

# The REACH OUT

Overeaters Anonymous, San Diego County Intergroup, Inc.

August 2009 - Issue 8

## STEP EIGHT

***Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.***

*We have all done things we regret. We wouldn't be human if we hadn't. The principle behind Step Eight is self-discipline. Somewhere between "I have never harmed anyone" and "Oh my God, I have hurt every single human being I have ever met!" lies the truth: we all owe some amends.*

*Why bother making a list? If swept under the carpet, the wreckage of my past can come back to haunt me. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous states, "We may have felt that once the food problem was solved, everything in our lives would be satisfactory. When we did stop eating compulsively, however, we usually found that our defective ways of dealing with others were a source of pain for us. In many cases, this pain was so great we were tempted to eat again rather than face it." Practicing the principle of self-discipline makes it less likely I will hurt others and helps me make amends quicker when I do.*

*I learned something about the importance of choosing the right attitude at the beginning of a seemingly unpleasant task while in treatment...I was exhausted. This particular treatment center was more boot camp than resort. I had already done hard labor, working earnestly, since the early morning in the hot sun during the peak of a California summer. It was now mid-afternoon and for the first time since lunch I sat down. No sooner had I felt the pleasure of taking the load off my feet did the person in charge of work assignments walk over*

*to me and say, "Here, take this toothbrush and scrub where the floor meets the walls inside both dorms." Are you kidding me? I wanted to complain. Why me? I hadn't been slacking off. It wasn't fair but at that moment it dawned on me that I had a choice. It wasn't a choice between scrubbing and not scrubbing. It was a choice in my attitude while scrubbing. Would I choose humility or humiliation? I chose to whistle while I worked. My body was on its knees scrubbing but my mind was free. The last bastion of human freedom lies in our ability to choose our attitude regardless of our circumstances.*

*Step Eight is not rocket science. It just seems hard when looking at it from the outside. And there's a reason for that. Albert Einstein said, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." Step Eight works because the previous steps, Steps One through Seven, changed me. I am not the same person I was when I harmed others. However, if I have not painstakingly worked the previous seven steps, Step Eight seems overwhelming. The word "all," which is used twice, jumps out and makes it seem like a daunting task. When looking at it from the inside, it is cleansing and one of the greatest gifts I have ever given myself. In fact, BEFORE making a single amends I remember the wonderful sense of liberation I felt simply realizing that I wanted to right these wrongs. Not surprisingly, the purpose of doing Step Eight is not to judge others, but to*

*learn attitudes of mercy and forgiveness. Zen tradition teaches, "Do not take offense, even when it is offered." Forgiveness is a decision. If I sit around waiting to feel like forgiving, chances are it is never going to happen. However, when I decide to forgive, the good feelings have always followed the decision. I must forgive myself. I am not responsible for my disease but I am responsible for my recovery. I cannot afford to have a double standard. If I want forgiveness I must give it. AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions says it best: "Finally, we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong, and then we approach true tolerance and see what love for our fellows actually means. It will become more and more evident as we go forward that it is pointless to become angry, or to get hurt by people who, like us, are suffering from the pains of growing up."*

*In the end, what others have done to me is irrelevant to my willingness to make amends for what I have done. They could no more control what they did than I could control my compulsive overeating. I remind myself it's not personal. (He's/she's/they're) sick, just like I've been. I ask God to give (him/her/them) all the same wonderful things I want for myself. I pray, "God, forgive my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me." When I am willing to completely set aside how others have wronged me, then I know I am ready to move on to Step Nine.*

**~ Michael**

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***SPONSORS***  
**NEW SECTION . . .**

**Garry (men only) 619-582-0469**  
**Nicki 619-582-3372**

Available sponsors: Email your phone number to [dtyler126@yahoo.com](mailto:dtyler126@yahoo.com) to be posted in this space in the next issue.

***HOTLINE***

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**Dave B. 619-224-4500**  
*(East Coast calls welcome) cell: 619-787-2937*  
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**Gillian 619-563-5167**  
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**Tracy 760-489-6601**  
**Virgil 619-749-9810**

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

*To have your name added to (or removed from) a list above call Donna T. 858-673-5587*

***A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR . . .***

Happy August, Everyone.

