was out of control. She was going to pray for the willingness to become abstinent.

A memory flashed into my mind: Spring, 1986, down by the duck pond. My sponsor was discussing abstinence with me. I'd been in program for about a month and was struggling with my food plan. She was trying to explain how abstinence was achieved.

"You need to pray for the willingness to place abstinence above the short-term gratification of food. Abstinence is a gift given by God. Ask God for abstinence, and it will be given to you." I went home and prayed to God for the willingness to become abstinent. Apparently God was out of abstinence. I wasn't given the gift.

After reporting God's failure to grant my request, my sponsor sat me down to explain the facts of life. She bought out *For Today*. Turning to May 15, she read: "Pray to God, but continue to row to shore." She explained to me what that line meant. I wasn't supposed to just pray to God and expect results. I was supposed to pray for the energy to be abstinent and put effort into the process. I was to be an active partner. She quoted another saying, "Pray as though everything depended on God, and act as though everything depended on you."

She told me that prayer would work if I put muscle into it. To protect myself from the impulse of breaking my abstinence, prayer was most effective if done away from the food. I had to put the fork down first and then enlist God's help. Somehow the desire to be abstinent was stronger when my hands were folded in my lap instead of wrapped around a fork.

This technique worked. Each meal began with the Third-Step prayer. I became abstinent with God's Help. I was rowing to shore. Back in the present I turned to my friend with a smile. "My sponsor told me to pray to God, but continue to row to shore. Let me tell you how it works."

- Wisconsin USA  
A New Beginning: Stories of Recovery from Relapse  
© 1998 Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.



## Day 6 of 12-day Temporary Sponsorship Training

I have mixed feelings about receiving help from other members. Sometimes I feel resistant to their help and actually can take offense – especially if I'm not a fan of the person offering the help. Other times I get annoyed by people who just spout off some trite OA tag lines – leaving me feeling unheard and misunderstood. I don't want them to fix me. I want them to listen and work with me to get to the root and support me finding my path.

I'm open to receiving help. The caveat to this statement is that the help has to come in a way that I can take it in, hear it and digest it. That's hard for someone to know about me so that they can actually be a help.

There is a part of me that doesn't expect to get "help" from people. "What could they offer that will break through my problem/condition/mindset to bring me to the other side so I can keep going or get renewed energy for commitment?" That sense of grandiosity/superiority/uniqueness, futility, resignation, weakness, unwillingness screws me up all the time.

Sometimes, I just need an ear to listen to me as I try to process out loud. Someone who can help me dismantle some long held, long hidden belief that is either a false belief or not useful to me in my life today. Sometimes the help I need from people is to just be able to call them to rest in the comfort of their presence with me, their voice...

Other times, I look for people who help by telling me their struggles, failures, successes and experience so I can see if there is some idea or concept or behavior that I can duplicate for myself – something that my mind will say "I can do that", or "I never thought about that in that way", or "yeah, I'm going to use that phrase/behavior/method... It makes sense to me and has a grounded impact on my thinking".

Sometimes I'm afraid to call people because:

- I don't expect them to really care about me
- I'm afraid of being preached to
- I feel awkward and don't know what to say. Do I limit my conversation to OA only or try to talk about other things?
- I don't really care; I'm just doing it because I'm supposed to
- I just want to whine, or vent about things – not always associated with OA stuff to get things out of my mind/body

I don't think I'm alone. Accepting help from others (sponsors, OA fellows...) is scary. This is my experience.

-anonymous

## SERENITY IN THE SIERRAS

39th Annual Tahoe Retreat  
July 31 - August 2, 2026

Register Today - it sells out fast!

<https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/tahoe-retreat.html>

## Intergroup Board

Chair	<a href="mailto:oachair@sacvalleyoa.org">oachair@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Katy H	(559) 392-7550
Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org">oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Christi C	(707) 366-2171
Treasurer	<a href="mailto:otreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org">otreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org</a>	Sharon E	(916) 813-4101
Webmaster	<a href="mailto:webmaster@oasacvalley.org">webmaster@oasacvalley.org</a>	Gerri S	(808) 250-1212
Secretary	<a href="mailto:oasecretary@oasacvalley.org">oasecretary@oasacvalley.org</a>	Shira D	(707) 235-0207
Region 2	.....	Steve H	(650) 224-4094
Region 2	.....	Mika M	(619) 341-3155
WSBC	.....	Cara D	(209) 329-9927
WSBC	.....	Curt B	(510) 435-3246

