

Overeaters Anonymous

Santa Cruz County Intergroup

The Stepping Stone

Fall 2015

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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**

Overcoming Our Barriers to Giving Service

The OA Responsibility Pledge:

*“Always to extend the
hand and heart of OA
to all who share my
compulsion;
for this, I am responsible.”*



TOGETHER WE GET BETTER

If you have been to many meetings, you've undoubtedly heard the call for people to take on service positions. And perhaps like me, you were silent and hoped someone else would step up. In those situations I've thought, "I already have service commitments; I'm just too busy right now; my schedule is changing and I won't be able to consistently attend the home meeting; or, I don't want to commit and then have to back out for health reasons." While some of these issues may be valid for me, it's also true that sometimes I'm just afraid to fail to live up to my standards or the standards of others.

Yet OA is a fellowship that exists and depends on the participation of its members. In reading literature for this article, I found the following quote which, for me, says it all.

*“When I participate in the health of my meetings, I am taking responsibility for my part in the health of OA as a whole. Taking responsibility is a meaningful sign of emotional and spiritual growth. It's also an opportunity to practice those spiritual principles, since service opportunities bring out some of my character defects, such as fear, self-will run riot, or self-righteousness. I don't have to wait until I am perfect to do service, though.” --
Voices of Recovery, page 252.*

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For me, this is true. Certain service positions have brought up a defect or two, uncomfortably so at times.

After attending the annual OA retreat recently, I am reminded of how active my compulsive mind still is, and how my “disease thinking” can keep me stuck in my defects and tell me untrue things. I’m also reminded that to stay connected to my physical, emotional and spiritual recovery, it’s vital to participate actively and give back to OA, in gratitude for my life in and out of program.

Doing service, which is imperative to recovery, can be as simple as setting up chairs at a meeting or as involved as leadership or committee work for Intergroup. In between, there are many opportunities with various time commitments.

At OA meeting level, the positions are:

Secretary, who leads their home meeting every week as well as the monthly business meetings, where decisions are made based on group conscience. The secretary also is a liaison with OA’s World Service Organization (WSO), making sure the WSO has current meeting and contact information by submitting meeting changes, using a form that’s on the OA.org website. It is vital that groups keep their meeting information up to date. The secretary is also responsible for distributing information from the WSO and service body—such as newsletters, surveys and other mail—to group members.

Treasurer, who keeps track of the 7th Tradition donations that are collected at each meeting and money collected for literature sales. The treasurer makes a brief monthly report to the group, usually at the business meeting, and based on group conscience, reimburses the literature

when purchases are needed. Each group makes its own decisions about how money is handled, by group conscience.

Literature person, who attends the meeting weekly, lays out the literature on hand, and passes along literature sales proceeds to the meeting treasurer. The literature person usually places orders for new literature and gets reimbursed by the treasurer. Sometimes literature can be stored at the meeting site and sometimes the literature person needs to keep it and bring it with them each week.

Intergroup Rep, who attends the monthly IG meeting to offer updates on how their meeting is doing, and brings information, flyers, and newsletters back from IG to share with their home group. The IG rep also updates the meeting binder with new flyers and announcements from WSO and the OA.org website.

Another possible service position at meeting level is *Lifeline* representative, who receives and passes along subscriptions to *Lifeline* magazine to WSO.

For meetings to remain strong and be available for all of us who need them, now and into the future, all service positions need to be filled and rotation of service must be practiced. These basics are included on the “Strong Meeting Checklist,” and it makes sense that greater participation makes for stronger meetings.

So the next time you hear the call for meeting service, please raise your hand whenever possible. You don’t have to wait until you and your program are “perfect” to do service, and moreover, your recovery and your meeting fellowship will benefit greatly from your efforts to help carry the OA message!



Service through Writing for *The Stepping Stone*

Hello all you writers out there! This newsletter’s committee invites you to share your experience, strength and hope by writing a piece for the newsletter. The winter newsletter topic is “Hope for the Holidays.” You can send your submissions to oascnews@gmail.com. All submissions must be received by Nov 15. Thank you. We look forward to hearing from you!

Your Choice: Reasons or Results

Living with an addiction can be overwhelming. If our lives were easily manageable, we would never have ended up in OA. Many of us, at least in the beginning, may feel stretched by the time and energy we are asked to put into recovery. If we are employed or caring for a family, we may feel lucky just to get to a meeting once a week!

So when our sponsor or other program friend suggests we get a service commitment, we may think at first this is asking way too much. We have all kinds of good reasons for saying, "sorry, I just don't have time." After all, there are others with more experience, and (we assume) fewer demands on their time, who seem to enjoy handling the business of the meetings. As for service beyond the group level, that seems an even more daunting commitment. "You want me to what? Go where?"

There are some of us who believe we just aren't capable of

fulfilling such a commitment; we're sure we will mess it up, bringing shame and embarrassment on ourselves in front of the group. Others may resent the time required, while still others may just not understand why our service is so important. "OA was doing fine before I got here - it's clear they don't need me."

The underlying belief for this way of thinking is that we are not responsible for OA, or perhaps even that we are not responsible for our lives in general. On some level, we may still be unable to see ourselves as adults capable of taking care of ourselves or of making a contribution to our community.

