

# OA CONCEPT ONE

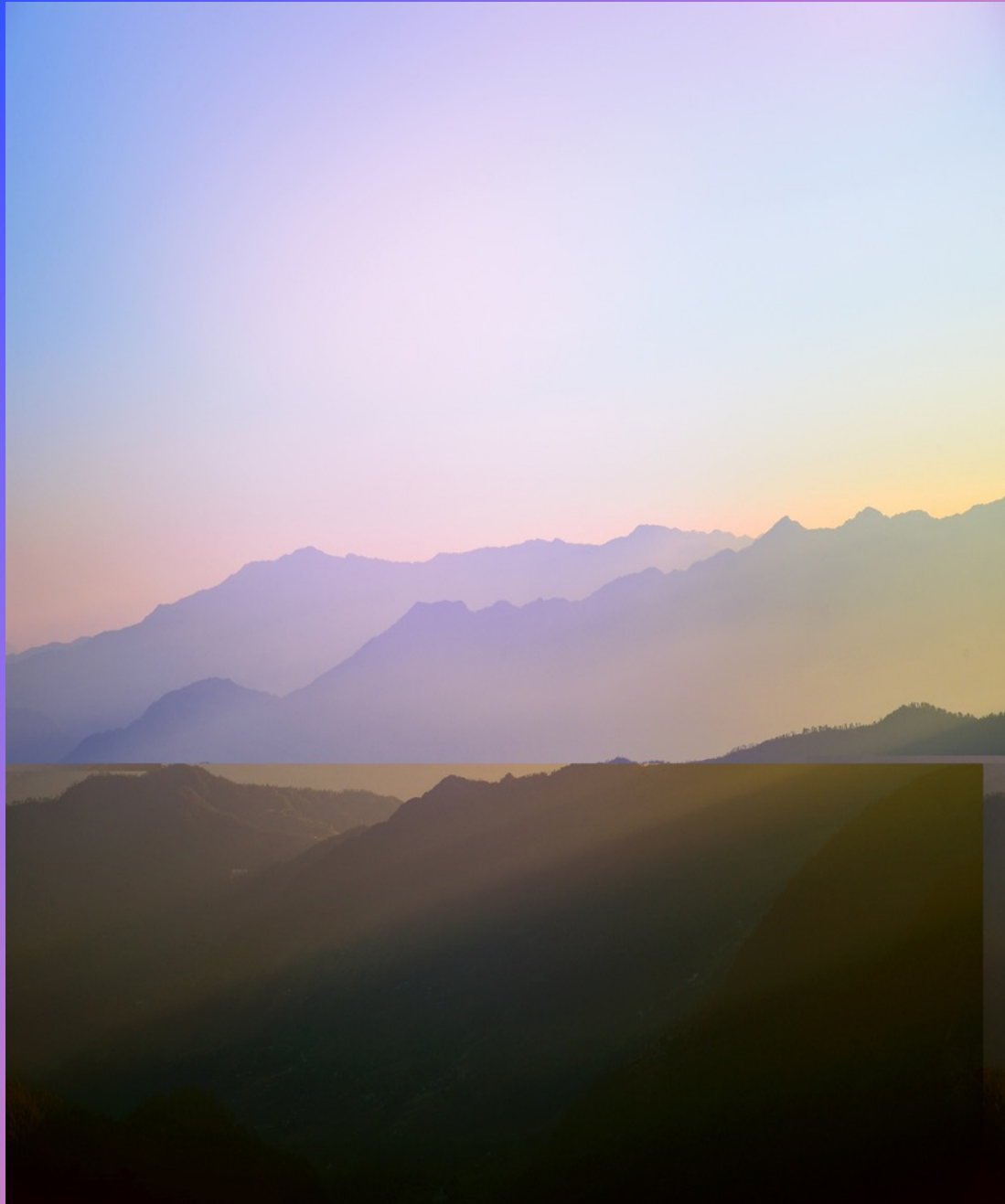


# Concept One

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Spiritual Principle: Unity





Individual members have the final say about world services and exercise this right through their participation in the decisions reached by their local and virtual groups, service bodies, and world service.

The OA *Twelve and Twelve* tells us, “in order to reach an *informed* group conscience, we affirm each group member’s right to take part in the discussions ... to make sure that the decision reached by the group takes into account all pertinent information (p. 100).”

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step One

We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.

## Tradition One

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

## Concept One

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

**Spiritual Principles:** Honesty, Unity, Unity



# Summary

“Honesty” and “unity” are the watchwords here. After admitting that we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable, it makes sense to learn to depend on the unifying process we call group conscience.

Rather than allowing differences of opinion to tear our Fellowship apart, open, honest, and respectful debate and discussion allows us to make decisions for the Fellowship as a whole.

While majority votes are not the same as a final group conscience, it is sometimes necessary to allow interim decisions to be made. They may be revisited until a true group conscience is reached.



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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?

# OA CONCEPT TWO



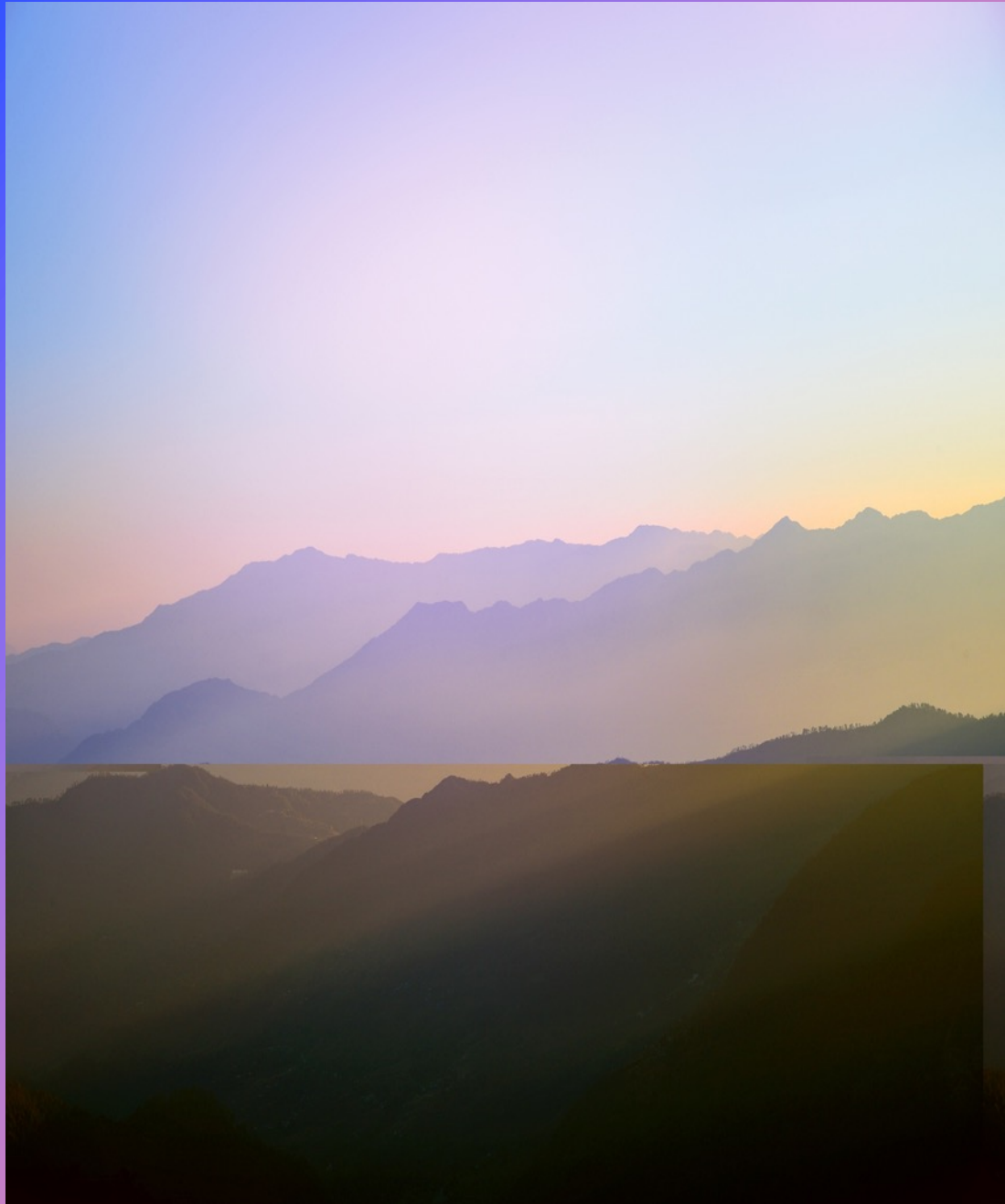
# Concept Two

The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

Spiritual Principle: Conscience







With thousands of OA groups worldwide, OA cannot hold a group conscience meeting including every member. It is a practical impossibility. To reach a group conscience that represents the Fellowship as a whole, OA holds the annual World Service Business Conference (WSBC).

