

The REACH OUT

San Diego County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

February 2009 - Issue 2

STEP TWO

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

In the same way a wild animal cannot tame itself, I could not restore myself to sanity. When it comes to food, the insanity was that I kept right on eating long after it had stopped working. The principle of Step Two is *Hope*. It states, "Came to believe that a Power Greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." I came to believe by going to meetings and reading the literature. I met people who were walking miracles. I read stories of people who like me had suffered incomprehensible demoralization and I knew they had not gotten themselves out of the hole alone. I came to learn that God does not make hard terms with those who earnestly seek Him.

If you take a balloon and breathe into it filling it up with your own air, how long can you keep that balloon up in the air? Every time you pat it up it gently keeps floating down. No matter how determined you may be, you cannot keep it up in the air twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, indefinitely. However, take that same balloon and fill it with a "power greater than yourself" like helium gas and it will float up into the air and remain there with no further effort on your part. The first is self-reliance. The second is God-reliance.

A friend once told me, "You can borrow my Higher Power but you have to find your own." He suggested I interview people whose recovery I respected and ask them how they came to believe. How did God work in their lives? I was free to take what I liked and leave the rest. It gave me a fresh perspective and ways of thinking about things not previously considered. What do you want your Higher Power to be and do in your life?

I've heard mental health defined in terms of our ability to cope with life on life's terms. Problem was I had a broken "coper." How many times had I sabotaged myself? How many times had I seen what I had worked so hard to attain slip like water through my fingers? I am now operating on a different basis. I trust and rely upon infinite God rather than my finite, limited self. The weight of the world is off my shoulders.

There is a difference between intellectually understanding something and believing it. Have you ever heard about the person in AA full of faith but reeking of alcohol? At my top weight of 287 pounds spiritual pride was a great stumbling block. I could talk faith but when it came to food I could not put it into practice. I learned the answer was not to redouble my efforts. It was to *renew my faith*. I needed a spiritual awakening to solve THIS problem. Belief turns the key that allows the door of Faith to be opened for us.

A sane and healthy relationship with food is my reality today. Like a snake handler does not fear snakes, I do not fear food. I respect it. Like a person in a wheelchair does not apologize for needing a ramp, I need not apologize for having special needs when it comes to prayer and meditation, making sure I am well nourished, and regularly attending meetings. I don't have to have all the answers. An open mind keeps me teachable and helps me seek out and learn what I need to know. On page 43, the Big Book states, "The *compulsive overeater* at certain times has no effective mental defense against the *first bite*... His defense must come from a Higher Power." Today I know food can fill my stomach but it can never fill the God-shaped hole inside me.

~ **Michael**

DOING SERVICE OR BUILDING MY EGO?

I have found it useful to do a "service inventory" on myself from time to time. This ensures that I'm doing some service, but also not doing more than my energy allows. It also helps me see if I'm doing service for the wrong reasons, like sponsoring because I think it makes me seem more recovered if I have several people wanting what I have. You know, if I am spreading myself too thin, or doing service to build my ego, I'm just in my disease. I do a "service inventory" in my workplace too, and when I see that I'm overcommitted, I can do something about that. If we all do our share, that's when things work the best in my opinion.

~ Marian L.

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Tel: 619-521-2538 ▶ Fax: 619-521-2548 ▶ Website: www.oasandiego.org ▶ E-mail: oasd@sbcglobal.net

SERVICE REQUEST

We would like to expand our Hotline list.

Please submit

your name and number.

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 |
| Gillian | 619-563-5167 |
| Jill | 619-459-1018 |
| Jo | 562-948-5040 |
| Liz | 858-336-7214 |
| Mary Jane | 858-616-6472 |
| 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</i> | <i>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 . . .

In reading the Big Book the other day, a thought came to me about how recovery is a journey, not a destination. That made me think of how my recovery is like one of those diamond pendent journey necklaces that have a row of diamonds that start small on one end and get larger as the row progresses. My recovery, serenity, spiritual enlightenment and happiness is the diamond and as my recovery grows, the diamond gets bigger and more brilliant.

How it gets bigger and more brilliant is through the journey of recovery. It is through taking action, working the steps, seeking my higher power, and doing the next indicated thing in which to get my recovery.

When I first came into program, my diamond was just a black mass. It was not even discernable that it was a diamond. Then, the more I came to believe and the more I worked the steps, the more I turned my will and my life over the care of God as I understand him and the more I took action to arrest my compulsion, the more my diamond was nurtured, polished and grew. As I did this, the miracle of the promises and this program took my black mass and started to show the real diamond within. The wonder of all this is that the more this happens the more peace, serenity, happiness and love I feel and, no matter who or what comes up, it cannot take away the brilliance of this thing called recovery from me. That is as long as I continue to do the next indicated thing and keep in fit spiritual condition. I am glad that I have the chance to take this journey and see the diamond from within each of us grow and grow to be more beautiful and brilliant than before.

May each of you find the diamond from within as you experience this journey of recovery!

