November 2022

Valley Voice

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS® SACRAMENTO VALLEY INTERGROUP

Vol 22 Issue 11

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.

"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, Tradition, Concept

Spiritual Principles: Spiritual Awareness, Anonymity, and Humility

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

Don't expect results
from work you didn't put in

Food isn't my problem,
I'm the problem.

We don't go through the steps,
we GROW through the steps

Change is never painful,
only resistance to change is painful.

I no longer serve GOD
in an advisory capacity.

Stay away from the long timers. They will tell you things about yourself that will piss you off.

A GOOD DAY is when everything goes my way
And I stay abstinent.
A GREAT DAY is when nothing goes my way
And I stay abstinent.

Love is Our Glue

When I first came to OA, I didn't know how to love. I was told that if I wanted to stay abstinent, I would have to learn to love; that in order to learn to love anyone else, I would have to learn to love myself. I didn't know what the hell they were talking about.

The OA group is a gathering of sharing, caring, loving people. More important, they love each other as discrete individuals, not as members of a group. Why? Because they need each other, and they know it. And they are willing to admit it - out loud.

Caring and sharing was the soil in which my seed of love could grow. Through the Twelve Steps, I was shown how to sweep aside my concern with self, to discard the selfishness and arrogance that stood in the way. All these were obstacles to love. And as I began to learn to turn my life and will over to God as I understood Him, the first faint glimmerings of humility began to appear.

Finally the awakening came, and for the first time in my life, I had the unique experience we call love. It was not the "I want everyone to love me, and I'll do anything to get it" love. It was simply "I love you" - without reservation, qualification, or expectation.

In an OA meeting, I know I am in the kind of community where love is our glue.

Through OA, I have learned that we are all born with a single set of instructions - to love one another. Our success in this world depends totally on how well we follow those instructions. To me, it is as beautifully simple as that.

- anonymous

Holiday Tips

- **Focus on the true meaning of the holiday rather than the food**
- **Prepare! Call ahead and find out what food is being served.**
- **Volunteer to bring a dish (something you can eat safely).**
- **Focus on the people rather than the food.**
- **Engage in "real" conversation...and really listen.**
- **Say the Serenity Prayer before each meal.**
- **Ask HP to guard your abstinence FOR TODAY!**
- **Use the time between meals to call an OA fellow.**
- **Form a group and text gratitudes to each other throughout the day.**

STAY CONNECTED!

The 12 Steps Work Like a Crowbar

The 12 Steps worked like a crowbar, prying into my dishonesty and fear. I didn't like the things I learned about myself, but I didn't want to go back where I had come from. I found out that there was no substance on the planet that could help me get honest. I would do just about anything to avoid working on myself.

The thing that kept me abstinent until I got a grip on honesty was the love in the rooms of OA. I made some friends for the first time in my life. Real friends who cared, even when I was feeling desperate.

At 22 months of abstinence, I was finally able to complete an honest inventory. The 5th Step enabled me to see my part in my resentments and fears.

In the Big Book I learned about The Bedevilments (p. 52) and The Four Horsemen (p.151), which I call "the 12 negatives." They provided me with knowledge about my reactions to the conditions in mylife.

Every response to every resentment, real or imagined, had been sick and self-destructive. I was allowing others to control my sense of well-being and behavior.

I came to understand that the behavior, opinions, and thoughts of others were none of my business. The only business I was to be concerned with was my own!

I asked my Higher Power to remove from me everything that stood in the way of my usefulness to Him and others, and to help me build a new life.

- anonymous

I Get What I Need

"...my Higher Power always takes care of my needs."

Getting abstinent does not necessarily mean that we ride off into the sunset. When I was two years abstinent, I was laid off from a high-paying job. But today I count myself blessed to be employed again.

My ego would argue that in light of my qualifications and experience, I should have a higher-paying, more prestigious position. But I learned not to listen to that voice when it gets on my case like that.

I learned that no matter what the circumstances, my Higher Power has placed me here for a reason. And I also learned what is really important in life. As undesirable as it may seem, I have support and encouragement from friends in OA to get through difficult times.

I have a sponsor to lean on. I have tools I use to deal with work stress. I journal three pages per day and I meditate. I've learned to do yogic breathing when I feel aggravated at work. I have friends in OA who listen to me and help me understand why I have been placed in this situation. And I, in turn, listen to them.

