

## Overeaters Anonymous Shrewsbury Tuesday meeting format. (amended for Virtual Meetings) – October 2020 and Jan 2021

1. Welcome to the Tuesday evening meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a compulsive eater and your leader for tonight's meeting.

As this is a Zoom meeting, please make sure that you are watching and listening in a private space in your house, so that non-OA members are unable to hear the meeting. Please keep your microphone and telephone muted during the meeting. If you wish to speak please raise your hand and wait to be called on by the Chair. Then unmute your microphone, share, then mute it again when you have finished.

Throughout this meeting, as agreed by our group conscience, we only use OA approved literature.

2. Will those who wish to please join me in the Serenity Prayer:  
**God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the difference.**
3. As we extend the heart and hand of the OA Fellowship to those who still suffer, let us be mindful of OA's Unity with Diversity Policy, which respects our differences, yet unites us in the solution to our common problem. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?
4. The following is the OA Preamble: "Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.

## 5. Will someone please read 'Our Invitation to You'?

### **Our Invitation to You**

We of Overeaters Anonymous have made a discovery. At the very first meeting we attended, we learned that we were in the clutches of a dangerous illness, and that willpower, emotional health and self-confidence, which some of us had once possessed, were no defence against it.

We have learned that the reasons for the illness are unimportant. What deserves the attention of the still-suffering compulsive overeater is this: there is a proven, workable method by which we can arrest our illness.

The OA recovery program is patterned after that of Alcoholics Anonymous. As our personal stories attest, the Twelve-Step program of recovery works as well for compulsive overeaters as it does for alcoholics.

Can we guarantee you this recovery? The answer is up to you. If you will honestly face the truth about yourself and the illness; if you will keep coming back to meetings to talk and listen to other recovering compulsive overeaters; if you will read our literature and that of Alcoholics Anonymous with an open mind; and, most important, if you are willing to rely on a power greater than yourself for direction in your life, and to take the Twelve Steps to the best of your ability, we believe you can indeed join the ranks of those who recover.

To remedy the emotional, physical and spiritual illness of compulsive eating we offer several suggestions, but keep in mind that the basis of the program is spiritual, as evidenced by the Twelve Steps.

We are not a "diet" club. We do not endorse any particular plan of eating. In OA, abstinence is the act of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Once we become abstinent, the preoccupation with food diminishes and, in many cases, leaves us entirely. We then find that, to deal with our inner turmoil, we have to have a new way of thinking, of acting on life rather than reacting to it — in essence, a new way of living.

From this vantage point, we begin the Twelve Step program of recovery, moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience. As a result of practicing the Steps, the symptom of compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours are removed on a daily basis, achieved through the process of surrendering to something greater than ourselves; the more total our surrender, the more fully realized our freedom from food obsession.

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6. Will someone please read 'The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous'?

## **The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous**

1. We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. 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.
12. 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.

“But I’m too weak. I’ll never make it!” Don’t worry, we have all thought and said the same thing. The amazing secret to the success of this program is just that: weakness. It is weakness, not strength, that binds us to each other and to a Higher Power and somehow gives us the ability to do what we cannot do alone.

If you decide you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms.

Whatever your circumstances, we offer you the gift of acceptance. You are not alone anymore. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home!

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7. Will someone please read 'The Twelve Traditions'?

## **The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters**

### **Anonymous**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. 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.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. 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.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

8. The Twelve Concepts of OA service help us apply the Steps and Traditions in our service work, an important part of the OA program. The Concepts define and guide the practices of the service structures that conduct the business of OA. Will someone please read the Concept corresponding to the current month?

## The Twelve Concepts of Service

### CONCEPT 1

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

### CONCEPT 2

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

### CONCEPT 3

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

### CONCEPT 4

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

### CONCEPT 5

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

### CONCEPT 6

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

### CONCEPT 7

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.

