

The REACH OUT

Overeaters Anonymous, San Diego County Intergroup, Inc.

September 2009 - Issue 9

STEP NINE

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

One day a man was hiking in the mountains when he suddenly lost his footing and tumbled over the edge of a cliff. In desperation he grabbed onto the roots of a tree growing out from the side of the mountain but he simply did not have the strength to pull himself back up. Dangling hundreds of feet in the air he prayed, "God, if you are there, please help me." To his amazement the sky opened up and the man clearly heard God say, "Just let go." The man looked down at the jagged rocks below, he took a deep breath and cried out, "Is anybody else up there?" The principle of Step Nine is *Love*. It states, "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others." The first time I read Step Nine I wanted to make amends about as much as the man in the story wanted to just let go – not at all! I too had fallen and could not get up. I needed help but found the idea of approaching the people I had harmed terrifying. I have since learned that although the solutions to my problems are not always what I expect them to be, the best thing I can do is trust the process, *Let Go and Let God*.

What does making amends have to do with eating compulsively? The Big Book states, "...we will never get over overeating until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past." I believe we are all connected and there is a ripple effect to every single one of our actions, whether positive or negative. For too many years, deep down, feelings of guilt and shame acted like a corrosive agent weakening the spiritual foundation of my life. Most of us instinctively know that what goes around comes around. Some call it karma. In short, you do bad things and bad things happen. You do good things and good things happen. I

choose to think of karma as a natural law of the Universe similar to gravity. Gravity does not care if you believe in it or not. It exists. If you step off a cliff you will fall. However, there are other natural laws that do not violate the law of gravity but rather can help us rise above it. For example, applying the principles of aerodynamics allows you to step off that same cliff and safely hang-glide back down to Earth. Making amends let me rise above the law of karma and cancel out the debt I owed it. Along with it went the guilt and shame that unknowingly had been weighing me down.

Step Nine has been a source of great comfort. Loved ones have passed away and I've experienced the peace of mind that comes from knowing we had the best possible relationship precisely because I had at one time made amends.

By the Grace of God, for years now, weight loss has not been a motivating factor in my OA recovery. My ongoing motivation is making amends to myself for years of self-abuse. No one has hurt me as much as I have hurt myself. An, "I'm sorry" is not enough. I owe myself a living amends. The Twelve Steps, the tools of recovery, and our slogans are the blueprints for my new life. The Big Book reminds us "At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. But this is not an end in itself. Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." It goes on to say, "There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. We don't worry about them if we can honestly say to ourselves that we would right them if we could." The spiritual life truly is not a theory. *We have to live it.*

~ Michael

NINTH STEP PRAYER

Higher Power, I pray for the right attitude to make my amends, being ever mindful not to harm others in the process. I ask for Your guidance in making indirect amends. Most important, I will continue to make amends by staying abstinent, helping others, and growing in spiritual progress.

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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

Ann Marie S. 619-428-5231
Dave B. 619-224-4500
(East Coast calls welcome) cell: 619-787-2937
Don B. 619-420-0357
Christine (anorexic) 619-992-5344
Flor (Spanish speaking) 760-931-9802
Gillian 619-563-5167
Jill 619-459-1018
Jo 562-948-5040
Lisa (anorexic) 775-790-2206
Linda J. 619-415-3510
Liz 858-336-7214
Mary Jane 858-616-6472
Nicki 619-582-3372
Shannon (bulimic) 860-604-3122
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
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Nicki 619-582-3372
Samantha 858-565-1974
Steve P. 760-231-1492
Thomas F. 619-280-1956
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 . . .

Greetings!

I want to take this opportunity to thank the 17 Intergroup representatives who came to the August Intergroup meeting. That was a fantastic turn out.

Doing service is part of our program and it is important for us to be of service in any way possible. For me, doing service gets me out of my head and myself and allows me to be of use to others. It also enriches my recovery. There are times that doing service gives my program such a boost that it not only enriches my recovery but makes me feel stronger. I want to encourage all of the fellowship to do service, no matter how small or at what level.

If you are not sure about doing service, I urge you to try. Doing service can be as simple as greeting someone at the door, speaking to a newcomer, making or taking a reach out call, answering the phone, or taking out the trash at the OASIS. Starting at the meeting level is a great place to begin if one is not sure.

Providing service at the group level is rewarding as well. We are all part of the fellowship and it is up to us to keep the fellowship thriving. Providing service is an important part to this process.

If you are interested in doing service at the group level, I encourage you to reach out to the existing board members for assistance. We are but trusted servants.

Lastly, as my sponsor always tells me, service is slimming. Stay tuned for more details of the upcoming service position elections in December.

~ Tracy

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

IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT

All my life I wanted only one thing -- to get what I wanted when I wanted it. I would lie, cheat and/or steal to get whatever I thought it was that I wanted. I thought it was food. I got lots of it. In all combinations, sizes, shapes, colors and amounts. I would sneak it. I would stuff it down. I would eat to way past the point of being full and then I would eat some more. I would eat and cry. I would cry and eat. Poor me. No one understood me. No one was treating me right. If you had my problems, you would eat too.

