



Secular Translations of the “God” Questions in *The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous*

Many of us work the Steps reading *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* (aka, *The OA 12&12*) using *The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous* (Second “Purple” Edition), and as we move through, we may find questions difficult to answer due to their god references. If you have a traditional sponsor, you can let them know that you translated the god questions so they make sense for you. (And, if you’re having trouble with *The OA 12&12*, we recommend you supplement those readings with a secular 12 Step book, check secularovereaters.org for recommendations).

Many volunteers worked on creating these secular versions. They are just suggestions, you can write your own, and if you have versions to share, let us know (email: secularovereaters@gmail.com)!

Tip: Print this out and keep it with your workbook.

• Step 2: Question 8 (p. 12)

Original: Since my willpower can’t change my unsuccessful way of living, am I willing to look for a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity?

Secular: Since my willpower can’t change my compulsive overeating, am I willing to try something different from all the self-focused tactics that have repeatedly failed me?

Or: Since my willpower can’t change my unsuccessful way of living, am I willing to

look to OA and the collective wisdom to restore myself to sanity?

• Step 2: Question 9 (p. 13)

Original: How do I define that Higher Power?

Secular: What resources can help me? HP alternatives: higher self, best self, sober intuition, nature, interdependence, true direction, future recovered self, OA is bigger than me, or the group. In the *Big Book*, Appendix II, Spiritual Experience section, pp. 567-568 it reads, “With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.”

• Step 2: Question 10 (p. 13)

Original: If I do not believe in a Higher Power, can I “act as if” I am getting help with my life? How?

Secular: Rather than pretending a faith or “acting as if,” how can I be authentic and still release control, trusting in others for support?

Or: Since I do not believe in a higher power, how can I get help with my life?

• Step 2: Question 11 (p. 13)

Original: What would I like such a Power to be and to do in my life?

Secular: What kind of help do I need?

• **Step 2: Question 12 (p. 14)**

Original: Do I believe in God but not really believe God can or will deal with my compulsive eating?

Secular: Do I believe it is possible to stop eating compulsively?

Or: Do I believe that with the program and the support of the other OA members, that it is possible for me to stop eating compulsively?

• **Step 2: Question 13 (p. 14)**

Original: Have I asked God to remove my fat yet allow me to go on eating whatever I want?

Secular: Do I want my fat to be magically removed and yet be able to go on eating whatever I want?

Or: Have I tried ways to control my body size, yet not wanted to change my compulsive food behaviors?

• **Step 2: Question 14 (p. 14)**

Original: How do I feel about replacing my old ideas about God with a faith that works?

Secular: Since I don't believe in God, what values or traditions can I turn to that give me strength?

Or: As I have never believed in God, where can I turn to get the support I need to work the program?

Or: How can I replace old ideas about G-d with a spirituality that works for me?

Or: Am I willing to let go of everything and change into something as yet unknown to me?

Or: As I do not believe in God, how can I determine what philosophy supports my recovery?

Or: How do I feel about changing my old preconceptions about the world with newer, healthier ones?

Or: Am I willing to be optimistic that I can change?

Or: Am I willing to look within the secular OA community to restore me to sanity?

Or: How can I open my mind to find what works for me (e.g., listen to other people)?

Or: Since my old ideas did not bring me recovery, what new ideas can I open to?

Or: How do I feel about putting my faith in OA?

• **Step 3: Question 4 (p. 17)**

Original: How do I feel about completely turning my life over to a Higher Power for guidance?

Secular: Do I have healthy eating guidelines? What daily support do I need to stick to my plan? Explain.

• **Step 3: Question 5 (p. 17)**

Original: Do I have healthy eating guidelines? Will I ask God for the willingness and the ability to live within them each day? Explain.

Secular: Do I have healthy eating guidelines? What daily support do I need to stick to my plan? Explain.

• **Step 3: Question 7 (p. 18)**

Original: How do I reach the decision to turn my will and life over to a Higher Power?

Secular: How do I reach the decision to entrust my will to the collective wisdom and those who have searched before me?

• **Step 3: Question 8 (p. 18)**

Original: Am I willing to earnestly seek God's will for me and willing to act accordingly? Explain.

