

OA Desert Recovery August 2026

Freedom from Blame

When reading a daily meditation, I ask how the thoughts apply to my life. This naturally leads to a look at emotions and reactions of the day. It is when taking this daily review past the point of looking at what happened, past recognizing how my reactions have caused upset in another, to the point of accepting that they, like me, mess up sometimes, and behave regrettably. Yet, they, like me, are loved by God, a fact which surprised me. Shouldn't they be condemned, if they have harmed me? But, no, the cure is accomplished by forgiveness. I need to see them, as I want others to see me... as forgivable. At this point, it is amazing to realize how much pressure is abated. Serenity is so very necessary to attain abstinence and recovery.

Becki B



Before recovery and even in the first years of recovery I was always saying "I am sorry". I did not know why I was saying it but I was. Finally, with working the steps with a sponsor I learned how to take responsibility for what I did by saying "I apologize for". I had to think about what I was apologizing for and not just taking blame for anything.

I also knew how to feel shame and guilt. I am still working on accepting myself as an imperfect person and I will make mistakes. I am so much improved over how I used to be. Thinking back to my past I am so grateful for recovery!

Rhonda S

I blamed myself. I blamed others. And, risking a lightning bolt from above, I blamed God. When I found a seat at my first OA meeting after being away for 20 years, I looked around the room. I saw more smiles than I expected, and the folks were downright warm and friendly. Some of them were heavy; some of them were not. I just knew that I was in the first group and wanted to join the second.

I kept coming to meetings for six months before I asked someone to sponsor me. That's when everything changed.

As we worked through the Steps together, I noticed that I was letting go—letting go of resentments, remorse, and regrets. It wasn't until years later that I recognized the equation: those three added up to blame.

By releasing all three, I had been set free.

Joy V'Marie

Sponsored by *Southern Arizona Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous*

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Freedom from blame is one of the big sources of relief in my recovery. When I started to understand others were not to blame for my overeating, I could see my actions and reactions more clearly.

While it was tempting to keep on believing things would be fine (and I wouldn't have to overeat) if "they" would just stop getting in my way, criticizing me, ignoring me, making more work for me, not understanding me, etc., I finally came to understand "they" weren't the ones with the eating problem.

When I could separate my actions from theirs, I began to stop blaming them. When I began to stop blaming them, I could start forgiving them. Both of those processes continue to this day. Progress, not perfection.

What I noticed next is that when I began to stop blaming and started forgiving them, I could begin to stop blaming myself and become willing to forgive myself. Both of those processes are still in play, as well.

I don't know if I will reach a time that I have completely stopped blaming or completely forgiven. I am willing for that to happen, and I have given it to my Higher Power.

I pray daily for wellness, happiness, and peace for each person I have yet to forgive, including myself, so that I come closer to forgiveness each day. Even though the process isn't complete, I feel lighter knowing forgiveness is possible.

Jeri H.



All I could do is echo what the big book says: "Acceptance is the solution to all my problems today. Anytime I'm disturbed with a person, place or thing there is something wrong with me and my perspective." (Paraphrased), Anytime i point a finger at anybody or anything not to my liking, I have 3 pointing back at me accentuating that I need to look at myself and my part in it. After all the big book also reminds me "resentment # 1 offender" we have "strange mental blank spots" and most of our ails are "of our own making" and we "are without defense" therefore we need to do step 1, 2 & 3: I can't, God can & I need to let Him. Accepting my powerlessness and surrender to God's All Power, Goodness & Love. It's an inside job and if we "truly do a 3rd step, we cannot fail to recover" which is a promise from out of our OA 12 & 12. So I'm going to keep coming back, learning and doing my part in making the world a better place one day at a time. Thank You God. Amen

Jody M.

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Higher Power works in mysterious ways. Today, I was gifted a wonderful example of this. First, I had a potentially unsettling encounter. Then, when I returned home, I saw a message asking me to submit an article for the newsletter on “Freedom from Blame.” Rather than fester or overthink the situation, I chose to write about it.

To recap the encounter:

I had parked my car in an empty section of our local mall parking lot. As I walked toward the mall entrance, I heard a voice call out, “Lori.” I turned to see the partner of a member of my husband’s family sitting in another car two bays over from mine.

After the initial pleasantries, his tone of voice and language became confrontational over an incident that had occurred with my husband a few weeks earlier. I politely replied, “I am not discussing this with you.” Not to be deterred, he continued, with the language and accusations becoming increasingly intense. I calmly repeated, “I am not discussing this with you,” and then I walked away.

In the past, I would have felt the need to defend my husband, try to defuse the situation, and make sure everyone played nicely “for the sake of the family.” I would have decided who was right and who was wrong and chosen my husband’s side.

Not this time.

I felt the guidance of my Higher Power. I was reminded that freedom from blame means letting go of the need to decide who is at fault—whether that person is, someone else, or myself. It doesn’t mean something didn’t happen or that I should excuse harmful behaviour. Instead of asking, “Whose fault is this?” I can ask, “What is my side of the street in this situation? What part is mine? What can I learn, and what can I do now?”

As I saw it, nothing was to be gained by engaging in a conversation that did not directly involve me. In addition, what I was hearing was neither kind, truthful, nor helpful. It was name-calling and mudslinging.

Higher Power does not want me to participate in these types of conversations—to be a gossip or a member of the debate society. What I could do was simple: not engage, walk away, and go on with my day.

This was a clear lesson for me that I can have “freedom from blaming others.” The other person is entitled to their opinion, and I do not need to become resentful, angry, or trapped by it. I don’t have to take it personally.

I can also have “freedom from blaming myself.” Not every problem is mine to solve. If and when I cause a problem, I can take responsibility, make amends as appropriate, and move forward.

Perhaps that is the real gift of today’s encounter. I didn’t have to figure out who was right or wrong. I didn’t have to defend, fix, explain, or judge.

I simply had to know what was mine—and what wasn’t.

As I heard in a meeting this week: “I get to do the possible while Higher Power takes care of the impossible.”

Lori B.