



A SERVING OF HOPE

The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual and do not represent OA Oregon Intergroup as a whole.

Step Two – Came to Believe



I came into OA with a belief in God. I was active in an organized religion as I had one of those “come to Jesus” experiences two years prior. It was this experience that led me to seek a stronger faith

through more involvement in the church. By describing my experience, I do not mean to criticize church or any organized religious body; it is how many people seek God and spirituality. For myself, I sat in mass and heard essentially, “turn your will and your life over to God and you will be rewarded.” I would sit in the pews and think, “That sounds great, sign me up!” Unfortunately, no number of daily readings, church attendance and prayer was working. My life was still a mess. I was eating myself to death, unhappy in my marriage, very afraid my mothering was doing damage to my then two year old, and was a mess of fears and depression. Finally, I was 12 stepped by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. I learned his story and found myself asking whether he thought my relationship with food could be the same as his relationship with alcohol. I will be forever grateful to this man. He told me that only I was the only one who could decide if I was an addict, but that I was welcome to come to the local AA meeting. He also let me know that there was a fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous.

When I went to my first meeting, I heard the steps and felt like I had finally found the missing instructions to find what I had been seeking by attending church. For a short while, I was on a pink cloud. Then, a funny thing happened on the way through my third step: my conception of God started changing. That part was okay, because I was letting go of the idea that God was a task master who would send down a lightning strike if I did not meet God’s expectations. That seems like it should be an easy idea to let go of, but it wasn’t. What if my old conception of a punishing God was the correct one and my new conception of loving God who “loves me in my totality” was wrong? I attended a retreat several years ago where the speaker stated “I’m an ex Catholic, which means I don’t believe in God and I’m sure that God is going to come kill my ass for believing that way.” I could totally relate.

Eventually, through prayer, step work and reading, I came to understand that God is never going to come “kill my ass” and, in fact, does love me in my totality unconditionally. I also realized that I still believe in the same God: I just stopped putting my human limitations on God. Sometimes I speak to God in church and other times I speak to Him while screaming on the floor in pain. “Coming to believe” made it very simple to turn my will and life over to God.

Anonymous

Upcoming OIG Events

- **Fri-Sun, March 15-19, 2019**
SERENITY RETREAT @TWIN ROCKS,
Twin Rocks Conference Center
18705 Highway 101 North
Rockaway Beach, Oregon
- **Saturday, February 16, 2019**
LIVING IN THE SOLUTION, ODAT
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
1st United Methodist of Bvrtn
12555 SW 4th St, Beaverton
- **Sunday, February 24, 2019**
OA UNITY DAY! Check out:
oa.org/podcasts/unity-day
- **Saturday, March 2nd**
MONTHLY SPEAKERS MEETING
7—8:30pm, Girl Scouts Building,
9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland
To attend by phone call
(641) 715-3836, PIN 282586
- **Wednesday, March 13th**
OREGON INTERGROUP MEETING,
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm,
Girl Scouts Building,
9620 SW Barbur Blvd, Portland

☞

More Region One Retreats

For more information, please visit:
www.oaregion1.org/events.html

- **Fri-Sun, April 5-7, 2019**
NORTH CASCADES INTERGROUP
SPRING RENEWAL RETREAT
Camp Casey Conference Center
Whidbey Island, WA
- **Fri-Sun, April 26-28, 2019**
LAKE COUNTRY INTERGROUP
ANNUAL RETREAT
“Renew Your Inspiration”
Lake Coeur d’Alene, Harrison, ID
- **Fri-Sun, May 17-19, 2019**
CENTRAL OREGON INTERGROUP
“Sunlight of the Spirit”
Lake Coeur d’Alene, Harrison, ID
- **Fri-Sun, June 7-9, 2019**
Save the Date!
VANCOUVER ISLAND INTERGROUP
Retreat set for Nanaimo

Newcomer Packet Update

The new *Where Do I Start? Everything a Newcomer Needs to Know* pamphlet (#705) is now available for \$1 in the OA bookstore.

