

Arizona Serenity in the Desert Intergroup Newsletter

June 2017

SERENITY PRESS

FREE



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This literature has been locally produced by ASDI. The content reflects the experience, strength, and hope of our local members. It is not OA Conference or board approved and does not represent OA as a whole.



Are you signed up for ECares?

Once a week ASDI sends out an email with the latest news and updates of what is happening locally, regionally, and worldwide.

Just go to our website at oaphoenix.org and on the home page on the left side you will see where to sign up.

Don't miss out on the latest news, ideas, stories, or suggestions.

Musings on the Tool of Anonymity

Recently, I experienced having my anonymity broken. It was painful, but in working through it, I was guided by my sponsor to look inward and to HP and I came to face some of my own choices. Do I gossip or tolerate hearing gossip? Do I walk away from situations where anonymity is being rejected or neglected and nurture friendships and spaces where it's being fortified?

Anonymity is so much bigger than I thought when I came into the rooms. It's not just about privacy and guarding confidences. It's about letting people have their story and their boundaries, about drawing my connections with others from direct experiences of and with them, and not interfering with others' experiences of each other. It doesn't involve my judgment or discernment of what needs my confidence and what doesn't, because when I'm healthy and doing what makes me feel best, other people's names and lives aren't a part of my relationships and communications. Crimes, new babies, deaths of loved ones, new jobs, relationship changes, bad haircuts, good haircuts: at the end of the day, it doesn't matter. That's someone else's story to tell. That's someone else's news to break or boundary to keep.

I got to sit and have tea with a newer program friend yesterday and practice letting God move me forward in these values. I fumbled a little, but less than I ever had before. And I experienced another fellow in a way I never had before. It felt like it was just the two of us and God. And it felt almost holy for me to do the work and make the effort to keep that energy pure and connected and present. And I left feeling really good *and* really grounded.

Now what about that part of the tool where I'm supposed to expect others to safeguard my anonymity? ("Within the Fellowship, anonymity means that whatever we share with another OA member will be held in respect and confidence." –The Tools of Recovery) Maybe part of it is to keep in conscious contact with God as I decide whether disclosing or listening with someone feels right, in the moment. And part of it is to have such strong faith that everything will be okay when I do share, that I can release whatever I need to in the moment, if that's where I'm led, without replacing the relief and comfort of sharing with a fear and worry about my confidence being kept. I maintain conscious contact and I connect when it feels safe, and I also trust that, if my confidence is abused or misplaced, my Higher Power's healing love & energy will get me through the emotional and, perhaps, tangible hurt.

For me, The tool of Anonymity isn't about stuff or mechanics, it's about faith and God, staying present, listening to my inner voice, and trusting that I'm safe so I can connect with my fellows in the way that feels right, just for today.

– Anonymous



Step Six

The leader of our workshop this past weekend helped us understand the action steps, 4–9. Step 6 doesn't seem like an action. After all, it's not even phrased as an action verb: "were entirely ready...".

So what action are we taking, and why? Well, it's this simple: We are approaching what might be the most important decision we will make in recovery, **the decision to finally stop living our lives on self-will and to start living by God's will.**

As our workshop leader told us, there's a blurry line between steps 5 and 6. The Big Book tells us, just before step six, that once we've read off our inventory, we spend an hour with our higher power. Reading that inventory is like watching a slow-motion movie of our life. If we've been completely honest and thorough, we will be ready to have all that's objectionable removed from us. But will we be willing?

On page 76, the Big Book asks, "*Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all—every one?*" In other words, do we want to keep holding on to a few things? A resentment against someone who wronged us deeply? Justified anger? A comfortable old way of looking at the world that we think keeps us safe from its ups and downs? The way we talk to others? The way we listen, or don't? Aggressive driving? The need to be right? The need to control? The idea that we can rely on ourselves? Eating compulsively to quash our feelings? These and a hundred-hundred worn out ideas and ways of conducting ourselves in the world have to go. Otherwise we will eat again. Think of our lives like a damaged ship. We wouldn't go back to sea having repaired the boat save for one little hole in hull. Even if the hole measured just a few inches across, eventually enough water would stream in that we would sink. It is the same with our recovery. We are about the business of giving ourselves to our higher power so that we can be fully repaired—by God—and sent back into the world to help others. If we deceive ourselves into hanging onto just a couple little things, then, like the ocean filling the ship, our ego will find that weak point and fill our souls back up with the very kind of junk we'd just read about during step 5. The stuff that makes us want to eat.

Yet, despite the fact that we didn't come into OA on a winning streak, we have this uncanny knack for hanging onto behaviors that have proven again and again to cause us pain and suffering. Step 6 is about getting honest on this account. About finally getting ourselves fully and unquestionably ready to abandon the stuff that doesn't work in our lives. **And because we are probably the worst judges of what does and doesn't work in our lives, we have to give it all away to God, the good and the bad.** That's how we avoid even the potential for hanging onto to something objectionable that can lead us back to eating again.

