



# A SERVING OF HOPE

## Serenity Retreat at Twin Rocks



Many of us know that the Oregon Intergroup hosts the Serenity Retreat at Twin Rocks, which is now open for registration. You may also know that the Serenity Retreat includes meetings, group sessions, inspiration, speakers, fun, fellowship, healthy delicious meals and comfortable lodging. But, here's something might not know: Oregon Intergroup hosts these Serenity Retreats *purely*

*as a way to give back to our fellowship.* These retreats are not fundraisers nor membership drives; they are simply a way of extending a deep and heartfelt "thank you" for your program of recovery. Here are some participant's quotes from past retreats:

*I always, always, always get so much out of OA retreats! They are a wonderful jumpstart to my recovery. They help me see how far I have come and how far I have to go. —Melissa W.*

*I really like to spend the time focused on recovery and nothing else. My distractions are gone and I can just be with my OA community. I also love all the exposure to different levels of recovery and getting to meet so many new people. It's help me grow my network of OA friends around the state. —Angela D*

*This upcoming retreat is my first in years and I'm looking forward to it. After over 6 years in OA, I can feel my enthusiasm waning. I am anticipating turbo charging my recovery and finding fresh perspective and focus. —Rosanne*

*One of the most valuable thing I have gotten out of Oregon OA retreats has been my wonderful sponsor. I had been listening to her share at retreats and was very impressed with her program and honesty. A few years went by and I was in the position to find a new sponsor. With fear and trembling, I did so. And it has been a life changing experience! —Anonymous*

*Retreats are where we confront old attitudes that have been holding us back, and consider actions that we can take to restore balance and order that will make getting abstinent more likely. For those who are already abstinent, it validates all of the things that they are doing "right", and tends to energize us to do increased levels of service. Often, it increases attendance at intergroups, since they are most often sponsored by the local intergroup. —Neil*

*I have never been to a retreat and not heard something I really needed to hear...it was a retreat that made it possible for my recovery to move forward. [Retreats] let me connect with SO MANY wonderful OAs, not just locally but from all over the world. —Deborah*

### Upcoming Events

- February 24<sup>th</sup> Workshop:**  
*FINDING AND CONNECTING WITH A HIGHER POWER THAT SUPPORTS YOUR RECOVERY*  
 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, Rm 20-21  
 Providence—St Vincent Medical  
 9205 SW Barnes Rd, Portland
- February 24<sup>th</sup>**  
*OA UNITY DAY* 11:30 am  
 OA members from across the globe pause to reaffirm the strength inherent in OA's unity.
- March 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
*MONTHLY SPEAKERS MEETING*  
 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm  
 Girl Scouts Building,  
 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland  
  
 To attend by phone call  
 641 715-3836, PIN 282586
- March 14<sup>th</sup>**  
*OREGON INTERGROUP MEETING,*  
 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm,  
 Girl Scouts Building,  
 9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland
- March 16-18<sup>th</sup>**  
*OA SERENITY RETREAT*  
 Twin Rocks Conference Center  
 18705 Highway 101 N  
 Rockaway Beach, OR  
  
 Register at [Oregon-OA.org](http://Oregon-OA.org)  
 \$50 scholarships available!

### Meetings Needing Support

- Wednesday, 7:15 pm  
 St Barnabas Episcopal Church,  
 2201 SW Vermont St. 97219,  
 Lower level of church building.  
 Church Offices. Red door, Rm 1
- Thursday 7:00 pm  
 St. Edward's Episcopal Church,  
 211 W Center Street, Silverton  
 (cross street is Fairview St)

## News from World Service

### *OA E-Books Now Available!*

Whether you prefer to read OA-approved literature on electronic devices or from a mix of e-readers and print books, you can now find OA e-books for popular e-readers and apps.



### *Sponsorship Success Podcast*

Sponsoring others is a vital service in OA. WSO's "Sponsorship Success" podcast series can help you prepare for your first sponsee or give you fresh ideas for your existing sponsorship service. Visit [oa.org/podcasts](http://oa.org/podcasts).



### *Traditions Explained Videos*

"Take a Walk Down the Traditions" is a series of videos designed to quickly explain each tradition. Find the first [six](#) videos at [oa.org/podcasts](http://oa.org/podcasts), and stay tuned for more.



