

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.

"Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible."
OA Responsibility Pledge

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Step, Tradition, & Concept of the Month

STEP 9: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Love for Others
Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

TRADITION 9: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Structure
OA, as such, ought never be organized: but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

CONCEPT 8: SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Ability
The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.

OVERHEARD at meetings



A. C. T. =
Action Changes Things

The Steps help me live with me;
the Traditions help me live with you.

RIGOROUS HONESTY:
You have to get real to heal.

I can live in spite of my disease
Or I can die because of it.

This is a simple program
for people who think they're complex.

I'm a drug addict with food.

If you aren't willing to work for it,
don't complain about not having it.

I obsessively pursue feeling good,
no matter how bad it makes me feel.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
EAST BAY UNITY INTERGROUP PRESENTS

Annual Twelve Step Marathon

SAT SEPT 17
1:00 — 4:00 p.m. PT

Meeting ID: 824 1998 3177
Passcode: 038457

Come hear 5 speakers tell how the 12 Steps of OA transformed their lives.

\$5-10 Suggested Donation
No one turned away due to lack of funds
Contact - Emma E, events@eastbayoa.org

I Was Finally at Peace With Myself

My ability to lie outwardly and to kid myself inwardly grew with every bite I took. Indeed, I had to overeat to cope with the demands of everyday existence.

Whenever I encountered disappointments or frustrations, my solution was to eat. I had always been oversensitive to criticism. When I was criticized or reprimanded, food was my refuge and comfort.

When I was faced with a special challenge or social event - such as a dinner party - I had to fortify myself with extra food before I went. But most of the time I would overdo it at the party. Whenever I went to a huge family reunion, I would go home in a food fog.

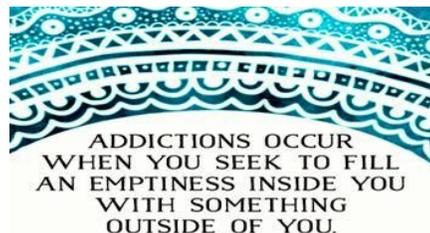
But most of all, I was suffering inner pain because my accomplishments in life failed to live up to my own expectations of myself. I had to anesthetize that pain with food. Of course, the more I ate, the more unrealistic my expectations became. So the need to overeat grew.

The more I ate, the more I fantasized about everything. I imagined getting even for hurts and rejections. In my mind I imagined scenes where I was plucked magically from the bakery and was instantly promoted at work. I lived in a dream world.

In OA I was taught to differentiate between my wants (which are never satisfied) and my needs

(which are always provided for). I was taught how to reject fantasizing and to accept reality. OA led me gently from fantasizing to embracing reality with open arms. And I found it beautiful! For I was finally at peace with myself, with others, and with God.

- anonymous



Old Timer's Prayer



God, keep me from thinking I must share in every meeting, no matter the topic.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details, and give me wings to get to the point.

Remind me to guard confidences and to keep still when I feel it is necessary to speak up for someone's own good.

Release me from the need to straighten out everybody else's thinking and program.

God, I ask for the grace to listen to newcomers. Please help me remember the patience with which others listened to me when I was new.

Please seal my lips to giving advice, and help me to remember to share only my experience, strength, and hope.

Remind me that my purpose is to fit myself to be of maximum service to You and to the people around me.

Help me to remain teachable. Teach me (again) the lesson that, occasionally, it is possible that I may be wrong. And remind me, please, of the freedom that I gain when I am able to promptly admit I am wrong and make amends when necessary.

Help me remember the difference between making amends and just saying, "I am sorry."

Help me to be a worker among workers, a friend among friends.

Help me to be ever mindful that I cannot manage my own life through my own unaided will.

Please show me the way to seek You so that I may continue to grow along spiritual lines.

Remind me about Rule 62.... to not take myself so damn seriously!

Keep me free of gossip, character assassination, and judgment.

Remind me that I am not perfect. And even though I have humbly asked that my character defects be removed, my shortcomings still arise unexpectedly.

Help me to walk with faith and acceptance, to see good things in unexpected places.

Help me to see that You love each of Your children, and that You do not need my opinion of them.