Collectively, delegates form the group conscience of OA as a whole. We have found that this representational democracy is the best method for serving OA.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Two

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

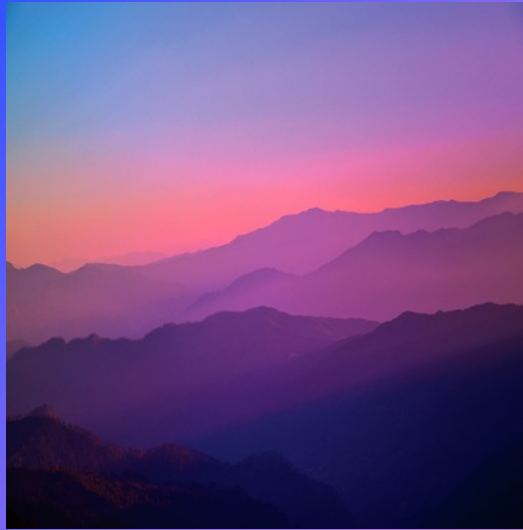
## Tradition Two

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

## Concept Two

The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

**Spiritual Principles:** Hope, Trust, Conscience



# Summary

Trusting our group conscience process is the backbone of this Concept. We, as a Fellowship, have come to understand that the Power greater than ourselves in which we place our individual hopes for recovery is expressed for OA by the WSBC, which acts on behalf of the Fellowship as its (current) group conscience.

New literature, selection of Trustees, revision of Fellowship-related policies and bylaws, and sharing the state of the worldwide Fellowship is reviewed and decisions are made based on informed group conscience and members' trust in the process.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



# OA CONCEPT THREE

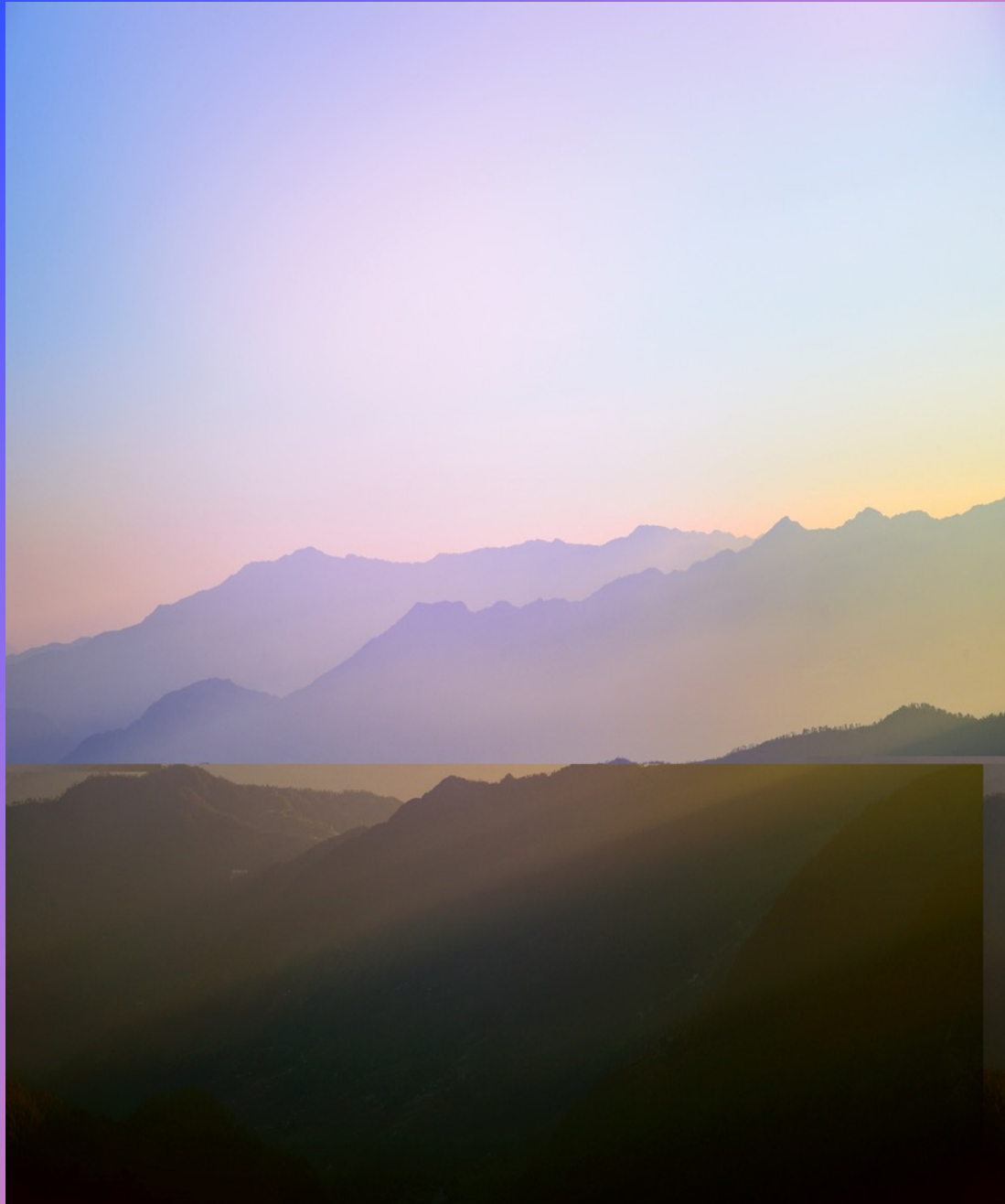


# Concept Three

The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

Spiritual Principle: Trust





Working within their job descriptions, trusted servants have the right to decide how to do their jobs. We trust them to act and lead responsibly.

The Third Concept gives OA groups the right to bestow upon a trusted individual the authority to make decisions on behalf of the group when needed.

Delegating in this manner allows quick and efficient decision making. This trust is the heart of Concept Three.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Three

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

## Tradition Three

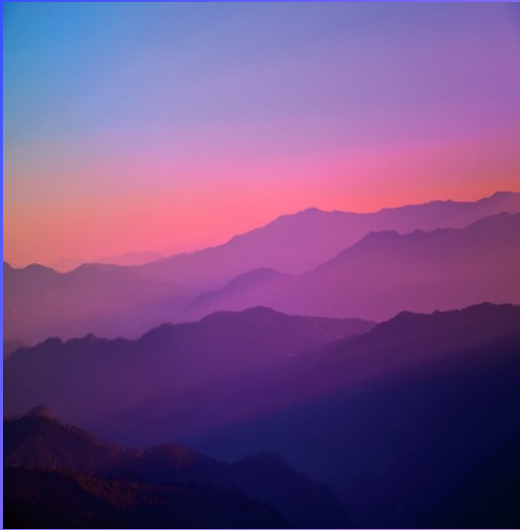
The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

## Concept Three

The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

**Spiritual Principles:** Faith, Identity, Trust





# Summary

Recovery provides us with the ability to make appropriate decisions – including sometimes deciding to allow other trusted servants to make decisions when necessary.

