

The REACH OUT

San Diego County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

April 2009 - Issue 4

STEP FOUR

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Seven years and forty-five minutes. That is how long it took one old-timer to do his fourth step inventory. Seven years thinking about it and forty-five minutes to write it down. The principle behind Step Four is *Courage*. It states, "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." My inventories have taken many forms:

- ◆ a chronological life history
- ◆ the OA Fourth Step Inventory Guide
- ◆ the matrix approach in the "Big Book" of Alcoholics Anonymous
- ◆ a no-nonsense list of every single thing for which I felt any form of guilt or shame
- ◆ Step Four from The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

Without exception, perfectionism has always reared its ugly head and initially frustrated my efforts. Setting aside Saturday afternoon or a three-hour block Tuesday night rarely ever worked for me. What has always gotten it done has been a simple willingness to sit down with pen and paper for just five minutes – whether I write or not. When all else fails remember: *five minutes gets it done*. Too much analysis causes paralysis. The bottom

line is simple: the only wrong way to do your fourth step inventory is not to do it!

Let me tell you a story. Once upon a time there was a tree. It was a big, beautiful, stately tree. But inwardly the tree knew it was losing its strength. Anytime the wind would blow it could hear its wood creaking and feel its trunk shaking. So it would grow a few more branches, which made it appear bigger and stronger than ever. One day there was a terrible gust of wind and the poor tree's roots snapped and it began to topple over. If it had not been for the help of a friendly but smaller tree right next to it, it certainly would have fallen to the ground. As time passed and it began to re-anchor its roots, the bigger tree could not help but ask the smaller tree, "How is it you not only withstood the force of the wind but you were also able to support me as well?" The smaller tree responded, "While you were busy growing more and more branches, I was growing deeper roots."

I have never felt more firmly rooted in my recovery and more a part of the program and our fellowship than when actively taking inventory. The pruning process that takes place

working the steps truly makes it possible to match calamity with serenity when the winds of life begin to really blow. The Twelve Steps are our way of growing deeper roots.

Step Four uses the words "searching and fearless." At first my inventories were extremely long. I mistakenly focused more on listing events and what happened than on answering the all-important question: "What was my part in it?" It is not the quantity of material but rather honestly seeking to find how I contributed to the situation or how my habitual response after the fact kept the pain alive that makes my inventory searching.

What makes the inventory fearless is the fact that God is with me... taking care of me. God will never give me more than I can handle. He is there guiding me, revealing what He would have me see. I can be fearless in the knowledge it is not up to me to change what I find. I have learned a powerful truth. *I make mistakes but I am not a mistake*. There is nothing I can ever do to make God love me any more than he already does and there is nothing I have ever done that can make God love me any less.

~ Michael

FOURTH STEP PRAYER

Dear God, It is I who have made my life a mess. I have done it, but I cannot undo it. My mistakes are mine, and I will begin a searching and fearless moral inventory. I will write down my wrongs, but I will also include that which is good. I pray for the strength to complete the task.

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SERVICE REQUEST

We would like to expand our
Hotline and Speakers list.

It is important that you are available and
willing to return calls promptly.

To have your name added
or removed call

Donna T. 858-673-5587

HOTLINE

Ann Marie S.	619-428-5231
Dave B.	619-224-4500
<i>(East Coast calls welcome)</i>	<i>cell: 619-787-2937</i>
Don B.	619-420-0357
Christine (anorexic)	619-992-5344
Flor (Spanish)	760-931-9802
Gillian	619-563-5167
Jill	619-459-1018
Jo	562-948-5040
Lisa (anorexic)	775-790-2206
Linda J.	619-415-3510
Liz	858-336-7214
Mary Jane	858-616-6472
Shannon (bulimic)	860-604-3122
Thomas F.	619-280-1956
Wilma	760-966-1812

SPEAKERS

Alice C.	858-292-7643
Barbara R.	619-448-3472
Barbara S.	858-458-9415
Bill C.	858-458-9415
Carolee	619-589-1842
Dave B.	619-224-4500
	<i>cell 619-787-2937</i>
Don B.	619-420-0357
Garry	619-582-0469
Jill	619-459-1018
Joe C.	858-571-5300
Pam T.	619-207-1856
Phyllis S.	858-569-1616
Samantha	858-565-1974
Steve P.	760-231-1492
Thomas F.	619-280-1956
Tracy	760-489-6601
Virgil	619-749-9810

If you would like to add your name to this list
call Donna T. 858-673-5587

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR . . .

