

The REACH OUT

Overeaters Anonymous, San Diego County Intergroup, Inc.

October 2009 - Issue 10

A Rabbi and a soap maker were walking along when the soap maker questioned the Rabbi by asking, "What good is religion? Religion has been around for a long time, but people are still bad to each other." The Rabbi was silent until they saw a boy who was dirty from playing in the street. The Rabbi asked the soap maker, "What good is soap? We've had soap for many, many years and people still get dirty?" The soap maker protested the comparison and insisted that the soap had to be used in order to keep people clean. "Exactly my point," said the Rabbi. "Religion," he said, "has to be applied in order to do anybody any good." The same concept applies to recovery from compulsive overeating. The OA program, which is spiritual in nature – not religious – works just like soap. The Twelve Steps and tools of recovery must be used regularly to be effective. In short, meetings are like showers. How many do I have to miss before I start to stink?

The principle of Step Ten is *Perseverance*. It states, "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." Repetition truly is the only form of permanence nature can achieve. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous states, "If we were to experience permanent recovery from compulsive eating, we will have to repeat, day after day, the actions that have brought us so much healing." It works if you work it. Fortunately, perseverance helps us overcome our natural human tendency to find something that works and then stop doing it.

Regarding Step Ten, the Big Book states, "We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear." In the same way I cannot afford to be a slave to overeating, I cannot afford to be a slave to anything else – including my emotions. Feelings are normal. Clinging to them is not. Step Ten saves me from the emotional hangovers caused by selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, fear, and the like that, if left unchecked, could eventually take me back to excess food.

STEP TEN

"DO NOT LET STAINS SET." That is the warning you will find on the instructions of most any stain remover. I keep life's everyday stains from setting by continuing to take inventory and when wrong promptly admitting it. To understand the importance of acting promptly, imagine sitting around a campfire when a bright red ember lands on your shirt's sleeve. If you blow it off immediately no damage is done but if you let it sit there it will ruin the fabric.

It is estimated that it takes the average homemaker twenty-two hours a week to keep a home clean, tidy, and well run. Is it any surprise it likewise takes a reasonable investment in time to keep my inner house in order? There are as many

forms of inventories as there are ways of cleaning a home. I equate my searching and fearless Step Four inventories to the cleaning that occurs when moving. Everything is examined. Non-essentials are discarded and everything of value is carefully transferred to my new home. Step Ten can be used as an annual "spring cleaning." It is a thorough cleaning and re-examination, a mini-fourth step, of everything that has accumulated since my last fourth step or over the previous year. It can also be done as a nightly written or mental inventory reviewing the day that I equate to "routine housework," like throwing out the trash, clearing the dishwasher, and wiping down the kitchen counter. Step Ten can even take the form of a "spot-check" inventory used anytime I find myself disturbed, facing an important decision, or dealing with a challenging situation. It is like "cleaning up spills" as they occur, which goes with the territory of keeping any home enjoyably livable.

Step Ten has taught me how to get the most out of the tool of writing. When I first started in recovery I would wind up worn out from writing page after page using the technique of free-association. Whatever came to mind I would write down. Nothing wrong with that other than it was not very user friendly and over time made me avoid writing because it just took too long. Later I tried focusing on writing about what was bothering me, which can be dangerous for someone whose root problem is being selfish, self-centered, and egocentric. I believed that if I just got it out it would lose its

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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 to be posted in this space in the next issue.

HOTLINE

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(East Coast calls welcome) cell: 619-787-2937
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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

**San Diego County Intergroup
Elections in December 2009**

Abstinence and Recovery Requirements:

To be elected to the Intergroup Board, a nominee must have a minimum of one year of current abstinence, six months of which shall be at maintenance, with the nominee being the sole judge of his/her abstinence and maintenance.

Available Positions:

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Internal Information Chair
- Public Information Chair
- Reach Out Editor
- Region 2 Coordinator
- Retreat Committee Liaison
- 12th Step Within Committee Chair

IMPORTANT BOARD MEETING DATES:

OCTOBER 7—ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT
NOVEMBER 4—NOMINATIONS
DECEMBER 2—ELECTIONS

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
Public Information	Vacant	
Reach Out Editor	Donna T.	858-673-5587
<i>Submit articles to dtyler126@yahoo.com and put Reach Out in the subject line</i>		
Recorder	Vacant	
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	Vacant	
12th Step Within Committee (acting)	Donna W.	619-549-0548

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power. From time to time I would find temporary relief from that approach, but more often than not it gave what was going on more power over me. I wound up with pages and pages all about the problem and yet found myself no closer to solutions. I then tried writing letters to God. They were wonderful and deepened the sense of intimacy I felt with God. It really brought Him into my life in very practical ways but they still tended to be problem-focused. When my worries feel like a squirrel running around a cage inside my head, I have learned to answer solution-centered questions to get my concerns out and at the same time find answers that bring with them real peace of mind.

