

ROAD TO RECOVERY

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South Central Pennsylvania Overeaters Anonymous Intergroup

From Our Chair

Welcome to the South Central Pennsylvania OA intergroup! As OA members we are part of a worldwide fellowship of compulsive eaters who have sought, and found, recovery in the rooms of Overeaters Anonymous. I begin this new year grateful for the many blessings OA has gifted me with. Abstinence, a life of abundant successes and the means to get through failures, and lifelong friends who are also on the recovery road from our baffling disease. I am powerless over compulsive overeating and exercise bulimia.

We are so fortunate to have over a dozen thriving groups within our intergroup. How many local meetings have

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you attended? I have my two “regular” in-person meetings (I consider both my home group), and I’m hoping (HP willing) to attend several if not all of our meetings at least once in the next 12 months. Together we get better and the more voices and stories I hear of member abstinence and recovery, the stronger my program is.

Many of us serving with intergroup have found that service is not only a tool but essential to our twelve step recovery program. Please consider joining us as we meet the first Saturday of most months (see the schedule at the SCPOAI website and in this newsletter) at 9:00 am, on Zoom. Reluctant to miss your regular Saturday morning meeting? No problem—we have a sharing OA meeting before intergroup, at 8:00 am. Yes, it’s an early start to the weekend and an opportunity to add to your OA toolkit. All are welcome!

*In Service,
Geri K*

Steps Traditions Concepts

*Spiritual principles are in **bold***

Step 1- Honesty

We admitted we were powerless over food- that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition 1- Unity

Our common welfare should come first; personal r recovery depends upon OA unity.

Concept 1- Unity

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.

Step 2- Hope

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Tradition 2- Trust

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.

Concept 2- Conscience

The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of the OA as a whole.

Step 3- Faith

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

Tradition 3- Identity

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

Concept 3- Trust

The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

Members Share

Step One

We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.

I'm finding I don't quite know where to start, and that's exactly how I came into the program of Overeaters Anonymous. Every morning I was miserable. I don't live like that anymore. Most mornings start well for me now, thanks to OA.

January gives me many opportunities to revisit Step One. Most meetings I attend read the Step One chapter in **The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous (Second Edition)** at some point in the month. If I miss it at one meeting, I'm sure to catch it at another.

This January, I find myself wondering if I am truly admitting my powerlessness. Is my life "unmanageable"? Define unmanageable. OA's 12&12 (p. 5) asks:

- Were we really excelling at our jobs?
- Were our homes pleasant places to be, or had we been living in an atmosphere of depression or anger?
- Had our chronic unhappiness over our eating problems affected our relationships?
- Were we truly in touch with our feelings, or had we buried our anger and fear in false cheerfulness?”

In all honesty, my life is showing signs of unmanageability all over the place. My mornings often start well but as I begin interacting with the world around me things can go off the rails. My shortcoming of procrastination has been rearing its ugly head again lately as a significant issue. So what does this have to do with my food?

“We procrastinated, we hid, and we ate” (OA 12&12, p. 6). Sometimes I have to be backed into the solution. Procrastination, at least for me, is an attempt at control. Experience teaches me, repeatedly, that my attempts to control circumstances, people, and outcomes never really goes well. Inevitably I am made aware of “the childish self-centeredness of [my] willful actions” (OA 12&12, p. 6), even when that action is inaction.

I heard an OA speaker once say that the hyphen in Step One does not mean “and;” it is a reiteration of the first part of the sentence. So if we admitted we were powerless over food = that our lives had become unmanageable, the unmanageability I experience in my life is in direction proportion to my acceptance of my powerlessness. The OA program teaches me 1) it’s all about the food and 2) how to live abstinently. If my life is unmanageable because of my character defects, then I am not admitting my powerlessness, and if I’m not admitting my powerlessness, then I am putting my food at risk. If I am putting my food at risk, then my abstinence is on the line.

In **Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition**, it says, “But the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be *absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge*” (p. 39). We often hear it said in meetings that self-knowledge avails us nothing. I can know all the things I’ve written so far as facts in my life, but that is no protection against the disease of compulsive eating.

Luckily, my Higher Power has given me the ears to hear the saying: “Step One is a statement of the problem and Step Two is a statement of the solution.” Putting this into action for me today means I *must* admit I am powerless over food, as evidenced by the absolute insanity of my attempts to

control people, places, and things. The solution lies in coming to believe, again and again, that my HP, the program, and the people in it are a power greater than myself. These can restore me to sanity, when I get out of the damn way and set aside everything I think I know.

BK, Reading Area

How I stepped up in faith into the Vice Chair position and why I did so

When I came to America, I told my husband: Ok yes but with one condition: we both need to lose weight. We did it, lost the weight (50 lbs) but gained it back in a few years. When I reached my bottom (220 lbs), I was binging, spitting, purging, and putting my daughter down for her nap for me to binge.

