

Focus on Step Four Principle: **COURAGE**

April 2018

Announcements

Apr 7 & May 5,
Step of the Month
meeting
9:45 am, Church of
Reconciliation,
Alban Room

Apr 14 & May 12
Intergroup
9:45 am, Church of
Reconciliation

Newcomer/
Welcome Back
meeting
9:45 am, Church of
Reconciliation,
Alban Room

Save the date:

**June 8-10, Slumber
Falls Retreat**

OA Step Four:

**Made a searching
and fearless
moral inventory of
ourselves.**

*“The fourth step
calls for us to
examine our lives
up to the present
day, writing down
all important
actions and events
of a moral or ethical
nature, our feelings
about them, and
the character traits
in us from which
these actions
stemmed...Those of
us who have
completed step four
have found that
taking this...
inventory was one
of the most loving
things we ever did
for ourselves.”*

OA 12 & 12, P. 29

A Member's Story

I thought it took courage to come to OA in the first place, but tackling the fourth step inventory took a different kind of courage, bordering on desperation.

Some of us had never attempted a “thorough housecleaning,” and some had taken this step more than once. What blocked us from freedom from obsession through connection to a Higher Power? What were the symptoms of our spiritual malady?? Resentments, fears, guilt and remorse about harms done others, especially our sex conduct . . . or our eating behaviors.

I thought there were “my part” and “their part” to the inventory, but found out that it was all “my part”. I was the one who had the resentment! This was the beginning of the end of the blame game. Gave it to God. HE could change me.

I resented my boss – he did not give me promotion, criticized me in front of peers.

This affected my self-esteem, ambition, person-

al relationships, security (financial and emotional)

SELFISH – I wanted that promotion, his respect

DISHONEST – He determined my worth.
TRUTH: He was not God

SELF-SEEKING – I judged, blamed boss for my feelings of inadequacy, gossiped because I was AFRAID of losing what I had, not good enough, something wrong with me

My resentments hid fears. Now that I saw them in that last column, I listed those separately and added any random fears (being attacked) not connected with resentments.

The FEAR inventory consisted of three or four questions found in *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Big Book) on page 68.

Fear that I was not good enough, something wrong with me

Why did I have this fear? As a child, overheard disparaging remark about my appearance from a parent

How did self-reliance fail me? Tried harder to please, acted out, ate

What was better way? Trust and rely on God , not blame others for this fear, which had directed my decisions, feelings, and life since childhood.

Said or wrote out the fear prayer inserting the specific fear. Took a quiet moment to see whether what God would have me BE (not DO) came to mind.

In the SEX inventory, I listed anyone with whom I'd had a relationship in which I had used my gender to try to get what I thought I wanted or needed.

For each relationship, I answered 10 simple questions on page 69 of the Big Book.

Following the directions in the sex inventory, it was powerful and revealing to inventory my COMPULSIVE EATING, which had caused as much trouble for me and harmed others too.

Most importantly, I ended with a prayer that I be given an ideal for both relationships and compulsive eating and wrote the prayer down for future reference.

— Anonymous

Principle Four... Members Share on Courage

"The self-analysis we do in step four is essential to our recovery from compulsive eating. This step continues a process of transformation which began with our admission of powerlessness in step one, a process of increasing honesty and self-awareness that will gradually free us from our bondage to self...As we face the problems, they lose their power to overwhelm and control us. The chains of self-obsession drop from us one by one and we are able to know and do our Higher Power's will more easily..."

OA 12 & 12, P. 30



When we consider the Step 4 Principle of courage, it is related to a "searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves", in Step 4. If you have done steps 4–9, what encouragement can you share with your fellows about why you are glad you completed it.

"I did Steps 4–9 the first time with my sponsor. It revealed many fears and resentments of a long-standing nature. I was surprised at how many fears I had buried. The best thing about doing Steps 4–9 the first time was facing all the fears and being released from them. Since that time I did a formal step study with a small group, which was rewarding, primarily for the close bond it created within the group. I repeatedly go back to Steps 4–9 as new fears and resentments come up. It is freeing to work on an individual issue and see how I can be released from the problem by working Steps 4–9."

Tell of a time the OA program gave you courage to face a difficult thing.

"Since being in the program, my life (all aspects) has been affected, whether I like it or not. Difficult situations are not as difficult as they once seemed, and likewise some situations that I thought were fine actually weren't. Now I have

tools and a new frame of mind to find out how HP wants it to actually be in His world."

