

Mark Your Calendars

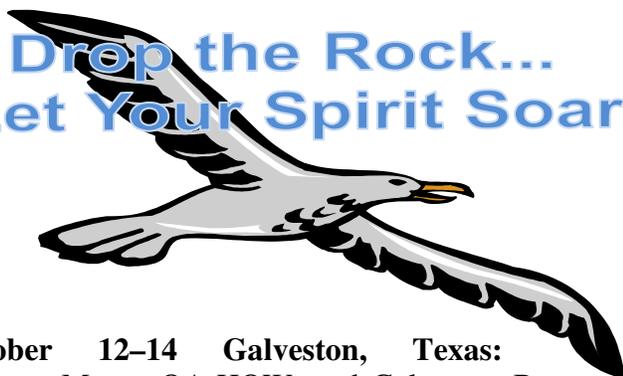
REGION III ASSEMBLY/CONVENTION

Date: September 28-30, 2012

Location: Sunset Station Hotel
Henderson, Nevada

Download Flyer and Register Online at lvoa.org

Drop the Rock...
Let Your Spirit Soar



October 12-14 Galveston, Texas:
Houston Metro, OA-HOW, and Galveston Bay Area, Intergroup host the 2012 OA Annual Convention at Holiday Inn on the Beach, 5002 Seawall Blvd. Call Sue H. 1-713-252-4432; email: ixzuhuykaak@yahoo.com; or go to Web site: <http://www.oahouston.org/> for registration...

Face It!

At whom am I mad? What am I upset about? What's frustrating me? Why is "this" happening? Describe it! What's really bothering me? Am I lonely? Why do things have to change? What's disappointing me? Am I in pain? How are my finances? How was I embarrassed? Who criticized me? Why do I feel guilty? What am I worrying about? Am I bored? What's causing me conflict?

When we face what's eating at us, we don't have to eat over it! We can't change what we don't acknowledge. What have I acknowledged today?

— Edited and reprinted from Intergroup Scoop newsletter, Oregon Intergroup, April 20

Serenity Times is a publication of the Galveston/Bay Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. The editor reserves the right to edit for space and style. Reprinting of this material is permitted provided proper credit is given the source. Please send submissions to: serenitytimes@hotmail.com

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I'm Okay

When *Dignity of Choice* first became available, I ran to the back of the meeting room before the closing prayer to buy a copy. I was afraid they would sell out. Even though I had been in program for almost two years and maintained my weight at a size 6 or 8 for several months (I started the program at size 10 or 12), I still wanted to find the magic food plan that would make it easy. Well, no such thing exists. But the pamphlet did give me validation for the way I already ate. For example, I like to drink warm milk before bed. My family never did this when I was small, no one told me to do it, and I don't remember how I got started. I just know it works for me. Some of the food plans in *Dignity of Choice* have a bedtime meal including one cup of milk or its substitute. When I read this, I felt reassured that what I do is okay. This is the essence of OA for me: learning I am "okay" and can trust myself (with the guidance of God and a sponsor). The OA "Twelve and Twelve" says, ". . . a source of wisdom inside us . . . becomes more powerful as we recover from compulsive eating and develop our relationship with our Higher Power . . . As we work the steps . . . intuition begins to function properly, helping us focus on God's will, both for our eating and for the living of our lives" (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 22). confirmed what my intuition had told me, and for that I am grateful.

— I.J.S., Naples, Florida USA

I Am Enough

While writing my first Fourth-Step inventory, I recorded an insight I had. When I read it to my sponsor as part of my Fifth Step, she suggested I share it with *Lifeline*. She assured me it was enough for publication.

Years ago I attended another Twelve-Step program half-heartedly, but it was my first experience with this type of group interaction. At the end of each meeting, we passed a list of affirmations around so each of us could choose one to say aloud. Mine was "I am enough." I never chose or wanted that one. I felt like I should be more than just enough. Being enough was not enough; more should exist. I should do and be much more than enough. For today, after more than a year of OA recovery, I am enough. "Enough" has a new meaning thanks to my sponsor's guidance and the OA program. Today it is an affirmation rather than a putdown or feeling of being less than what I am meant to be. I am a WIP: a Work In Progress in partnership with my Higher Power. For today, that is plenty "enough" for me.

— Lillian N., Yorba Linda, California USA

OA is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, hope, and the 12 steps of this program 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 this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

Need for Change

I have signed up to lead an OA meeting in about a month. It will be good to lead at that time because the following week I go away for four days to do a craft I love with a group of non-OA women. I'll be at a facility with buffet-style meals. That's always a challenge for any OA member. I will start my day in my room with an abstinent breakfast I'll bring from home. That will set the tone for the day. I recall what one woman told me at a retreat. She had been watching my food choices at each meal and said, "I want to eat like you eat." Did she have a problem with food? Yes, because she wore it on the outside like so many of us. Could I have changed my food choices just by watching what someone else ate? No. If I could, I would not have needed the OA rooms. *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* states, "We must change if we are to recover" (p. 30). I had to change; or rather the program and my Higher Power had to change me: my attitude toward food and my perception of how to live without food as the focus. The program gives me tools that enable me to put down the food one day at a time with HP's help. So, no; I can't put the food down by watching what someone else eats. I am a grateful OA member who has been in the rooms 21 and a half years, maintaining about a 70-pound (32-kg) weight loss. I say "about" because I quit weighing myself when I was at my heaviest. So by putting my hand in your hand (the hands of fellow OA members) and my hand in my HP's hands, I have been able to do what I could not have done by myself.

