

## THE POWER OF WE: Unity and Specific Focus Groups

**Background: R5 disruptive member alienation and the AQ motion.**

**The Question:** Do specific focus groups strengthen or weaken unity? How? As groups form do we ever draw the line? Where is the line? Is there a line? How do we maintain unity while sub-dividing? Consider specific focus groups in light of one of the traditions below and report back to the group as a whole.

*Our primary purpose* in Overeaters Anonymous is to abstain from compulsive eating and to carry the message of recovery through the [Twelve Steps of OA](#) to those who still suffer.

“The Unity with Diversity Committee’s primary concern is that all OA members, in all meetings, feel safe while sharing their experience, strength, and hope and are not told that their share is an outside issue. Everyone needs to be able to share at meetings about factors in their lives that could cause them to act out with food.” (*What is an Outside Issue Letter: July 11, 2023*)

Specific-Focus Meeting: Designed for individuals who may feel they can more readily identify with fellow members of Overeaters Anonymous with similar attributes. For a full list, see the oa.org [Find a Meeting page](#). All OA members are welcome at these meetings.

Specific-Topic Meeting: Designed for a specific subject matter or format. For a full list, see the oa.org [Find a Meeting page](#). All OA members are welcome at these meetings.

### 1994b Amended 2008 and 2023.

It was adopted that:

Overeaters Anonymous recognizes the existence of specific-focus meetings comprised of persons with similar attributes. For a list of these meetings, see the oa.org [Find a Meeting page](#). According to the Traditions, bylaws, and policies of OA, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. Therefore, we ask each person attending a meeting to respect and consider the group conscience of the whole Fellowship and welcome and give a voice to any person who has a desire to stop eating compulsively.

*Attribute: 1.a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something.*

## **Tradition 1: Unity**

**Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.**

“Thus, the unity of OA is a matter of life and death to us.” (pg. 92)

“If we as individuals did not value the common welfare of the Fellowship above our own personal viewpoints, OA would soon split into argumentative factions and would lose the strength that comes from our union of many.” (pg. 92)

“OA is a place where every member has ample opportunity to share.” (pg. 92)

“Unity does not mean uniformity.” (pg. 95)

## **Tradition 4: Autonomy**

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

“Groups should not do anything that will injure other OA groups or OA as a whole.” (pg. 113)

“...are considered a group, as long as that group has no other affiliations...” (pg. 114)

“Living by the Fourth Tradition in OA means learning to act autonomously, even as we live in harmony with others.” (pg. 117)

*Affiliation: 1. the state or relation of being closely associated or affiliated with a particular person, group, party, company, etc.*

## **Tradition 10: Neutrality**

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

“OA has no opinion on Christianity or any other religion or spiritual belief...” (pg. 152)

“Ridicule and disrespectful comments about religions, diets, political beliefs, and other matters have absolutely no place in OA meetings.” (pg. 153)

“Do we concentrate on our common bonds, rather than our differences?” (pg. 155)

## **Tradition 12: Anonymity**

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities (Tradition Twelve).

*Anonymity: lack of outstanding, individual, or unusual features; impersonality, not named or identified, lacking individuality, distinction, or recognizability.*

“We cease all attempts to use OA to promote our favorite outside issues and enterprises.” (pg. 163)

“To be anonymous in OA means to be one among many..” (pg. 164)

“When we keep the twelfth tradition no one person or group of people is ever given special status in OA.” (pg. 166)

R5 Spring 2026 Assembly

Friday Evening Workshop

Juliette R. Trustee Liaison