

The REACH OUT

San Diego County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

January 2009 - Issue 1

STEP ONE

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

"I have good news and I have bad news. The good news is the war is over... The bad news is you lost." Those simple yet profound words were my introduction to recovery. It had to start with surrender. I came to realize the futility of self-reliance. My best efforts had failed. My best thinking had gotten me nowhere. If I could have solved my problem, I would have done so a long time ago but my dilemma was I lacked the power.

The Big Book states, "The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success." I indeed was like the actor trying to run the whole show. I had to quit playing God. It was clearly not working even though my motives were good. But how? The twelve

steps practiced as a way of life that's how. It's not official but I like to think of Step Zero as, "If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it - then you are ready to take certain steps."

The principle behind the first step is *Honesty*. It states, "We admitted we were powerless over food - that our lives had become unmanageable." In my experience, it is precisely because I AM powerless over food that I no longer overeat. Whenever I misuse food I am NOT being honest. I am deluding myself into thinking I have power. Whatever I turn to in times of trouble I am making my Higher Power. When I turn to food I am once again playing God. Overeaters Anonymous is a spiritual program. I need

physical abstinence from overeating but if I do not have emotional sobriety my inner life repeatedly gets so unmanageable that I continue going back to the food. Without a Spiritual Awakening I cannot remain emotionally sober and therefore I remain at risk of taking that first compulsive bite, which sets off the old destructive cycle. The Big Book states, "When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically."

For me today the miracle is not the weight loss, nor even the fact that I am not eating compulsively. *The miracle is I don't want to overeat.* I have freedom from food obsession. God has done for me what I could not do for myself. Keep coming back. It works if you work it.

~ Michael

Right vs. Happy

There is a phrase I have heard often in recovery. Do you want to be right or do you want to be happy? That being said, it has been important for me to embrace my wrongs in this program. My wrongs have taught me so much. Embracing my wrongs have given me the awareness to clean up my side of the street. As I work the steps on my wrongs, what do I get? I get more peace of mind, serenity, good health, happiness and security and I am more free to be the real me. So what's at stake? MY LIFE!

~ Bonnie

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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

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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 . . .

Happy New Year!

"True happiness is found in the journey, not the destination."

(Page 511, 4th Edition, AA Big Book)

Wow! A year has come and gone and as I embark on a new year, I am so grateful that I have a Higher Power who loves me, a program and the 12 steps in which to walk through each an every day. It is not for me to question what the destination is, but to believe that regardless of what happens my part is to trust in my Higher Power and to work my program on a daily basis and everything else will work out.

This does not mean that I do not have to do the foot work. Recovery takes action. Recovery takes willingness. I still have to work my program on a daily basis. I have to be willing to grow along spiritual lines and to trust my higher power. I have to make sure I keep my side of the street clean and I have to be willing to accept life on life's terms. It also means I have to let my HP, whom I choose to call God, do what He needs to do and try not to tell Him how I think it should be done.

I do know that as long as I remain willing, accepting and do the foot work, the rewards are far greater than the food ever was. So, as another year starts, no matter what the journey brings, I know that I can make it through thanks to my HP, this program and the 12 steps.

~Tracy

TRUSTED SERVANTS

Chair	Tracy	760-489-6601
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Secretary	Vacant	
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Young People's Coordinator (acting)	Shannon	_____
12th Step Within Committee (acting)	Donna W.	619-549-0548

When we begin program the discussion is about abstinence. It is personal, and mine began as candy but is now from sugar, white flour, refined foods. But as we start to withdraw from these foods something happens. Suddenly, we are not quite so crazy as before. Amazingly, what we think is more clear. Then, incredibly, we begin to feel emotions.

I took my first abstinence on my first day at program. It was candy. That first week was the hardest of recorded memory. I sat at my desk, and though my candy tin was empty, I imagined taking the tin and opening it and counting out the allowed 25 jelly beans and how each of the different colors would taste. I didn't imagine it like you would imagine being in your happy place for a feeling of calm. No the thoughts came up by themselves, unsummoned, unbid, unrequested. It was my disease, calling, beckoning, singing like the sirens of mythology. I didn't know the disease acted this way. I didn't realize that I had underlying feelings to my desires to eat. The week went on and each day became easier than the last.

The second week began with a feeling I had to analyze to discover what it was. I was given a project at work, one I had never done before. It was complex, complicated, and convoluted. I wanted to eat, all day long. When I thought about it, I could see I wanted to eat. Initially I couldn't see a reason. But on contemplation, I discovered the cause of the desire to eat. I was afraid, afraid to fail; afraid to look incompetent in the eyes of my supervisor and bosses. Looking at the emotion, at the fear, I immediately had no desire to eat. It was as if a magician had waved a magic wand about my head and the desire for food when I wasn't hungry was taken away.