Delegating in this manner allows for quick and efficient decision making and dissemination of information. The trust that permits members to act within their delegated authority is at the heart of this Concept.

This Concept does not remove our individual responsibility regarding support of our decisions; it allows us to move forward effectively.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?

# OA CONCEPT FOUR



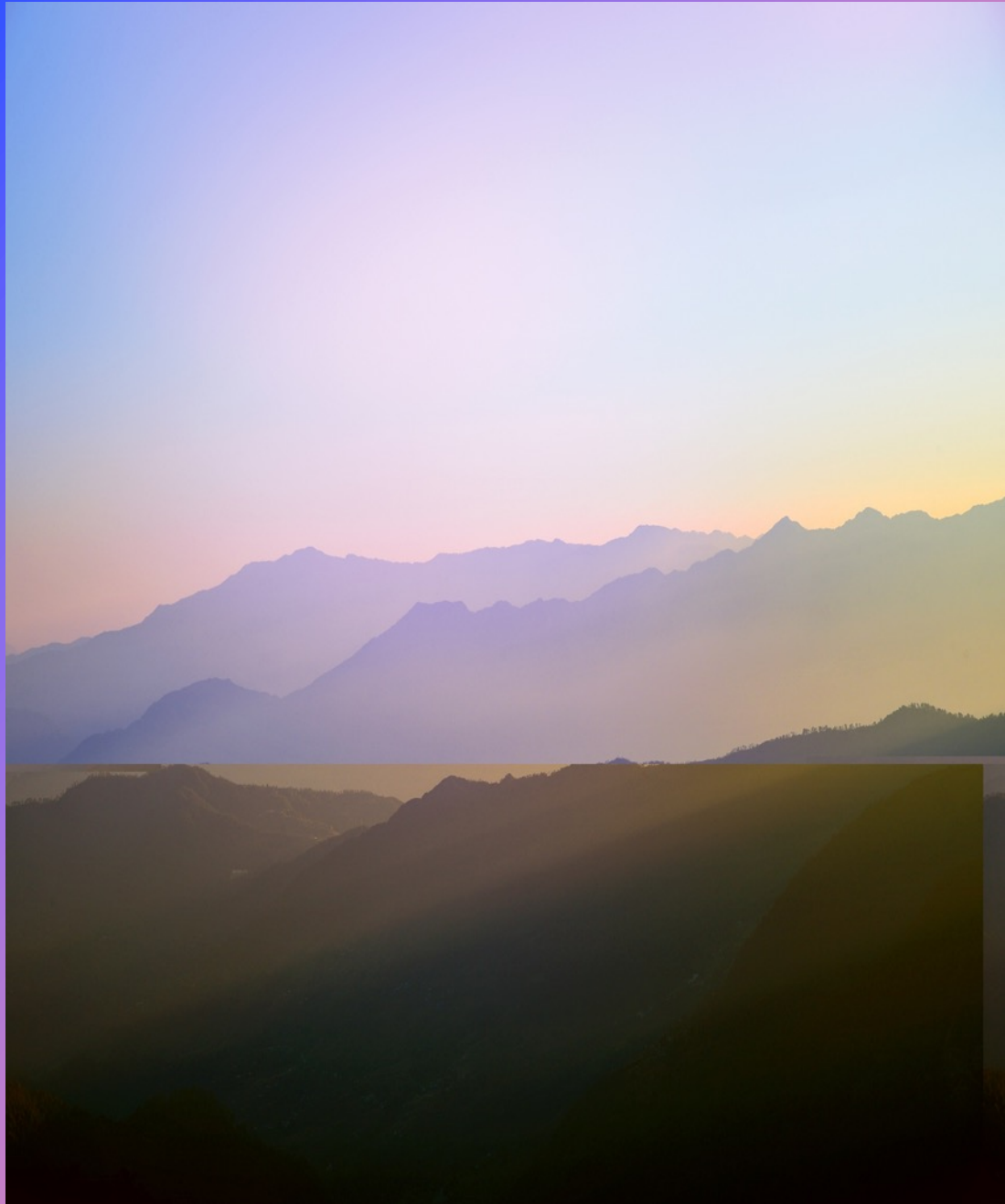
# Concept Four

The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

Spiritual Principle: Equality







At all levels of service, each member has a voice on all issues. This participation may be direct, via discussion and vote at the local and virtual levels; or it may be indirect, via trusting an elected delegate or trustee to participate at other service levels, such as at service body board meetings. This direct and delegated participation ensures the democratic foundation of Overeaters Anonymous.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

## Tradition Four

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

## Concept Four

The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

**Spiritual Principles:** Courage, Autonomy, Equality

# Summary

The right of participation provides each member the ability to have a voice – direct or indirect – in the recovery processes of OA.

This includes the writing of inventories, being responsible for making sure that the primary purpose of our Fellowship is being addressed at each group, as well as participating in the different levels of OA service.

The Spiritual Principles of integrity, purpose, and consideration are intertwined to expressly make sure that everyone is a part of their own recovery and the long-term health of OA as a whole.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



# OA CONCEPT FIVE

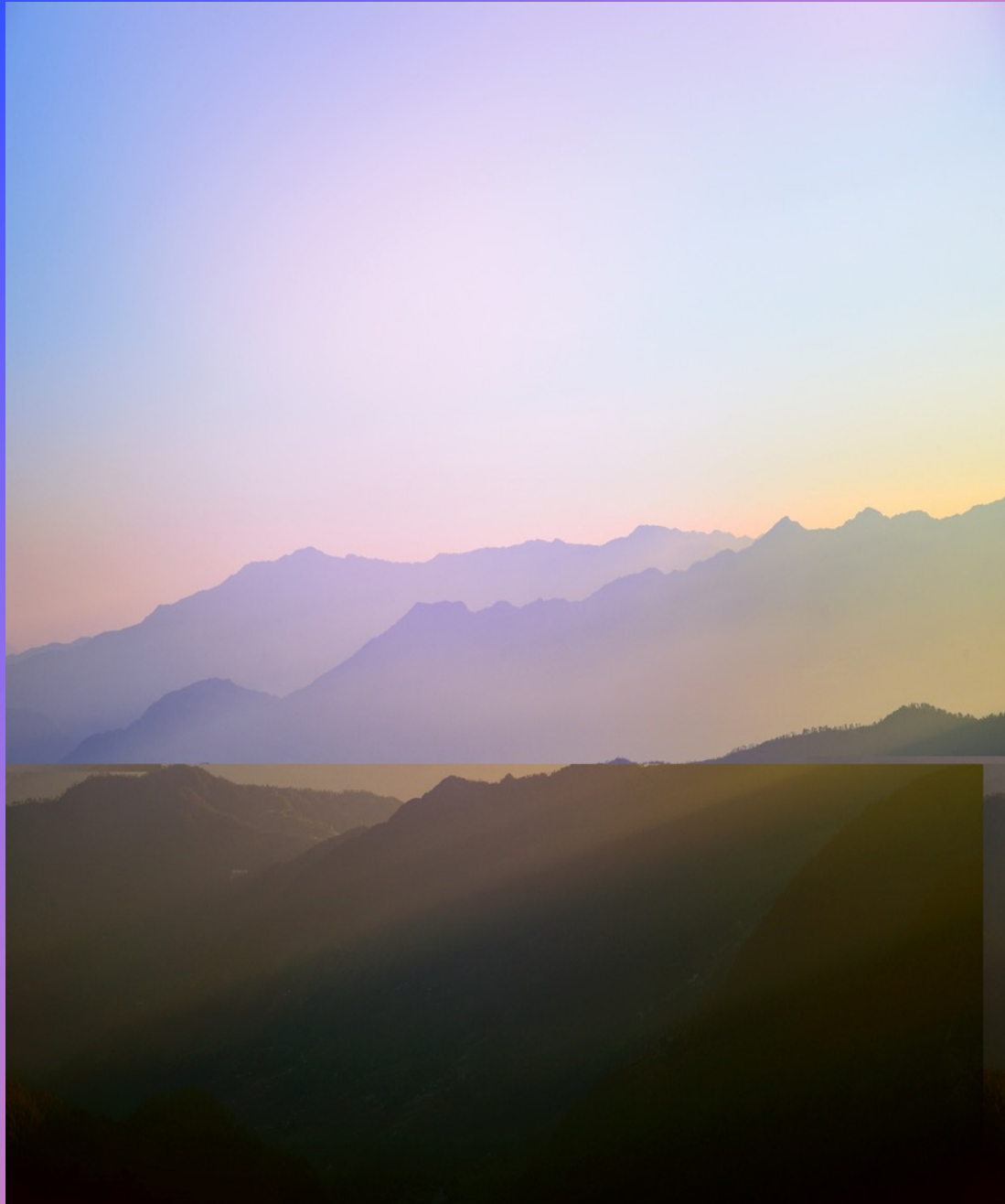


# Concept Five

Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

Spiritual Principle: Consideration





Decisions are made by human beings. Sometimes members feel that a decision is made in error or in conflict with our Steps, Traditions, and/or Concepts.

