



# Newcomers—Welcome to Secular OA!

If you are new to OA and you bristle at the god-talk and patriarchal language in traditional meetings, Secular Overeaters can help. Here are some resources that will show you a path to recovery without a theist higher power and help you find others like yourself. Please note that many of these resources are not OA-approved and will not be found at traditional meetings.

## General Tips

Read the OA brochure *Where Do I Start*. It covers all the basics like abstinence, food plans, sponsors, and more.

Try at least five different secular meetings. Some follow OA traditions (e.g., no outside literature or crosstalk), while others operate like support groups.

Check out alternative versions of the Steps. This will help you understand how to work the program without a higher power.

Don't worry about getting a sponsor right away. There aren't a lot of available secular sponsors, and often people supplement their secular program with Accountability Buddies and Recovery Circles.

Subscribe to the *Secular Overeaters Community Newsletter* to find out about upcoming events.

Links to all of the above are in the following section and are also found on our website (<https://secularovereaters.org>).

Welcome to secular recovery!

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## Secular Resources

### Facebook

**Secular Overeaters:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/secularovereaters>

### Literature

***Alternative 12 Step Discussion Guide for Secular Overeaters, Version 2*** (pdf, 29 pages): Includes seven different versions of secular Steps, <https://bit.ly/SO-AltStep-Guide2024>

***Food Freedom Manual:*** Practical ideas and guidance to address compulsive food behaviors, <https://bit.ly/SO-FoodFreedom-Manual2022>

**Secular Translations of God Questions in the OA 12&12 Workbook:** Check out rewritten god questions in the Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous: <https://bit.ly/SO-OA-WorkbookQuestions>

***What If I Don't Believe in "God"?*** ([OA brochure](#)): Includes a secular member's interpretation of the Steps.

### Meetings

Complete list of secular meetings listed in your timezone: <https://secularovereaters.org/so-meeting-schedule/>

### Newsletter

Secular Overeaters publishes a short monthly digital newsletter with monthly updates and workshop information: <https://bit.ly/SO-Newsletter>

### Podcasts

Look in your favorite app for these OA podcasts featuring awesome stories of OA secular recovery!

#### The Secular Overeaters Podcast

**Overeaters Anonymous Secular Podcast for Atheists, Agnostics, and Freethinkers**

**Overeaters Anonymous East Bay** (look for speakers from the Freethinkers Meetings)

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## Secular Resources Continue

### Websites

**Secular Overeaters:** (Lists OA and secular recovery resources) <https://secularovereaters.org/>

**Secular Service Board of Overeaters Anonymous:** (Lists only OA-approved resources) <https://www.secularserviceboardofovereatersanonymous.org/>

### Workshops

**Secular Overeaters** typically offers 4-6 free workshops a year covering topics like Accountability Buddies and Recovery Circles.

**The Food Freedom Workshop** is seven sessions long, focuses on recovery strategies and includes ongoing recovery circles: <https://bit.ly/SO-FoodFreedomInterest-Form>.

Check the website and newsletter for more information about workshops.

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## Secular Steps

Using secular Steps is a game changer for most OA members who have trouble with the traditional 12 Steps. And, many people eventually write their own versions.

Secular Overeaters Alternative 12-Steps Discussion is a monthly meeting devoted to studying different versions of the Step of the Month (i.e., January is Step 1, June is Step 6). They meet the third Sunday; check the Meeting Schedule for details.

The meeting uses this booklet, *Alternative 12 Step Discussion Guide for Secular Overeaters, Version 2* (<https://bit.ly/SO-AltStep-Guide2024>, pdf, 29 pages). If you find Step versions you like, you can buy the accompanying books.

Here is a version of secular Steps that was used by the Pacific Coast Freethinkers Meetings until OA Region 2 asked their Intergroup to delist them for using outside literature (so the meeting stopped using them!).

### Freethinker Alternative 12 Steps for Overeaters\*

**Step 1:** We admitted we were powerless

over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.

**Step 2:** Came to believe and to accept that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.

**Step 3:** Made a decision to entrust our will and our lives to the care of the collective wisdom and resources of those who have searched before us.

**Step 4:** Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

**Step 5:** Admitted to ourselves without reservation and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.

**Step 6:** Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.

**Step 7:** With humility and openness sought to eliminate our shortcomings.

**Step 8:** Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

**Step 9:** Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

**Step 10:** Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

**Step 11:** Sought through meditation to improve our spiritual awareness and our understanding of the OA way of life and to discover the power to carry out that way of life.

**Step 12:** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive eaters and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

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## The Serenity Poem

This “no God” version is accepted by OA as an alternative to the traditional version and can be used at all OA meetings.

*We seek the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference.*