

Desert Recovery

THE VOICE OF TUCSON AREA OA

April 1991

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS PREAMBLE

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

THE 12 TRADITIONS OF OA: TRADITION FOUR

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of 12 articles about the Twelve Traditions, reprinted from The OA Reporter, the Tucson Area Intergroup newsletter in 1981.

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

There used to be a sentence "any two or more compulsive overeaters gathered together for abstinence may call themselves an OA group provided that as a group they have no other affiliation."

One facet of Tradition 4 is the right to be wrong. Part of my disease is compulsive perfectionism. I need to belong to a group that is not so afraid of making a mistake or violating a tradition that it doesn't do anything. What possible actions of one group could affect other groups or OA as a whole? Idle gossip; public solicitation of funds; untasteful promotion; and lack of anonymity are some things that come to mind. Breaking anonymity at the public level would probably be the most frightening to prospective members.

If one group took over all the public information work without consulting the other groups, this might also adversely affect OA as a whole. If the public sees one group doing vigorous promoting to get people into the program, they might think promotion is OA Program—not attraction.

Non-member speakers, especially any who would be promoting professional services for weight loss or counseling or religion would interfere with members sharing experience, strength and hope with each other. Consider also what this would reflect to a newcomer.

Is this how we would want a first time attender to be introduced to the program?

If another group uses group conscience to eliminate the 12 steps, then it probably should not call itself OA any more. If members of a particular group go out binging together after a meeting, this behavior could reflect on OA as a whole as well.

Group autonomy can be reflected in special interest groups such as non-smokers; over 100 lbs. losers; gays; women only; stag; or in abstinence requirements for speakers and leaders of meetings or officers of a group. How to open and close meetings, topics for discussion, place and time for meetings, how to apportion 7th tradition contributions are other areas for groups to exercise autonomy. With the freedom of autonomy travels the responsibility to preserve unity of OA throughout the world.

If we are conscientious as group members, we can use Tradition 4 in a manner similar to how we use Step 4 as recovering individuals. We can boil the tradition down simply to—is this good for the fellowship?

Judith, Tucson

KEEPING OA's PURPOSE PRIMARY

Last year a new piece of OA literature was created. A tent card that proclaims: "OA spoken here. Let's focus on the experience, strength, and the hope that we have gained through the twelve steps and twelve traditions of Overeaters Anonymous." Members everywhere seemed to understand that it was meant as a gentle reminder to focus our words and our sharing on OA meetings and events on recovery through the twelve steps and traditions.

At one time or another we all may have been guilty of overexuberance in sharing at meetings what has helped us as individuals. It may be hard for many of us not to relate the ideas found in a new self-help book or a comment by a counselor with our friends and soul mates in our home group. But tradition five is there to

With the freedom of autonomy travels the responsibility to preserve unity of OA throughout the world.

... our primary purpose is to share the unique message of twelve-step recovery.

pull us back from our well-intentioned but misguided enthusiasms by reminding us that our primary purpose is to share the unique message of twelve-step recovery. Perhaps we can remind ourselves that when we speak at a meeting we may be framing the first introduction to OA ever heard by a compulsive overeater who has come in looking for an answer to his or her eating problem. The answer a newcomer hears in meetings oughtn't to be about food plans or behavior modification therapy or the latest successor to Sigmund Freud. The answer is in the steps. If there were another message applicable to all, would we have need of Overeaters Anonymous?

Tradition 5 tells us that "each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers." But how can individual members practice this tradition?

Most OA members are not secretive about their membership in OA. When appropriate, they willingly share the fact of their compulsive overeating and their recovery in OA. They realize the importance of carrying the message: If suffering compulsive overeaters don't hear about OA, they won't be able to find recovery, and OA's future could be threatened. Of course, we must always abide by Tradition 11 and maintain our personal anonymity where the media are concerned.

Living Tradition 5 in our daily lives also means smiling at unfamiliar faces at meetings, talking to newcomers and making them feel welcome, and seeking out the person who didn't raise his or hand as a newcomer but looks lonely and afraid.

