

Jan/Feb 2020

InterVoice

Channel Islands Intergroup—Santa Barbara & Ventura Counties



Remember to donate to Intergroup as part of 7th tradition and Thank You:
Ventura #35960 and #36068; Goleta #32642 and #15648; Camarillo #56380.

New Year—If not Now, When?

For decades at the beginning of the New Year I would resolutely and desperately try to put my mind in a hopeful frame of mind to lose the excess weight—weight that was increasing as I desperately ate my tiny breakfast, tiny lunch and then came home from work and after a snack and dinner, kept going back for more food and more food—often not stopping until I was in pain. Each day I started a diet and each day I broke it.



I'm an optimistic person, and pretty good at getting things done, but year after year, I became frustrated and could not understand why I could not get this important part of my life together. Each January I was ready for something new—a new diet, joining a gym, seeing a therapist—if I lost any weight, I would soon regain it and more and I...

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****Share your experience, strength and hope here in the InterVoice. Your story is important and will help others! Please submit to editor.**



Responsibility Pledge:

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



Parking Lot Meeting And Meeting on the Go

Parking Lot Meeting is a telephone meeting, which takes place, live, **seven days a week**, from 10 PM to 3:30 AM, PST. They are a great place for support, open to anyone in a 12-step program. Irene, the moderator, would love for participants to share and become an active part of this inclusive community.

Dial: (712) 432-3900 and provide the conference ID: 6508933#

Meeting on the Go is a new resource, accessible through your phone. By dialing (559) 670-1414 and providing the conference code 6508933#, you will be put in contact with over 70 speakers, Sheila's Eight

Workshops, Lauren's Harp Meditations, music, special events and more. To access what you want, just put in the extension number, provided at the beginning of the call.

Meeting on the Go is available 18 hours a day, from 4AM-10PM. But it is not available during the hours that the live **Parking Lot Meeting** is taking place. Both of these options are terrific supports for our program of recovery.

For more information contact Sheila J. at (310) 413-1745

First three Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understand God.

More Phone Meetings and Podcasts

Meetings—**Avision4you Big Book Study**—M-F, 4 AM and 7 AM, PST, dial: **(712) 432-5210**, and punch in the conference code: **876148#**. Use the same phone number and conference code for the recorded **Special Edition** speakers meetings, every Sunday at 5:30 AM PST. **All these phone meetings are recorded and can be accessed at avision4you.info.** Thousands of powerful the **Special Edition** speakers meetings can be accessed at avision4you.info—click on **Special Edition** and scroll down.

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was so disappointed in myself—when I really looked in the mirror, I was humiliated—especially at department store dressing rooms. I did not want to recognize that, in fact, while there were parts my life that seemed to work, there were really lots of other parts, not just my eating, that were a mess. The chatter in my head would not let me relax.

I lived in so many different forms of fear. What is different now? I recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body by becoming part of OA and working the **Steps**. I am now, finally at a normal body weight and I have maintained it for several years. It worked for me when nothing else did. Not only did I lose the weight, but, by working the steps I learned how to deal with the resentments and fears that were eating me up and destroying the quality of my life.

I recognized my own powerlessness in this world to make people and situations turn out the way I wanted them to. And I now allow my higher power to direct me.

I am living a useful life that is not centered on me. I am living a life of trying to be useful to others, and through this I have found a life **beyond my wildest dreams**. I might be powerless, but I am not helpless. And the most important thing I can do each day is to stay in my program. I have learned to accept life as it is and see the beauty around me. I am not constantly trying to direct everything and everybody. And I can, and do, allow people—especially family members and co-workers—to decide what is right for them. I have learned that I don't know what is best for anyone and when I try to control, I only alienate those around me.

I am so grateful for this program that has given me a new life. And amazingly enough, this program is free!

—Anonymous

Outreach Focus Starting January: Gyms!

By Elaine S., Outreach Chair

Help Spread the Word!

At the start of the new year, as many overweight people resolve to deal with excess weight, they may start a new diet, as we have all done, and some may join a gym. Physical trainers at these gyms often encounter these overweight people and try to help them lose the excess weight and get in shape.

For some people, a diet and exercise program will work. They will cut back the calories they are consuming, start regular exercise, and get into shape—as we are often urged by our doctors to do.

