

Is CMA a religious organization?

No, CMA is not a religious organization. There are no set religious beliefs to which members must subscribe. No beliefs of any kind are required. Even the Twelve Steps are only suggestions. People of all beliefs are equal members in the fellowship of CMA and have achieved sobriety.

It is important to remember this: We didn't necessarily come to CMA to find religion. We came to this fellowship because we could relate to others who were also addicted to speed and who had found a way out of that obsessive cycle of addiction. We have found replacing that old master speed with a kinder, gentler Higher Power gives us the freedom to learn and grow in our recovery.

A few suggestions for newcomers

- Remember that CMA is a spiritual, not a religious, fellowship.
- Try to keep an open mind.
- Find others with whom you can talk about spirituality
- Find a Higher Power that suits you.
- Use the group as your Higher Power if that helps.
- Don't worry if you are uncertain.



*CMA Conference Approved
Literature*

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WHAT ABOUT GOD?

THE QUESTION HERE IS WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT GOD? WHAT'S YOUR DEFINITION OF A HIGHER POWER?

Crystal Meth Anonymous

What about God?

The question here is what do *you* think about God? What's your definition? God the Mother, God the Father? A Universal Force? Or do you not believe in God at all? Not sure? It is *ok!* This is not a religious program. CMA suggests we develop a relationship with a power greater than ourselves. This power is of your own understanding, or misunderstanding—it can be anything you choose, provided it makes sense to you. Your conception of a Higher Power is just that, *yours*.

Something had to change

Almost none of us came to CMA looking to find God. We came to CMA because we wanted to stop using meth, because we had a sincere desire for our lives to get better, or for a thousand other reasons. For far too long crystal was a power greater than ourselves. It dictated when we got up, when we passed out, and everything we did in between. Speed was our master... The fact of the matter is we really were no stranger to a Higher Power. Now something had to change. Whether we were court ordered, sent by our family and friends, or sick and tired of being sick and wired, we came to CMA because we could not quit on our own. Soon after arriving in the fellowship we began to realize the thing that needed to change was us.

For most of us, CMA was our last resort. Our willpower hadn't been enough. Our own resources had been insufficient. We felt doomed to a life of active addiction without some outside help. Fortunately, CMA and its solution were there for us. In the First Step, we admitted we couldn't stop using on our own; we were powerless to do so. We could no longer bear the unmanageability of our using lives. We needed a power greater than ourselves—something stronger than our addiction—to get clean. In the fellowship of CMA this power is often called Higher Power, God of our understanding or God. The most important thing is that *your* Higher Power can work in *your* life.

We came to believe

Try to keep an open mind. There are probably as many concepts of a Higher Power as there are people in CMA. Some of us already had a clear idea of our spirituality when we came to CMA or began to re-explore the God we grew up with. Others decided to personalize a version of God they could relate to more easily. For others, God was not a being, but a spiritual concept: a force or the system that underlies the universe. Your Higher Power could be a concept such as love, hope, faith or compassion, or as many of us found, an unsuspected inner resource. Making your Higher Power the CMA fellowship, a Twelve Step Program, principles, the meetings, and your fellows works too. Another useful approach is thinking of God as Good Orderly Direction or a Group Of Drug addicts.

Some of us called our Higher Power God and others did not. Some of us didn't worry about defining it. Others were uncertain and worried that the program wouldn't work if we were unsure about all this God stuff. But even if all we could say was, "Supreme Whatever, I'm not going to make it without some power greater than myself!" that was enough for a good start. As long as we were willing to accept the aid of some kind of Higher Power, we could recover.

When we were ready to accept direction things began to change. Once we started we began to see the importance of having this "Power greater than ourselves" guide us in this new direction. We started to see and feel the effects of this Higher Power in many areas of our lives. There is no right or wrong answer and the items we found valuable was an open mind and a willingness to grow in understanding. All that we needed to make a beginning was to remain willing.

While it is common to start out thinking of the CMA group and our fellows as our Higher Power, many of us found we eventually needed more than that. We wanted a Higher Power that could be with us all the time: when we couldn't get to a meeting, when our sponsor was out of town, or when we couldn't reach others in the fellowship. Many of us found our Higher Power had to become something greater than a specific person, group, or situation. Allowing your concept of a Higher Power to be vague, uncertain, and flexible may be necessary. Some of us found our concept of our Higher Power changed as we grew in recovery.

What if I don't believe in God?

The word "God" is used six times in the Twelve Steps of CMA. For many this was not a problem. However, some of us had negative experiences with organized religion, or we had images of a harsh, judgmental, and punishing God. Even some of us had decided that there was no such thing as God at all. But all of us found that if we kept an open mind, we were able to find a "God of our understanding" that helped us in sobriety. Even those committed atheists or agnostics found they too could fit in. Not believing in a God need not be a problem. People of every imaginable belief or non-belief happily coexist in CMA.

We admit it sounds a little strange to say that the "God of our understanding" may be "No God at all", but atheists have done just that, and achieved and maintained sobriety.