

Welcome

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer.

For more information about Overeaters Anonymous and its program of recovery, please explore our site or visit www.oa.org.

Program & Meeting Changes

Please note the following program and meeting changes since the last newsletter:

- OA Game Night has been canceled
- Monday evening Spanish-speaking meeting and Friday evening Soquel meetings have been canceled
- Friday lunchtime meeting has been moved from Dominican Hospital to St Steven's Lutheran Church
- Sunday meeting has been moved from Dominican Hospital to Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center:
2900 Chanticleer Ave, Santa Cruz 95065

12th-Step Within

12th-Step within is a committee to help individuals, groups, and intergroups to carry the message of recovery to those within the OA fellowship who still suffer and to make Twelfth-Step within information available to all:

"the Twelfth Step Within Committee was created at OA's 1985 World Service Business Conference to address the relapse and recovery of our members...to strengthen Overeaters Anonymous by sharing information and ideas that generate recovery within the fellowship."

Marci S is the current 12th-step within chairperson for this newly-forming committee within Santa Cruz OA.

Your participation is wholeheartedly invited!

She can be reached at msoler326@gmail.com or 335-9240 (before 10pm)

The Great Riddle

What weighs less than 1 pound and can save your life? *...Answer on page 4*

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Find a Meeting

Tradition 3:

"The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively."

Sunday	9:00 AM Speaker/Discussion Meeting Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center 2900 Chanticleer Ave Santa Cruz 95065 Free Childcare Available
Monday	12:15 PM Literature Meeting St. Stephen's Lutheran Church 2500 Soquel Ave Santa Cruz 95062 Fragrance Free
	7:00 PM Book Study/Speaker Mtg Soquel Congregational Church. 4951 Soquel Dr Soquel, CA 95073 Focus: Addicts and Alcoholics
Tuesday	12:15 PM Step and Tradition Study Quaker Meeting House, 225 Rooney (Off Hwy 1 at Morrissey) Fragrance Free
Wednesday	10:30 AM Voices of Recovery Study Bayside Baptist Church 1335 Seabright Ave., Santa Cruz (across from Gault School)
Thursday	12:15 PM Brown Book of OA Study Quaker Meeting House, 225 Rooney (Off Hwy 1 at Morrissey)
Friday	12:15 PM "For Today" Book Study St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Saturday	9:00 AM Speaker/Discussion Meeting Calvary Episcopal Church 532 Center St, Santa Cruz Fragrance Free

For information on the meetings,
call our **Hotline Number (831) 429-7906**.

Or login to SantaCruzOA.org

All meetings are open to all OA members.
This information is subject to change.

Region 2 Rep Needed

Our intergroup needs a region 2 rep to represent us at assembly, which is the business meeting of the region; California, Nevada, Arizona, and Hawaii.

It is very rewarding and lots of fun. You get to meet lots of people from all over.

There are lots of committees which do good work, and this opportunity for service can really strengthen your recovery.

Attendance at Monthly Sunday intergroup meetings is required.

My Pre-OA FantasyLand

I used to fantasize losing weight soon, starting tomorrow. I bought clothes that were too small—fully expecting to be able to wear them in a few months, without knowing how I was going to get from here to there. I hated dieting. A weight loss club worked for me—three times. But it was painfully slow, and every time I left without ever learning why I ate compulsively, or what to do when inevitably it would happen again. I cheated on diets as bleak and endless as the Sahara. But just over the horizon were those great clothes a size too small. Just over the horizon was the attention of men. Over the rainbow was the real me. The "I" who walked here today was defective, but not permanently so—at least, I hoped not. Naturally I wanted to be with the real me, over the rainbow. So I lived in this fantasy. Why live in the real world? I didn't like it as much.

