

What Living in Step One Means to Me

"We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable."

Living in Step One means surrendering on a daily basis. The more I continue to work my program and travel on my journey, the more gratitude I have for this new way of living, truly beyond what I ever thought was possible. When I surrender, I win – big time!

Living in Step One means surrendering my will to God's will. Every time I take the reins, I lose control. My job is to be quiet, wait for an intuitive thought, then take action. I make my life unmanageable through my stubborn insistence on running the show alone.

Living in Step One means to remember I have a disease of Isolation. To remember that illness starts with I, and wellness starts with we. Admitting my life is unmanageable is to remember the desperation, agony, misery, anxiety, depression, physical symptoms, relationship problems, and spiritual bankruptcy.

Living in Step One means reaching for the mental, emotional, and spiritual solution found in the OA Twelve Steps and in the Fellowship.

Living in Step One means I have to keep my memory "green". My challenge now is to keep remembering that. I need to tell my story regularly. I need to speak to newcomers. I need to sponsor. When I do those things, I give myself a gift: the opportunity to remember how desperate I was, and how much better my life is now.

Living in Step One teaches me to be constantly aware of my powerlessness over food, people, places and things. When I live in Step One, I am given the gift of acceptance and find it easier to live life on life's terms. As a result, I am given the kind of life that I never thought I could achieve.

- *anonymous*

No one was ever pulled over



for driving overweight!



TODAY, I Made Amends to My Dad

After a lifetime of resentment toward him for his alcoholism and drug use. After decades of dad-centered gossip, whining, and some of the meanest things I've ever uttered. After refusing to dance with him at my wedding.

After reaching out to reconnect after my first child was born. After being rebuffed and never answering another phone call again. After writing his obituary through gritted teeth and hatred in my heart.

After two years of sinking deeper and deeper into my disease. After stumbling upon OA and being granted a sudden reprieve from my constant self-harm. And after reading Chapter 3 of the Big Book, a few months later, I made amends to my dad.

He was suffering my whole life. He wasn't making choices to harm me. He was living a diseased life while all those around him wanted him to think and decide his way out of it. It was unfair. And now it's too late. So as I brushed off his grave, clipped back a few weeds, and set down some flowers, I wept and apologized, then reminisced and laughed.

Now, I go back out into the world and try to counteract some of the harm I did. What's the opposite of punishing someone for their disease? Maybe it's helping others to see people in a truer light.

- *anonymous*



My Spiritual Christmas Tree



Every year I threaten to get an artificial Christmas tree because the real trees are so messy. But I love that real trees, like me, are not perfect. And when I get the tree all decorated and turn on the lights, I realize it was totally worth the mess and inconvenience.

I think there's a spiritual lesson in there for me. Recovery has been just like decorating a Christmas tree. It's hard work, messy and inconvenient.

Branches need to be trimmed. The trunk needs to be evened out so that it stands upright without leaning over. Sometimes the tree needs to be washed and dried before I even bring it into the house.

That's like what happens to me when I work the Steps. I take an inventory and agree that some behaviors need to change or get removed just like trimming a tree. The tree needs a stand. That's like the support

I get from my sponsor and other members of the program. The tree needs water added daily to the stand so that it doesn't dry out. That's similar to how I ask my Higher Power for help every day and why I need to keep attending meetings.

Then I get to decorate the tree with lights and ornaments. That's like the transformation that God blesses me with in recovery.

There is a beauty, serenity and healing that can only come from working the Steps. The tree gets an angel or a star or something on the top. That reminds me that I am guided by my Higher Power, whatever that power looks like for me.

A real Christmas tree eventually dries out and loses its needles. Sometime in January, I undress the tree and carefully store away all the ornaments and lights. And sadly, I eventually discard and recycle the tree. Recovery never has to lose its freshness or beauty. I can keep my Christmas tree alive in my heart by

practicing the 12 steps in all my affairs and trusting my Higher Power.

My spiritual Christmas tree can stay green and fragrant and beautifully decorated all year long. And no matter what season of the year, I can be the bright lights on a dark winter night for those struggling with compulsive overeating.

My season of hope can be year-round by offering understanding and encouragement to a newcomer.

Yes, recovery can be messy, inconvenient, hard work, challenging and even painful at times. But the beauty of the transformation, just like a Christmas tree, is so worth it.

I'm going to keep coming back!
- anonymous

the house of **RED LIGHT** foods

T'was a night around Christmas
and all thru the house
Not a peep could be heard
except my snacking spouse
He was down in the kitchen
where the sweets are amass
When I noticed him lurking –
I was aghast!

This whole house is maxed, the fridge is full
It's all red-light foods, except a small hole!
My mother-in-law is a stitcher
and baker-be-proud
If I ate any of it that stuff,
she could sew me a shroud

My clean foods sit in the crisper drawer,
waiting for only me to adore
No one grabs at it with vigor and vim

Except for me,
so in the green beans I swim
The S-foods are out and all around,
I am thankful for the God I have found

He keeps me abstinent,
and my Action Plan too!
Calling my sponsor and
getting her aid,
Can keep me from starting
the downhill tirade
So looking in that fridge
doesn't cause me to boo-hoo

Seeing that table full - was a step above
BUT doesn't compare to the people I love
Sitting there happy eating the planned food,
I love the holidays and I love you.

- anonymous

OA BIRTHDAY PARTY

Hosted by Los Angeles Intergroup
January 14 - 16, 2022
[Register at OABDP.ORG](http://Register.at.OABDP.ORG)



USING STEP ONE in Recovery

"Once I start arguing with my disease, I have lost. It is much more powerful than me."