The quality of the questions I ask myself determines the quality of my life. I am

either working the problem or I am working the solution. I had to stop asking circular "why?" and "why me?" questions. Answering the following Positive Constructive Questions to take a "spot-check" inventory whenever I am disturbed is quick, solution-centered, and never fails to leave me feeling serene and deeply aware I am safe in God's loving care:

- ◆ What good can come from this?
- ◆ What can I learn from this?
- ◆ How can this strengthen my recovery?
- ◆ Where does God fit into this?
- ◆ Which spiritual principles can I consciously apply to this situation?

Many promises come after Step Nine and as we work Steps 10-12. None have greater meaning to me than the ones on pages 84 and 85 of the Big Book, "And we have ceased fighting

anything or anyone – even *food*. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in *overeating*. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward *eating* has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality – safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition."

~ Michael

When I first came into the program it was because someone carried the message. What a miraculous gift they gave me. I have a phrase I use for myself and it's "now that you got it, go give it away". I learned how to do that in this program by being an example to the best of my ability and sharing my experience, strength and hope; then letting go of the outcome. I have learned that everyone has a different spiritual process and acceptance is respecting another's process. My job is to work this program. My weakness is in not making enough phone calls. I consider it selfish that I don't. I heard a woman speak at the convention that said she made 15 phone calls a day. I also heard how it helped her program. It inspired me to pick up the phone more often. Program first, survival second, family third.

~ Bonnie

TRADITION TEN

OA has no opinion on outside issues, hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Do you understand the need for OA to maintain its identity on a very basic level? We have spent most of our lives alienated from our families, our friends, the world, in some cases, because our opinions differed from theirs. Here, while we may not agree on a specific food plan, we certainly agree on the power and force of the 12 Steps for our recovery. Another of my favorites is "food nourishes my body, Program nourishes my soul". I did not have to give up freedom of thought. As a matter of fact, I found the Program initiated constant provocative life changing thoughts. But, I was not bound by membership to do so. And, the positive atmosphere

at meetings was something I came to depend on. *We are not a glum lot!* And, *OA groups focus their discussions on recovery from compulsive eating rather than on other issues.* Everything we do as individuals could be cause for discussion; our food plan, our exercise, our vitamins, our sleep program, our meetings, etc., etc. Another cliché I like is, "We are here to see each other through, not see through each other". No more conflicts. Only concentrate on recovery. We have nothing to debate. It is important to agree only on the fact that we are here because we wish to stop eating compulsively. We can to that!

~Phyllis

Announcements

MEETING UPDATES

NEW MEETINGS:

- Sunday, OASIS, 5:30 pm, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning
- Tuesday, OASIS, 6 pm, Relapse and Recovery
- Wednesday, OASIS, 5:45 pm, Young People

CHANGE IN MEETING LOCATION:

- Thursday, 12:30 Step Study and Literature
Meeting has moved from Imperial Beach to First Baptist Church at 494 E Street, Chula Vista

CLOSED:

- Wednesday, Hillcrest, 4 pm
- Thursday, City Heights, 6:45 pm
- Friday, OASIS, Midnight
- Saturday, OASIS, 1 pm, Young People

NEEDS SUPPORT:

- Monday, Chula Vista, 7:30 pm
- 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)

OCTOBER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- OA Sponsorship Workshop:** October 3, 1-4 pm, Seacoast Community Church, Encinitas
- Intergroup Meeting:** October 7, 7 pm, OASIS
- 155th Serenity Retreat:** October 9-11, Pathfinder Ranch, Idyllwild
- Board Meeting:** October 21, 7 pm, OASIS
- R2 Fall Assembly:** October 30-November 1, Marriott San Francisco Airport Hotel

Upcoming Events

- 12/12 Marathon Meetings:** December 12, OASIS
- 156th Serenity Retreat:** February 19-21, Warner Springs
- 157th Serenity Retreat:** June 11-13, Camp Cedar Glen, Julian

Mailing Party

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

***Next Party
October 31st***

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

HELP NEEDED

For those who wish to do SERVICE and give back to the program for all you receive, here are some jobs that need to be done at the OASIS on a regular basis:

Vacuum; clean bathroom sinks, toilets, floors; answer phone; stuff envelopes and help with special mailings; arrange chairs for meetings; remove trash from building; help with filing; make sure lights are off and the door is locked after meetings; clean up after yourself so others won't have to.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

FRI DAY, OCTOBER 30, 2009
8 P.M.
AT THE OASIS

Dance to DJ Ken
Costume Contest
Prizes
Refreshments
Fun and Fellowship

Questions? Service?
Contact Lessie (619) 739-1643
iblessie@sbcglobal.net