"It took courage to admit I was and am a compulsive eater, an addict with sugar, in the same way others are addicts with alcohol or drugs. I felt fear in admitting it, fear of what it meant, fear of what I thought about myself, fear of what I thought others would think of me. But as I thought about all the fears, I came to the conclusion, what was my alternative? If this 12 step program was a viable alternative to the hell of my life in compulsive eating, wasn't that better than continuing in my destructive ways? I decided yes, and I jumped into OA with both feet. Has it been easy, no. Has it been worth it—without question. I am being transformed and I am grateful."

"I used to think that courage was a feeling – that heroes "felt" courage rather than fear. The program slogan "Feel the fear and do it anyway" is a good description of my experience of courage as willingness and, sometimes, willingness to go to any length. With the help of my loving Higher Power and my sponsor, in program I have been willing to do things

I definitely did NOT feel like doing (getting abstinent, writing and sharing my Fourth Step Inventory, and making amends). As a reminder that my program is often a matter of "acting my way into right thinking" whether I feel like it or not, I periodically pray "God grant me the honesty to accept the things I cannot change, the willingness to change the things I can, and the open mind to know the difference."

Fear, pride and resentments come up in Step 4. How have you seen evidence of courage in one of these areas?

"I, through the power of OA recovery, am starting to conquer fear of approaching situations that I would shy away from before program. I have been so very capable of handling difficult situations without beating myself up about it or delving into my trigger foods without stopping."



Newcomer's Corner

Tackling a Step Four Inventory

What is the searching and fearless moral inventory, called for in Step Four? Our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA (OA 12 & 12) says many people delay the fourth step out of fear of doing it wrong, habits of procrastination, self-denial, and just plain not wanting to do it (P. 31).

If you find yourself unable to get started, the OA 12 & 12 suggests saying a prayer to Higher Power to be willing. Then just start—

"any action, no matter how small will overcome deadly procrastination" (P. 31). It is also advisable to work with an abstinent sponsor who has worked the steps.

What is included IN the inventory? The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous is the original guide for fourth step inventories (4th Ed, P. 64-71).

The OA 12 & 12 Step 4 Chapter (P. 29) gives an overview of why and how to write a Step four with specific questions to answer as a guide in writing Step 4 (P. 34-43).

OA also has a 4th Step writing guide available in the literature store (found online or at a face to face meeting).

The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous also provides additional questions to help begin the process of writing a Step 4, and review after Step 4 is written. (Workbook found at face to face meeting or online).

A Step 4 inventory—"one of the most loving things we ever did for ourselves" (OA 12 & 12, P. 29).

San Antonio Area Intergroup—Service Board

SAAI is duly registered with the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous.

Our primary purpose is to aid those with the problem of compulsive eating through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous and to serve and represent the OA groups from which the Intergroup is formed.

SAAI can be reached in the following ways:

Phone: 210.492.5400

Email: news@oasanantonio.com

US mail:
SAAI
PO Box 5458
San Antonio, TX 78201

2017-2018 Board

Chair: Lea B.
Vice Chair: Lynn G.
Treasurer: Lenora M.
Recording Secretary: Helen
Communications Secretary: Mike H.
Parliamentarian: Julene F.
WSO Delegate: Mary Rose J.
Region III Representative: Noé G.

SAAI Standing Committees

SAAI has standing and special committees to carry out its purposes in an effective and efficient manner.

2017-2018 Committees

Audio Library: Steve M.
Archives: Barbara F.
Communication: Mike H.
Swan/El Cisne:
Alice G., Carrie H.
Website: Mike H.
Public Information: Bethany R.

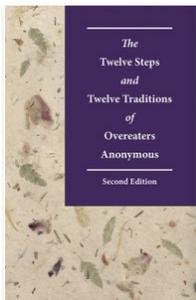
Professional Outreach:
Mary Rose J.
Meeting Info/Phone line:
Sharon V.
Literature: Valerie S.
Lifeline Rep:
12 Step Within: Ron J.
Sponsorship
IDEA Day
Unity Day
Slumber Falls
Welcome Back/Newcomer:
Curtis

OA and AA literature can be ordered and picked up at Intergroup meetings.
[Literature forms online](#)

Place literature order at:
oasaliterature@gmail.com

Want to receive The Swan/
El Cisne via email?
news@oasanantonio.com

World Service News



New Edition Available!

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, SECOND EDITION

The World Service Office has announced the availability of a new edition of the OA 12 & 12. According to WSO, it has been revised for clarity and inclusiveness, and Step 4 has been re-structured to increase usefulness. Coming to a local face to face meeting in April! Or order online at oa.org



<http://www.oalifeline.org/>

Lifeline Magazine

-first published in August 1963
-first bi-monthly edition, Oct 1965
-circulation of 4,747 in Jan 1978
-highest circulation of 25,116 in June 1990
-available via hard copy and online
-back issues available

Want to read an edition of Lifeline? Look for one at your next face to face meeting. Want to share your past Lifeline magazines with your fellows? Donate them at your next face to face meeting.

