

# The REACH OUT

Overeaters Anonymous, San Diego County Intergroup, Inc.

May 2009 - Issue 5

## STEP FIVE

**Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

Step Five leads off the chapter in the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, simply titled, "Into Action." On page 72 it does a superb job of explaining why we need to admit our shortcomings to another human being. "The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome *compulsive overeating*. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they *overate again*. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their housecleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only thought they had lost their egoism and fear; they only thought they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else all their life story."

What are wrongs? In this case wrongs refers to defects of character, faults, mistakes, things we have admitted are objectionable, shortcomings, flaws, and even sins. They all mean the same thing – whatever blocks us off from God and others. If you have ever worked with acids you know they cannot be neutralized with water. However, baking soda neutralizes them immediately. If I only focus on what happened, it is like trying to neutralize acid with water. It doesn't help me. However, when I look deeper to the exact nature – truly my part in it, it works like baking soda. When I act out I can look inside myself and realize things such as, "Oh... I was scared I wouldn't get what I was demanding or would lose something important to me." "There I go playing God again." Or, "He's just spiritually sick, like I've been. God, give him the same wonderful things I want for my-

self. Please save me from getting angry." The acid is neutralized. I may still need to clean up the mess but restored to sanity I am no longer blocked off from the Sunlight of the Spirit.

I always like to think that I get out of recovery what I put into it. But then I am reminded that half measures availed us nothing. My first attempts at Step Five were a little disappointing. They basically ended up being little more than me reading my fourth step inventories, which in retrospect were less than searching and fearless. I expected more from the experience but when I look back I recognize my half-hearted effort. I wasn't truly open. Defensive, I'd say things like, "Yeah, but...." I was basically going through the motions and treating the steps as assignments rather than a life and death errand.

Years into the program, I found myself desperate and deeply depressed. I realized I had to change. I had to get the poison out or die. I no longer cared about looking good. Finally, I wrote down an inventory not based on any format or answering a ton of questions, although they certainly have their place. Rather, with the desperation of a drowning man I made a list of every single thing for which I felt any sort of guilt or shame. I told, rather than asked, an experienced member in the fellowship that he had to help me. I described with deadly earnestness the bare bones inventory I had written and he agreed to spend an entire day together. This time I didn't merely read it. We discussed and scrutinized each item. Patterns emerged. My eyes were opened. At last, I felt the long sought after relief I had read about and heard was possible. By the grace of God, I am still learning and growing one day at a time. Each one of our experiences is different. Please identify but do not compare. Keep coming back. We need you!

~ Michael

## 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

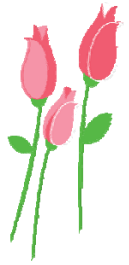
<b>Ann Marie S.</b>	<b>619-428-5231</b>
<b>Dave B.</b> <i>(East Coast calls welcome)</i>	<b>619-224-4500</b> <i>cell: 619-787-2937</i>
<b>Don B.</b>	<b>619-420-0357</b>
<b>Christine (anorexic)</b>	<b>619-992-5344</b>
<b>Flor (Spanish speaking)</b>	<b>760-931-9802</b>
<b>Gillian</b>	<b>619-563-5167</b>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

## SPEAKERS

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

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

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR . . .



Happy Spring, Everyone. What a great day to recover!

Recently the speaker at the Saturday morning Maintainer's meeting selected the topic "How big is your God" for the open sharing.

For me, my Higher Power, whom I choose to call God, is as big as I let Him be.

I choose to believe that my Higher Power is always there for me. My Higher Power often runs to me, loves me and accepts me no matter what or no matter how many times I have turned my back on my Higher Power. My Higher Power provides for me exactly what I need, even if I think I need something else or something more. My Higher Power will never fail me or let me down.

You might be wondering though "what does she mean by the as big as I let Him be" part. What I mean is that it is within me as to how I accept my Higher Power. It also means that it is solely within me to be willing to believe and turn my life over to His care. It also means that I must surrender, unconditionally, to my Higher Power. That's right – I have to be willing to turn my life and my will over to my Higher Power. I have to be willing to step aside and quit being my own Higher Power and forcing my will. It means that I have to face life on life's terms and to continue to work my program to the best of my ability and to believe unconditionally that my Higher Power will provide for me exactly what I need. In doing this, I am letting and asking my Higher Power to be as big as He possibly can be.

~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>
<b>Secretary (acting)</b>	<b>Heather</b>	<b>858-386-9448</b>
<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 (acting)</b>	<b>Jayson</b>	<b>619-400-9591</b>
<b>Reach Out Editor</b>	<b>Donna T.</b>	<b>858-673-5587</b>
<b>Recorder (acting)</b>	<b>Carol</b>	<b>619-280-5465</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 (acting)</b>	<b>Shannon</b>	<b>860-604-3122</b>
<b>12th Step Within Committee (acting)</b>	<b>Donna W.</b>	<b>619-549-0548</b>

## Reflections on the SDIG Meditation Workshop, March 14, 2009

The Meditation Workshop was attended by 47 members and was a wonderful experience. Our workshop leader was Judi H., a longtime OA member who is also an author and addiction specialist who has studied meditation in monasteries in the U.S., Burma, and India.