Members have the right to request that the deciding body or another service body within the OA service structure reconsider the decision.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

## Tradition Five

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

## Concept Five

Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

**Spiritual Principles:** Integrity, Purpose, Consideration



# Summary

The ability to change is a significant part of recovery in OA.

Disagreements are expected in all relationships – and participation in OA, especially as service, is a relationship.

After working the Steps and looking at Traditions on an issue, members are always within their rights to request that a decision be reconsidered.

Requesting reconsideration does not mean that the decision will be changed, just that the decision will be reconsidered based on the question(s) raised and it *may* be changed.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?

# OA CONCEPT SIX





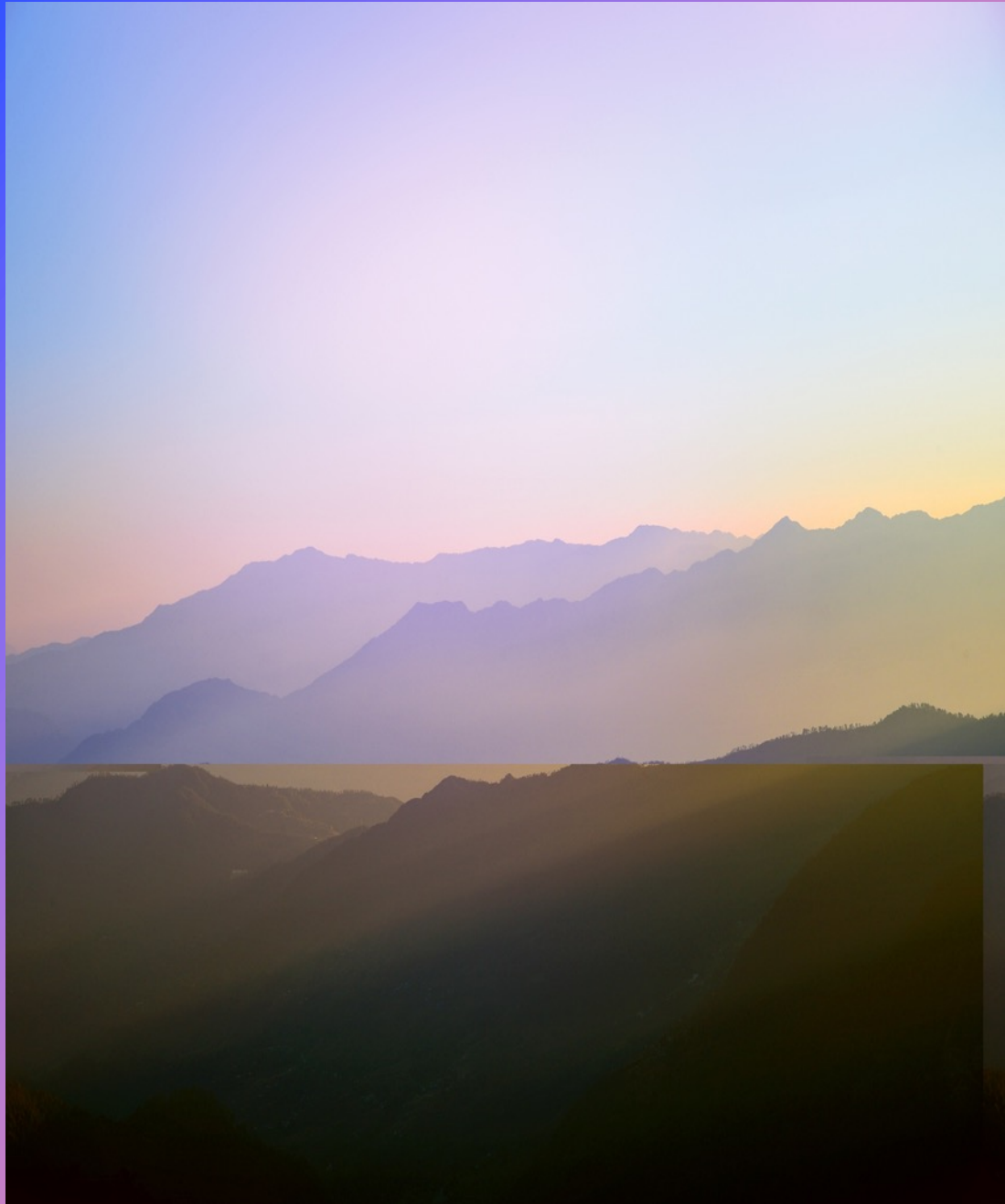
# Concept Six

The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous

Spiritual Principle: Responsibility







Although OA is non-structured, we may create service boards or committees responsible to those they serve. In practice, the needs of the group as a whole may sometimes be best served by a smaller group with a well-defined purpose.

To safeguard the Fellowship, the Board of Trustees is given the responsibility of overseeing the administration of the corporate entity.

Trustees answer directly to WSBC delegates and are responsible for carrying out WSBC directives as well as for serving as liaisons to service bodies and members.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Six

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

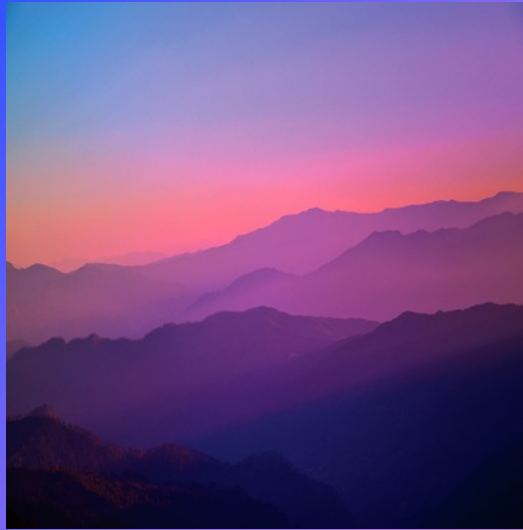
## Tradition Six

An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

## Concept Six

The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.

**Spiritual Principles:** Willingness, Solidarity, Responsibility



# Summary

Trusted servants are just that – OA members who the service body believes have the recovery and service experience to provide leadership, direction, and oversight determine actions in between official meetings.

The WSBC elects willing and qualified members of the Fellowship to serve on the Board of Trustees. The board provides administrative direction and carries out Conference-approved directives, keeping in mind the Principles of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?





