

July/Aug 2018

InterVoice

Channel Islands Intergroup—Santa Barbara
& Ventura Counties Newsletter



Remember to donate to Intergroup as part of 7th tradition and Thank You:
Goleta #32642, #15648.

I Finally Get It!



Long term abstinence has been difficult for me. When I started attending OA meetings, almost three years ago, I quickly become abstinent, through God's help. I lost weight and felt great. But, I have had a number of relapses and each time had a hard time regaining my abstinence. A number of recovered fellows have helped me tremendously.

After my first relapse I got a sponsor who took me through the Steps using the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. I was amazed that, after about 10 days of white knuckling, the desire to eat between meals and especially after dinner, disappeared. I maintained this abstinence for some time. But, when deep fear was aroused, at a time that I began skipping praying and meditating in the morning or evening when I felt I was too busy, I relapsed. I was not living in 10, 11 and 12.

It was frustrating, but after a few false starts and a growing recognition that I would have to do the necessary work, I was back in the Big Book and the Steps, listening to loads of amazing Special Edition podcasts on avision4you.info and back on a stronger spiritual program, I regained my abstinence. I got to my dream body weight. I looked and felt great! This was the life I had always desired and more! All new clothes—my old clothes no longer fit—and now I could enjoy the trendy styles that had always alluded me. This was living!

In a way, this was the problem. I got busy, stress built up, and I got cocky. Was it really going to be that hard getting back on program if I tasted the delicious looking dessert my friend brought to my barbecue. This thought came, not when the company was there, but while I was cleaning up? Typically, my compulsive eating was always in secret. Before I knew it, I was back in the food and very desperate.

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*****Please consider
submitting an article to
InterVoice. Your story
is important and will
help others!**

Contact editor at esaffan@icloud.com



Responsibility Pledge:

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

I Finally Get It, continued from page 1:

A wonderful new sponsor explained to me that the only thing I had to do perfectly was maintain my abstinence. She said it was **a matter of life and death**. As I struggled to regain my abstinence she kept repeating this to me, sharing her own struggle. I tried to understand this life and death thing, but since I was still more or less at a normal body weight, I didn't get it. **Until finally I did!** How did it happen?



In this most recent relapse, I became especially frustrated. I had been sponsoring and had to tell my sponsees of my relapse. Sponsoring was something which I loved doing, and which had become a major part of my life. I suggested to my sponsees that we work together and co-sponsor each other, which they were happy to do, and I agreed to commit my food in advance. Again it was a struggle. I couldn't just get back on program as I had crazily thought. I felt less strongly connected to God, so I increased my praying. I tried being diligent about 10th Steps. This

was not enough. I was repeating my old habit of staying on program all day and then binging after dinner. I became impatient and critical of my husband. **This led me to finally understand that abstinence was indeed life or death for me.**

I was sitting at the dinner table with my husband and started criticizing him for the second time within a two hour period. I stopped mid-sentence. What was I doing? I was taking out my frustration with myself on him. If I persisted, I would return to a way of life that was miserable. I have an incredible husband who is a human being and therefore imperfect as certainly am I. I immediately made a sincere amends. I realized that if I did not regain my abstinence and **STAY ABSTINENT 100%**, one day at a time, one minute at a time, I would destroy the life I had come to love.

This was the death my sponsor was talking about! I would again become a person who was lonely, critical, controlling, impatient, self-seeking, fearful and miserable. **The chatter which had already begun in my head, would get much worse.** While there were some wonderful things in my life before OA, my worst days recovered were a million times better than what my life had been like before I worked the steps through the Big Book. I could not go back to that time. It was not the life I wanted. I knew the solution which had worked for others and had worked for me in the past. **I finally got it. It's abstinence and recovery or death.** I became instantly abstinent. When the food called me every evening at about 9:30 PM, I fought it. I am now just getting past that white knuckle period. It's a little scary but I feel a strength I never felt before.



I do not skip prayers and meditation now, no matter what. I set my alarm clock and take as much time as I need, even if I will be late. I have reworked the steps quickly but deeply for a third time and am currently on Step 10. I have recognized a new character defects, materialism, partly stemming from selfishness but also from fear of not being good enough, and I have let God know I am willing and ready to have him remove this character defect in his time, so I can be more useful to him and others. It is my birthday today and day 11 of my abstinence. I am so grateful to God for this program and for being alive. Relapse is no longer an option. I am feeling God in my heart most deeply.



—I share my story with you in gratitude and love but anonymously.

This is Your Intergroup and Your InterVoice!



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We take so much for granted. This happens even when we pray every morning and thank God for our lives. We think that if we don't step up and do service, the service that needs to get done to make OA function as an organization, someone else will do it. **This is just not so!** Your time and energy is needed to keep this Intergroup functioning. Each OA meeting must send at least one Intergroup rep. to every Intergroup meeting. We need people to step up to take positions in Intergroup. We need people to attend regional meetings. We need people to share their experience, strength and hope not just at meetings, but by writing for InterVoice. We need people to join our committees—Professional Outreach or Workshops and Retreats. Please seriously look at your life and consider if you cannot find time to commit to keep our precious organization going. I vibrant Intergroup and InterVoice will only come about with each of us doing all we can. Not more than we can, but all we can. **Join us in the Sunlight of the Spirit!**

California Central Coast Intergroup presents:

“Connecting the Dots! How to Use the Traditions & Engage in Service to Expand Your Recovery & Heal Your Relationships”

Saturday, July 28, 2018 Time: 1-4 pm BYOL 12-1

French Hospital, Copeland Pavilion, Urology Associates' Room, 1st floor;

1911 Johnson Av, San Luis Obispo, CA 9340; parking in back; \$5 donation suggested

For further information contact Katherine G. greekviking1@gmail.com & 805-709-9401

Talk to your Health Care Professionals About OA!



