

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.

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Step, Tradition, & Concept of the Month

Step 4: Spiritual Principle is **COURAGE**

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Tradition 4: Spiritual Principle is **AUTONOMY**

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

Concept 4: Spiritual Principle is **EQUALITY**

The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

OVERHEARD



I get a daily reprieve from the thinking that precedes the eating.

My favorite drug was MORE.

Step 4 teaches me what other people do is none of my business.

Please call me.
I need to hear what I'm going to tell you.

Serenity is not the absence of conflict, it's the ability to cope with it.

Food was not my problem.
I used food to deal with life.

When the pain of where I am overwhelms the fear of where I am going, then I am ready and willing to grow and change.



 **VIRTUAL REGION WORKSHOP**

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

SERVICE KEEPS US IN PROGRAM

Sun April 10
12:00 noon PT

Meeting ID: 891 6554 0024
Passcode: 120912

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89165540024?pwd=eXZWSUNNdVhtZ3hHZHZjY2RRejJkdz09>
For more information go to oavirtualregion.org



Stark, Raving Abstinent!

After ten years of exposure to the OA program, I still experience that periodic

phenomenon referred to as "stark, raving abstinent." A period of temporary insanity. A self-imposed separation from others and from God. When I try to run my own current like a battery without a generator, it soon runs down and becomes quite dead.

The times of the greatest danger of self-destruction were when I attempted egotistically to take over the reins of my life and tried to exercise total control over my own affairs. I'm capable of emotional extremes ranging from feelings of unbounded elation to depths of dark despair.

My emotions can fluctuate much like the weather. When all seems to be going well, my general feeling of well-being is like a "high pressure" weather area, accompanied by clear, blue skies and lots of sunshine.

But then there develops a turbulence and confusion in the atmosphere, a mental confusion, an emotional jag. I have a difficult day with a number of negative events. Mix in fatigue, worry, stress and anger and you have a "stark, raving abstinent" OA in the making.

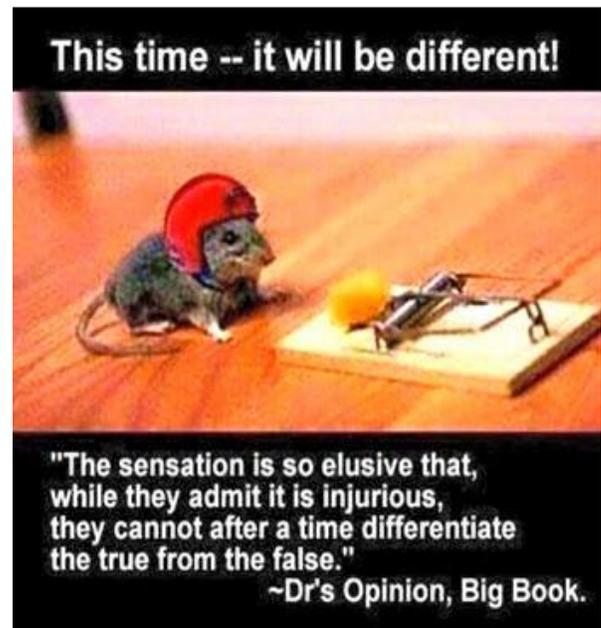
The antidote is contained in the Twelve Steps. Attending more meetings, helping others – even a simple phone call inquiring about an OA fellow – can shake me loose from my exaggerated self-concern. I can't express love and self-pity at the same time. Showing concern for another helps me see how foolish I have been. How I have literally trapped myself in that familiar mental "squirrel cage."

When nothing works, I can say "Today I am sick." I have a spiritual disorder – a separateness from God as I understand Him. During an emotional bender I can admit I am powerless over my emotions and my life is more unmanageable than usual. It helps to discuss this with another OA to see clearly where I went wrong.

Becoming "stark, raving abstinent" is mostly a childish tantrum. An interval of immaturity. A regression to those frantic bingeing days of self-will run riot.

It can still be a perilous period for a compulsive eater struggling for recovery. I know there have been dark days when a will greater than my own has been responsible for my abstinence.

- anonymous



False Evidence Appearing Real

Shortly after completing my fourth Step for the first time, I had a profound spiritual experience. I had been an atheist all my life but had been brought to my knees and was willing to suspend my disbelief because I needed something to work, something to change. I found a sponsor who had what I wanted, and I did what she suggested. I prayed for the first time in my life, and I began to develop my own spiritual beliefs.

Then, one day, I was walking on the beach not doing or thinking anything in particular when I was overwhelmed by the knowledge that I had spent my entire life in fear. Fear of people. Fear of places. Fear of change... I felt this on a cellular level as though my entire body was physically filled with this new understanding.