# OA CONCEPT SEVEN

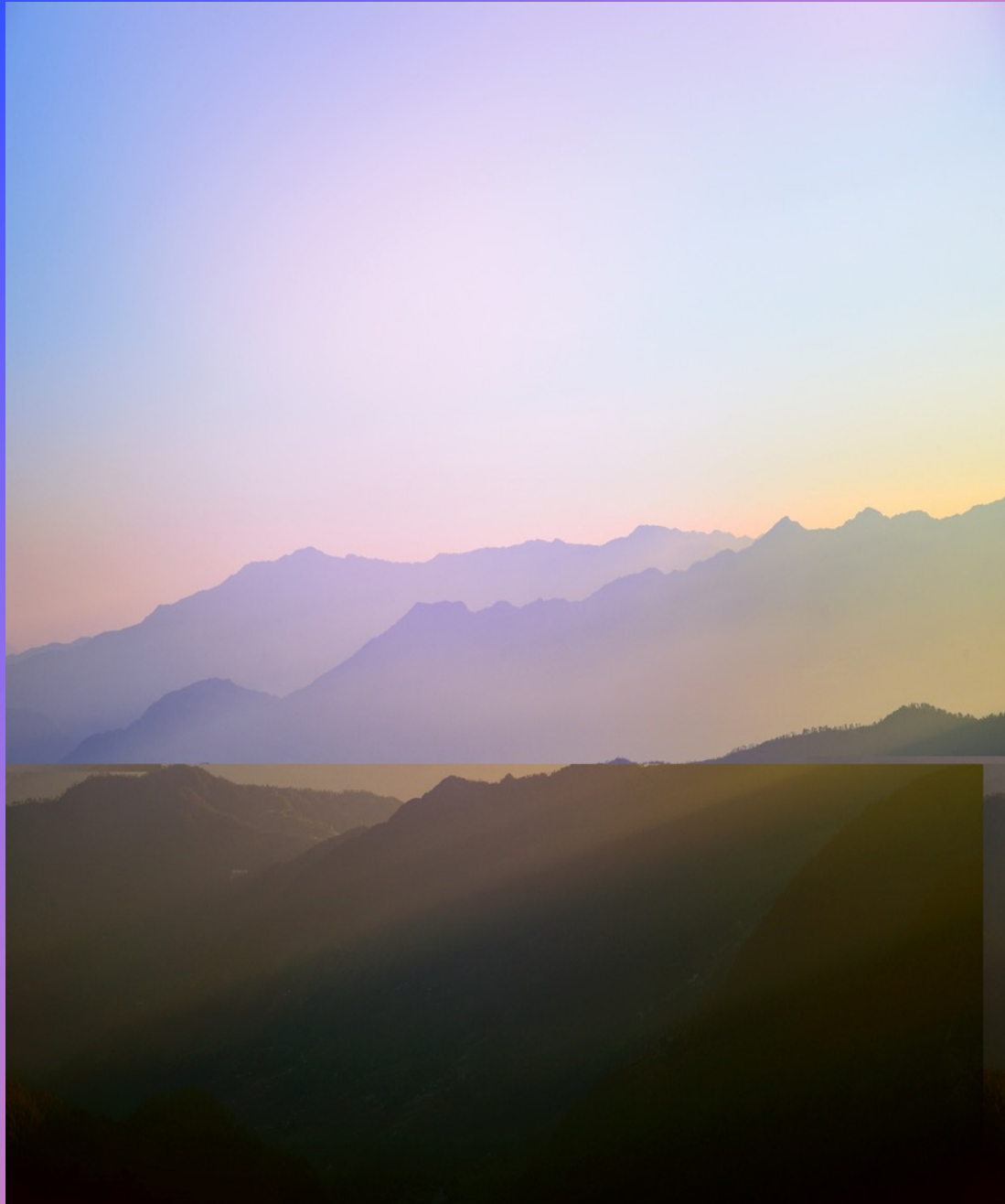


# Concept Seven

The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.

Spiritual Principle: Balance





OA Bylaws, Subpart A governs the organization of the World Service Office and describes the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees as directors of a nonprofit corporation. It is amendable by the board, usually with the assistance of legal counsel.

OA Bylaws, Subpart B, which is approved by the WSBC, defines OA membership, basic service structure, and procedures relating to the functioning of the Fellowship.

Because OA is committed to the group conscience process, the board willingly accepts the responsibility to carry out the decisions made by the WSBC and delegates willingly place their trust in the board to do so.

The trustees have “legal authority”; whereas the Conference has “moral authority.”

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Seven

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

## Tradition Seven

Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

## Concept Seven

The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.

**Spiritual Principles:** Humility, Responsibility, Balance





# Summary

The Third Step, Tradition, and Concept address our place in the world in general and in OA specifically.

- At meetings we are responsible for our individual participation and support.
- Service boards and regions are responsible for the activities required to carry the message of recovery to compulsive eaters and our members.
- WSBC supports and amplifies the workings of the Fellowship as a whole.

The Board of Trustees has fiscal and managerial oversight of the corporation and implements the directives of the WSBC.

Each level of service has the responsibility to pass on suggestions and experience, strength, and hope to other levels within our upside down service pyramid. Decisions can be amended, but only the responsible parties can alter them.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



# OA CONCEPT EIGHT





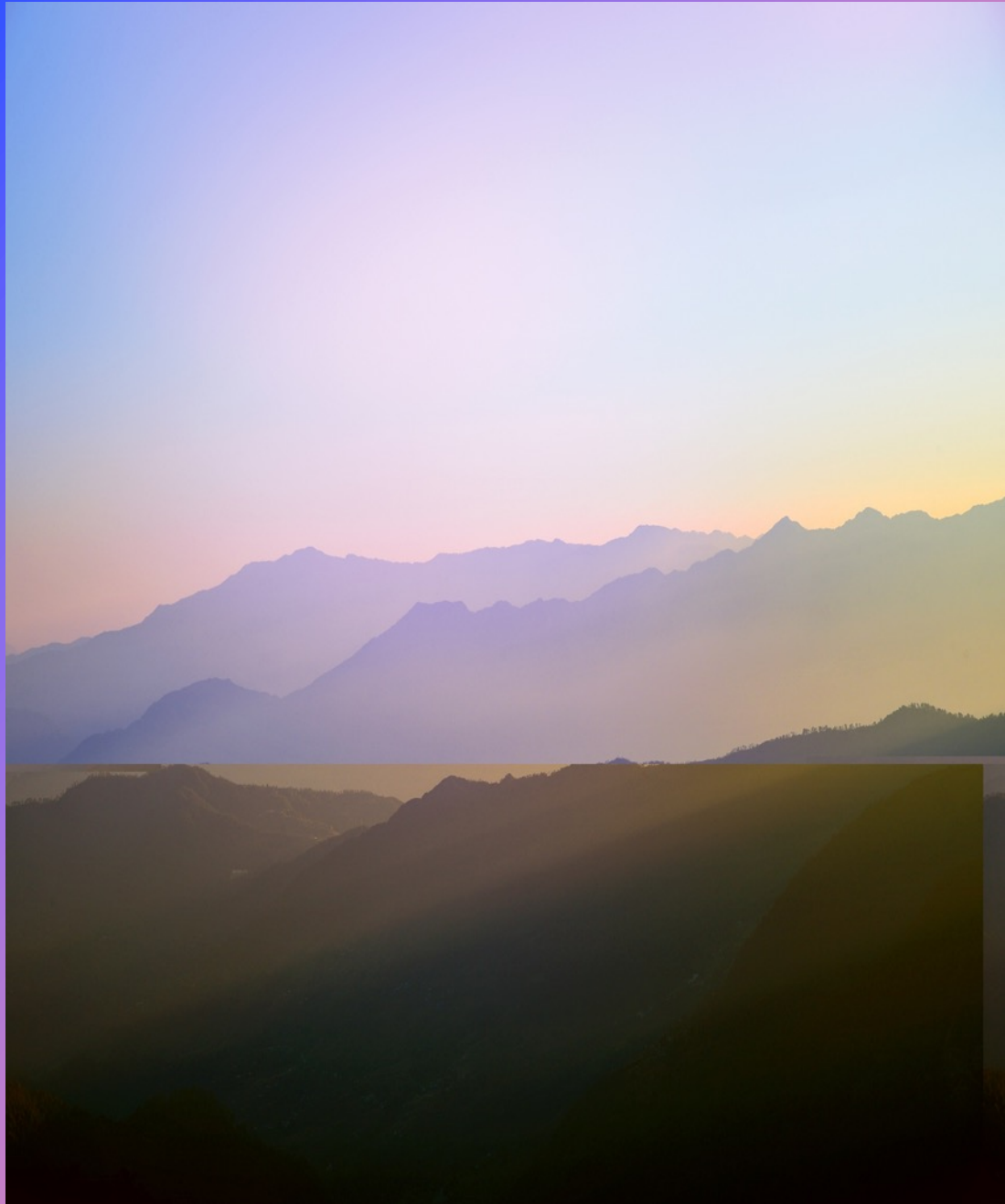
# Concept Eight

The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.