It's hard to believe it is April already!

For my share this month, I wanted to share on doing service. As part of our program, we need to provide service. Service can be as simple as helping to set up the room for a meeting, greeting newcomers or being committed to providing service above the meeting level. How you choose to do service is your own choice. Any service you are willing to provide is important for yourself and the fellowship.

I know for me doing service has enriched my program, recovery and life more than I could have ever imagined possible. Providing service has allowed me to grow not only within my recovery but as a person. It has also given me skills that have helped my professional life as well. Providing service has given me new insights into my abilities and character defects. More importantly, providing service gets me out of my head and insanity and into the solution. I don't know about you, but my head is not a safe neighborhood to be in. Providing service has taught me not to take myself so seriously and to laugh. Providing service has taught me to let go and trust God. It has taught me how to live our traditions and to accept.

For the good of your own recovery, be willing to step outside of yourself and see what wonders will unfold when you do. Be the beacon of light for someone who might be struggling. I promise the rewards you receive from doing service will enrich your program and your recovery. No matter what service you choose to do, just do it.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

~Tracy

TRUSTED SERVANTS

Chair	Tracy	760-489-6601
Vice Chair	Rex	619-302-3003
Secretary (acting)	Heather	858-386-9448
Treasurer	Dave B.	619-224-4500
Internal Information (acting)	David H.	858-382-0014
Literature (acting)	Mary	619-922-2468
Professional Outreach	Gina	619-758-1531
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Region 2 Coordinator	Ginger G.	619-425-3000
Retreat Liaison	Iola	619-370-4594
WSO Coordinator (acting)	Ken	619-212-5292
Young People's Coordinator (acting)	Shannon	860-604-3122
12th Step Within Committee (acting)	Donna W.	619-549-0548



REGION 2 PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL CONVENTION

RECOVERY: SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

June 26-28, 2009

Doubletree Hotel, Ontario Airport, Ontario CA

Information: oar2@org or contact Cheryl (chair) at 716-246-7700 or carrhyne@msn.com

Abstinence is the bedrock of my program, and I'd not be growing in any meaningful way without it, but LOVE has come into my life these last three abstinent years like never before in the 60 years prior. I think it starts with finally being able to forgive myself for being a lifelong overeater. To be in a room full of fellow compulsive overeaters brings me great comfort and joy. I never knew that I belonged in OA until I walked thru the door of my first meeting. I mean, it took me over a year of thinking about trying it, and a final binge of many months' duration that I just couldn't stop, but I never believed I would find home in these rooms. When you welcomed me with open arms, I still held back, but I stayed abstinent and I never stopped coming back. Over time, as I got to know more and more of you, I just plain fell in love. I found my old unlovable self in all of you. Not that you were unlovable, but that we shared a disease that was incurable, and that didn't make us bad people. Sounds pretty simplistic as I write it, but it was a profound experience for me. And I just wanted to embrace every one of you with the love that entered my being. Today I experience love in a whole new way. Unconditionally. If I can love me, I can open my heart and my arms to you. We are family. Of the best kind. The world is my family now and I am a legitimate part of it. I am God's child and I have work to do for God. Thanks to each of you for enriching my life and my spirit, one miraculous day at a time. It is weakness that binds us together and makes us strong. I pray to be relieved of the bondage of self, one day at a time. My life today is a miracle, and it's all about love. I saw an article in the newspaper a while ago noting that scientists have discovered that happiness is contagious. That's one "virus" I love to expose people to — hope they catch it!

~ Kathy

TRADITION FOUR

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

This tradition gives OA groups the freedom to do what works best for them. They make their own decisions and mistakes without any governing body other than its own group conscience. I have traveled far and wide and been to meetings where I did not understand the language, but the Steps and tools and books were there and I was right at home.

However, there are opportunities that present themselves and we have to look carefully to see if OA as a whole will be threatened. This can be done by accepting "FREE" services, by displaying and selling literature other than our own, allowing discussion at meetings that does not directly connect with our purpose, and on and on.

If a tradition is broken, it usually happens because we are not familiar with the text. Everybody reads the steps but overlooks, quite often, the traditions. If ever there is a question about breaking a tradition, it is our responsibility to speak up rather than ignore. It gives us all the opportunity to do some valuable research.

