

What's Happening

New Meeting starting 9/21/09: Mondays @ 7:00 pm (For more info, contact Lorraine at 404-653-0215)

First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta (First E)
470 Candler Park Dr., NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

New! SPANISH SPEAKING MEETINGS

Thursdays @ 7:30 in Suwanee, GA (For more info, contact Manny at 678-548-6845 or Steffi at 678-570-9009)

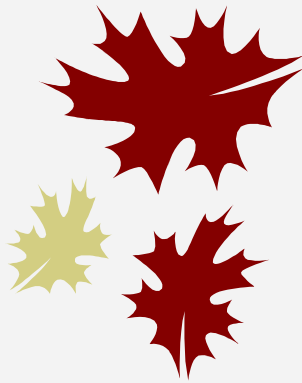
Tuesdays @ 8:00 pm in Sandy Springs, GA (For more info, contact Amy at 404-705-8139)

November 21 — International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA)

Celebrated the third Saturday in November, this day encourages OA members worldwide to begin or reaffirm their abstinence from compulsive overeating.

December 12 — Twelfth-Step-Within Day

Celebrated on December 12 (12/12) each year to encourage OA service boards, meetings and individual members to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors. [Send the WSO](#) your ideas for activities and events to celebrate Twelfth-Step-Within Day. We will post them in upcoming issues of A Step Ahead and Lifeline.



OA Basics

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Introduction to the Twelve Steps:

We of Overeaters Anonymous have found in this Fellowship a way to recover from the disease of compulsive overeating. After years of guilt over repeated failures to control our eating and our weight, we now have a solution that works. Our solution is a program of recovery – a program of twelve simple steps. By following these steps, thousands of compulsive overeaters have stopped eating compulsively.

In OA we have no program of diets and exercise, no scales, no magic pills. What we do have to offer is far greater than any of these things – a Fellowship in which we find and share the healing power of love.

(From The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous)

Step 10:

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Tradition 10:

Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Concept 10:

Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.

Members Share

The opinions here are individual and do not reflect OA as a whole:



The OA Promise

*I put my hand in yours,
and together we can do
what we could never do
alone. No longer is there a
sense of hopelessness, no
longer must we each
depend upon our own
unsteady willpower. We
are all together now,
reaching out our hands for
power and strength
greater than ours, and as
we join hands, we find
love and understanding
beyond our wildest
dreams.*

Daily Meditation

*I keep going to food to
meet my basic needs.
Food provides fuel for my
body – nothing else. My
need for spiritual and
emotional fuel comes from
within me.*

*Voices of Recovery
(p. 278)*

Sunlight of the Spirit

“By going back in our own (eating) histories, we could show that years before we realized it we were out of control, that our (eating) even then was no mere habit, that it was indeed the beginning of a fatal progression” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 23).

When I first started using food it made me feel better. It took away the pain of what I was feeling and I was happy. But since I never dealt with the pain, it just continued to grow inside me. When it surfaced again, I needed more food, my drug of choice, to take it away. Like a drug addict, I needed more food to make me feel good, all the while believing I controlled the food, until one day I realized the food controlled me.

To keep me coming back, food kept me in denial about how fat, unhappy and unhealthy I was and how I cared more for my time with food than I did for my time with family and friends. Food became my lover, giver, taker, everything. One day, I saw what I had allowed the disease to do to me. Then came the shame, guilt, isolation, anger, depression and hopelessness.

The disease laughed at me and told me to eat more every time I shoved food into my mouth, while inside I was screaming “Stop!” and “I can’t.” I began scrounging for anything to drown my emotions: looking through garbage, eating someone else’s food, taking another’s money to buy more, going to different drive-through windows because I’d been to the same one too many times that day — anything to get my fix. It didn’t matter who needed me; food was more important, my god. I followed it 24/7.

Then OA came into my life. OA brought relief, hope, a solution, sanity, a Higher Power, strength, love, joy, laughter, smiles, hugs, kisses, sharing, understanding, friendships, knowing

looks, acceptance of the fat me, encouragement and peace. Food never gave me these things. It only gave me

depression, isolation, fat, anger and shame.

OA has brought me into the sunlight of the spirit. So why would I want to choose food again? It is usually because I forget what I have received in this program and begin to believe the lies this disease tells me — lies of false relief; an easier, softer way; and half measures.

But not this time. This time I choose life, sanity, surrender, power, hope, health, friends, joy, laughter and love.

Thank you, Higher Power, and thank you, OA!