Thank You very much,

Amen

- anonymous

A Bright Spot in a crisis



I joined OA and got abstinent in 2010. I had been laid off from work, so I was attending four or five meetings a week. Not long after, however, my former boss called me back to work. So for the next ten years I went to meetings only as my work schedule allowed. Often, I could only attend meetings on weekends.

Then in March of 2020 COVID hit, and suddenly Zoom meetings began popping up everywhere. For the first month I attended meetings online during my lunch break. Then my schedule changed to a three-day work week with lots of time on my hands. So I decided to hit an online meeting every day. I also began attending meetings in different states and across the world.

During that time, I found several meetings I felt really comfortable with, so I regularly attended those meetings. I started to feel like “family.” I got to know people I would never have met had I only been attending local in-person meetings.

Recently, one of my virtual meetings started talking about going back to in-person meetings again. And it hit me hard that our online meetings might soon be discontinued. While I should have felt glad for the return to traditional meeting formats, my response was to experience sadness and regret. I had gotten to know many of these fellow OA’s personally. And I felt a kinship toward them.

I talked to my sponsor about this and she suggested I let these groups know of my feelings. So I did. I was encouraged to hear that some of the members were considering continuing on with the virtual meetings even after they went back to in-person. All of them shared my feelings about how important our online fellowship had become.

Only my Higher Power knows what will happen next. But I do know that for as long as these virtual meetings are available, I’m going to continue to attend them.

I found something my recovery program was missing — available meetings. In fact, I’ve probably attended more OA meetings in the past two years than I had in the previous 10 years!

My abstinence is stronger and my program has improved dramatically as a result.

- anonymous



At the beginning of working the program, I sacrificed the food. I had to, or it would have killed me. But I couldn’t get rid of the food unless I made other sacrifices.

Stinking thinking had to go.

I had to get rid of self-justification, self-pity and anger.

I had to give up my drive for personal accolades.

I had to take personal responsibility for my problems and stop blaming others.

SURRENDER

S - Seriously

U - Understanding

R - Real

R - Recovery

E - Entails

N - Not

D - Debating

E - Every

R - Reason

I had to give up my dearest possessions: my ambition and my pride. And trade them in for humility.

I started practicing Step 12 and began to carry the OA message. I sacrificed my time and my energy to do this. I couldn’t keep what I had unless I gave it away.

But I could not demand that my sponsees do the work. So my natural desire to control how they worked the program had to be sacrificed, otherwise it I would not be of use to them.

I learned that sacrifice had to bring a double benefit: for others as well as for me.

And I began to learn how to sacrifice what I was for what I could become.

- anonymous

Suit Up and *SHOW UP*

I have no idea how I practice spiritual principles. I just continue to do what I was taught in my first week -- suit up and show up and try to be the best me I can. I fail often. I'm no saint.

In the beginning, I showed up to meetings because it was a requirement from my sponsor. But pretty quickly I sensed that you all had something I wanted. I had no idea what it was, but I kept coming back to find out.

When I was 90 days abstinent I got "volunteered" by a woman in my home group to be the literature person. Now I had to show up. Fifteen people depended on me to bring the literature.

I kept showing up. And my life began to change. I made my way through the Steps with my sponsor. I learned that I wasn't the bad person I thought I was. I saw that my resentments were hurting only me. In the process of taking the Steps, self-centered fear began to dissolve, making room for HP to work in my life.

I began suiting up by spending a few minutes of quiet time each morning in prayer and meditation. I went for walks in nature. I read the Big Book and other spiritual literature. I was drawn toward the mystery of recovery. I began to try to do the next right thing even when I didn't feel like it.

The process of suiting up and showing up to life through the years has somehow made me "esteemable." Today, I am a friendlier neighbor, a more patient driver and a more loving wife. Earlier this year my husband had a serious medical challenge -- 60+ days in four different hospitals, an eleven hour surgery, and a battle with depression.

I spent eight to twelve hours at the hospital every day, helping where I could. Thankfully, he is almost back to his normal happy self. But it was touch and go for a while. An emotional high-wire. But I didn't get paralyzed in fear. And I didn't pick up the food.

- anonymous

A Worthwhile ADVENTURE

After nine months of Overeaters Anonymous and a few slips, I had a terrible bout with resentment, self-pity, and chocolate cake. The next morning - a beautiful, fresh spring morning - a food addict's awakening came: "I never have to do this again!" I felt free! Ready to learn what OA was really all about. This 12 Step way of life. So simple and yet so profound.

