



**Overeaters Anonymous Office: 1219 East Glendale Avenue #23, Phoenix, AZ 85020 602-234-1195**  
*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](http://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.

## What About the God Thing?

I did a lot of research about OA before I walked in the door of my first meeting. The God thing had me worried because I had finally shaken off my religious upbringing. I considered myself a committed atheist. In reality, I was an atheist who should've been committed.



I knew some 12-Step folks, and they told me, to a person, that I didn't have to worry about the God business. Later I learned this was a gentle way of saying *don't let your pride and your prejudices get in the way of a joyful recovery*. Soon, you all showed me that it didn't matter what my belief about God consisted of, so long as I believed three things:

1. There was a Power great than myself
2. This Power had the ability to change my food behaviors for me
3. This Power would do so, if I created a relationship with It.

Nothing there about beards, lightning bolts, or afterlives. Nor anything about my character or that I had to fear punishment. Nor anything about any appointed person I had to go through in order to seek this power. In fact, the three points I learned told me that this Power loved me and wanted a direct relationship with me. Perhaps most important: *I could believe anything else about a Power greater than myself that I wanted to and that helped me recover.*

It took me about six or eight months to fully comprehend this idea, but when I did, OA opened up for me in an amazing way. Abstinence wasn't something I had to fight for, it was something that I asked for, participated in, and gratefully received. It took me another year before I comfortably used the word God, but it's faster to say than "Higher Power." It took me a little more time yet to be willing to capitalize the G in God. I do so now because it reminds me that God is a real thing, and because It has helped me, so I owe the respect of an uppercase letter. A small thing? Yeah, but for a former atheist, a huge change.

In the end, I suppose that the organized religion of my youth might yet consider me an atheist because I don't believe in its concept of god anymore. That's OK with me nowadays; everyone has the right to their own beliefs. And today I believe in a concept that works for me and keeps me out of the food and in OA. The God thing worked out just fine.

– Anonymous, February 2015

## It's Never Too Late!



## Fresh Start Workshop Steps 1, 2 & 3

### A New Beginning

Saturday, January  
27  
1:00pm – 3:00pm

Speakers will address the first 3 steps to include sharing on “Utter defeat towards liberation and strength”, “firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built”, “the liability of self confidence”, “fatal progression”, “rigorous honesty and surrender”, “all you need is a truly open mind”, “I had only to stop fighting”, “belief means reliance not defiance”, “developing dependence on Higher Power”, and “Our whole trouble has been the misuse of willpower.”

7<sup>th</sup> Tradition will be taken  
(\$5.00 suggested  
donation)

Contact Mike V. by email:  
[mvalder@cox.net](mailto:mvalder@cox.net) or  
phone: (602) 615 - 2396

## Willing Release

In the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous* it says, “No man, we saw, could believe in God and defy Him, too. Belief meant reliance, not defiance” (p. 31).

This is interesting because it clarifies the difference between understanding the concept of a higher power, and actually *believing* in a higher power. To truly believe is to accept that my Higher Power's will is absolute. I cannot ask my heart to beat or stop beating – my Higher Power makes sure it does.

I have fallen down in the past when I was not willing to totally accept my Higher Power's will for me. I tried to defy or change it at almost every turn. Some examples include ignoring strong messages that a man was not right for me, pursuing a career I found terrifying, not accepting who I was, denying my shortcomings and strengths, ignoring the blessings sitting in front of me to pursue the fantasy and false status, not accepting how I look, and trying to control others' perceptions and manipulate those around me in order to get love.

Prior to OA, I made others, my career, or myself my Higher Power. All failed me at some point. Even within OA, the quality of my faith was wrong because I thought I believed, but actually I wasn't willing to ask for my Higher Power's will. I couldn't accept the possibility of not getting what I wanted. I refused to experience hunger or not eating what and when I wanted. I refused to let go of activities or fantasies connected to ego. I was afraid I might not get what I thought I needed! I felt it simply wasn't possible to let go of these things. And yet, surrendering my food at last (which for me means following a workable plan of eating not designed by me) formed the foundation of what “letting go” can offer. I am abstinent, an absolute and deeply humbling miracle.

I see how handing over my will around food gives me the miracle of abstinence. The rest of my little plans and designs have kept me ill for so long that letting them go now seems possible. In fact, not knowing or trying to control outcomes and just trusting has become easier and more of what I seek each day.

I have sustained abstinence and a deep sense of peace and serenity at long last. Thank you, OA.

– Sarah S., United Kingdom

## Glimmer of Hope

It was December, and I had hit my bottom. My despair and anguish were monumental and unrelenting. I had tried every conceivable diet, weight-loss scheme, pill, and quick fix, and nothing had worked. I know now that I had not addressed the real, underlying issue: I was a compulsive eater.