Spiritual Principle: Delegation







The authority to oversee administrative issues is delegated to the Executive Committee (EC), composed of all board officers and other trustees appointed to serve on the EC.

The day-to-day management of the World Service Office is assigned to the managing director. The managing director attends all EC meetings but has no vote.

The EC meets with the managing director monthly in person or virtually. In cooperation with the managing director and management staff, the trustees serving on the EC oversee all aspects of operations. This includes creating an annual budget, maintaining a prudent reserve, handling investment matters and an annual audit, addressing legal issues, and setting the prices for literature.

# Connecting the Pieces

## **Step Eight**

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

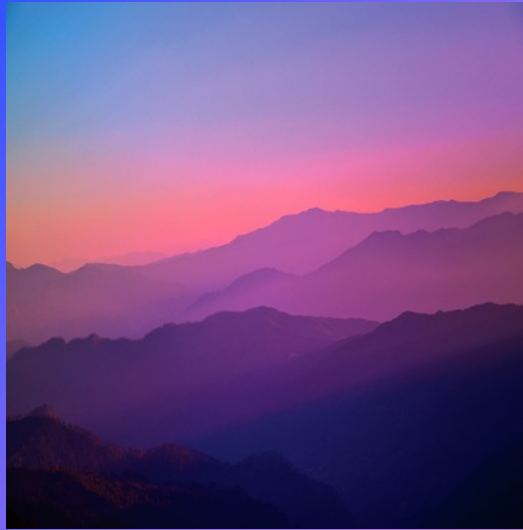
## **Tradition Eight**

Overeaters  
Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

## **Concept Eight**

The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.

**Spiritual Principles:** Self-discipline, Fellowship, Delegation



# Summary

Delegation of authority allows for a group of trustees to focus on the operations and activities of the World Service Office.

While we must always remain non-professional, it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee, with the support and assistance of a highly qualified group of employees and consultants, to make sure OA remains financially solvent and operation-ally effective.

To execute these responsibilities, the Executive Committee regularly assess OA's changing needs and how to best meet them – an inventory process that keeps OA vital and maintains our Fellowship as a spiritual home for us all.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?





# OA CONCEPT NINE

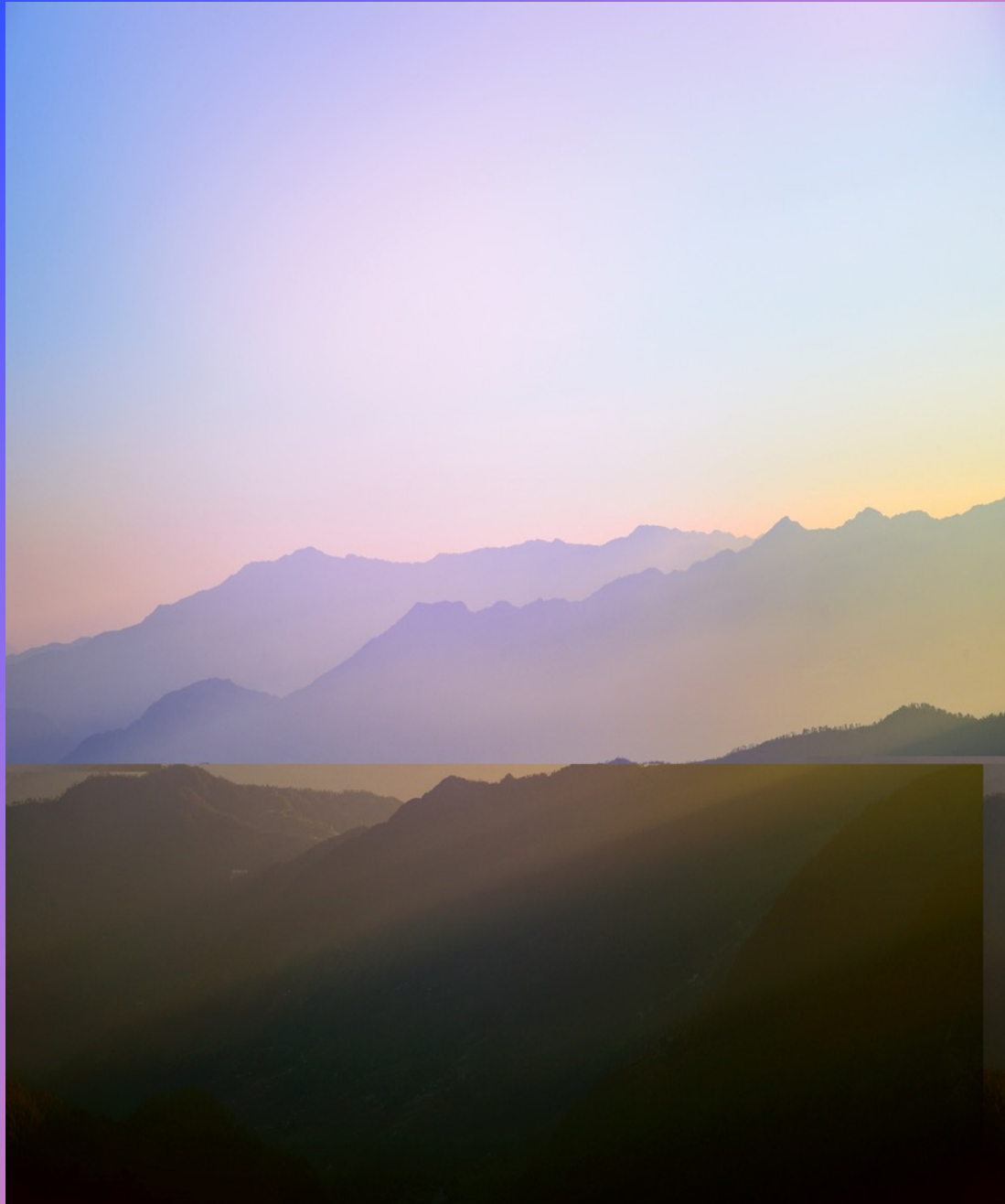


# Concept Nine

Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.

Spiritual Principle: Ability





Trusted servants are vital to OA at all levels of service, and the methods for choosing them vary, as do their jobs.

Some jobs may require only a willingness to help. Others may require specific skills and abilities. These requirements need to be clearly stated prior to the selection of trusted servants.

Conflicts may arise when a group fails to clearly define the abilities, past service, and abstinence requirements needed for a position.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Nine

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

## Tradition Nine

OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

## Concept Nine

Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.

**Spiritual Principles:** Love, Structure, Ability





# Summary

Trusted servants are not necessarily born – we "become." Personal growth is the touchstone of OA's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.