Meditation is about emptying the mind; by releasing and letting go we allow ourselves to be open to surprise, to not knowing what is going to happen to us. In practice emptying the mind is hard to do, and when you think it is empty, there is always more. Judi gave a visual example of emptying a water pitcher—you think you emptied it, but there is still more to pour out.

Judi led us through a body awareness meditation which is based on her study of meditation in monasteries. The Buddhists suggest meditating with eyes open, looking down at a 45-degree angle and focusing on a spot on the floor. Be aware of your breathing and your body, feel the cells in your feet, then work your way up to the shoulders and head.

Members shared afterwards on the body awareness meditation:

- ◆ My profession relies on my verbal communication; I did not realize that a lot of what I say is not necessary. I followed the leader's suggestion of not talking during the break. I hugged someone I had not seen in awhile. I know if I would have spoken, it would not have been as rewarding.
- ◆ Judi presented a meditation workshop at the Region 2 Assembly. I started meditating and my work life is so much better. I am not always thinking about work nor am I stressed before I arrive at work.
- ◆ I have a double Master's degree, but until I went to a 12-Step retreat and participated in a meditation workshop, I did not really get it.

If anyone has further questions about meditation, you can contact the speaker at JudiHollis@aol.com.

~Ginger

### THE ELEVATOR IS BROKEN – TAKE THE STEPS

*At first glance one would think the elevator would be the easier, softer way. And maybe it would for those short couple minutes. But, when I get off the elevator my life is the same as it was when I got on. Not so, if I choose to work the steps. Little did I know once I came through these doors my life would change so much, and for the better. By taking the steps, first of all, I found I could lose*

*weight. And it was different than the many other times I'd lost 50 or more pounds. I had a peace I'd never known before. And then, continuing on with the steps, I learned to be a better person and how to live a centered life. I'm still learning. There is always more to be revealed. So I will gratefully keep coming back. And I hope you will, too, so I will never be alone.*

~LaRue

### TRADITION FIVE

***Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.***

To me that means that I share my experience, strength and hope on a spiritual, emotional and physical level. I had tried every known diet and none of them had the braces of spiritual and emotional recovery. Food nourishes my body, the Program nourishes my soul. Did I really find the solution to my weight problem by working the Program? It was important for me to go on a food plan first and then clear my mind to allow for the emotional and spiritual growth. If I am eating, food is my higher power and I am not in recovery. I need to have this reinforced daily, even after all these years. And, I do it by going to meetings, sponsoring, phone calls, reading/writing, service....sounds like good tools to me. The doctors, psychologists/psychiatrists, religionists could not do for me what an OA meeting does. Newcomers are always welcome and old timers are good to have around. After many years, I still lead a Newcomer's meeting weekly. If someone is missing from your meeting, call them, tell them you miss them, and invite them back. ~Phyllis

# Announcements

## MEETING UPDATES

### NEW MEETINGS:

- Saturday, OASIS, 1 pm, Young People
- Wednesday, OASIS, 5:45 pm, Young People
- Questions? Contact: OAYoungpeople@gmail.com

### 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 (need sponsors)

## Fifth Step Prayer

**Higher Power,**

**My inventory has shown me who I am, yet I ask for Your help in admitting my wrongs to another person and to You.**

**Assure me, and be with me, in this Step, for without this Step I cannot progress in my recovery. With Your help, I can do this, and I do it.**

## MAY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

**12th Step Within Meeting:** May 2, 10:15 am, OASIS  
**Intergroup Meeting:** May 6, 7 pm, OASIS

Upcoming Retreats/Conferences/  
Conventions/Workshops

**154th Serenity Retreat—12th Step Within:** 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**  
**May 30th**

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

**CAN YOU SAY RETREAT!?! (June 12, 13, and 14)**

This retreat is going to include a Friday night meeting under the stars, hiking, swimming, a special speaker and a Saturday night dance. On top of all of that, we are going to have lots of love and support and five abstinent meals. What more could a person ask for? It is bound to be another retreat full of fantastic recovery. ~ Iola B., S.D. Retreat Liaison

**HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?** Springtime, wow! Everywhere there's new growth. Every garden usually needs some encouragement from an active gardener. Using the right tools is necessary for cultivating a successful garden. In your recovery garden where your physical, mental and spiritual needs get tended, are you using the correct tools? Using the tools of recovery makes for a successful life. Abstinence (food plan), sponsorship, meetings, phone calls, writing, literature, anonymity, and service. Pick up a tool today and start cultivating the desires you have for a healing, healthy, joy-filled life. I invite you to get firmly rooted in the OA recovery program.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

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