— P.R., Conroe, Texas USA
(reprinted from oaregion8.org)

Members Share

**STAYING IN RECOVERY, WITH THE HELP OF 12TH STEP WITHIN
HELPFUL 12 STEP CALENDAR USING THE WELCOME BACK, WE CARE PACKAGE FOR THOSE IN DANGER OF GOING INTO
RELAPSE OR ARE RETURNING FROM RELAPSE**
(Topics for discussion and/or writing)

OCTOBER	
Topic:	Tools! Tools! The Holidays start this month, get out the pamphlet "The Tools of Recovery" and make a plan to get through the holiday abstinently!
Do:	Make a plan and share that with others.
Don't:	Give yourself permission to let the "holidays kill you"
NOVEMBER	
Topic:	Continue to work on the "The Tools of Recovery" pamphlet. Pick a tool and talk about how that tool specifically saved your abstinence.
Do:	Make gratitude lists.
Don't:	Get caught up in "it's the holidays, I deserve to eat", what you deserve is recovery and life!
DECEMBER	
Topic:	Review the Recovery Checklist
Do:	Use the checklist to identify any problem areas.
Don't:	Think you are hopeless, we are not hopeless... we are powerless!!



World Service Office

NEWS FROM WSO

Updated! Suggested Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature

These updated guidelines encourage OA service bodies to produce local literature for public information and/or professional outreach efforts. Service bodies can use the OA logo with permission of the WSO. Free PDF download available at www.aa.org/docs/

Updated! Suggested Guidelines for Writing the History of Your Local Area

Helps preserve local group history and memorabilia. Updated to encourage groups to submit their histories to WSO for safekeeping and to encourage the approval of local histories by the local group conscience. Free PDF download available at www.aa.org/docs/

Two New Podcasts

In interview # 10, OA member Esti talks about Overeaters Anonymous and what program means to her.

OA member Joe talks about his relationship with food and Overeaters Anonymous in interview # 11. www.aa.org/podcast/



ASK-IT BASKET

Q: How would you respond to a fellow OA member who told you what and how to eat, and who said you weren't abstinent if you didn't follow a particular plan of eating?

A: Tradition Two states: "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God . . ."

The OA pamphlet *Person To Person* states, "Carrying the message to others simply means to unselfishly share our experience, our strength and our hope with them" (p. 1). In the pamphlet *To the Newcomer* we read, "OA takes no position on what constitutes proper food planning, either for weight loss or weight maintenance" (p. 6).

Since OA takes no position on these issues, it would make sense that we as individual members take no position, except to share our experience, strength and hope arising from working and living the Twelve-Step recovery program. The OA program suggests working it in its entirety (half-measures availed us nothing). Enforced measures are not mentioned.

What works for one may not work for another, especially with plans of eating. Members who do otherwise may be harmed.

As the OA pamphlet *A Guide For Sponsors* states, "It is important to know that a sponsor's role is not one of therapist, doctor, lawyer or other professional" (p. 1). Further, the role of a sponsor is not one of making demands. This is not in keeping with OA guidelines and the spirit of OA.

In our zest to be of service as a sponsor, we may overstep established guidelines and customary practices. Reading OA's literature helps us to avoid such overstepping. For example, *The Tools of Recovery* pamphlet states on page 4, "Find a sponsor who has what you want, and ask that person how he or she is achieving it."

— Members of the Board of Trustees provide answers to these questions

Upcoming Events

November Toolbox Article Ideas:

"The celebrations of this day will be over at midnight, and tomorrow I will wake up glad to be alive and abstinent."

– For Today, pg. 151

How do you maintain abstinence on Thanksgiving Day?

CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP OUR ANNUAL FALL RETREAT - GRATITUDE IN ACTION

OCTOBER 16-18 2009

LAKE YALE CONFERENCE CENTER
39034 County Road 452
Leesburg, Florida 34788

"Rockin' and Rollin' in Recovery"

SOAR 8 Recovery Convention and Business Assembly

November 6 – 8, 2009

The Clarion Hotel and Conference Center
2701 E. Fowler Avenue, Tampa, FL 33612

Flyers for these retreats can be viewed and downloaded from the OA Region 8 website:

www.oaregion8.org

Calendar

SATURDAY

October 10, 2009

Intergroup
OA Office

10:30 am - 12pm

All Are Welcome

SATURDAY

October 17, 2009

Super Saturday
OA Office

10:30 am - 12pm

Speakers / Sharing

SATURDAY

October 24, 2009

Newcomers Workshop
OA Office

10:30 am - 12pm

Two Speakers/Ask questions

SATURDAY

October 31, 2009

Big Book Study
OA Office

10:30 am - 12pm

Steps 10, 11 and 12