

## Starting An O.O. Support Group Guidelines

The following suggestions are based upon the origination of the first Overcomes support group by Bob and Pauline Bartosch at a Baptist church in Southern California in 1977.

1. Interested individuals should get together and pray and “brainstorm” various methods of starting a group in their particular church area,
2. Potential group leaders should be actively working their own 12 Step program with minimum of one year of continuous recovery.
3. Schedule a visit with your pastoral / ministerial leadership, expressing your need and desire for a Christian support group to begin in your congregation. Discuss feasible methods to implement a group. Suggest the scheduling of an educational workshop or film.
4. With the approval of your pastoral staff, set a specific time slot and meeting place. Run a line or two in your church newsletter or bulletin with information regarding the new Christian support group which is available for individuals and family members who are struggling with alcoholism, chemical dependency and other compulsive behavioural problems.
5. It takes only one or two *DEDICATED* people to get the process started due to the great need. Be willing to meet regularly even though attendance may seem small, so that you will establish the fact that the group is available and trustworthy.
6. Be *OPEN!* Share what God is doing in your life and be ready to *LISTEN* as others open up too! Remember it isn't our job to “fix” anyone!
7. Pray that the affected people in your congregation will have the courage to reach out for help and *BE THERE* for them!

We recommend continuing attendance at other open 12 Step groups, e.g. “Alcoholics Anonymous” (for alcoholics), “Al-Anon” (for families and friends of the alcoholic) etc. and listening with an open mind, particularly IN REGARD TO THE “12 Steps”.

Though various people may have different opinions concerning the identity of the “higher power”, we need not press the point because we know in our minds and hearts the HE is indeed our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

They are helping many find sobriety and are located worldwide with both daytime and evening meetings available. Meeting directories may be obtained by referring to the yellow pages or local telephone directories and calling the appropriate number in your particular area. Much practical help may be derived from these traditional 12 Step groups, and as the say, “take what your like and leave the rest.”