Region III Convention News

Convention Dates: March 19-21, 2019. Save the Dates!

Theme: Steppin' Up—OA in SA
Take your program to a new level

Our Region III representatives will begin getting the word out about our convention when they attend the spring 2018 region convention.

See upcoming issues of The Swan for ways to help!

Convention Chair: Elaine L
Questions? Please e-mail elangstl@aol.com

“Looking back over what we have written, we shouldn’t be discouraged if the negative outweighs the positive. After all, if we found nothing wrong, we wouldn’t need our program of recovery. In fact, we’ve found that the more defects we uncover, the more our lives can improve as we continue working the twelve steps. Each of us who completes a fourth-step inventory in OA finds it essential to our recovery and a major factor in changing our lives. As we reach the end of step four we discover ‘we are moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience’”.

OA 12 & 12, P. 44

A Member's Musing:

Step Four Miracles

Each of the Twelve Steps contains a miracle. Step Four is really where the compulsive overeater finds the Power to take action.

The first one I wrote in the spring of 1981, while I was still in school, was short and inadequate, but I couldn't write more then, as I wrote about the resentments I had toward those I loved most and who had done the most for me. I was deeply ashamed about these "unworthy" feelings.

I then developed a terrible headache that would not go away. I prayed, got my first massage, got blessed by a priest. AND, did not eat. It went away when I did my first fifth step weeks after developing the headache.

Amazing miracles ensued and they still do when I do the steps.

— Julene

INHALE
COURAGE
EXHALE
FEAR

The Meet Up

| | | | | |
|------------|---------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| SUN | 5:00 P.M. | Lynn G. (210) 240-3277 | University United Methodist Church Main Entrance Second Floor, Room 210 5084 De Zavala (at Vance Jack- son) 78230 | Step Study/ Discussion and Speaker (2nd Sun) |
| MON | 9:30 A.M. | Vera C. (210) 494-2713 | Shearer Hills Baptist Church North Building, Room 128, Interpark Entrance, 12615 San Pedro 78216 | Literature: Currently Big Book |
| | 7:00 P.M. | Graciela (210) 219-9660 | La Iglesia El Divino Redentor 2803 W. Salinas, 78207 | Literatura/ Discusion |
| | 7:30 P.M. | Ken R. (210) 520-3727 | St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 6110 NW Loop 410 78238 | Discussion |
| TUES | 7:00 P.M. | Noé (210) 392-8031 | Alamo Heights Baptist Church 6501 Broadway 78209 | 12 & 12 Study/ Discus- sion |
| WED | 12:00 P.M. | Kay (404) 286-9169 | Unity Church of the Hill Country, 1016 Jefferson St., Library, Kerville 78028 | Steps/ Traditions |
| | 7:30 P.M. | Barbara D. (210) 637-7203 | Church of Reconciliation, Brigid Room, 8900 Starcrest 78217 | Step Study Newcomers' Ask It Basket |
| THURS | 12:00 P.M. | Mary Helen (210) 534-5875 | Crestholme Presbyterian Church 1602 Goliad- Room right behind church | Discussion |
| | 7:00 P.M. | Kristy (512) 393-1366 | Unity Church, Life Room, 408 Gruene Rd. New Braunfels 78130 | Step Study |
| FRI | 9:30 A.M. | Gwen (210) 862-8211 | N.E. Christian Church 2839 Wood- bury (at Nacodoches) 78217 (.6 miles outside Loop 410) | Literature Dis- cussion Speaker 2nd Fri. |
| | 12 Noon | Destine (956) 744-5011 | Christ Church Episcopal 2320 Lane St. Laredo | English/ Spanish |
| | 7:00 P.M. | Dawn C. (210) 849-0027 | University United Methodist Church Main Entrance Second Floor, Room S211, 5084 De Zavala (at Vance Jackson) 78230 | Speaker/ Step Study/ Discus- sion |
| SAT | 8:30 A.M. | Sharon V. (210) 863-3338 | Church of Reconciliation Alban Room 8900 Starcrest 78217 | Literature/ Discussion |
| 1st SAT | 9:45 A.M. | Kathy S. (510)506-1756 | Church of Reconciliation Alban Room 8900 Starcrest 78217 | Step of the Month |
| 2nd SAT | 9:45 A.M. | Curtis (210) 487-1683 | Church of Reco 1 Alban Room 8900 Starcrest 12 | SAAI Newcom- er/ "Welcome Back" |

Have an idea for The Swan/El Cisne? Want to contribute content for an upcoming issue?

Contact co-editors: Alice at playswithwordz@gmail.com

Carrie at oacarrie@gmail.com