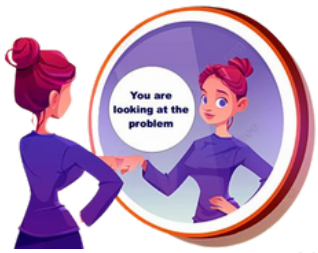
As I stay connected to my Higher Power, I truly believe I am serving my purpose as I do my job, I feel I'm able to make a difference in the lives of those I come in contact with. I do sometimes get frazzled and start to feel overwhelmed. And I work long hours sometimes and have a long commute to work.

But I still manage to connect with my sponsor, go to meetings and stay connected to program with calls, texts and emails. And I found a close group of OA friends that I talk to on the phone during my commute.

I can get all freaked out about how my life is on such a track, or how I'm getting derailed, or how things are not going the way I thought they should. But I try to pause before I go into freak-out mode, and connect with my Higher Power. And I realize that although I don't always get what I want, my Higher Power always takes care of my needs.

- anonymous

Getting Rid of Old Attitudes



What comes to mind for me is about "teaching old dogs new tricks," me being the "old dog." So in peeling the onion on my recovery, I realized my partner was NOT the problem.

My knee jerk reaction has been that WHENEVER she says something - WHATEVER she suggests - my mind is going, "you ain't the boss of me", "butt out" OR "you are SO WRONG!"

And the truth is I think I'm talking to my mother, an intrusive control freak who stuck her nose in my business (and my mail). And it pissed me off.

So lately, I've been taking a breath... and taking a pause. And even though my brain is shrieking, "NO!", I listen anyway. And I ask her to repeat things. Or paraphrase. Or explain more. And lo and behold, just about EVERY time... her ideas are actually better than my best idea (because usually I just grab my first thought... to "get the job done"). Fancy that! And in EVERY CASE... she has prevented me from shooting myself...and others... in the foot ! ! !

Also, I tend to do things the same way forever (like put on shorts and a tank top to take my morning walk while not paying attention that the weather has shifted and I need to put on warmer clothes rather than cancel my exercise routine). Duh. And so my partner keeps suggesting I put on warmer clothes and just walk in the neighborhood (rather than driving to the park or canceling my morning exercise), etc.

Let's face it. I live on a gerbil wheel. I do the same thing over and over. I never change anything in my world unless backed up against a wall. And that PAUSE is totally saving my ass along with opening my mind. Along with listening and remaining teachable.

And I need to practice getting humble - asking for help - and actually LISTENING to other people's suggestions. So this old dog keeps trying to learn new tricks and learning that "they" are NOT the problem. It's ME !

- anonymous

STEP 11 is the KEY

Why was I surprised that the compulsion had hold of me again? I had stopped praying for only two days, and there I was, unable to fill the hole in my stomach.

At times, after a quick prayer, there would be a glimmer of hope. And then the feeling that it was slipping through my fingers. I remembered hearing in OA, "Let go and let God." Let go of what? "Let go of self-will." Then who will hold me up? Not my husband. He has to work. Not the group. They have their own lives. Who will hold me up? "Let go and let God."

That's what I thought I was doing. And look where I was yesterday — back in that cave I used to live in. But I had forgotten the key. The key is prayer.

So I unplugged the phone, shut my bedroom door, got down on my knees and opened my heart to God. I talked to my Higher Power as to my mother or father. I prayed to be able to pray. "How can I best serve You, not me?"

Asking for freedom from that forceful self-will, I prayed for the courage and grace to deal with my fears. And for the strength to abstain. I am no authority on what others need. And I have no answers for anyone else.

I can only share what I have learned. In giving God a small part of the twenty-four hours ahead, I keep the channel clear and allow God's will to be active in my life.

I can't make it in this program without a daily practice of Step 11. If I want to get well, I pray each day, on my knees, in a quiet space cleared for that purpose. Only then am I able to let go.

- anonymous

What Goes on in My Head

I don't know why, but my perception of my life is always different—and worse—than the reality of what is happening in my life. I can simply be in line at Starbucks, but my head is elsewhere and it's all bad. I'm thinking the line is so slow, and I'll be late for work; the coffee won't be hot enough, and the traffic afterward will be horrible, and I'll miss that big deal, and then I'll lose my job and join the rest of the world of the unemployed in the Second Great Depression. And this is all happening while in line getting coffee!