Despite never being "organized," by clearly defined job responsibilities and position descriptions and by agreeing to some baseline experience (prior service work, abstinence, length of time in OA), we allow for effective leadership and the opportunity for members to participate at all levels of OA service.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



# OA CONCEPT TEN



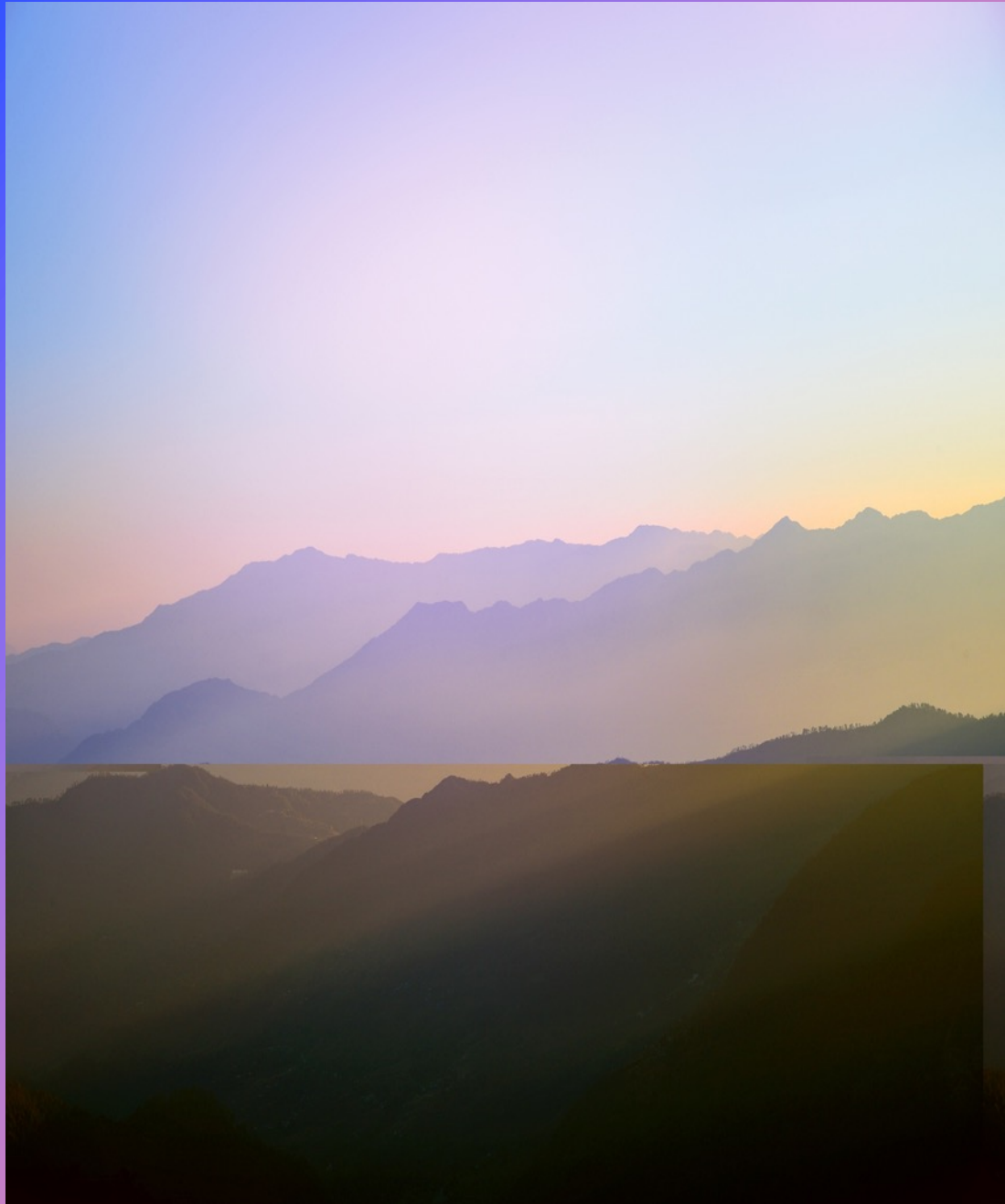
# Concept Ten

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

Spiritual Principle: Clarity







Clearly and carefully defined, written job descriptions allow members considering service positions to understand explicitly what is expected of them.

By defining service authority, groups can avoid problems and controversy arising from misunderstood job responsibilities and multiple people doing the same tasks.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Ten

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

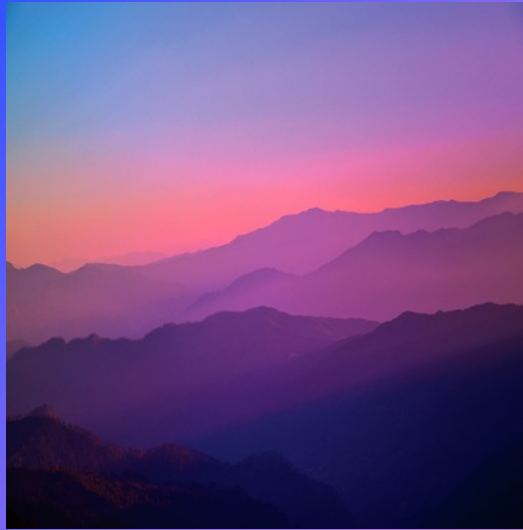
## Tradition Ten

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

## Concept Ten

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

**Spiritual Principles:** Perseverance, Neutrality, Clarity



# Summary

The Tenth Step, Tradition, and Concept focus on self-awareness and managing our relationships within and outside of OA.

Avoidance of controversy is as important for OA as a whole as it is for the health of our individual service bodies.

Service is essential to recovery. We provide more opportunities for service by encouraging members to perform a variety of activities over time. When we clearly define job responsibilities, we assure that necessary tasks are accomplished and that conflicts related to specific duties are avoided.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



# OA CONCEPT ELEVEN

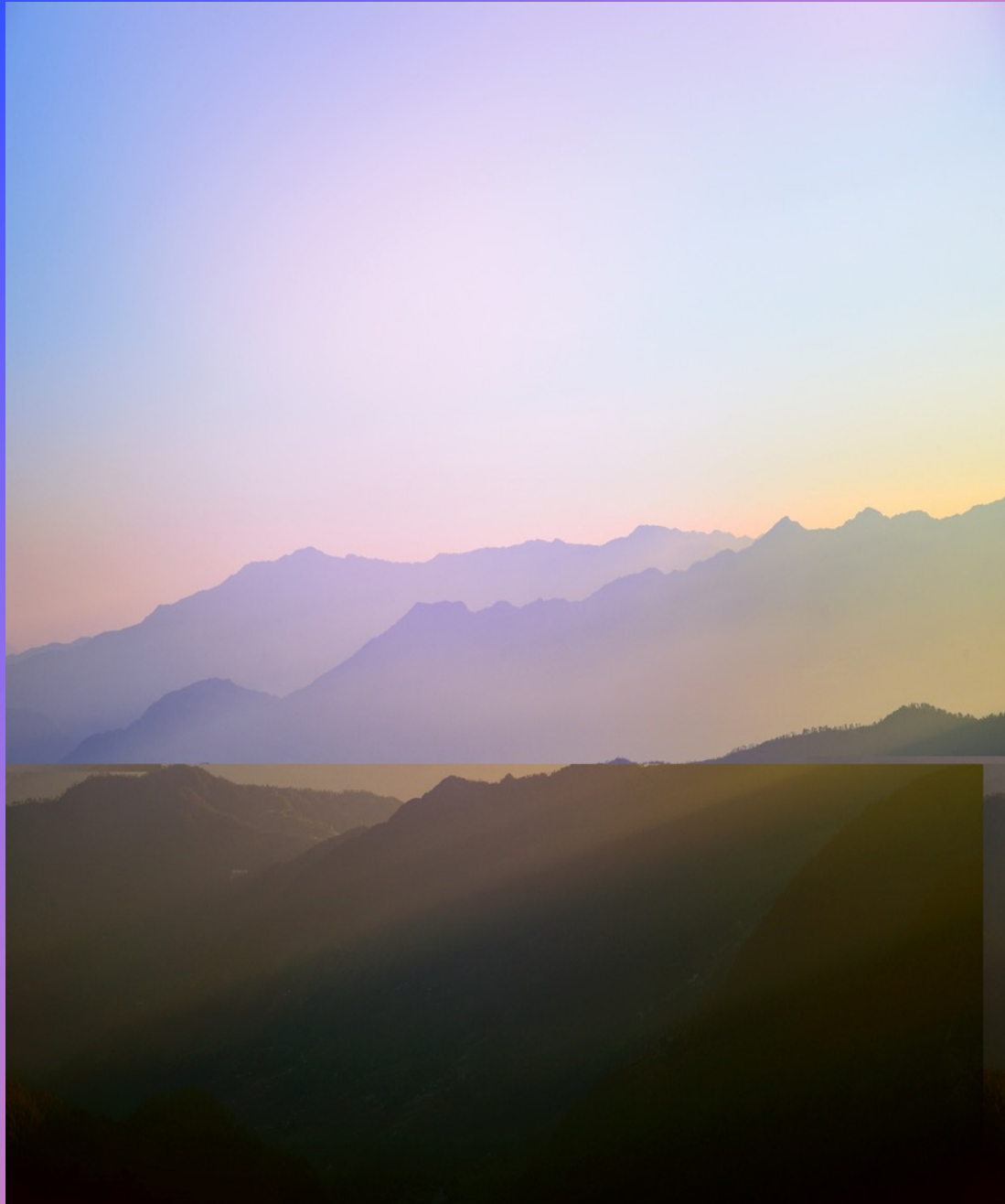


# Concept Eleven

Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.