When I first arrived in OA, I didn't like the members. I didn't really want to be here. So I left. Three years later, I came crawling back. I had hit an emotional bottom. When I finally admitted complete defeat, I started to get better. The war was over. I stopped negotiating with my disease.

I have learned that once I start arguing with my disease, I've lost. It is much more powerful than me. But "we"- my higher power, the program, the fellowship, and finally me - were stronger than the addiction.

As for the second part of the first step, my life had become completely unmanageable. I couldn't stop picking up the food. I had to be humbled in order to see my powerlessness. This addict needed to be willing to do whatever it took to stay abstinent.

Today, 12 years later, I still need and use Step One in my recovery. I feel that surrendering has opened up the rest of the program to me: the fellowship, the Steps and service.

I am powerless over many areas of my life, but not helpless. Because of Step One, I am able to ask for and accept help sooner (when all else fails, I follow directions!) I don't play around with my addiction.

I reach out to a Power greater than myself more readily. This may be talking to an OA friend, reading some literature; praying, or going to a meeting.

Because of the first step, I know I can't put anything before my recovery. I have canceled plans because I knew that a meeting was more important than any social obligation. I am more willing to do service and help newcomers, because that helps me stay abstinent.

Ironically, I thought surrendering meant all the fun in my life was over. All I had to look forward to was a lifetime of gloomy recovery and white-knuckling it. But my experience has proven the opposite. The first step was the start of my freedom. Being powerless over my addiction removes so much that is holding me back and frees me up to live the rest of my life.

It's as though my food addiction is a tiny country and there is a whole world left to explore. Yet, I often want to go back to that tiny country- that small, dark place. Sometimes I even need to go right up to the border of my abstinence. But when I remember Step One, I realize that if I cross the border, I may never come back.

- anonymous

"For every mountain, there is a miracle."

Whether you've scaled one mountain or a whole range in your journey of recovery, or are just beginning on your trek, we invite you to

Believe in the Miracle of Your OA Recovery

WORD SEARCH

E	U	I	S	F	A	V	O	R	I	T	E	S	T
C	B	D	T	C	B	R	N	L	C	L	O	U	M
O	I	G	R	I	S	N	P	S	G	S	L	N	E
M	N	K	U	G	T	A	M	S	P	I	F	M	A
P	G	L	G	N	I	O	G	E	F	G	R	A	P
U	E	D	G	I	N	L	T	T	A	E	W	N	G
L	F	D	L	K	E	S	E	I	S	L	E	A	N
S	O	E	I	R	N	D	O	N	N	A	S	G	I
I	O	T	N	O	T	M	E	S	S	A	G	E	T
O	D	I	G	W	D	E	T	T	I	M	D	A	E
N	N	M	P	O	W	E	R	L	E	S	S	B	E
E	C	I	C	O	N	T	I	N	U	E	D	L	M
G	E	L	O	K	A	G	N	I	T	A	E	E	A
O	E	A	G	N	I	L	L	O	R	T	N	O	C

- POWERLESS
- WORKING
- ABSTINENT
- STRUGGLING
- CONTROLLING
- LIFTED
- MEETING
- UNMANAGEABLE
- EATING
- FOOD
- LIMITED
- MEALS
- COMPULSION
- CONTINUED
- FAVORITES
- BINGE
- MESSAGE
- STEPS
- ADMITTED



JOIN US TO
CREATE & TELL YOUR STORY
IN A NEW WAY OR SHARE YOUR
CREATIVE SKILLS TO HELP
OTHERS

SAVE THE DATE

CHOOSE FROM
7TH, 8TH OR 9TH
JAN 2022

TO READ EXISTING LIFELINE STORIES VISIT

OALIFELINE.ORG

LIFELINE IS COMING BACK

WE NEED YOUR STORIES

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 every month

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

Meeting ID: 984 7782 1659

Passcode: 860953

Intergroup Board

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Intergroup Committees

Committee Title	Specific Tasks	Chair	Chair email
Bylaws	Bylaws and Policy & Procedures Bi-Annual Review/Update	Scarlet H.	oavicechair@sacvalleyoa.org
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Special Population Focus	Special Population Support	VACANT	
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Resources Maintenance	Cary H.	caryhh2002@yahoo.com

"Service itself has **called** me, has **cajoled** me, challenged me, and **supported** me to be **beyond** more than I thought I could ever be."
- anonymous

We are collecting "gifts" for the OA Birthday Party Slideshow



Tell us

- * what "gifts" you received by working the 12 Steps
- * what "promises" you have experienced

Send us

- * a photo (before/after or just after)
- * and how long you have been abstinent

Email them to

alohagerri@aol.com



Deadline is Jan. 15 !!!

Word Search answers from page 4

E	U	I	S	F	A	V	O	R	I	T	E	S	T
C	B	D	T	C	B	R	N	L	C	L	O	U	M
O	I	G	R	I	S	N	P	S	G	S	L	N	E
M	N	K	U	G	T	A	M	S	P	I	F	M	A
P	G	L	G	N	I	O	G	E	F	G	R	A	P
U	E	D	G	I	N	L	T	T	A	E	W	N	G
L	F	D	L	K	E	S	E	I	S	L	E	A	N
S	O	E	I	R	N	D	O	N	N	A	S	G	I
I	O	T	N	O	T	M	E	S	S	A	G	E	T
O	D	I	G	W	D	E	T	T	I	M	D	A	E
N	N	M	P	O	W	E	R	L	E	S	S	B	E
E	C	I	C	O	N	T	I	N	U	E	D	L	M
G	E	L	O	K	A	G	N	I	T	A	E	E	A
O	E	A	G	N	I	L	L	O	R	T	N	O	C