What a great day it is to recover! For my share, I have chosen to comment on the following statement:

*"I will take a long look at where I am today and be grateful. I am preparing for the adventure ahead."*

It is important for me to remember and reflect on where I came from; where I started this journey. Why? Because it is vital that I do not forget what the lowest low was. So I don't forget where I came from and the reasons why I came to recovery. It is also just as vital to continue the journey by reflecting and accepting where I have been and what I have done and what I need to do to keep taking the next indicated step. To admit and become aware of my defects of character and to seek my amends and to right my wrongs and keep my side of the street clean. It is also imperative that I remain humble, that I am willing to admit my faults, and that I am willing to do the footwork. Above all, I MUST trust and believe in my Higher Power, no matter what. It will only be through my experience that I will gain hope. It is through doing the footwork that I can ensure that, just for today, the promises are before me. That, just for today, I do not have to control and that all I have to do is accept.

Just for today, one day at a time, the promises of this program will continue to appear as long as I remember that my destiny is in the hands of my HP.

May you find recovery and the promises in each and every day.



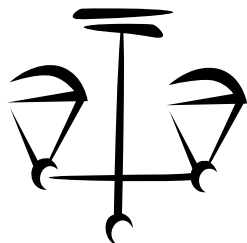
~ Tracy

***TRUSTED SERVANTS***

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Tracy</b>	<b>760-489-6601</b>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>Rex</b>	<b>619-302-3003</b>
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<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Dave B.</b>	<b>619-224-4500</b>
<b>Internal Information (acting)</b>	<b>David H.</b>	<b>858-382-0014</b>
<b>Literature (acting)</b>	<b>Mary</b>	<b>619-922-2468</b>
<b>Professional Outreach</b>	<b>Gina</b>	<b>619-758-1531</b>
<b>Public Information</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>Reach Out Editor</b>	<b>Donna T.</b>	<b>858-673-5587</b>
<i>Submit articles to <a href="mailto:dtyler126@yahoo.com">dtyler126@yahoo.com</a> and put Reach Out in the subject line</i>		
<b>Recorder</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>Region 2 Coordinator</b>	<b>Ginger G.</b>	<b>619-425-3000</b>
<b>Retreat Liaison</b>	<b>Iola</b>	<b>619-370-4594</b>
<b>WSO Coordinator (acting)</b>	<b>Ken</b>	<b>619-212-5292</b>
<b>Young People's Coordinator</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>12th Step Within Committee (acting)</b>	<b>Donna W.</b>	<b>619-549-0548</b>

## PLAN OF EATING – FUNCTIONING ON THREE LEVELS

**F**or this compulsive overeater, it is very difficult to make decisions about what is a moderate meal. I alone do not have the power to eat moderately. Also, after years of abuse, my stomach and digestive tract are not like a normal eater's. A plan of eating helps me to recover by operating on three levels.



First – it addresses my physical allergy. An alcoholic does not have a glass of wine with dinner. I do not have my alcoholic foods. Period. My plan of eating eliminates all of my red light foods and most of my yellow light foods. This means my body is not physically triggered by the foods I ingest. Upon becoming

abstinent and within three days of eliminating these foods, the cravings had left me almost entirely. They do return in acute moments; but, when they do, I can usually trace them back to either an emotional issue I need to address or to the unwarranted presence of a red light food in my diet. I can then deal with the problem, not the post-binge despair.

Second – it addresses my mental obsession. I do not make decisions about what food goes in my mouth. I lost that power and that right a long time ago. These days, my food is none of my business. The food plan tells me what is acceptable and what is not necessary for proper maintenance and functioning. I don't even think about what else is out there to eat. My mental obsession is not triggered at mealtime because I do not get a vote in what I eat.

Third – it address my body's need for a balanced, nutritious diet. A solid food plan includes protein at every meal and healthy portions of fruits and vegetables. It includes fiber, vitamins, minerals and the essential oils. These good things no longer come to me through a pill. They no longer come to me during an especially saintly meal one day a week. These good things are a part of every meal, every day. This consistency provides a nutritional balance that is a welcome normalcy after years of bingeing. My body responds well to this balance. It now sends me appropriate hunger signals, the sensation of soft satisfaction after a meal, and emotional and mental clarity.

Could I abstain from compulsive over eating without a plan of eating that addresses all three of these components? Not for long.