Secular: Am I willing to truly listen, set aside my assumptions, and take guidance from OA fellows who have more experience and found more recovery than I have on my own?

Or: Am I willing to ask for help from other OA fellows and to act accordingly? Explain.

• **Step 5: Question 3 (p. 59)**

Original: How does my Higher Power help me leave rationalizations behind and not blame others?

Secular: What tools and support help me to leave rationalizations behind and take responsibility for my own behaviours around food?

Or: How have I learned to leave rationalizations behind and not blame others?

• **Step 7: Question 5 (p. 69)**

Original: Why do I want God to remove my shortcomings?

Secular: Why am I now willing to release my shortcomings and behaviors that may have once helped me survive but have become harmful to me?

Or: Why do I want my character defaults removed?

• **Step 7: Question 10 (p. 71)**

Original: How will I ask God to take my shortcomings from me?

Secular: How can I begin to replace my problematic behaviours with ones that are healthier?

Or: What's my plan for changing my character defaults?

• **Step 7: Question 17 (p. 73)**

Original: How has repeated practice of Step Seven affected my relationship with my Higher Power?

Secular: How has the repeated practice of the principle of Step Seven (humility) affected my relationship with myself and others?

• **Step 11: Question 2 (p. 94)**

Original: What is my belief about recovery through a spiritual relationship with a Power greater than myself alone?

Secular: What is my perspective on recovery through interpersonal relationships with a group that is greater than my ability alone to make change?

Or: Do I think I can recover as I gain self-awareness?

• **Step 11: Question 3 (p. 94)**

Original: In what ways do I actively seek to improve my relationship with my Higher Power?

Secular: In what ways do I actively seek to improve my relationships with myself and my fellow humans?

Or: In what ways do I actively seek to improve my relationship with myself?

• **Step 11: Question 5 (p.95)**

Original: What do I say when I talk to my Higher Power?

Secular: What do I say when I listen and speak with my heart?

Or: What do I say when I consult my better self?

• **Step 11: Question 6 (p. 95)**

Original: Am I afraid to express my honest feelings to God? When and why?

Secular: Am I afraid to express my honest feelings to another person (sponsor, fellow)?

• **Step 11: Question 7 (p. 96)**

Original: For what knowledge do I need to ask God?

Secular: What knowledge am I seeking?

• **Step 11: Question 8 (p. 96)**

Original: When have I felt angry with God?

Secular: When have I felt angry with powers beyond my control?

Or: When have I felt angry with OA?

• **Step 11: Question 9 (p. 96)**

Original: In what tangible ways can I communicate with my Higher Power?

Secular: In what tangible ways can I communicate with my better self?

• **Step 11: Question 12 (p. 97)**

Original: How do I know which thoughts are God's directions and which are my own rationalizations?

Secular: How do I know which thoughts are my best next right actions and which are my own rationalizations?

• **Step 11: Question 14 (p. 98)**

Original: What do I do when I feel I have received insight from my Higher Power?

Secular: What do I do when I feel I have received insight?

• **Step 11: Question 16 (p. 99)**

Original: How do I respond when I make an error in acting on what I think is God's will for me?

Secular: How do I respond when I make an error in judgment?

• **Step 11: Question 17 (p. 99)**

Original: In what ways does God speak to me?

Secular: In what ways can I figure out the next right action?

• **Step 11: Question 18 (p. 99)**

Original: What do I need to do to stay aligned with this Higher spiritual Power?

Secular: What do I need to do to stay aligned with my better self?

• **Step 12: Question 1 (p. 100)**

Original: What has been part of my spiritual awakening experience?

Secular: What has helped me to feel a vital part of something (OA, community, nature) larger than myself?

Or: What are examples of self-awareness?

• **Step 12: Question 4 (p. 101)**

Original: How am I to remain spiritually awake and fully alive?

Secular: How am I to remain self-aware and fully alive?

• **Step 12: Question 13i (p. 106)**

Original: What did I learn about the following Principle that I can practice in all my affairs: spiritual awareness in Step Eleven?

Secular: What did I learn about the following principles that I can practice in all my affairs: self-awareness in Step Eleven?