I felt there was no hope left. At that moment a still small voice inside me told me to check out the OA website. There I found a list of questions that, if answered “Yes”, were good indicators of an issue with compulsive eating. I checked every box. That night I made a decision to attend an OA meeting. It was the best decision of my life and a huge turning point for me.

As the meeting progressed and I listened to members telling their stories, tears welled up and began to stream down my face; I realized their stories were mine. I felt a connection. For the first time in my life, there was a glimmer of hope.

That glimmer has kept me in recovery, abstinent and coming back for four years now. I've learned to use the Tools, and my life is much more balanced as I work the Steps with the help of my Higher Power.

Every time I walk into a meeting, I feel such gratitude as I'm reminded of the greeting we receive every week. “Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home!”

– Sharon R., Billings, Montana USA

## 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

## Arizona Serenity in the Desert Intergroup (ASDI)

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Office Cleaner Coord.	Carol H.	602-292-4346

## 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



## Spiritual Principle of Step Two: Hope Spiritual Principle of Tradition Two: Trust

“In our recovery from food obsession we can find strength and hope in so many different things; gratitude, flowers, sunsets, phone calls, and other people.” – OA Website: Strength and Hope

“The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.” – Concept Three

### STEP TWO

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

### TRADITION TWO

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority— a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

### CONCEPT TWO OF OA SERVICE

The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

### Region 3 Representatives & World Service Delegates

Tori, Harlan, Stacy Alyse  
Rosie/alternate

### 3 Questions About Whether We're Spreading Hope When We Share

Think back to the moment we first walked into an OA meeting. We finally gave up outwitting or toughing out our disease. Our eating discouraged us. The shape of our body discouraged us. So did our emotional health.

We come into OA on a losing streak. None of us thought that, gee, OA might be a fun place to meet friends and network. We came because our lives, as we were living them, were pretty lousy: chained to food like a slave to their master. None of us had the foggiest idea what to do, we just wanted a place that could help us where no one else could before. So when we went to our first meeting, what were we looking for? Why, hope of course! All we wanted was a tiny glimmer, a glinting of shining hope. Half a ray of hope, even an eighth of a ray, would have been infinitely more hope than we walked in with.

But how do newcomers (or current members) get that hope? In our first meeting, we were probably confused by all the terminology chucked around: abstinence, food plan, Higher Power, unmanageability. What's it got to do with stopping the uncontrollable urge to eat? Then we hear someone describe their journey. We hear in them what's familiar: the obsession, the physical need for our binge foods, the fear and self-doubt. We hear in another's words the lonely secrets of our food behaviors.

But the problem isn't the only thing we need to feel hopeful. If everyone shared only about the problem, then it's just talking. What we felt and heard was that OA has a solution. We didn't necessarily know what "Twelve Steps" meant, but we heard people talking about how their compulsive eating had been arrested. We saw that they achieved some physical recovery. And we imagined ourselves in their place. "If they were like that before, and they are getting better, then I can too!"

If we heard hope, then we probably left our first meeting with some lightness in our hearts. Finally, we'd stumbled into a path forward.

But what if we hadn't heard hope? What if we didn't hear that there was a solution? What if we mostly heard about the problem? Or sharing that's mostly retellings of the difficult problems of the past week? Would we have stuck around? Just as newcomers need to hear hope, current members, no matter where we are in our journey of recovery, need to hear hope, too. Even more important, we desperately need to **share** hope. Step 12 tells us that we are to carry the message of hope to those who still suffer. The Big Book tells us explicitly and implicitly that we must share what happened (the problem), what we did (the solution in OA), and what we're like now (how we've been changed by OA). This isn't optional; it's foundational to maintaining our spiritual condition. It's mirrored again in Tradition 5 that tells us that the primary purpose of any OA meeting is to carry the message to still-suffering compulsive eaters. It's not about us, it's about others. It's about hope!

#### **As practicing OAs, we can ask ourselves three important questions about our sharing:**

- 1. What percentage of our sharing is about our problem with food? With non-food life problems? Or is a retelling of events of the past days or week?
- 2. What percentage is about how we are working toward the solution?
- 3. Are we remembering to describe how our lives have changed for the better through OA?

Or we can ask one big question: *Do I consistently share so that I feel better or so that **someone else** in the room feels hope so they can get better?*

These answers make all the difference to us as well as the newcomer. If we hear ourselves talking about the solution, we may be more likely to continue reaching for it, reminded of its daily importance to us. Just as the still-suffering compulsive eater may be more likely to stick around and reach for the solution when they hear hope from us.

Hope is a diamond for the newcomer, each of our recoveries are its facets, and our Higher Power is the light that sparkles through it.

– *Anonymous, June, 2017*

### Contact Information for Monthly Contributions

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

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## NEXT ASDI INTERGROUP MEETING

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month  
February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

ASDI Intergroup Meeting ▪ 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
OA Office ▪ 1219 E. Glendale Ave. ▪ Suite #23 ▪ Phoenix, AZ 85020