

Santa Cruz OA Newsletter

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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,
VISIT SANTACRUZOA.ORG OR CALL OUR HOTLINE, 831-429-7906.**

Step by Step

My experience, strength and hope is that working the 12 Steps works.

Step 1: I'm powerless over food, body image, my weight, my prospects, my past and you.

Step 2: With or without supernatural sensation there is something larger to fix crazy me.

Step 3: Take it, big guy!

Step 4: Don't attempt without a net (sponsor). I look at my stuff in a new way, without self-abuse or denial.

Step 5: Wow, I can admit anything to myself, HP, and to the right person.

Step 6: Again, I'm powerless. Become willing, and only HP takes away these newly-accepted character defects.

Step 7: Please?

Step 8: My sponsor helps me create a list as ultimately freeing as my Step 4 inventory.

Step 9: What? You mean now?!

Step 10: I did 1-9 to learn how to work Step 10 the rest of my life – God willing – dealing with my mistakes, fears, lack of humility and garbage, quickly.

Step 11: The most beautiful

Newsletter Submissions

Send your OA-related writings to oascnews@yahoo.com or call Marion at 831-334-7233 for more information.

It's Not Too Late!

NAME OUR NEWSLETTER

We're looking for a new name for our newsletter – one that reflects the experience, strength and hope of the members of our Santa Cruz OA Fellowship.

Send your suggestions via email by February 29, 2012, to oascnews@yahoo.com. All entries will be printed in the March/April newsletter. The new name will be picked by a general vote.

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**

and elusive, to me. I may complete the second half of it by asking to be shown the next right thing to do.

Step 12: Hello! How are you? I'm so glad you are here. Can I help?

Cate M.

My Meeting

It's October, 2009 – I take a leap of faith as I walk into my first OA meeting. Soon I attend meetings daily; my favorite is an OA writing meeting.

One day, the suggested topic is a job description for my Higher Power. I watch as the first line appears on my notebook page. "My Higher Power teaches me with love and laughter." Upon writing these words, I become willing to explore my spirituality and acquaint myself with my Higher Power. I

pour myself into my notebook pages and fall head-over-heels in love with writing meetings.

Fast forward to August, 2011 – I start two new OA meetings in Watsonville. No doubt one of them is a writing meeting! We use the day's entry in *For Today* and try to connect it to the Step and Tradition for that month.

Please join us on Wednesdays for *Learning Our Literature (LOL)* and/or Fridays for *Wonders of Writing (WOW)*. See meeting list on next page for particulars.

– Peg

Another Meeting in Watsonville

I really enjoy the Saturday 11:00 a.m. OA meeting in Watsonville. The focus of our meeting varies week by week. The first Saturday, we have a speaker. The second and third weeks, we study the Step of the month, and the fourth week we study the Tradition of the month. If there is a fifth week, we study an OA tool. We welcome newcomers to our meeting, so please come by.

– Nanette

Upcoming Events

- **JANUARY 20-22.** OA's 52nd Birthday Party in L.A. Visit www.oabirthday.org for more info.
- **FEBRUARY 25.** Annual Unity Day to celebrate OA Diversity.
- **JULY 27-29.** OA Region 2 Convention in Sacramento. Visit www.oar2.org for more info.

What It Means to Me...

One of the most powerful slogans I use in my OA recovery is *No Matter What*. I abstain, No Matter What. It reminds me that abstinence is not situational, dependent on what is happening in my life. It is a one-day-at-a-time medicine that is necessary for me in order to live all the possibilities of my life.

The disease voice in my head can still find excuses to eat compulsively. No Matter What combats whatever excuse that voice can create. I abstain No Matter What. When that voice says, "It doesn't matter this time," or "I can't stand this emotional pain one more minute," or "I will die if I don't eat right now," No Matter What stops the debate in its tracks.

Abstinence gives me the gift of life each day. No Matter What is a fierce defender of that abstinence.

Margo

From Our Roving Reporter

OA Diversity: The Male Point of View

A new OA pamphlet, *A Common Solution: Diversity and Recovery*, states that "Members found a home in OA meetings despite their differences of age, health, sexuality and gender identity..." We celebrate these diversities on Unity Day, February 25th.

