



Step of the Month: Step 4

Guiding principle: Courage

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

Courage is inherent in every living human. If a person did not have courage they would fail to exist. Courage for one person cannot nor should it be defined in the same way for another person. We all know no two humans are alike and what defines courage and struggle for myself may be totally different for you the reader.

In OA, we work through the guiding principles of: Honesty, Step 1; Hope, Step 2; Faith, Step 3. These three steps lay a foundation upon which to continue on with Step 4 where we come to face a searching and moral inventory of ourselves. In this step, courage is learning how to look deep within ourselves, looking into a mirror and trying to look deep into our eyes, the windows of our souls to seek out our short-comings. It is also courage that looks into those same eyes and sees something even harder for me to acknowledge about myself anyway - my redeeming qualities.

Yes, as I said, we are all different. I could not see any good qualities in myself. Somehow it's scary for me to greet myself with a kind smile and 'hey, you look good'. Sometimes it makes me cry and there are times that if somebody compliments me a voice in my head shouts out, "Just a polite thank you ... you can do this... don't just turn and dis yourself... you can do it - say Thank You." So many times I have been the self punishing despot, hating the very core of my own being. For me, with the help of sponsors past and present, program, and therapy too I am learning that the biggest and scariest ghost that I faced was the 'Spirit of Worthlessness'. For me, the core of my being has never meant to harm someone and how I carry that burden when I do. Yet, it has always been alright to treat myself unkindly. For me courage is smiling and meeting others and forcing myself to be with others because it takes courage to do any of these things when you feel vulnerable.

Step 4 gave me the gift of unloading that burden of carrying my screw-ups around as Jacob Marley carried his chains. And in a certain way, like the very popular Christmas tome, Step 4 allowed me to walk through my life and face my ghosts and in the end find out that I, like Ebenezer Scrooge have been hiding all the best things about myself. I have learned that I do have something to give to others. I have my quirks that make people smile and I now accept them as uniquely me. I make amends to people when I am conscious of my wrong-doings, and if I am not immediately aware then when I realize or have them pointed out to me I will ask forgiveness as I never like to have a long list that I sit upon. That said, I've done Step 4 a few times and it seems that whenever I do look into my eyes in the mirror, straight down to my soul, there is always something I can clean-up and there is always something new and good that I learn about myself.

Courage is something we all possess. If you are reading this, then I know you are human and I know you are very brave. Just getting into these rooms; THAT takes courage. I remember the day that I attended my first OA meeting. I stood staring into an empty room with both dismay (I was terrified to be there) and a bit of glee (the room is empty, I'm outta here). Had it not been for two people seeing me in the hallway who asked me if I was here for an OA meeting, I would have turned and bolted. I would not be here today and I never would have known that inside of me was a pretty, decent person who just needed to meet beautiful, brave people who had traversed similar heights, storms, and battles to my own People brave enough to share the challenges faced both internally and externally every day.

To my dearest friends and readers, I commend you all on your courage and the willingness to take things one day at a time. In this new time especially we all face unknowns. Yet, we are here, via our virtual rooms, e-mails, texts, and even the telephone. I am still working on the courage to talk with people on the phone. It's scary and awkward to me. So, with a smile I conclude this. It's a phone and a friend. Yes, I'll work on that - phone contact, one day at a time.

Step 4, it's daunting yet inspiring and liberating. May God be with you during these times of uncertainty. And, remember we are not just OA, we are FAMILY. We understand the struggles that unite us. So if you need to grab that phone, text, computer go for it! If you're feeling stir crazy, reach out! That's a great courageous act in a pretty crazy time. Step 4 is about the courage it takes to truly break chains that hold you back and to see the beauty within you and love yourself. Take the jump ... I did. Look, now I'm writing this. SMILE.

Sincerely,
Jamie S.

Announcements



April 4 & May 2

Step of the month mtg
9:45 am, Church of
Reconciliation,
Alban Room

April 11 & May 11

Intergroup 9:45 am,
Church of Reconciliation,
Cranmer Room

April 4 & May 2

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

Quick Note:

When you need
any updated
meeting infor-
mation during the
COVID 19 time
frame, Up to date
meetings and
schedules are
available at
oasanantonio.org

Fear Prayer – “We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.” – (p. 68 How It Works)

Step 4

The Feared Fourth Step of OA where we come to terms with our past, our self, our reality and admit to God and step inside one's self with courage. The OA 12 and 12 says this is to be a fearless and searching moral inventory. There was nothing fearless about it for me. I was filled with fear when I started but with the help of fellow OAs, I learned to search and I found out who I was and I am still finding out about myself and I have done two complete fourth steps and several minis. Each reading of the step, each inventory, each sharing of it, each amends, releases me from some of my perfectionism. The twelve steps are a process and even when we have done them once we still have to commit to that continual process of applying them to our lives and that means not only being willing but wanting to do the steps, especially the fourth one. It takes courage and I must remain courageous if I am going to make progress step by step never becoming perfect, but always searching and seeking to remove the things that lead me to a pattern of overeating and keep me from finding serenity. With help from you my fellow OAs and my higher power, this step of courage is not hard it is actually exciting!

-David

One Hot Stove: Courage

I was asked to write about the spiritual principle of courage and here's what I found:

Courage is a noun and it's defined as the ability to do something that is frightening or to have strength in the face of pain or grief. Courage is not the absence of fear but it is being scared to death and walking through it anyway.

It takes a lot of courage to do the right thing regardless of how I feel about it. I was also trying to figure out why it was the principle behind the fourth step when the first three steps take a lot courage also but then I realized that the fourth one is the first one that requires us to actually do something and take action.

