

OA GUIDELINES



Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Service Bodies

- Fundraising Ideas
- The Tradition of Self-Support
- The Prudent Reserve
- Guarding our Traditions

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

OA events are wonderful for fellowship and recovery, and the funds they generate can help groups and service bodies continue Twelfth-Step work. Fundraisers that include the use of OA literature reinforce the program and help carry the message.

Suggested fundraisers

Anniversary celebrations Annual OA events such as Overeaters Anonymous' birthday may be celebrated with a marathon, banquet or dance. National holidays can also be special times for fellow OAers to be together. Valentine's Day dances, Independence Day picnics, Thanksgiving "thankathons" and Halloween and New Year's Eve balls are examples of events with a holiday theme.

Games and activities Fundraising doesn't have to stop once the admission fee is paid. A dance or carnival can include games and activities that can be enjoyed for a nominal charge. Examples: shaving-cream pie tosses, photo booths and face-painting stands. Raffles/drawings, money boxes (participants insert dollar bills with their names attached; the winner gets half the contents, the sponsoring service body the other half), or other games of chance may be offered in areas where state and local law permits.

Merchandise sales T-shirts, mugs, book bags, and other items can be sold at OA events, and serve as ongoing fundraisers for groups and service bodies. In accordance with OA World Service Business Conference policy, it's suggested that all sale items be approved by group conscience and that sales be conducted in a manner that will not divert attention from our primary purpose or endorse an outside enterprise.

Auctions Items or services contributed by OA members can be purchased by the highest bidder.

"Garage" sales Clothing and other items contributed by members can be sold for set prices.

Talent shows Members can show off their creativity and raise money, too.

Gratitude pledges Members may choose to make special Seventh-Tradition contributions to celebrate OA birthdays, memorials, or other occasions. Pledge envelopes can be made available at meetings.

Contribution jars These could be set out for special causes as well as ongoing needs such as the region representative or World Service Business Conference delegate travel funds, telephone funds, buying office equipment, or scholarships to OA events.

"No Bake" sales Members contribute money they used to spend on snack or junk-food items.

For additional ideas or guidance, contact other service bodies or your region.

THE TRADITION OF SELF-SUPPORT

OA's Seventh Tradition states: "*Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*"

A question groups and service bodies must ask themselves is: "Are we truly self-supporting?"

How can our group increase the Seventh-Tradition collection?

Group members may not be aware of how important individual contributions are to OA's continued existence. To bring this point home during meetings, the group treasurer might read aloud OA's Seventh Tradition and its explanation from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, as the basket is being passed. Group treasurers can also make monthly reports to their groups and make sure the basket circulates to all members.

How much should our group give to our service body and why?

Many meetings never contribute financially to their service bodies—sometimes because they don't understand the importance of it, sometimes because they don't know how. A good guide for making appropriate financial contributions to service bodies is the pamphlet *Seventh Tradition of O.A.* It explains how contributions support service body services such as telephone hotlines, meeting lists, public information and Twelfth-Step-Within activities.

What can service bodies do to encourage contributions?

Service body officers may want to attend meetings that haven't contributed to the service body and explain the concept of self-support. Monthly service body newsletters can print service body treasurers' reports to let members know how contributions are being spent. Newsletters can prominently print the service body, region and World Service Office addresses to help groups send in their contributions. Service body treasurers should keep in regular contact with group treasurers. Groups that do contribute could be acknowledged through thank-you notes and notices in the service body newsletter.

Am I giving enough?

A personal question members may want to ask themselves is: "Am I still contributing in the same manner as when I first came into the program?" Sponsors might share with sponsees the meaning and importance of the Seventh Tradition.

THE PRUDENT RESERVE

What is a prudent reserve?

A prudent reserve is an amount of money set aside to meet an organization's operational expenses in the

event that contributions decrease. For example, the World Service Office has established a policy for its prudent reserve, which calls for a reserve "not to exceed one year's operating budget plus outstanding liabilities plus one-time capital expenditures." Each group or service body should establish its own prudent reserve policy.

How much money should be in the prudent reserve?

The amount may be determined by figuring operational expenses for a given period of time—for example, three to six months. Expenses include such things as rent, telephone, postage, printing, utilities and salaries, if applicable. The fund should be periodically reviewed to make sure it meets the present and projected needs of the group or service body.

What if our group doesn't have any extra money?

If a service body finds it can't fully fund its prudent reserve all at once, fundraising activities such as those suggested in these guidelines may be undertaken to raise the needed monies.

GUARDING OUR TRADITIONS

It's the responsibility of all OA members to act as guardians of our Traditions. Not upholding our Traditions often occurs through misunderstanding or misinformation. We need to be constantly alert that we don't inadvertently make a precedent-setting decision that could adversely affect our own and other OA groups and thus OA as a whole.

For more information, see the *OA Handbook*; *Guidelines for OA Events*; *Seventh Tradition of O.A.*; the pamphlet *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*; and the book *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*.

Note: See *Budget Guidelines for Service Bodies* for help with creating, monitoring and maintaining budgets.

OA Board-approved

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