

Sober Open-Minded Women Group History

The year was December 2012. Val W. had just moved into a Senior Living apartment community. Shortly after the move; having MS, Val had a flair up and unable to attend meetings. Her good friend Ginger G. called and asked if there was anything she could do to help. At first Val declined help from Ginger. Self-pity was beginning to cripple Val much faster than the MS flair up. Suddenly, Val W. remembered how in April 1999; she and Ginger had read out of the Big Book after Val had major surgery and was on sick leave from work! Voila! Immediately she asked Ginger if she would come over to study the Big Book with her a couple times a week. The first week Ginger came alone. The second week she brought Conoly H. and the week after that Jennifer P. joined the small but effective AA Big Book Study.

Pretty soon, the cozy study meetings were getting too large for Val's small apartment. Val got permission from the property manager to use the community room. The PM was more than happy to oblige. Val W. explained the principal of anonymity and having no other affiliations. Thus April 2013 dawned the first official SOW meeting. At first the women were satisfied just being sober women meeting in a safe space. As they grew; they knew they needed to contribute financially as our 7th Tradition suggests. We began sending contributions to the General Service Office. They would thank us but encouraged us to get a group number and be counted in the great whole of AA. Later, Beth T. donated her daughter's little green piggy bank which became the group's mascot.

In order to have a group, we had to have a name. Val sent out an email to the women who regularly attended the meeting. Among them included: Val. W., Ginger G., Conoly H., Jennifer P., Paula W. Paula S., Helen P., Georgia P., Kay B., Ray A., Pam W. and Michelle C. The email asked to come up with a very catchy name for the group that would be an acronym. The suggestion most liked was: Sober Old Women or S.O.W. Most of the women in the group were older and had enough sober time to laugh at such a silly name. However, we decided to call ourselves: Sober Open-minded Women; still acronym SOW.

We applied for a group number to our Georgia State General Assembly and in January 2015 we received our welcome letter and group number. SOW has continued to grow and attract women (younger and older) wishing to stay sober. We read thirty to thirtyfive minutes from the Big Book and leave remaining time for discussion. Our introduction states that we are a group geared towards women -- but we welcome ANYONE wishing to stay sober.

Like any AA group; SOW has had some 'growing pains', yet we are quickly or sometimes slowly, reminded of our first Tradition: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

SOBER OPEN-MINDED WOMEN (S.O.W.) GROUP

Lakewood Hills Senior Village

1025 Barnett Shoals Rd,

Athens 30605