It really does take a tremendous amount of courage to really look deep within myself. It takes courage to look in all the nooks and crannies of my real self - not the fantasy one that I've created over the years. Fear of the unknown - I'm scared to death of what I might find or what I might not find. What if this? What if that? Then what? I am fine thank you very much! But I know in my heart that I'm not fine and I really do want to change but I hate to be uncomfortable. The book talks about us being masters of self deception – I know that applies to me. God I'm scared right now please give me the courage to jump all the way in and take the action necessary so I can become the man that you want me to be.

-Curtis

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

Website:
www.oasanantonio.com

2020-2021 Board

Chair: Carie H.
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Parliamentarian: Richard V.
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Region III Representative:
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SAAI has standing and special committees to carry out its purposes in an effective and efficient manner.

2018-2019 SAAI Standing Committees

Audio Library: Steve M.
Archives: Barbara F.
Communication: Mike H.
Swan/El Cisne: Chris B.
Website: Mike H.
Lifeline Rep: Richard V.
Public Information: Mersi

Professional Outreach:
Mary Rose J.
Meeting Info/Phone line:
Sharon V.
Welcome Back/Newcomer:
David & Lea B.
12X12: Vacant

Literature: Elaine L.
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 and important updates via email?
news@oasanantonio.com

NEWS FROM OA'S WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

WSO's Statement on COVID 19 (March 10, 2020): [OA-COVID-19-Letter-2](#)

As of March 20, 2020 most of the buildings inside San Antonio and Bexar County have been closed and local authorities have asked groups larger than 10 not to meet. State authorities have encouraged people to stay home except for essentials such as gas and groceries.

ONLINE MEETINGS

There are multiple meetings happening online for you to participate in. Please call the hotline (210) 492-5400 or email news@oasantonio.com for more information.

If you know of a new meeting happening online please email news@oasananotnio.com or contact Mike H (210-391-0498) to share the information so others can find it.

Even though we are not able to meet face to face, recovery is happening over the phone and online from homes, backyards, and even in cars. Please join in a virtual meeting. The fellowship and the newcomer needs your experience, strength, and hope.

TWELVE STEPS (Continued)

- 1. We admitted we were powerless and our lives have 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 understood Him.***
- 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**
- 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
- 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
- 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**
- 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**
- 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
- 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**
- 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for**

TWELVE STEPS (cont.)

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



Service Station

SERVICE STATION

Service and “social distancing” seem contradictory. Personally, as a compulsive eater, I have practiced “social distancing” with food and self-centered fear much of my life. The food-and-fear fogs create more distance between me and others and between me and myself than the currently recommended gap of 6-8 feet.

We have already had OA members do service by setting up phone and “zoom” meetings to replace suspended face-to-face meetings. Working with others can continue even with self-quarantine via the phone and internet. Most importantly, prayer for others requires no equipment and can be done anywhere and any time. Praying the 9th Step promises for others also reminds me that I want these promises in my life.

— Alice G

AREA MEETINGS

SUN	5:00 P.M.	Lynn G. (210) 240-3277	University United Methodist Church, South Campus, Main Entrance Second Floor Room S210 , 5084 De Zavala (at Vance Jackson), 78249	Step Study / Discussion / Speaker (2nd Sun)
	7:00 P.M.	Elaine (210) 332-0551	Unity Church, 408 Gruene Road, NEW BRAUNFELS , 78130	Literature / Discussion
MON	9:30 A.M.	Vera C. (210) 494-2713	Shearer Hills Baptist Church, South Build- ing (San Pedro Entrance) Room 201, 12615 San Pedro, 78216	Literature: Currently Big Book
	6:00 P.M.	Graciela (210) 219-9660	La Iglesia El Divino Redentor, 2803 W. Salinas, 78207	Literatura / Discusion EN ESPANOL
	7:00 P.M.	Ken R. (210) 520-3727	St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6110 NW Loop 410, 78238	Discussion
TUES	12 Noon	David E. (830) 928-4844	Church of Christ, 1 Upper Balcones Rd BOERNE 78006 oaofboerne@gmail.com	Discussion
	5:45 P.M.	Julene (512) 923-0707	Alamo Heights Baptist Church, 6501 Broadway, 78209	Joe & Charlie Big Book Study - Bring BB, Notebook & Dinner if desired
	7:00 P.M.	Curtis (210) 487-1683	Alamo Heights Baptist Church, 6501 Broadway, 78209	12 & 12 Study / Discussion
WED	12 Noon	Kay (404) 286-9169	Unity Church of the Hill Country, Library, 1016 Jefferson St., KERRVILLE , 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	12:15 P.M	Graciela (210) 219-9660	Collins Garden Library 200 N. Park Blvd. (corner of Nogalitos) San Antonio, TX 78204	Discussion
	7:00 P.M.	Kay R. (210) 831-8079	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 Woodbury (at Nacogdoches .6 miles outside Loop 410), 78217	Literature, Discussion, Speaker 2nd Fri.
	12 Noon	Destine (956) 744-5011	Church Christ Church Episcopal 2320 Lane St LAREDO , 78043	English/ Spanish
	7:00 P.M.	Dawn C. (210) 849-0027	University United Methodist Church, South Campus, Main Entrance First Floor Parlor, 5084 De Zavala (at Vance Jack- son), 78249	Speaker / Step Study / Discussion
SAT	8:30 A.M.	Sharon V. (210) 863-3338	Church of Reconciliation Alban Room 8900 Starcrest, 78217	Literature / Discussion
****MONTHLY MEETINGS****				
1st SAT	10:00 A.M.	Michele(210) 460-9179	Church of Reconciliation Alban Room 8900 Starcrest, 78217	Step of the Month
2nd SAT	9:45 A.M.	Denise (210) 884-6749	Church of Reconciliation Alban Room 8900 Starcrest, 78217	SAAI Newcomer / "Welcome Back"