### CONCEPT 8

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

### CONCEPT 9

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

### CONCEPT 10

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

### CONCEPT 11

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

### CONCEPT 12

The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:

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

9. Statement on Abstinence and Recovery: **Abstinence** is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviours while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of working and living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Program on a daily basis.
10. Tools: The OA tools of recovery help us work the Steps and refrain from compulsive overeating. The nine tools are: a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature, action plan, anonymity and service. Would someone like to choose one of the tools to read out from our 'Tools' leaflet. Now could someone please tell us how they have used one of the tools this week?
11. Sponsors: Sponsorship is one of our keys to success. Sponsors are OA members committed to abstinence and to living the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to the best of their ability. Sponsors share their program up to the level of their experience and strengthen their recovery through this service to others. To find a sponsor, look for someone who has what you want and ask how he or she is achieving it.  
Will all abstinent sponsors please identify themselves?  
Please be aware that these sponsors may not be able to take on new sponsees now but are able to talk with you about the sponsor role.
12. Reports: Are there any OA reports or business this week?
13. At this meeting anyone who wishes to may give their telephone number to other group members and somebody will commit to texting everyone else every day or as often as possible using literature as agreed by the group conscience.  
Who would like to do the texting this week?
14. This meeting has weekly meeting choices each month as follows:
  - Week 1 – conscience meeting + principle,
  - Week 2 – step,
  - Week 3 – topic,
  - Week 4 - tradition,
  - Week 5 – share.
15. Next week's meeting is a \_\_\_\_\_ meeting.  
Who would like to be responsible for taking the meeting next week?

***The week's readings etc happen now***

16. Sharing: As you share your experience and strength in OA, please also share your hope. Please confine your sharing to your experience with the disease of compulsive eating, the solution offered by OA and your own recovery from the disease. *Please do not mention foods by name, or go into the specific details of compulsive behaviours as these can be detrimental to other members' wellbeing.* If you need to talk more about your difficulties and seek solutions, we suggest you speak to your sponsor and other members after the meeting. Feedback, cross talk and advice giving are discouraged here: Cross talk during an OA meeting is giving advice to others who have already shared, speaking directly to another person rather than to the group and questioning or interrupting the person speaking at the time. The meeting is now open for sharing for those who wish to do so.
17. Thank you all for sharing. According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self supporting through our own contributions. Please continue to collect and/or send up your contributions.
18. Closing: By following the Twelve Steps, attending meetings regularly and using the OA tools, we are changing our lives. You will find hope and encouragement in Overeaters Anonymous. To the newcomer we suggest attending at least six different meetings to learn the many ways OA can help you. The opinions expressed here today are those of individual OA members and do not represent OA as a whole. Please remember our commitment to honour each other's anonymity. What you hear here, whom you see here, when you leave here, let it stay here. Let us all reach out by phone or email to newcomers, returning members and each other. Together we get better.

Will everyone join me in the OA Responsibility Pledge.

**Always extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.**

After 2 minutes of silent meditation will those who wish to please join me in the OA Promise.

### **OA Promise**

I put my hand in yours, and together we can do  
what we could never do alone.

No longer is there a sense of hopelessness,  
no longer must we each depend  
upon our own unsteady willpower.

We are all together now,  
reaching out our hands for power and  
strength greater than ours, and as we join hands,  
we find love and understanding  
beyond our wildest dreams.

## **THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF THE OA PROGRAM**

The Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service have principles related to them. They are listed here:

### **The Principles in the Twelve Steps (as listed in Step Twelve of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*)**

- Step One: Honesty
- Step Two: Hope
- Step Three: Faith
- Step Four: Courage
- Step Five: Integrity
- Step Six: Willingness
- Step Seven: Humility
- Step Eight: Self-discipline
- Step Nine: Love for others
- Step Ten: Perseverance
- Step Eleven: Spiritual Awareness
- Step Twelve: Service

### **The Principles in the Twelve Traditions (as listed in the *Service, Traditions and Concepts Workshop Manual*)**

- Tradition One: Unity
- Tradition Two: Trust
- Tradition Three: Identity
- Tradition Four: Autonomy
- Tradition Five: Purpose
- Tradition Six: Solidarity
- Tradition Seven: Responsibility
- Tradition Eight: Fellowship
- Tradition Nine: Structure
- Tradition Ten: Neutrality
- Tradition Eleven: Anonymity
- Tradition Twelve: Spirituality