~Tracy

TRUSTED SERVANTS

| | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| Chair | Tracy | 760-489-6601 |
| Vice Chair | Rex | 619-302-3003 |
| Treasurer | Dave B. | 619-224-4500 |
| Secretary | Vacant | |
| Internal Information (acting) | David H. | 858-382-0014 |
| Literature (acting) | Mary Joyce | 619-922-2468 |
| Professional Outreach | Gina | 619-758-1531 |
| Public Information (acting) | Jayson | 619-400-9591 |
| Reach Out Editor | Donna T. | 858-673-5587 |
| Recorder | Vacant | |
| Region 2 Coordinator | Ginger G. | 619-425-3000 |
| Retreat Liaison | Annette | 858-578-9489 |
| 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 |

TRADITION TWO

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Wherever there is a power structure, there will be a power struggle. OA is built on the strength of all of its members. One of the most important tools we have is service. That is what keeps us running. (Also, I have learned that Service is Slimming.) When I am doing service, I am in the company of other working members of the Program and I learn a great deal from them. We have service bodies in each group, in each intergroup, in each region, and in World Service. If a vote turns out not to be the one I want, I pray for acceptance and have learned that if it is good for the Program, it will survive. If it is not, it will self-destruct. Another sign of maturity is not trying to "run the show" with power and manipulation. I was a master before coming here. Serenity did not exist in my realm.

~ Phyllis

On December 12th, I went to That First Bite – Relapse Prevention Workshop presented by the 12th Step Within Committee at the OASIS and thought you might be interested in the content.

The first part was a skit in a "garden" with a "tree of temptation" that had bags painted with different words hanging from it. The words were anger, resentment, bitterness, loneliness, etc., and on the reverse sides were their opposites — love, hug people, and so on. There were three "spirits" (women dressed in white sheets) and they portrayed honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness.

A young man comes in wanting to binge and the spirits tell him that his world will darken if he loses his abstinence. He finally does take that first bite and the lights go out. He is in the dark. The spirits have disappeared. He pleads for help, because he does not want to be alone anymore. The lights go on and the spirits return. He is back working on recovery and

everyone is happy. Applause. Applause. Cute skit.



Then there were three speakers. Each had been in relapse at some point but returned to program.

The first spoke about the miracle of recovery in OA. She had been in relapse and called it falling back. She was depressed and suicidal and did not go to her meetings. She had negative thoughts and was obsessed with food, calories and weight. She rationalized quantities of food. She has a recovery check list now and uses her tools. She has a Higher Power, goes to meetings and makes phone calls. She's willing to go to any lengths for her recovery and said that there are spiritual, emotional aspects. She can't work the program alone and calls her spon-

sor and works on the Steps. She suggested that if you are having problems you should ask for help. Talk to someone.

The next speaker had been 460 pounds when he first came into program. He lost 200 pounds and then left the rooms. He has been back one year and is on his food plan and has no other choice... he had tried everything else but this is where he belongs. He suffered shame, self-hatred, and willingly participated in this subtle disease. He was an empty person. He had nowhere else to go. He has to be rigorously honest or he will die from this disease.

The last speaker volunteered for various groups and was involved in social eating. She lied to herself and to others about her food. She was not honest with her sponsor. She said that humility helps. She struggled with her food plan but has been abstinent a few months now. She had tried all the other diet and calorie clubs. She has no choice but to remain in these rooms.

~ Barb

Announcements

MEETING UPDATES

NEW LOCATION:

Saturday, Encinitas, 8:30 and 9 am meetings have been moved to Seacoast Community Church, 1050 Regal Road (Bldg. C), Encinitas CA 92024

CLOSED:

Wednesday, Hillcrest, 4 pm
Thursday, City Heights, 6:45 pm
Friday, OASIS, Midnight

NEED SECRETARY OR CONTACT:

Tuesday, OASIS, 6 pm, Step Study

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/Seacoast Comm. Church, 8:30 am

Mailing Party

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

Next Party
February 28

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

Second Step Prayer

I pray for an open mind so I may come to believe in a Power greater than myself. I pray for humility and the continued opportunity to increase my faith. I don't want to be crazy anymore.

CAREFRONTATION CORNER

I always had good intentions every January 1st. I remember many years of heartache and suffering instead of flowers and love on Valentine's Day. My life was laden with self-hate, guilt, shame and resentments. That always had me in relapse with compulsive overeating (again). I was bingeing and I left the rooms of OA many times.

On February 14, 2009, we want to welcome you to join us and celebrate your recovery as we present Cafe OA - Espresso Yourself! at the OASIS from 3-5 p.m.

Please! If you are back out there, we love you and want you to come home. Come be with your "family" in OA. We will love you until you can love yourself. Isn't love what Valentine's Day is all about?

There will be people sharing art, music, comedy and most importantly RECOVERY. There will be members available to sponsor anyone who needs a helping hand to step back into recovery.

Welcome to OA. Welcome BACK — we missed you.
~ Pam T.



Contact: Donna W., Chair of 12th Step Within Committee
(619) 549-0548 hopefuldkw@yahoo.com

Overeaters Anonymous is 49 Years Old!

Birthday Party Celebration
February 13-15, 2009

Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Los Angeles

Registration packages available:

www.OALAIG.ORG

FEBRUARY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Intergroup Meeting: February 4, 7 pm, OASIS

12th Step Within Meeting: February 7, 10:15 am, OASIS

12th Step Within—Café OA Espresso Yourself:
February 14, 3-5 p.m., OASIS

153rd Serenity Retreat: February 20-22, 2009, Camp Cedar Glen, Julian (Leader: John K.)

Upcoming Retreats/Conferences/ Conventions/Workshops

154th Serenity Retreat: June 12-14, 2009, Julian

155th Serenity Retreat: October 9-11, 2009, Idyllwild