Composed from the five pamphlets in OA's Newcomer Packet, *Where Do I Start?* eliminates repetition, packing key information about OA's Twelve Step program of recovery into a single 32-page pamphlet. Includes: the Fifteen Questions, Tools (abridged), Plans of Eating, OA Promise, AA Third and Seventh Step Prayers, "Welcome Home," and so much more.

Groups, service bodies, fellows: Welcome newcomers and help them get started in OA with our new, comprehensive pamphlet. Order them for your group at bookstore.aa.org

☞

Attention Men in OA

If you want to connect with other men recovering in OA, there are several other ways you can connect:

OAMen.org is a website to find resources for men in OA, such as phone meetings and online meetings.

You can join an email-based discussion group **Tuesday@OAMen.org** (include your first name and last initial). To join the Yahoo group, visit <http://oa12step4coes.org/loops/male> and submit your email address.

☞

Virtual Workshops

Listen to recordings of virtual workshops on a variety of topics, including *Sponsorship Success, Service & My Recovery, Take a Walk Down the Traditions, The Importance of Working All 12 Steps, OA Literature*, and much more! Members share their experience, strength, and hope to bring the Twelve-Step program of Overeaters Anonymous to life.

<https://oa.org/podcasts/>



Care During Dark Times

Recently I found myself filled with a darkness I hadn't experience in quite some time. It was the type of darkness that I felt filling my chest, strangling my soul, reaching behind my eyes and distorting my perspective. My thoughts darkened to levels I never thought I would go.

I felt embarrassed by this darkness; that somehow I had failed at being mentally stable. After all, I have 8+ years of abstinence, so shouldn't that make me immune? Without realizing it, I had turned my years of abstinence into a new title for myself, "Ms. I-Got-It-All-Together." To be fair, this was not completely unreasonable considering the promises had come true for me in more ways than I can count. And yet... here I was in such despair that facing the world simply felt too hard. As embarrassing as it felt, I knew I couldn't keep the pain to myself and thankfully my recovery muscles fell back on the principle of step one: *Honesty*. Carpooling to a meeting, I finally spoke my truth to an OA fellow. Then I was able to speak my truth at the meeting. Later, I shared everything with my sponsor. Shortly after sharing my insides with my recovery community, I felt I was on my way back to the light.

Surprisingly, during this challenging time my abstinence felt somewhat easy to maintain—testimony of the OA program for sure! Certainly, I had the occasional longing to purge, but I acknowledged it to myself right away—without judgment—and the urge would slip away. The difficult parts were all the other things I do to maintain my recovery: the self care, the gratitude lists, resisting negative self talk, sharing in meetings, spending time with my HP, and accepting that being human includes darkness. Life isn't always fair no matter how much time or recovery you have. No where in our literature or that of AA (our parent program) does it promise us a life only filled with sunshine and roses. It promises us a life beyond our wildest dreams and darkness can come despite doing everything "right". To be struggling shouldn't be embarrassing. It simply means it's our turn to face the darkness and allow it teach us what we need to learn.

My lessons were that I need to make human connections during hard times and I need to share even if I think it will bring someone else down. My fellows have their own HP. Plus, they feel good when they can offer help to me. I also learned that as much as I hate to admit it, I'm human with real human experiences. Once I opened up at meetings, I found others who could easily relate. The last thing I learned is that darkness also passes. If I allow it and if I stay connected to my HP and others, it takes its normal course just like any other feeling.

Kym, Aloha

Proof that I'm still a Compulsive Over-Eater

This is an incident that proves to me that I am truly a compulsive overeater (as if I hadn't already realized it!).

I made some sugar-free candy for my husband and me. As I was putting the glass dish into the freezer, my husband warned me to be sure the pan was in a flat place. I thought it was secure, but the next day when he opened the freezer door, the pan fell & broke on the concrete floor. He told me about it when I got home, but said he hadn't cleaned it up. He told me he didn't think we should eat it, as glass was all over the place.

I picked up the pieces of broken glass, brushed off any glass I could see, and ate 2 or 3 pieces of the candy. I'm pretty sure there was tiny glass fragments, as it tasted gritty. Even so, I put the remainder back in the freezer, but didn't tell my husband. (I was pretty sure he wouldn't approve.)