I am beginning to understand what they mean when they say that addiction is a disease of perception. My best thinking used to get me into trouble, and even in recovery the distortion of my thoughts can easily make me restless, irritable, and discontented. That's why I must rely on my Higher Power and the program to constantly restore me to sanity.

These days, I've learned to run my thinking by others in the fellowship and to turn my fears over to God. I now listen less to my thoughts, and instead I pay attention to the reality of my life in the present moment. When I do this, I'm able to appreciate the miracle my life is today. And I'm able to enjoy the serenity I have access to, no matter where my thoughts are or what I'm doing.

Today, I'm grateful that what's going on in my head isn't happening in my life.

- anonymous

Abstaining Through the Holidays

Living without the fear of food.

In my family, holidays were eating days. The morning was spent preparing a feast. Afterwards, I was in a stupor. I would watch TV, sleep and think about the evening meal while I nibbled on snacks. I was full of self-pity because I felt that everyone else was out there living while I was being a good girl and staying home with my parents. As if I were responsible for their happiness.

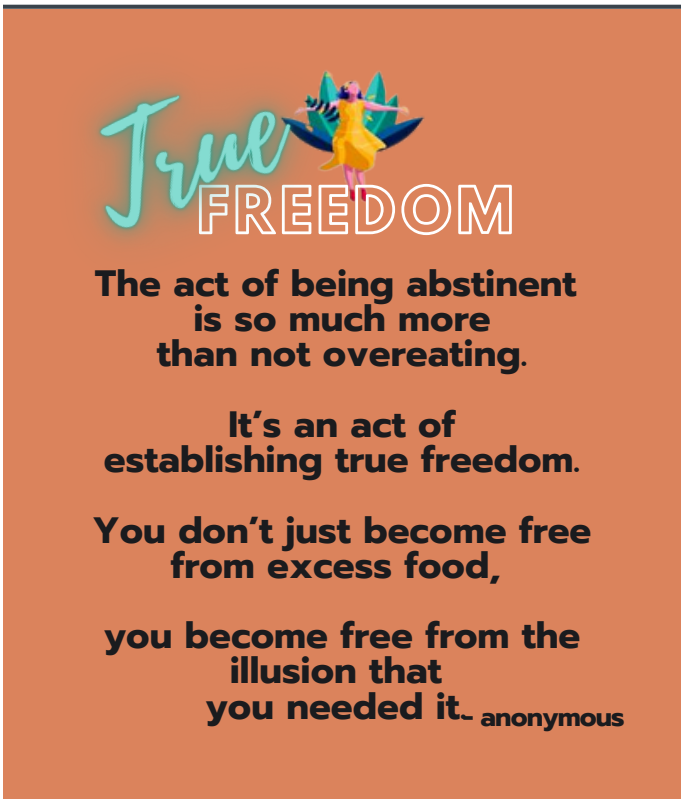
Last Thanksgiving I had no plans for dinner. I went to an OA meeting with a friend who called and needed a ride. I knew I didn't want to be alone. I shared my feelings at that meeting. Later I went to a dinner prepared and served by volunteers. Program people like me who desperately needed to get out of fear, self-pity and melancholy. All of which were comfortable old attitudes of self-centeredness. I saw love in action. I was seeking love, yes, but I was waiting for it to come to me.

I didn't have to live in fear of the food. A fear that would endanger my abstinence. I turned my life over to a Higher Power, the source of all my strength, and I was restored to sanity. I asked God to remove my fears and other shortcomings, and made amends to myself and others by seeking opportunities to give of myself.

During my meditation at the end of the day, I realized I had called upon God and been given everything I needed that day. Especially the gift of abstinence. And the desire and willingness to accept it.

The Steps tell me that I alone can make a change in attitude and apply my new knowledge in all areas of my life.

- anonymous



SVIOA News & Information

Chatter from the chair

Recognizing the Principal of Rotation of Service, Let's Give a Shout Out to Three Outgoing Trusted Servants

Ever wonder why service positions are rotated so often and incumbents can only serve in the same position for so long?

Concept number 4 states, "The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process."

Page 102 of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, says, "The counsel of longtime members continues to be valuable, but it is not good for the group or its leaders if one person holds a particular service position too long...thus, service positions are rotated regularly..."