### *Access OA's Lifeline Online at [www.oalifeline.org](http://www.oalifeline.org)*

For \$23, you get one year of access to new Lifeline stories published ten times per year, plus the archive of hundreds of stories published since January 2016



## Literature Spotlight



### **OA Members Come in All Sizes: Welcome, Whatever Your Problem With Food**

OA members who came to the program not necessarily overweight, including anorexics and bulimics, share their unique challenges and stories of recovery. Look for this pamphlet at your meeting or at [bookstore.oa.org](http://bookstore.oa.org)

## I Thought I Could Do It Alone



I grew up believing that I was supposed to be smart enough to figure things out on my own. I thought I could do it all alone, that only weak people needed a helping hand or a "God". I watched other people do things together, asking for and get help with their problems and was left mystified. How did they make that work? Doing things on my own only got me so far.

No longer able to trudge this road alone, I had to face something important: I didn't just have a problem, I had a problem with *other people*. Having other people around made me want to eat! I couldn't help it; I was just so nervous about what "all those other people" thought of me. And if I made a mistake? Or thought I made a mistake? Or thought I *might* make a mistake? Oh no!! I definitely could not maintain a sane relationship with other people and certainly not the food.

Thank goodness OA gave me the answer I needed in Step Two. According to Step Two, all I need is a "power greater than myself" to restore me to sanity. I needed something other than my own unreliable willpower to deal with the food *and* with other people. And every day I needed to turn my will over to such a greater power, to a Higher Power.

There was just one rather major problem: what would my Higher Power be?! I didn't believe in the God of my childhood and I wasn't convinced that OA was my Higher Power. I had to fashion for myself a personal Higher Power and one that supported my

abstinence. I found an answer in the AA Big Book as I read the words from Page 217 of the 4th Edition, "And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today..." Those words resounded in my heart and I knew that I could accept myself just as I am—with my anxious food behaviors *and* social anxieties. My Higher Power of total acceptance can support the challenge of accepting my whole self—character defenses and all. I know from experience that I can't change anything that I won't accept.

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So, how do I now maintain my sanity today? By accepting that other people are part of my Higher Power. I open myself up and slowly learn that my feelings won't kill me and I can handle the emotional vicissitudes of relationships. They may not always act in ways that make sense to me, they may push my buttons, I may feel afraid that my cover will be blown apart and I may act awkwardly or inappropriately. But somehow they are a part of my "reality" and my support system, my Higher Power. Somehow, I learn from dealing and interacting with these other people.

And in the balance, it is an interaction that generally makes me smile.

—Elizabeth S

## OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS



*“So what was YOUR gateway food?”*

### Dear Oregon Intergroup,

When I first came to OA over a year ago, it was my first hope to overcome my weight problem. I had just been diagnosed with pre-diabetes which means a test called hemoglobin A1c between 5.7 and 6.4. When it is over 6.5 it is classified as diabetes. I weighed 240 pounds and was terrified I was destined to have all of the complications of not being able to follow and stay on a diabetic diet. These included kidney damage,

going blind or having a foot or leg amputated.

I had been on so many weight loss programs. I had been able to lose weight, but then I would gain it all back plus 10 or 15 pounds more. I binged on a regular basis and grazed in the kitchen at night. I was talking to a friend about my fears of having pre-diabetes. She told me she had been thinking about going to Overeaters Anonymous. I asked her what that was. She explained it was a 12 Step program like AA.

At my first meeting, I was overjoyed to find out there were people present who had lost weight and had kept it off for several years. I found hope this program would work for me also.

Now over a year later I have lost 63 pounds and my hemoglobin A1c is 5.4. I am thrilled. I have worked my first 12 steps and attend meetings weekly. I now do steps 10, 11 and 12 daily. I don't work the program perfectly, but I no longer binge or graze in the kitchen nightly.

I want to encourage you to attend 6 OA meetings to see if this program might work for you.

— Char L.

### Journey into Grief

Six weeks ago my little brother took his own life after several decades of dealing with emotional pain. He was 44 years old and he struggled with bi-polar and alcoholism since he was a teenager. The news of his death still feels like a knife in my soul, but with the help of OA and the 12 steps I am learning to handle life without him.

The week after his death I was in shock. I felt numb and was lost. Being a proactive person I wanted to know how to navigate this new journey of grieving. I had never grieved someone so close to me and I had no idea what to expect or what to do. About a week into it, I did what I knew helped me before...I went to the beach for a “cry date” with my Creator. I did a lot of crying, walking and writing. It was this trip that gave me the hope I needed.