Committee Title	Specific Tasks	Chair
Bylaws	Bylaws/Policy & Procedures Review/Update	Scarlet H
Events	Events Support	Christina S
Group Support	Meeting/Zoom Support	Nici P
	Speaker List Maintenance	Emily M
Answer Phone	Answer Phone	Carla S
Newsletter	Newsletter Editor	Mary L
	Contributing Editor	Rosa N
Meeting List	Meeting List Coordinator	Susan L
Public Outreach	Public Outreach Support	Nancy Mc
Retreat	Retreat Coordination	Angie
Special Population Focus	Special Population Support	Raven Y
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Resource Management	Dee G (775) 790-5419

**2025 Dec 31st- 7th Tradition Contributions to Intergroup**

Day	Time	City	WSO#	Group	Individual	Total	Total 2024	
Sun	3:30 p.m.	Sacramento	56483		277.27	277.27	270.00	
Sun	4:00 p.m.	Sacramento	54797	298.53	419.24	717.77	369.11	
Sun	6:00 p.m.	Chico	45601	1,211.36	94.00	1,305.36	722.10	
Mon	10:00 a.m.	Stockton	57338	174.71		174.71	154.62	
Mon	12:30 a.m.	Nevada City	53250	5.00	1,106.62	1,111.62	1,201.41	
Mon	1:00 p.m.	Stockton	89663		74.52	74.52	240.40	
Mon	5:30 p.m.	Carson City, NV	801956	141.39		141.39	95.16	
Mon	5:30 p.m.	Modesto	53717		420.30	420.30	569.04	
Mon	5:30 p.m.	North Reno, NV	41148	335.50		335.50	506.80	
Mon	6:30 p.m.	Rancho Cordova	45680			-	134.51	
Mon	7:00 p.m.	Yuba City	57050		268.93	268.93	201.41	
Tues	12:00 p.m.	Sacramento	36145	768.55	1,445.48	2,214.03	2,282.63	
Tues	5:30 p.m.	Davis	56921	642.20	906.45	1,548.65	430.75	
Tues	5:30 p.m.	Sacramento	57914			-	120.00	
Tues	6:00 p.m.	Chico	52849		313.41	313.41	210.92	
Wed	9:00 a.m.	Stockton	89493		328.96	328.96	359.41	
Wed	10:00 a.m.	Auburn	58049	602.70		602.70	84.00	
Wed	10:30 a.m.	Sparks, NV	800674	295.02	100.00	395.02	270.00	
Wed	1:30 p.m.	Stockton, CA	58082			-	-	
Wed	5:30 p.m.	Gardnerville, NV	89947	146.30		146.30	89.02	
Wed	6:30 p.m.	Sacramento	57929	549.38	388.69	938.07	161.16	
Thu	12:00 p.m.	Sacramento	20215	525.54	5.00	530.54	814.96	
Thu	3:00 p.m.	Stockton	30896		207.60	207.60	217.36	
Thu	5:30 p.m.	Stockton	57235			-	-	
Thu	6:00 p.m.	Chico	54397		389.55	389.55	205.79	
Thu	7:00 p.m.	Auburn	58473			-	-	
Fri	12:00 p.m.	Carson City, NV	50936	168.78		168.78	216.61	
Fri	5:00 p.m.	Grass Valley	57918	89.99		89.99	260.00	
Friday	2:00 p.m.	Placerville	58513			-	-	
Fri	5:30 p.m.	Yuba City	57644			-	-	
Fri	7:00 p.m.	Yuba City	52984		283.68	283.68	309.41	
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Folsom	39494	1,199.81	455.18	1,654.99	592.96	
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Rocklin	18446	1,114.45		1,114.45	1,887.76	
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Sacramento	29079	1,510.03	1,088.05	2,598.08	2,971.77	
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Sacramento(zoom)	801435	863.93	682.66	1,546.59	397.39	
Sat	9:00 a.m.	Stockton	54051		187.97	187.97	236.01	
Sat	9:30 a.m.	Sparks, NV	50938	275.00	150.04	425.04	652.56	
Sat	6:00 p.m.	Sacramento	89410		19.98	19.98	20.00	
Individuals \$ to Intergroup Gen Fund					1,355.31	1,355.31	454.02	
Closed Meetings					177.99	5.00	182.99	852.53
<b>Total</b>					<b>11,096.16</b>	<b>10,973.89</b>	<b>22,070.05</b>	<b>18,561.58</b>

## Intergroup Meeting

TUES APRIL 14  
7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

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

## Submitting Stories of Personal Recovery

All stories are welcome! In addition, each month we will be highlighting one of the Twelve Steps and its Spiritual Principle. In **MAY**

**Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

**Spiritual Principle: INTEGRITY**

Submit stories via email to [marylush@comcast.net](mailto:marylush@comcast.net) by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter.

## Meeting List Link

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