To explore OA diversity in Santa Cruz, I interviewed four male OA members: Doug (19 yrs), Jon (3 yrs), PJ (7 mos), and Tim (7 mos). We thank them for their honesty and service. Happy Unity Day everyone!

Q: What are some of the challenges of being a man in OA?

J: Since there are few men in the program, there are not enough sponsors. I'm currently looking for a new sponsor, and I'm considering moving outside of the general rule of having same sex sponsors.

P: I didn't know what to expect. The meeting I go to is glad to see men. First it was a little uncomfortable, but now it's very welcoming.

D: Initially the feeling was, "I'm a bit outnumbered." The disease makes one feel isolated and weird anyway. I began to feel the healing energy of being around women. It is a godsend for me to be in a mostly female environment – women in my family of origin are not that into healing.

T: At first it was a little intimidating, but as I listened, I began to recognize my own story. There were 30 other people and they were all women. I am feeling safe now because women talk more than men, which is more intimate. I'm working on intimacy issues, so that is helpful.

Q: Are you aware of other forms of diversity in OA?

J: Professional orientation, sexual orientation, different meeting formats, different food plans. OA 90 is very spiritual; a lot of weight was lost with that and similar food plans. The HOW program is a little more flexible.

P: At my OA meeting there are no real issues around diversity. On the first day I wondered if I was going to make the ladies uncomfortable. What can I relate to them and possibly share? But they were so accepting and it is very comfortable. I went in with the idea of a health or therapy group, but found that the support was huge. OA is a community of support.

D: I am not gender-specific with sponsors. All my sponsors have been women. It's very comfortable around my wife of 27 years and my two daughters, so working with females feels natural to me.

T: Yes – gay, multiracial, bulimia, non-bulimia, anorexia, food plans. This is much more complex than alcohol or sex addiction.

Q: How is your food plan?

D: Nineteen years and many experiments have brought me to 3 moderate meals, no snacks before, after or in between. No dessert or any form of snack food. I'm currently abstinent, but unfortunately my abstinence has not always been steady.

T: Three meals/three plates. Whatever I can put on the plate in sane portions. Ninety days/ninety meetings is a huge commitment, but it's a life-changing experience. I put off joining OA for ten years; I went to a meeting to see what it was about – to take the mystery out of it. The plan was so simple I decided to join that day!

Q: What are the spiritual aspects of your OA experience?

P: I love hearing about Higher Power from other OA members. My relationship with Higher Power has more impact than it did before OA.

D: Absolutely, definitely! It's been a pleasant and wonderful discovery that Higher Power does exist and it's made my life very positive!

Find a Meeting

Meetings are open to all.
Meeting information is subject to change.

SUNDAYS

9:00-10:15 a.m. Speaker/Discussion

Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center
2900 Chanticleer Avenue, Santa Cruz
Free childcare with advance reservation
Call 831-461-9644

4:00-5:15 p.m. 90-Day

Church of the Nazarene
115 South Morrissey, Santa Cruz

MONDAYS

12:15-1:15 p.m. Literature

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz
Fragrance Free

7:00-8:00 p.m. Book Study/Speaker

Soquel Congregational Church
4951 Soquel Drive, Soquel
Focus: Addicts and alcoholics

TUESDAYS

12:15-1:15 p.m. Steps and Traditions

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz
Fragrance Free

WEDNESDAYS

10:30-11:30 a.m. Voices of Recovery

Bayside Baptist Church
1335 Seabright Avenue, Santa Cruz
(across from the Gault School)

12:00-1:00 p.m. Literature

Watsonville First United Methodist
229 Stanford Street, Watsonville
St. Stephens Room

6:30-7:30 p.m. Writing

The Wednesday Night Meeting
Teach by the Beach (next to JC Nails)
Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center, Aptos

THURSDAYS

1:00-2:00 p.m. Big Book study

Louden Nelson Community Center, Room 5
301 Center Street, Santa Cruz

FRIDAYS

12:15-1:15 p.m. For Today book study

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
2500 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz

12:00-1:00 p.m. Writing

Watsonville First United Methodist
229 Stanford Street, Watsonville
St. Stephens Room

SATURDAYS

9:00-10:00 a.m. Speaker/Discussion

Calvary Episcopal Church
532 Center Street, Santa Cruz

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Steps/Traditions

Watsonville Hospital
75 Nielson Street, Watsonville
Sequoia Room