Then I came to OA. I got the shock of my life. I was told that it was not my mom. It was not my dad. It was not my brothers. It was not the school. It was not the neighborhood. It was not the church. It was not society to blame. It was me!!! Needless to say I did not like that message much so I went out and ate some more.

Eventually I came back, started to use the Steps to clear away denial, rationalizing, minimizing, analyzing, and other assorted tricks I had been using to make myself sick and keep myself that way. However, in the process I got scared and ran back to the food. It took me a while to reach my goal weight but I had finally gotten the message.

So, when I give service at any level, it is because I have found my real purpose in life. That purpose has nothing to do with a big house, big car, big bank account, power, fortune or fame. It has nothing to do with little center of the universe plans and designs. It has nothing to do with half measures. It has everything to do with finding a God of my understanding. I turned my will and my life over to God's care. I seek to know and to do God's will for me every day.

It took me nearly a decade after coming into OA to get the First Step. I don't know what it will take for you or how long it will take. But, I know I can say without any fear of contradiction: KEEP COMING BACK. ~ Jacqueline

**Come join us for an
OA SPONSORSHIP
WORKSHOP** Saturday,
October 3, from 1–4 pm at the
Seacoast Community Church,
1050 Regal Road, Encinitas.

The workshop will cover: **How to be a sponsor - How to find a sponsor - How to have a sponsor.** Three sponsor/sponsee pairs will share their individual experiences, sponsoring styles, and answers to specific questions about sponsorship. There will also be an opportunity for participants to ask questions of the panel and other experienced sponsors. Each person attending will receive a Sponsorship Kit.

Please RSVP at rsvpsponsor-workshop@gmail.com to ensure there are enough kits for everyone. If you cannot RSVP, registration will be accepted at the door. Everyone is welcome.

Maureen 760-525-0358
maanstr@gmail.com

TRADITION NINE

OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

One of the first things I learned in 12 Step Programs was that I was completely disorganized. This was not an easy admission. They told me that if I brought discipline to my food, I would bring order to my life. Once again, they were right. And so it is with our work of carrying the message. In order to allow more service to be done, it is necessary for more people to participate. There are many groups where one person has too much responsibility. It is necessary for us to get people involved. Again, service. When I am doing service, I am abstinent and in the company of sober overeaters. Service is slimming! For some who are looking for perfect meetings, this can be difficult. It takes a while before you can really understand our relaxation around this process.

There is another aspect of this tradition that is vital to our success. If you believe traditions are being broken, it is our individual responsibility to discuss this within the group and intergroup, if necessary. This may not win any popularity contests, but, believe me, it is worth maintaining the structure of the traditions, rather than suffer disagreement among members. I have a personal theory that if it is good for the Program, it will survive. If it is not, it will self-destruct.

Coming from the chaos of compulsive eating, this is almost a spiritual experience. ~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

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)

Mailing Party

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

Next Party

September 26th

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

FOR TODAY— SEPTEMBER 13

To err is human; to forgive divine. Alexander Pope

If I am unable to accept the fact that people make mistakes, am I not rejecting them as human beings? Even more to the point: does my inability to accept my own failings cause me to see myself as not measuring up?

For my own peace of mind, I need to forgive even the most damaging transgressions; but forgiveness of others can only come when I have learned to forgive myself.

For today: I pray for a forgiving heart and the willingness to let go bitterness.

From Your Reach Out Editor

Write about your favorite meeting and what makes it special. The article should be 200-300 words long. Submit your article by email to dtyler126@yahoo.com. Please show "Reach Out" in the subject line.

Other topics accepted.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Intergroup Meeting: September 2, 7 pm, OASIS

12th Step Within Committee Meeting:

September 9, 7 pm, OASIS

Board Meeting: September 16, 7 pm, OASIS

Upcoming Events

OA Sponsorship Workshop: October 3, 1-4 pm, Seacoast Community Church, 1050 Regal Road, Encinitas

155th Serenity Retreat: October 9-11, Pathfinder Ranch, Idyllwild

R2 Fall Assembly: October 30-November 1, Marriott San Francisco Airport Hotel

CAREFRONTATION CORNER

New Meeting: "12th Step Within -Save a Member Meeting" on Tuesdays at 6 pm to 7 pm at the OASIS in the Boardroom (smaller room). Speakers, writing, and sharing. Come out and share your recovery with another COE or gain support and encouragement for yourself. Fellowship; using the tools; spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is available to all who want it.

Contact: Donna W. (619) 549-0548 or Pam T. (619) 207-1856

The 12th Step Within Committee is looking for individuals who are willing to give service to reach those who still suffer. Our committee is currently working on the upcoming 12/12 Day in December. It will be a special day for marathon meetings with a special focus on Relapse and Recovery and 12th Step work. Our next committee meeting is on Wednesday, September 23, at 7 pm in the Boardroom. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate at any level you feel able.

REMEMBER: WE CANNOT KEEP IT
UNLESS WE GIVE IT AWAY!

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

Donna W.

(619) 549-0548

hopefuldkw@yahoo.com