~ Phyllis

My life before OA revolved around my looking outside of myself for the answers to all my problems. If I practiced avoidance I felt the excess weight I was carrying would not exist. I was a pro at avoidance, at not feeling my feelings and only relating to the other person and their life. Now in OA I have learned it is an "inside job". Recovery comes from the inside out, not from the outside in. I now have tools to use for my recovery, and when I practice them it is amazing...they work! I turn to my HP and rely on Him to give me the direction I need...in His time, not mine. For this and so much more, I am so grateful to have OA in my life. Hand in hand we walk this road together. ~ Judy

Announcements

MEETING UPDATES

NEW MEETINGS:

- Monday and Friday, SDSU Calpulli Ctr Room 4, 2 pm (Call 619-335-0401 to verify)
- Saturday, OASIS, 1 pm, Young People's Meeting

CLOSED:

- Tuesday, Serenity Shop, Noon
- Wednesday, Hillcrest, 4 pm
- Thursday, City Heights, 6:45 pm
- Friday, OASIS, Midnight

NEED CONTACT PERSON:

- Tuesday, OASIS, 6 pm, Step Study
- Thursday, Serenity Shop, Noon, Participation

NEWCOMER MEETINGS:

- First Sunday of every month, OASIS, 6:30 pm, focus on Anorexia/Bulimia
- Monday, OASIS, 6:30 pm
- Saturday, OASIS, 8 am
- Saturday, Encinitas, 8:30 am

Attention

Intergroup Reps!

Monthly meetings
first Wednesday of
every month
7 pm - at the OASIS

This is where you find out what's happening
so you can bring the news back to your group.

APRIL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Intergroup Meeting:** April 1, 7 pm, OASIS
- 12th Step Within Meeting:** April 4, 10:15 am, OASIS
- Spring into Recovery—Marathon Meetings:** April 12, 9 am-5 pm, OASIS
- Sponsorship Fair:** April 18, 1:30-4:30, OASIS
- Men's OA Retreat—Boot Camp as Harlan sees it:** April 24-26, Rancho Elegre Summer Sizzler, Santa Barbara (Contact: gwally@earthlink.net)

Upcoming Retreats/Conferences/
Conventions/Workshops

- 12th Step Within Retreat:** June 12-14, Camp Cedar Glen, Julian
- Region 2 Convention:** June 26-28, Doubletree Hotel, Ontario CA
- 155th Serenity Retreat:** October 9-11, Pathfinder Ranch, Idyllwild

Mailing Party

The fun begins at 10:15 am
Even 15 minutes will help

Next Party
April 25th

Call David H., 858-382-0014, if questions



PARTICIPATE IN THE SILENT AUCTION

R2 2009 Convention

June 26-28, 2009

Doubletree Hotel—Ontario, CA

Help carry the message by donating:

Artwork, handcrafts, gift cards, program tapes, AA/OA
conference approved literature and stuffed animals

Contact: Gretchen, Fundraising Committee
at (562) 706-5176 or gmk5898@yahoo.com

CAREFRONTATION CORNER

"Practically every A.A. (O.A.) member declares that no satisfaction has been deeper and no joy greater than in a Twelfth Step job well done." AA 12&12 - pg 110

Our 12th Step Within Committee has had such a wonderful success in the past couple of years. Bringing different kinds of formats and using different venues for workshops and meetings in order to carry the message of OA has been a joy filled experience for me and may I say for those who have participated. I am grateful to be a part of the fellowship that demonstrates reaching out to those who still suffer in such a special way.

We are hard at work planning the June San Diego Retreat. We have a wonderful speaker coming from Los Angeles (Pamela W.) and a great DJ lined up (Ken) for Saturday night's dance. We are going to have a late night meeting under the stars Friday night (so be ready to stay up a little longer) and a wonderful Meditation Workshop experience on Saturday and Sunday morning. There will be music (singing), an ice breaker to help us get to know each other better, a Relapse and Recovery Meeting and of course a skit! And for those who enjoy out of doors we will have swimming, hiking and yoga. We are not a glum lot and absolutely insist on enjoying life (together).

Hope to see you June 12, 13 and 14.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

Donna Walls ♥ 12th Step Within Committee Chairman
(619) 549-0548 or hopefuldkw@yahoo.com