Finally, ask yourself: "Is what I'm hearing at meetings the message I would want to hear as a newcomer? Are we sharing about 12-step recovery from compulsive overeating? Are we honoring OA's twelve traditions?"

Carrying the message is the responsibility of each member and service body in OA. There are so many compulsive overeaters still suffering. After 31 years, our job has just begun.

*Reprinted from WSO Notebook,
Vol. 18, No. 2, March/April 1991*

AFFIRMATIONS AS A SEVENTH STEP

I wanted to share with other OAs something I've been trying recently at the suggestion of a friend. I have taken each "character defect" on the list of my fourth step inventory, and turned it into a positive affirmation. I try to read the affirmations often. I don't read the list of defects often! Below are some examples:

Inventory Item: I am often blaming and judgmental of myself and others.

Affirmation: I accept myself and others, just as we are right now.

Inventory Item: I make my sense of self-acceptance too conditional on praise from others.

Affirmations: I accept my powerlessness over how others evaluate me and over others' feelings about me. I accept myself just as I am. I am enough. I listen to commentary on my behavior with good boundaries. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn that it affords.

Inventory Items: I don't ask for what I want, but hope people will read my mind and give it to me, and then feel that either they are bad or I am bad if I don't get it. I have left relationships without giving the other person a chance to change.

Affirmation: I ask for what I want from safe people.

Inventory Item: It bothers me when others don't agree with me, and I try to convince them.

Affirmations: I listen to others, and share my experiences. I accept that others' ideas are different than mine. I share my ideas in the spirit of accepting differences.

Inventory Item: I think I only have the right to be angry if the other person is to blame. This leads me to think others are bad (blame), stuff my anger, or think I am bad.

Affirmation: I accept my anger. It shows me things I want to change. I experience my anger fully, and experience my acceptance of myself and others fully.

The same friend suggested that these affirmations be used as a part of prayers, keeping the language positive. So, for example, I might say as part of a prayer, "God, I trust that you are teaching me to accept my anger and see it as a way of finding out what I want to change in my life." This has a real positive feel to it and I've found it very helpful. I am grateful to this program friend for the suggestion.

Paula, KISS Group

PRAYER

Prayer: "Communication" with God, not just talking to God.

- P - Priority. Prayer must be a priority in your life not just something you do if and when you have time.
- R - Relax. You must put yourself in a relaxed setting. This includes physical, emotional, and mental relaxation.
- A - All Encompassing. There is more than one way to pray. A good and healthy prayer life includes all of these.
- Y - Yourself. Be yourself. You have to pray from where and who you are, not like someone else; you can't imitate someone else in prayer.
- E - Ear. Give an ear. Be open to listening to God.
- R - Respond. One must respond to prayer; grow spiritually from your prayer life.

TYPES OF PRAYER:

Recited: The formal prayers we learn and recite.

Spontaneous: Say what you feel. Communicate your feelings and thoughts.

Contemplative or Meditative: Just being with God in the silence of your heart, mind and soul.

Source unknown

FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .

Telephone Committee: From January 1, 1990 through December 31, 1991, the telephone committee handled one thousand twenty calls (1020). This is an increase of one hundred sixty (160) calls over the same period in 1989. We would like to thank all the volunteers who helped with this important twelfth step work during the past year. Without your help, it wouldn't be possible to contact so many people. Anyone desiring to volunteer for this important service work, please call Maxine at [REDACTED]

Treasurer: Intergroup Treasurer requests that group treasurers follow either of these two procedures regarding accepting checks from members: (1) If you accept checks, have them made payable to you; or (2) send these checks to KG immediately. Backdated checks can become a cashing problem and KG makes the contributions for World Service, Region III and Tucson Area Intergroup from the money she receives from meetings.

Professionals and Institutions Committee: Two different informational meetings are being held at treatment facilities in the Tucson area: at Westcenter on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 3:15 p.m.; and every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at Sierra Tucson. Volunteers are still needed to share their stories at these meetings. Please call Fred M. at [REDACTED] if you would like to give service in this area.

Meetings and Groups: Please remember to inform Jean S. (Intergroup Secretary, 296-9963), of new officers in your groups. Jean is responsible for keeping WSO informed of group status and officers.