— K.W., Purcellville, Virginia USA



Taking My PILLS

Having completed Step Nine, I began to have trouble with the disciplines of daily living in Steps Ten through Twelve. It was as if having completed the "hard part" of recovery (Steps One through Nine), I could take it easy. I would work Steps Ten through Twelve when I felt like it, had time and could fit them in—dangerous ideas and actions for a gutter-level compulsive overeater like me. Soon my recovery and level of serenity reflected my negligence. My approach demonstrated I wasn't taking my disease or recovery "medicine" seriously. This wonderful program had freed me from the hell of life in active disease. I was well on my way toward eventual release of over 200 pounds (90kg) and did not want to go back. My answer came from an unlikely source. The author of a Web article I was reading about one of my chronic health issues stressed the necessity of taking medication daily to maintain optimum health and prevent premature death. Diligence was necessary, and I even had systems in place so I wouldn't forget to take my medication. I wondered if I could translate this into my recovery from compulsive overeating, so I came up with a helpful acronym. It allows me to live in Steps Ten through Twelve daily by incorporating the disciplines encouraged in pages 84–88 of the Big Book. The acronym is PILLS. The "P" is for Prayer, said before my morning meditation and reading. I ask God (my Higher Power) to show me what he wants me to see, and for his direction and the power to carry it out. I ask for another day of recovery and abstinence, and I pray before every meal. During the day, while doing Tenth-Step spot checks, I pray for relief from selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear, and ask to turn my attention elsewhere by praying for others and their needs. At night as I review my day, I ask for help to assess my conduct with honesty. I say prayers of gratitude and thanksgiving for my blessings, but I also ask for forgiveness, if needed (it usually is). The "I" is for Introspection (another word for meditation). Meditation is tough because I cannot sit still in a chair and just think, so I do a written meditation. I set a timer for 10 minutes and often base my writing on

something I've read or heard in program. Once the timer beeps, I am often still going strong. It's amazing to read what I've written and see what I've uncovered through this process. The first "L" stands for Learning. I read something from the Big Book and/or the OA and AA "Twelve and Twelve" books every day. I am still pleasantly surprised when I uncover yet another gem that enhances my recovery. I've been back in OA for four years, and these books seem so familiar; but hidden treasures are inside for the digging. The second "L" stands for Listing Life. My disease was one of self-pity and victimhood. The practice of gratitude has been paramount to my serenity. So I do a gratitude and blessings lists. Some I write, but often I do them in my head. I've adopted a game that makes this fun and different every time. At any given moment in a day, I list three reasons why I am grateful for this particular situation, person or task. What or where are the blessings here? Sometimes I have to stretch to find them, but they are always there. The "S" is for Service. You cannot read the Big Book and not see woven through almost every page the idea of serving others. As a recovered, self-pitying victim, I look for ways to be a giver instead of a taker. I give service by sponsoring others and taking on responsibilities at OA face-to-face and telephone meetings. When I make outreach calls in my non-OA life, I look for ways to be of loving service in a healthy way. At the top of each day's action plan are the words "Take PILLS"! This prioritizes my health. Whether I am taking my pink and white pills or my program pills, putting it at the top of the list humbly acknowledges that they both enhance the quality of my life and, ultimately, save it.

— Michele R., State College, Pennsylvania USA



Serenity Times, Publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup 2012 Meeting List

MONDAY

Deer Park (51567)

Open Meeting, Literature 11:30 a.m.
In His Presence Fellowship Church
1202 East P Street (Fellowship Hall)
Deer Park TX 77536

Contact: Bekki S. 409-454-5720

WEDNESDAY

Clear Lake (13244)

Literature (Big Book/12&12), 10 am
Clear Lake United Methodist Church
16335 El Camino Real Rm. 304

Contact: Jean 281-488-2402, Kay 281-577-3881

Intergroup Business Meeting

Jan., April, July, Oct.

3rd Monday, 5:30 p.m.

Bay Area Community of Christ Church
Travis @ Austin Street

Contact: Kay H. 281-557-3881

THURSDAY

Webster (30093)

6:30 p.m. Up the Street Club
508 W. Nasa Parkway, RM 2 Discussion
Meeting

Contact: Chuck B. 281-770-7539

SATURDAY

Clear Lake (12635)

For Today/Discussion, 10:30 am
House of Prayer Lutheran
14045 Space Center Blvd.

Contact: Marcia 281-488-7684

More Listings At www.ohio.org