Steps 6 and 7 get very little airtime in the Big Book, but they are the turning point in our recovery. **Up until then, we've been dealing with our problems.** Once we get through step 7, **we restart our lives in the solution.** But for step six, the good news is that we are only becoming perfectly willing, not perfectly able. It turns out that giving away our character defects is a lifelong process, and one that brings us closer and closer to God. So in step 6, we have simply to tell ourselves, that, yes, this is something I'm signing up for. From here on out, I'm going to get out of God's way by not trying to do it my way. – Anonymous

NEW OA MEETING!

Downtown Scottsdale

Thursdays:
6:30pm-7:30pm

First Baptist
Church (FBC)
Scottsdale
7025 E. Osborn
Rd.
- 2 blocks west of
Scottsdale Road

Topic: Step Study

The meeting will have begun May 18th. Please join us and help to start your NEW MEETING!

For Questions or
Directions, please
contact:
OA Valerie
(602) 770-1842

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Arizona Serenity in the Desert Intergroup: P.O. Box 47565, Phoenix, AZ 85068. Serenity Press is always seeking submissions on how the OA program of recovery works in your life. We reserve the right to refuse or edit submissions for punctuation and grammar. Permission to reprint original material found in this newsletter is granted to all Twelve Step groups and their publication provided that ASDI is credited. All opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of ASDI or OA as a whole. Please send articles, content, contact changes, OA-related events, etc. to the editor or specifically to the proper party as listed in the newsletter. Deadline is the 1st of the month, one month ahead of the next month's issue. Your newsletters will be distributed at the Intergroup meeting for your reps to bring back to your meetings.

Emily G. – 480-582-8061 – mycatbobby@yahoo.com

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(See Outreach Directory for e-mail addresses)

This is your newsletter!

We are always looking for contributions from our local fellowship.

Share your experience, strength, and hope of recovery with others.

It is as easy as emailing it to:
mycatbobby@yahoo.com

Tools of Recovery

Literature

Many OA members find that reading literature daily further reinforces how to live the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

We read OA-approved books such as *Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition; The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous; Voices of Recovery; For Today; and Alcoholics Anonymous* (the Big Book). We also study and read OA-approved pamphlets and *Lifeline*, our magazine of recovery. All our literature provides insight into our problem of eating compulsively, strength to deal with it, and the very real hope that there is a solution for us.

Action Plan

Along with working the Steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance and manageability into our lives.

An action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions, both daily and long-term, that are necessary to support our individual abstinence and emotional, spiritual and physical recovery. While the plan is ours, tailored to our own recovery process, most of us find it important to work with a sponsor, fellow OA members and/or appropriate professional to help us create it. This tool, like our plan of eating, may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted as we progress in our recovery.

STEP SIX

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

TRADITION SIX

An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

CONCEPT SIX OF OA SERVICE

The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.

Region 3 Representatives & World Service Delegates

Tori, Halina, Harlan
Rosie/alternate

Food Addict or Compulsive Eater?

Hi, I'm _____, and I'm a _____. That's a staple of 12-Step culture. It's one of the ways we remain equals in our meetings and put principles before personalities. In some fellowships, the second blank probably doesn't have much variation: alcoholic for example. OA is a little different in this way because there are as many food compulsions as there are members. Here are a few of the many self-descriptions that members in our area and elsewhere use:

- Compulsive overeater
- Compulsive eater
- Food addict
- Compulsive eater *and* food addict (or vise versa)
- Binge eater
- Sugar addict
- Sugar and flour addict
- Anorexic
- Bulimic
- Exercise bulimic.

It doesn't matter what we call ourselves, we still get to be members as long as we have a desire to stop eating compulsively. The important thing is that we are in a meeting, seeking a solution, and no longer in denial about what our problem is. There are as many names for this disease as there are members. No matter what we call ourselves, we all belong, we can all be loved unconditionally by this fellowship, and we can all find a path to abstinence that meets our own personal needs if we keep coming back. That's what OA's new **Unity With Diversity Checklist** is all about. In OA we're all the same, yet we're all different. It's what gives us strength and the ability to help members with a wide range of compulsive food behaviors. The Unity with Diversity Checklist can be found on the OA Website or by following this link:
<https://www.oa.org/pdfs/UnityWithDiversityChecklist.pdf>.

— Anonymous

Contact Information for Monthly Contributions

Please be sure to include you World Service Office group number with ALL of your donations.

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NEXT ASDI INTERGROUP MEETING

3rd Saturday of every month
JUNE 17th

ASDI Intergroup Meeting • 1:00pm – 3:00pm
OA Office • 1219 E. Glendale Ave. • Suite #23 • Phoenix, AZ 8502