But for people who are real compulsive eaters, like ourselves, good intentions like these, do not bring about the desired result. We have a type of allergy to certain ingredients which makes us crave more and more, even when we are full and in pain. We do not know when we will stop eating, and while we pledge to stop this bingeing behavior and the next morning resolve to get on track, we fail. And we do this again and again.

For a compulsive eater, what is required to lose the weight, and keep it off, is to first become aware of our allergy to certain ingredients. We must identify the foods and ingredients that, when we have a little, we want more and more. These ingredients are different for different people, but they are often sugar, white flour and trans fats. And 2nd, we must learn that for real compulsive eaters who cannot lose the weight and keep it off, no matter how hard we try, the problem is not just an allergy of the body, but also an obsession of the mind, which sends us to these ingredients when we experience resentments, fear and other human emotions—even when things are going well. We are feeling restless, irritable or discontented, or even when we are happy, we just don't feel filled up—there is still something more that we want. In any of these situations, it is often the case that a real compulsive eater will go to our trigger foods. And once we have just a bit we want more and more.

Knowing that we have an allergy of the body and an obsession of the mind is not enough to solve our problem. The solution is a spiritual one—not a religious one—but a spiritual one, that even atheists and agnostics will find useful. Thousands of us have found that working the **steps**, as outlined in the book **Alcoholics Anonymous**, will show us how to remove the resentments and fears and empty feelings, which



are sending us to the food. For a compulsive eater, food is not the problem. Food is the perceived solution to the problem.

Physical trainers need to be aware of this disease because they can help steer compulsive eaters in a good direction and possibly save their lives. Exercise for a compulsive eater can be quite worthwhile, in moderation, if he or she is also working the steps. But for an overweight compulsive eater, excessive exercise or even moderate exercise can be deadly.

I personally know two overweight men who had heart attacks and died on the gym floor. They carried excess fat around their heart and there is a good chance that carrying the excess weight and heavy exercise resulted in their deaths. One was my rabbi who died at age 44 and the other was a dear friend who died at age 53. It is important that those of us in OA communicate with trainers to educate them about OA so they can refer clients who would benefit from our program.

Overeaters Anonymous is a free program that can relieve compulsive eaters of their obsession and working with a trainer can help them (us), firm up as we lose weight and further improve our health.

I urge all fellows of Overeaters Anonymous in our Channel Island Intergroup to join in the campaign to notify trainers at gyms of the existence of Overeaters Anonymous and to encourage their compulsive overeating clients to come to us for recovery.

Compulsive eating is not the only form of food disorders, as some people with a food disorder are bulimic or anorexic. These people perhaps restrict their eating, sometimes starving their bodies of necessary nutrients, never feeling they are thin enough and exercising to lose what they consider to be excess weight. Trainers can help direct these people to OA as well.

Join us in this campaign to reach out to personal trainers.

Meeting Schedule for Channel Islands Intergroup

Sun	SB 6 PM	Literature Study: Big Book (#11982), Garden Court, 1116 De La Vina St. Meeting in Library. Use main entrance, go down to end of hall—Library is on the right. Street parking or visitor spots. Do NOT park in resident spots.	Elaine S 909 908-7069
Mon	Ventura 8:45 AM	Literature Study (#51450), 21 North Dunning St., Meet back of Duplex.	Chuck S. 805 701-9901
	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. Last Monday of month is a speakers meeting.	Natalie M. 805 814-9241 Chuck S 805 701-9901
Tue	Ojai 6:30 PM	Literature Study (#47208), Ojai View Park and Resource Center, 555 Mahoney Ave., Multipurpose Building. Park in diagonal parking, where sign says “Authorized vehicles only.: Walk through the gate to the paved courtyard. The building is to the right. Additional parking lot across Mahoney. Do NOT park on street in front of residences.	Natalie G 310 488-2893
Wed	Camarillo 12 PM	Step Study—(#56380), Center for Spiritual Living, Pleasant Valley, 221 E. Daily Dr., Camarillo	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.	Samantha H. 805 558-2038
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.	Sue F. 805 448-0094
	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), First Methodist Church 305 E. Anapamu St. Enter lot from Garden St. (Not Anapamu St), go to other side of building, park only in undesignated spaces, or space marked “Office.” Be aware that there may be families with children in the parking lot. Ring bell at door marked “Office” for entry. Library is there steps up.	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. <i>First Saturday of the month is a Speaker Meeting.</i>	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