New Meetings: Just a reminder to support the new meeting on Sunday evenings at 7:30 in the Santa Rita Room at Tucson General Hospital. "Step into Reality" is a meeting focused on studying The Twelve Steps of OA. Check your meeting list or call Felice at [REDACTED] for more information.

A new meeting has started in Marana on Monday at 5:30 p.m., at the Sky Rider Coffee Shop, 11701 W. Avra Valley Road. Contact Lori at [REDACTED] for more information.

The Tuesday "Going Sane" meeting needs our support. It meets at 5:30 on Tuesday at the First Christian Church.

FEMINIST OA GROUP, ANYONE?

I'd like to start an OA meeting with a feminist focus if there's enough interest. If you'd like to talk about the idea, call me at [REDACTED]. Paula.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS**14th Annual Prescott Retreat**

June 7-9, 1991

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Contact: 2050 W. Hazelwood Parkway

Phoenix, AZ 85015

See Flyer at your OA Meetings

TRADITIONS WORKSHOP

sponsored by Tucson OA & HOW Intergroups

June 1991, Tucson, Arizona

WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS

TUCSON AREA RETREAT

sponsored by Tucson OA Intergroup

October 11-13, 1991

Picture Rock Retreat

WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS

FUN 'N' GAMES with COCHRAN!

"Let's go back to lesson number one."

TUCSON OA QUARTERLY TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>1991 1st Quarter</u>
Came to Believe	18.54
Eastside Stop-off	100.00
Easy Does It	--
Freedom	149.50
Going Sane	--
Gratitude	--
Green Valley	12.60
Highsteppers	--
Honeymooners	--
I'm a Miracle	51.00
Just for Today	60.00
KISS	28.57
Men's Group	--
Moms for Recovery	--
Northern Lites	106.73
Oasis	--
Omni	65.00
Pink Cloud	--
Promises	--
Recovery (Monday)	50.00
Safe Place	25.00
Saturday 4th Step	55.65
Saturday Study Group	114.94
Sierra Vista	133.11
Silhouette	130.00
Steps into Reality	--
Sunday Big Book	--
Sunday Sanity	75.00
Warm Fuzzy	20.00
Welcome Home	60.50
Youth Meeting	--
Intergroup 7th	22.00
OA HOW (phone & listing)	182.03
Interest earned	38.31
Marathon	136.97
Region III Delegate Fund	150.00
Newsletter overpay	16.90
Literature repay	50.00
TOTAL	1,852.85
Opening Balance	<u>2,937.25</u>
	4,790.10
<u>Expenditures</u>	
Region III Contribution	204.00
WSO Contribution	204.00
Directory Listing	140.00
Telephone	157.50
Delegate expenses	744.56
Newsletters	284.57
Retreat deposit	300.00
Public information	49.39
Secretary/Treasurer expense	62.49
Literature refund	<u>18.11</u>
TOTAL	2,178.69
Delegate Reserve Fund (non-spendable)	<u>2000.00</u>
Cash available	<u>611.41</u>

HANDLING THE MONEY


OA INTERGROUP makes donations to REGION and WSO in the name of all groups. Please send donations monthly after expenses and \$25.00 reserve. Use the form below for proper credit for your group's contribution.

GROUP NAME _____

MEETING DAY AND TIME _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____



Make Check Payable to: Tucson Area OA
Intergroup. Mail form and donation to:


C
Tucson, AZ 85708

EDITOR'S CORNER

Jean S. submitted the winning name, *Desert Recovery*, for the "name this newsletter contest." Intergroup representatives voted on several suggestions at the February meeting. Thanks, Jean, for the great name and we hope you enjoy your new book and water bottle.

THANK YOU to the Saturday KISS group for submitting articles for this month's newsletter. Articles are welcome at any time. Your experience, strength and hope put into writing can make a difference in some else's recovery, and certainly your own.

Please mail any articles, changes, corrections, or comments to Liz , Tucson, or call . DEADLINE for the May newsletter is May 7 for publication on May 18.

Desert Recovery gives permission to any other 12-step anonymous group to reprint any article from this newsletter, as long as credit is given.