Then I looked on the computer about whether ground glass could harm you. I learned it wouldn't kill you, but could cause a small amount of bleeding in the GI tract. Most of the articles referred to "giving" ground glass to someone else- not knowingly eating it yourself. The next day I shared this incident at a meeting and threw it into the garbage can. If this doesn't prove to me that I'm a food addict, I don't know what will!



Anonymous

*Quote of the month: "In step two we learned **hope** as we came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. This same hope will now need to underlie all our actions." OA 12x12 (1st ed, pg 104)*

Learning the Lingo: Making Sense of OA Chatter

Many of the things said in OA meetings are like codes that only the insiders know.

Several related ones are:

"Trigger foods"

"One is too many; 1000 is not enough."

"My red light, yellow light, green light foods"

These phrases are a short way of mentioning some key concepts surrounding our disease processes. The person is saying something like, "Once I examine my behavior around certain foods, I realize there are some foods that if I begin eating, I usually can't quit." One term for that is **trigger food**. It's called that because one bite of that particular food triggers a reaction in the body that craves a little more and then a little more and then a little more.... Once that first bite happens, there is no satisfying the craving it ignites.

That is why the next phrase is also appropriate: **one bite is too many; 1000 is not enough**. A thousand bites are not enough because no amount of that food will ever satisfy that particu-

lar craving. I will never feel like I've had enough.

This leads to: **red light, yellow light and green light foods**.

Some folks make a list of trigger foods and label them as "**red light**." This means "Danger! Stop before you take that first bite." Red light foods are foods we don't eat no matter what because they always lead to binge. Even if it's not that first day, the end result is breaking our abstinence.

The **yellow light** foods listed are those items where you may want to say, "Stop! Think about this. Are you sure at this moment that food won't be a trigger food to you?" Sometimes we can successfully eat yellow light foods, but sometimes we can't, so we have to be very cautious about when and why we're choosing such foods.

Green light foods are those that rarely cause you any trouble and can be safely incorporated into an abstinent food plan.

Roseanne K.

Oregon Intergroup

Oregon Intergroup serves meetings from Longview to Tillamook, Salem to Portland, Silverton to Hood River, and includes Vancouver and the surrounding area. Visit our website at Oregon-OA.org

☞

WANTED: Intergroup Reps

Serving as an Intergroup Rep offers you a rewarding opportunity to do service. Intergroup Meetings are at 7pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the Girl Scouts' Building in Southwest, Portland. You can better serve the members of your group and fellow reps by being an observer at as many meetings as possible.

☞

Young People's Phone List

Did you enter OA at age 30 or younger? If you can offer support to a young member, send your name, phone, email and age started OA to youngpeople@oregon-oa.org. OA has a Young Persons Facebook page: www.facebook.com/OAinfo/

☞

Virtual Sponsors Wanted

The Virtual Sponsorship Committee is needs sponsors. Many people live in areas where OA is not well established. For more information: www.oaregion1.org/find-a-sponsor-or-sponsee.html

☞

Newsletter Submissions

Tell us your favorite step, tool, slogan, or fellowship moment. Also, send us any meeting updates or announcements. All submissions required by the 25th of the Month. Email newsletter@oregon-oa.org

☞



OPEN INTERGROUP POSITIONS

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 12th, 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
- **EVENT COORDINATOR**
Duties: Coordinates intergroup activities; formulates yearly calendar; works with OIG and any meetings sponsoring an event; updates the OIG website events and calendar up to date; serves as Ex-Officio on all event committees; serves in an advisory capacity with event chairs and the committee; maintains and updates event coordinator notebook
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
- **SERENITY RETREAT CHAIR**
Serenity Retreat chair shall coordinate our two annual retreats and work with the Serenity Retreat Committee Registrar. You must submit a report to Intergroup monthly and at the end of any specific event coordinated by that committee. You shall include an itemized list of expenditures with the committee report. And, the Serenity Retreat Chair's registration is paid for by the Oregon Intergroup!
Qualifications: 9 months abstinence; worked through step 7