Fortunately, we can begin to reap the benefits of doing service long before we are free from all our reasons, excuses, and negative beliefs. For starters, we just need to expand our concept of "service," because just going to a meeting, sharing our experience, or taking another member's phone call is a form of service. Helping with the chairs, greeting newcomers, or volunteering to call the members who request a phone call... all these are ways we help to carry the message.

The time will come when a service position in a meeting is open and a volunteer is requested. An inner voice may be saying, "I can't/won't do this!" even as we feel our hand wanting to rise. This is the moment when we get to choose: fear or faith, reasons or results. Those who have chosen faith have rarely regretted it. They usually find that their fears were ungrounded. And the positive results far outweigh any minor inconvenience or time expenditure. And surprise! Service can be fun!

Eventually, we begin to realize that making a service commitment by taking on a position is not a sacrifice, but an opportunity to grow and deepen our own recovery. Many members share that it was in giving service that their sense of isolation started to fade away, and they began to feel connected with the program and other members. This is the beginning of real healing. And if this isn't enough to motivate us, we need to remember that without volunteers willing to serve, OA would not exist!

Fun, connection, self-confidence, a stronger recovery, and the very existence of OA in our community... these are some of the many gifts awaiting us when we take that leap of faith and let our hand go up.

WANT TO LOSE WEIGHT?

MIRACLE SOLUTION!

NO DIETING,
NO SELF-DEPRIVATION,
NO DRUGS,
NO KIDDING!
OA's BEST KEPT SECRET!

Our special secret formula for sustainable weight loss is so simple, so painless, so fool-proof, anyone can do it!

SERVICE IS SLIMMING

Try it, you'll like it!

The Literature Table

What does OA Literature say about doing service?

In the following quotes, OA literature readily reminds us that doing service is part of fulfilling the 7th Tradition, and is deeply connected to our spiritual recovery from compulsive overeating...

“The seventh tradition doesn’t simply apply to financial support, however. In order to be fully self-supporting, groups and individuals need to take on their share of the service work as well.” – *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, page 165

“Individuals are fully self-supporting only when they do what they can, when they can, giving back some of the help they have been given in OA.” – *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, page 166

“I have noticed in my home groups that people who remain in recovery are people who continue to give service. Service gives me practice at freeing myself from the bondage of self.” – *Voices of Recovery*, page 284

“Every time I give service without counting the hours I give or looking for any reward, I am filled with freedom, friendship, joy, and abstinent recovery.” – *Voices of Recovery*, page 284



I am grateful for a loving Higher Power who takes care of me one day at a time! - Anonymous

I’m grateful OA is open always, for the Twelve Steps of recovery, for our loving fellowship, and for people like you! - Anonymous

I am grateful for my happy, joyous, and free life – that would not be possible without the twelve step program and all of you. Thank you! - Anonymous

I am grateful for a sponsor who pushes me to do what I need to do, one day at a time. – Bonnie

I am grateful for my loving and honest sponsor. The gift of sponsors all around. - Anonymous

Find A Meeting

Meetings are drop-in and open to all.
see santacruzoa.org for up-to-the-minute changes

SUNDAYS

9:05-10:15 a.m. Speaker *Fragrance Free*
Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center, Sutter Room ♿
2900 Chanticleer Avenue, Santa Cruz

4:00-5:15 p.m. 90-Day *Fragrance Free*
Church of the Nazarene, 115 S. Morrissey, ♿
Santa Cruz *green door to left of main entrance,*
off parking lot

7:00-8:00 p.m. Young Persons (all ages welcome) ♿
PAMF Main clinic, 2025 Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz
2nd Fl. Conference room, (Use Urgent Care Entrance)

MONDAYS

12:15-1:15 p.m. Prayer and Meditation ♿
Fragrance Free
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Library
420 Melrose Avenue, Santa Cruz *through yellow gate*

7:00-8:00 p.m. Book Study/Speaker ♿
Fragrance Free
Soquel Congregational Church
Anne Hutchinson Room, 4951 Soquel Dr., Soquel

7:00-8:00 p.m. Literature
Mars Hill Coffee House, Community Room
610 San Benito Avenue at 6th Street HOLLISTER

TUESDAYS

1:00-2:00 p.m. The Tools of Recovery ♿
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Youth Room
420 Melrose Avenue, Santa Cruz

WEDNESDAYS

10:30-11:30 a.m. Voices of Recovery ♿
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Youth Room
420 Melrose Avenue, Santa Cruz
(2nd door down from corner of Melrose and Poplar)

6:30-7:30 p.m. Writing ♿
335 Spreckles Drive, Suite A, Aptos

THURSDAYS

1:00-2:00 p.m. Focus on Abstinence ♿
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Youth Room
420 Melrose Avenue, Santa Cruz

FRIDAYS

12:00-1:00 p.m. 90-Days, AA 12&12 Study ♿
Fragrance Free
Live Oak Family Resource Center
Community Conference Room
1740 17th Avenue, Santa Cruz

12:15-1:15 p.m. For Today Book Study ♿
Quaker Meeting House, Social Hall
225 Rooney Street, Santa Cruz

SATURDAYS

9:00-10:10 a.m. Speaker/Discussion
Calvary Episcopal Church
531 Center Street, Santa Cruz

11:00-12:00 p.m. Speaker/Literature ♿
Fragrance Free
Watsonville Hospital
Sequoia Room, Watsonville