

## Mark Your Calendar

**June 13-15** San Antonio & Austin Intergroups  
13<sup>th</sup> Annual Slumber Falls Retreat  
More info at [oaregion3.org](http://oaregion3.org)



Happy Joyous & Free Let it Be Me  
Region 3 Convention & Assembly  
For more info go to: [oaphoenix.org](http://oaphoenix.org)

**October 3-5** HMI 2014 OA Convention in Galveston, TX  
"Happy, Joyous and Beachy"  
More info at [oagalveston.org](http://oagalveston.org) Contact Victor 281-489-0817

Overeaters Anonymous Region III Presents  
Sailing into Recovery 7-Night Cruise on Royal Caribbean's  
Navigator of the Seas March 22 -29, 2015  
Leaving from Galveston  
[www.oaregion3.org/r3-welcome/2015-cruise](http://www.oaregion3.org/r3-welcome/2015-cruise)



**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 eating and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.**

**NOTE: If you would like to have a monthly copy of Serenity Times emailed to you, please send your email address to: [serenitytimes@hotmail.com](mailto:serenitytimes@hotmail.com)**

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### STEP 2 AND TRADITION 2 AND MY LIFE

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." When you look in the 12 step dictionary under "insanity" you will see my picture. I've heard this definition of insanity in 12 step meetings. Insanity is doing the same thing and expecting a different result. By that definition, I was certifiable. I tried diets, diet clubs (I have a lifetime membership for at least one), and exercise clubs (exercise is great if you show up for it, but not so good if you only pay for it). I tried eating like other thin people. I read books on why I ate. I asked God over and over to take away the compulsion to eat. I even tried doing OA "my way" in 1993 and 2005, but in all these things I had less and less success and more and more failure.

The Big Book speaks of alcoholism as curing a headache with a hammer. I tried to solve my problems and my anxiety with food. I was the master of excuses. I needed to eat to stay awake. I needed to be served at a restaurant because I served other people in my job all day. I needed to eat because I had a bad day, or a good day or an average day I was going to start eating in a healthy way Monday or Saturday, but always tomorrow. But the truth was I was insane. The food did nothing to solve my problems or take away my anxiety. It would satiate a passing craving and then the craving would come back even stronger. Now that I have been abstinent long enough for the food fog to clear, I can actually remember those physical feelings. Just like the Big Book says about alcoholics, I have a physical allergy to certain foods. For me,

if I eat these foods, even in small amounts, the craving comes and does not leave.

When I came to OA the first two times, I really didn't think Step Two was a problem for me. For many years, I have believed in a Power greater than myself. The God I believed in was kind, forgiving, powerful, loving, and able to do anything...but remove my compulsion to eat. God had even given me, without my awareness, a sponsor from another 12 step program, in the form of my counselor. He saw what was going on in me. And he began to talk to me back in 2005 about surrender. He has been talking to me about that for seven years. And then God did something that I did not want. God allowed my life to fall apart. I had been working at a job I loved for 19 years, but as my disease had worsened, my self-loathing increased. In an effort to prove I had value to myself and anyone else, I added more and more things to my plate, and eventually things began to fall off the edges. Three of the people I work with called me on it. But they also told me that they were concerned that if I did not change, I would not be here in five years, and that was unacceptable to them, so either I did something different, or I would no longer have a job. So the one thing I did that I thought was of value wasn't any more. I was devastated, angry, resentful and, at last, desperate enough to, in the words of the Big Book, "go to any length." The people at work sent back to my counselor and once again, he recommended OA.

I went back in June of 2012. But there was something different this time. It had only taken me 19 years, but I finally figured out why God had not removed the compulsion to eat. God had been offering it since that first OA meeting I attended in 1993. It was a gift being held out to me, but I had never received it because I had never surrendered.

It isn't unlike the chair I'm sitting in right now. When I came in my office this morning, I walked to this chair. I could have stood next to it. I could have told several people around me that the chair was strong, that it could hold me. But that isn't what surrender looks like. Surrender happens when I trusted the chair enough to sit down on it, and let it do what it was always able to do. In so many areas of my life, I had done that but never in this one--my food addiction. When I truly came to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, I surrendered. I let go of binge foods I could see, and when my sponsor recommended I also let go of sugar, because she had never seen anyone stay with the program that had not let go of sugar, I let go. I didn't debate, I didn't analyze the chair. I stopped looking for a softer chair. I sat down. I trusted. I surrendered. And now God is doing what God was always able to do. Now, the compulsion is gone. God has set me free. I can sit at a party, like I did last night, and not even look at the food, because I am enjoying the people I'm around. I can allow my resentment to be swallowed up by gratitude. I can admit my failures and make my amends because, finally, I believe enough to surrender. At one of my meetings recently, I heard a saying -- the steps keep us from killing ourselves and the traditions keep us from killing each other. They are about how we walk together in this spiritual journey we are on. Tradition Two is "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." How appropriate--as we individually are surrendering to this Power greater than ourselves, we are also surrendering together to God. We see God acting in each other in each group conscience as there is respect given, honesty expressed, intent listening to each other, and decisions made based on our understanding of how God is leading us as a group. There is a paragraph from the Big Book I'd like to close with. It was a statement about that first group of AA members, but I celebrate

that it is still true of us in each of our rooms today. "The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by our-selves." (Big Book, p.25) Every time we read "Our Invitation to You" I am moved by the last two sentences. "Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home." We are meant to be this miracle together. We were never meant to do this alone. We were meant to do this with the Power that is greater than ourselves, and we were meant to do this with each other. Thanks to God, my Higher Power, and thanks to you for doing this with me, for being that place I can call home.