During that second week, I had other feelings arise and with each feeling came a corresponding desire to eat, to eat sugar, to eat candy, my abstinence. The other feelings that came up were frustration about not being able to complete a task because I didn't have all the information, the computer program was not functioning correctly, and the computer was not working properly. That day I wanted sugar in the worst way. But as I watched the feeling, the desire for sugar subsided. I also experienced boredom. It is not that I was not busy, I was. I am just tied to my desk. I have to be there to be doing my job. That day I just wanted to eat. As I became aware of the boredom and the underlying cause of just being tied to my desk, the desire to eat also subsided.

The other night, I had the opportunity to look at my resentment, and the following irritability and crab-biness. In this experience, the disease very deceitfully presented itself a few days later, when I prepared my usual sugar free dessert, then proceeded to eat two servings. What was that about? My sponsor suggested that I be very careful as the disease is cunning and artful in convincing us to eat that forbidden fruit. After long discussion about the resentment and ways to handle the situation in the future, I have had removed from my feelings the desire for extra, extra dessert, extra food, exotic food.

To me this is the magic. I have asked my sponsor how it works, she doesn't know. I have asked other OAers how it works, they don't know. But what I see is when you are abstinent, the crazy is removed, and when you look at the feelings the disease is calmed. If this isn't magic, well then, show me what you've got!

~ Karuna

TRADITION ONE—Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity

There are so many opportunities to consider this Tradition. It is important to recognize the format at each meeting. This was decided by a steering committee for that group. It is our responsibility to observe the "rules" of the group. *It is every member's responsibility to protect the OA spirit of unity and mutual support.* It is a good lesson in maturity to be able to resolve disagreements without destroying people. We may disagree, in principle, but we have the ability to work out all differences. We are growing up. We are not all alike and the sooner we realize that we are here to see each other through, not see through each other, recovery is in process. *Unity does not mean uniformity. Some of the questions regarding this tradition are on page 115 of the OA 12 & 12.* You would do yourself a great service by reading each Tradition and by answering some of those questions with your sponsor. We are not alone. My recovery depends on what I hear at meetings and from friends in the Program. I am learning how to make healthy relationships (and choose them) and in this way becoming a healthier human being and worthy of being a power of example.

~ Phyllis

Announcements

MEETING UPDATES

NEW MEETINGS/CHANGE IN FORMAT:

- Friday, OASIS, Midnight

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

NEED SECRETARY OR CONTACT:

- Monday, OASIS, 6:30 pm Newcomers
- 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

Group Registration by Email, Phone or Online

All changes to the meeting directory can be done by email or telephone. Submit meeting information to tjo@acm.org or call 619-251-8304. For online registration, go to www.oasandiego.org. This action updates our San Diego County Meeting Directory/website and the World Service Office mailing list/website.

Women's Committed Step Study

Mondays 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Starts January 12, 2009

110 Juniper Street in the Balboa Park Area
San Diego 92101 (free parking available)

Contact: Barbara S. 619-813-7677

JANUARY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

12th Step Within Meeting: January 3, 10:15 am, OASIS

Intergroup Meeting: January 7, 7 pm, OASIS

Upcoming Retreats/Conferences/ Conventions/Workshops

12th Step Within—Express Yourself: February 14, OASIS (Poetry and writings)

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

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

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

Mailing Party

The fun begins at 10:15 am **Next Party**
Even 15 minutes will help **January 31**

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

First Step Prayer

**Today, I ask for help with my addiction.
Denial has kept me from seeing how powerless
I am and how my life is unmanageable.
I need to learn and remember that I have an
incurable illness and that abstinence is the
only way to deal with it.**

CAREFRONTATION CORNER

12th Step Within – Reaching out to those who still suffer within the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous.

For Today (Page 348)

"We are no longer wandering, alone and lost. We are found."

OA 12 & 12 (Page 130)

"As tradition three implies, a desire to abstain—to refrain from eating compulsively—is the heart of OA membership. There are many opinions among us about what it means, exactly, to stop eating compulsively. Nobody is excluded from OA membership because of his or her personal opinion of how to achieve abstinence...in fact, many of us kept coming back to OA despite problems with abstinence and have found this to be the key to our recovery."

Loneliness, isolation, and separation from God and my fellows, that was my life before recovery in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Since I walked into these rooms I have not found it necessary to live this life alone. I have developed a "safety net" of recovery through a relationship with God, my sponsor, some special friends in program, meetings and service commitments. I can look forward to a "day at a time" of successful recovery as long as I am willing to keep coming back no matter what happens in my life. I am grateful to my HP and you OA.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service. Happy New Year!

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