Step 12 asks us to practice these principles in all our affairs and carry the message to those still suffering from our disease. The Professional Outreach Committee (POC) has been trying to do this by attending various health fairs and events where we can, get out the message. **YOU** can do this too.

If you are Recovered be sure to share your OA experience with all your health care professionals. When our doctors see that we are losing weight and are keeping it off, they will share this program with their patients. This is already starting to happen and it is a vital way for us to grow. The POC has specific literature for doctors and other healthy care professionals, which

are available to you. If your meeting does not have literature for the Health care Professional please contact Stephanie at (805) 729-4811. She has both pamphlets and an entire packet devoted to educating Health Care Professional about our program.

Meeting Schedule for Channel Islands Intergroup

Sun	SB 6 PM	Literature Study: Big Book (#11982), Unity Church, 227 E. Arrellaga St.. Meet in Chapel, across from main sanctuary. Additional parking in upper lot on Valerio St.	Carla 805 450-4241
Mon	Ventura 8:45 AM	Literature Study (#51450), 21 North Dunning St., Meet back of Duplex.	Linda 805 607-3249
	Goleta 12 PM	Leaders Choice (#32642), Goleta Presbyterian Church, 6067 Shirrell Way behind Fairview Center. Meet in kitchen, through social hall, facing parking lot on the left. OK to bring lunch.	Barbara G 805 969-9942
	Ventura 7 PM	Newcomers & Pitch (#31329), Bible Fellowship Church, 6950 Ralston St, at Johnson Dr. Meeting in Pavilion #1. Enter parking from Ralston St. Third Monday of month is a speakers meeting.	Jan 805 850-5657
	SB 7:35 PM	Big Book & Step Study Meeting. Newcomers Welcome!; (#51002), First Congregational Church, 2101 State St, Dorcas Classroom, through courtyard door on left (not patio door).	Elaine S 909 908-7069
Tue	Ojai 6:30 PM	Literature Study (#47208), Ojai Valley Community Church, 907 El Centro. Corner of El Centro and Loma. Park in lower lot off of Loma.	Natalie G 805 640-2528
Wed	Ventura 12 PM	Literature Study (#35960), Bible Fellowship Church, 6950 Ralston St. (at Johnson Dr.) Enter parking from Johnson Dr. Meeting at Building 300, room 302.	Brigitte 805 649-5716
	Camerrillo 12 PM	Step Study—New meeting! Permanent location has not yet been determined. Call Judith at 805 603-8947 for address.	Judith 805 603-8947
	SB 7:30 PM	Literature Study (#36031), Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 909 N. La Cumbra Rd. @Foothill Rd., across from parking lot.	Jojo L 818 400-5468
Thu	Goleta 12:00 PM	Literature Study (#15648), Goleta Presbyterian Church, 6067 Shirrell Way. Behind Fairview Center. Meeting in kitchen, through social hall, facing parking lot. on the left. OK to bring lunch.	Raven 805 453-2961
	Ventura 7 PM	Topic Meeting (#54396) Buenaventura Mobile Home Estates Club House, 11405 Darling	Dean 805 585-0842
	SB 7:00 PM	Literature Study *** 4th Thur of each month *** Casa Serena Residential Recovery Home for Women, 1515 Bath St.	Abby 248 933-3864
	Carpinteria 7:30 PM	Channel Islands Intergroup (#005-09068) *** 1st Thur of each month *** Carpinteria Community Church, 1111 Vallecito Rd. Exit 101 at Casitas Pass Road.	Natalie G 805 640-2528
Fri	SB 10:00 AM	Literature Study—Big Book and Step Study. (#00243), Unity Church, 227 E. Arrellaga St. Meeting Bride's Room (upstairs). Additional parking in upper lot on Valerio St. Closed meeting —open to OA members and those who desire to stop compulsive eating.	Sarah 805 564-3060
	Ventura 10:30 AM	Discussion Dialogue (#35404), Trinity Lutheran Church, 196 N. Ashwood Ave. At intersection of Loma Vista and Ashwood. Meeting in library.	Gary 805 766-7136
Sat	Ventura 10 AM	Long-timers Pitch —All are welcome! (#36038), Ventura County Medical Center, 3291 Loma Vista Rd. (at Hillmont Ave.) Meeting in Cafeteria Conference Room on bottom floor.	Carol E 805 208-1756
	SB 10:00 AM	Step Study—Newcomers (Second Saturday of every month. Unitarian Society, 1535 Santa Barbara St. Meeting in Classroom 1 in Courtyard. Location varies at times—look for signs.	Susan R 805 680-8371
	SB 10:30 AM	Step Study —OA 12 & 12 (36037) Unitarian Society, 1535 Santa Barbara St. Meeting in Classroom 1 in Courtyard. Location varies at times—look for signs.	Susan R 805 680-8371

Meeting secretaries: please notify the World Service Office of any meeting updates by visiting “Find a Meeting”