Spiritual Principle: Humility





OA deserves effective and efficient service workers. Similar to the realization that some members may need to look outside of our Fellowship for help in their personal recovery, Concept Eleven acknowledges that our service work may require assistance from people outside of OA who possess professional skills and talents not available within our groups.

Getting qualified assistance may include the creation of committees or small focused groups as well as the hiring of staff or consultants.

# Connecting the Pieces

## Step Eleven

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

## Tradition Eleven

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.

## Concept Eleven

Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.

**Spiritual Principles:** Spiritual Awareness, Anonymity, Humility





# Summary

The use of outside professional help or internal, member-supported committees is important to the overall health of our Fellowship.

Committees are established to perform tasks in small, focused groups. Many of these are specified in service board bylaws and OA Bylaws, Subpart B. Ad hoc or task-specific committees may be created at the discretion of a service body or the Board of Trustees.

Under the leadership of the managing director, the staff of the World Service Office is hired based on knowledge and skills in relevant areas. Short-term needs may be fulfilled by consultants.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?

# OA CONCEPT TWELVE





# Concept Twelve

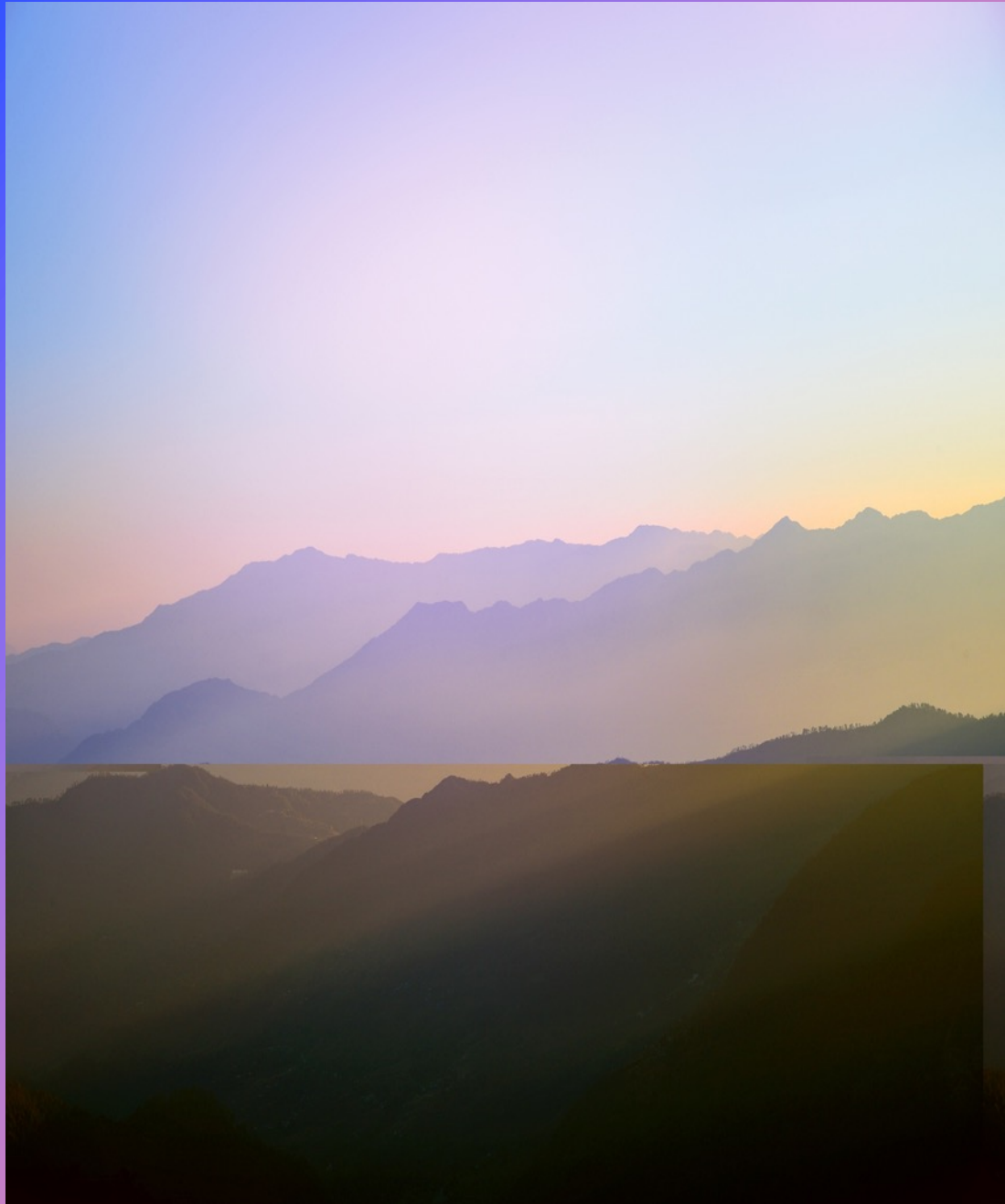
The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:

- a. No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
- b. Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
- c. No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
- d. All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible by substantial unanimity;
- e. No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
- f. No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Spiritual Principles: Guidelines, Selflessness, Realism, Representation, Dialogue, Compassion, Respect







The guidelines presented in the Twelfth Concept bring to our service bodies and trusted servants the boundaries that give each recovering member of OA an approach to support our service positions.

By focusing on the guidelines of selflessness, realism, representation, dialogue, compassion, and respect, OA can continue to grow and support the compulsive eater who still suffers.

# Connecting the Pieces



## Step Twelve

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## Tradition Twelve

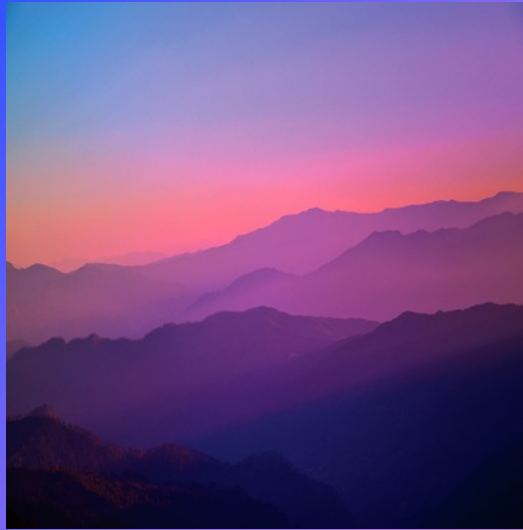
Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## Concept Twelve

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- a. No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
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- d. All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible by substantial unanimity;
- e. No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
- f. No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

**Spiritual Principles: Service, Spirituality, Guidelines**



# Summary

With the Twelfth Concept we come full-circle. OA is a spiritual Fellowship based on a belief that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity, not only regarding our issues with food, but in all areas of our lives. This spiritual foundation, which includes the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts, extends to our personal lives and *all* facets of our service experience.

These Concepts are ideals that support the Principles found within them and in, concert with the Steps and Traditions, provide guidelines (selflessness, realism, representation, dialogue, compassion, and respect) for the growth that recovery brings.

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# QUESTIONS? DISCUSSION?



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