—Vivian Johnson  
 oa today, St. Luis Intergroup

This week I have shared my experience, strength and hope with several people in need outside the fellowship. I felt my heart was trampled on. HP, God said, "It is good that you share this, but include more of my Word and how it applies to the 12 Steps and to your life. My Word can never be trampled on, it will accomplish what it is meant to accomplish in my time...it never goes out void.

I thank God for sending me to the 12 Steps. I am alive physically, emotionally and spiritually today because of it. I want to share my recovery it's an ongoing miracle! ..... --Traca

From The Life Recovery Bible 1 Peter 4:1-4 Step 12 The Narrow Road Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

We probably came into recovery because we'd had enough! We'd had enough of the pain, the lies, and the destruction that resulted from our addictive behavior. One day at a time, we learned the principles on the road to recovery. Now we are at a place we weren't sure we could ever reach – Step 12. Now we are encouraged to share the message with others—even though not everyone will welcome it.

Peter pointed out: "You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their **feasting** and drunkenness and wild parties... Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you." (1 Peter 4:3-4).

Jesus said: "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to **life** is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it" Matt. 7:13-14

Our message won't be accepted by the masses. The people on the "highway to hell" won't eagerly restrict themselves to the clearly defined steps on the road to recovery. But for those who do listen, our story could be the difference between life and death for them.

**Serenity Times Publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup Meeting List 2014**

**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**  
**Intergroup Business Meeting**  
**Jan., April, July, Oct.**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Bay Area Community of Christ Church**  
**Travis @ Austin Street**  
**Contact: Kay H. 281-557-3881**

**TUESDAY**

**Santa Fe (52400)**  
**Topic/Discussion 6 p.m.**  
**Rosa May Catching Annex Bldg.**  
**12045 15<sup>th</sup> (on corner of Hwy 6 and Ave K)**  
**Guest Speaker on 5<sup>th</sup> week of a month**  
**Contact: Linda 409-457-9517, Laura 281-507-4968/409-925-8353**

**WEDNESDAY**

**Clear Lake (13244)**  
**Literature (Big Book/12&12), 10 am**  
**Clear Lake United Methodist Church**  
**16335 El Camino Real Rm. 311**  
**Contact: Kay 281-557-3881**

**THURSDAY**

**Webster (30093)**  
**Discussion Meeting 6:30 p.m. Up the Street Club**  
**508 W. NASA Parkway, Rm #2**  
**Contact: Chuck B. 281-770-7539**

**FRIDAY**

**Webster (53219)**  
**Literature 12 p.m. Up the Street Club**  
**508 West NASA Pkwy Rm #2**  
**Contact: Vonda (512) 565-4000**

**SATURDAY**

**Clear Lake (12635)**  
**For Today/Discussion, 10:30 am**  
**House of Prayer Lutheran**  
**14045 Space Center Blvd.**  
**Contact: Marcia 281-488-7684**

**12 Step Recovery** - Eating Disorder - "Failure is taking the path of least persistence" - Example, attending meetings but not working ALL of the steps thoroughly. "Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely," It doesn't say half measures availed us 50%. It says half measures availed us nothing. Not a thing. "We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon." We let go absolutely. Before that it says, "Without help it is too much for us. But there is One Who has all power --that One is God. May you find Him now!" It's beautiful. It's a beautiful thing." A New Pair of Glasses by Chuck C. page 15. What happens if I stop working the steps in the middle of them? I stall, sputter and fizz out... I start gradually overeating again. Hesitation to complete the steps thoroughly is dangerous to the addict. Some of us have been blessed with weight loss in the beginning of the steps.... to stall is to relapse. There may be some protection for a while but the commitment is needed to go all the way to step 12. I cannot abuse the slogan, "Progress, not perfection." I cannot use that slogan as an excuse for not moving forward. It would send me back into my disease. I do not have the luxury to be lazy in a 12 step program. A happier life is waiting for me. There are more people to meet. God has plans for me.

Bekki S.

**\*A\*W\*E**

Sometimes as I set up an action plan for the day or week or longer, I use a word or acronym as a way to help me remember what I am aiming for. Today I will write about using \*A\*W\*E as a reminder. What does it remind me of?

**\*A** is for acceptance--or alternatively for awareness--or even for action plan, the newest of OA's nine tools. I ACCEPT that I have a disease that is an addiction and that, as such; it requires treatment on a daily basis. To have AWARENESS of what I must do for my disease, I must have a clear head, not one fogged by excess foods. I need to do -- and redo -- an ACTION PLAN frequently to help keep me on the right path.

**\*W** is willingness. I must be WILLING to take action, to use the tools, and to take my treatment, which is the OA program rather than a specific medication.

**\*E** is for effort. We say that we have a program that is simple but not easy. If I do not accept and have the willingness to give EFFORT to make this program work, it will not just arrive at my doorstep on a silver platter. If I keep \*A\*W\*E in mind, then I can be in awe at the results that abstinence and our three-legged stool, supported by physical, emotional, and spiritual efforts, can bring me.

Linda S.

Together We Can April 1014 Metro DC OA Intergroup

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