A casual comment to me about my weight was like a sledge-hammer. I would well up in

tears and hate you forever. You exposed the fact that my shame was not invisible. I felt shame constantly, but I didn't want you to know. I didn't want your pity and I didn't want your advice. My work was superior to yours—wasn't that enough? Each time I got thin, I thought I had done it! As it slipped away, I watched myself scavenge through the pantry with horror and morbid excitement. What happened was that as the craving grew in strength, the blinders closed in. I became unaware of any time but the present, forgetting all the past times this behavior had damaged me—oblivious to the future an hour and 10,000 calories from now—when misery and self-loathing would flood me. I couldn't win if I dieted, I couldn't win if I pigged out. Mentally I had hit a wall and I simply couldn't think myself out. I put as much effort as I could into my work, but I could never concentrate for extended periods of time without the thought of coffee. I would go to get a cup of coffee and think, "Hmm, X would go well with this coffee." I would carry them both back to the computer. But I couldn't really work until I had finished eating. I would then apply myself again, but the die had already been cast, and the demon had won. I had fed him, and now he was stronger than when he'd first suggested the idea—and I'd given into that. How could I not give into a stronger and cleverer suggestion? I had no understanding—and thus no defense. I didn't ask 'till it was over, "Why am I doing this?" That was too broad a perspective to be aware of. I was a mystery to myself. If I was doing something I absolutely loved, I never thought of food. But when I wasn't, I loved food for carrying me into the realm of fantasy where, ironically, I could fantasize about being thin

and beautiful. My thinking was like a toxic cloud that engulfed me for years and that I mistook for the natural atmosphere.

I don't think about food that way anymore. I have a worldview that finally makes sense to me. The 12-Step program is the first story that has ever explained my eating behavior in the larger context of my entire life. It has opened my mind to a new level of reality, and on that level *a solution exists!* The old alternatives—dessert vs. desert—were an illusion of the disease, reinforced by the media and medicine's still-primitive understanding of compulsive overeating. More amazingly, on that new level is the real me that I used to look for over the rainbow. This is a miracle so astonishing that in my addictive years I never even prayed for it because it was beyond my imagination: I prayed either to be effortlessly thin, or to live in a world where buxom was beautiful.

Now I don't think about food. I keep a great variety in the house. At mealtime, I look at what is there and ask my higher power what will feel best: "What will be satisfying and leave me feeling sane and happy?" I make it and enjoy it. When I run out of something, I write it on the shopping list. When the list gets long, I shop. Beyond that, I don't think about food. OA—you have my absolute, eternal gratitude!

-Anya

Save Someone's Life:

Is there something written in your OA journal that might help others' recovery? Share it in the newsletter. *You might just save someone's life!*

Submit to: OASCNews@Yahoo.com

Some Great Quotes From Recent OA Meetings

(with apologies for the lack of attributions, but these are simply quotes from recent meetings that happened to make it into my notebook and I didn't note who said them—Yitz M)

- I wrote a job application for my Higher Power, and am only willing to take the most qualified candidate.
- Presence is the lack of intellectual analysis without the loss of consciousness.
- The more developed the mind, the more it needs to control.
- How 'bout that—Turns out that most people who know about my past are still willing to talk to me.
- Some days the most serenity I can hope for is just to avoid wanting to kill someone.
- When a bump in the road comes along, I can try to speed over it. Usually that results in me hitting my head on the ceiling. Then it occurred to me—I could simply slow down...
- Either I find a plan of eating I can live with or I'll find a plan of eating I can die with.
- I came to a meeting. There I found a bunch of other people who also thought that they—at some level—were in charge of the universe. Hmm. Maybe we're not...
- I don't know what is possible because every time I let God be in charge of my life I end up going beyond what I ever thought I was capable of.
- This program really pisses off the teenager in me...

Self-Exploration: Topic Writing

The following is a technique that many adult OAers have used to explore difficult topics learned in childhood:

1. Pick 1 word or 1 simple topic you want to explore in your journal
2. Journal on the following questions:
 - a. What were the beliefs I learned about this topic while I was growing up?
 - b. If we videotaped my life from about ages 20-30, what would the videotape show that I believed about this topic?
 - c. What would God want me to believe about this topic?

Riddle Answer



Thank you to everyone who submitted material for the Winter Newsletter!

Spring Newsletter Information

Submissions: PLEASE!—MSWord or Excel format

Email to: OASCNews@Yahoo.com

Deadline (if you want to make your edits) Apr 23

Final Deadline: Apr 30

Newsletter editor: Yitz M (831) 594-9489