When I entered the OA room, I hated the phone and hated speaking out loud because my English was so poor. I was stuttering, my voice was stuck in my throat, I could not share without crying. Now after sixteen months of entire abstinence, I have lost almost 100 pounds, completely changed my wardrobe, started yoga, become a better mom, wife, sister, friend, daughter. I just started a new position at my work; work that will take time to be trained in. That's why when the SCPOAI chair position and the vice chair position opened, I put my name in for the vice chair. I was not ready for the chair position yet and was too afraid of it but I knew I could try to do my best to help the chairperson and be of service because now I love calling people, I love talking with people. Sometimes, I go to a French meeting, and I have trouble speaking in French because all my OA program is in English, lol. Thank you, God!!!!

Delphine
vice chair of SCPOAI

Unity in the Fellowship

My entire compulsive eating career was authored by my disease, co-authored and orchestrated by me. I displayed brilliant acts of accomplishment each time I went to the grocery store and hid my addictive, alcoholic foods under piles of produce I never ate, lest someone I knew would see me and shower me with shame I swam and drowned in daily as I binged on said alcoholic foods. I was skillfully adept at

shoving massive amounts of my alcoholic foods in my face as I drove, only to halt at a stop light- I didn't want other drivers to see me eating. Only with the fellowship of OA and the knowledge that millions have recovered from this lethal disease have I been able to finally put down the food and pick up a life full of joy and serenity. Thank you OA- Together we get better.

Anonymous, Mechanicsburg PA

Thoughts on Steps 2

“Sanity” before OA means if I ate what other people told me was appropriate it was “simple” math. Calories in =calories out, adjust, you lose the pounds compulsive overeating put on. But there is no room in this formula for the stark fact that I suffer from an incurable disease that may only be arrested if I abstain from my alcoholic foods, one day at a time (see AA Big Book P. XXX The Doctors Opinion). The suggestions offered pre-OA, to me did not include involving my Higher Power in my decision to eat or not. I am a compulsive eater. This I cannot change. But I can turn to my HP and ask for help. I can make a decision, each day, to turn my will over to HP. This, to me, is sanity. The sanity promised in Step 2 is Promised to all of us on the OA 12 Step journey. If I only take that 1st step and admit I'm powerless over my disease, take Step 2 and see how insane life pre-OA was, and take Step 3 each morning, sometimes several times each day.

Anonymous, Mechanicsburg PA

WWW.SCPOAI.ORG

It may surprise no one, but we were able to secure the domain [scpoai.org](https://www.scpoai.org). Not too many other organizations out there with our whimsical jumble of letters. So, what can you find there? Here are some highlights:

SCPOAI: <https://www.scpoai.org/about-scpoai>

If you need immediate SCPOAI answers, the “About SCPOAI” page is going to meet your needs. You can find the current board and committee chairs, dates of business meetings, and - - for the *uber* nerds - - the bylaws and policy manual.

CURRENT MEETINGS: <https://www.scpoai.org/oa-meetings>

There is a calendar available of all the SCPOAI meetings along with their information.

NEWSLETTER: <https://www.scpoai.org/current-edition> | <https://www.scpoai.org/archives>

Our newsletter, *Road to Recovery*, is available in PDF from the most current edition all the way back to June/July 2020. Utilize these in your personal program, with your sponsees, and at meetings.

SPONSORS/SPEAKERS: <https://www.scpoai.org/sponsorsspeakers>

In conjunction with 12th Step Within, SCPOAI offers a list of available speakers/sponsors and provides the opportunity to sign up to be added to this resource.

EVENTS: <https://www.scpoai.org/events>

Here we highlight events that are happening with our intergroup, our region, and, because of the gift of technology, the country (and sometimes world - - we helped spread the word about an Australian New Year’s Eve marathon).

RESOURCE LINKS: <https://www.scpoai.org/links>

Here you can find different OA resources, podcasts/recordings, and useful sites.

EMAIL LIST: <https://www.scpoai.org/email-list>

Contributed by Amanda D.

HELP WANTED

SCPOAI is looking for someone to serve as Orientation Chair. Don't let the word 'Chair' scare you--this is a one-person position requiring only a desire to help carry the message through being the liaison between Intergroup and any new meeting representatives or those requiring assistance. If you have been thinking about serving at the Intergroup level but just haven't been ready to make the commitment yet, this is the job for you!

Because we distribute material electronically, there is no need to update copies of documents and compile them in folders like we did in the past. In a nutshell, the Orientation Chair helps new meeting representatives feel comfortable in their role, by explaining how SCPOAI meetings are conducted, what their role is as far as taking information back to their local meetings for group conscience and connecting them with other meeting reps for support.

The incumbent of this position may also reach out to meetings that do not have a representative to try to get them involved. It is a great way to get involved above the local level, with minimal time commitment. There is no abstinence requirement for this position, only a desire to help carry the message.

Are you our next SCPOAI outreach chair? Please contact any SCPOAI representative listed in the gray columns on pages 1 and 2 of this newsletter, or ask your Group Representative. Together We Get Better!

Contributed by Connie T.