Immediately after this, I was flooded with the assurance that there was absolutely nothing to fear. Nothing. Ever. Again. It was a physical experience. Saying that my body felt filled with light may be cliché, but it comes closest to describing what was an indescribable feeling.

This was many years ago, and I've never had another experience like it. My memory is short and invariably I forget this experience. Fear creeps back into my life. But I recently worked through my fourth, sixth, and seventh steps again and was reminded. Fear truly is:

False **E**vidence **A**ppearing **R**eal.

- anonymous

Last Night's



MEETING

During this morning's quiet time, I started wondering if I needed to go to last night's meeting. I'm almost thirteen years abstinent. I have some serenity in my life and am active in OA service work. I have a wonderful partner and a great job. I owe all of this to OA.

But this morning, I started wondering: If I had not gone to that meeting, what would have happened? Would I have picked up the food, lost my serenity, quit doing service or lost my partner and job? Probably not. Then what would have happened if I had missed last night's meeting?

I would have missed Diane (names have been changed), three weeks out of a treatment center, celebrating her "belly button" birthday with a call from her mom. Or missed Ella share about relapsing after 15 years when she stopped going to meetings. I would have missed John realize the promise of losing his fear of economic insecurity.

I have learned that I have only today. I can't live in yesterday. I can't worry about tomorrow. God has given me this day as a gift. What I do with it is my gift to him.

So I think I'll go to tonight's meeting. Maybe I'll hear Kate share about the love of her kids. Maybe I'll hear Patty share about her 3 years in recovery that started with her neighbor asking her for a ride to her first OA meeting. Maybe I'll hear Steve, with his beat up Big Book, share about the wonders of a God of his understanding. Maybe I'll finally hear that newcomer share for the first time... and I certainly don't want to miss that! Maybe I'll hear you.

And I'll be able to stay abstinent one more day listening to experience, strength and hope being shared, because that's what happened when I went to last night's meeting!

- anonymous



The Keys to Relief

As I approach my fourth year in OA, I am beginning to realize that working the 12 Steps offers me far more than abstinence and weight loss. It gives me the opportunity to take a little more responsibility for my entire life!

This opportunity for a deeper, more satisfying relationship with myself and others brought me back into OA a more humble and a more attentive member. In my humble opinion, the keys to relief from my compulsive eating and other problems include:

- my ability to laugh at myself and view myself with less solemnity;
- the ability to assume a greater measure of emotional responsibility with myself and others;
- the knowledge that the 12 Step program offers me relief from ALL emotional disturbances.

Only the first Step deals with my personal food problem. The remaining 11 steps, it seems to me, are aimed toward helping me achieve greater emotional maturity.

- anonymous

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

NORTH CASCADE INTERGROUP

SPEAKER MEETING

Sat — April 23

10:00 — 11:30 a.m. PST



TWO SPEAKERS WILL SHARE THEIR
EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH, and HOPE
FOLLOWED BY Q & A

Meeting ID: 844 5138 9682
Passcode: NCI0422



recovery inspires shared experiences

Our mission is to provide inspiring speaker meetings of depth and authenticity while supporting World Service through financial contributions.

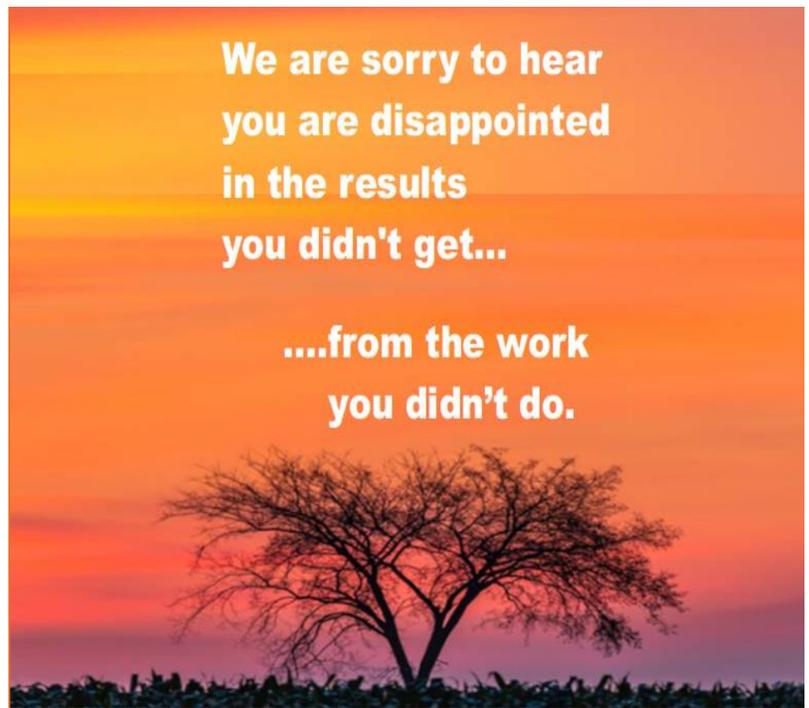
Upcoming Speaker Topics:

SUN—APRIL 3
The Spiritual Principles of OA – in Daily Life

SUN –APRIL 17
(TBA)

1-4 p.m. PDT **Overeaters Anonymous**
Registered Meeting #88993

Meetings held regularly on the first & third Sundays of each month
Zoom ID: 947 2125 9974 Password: 810562



Writing the *DREADED* Step 4 Inventory

I spent my first year in OA 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 an OA 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 actually 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... Who'll have time to listen? It'll be too long....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.” So I took out my notebook and began writing.

I discovered that writing slowed down my thought processes and increased 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. Defects which were causing me a great deal of pain.

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.

So today I can recognize so many blessings in my life. My relationships with family, friends and co-workers keep improving. And I am now willing to use everything OA offers me to make my life better.

- anonymous



When I came into OA it was to help a friend. Both of us were obese. And she had heard that you could achieve long-lasting weight loss by following the OA program. But she did not want to go alone. So I agreed to go with her. I, of course, did not have a problem myself, mind you. Even though I was returning at an alarming rate to my top weight of 400 pounds. But I did not have a problem.

I went. I listened. I heard two important ideas: 1. Keep coming back, it works; and 2. A Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. I knew everyone else in the room was crazy. And I of course was not. But I sure needed some sanity in my life. So I decided to give OA six to eight weeks and see what happened. Every night I was eating twenty candy bars and then puking my guts out. That's when I learned how to be humble and ask for help. I used just three words: “Oh, God, please....”

-story continued on page 5

...continued from page 4

By working this spiritual program of recovery I have been able to forgive myself for many things. I have been abstinent for more than a year. And I am approaching my goal weight – a feat I've never achieved as an adult.

Thanks to OA, I am a happy and functioning human being who faces each new day optimistically, one day at a time.

- anonymous

My Coming of Age

I am no longer concerned with the cause of my food addiction-- only with the effect. When I first came into OA, I searched for reasons that caused me to acquire the disease of compulsive overeating. It seemed to me that this search was necessary in order to justify the kind of person I had become and what I had done to my family and friends. I believed that nothing happens without a reason, and I still believe this.

But gradually, as I struggled toward complete honesty with myself, I came to the conclusion that I simply had never passed from childish to adult thinking. I had failed to develop an adult point of view towards life and turned to food to avoid problems or situations which I felt I incapable of handling. Such as feeling ill at ease with people; the responsibility of marriage; the responsibility of divorce, being a single parent; fear of loneliness, to be among people and yet never feel accepted by them.

When I finally came to the realization that I had remained a child, unable to cope with life and its normal trials and tribulations on an adult basis, and when I stopped blaming people and situations for my overeating, I began to grow up.

I made amends where possible to those whom I had hurt. Although I firmly believed that they had hurt me, I began to see that in reality I had hurt them.

Three Magic Words



Newcomers sometimes ask me how I've been able to stay abstinent so long. My answer is always the same: Every morning, the first thing I do is say three magic words-
"God, help me."

That my behavior had caused them to act as they had towards me. This realization brought me a feeling of peace and relief.

There is tremendous satisfaction in looking at myself honestly-- both the good and the bad sides-- and discovering I can really begin to like and respect myself after all. I can welcome responsibility and feel for the first time in my life that I am becoming a mature and responsible person.

The OA program is a wonderful way of life. And it is the adult way. This program is not for children, but for grown men and women. We may come into OA as children, but in my opinion it is impossible to work this program and remain a child.

- anonymous

SPONSOR

GET ONE



USE ONE



BE ONE



HONESTY

I always thought of myself as an honest person- "honest as the day is long" as the old adage says. I always return what I borrow. If a sales clerk gives the wrong change I make it right. If asked to keep a confidence I honestly do!

However prior to coming to OA I was dis-honest about food and I lied to my Higher Power by giving food more power than my Higher Power. I lied to myself and gave food so much power over me. Eating more and more and needing more and more. And not seeing all the damage that was resulting.