Four years later, I was hit with a series of family tragedies: a long terminal illness, and three deaths. During those sad times, friends lent my husband and me their beach house. It was during that quiet break that an "aha moment" occurred - a God-given new awareness. The wings of spirit were unfurled. And ever since then, I have been learning how to use those wings.

Once, I thought that only unusual circumstances made these moments possible. I now think they are forecasts of what I can have if I am willing to take the time and make the effort.

Sometimes, I am at ease in the world for days at a time. Then my serenity goes away. But the understanding continues. My shortcomings have not disappeared - anger, self-pity, hastiness, envy, selfishness, resentments. But they have lessened,

The clamor of now has been reduced. Understanding has increased. Feelings have become something to explore rather than to suppress. Looking inward has increased for me. And this has increased the importance of other people. Yes I have nothing to do with the joy that comes forth. How this happens is a mystery.

I believe serenity is always available to me if I take the time to make the effort, through quiet thinking, prayer and chosen reading. These are the ingredients. For me, it has been a worthwhile adventure

- anonymous



VIRTUAL REGION WORKSHOP

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

*Being Entirely Ready
for HP to Change Us*

SEPTEMBER 11TH 2022

12:00 - 1:30 PM
Pacific Time

Zoom ID: 891 6554 0024
Passcode: 120912

For more information go to oavirtualregion.org

The Mending Process

STEP 9

During my first month in Overeaters Anonymous I did what so many of us have done -- I decided, without benefit of sponsor or sanity, to immediately make amends. For years I had been attending church, hoping to get some type of spiritual help for my food addiction. (It never occurred to me to quit overeating). In my prayer group was a woman who totally irritated me. How I tried to help that woman learn to pray! And I behaved very badly.

Upon getting abstinent, she was the very first person I decided to make amends to. I called and said something like, "Susan, I just wanted to tell you that I love you," and she promptly replied, "Thanks a whole lot!" and hung up on me. I was crushed!

For me, each of the Twelve Steps has required a new surrender. And Step Nine was no different. For a long time I agonized because nothing seemed to be happening as I wandered through Steps Eight and Nine. There was no comfort. No sense of having "taken" Step Nine.

I walked around for a time saying, "I'm sorry." But that didn't feel right. That had been one of my favorite responses in the past when I had screwed up in some way. Those who had heard it over and over during those awful years were more than a little skeptical of this repeat phrase.

I never surrender gracefully. So after being told by one of those quiet, serene long-timers to pray for willingness, I went home, stormed, ranted and raved. And generally behaved like a five year old.

Finally a sponsor's suggestion to "read the Big Book" dawned.

I read. I cried. I finally fell to my knees and said to my HP, "You already know my needs and wants, so from now on I'll do my best-- just please help me." No more bargains. No more threats or pleas.

And so it began. The God of my understanding gave me the opportunity to begin the mending process. What a lot of hill climbing that has been. And as with most hills, sometimes it's up and at times it's straight down. Then there are the plateaus when it seems like I'm just marking time.

The great revelation for me was that direct amends are not a thinking or wishing process. Direct amends are action-oriented. Words are necessary for people to hear that I am trying to mend my ways. But it is the living out of the principles of this program that truly counts.

- anonymous

Made Direct Amends

"NO, NEVER! I WILL NEVER BE WILLING to make amends to my family. Not after the terrible things they have said and done to me!"

As I finished my hostile outburst, my sponsor smiled sweetly with her exasperating, all-knowing look.

"You may not be ready to make amends now," she said. "But there will come a time when you will want to make amends to them. When you are spiritually ready, your Higher Power will find the right time and place. You'll make your amends, and you will feel wonderful. I promise you, it will happen."

I didn't believe her. I couldn't imagine why I would ever make

amends to them. In my family, no one knew how to say, "I'm sorry." No one ever admitted he or she might be wrong. And I added my own flaming resentments to the problem. I covered up my excesses by blaming my family. I carried the addict's bitter brew of anger, resentment, and despair. In the end, I alienated my family completely.

My family was the primary target of my Eighth Step. I was two years abstinent when I wrote my list and made those first, difficult, direct amends. With newfound humility and dignity, I recognized my part in the angry scenes and hostile home atmosphere. I admitted my mistakes, as best I remembered them.