The first thing I realized was that feeling lost wasn't new for me. I remember feeling the same way when I went into eating disorder treatment and joined OA and yet, I have somehow gained 7.5 years of abstinence. Seven and a half years ago I reminded myself that I didn't have to figure it all out on my own, that there were people who knew better than me, and they were there to help; I just needed to trust the journey. Now I realize that the things I've learned in OA have blessed me with transferable skills; I may not know every step, feeling or experience that lay before me, but I am confident that I will work through them just as I have worked through my eating disorder.

The next thing I realized that day was that I could 12 step grief. I am powerless over grief. It's going to come and it's my job to not numb it through food behaviors, but to let my HP handle it for me. Writing letters to my brother and my HP helped me work the 4th step as I faced the guilt and anger that comes with the suicide of a loved one. Sharing those feelings with my sponsor helped me tease out what is mine and what wasn't.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Oregon Intergroup

Oregon Intergroup serves meetings from Longview to Tillamook, Salem to Portland, Silverton to Hood River, and includes Vancouver and the surrounding area. Find us online at [oregon-oa.org](http://oregon-oa.org) or call (971) 317-6343.

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## Virtual Sponsors Wanted

The Virtual Sponsorship Committee is in urgent need of more sponsors.

Many people live in areas where OA is new and not well established. Visit the OA Region 1 website at [www.oaregion1.org](http://www.oaregion1.org) and click on the "Find a Sponsor or Sponsee" link located on the right.

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## Young People's Phone List

If you came into program at age 30 or younger and can offer support to a young OA member, send contact information (name, phone, email and age you were when entered OA) to [youngpeople@oregon-oa.org](mailto:youngpeople@oregon-oa.org).

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## Tradition of Anonymity

The views expressed in this newsletter are of the person who wrote them and do not represent OA as a whole. Take what you like and leave the rest.

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## Newsletter Submissions

Practice the tool of writing and tell us your recovery story. Write about your favorite step, tool, slogan, and/or fellowship moment. **Have a meeting update, need support or have an announcement?** Send all writings and/or information to: [newsletter@oregon-oa.com](mailto:newsletter@oregon-oa.com)

# OPEN INTERGROUP POSITIONS



As you can tell from the list below, **Intergroup needs YOU!** It needs your recovery, your twelfth step-service, and your experience, strength, and hope. Perhaps you have newly come to Overeaters Anonymous and have no clue what Intergroup is all about. Maybe you even think you are not sure you want to be of service...let your curiosity guide you to see if this service might be a good fit for you. We need:

- **VISITORS:** Duties: Show up at Intergroup and join in discussion (or not); does not vote. *Qualifications: Desire to be of service and curiosity*
- **MEETING REPRESENTATIVES:** Duties: Represents your meeting at Intergroup; bring back materials posted. *Qualifications: Selected by group they represent*
- **TWELFTH STEP WITHIN:** Duties: Report monthly to Intergroup and upon project completion; Arrange project for December 12<sup>th</sup>, Twelfth Step Within Day; specific projects (e.g., Affirmations Project). *Qualifications: 90 days abstinence; worked through step 7*
- **PUBLIC INFORMATION PUBLIC OUTREACH:** Duties: Issue press releases; coordinates OA poster campaigns; explains OA to those unfamiliar with the program; publicize meetings. *Qualifications: 9 months abstinence; worked through step 7*
- **WAYS AND MEANS:** Duties: Report monthly to Intergroup, as projects occur; conduct money making projects at OA events; prepare items for said projects; enlist helpers for said projects. *Qualifications: 9 months abstinence; worked through step 7*
- **MEMBER AT LARGE:** Duties: Assume any board position during temporary absence or until replacement is elected; assist co-chair in contacting groups not represented at Intergroup. *Qualifications: 9 months abstinence; worked through step 7; Familiar with 12 traditions; Regular attendance (2 years) at a home group; have/be a sponsor; familiar with Roberts Rules of Order; present for nomination and election*

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The first day that I felt good after his death I realized steps 6&7 in this journey. If I truly want my HP to manage my grief, I have to accept and enjoy the good days. Guilt about feeling good so soon, has no place in my program. Grief does not need to become my new identity.

I also realized that I had to put all my extra energy into self-care. My abstinence has to be the most important thing and this loss could easily cause me to slip, so it's time for me to focus of what I need to do to take care of myself. I have had to pull back on some service work, but I know I will be better equipped to serve in the long run. As I told a friend of mine, after I experience this grieving, I will have one more thing to add to my "emotional resume." As the promises tell us, "No matter how far down the scale we've gone we will see how our experiences would benefit others."

I am not excited about my new journey into grief, but I am grateful that I have the OA program and 12 steps to support and guide me. As step 12 says "I am practicing these principles in all my affairs."

—Kym L