As each of our groups practices the very important principal of rotation of service, so does Intergroup, Region 2, and World Service.

A World Service Delegate and Region 2 Representative can serve a maximum of two consecutive two-years terms, and SVIOA Board members and Committee chairs can serve a maximum of two one-year terms in the same positions.

As the year comes to a close, I want to spotlight three members who have served our Intergroup well and are honoring the concept of Rotation of Service as their service terms are ending.

Barbara M. has been our World Service Delegate for the past four years! She served on the Public Information and Professional Outreach committees. Barbara said, "It was an amazing experience of fellowship, friendship and seeing the traditions in action. I'd love to talk with anyone interested in learning more about being a World Service Delegate."

Joel W. is wrapping up two years of service as our Treasurer. In that time, he streamlined several processes and was a conscientious steward of Intergroup funds. When asked what he liked most about being the Treasurer, he said, "I'm grateful for the opportunities to learn, collaborate, trust, persevere, and improve my willingness to seek help when needed. Working together in this "we" program gives me a fuller appreciation of whom my HP wants me to be."

Cary H. has enthusiastically served as the Sponsorship Committee Chair for the last two years, after having served as a committee member the year before. Cary states she's "...enjoyed connecting new and not so new members with people eager to sponsor. Knowing I can help others in this way keeps my recovery fresh, and I have accumulated so many numbers for my own outreach calls!"

Oh, one more note – Yours truly is wrapping up after serving as Intergroup Chair these past two years. I am so thankful to every single Intergroup Representative, Committee Chair and Board members who make this Intergroup truly one of the best in Region 2 (and maybe the world!). *Honestly, SVIOA has a stellar reputation for regularly contributing to service beyond group level.* Being of service in Intergroup has allowed me to stay in the middle of the herd. Even when life gets hard, I know I can count on the consistency and focus of service as an anchor. For your love and support, I am eternally grateful.

In loving service,

Jan H.
Sac Valley Intergroup Chair

INTERGROUP * MEETINGS * EVENTS

SVIOA MEETING LIST
CLICK HERE

SVIOA EVENT LIST
CLICK HERE

INTERGROUP MEETINGS

7 - 8 p.m. (Pacific Time)
Every 2nd Tuesday of each month
Zoom Meeting ID: : 984 7782 1659
Passcode: 860953

INTERGROUP BOARD

Chair	Jan H.	(916) 616-1466	oachair@sacvalleyoa.org
Vice Chair	Scarlet H.	(916) 505-0360	oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org
Secretary	Emily H.	(916) 718-2070	oasecretary@sacvalleyoa.org
Treasurer	Joel W.	(916) 397-8276	oatreasurer@sacvalleyoa.org
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	Nancy Mc.	(916) 698-0541	oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org
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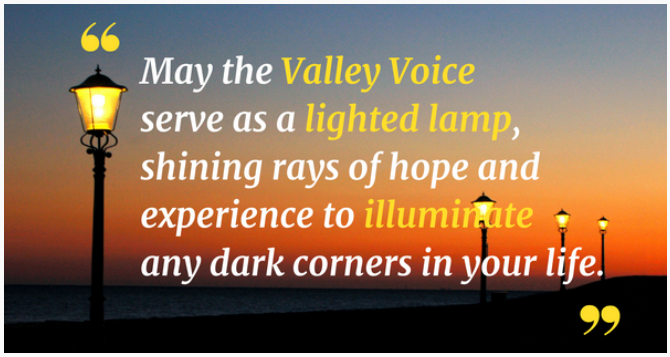
WSBC	Les F.	(775) 813-4076	sdallama@me.com
Webmaster	Phil K.	(916) 768-4549	webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org

INTERGROUP COMMITTEES

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	Speaker List Maintenance	Dee	
Newsletter Meeting	Answer Phone Maintenance	Diane B.	iamdianeb@outlook.com
List Public Outreach	Newsletter Editor	Christina H.	ohxina@gmail.com
Retreat Special	Meeting List Coordinator	Dawn S.	dawn.strickler@gmail.com
Population Focus	Public Outreach Support	VACANT	
Sponsorship	Retreat Coordination	Rick Z.	rick@directdigitalcontrols.com
	Special Population Support	VACANT	caryhh2002@yahoo.com
	Sponsorship Resources Maintenance	Cary H.