I said those unfamiliar words, "I'm sorry," and I asked for forgiveness. I told each person what I was doing to turn my life around and promised that I would try my best not to offend again. I never mentioned their behavior. I kept to my side of the street.

The pattern of blame, excuses, and grudge-holding left no room for human error or compassion.

Miraculously, everyone accepted my amends with grace and good will. But the real miracle was that they began to realize that they could do the same thing toward those whom they had offended.

Making my amends set an example in human relations that would be invaluable in the years ahead. Making amends started a chain reaction of forgiveness that changed a whole family. As my sponsor promised me years ago, I learned more from those amends than from any other event in my recovery.

- anonymous

OUR UNITED GROWTH THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

Sun Sept 25
12:00 – 1:30 p.m. PT

Presented by the
Sponsorship Committee
Of OA Footsteps

Meeting ID: 891 6554 0024
Passcode: 120912

*Serenity- the absence of mental stress or anxiety. Unaffected by disturbance; calm and unruffled.
Peace- a state of harmony between people or groups; freedom from strife.*

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

page 83-84, AA

SVIOA News & Information

Meetings * Events * Intergroup



Chatter

from the SVIOA Chair

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 oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org oar2rep@sacvalleyoa.org	Curt B.	(510) 435-3246
WSBC	oawsbc@sacvalleyoa.org oawsbc@sacvalleyoa.org sdallama@me.com	Kathryn K.	(209) 988-1172
Webmaster	webmaster@sacvalleyoa.org	Nancy Mc.	(916) 698-0541
		Barbara M.	(916) 203-6025
		Judy L.	(916) 799-5804
		Les F.	(775) 813-4076
		Phil K.	(916) 768-4549

Intergroup Committees

Committee Title	Specific Tasks
Bylaws	Bylaws and Policy & Procedures Review/Update
Events Group Support	Events Support Meeting & Video Conference Support Speaker List Maintenance
Answer Phone, Newsletter, and Meeting List	Answer Phone Maintenance Newsletter Editor Meeting List Coordinator
Public Outreach	Public Outreach Support
Retreat	Retreat Coordination
Special Population Focus	Special Population Support
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Resources Maintenance

Chair	Chair Email
Scarlet H.	oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org
Sandra S. Gerri S.	divingal17@gmail.com alohagerri@aol.com
Dee Diane B. Christina H. Dawn S.	iamdiane@outlook.com ohxina@gmail.com dawn.strickler@gmail.com
VACANT Rick Z. VACANT	rick@directdigitalcontrols.com
Cary H.	caryh2002@yahoo.com



*May the Valley Voice
serve as a lighted lamp,
shining rays of hope
and experience to
illuminate any dark corners
in your life.*

SPOTLIGHT:

DON'T FORGET – 2023 Board Nominations are due by mid-September!

Nominations will also be accepted by individual SVIOA members via email at anytime prior to the end of the nominations period – 8pm, Tuesday, September 13, 2022.

Simply email your nominee (yourself or another SVIOA member) with the nominee's name, phone number, and position for which the person is being nominated to the current Vice Chair at oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org.

Board Positions include:

- ☑ Chair
- ☑ Vice Chair
- ☑ Secretary
- ☑ Treasurer
- ☑ Webmaster
- ☑ Region 2 Rep (2 positions available)
- ☑ World Service Business Conference Delegate (2 positions available)

Qualifications are minimal:

- ★ Active member of OA for at least one year; six months for the secretary
- ★ Familiarity with the 12 Traditions of OA and the 12 Concepts of Service but this is absolutely an on-the-hob learning experience.
- ★ Regular attendee in an active group for one year and served as an Intergroup Rep for one year, except six months for the secretary position
- ★ Region 2 Reps have no additional qualification requirements than those described above.
- ★ World Service Business Conference Delegates shall have at least one
- ★ year of current abstinence and at least two years of service above the
- ★ group level in addition to the qualifications listed above.
- ★ MOST IMPORTANT: A willingness to be of service to your fellow OA members

For more information, go to <https://www.sacvalleyoa.org/board-members.html>

Direct any questions to the current Vice Chair, Scarlet H. at oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org or text Scarlet at (916) 505-0360.

*In loving service,
Jan H.
Sac Valley OA Intergroup Chair*