~ Jenny

### TRADITION EIGHT

***Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.***

This tradition helps us stay away from money-making situations other than carrying the message. No one is specially trained in OA behavior and knowledge. You don't need a degree to share your experience, strength and hope; or in sponsorship; or to be the leader or a treasurer. However, there are instances

where specific assistance is needed in our offices and it is permissible to hire "special workers" to answer phones and correspondence, etc.

Those of us who just "carry the message," are never paid. We do it for our own recovery and the fellowship. We discover a beautiful spirit of caring service which becomes a powerful factor in our healing. Living by the spirit of this tradition, we can turn to the one next to us and say truthfully from the heart, "I put my hand in yours because I care."  
~Phyllis

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED  
FOR  
CLEANUP DAY  
AT THE OASIS**

**AUGUST 15  
1 PM—5 PM**

For more information, call 619-521-2538

# Announcements

## MEETING UPDATES

- **NEW MEETINGS:**
  - Tuesday, OASIS, 6 pm, Relapse and Recovery
  - Wednesday, OASIS, 5:45 pm, Young People
- **CLOSED:**
  - Wednesday, Hillcrest, 4 pm
  - Thursday, City Heights, 6:45 pm
  - Friday, OASIS, Midnight
  - Saturday, OASIS, 1 pm, Young People
- **NEEDS SUPPORT:**
  - Tuesday, Serenity Shop, Noon
- **NEED CONTACT PERSON:**
  - Tuesday, OASIS, 6 pm, Step Study
  - Saturday, OASIS, 6:30 pm, 100 Pounder
- **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 (need sponsors)

## *Eighth Step Prayer*

*Higher Power,*

*I ask Your help in making my list of all those I have harmed. I will take responsibility for my mistakes, and be forgiving to others as You are forgiving to me. Grant me the willingness to begin my restitution. This I pray.*

## AUGUST EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Intergroup Meeting:** August 5, 7 pm, OASIS
- 12th Step Within Committee Meeting:** August 12, 7 pm, OASIS
- OA 12 & 12 - Step Up to Recovery Men's Retreat:** August 14-16, La Casa de Maria, Santa Barbara (for more information contact [s.gerschick@sbcglobal.net](mailto:s.gerschick@sbcglobal.net))
- Board Meeting:** August 19, 7 pm, OASIS

## Upcoming Retreats/Conferences/ Conventions/Workshops

**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*  
*August 29th*

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

## LITERATURE TEAM

*The following members can arrange to sell you  
OA literature at the OASIS.*

**Mary 619-922-2468**  
Literature Chair

**Dave H. 858-382-0014**

**Rex 619-302-3003**

**Dave B. 619-787-2937**  
Saturday: 9 am—1 pm

**Gina S. 619-758-1531**  
Tuesday: 11:30 am—1:30 pm  
Wednesday: 11:30 am—1:30 pm  
Saturday: 8:30 am—Noon

There may also be a literature person at your meeting,  
or you can order online at  
[http://www.oa.org/literature\\_catalog.htm](http://www.oa.org/literature_catalog.htm),  
or stop by the Serenity Shop.

## CAREFRONTATION CORNER

### NEW MEETING

**TWELFTH STEP WITHIN - SAVE A MEMBER MEETING** beginning July 28th, Tuesdays, at 6 PM until 7 PM at the OASIS in the Boardroom (small meeting room). Our focus is on Relapse and Recovery/Relapse Prevention. We will have meeting leaders who will share their experience, strength and hope about their own relapse and recovery story. We will focus on topic, read, write and share. Everyone is welcome.

*"Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist, but in the ability to start over."  
F. Scott Fitzgerald ♦ FOR TODAY ♦ page 361*  
*What injustice to think myself a failure because I have to begin again! So I slipped, or relapsed: so what? Starting over is what all creation is about; it is the part of the fabric of success in enterprises ranging from spinning a web to splitting the atom. For Today: I think of the term, "retread", as proof of how wonderfully accepting and free we OAs can be about the nature of our disease. If there were no Overeaters Anonymous I might have to give in to the gloom and doom; but OA is alive and well and going strong - and so am I!*

Donna Walls (619) 549-0548 [hopefuldkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hopefuldkw@yahoo.com)