Prior to OA I led a dishonest life and am pleased now to be honest as the day is long, one day at a time.

Now I can honestly declare that following the OA program, and guided by a Higher Power, results in serenity, peace, hope and a full life. The fellowship of meetings through Zoom and telephone continues to offer an honest approach to living and to battling compulsive overeating.

My life is not always hilarious or successful but it is full and guided by One who is greater than me. Working with a sponsor, writing and seeking is making an honest person out of me for which I'm truly grateful.

- anonymous

SVIOA News & Information

Meetings * Events * Intergroup

SVIOA Meeting List

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

Events

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

Intergroup Meetings

7 - 8 p.m.

Every 2nd Tues. of each month

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

Meeting ID: 984 7782 1659

Passcode: 860953

Intergroup Board

Chair	oachair@sacvalleyoa.org	Jan H.	(916) 616-1466
Vice Chair	oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org	Scarlet H.	(916) 505-0360
Secretary	oasecretary@sacvalleyoa.org	Emily H.	(916) 718-2070
Treasurer	oatreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org	Joel W.	(916) 397-8276
Region 2	oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Curt B.	(510) 435-3246
	oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Kathryn K.	(209) 988-1172
	oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Nancy Mc.	(916) 698-0541
WSBC	oawsbc@sacvalleyoa.org	Barbara M.	(916) 203-6025
	oawsbc@sacvalleyoa.org	Judy L.	(916) 799-5804
	sdallama@me.com	Les F.	(775) 813-4076
Webmaster	webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org	Phil K.	(916) 768-4549

Intergroup Committees

Committee Title	Specific Tasks	Chair	Chair Email
Bylaws	Bylaws and Policy & Procedures Review/Update	Scarlet H.	oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org
Events	Events Support	Sandra S.	divingal17@gmail.com
Group Support	Meeting & Video Conference Support	Gerri S.	alohagerri@aol.com
Answer Phone, Newsletter, and Meeting List	Speaker List Maintenance	VACANT	
Public Outreach	Answer Phone Maintenance	Diane B.	iamdianeb@outlook.com
Retreat	Newsletter Editor	Christina H.	ohxina@gmail.com
Special Population Focus	Meeting List Coordinator	Dawn S.	dawn.strickler@gmail.com
Sponsorship	Public Outreach Support	VACANT	
	Retreat Coordination	Rick Z.	rick@directdigitalcontrols.com
	Special Population Support	VACANT	
	Sponsorship Resources Maintenance	Cary H.	caryhh2002@yahoo.com

Share Your Story

The Valley Voice needs you! Consider sharing your experience, strength, and hope in OA. From newcomers to oldtimers, your unique stories are what makes us keep coming back. All our articles are anonymous. You are in a safe space here in the Valley Voice. If you need a topic, consider focusing on our next Step, Tradition, and Concept of the month (4th). However, this is only a suggestion and all OA stories are welcome! Email your story to Christina H. at ohxina@gmail.com for our April edition. Thank you for your service and for carrying the message.

Chatter

from the SVIOA Chair



SPOTLIGHT: Service Opportunities

Sac Valley Intergroup currently has three wonderful service opportunities available. We're looking for folks who might like to:

- (1) Maintain and provide the Speaker List upon request;
- (2) Oversee our Public Outreach efforts; or
- (3) Support Special Population Focus members/meetings.

For more information about these positions, check out the website at:

<https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/committee-chairs.html>

or contact me at oachair@sacvalleyoa.org or call me at (916) 616-1466.

It's really fun and, just like we everything we do, we do in fellowship, never alone.

I had the great good fortune to attend the R2 Assembly along with two of our R2 Reps, Nancy Mc and Kathryn K. the last weekend in March. What a wonderful experience! If you go to the April Intergroup meeting, you can hear the highlights of the assembly from our reps.

Speaking of the monthly Intergroup meetings, did you know that ANYONE is WELCOME to attend?? Please log on to see what it's all about. Perhaps it will spark a new light to compliment and strengthen your recovery. Hope to see you soon!

*In loving service,
Jan H.*

Recovery Across the Sea

Although we all miss seeing and hugging each other in person, Zoom provided us with a special gift. Right after SVIOA shut down all our in-person meetings, one of our members put her name in a meeting CHAT as an available sponsor. A woman contacted her... and her soon to be sponsee now has 18 months of abstinence!

In a few months our SVIOA fellow is flying off to South Africa with her husband to meet this sponsee carrying with her a 3 month, 6 month, 9 month and one year chip... (she couldn't find an 18 month anniversary chip). Recovery knows no boundaries!