

## **Applying The Traditions**

In your work with institutions and professionals, it is important to follow our Twelve Traditions which were created to ensure the unity and well being of OA as a whole, as well as personal recovery. They guard OA's survival by limiting conflict, controversy and power. During community interactions, let our Traditions guide you. Be sure that all committee members have a thorough understanding of our Traditions. Your committee may want to hold a discussion session on our Traditions and their implications to foster greater understanding. In particular, it is vital that the following Traditions be observed:

### ***Tradition Five***

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

### ***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.”

### ***Tradition Seven***

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

### ***Tradition Ten***

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

### ***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.”

### ***Tradition Twelve***

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

Policy statements provide additional guidelines for OA members and service bodies. Board-approved policy statements are adopted by members of the Board of Trustees, who act as guardians of the Steps and Traditions. Conference-approved policy statements are introduced as new business motions at the World Service Business Conference. They are then debated and voted on by service body delegates who represent the collective conscience of the Fellowship as a whole.

### ***Policy Statement Regarding Professionals***

***Passed by the Board of Trustees, September 1983***

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“In adherence to Tradition Six, Overeaters Anonymous does not provide nursing services, hospitalization, drugs or any medical, nutritional or psychiatric treatment; nor does OA provide referrals for the treatment of eating disorders.

“‘Two hatters,’ i.e., OA members affiliated with related facilities, should be requested to speak only to their personal recovery at OA functions to avoid implying endorsement of an outside enterprise by OA as a whole.”

***Policy Statement on Anonymity***

***Adopted by the delegates at Conference 1980***

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program, always ensuring principles before personalities. This means that OA itself is not anonymous, but its members are. There are no exceptions. While OA may be publicized, we do not break our individual anonymity at the level of press, radio, films and television and the recognizable facial exposure of persons identifying as OA members at the level of press, films and television is a violation of our Tradition of anonymity even though the first name only is given, or the entire name is withheld.”

***Policy Statement on Abstinence and Recovery***

***Adopted by the delegates at Conference 1988, revised 2002, 2009 and 2011***

“Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.”

The intent of the above statement was to establish broad consensus on the meaning and experience of abstinence, thereby giving direction to the board and the Conference Literature Committee which are responsible for revising and developing OA literature.

Professionals, staff employees and patients of eating disorder units may ask about OA’s suggested food guidelines. As stated in the following policy statement, our unique program offers abstinence and recovery without mandatory food plans.

OA’s preamble, adopted at the World Service Business Conference in 1984 and revised in 1990, describes OA’s program succinctly.

***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 overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.”

Finally, it is most important that individual OA members explain that they speak only from their own experience, and do not speak for OA as a whole.

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Appendix 2

## Volunteer Profile

(Modify as needed.)

**CONFIDENTIAL:** This will be on file with the committee chairs. Only your first name and phone number will be made available to committee members.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Length of abstinence \_\_\_\_\_ Length of time in OA \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Twelve Step experience:  Worked all Steps  Worked through Step \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you sponsored? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe type of institutional experience \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check your areas of interest or experience:

Schools  Recovery homes  CDU  EDU/Hospital  EAP

Psych/Crisis Center  Prisons/Juv. Prob.  Other \_\_\_\_\_

OA service beyond group level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Appendix 3

## Attracting Volunteers Inside Of OA

*(Modify as needed.)*

You may want to consider the following examples for use in OA newsletters or secretary's announcements:

**Version 1**

In search of compulsive eaters willing and able to speak in front of groups — available during the workday. Traditions knowledge is strongly suggested as well as recovery on all three levels. Please contact the [*name of committee*] at [*telephone number*].

**Version 2**

Looking for individuals with recovery on all three levels to serve on presentation and/or other panels on behalf of the [*name of committee*]. Need to be thoroughly familiar with the Traditions. If interested, please contact the [*name of committee*] at [*telephone number*].

**Version 3**

### SEEKING RESOURCES

The \_\_\_\_\_ [*name of committee*] will be contacting \_\_\_\_\_ facilities in the \_\_\_\_\_ area. We are looking for individuals who can identify specific people to contact so we can address correspondence to the appropriate person.

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Appendix 4

## Sample Letter For One-On-One Contact

*(Modify as needed.)*

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a self-help, nonprofit organization patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous that offers a three-fold recovery program from the disease of compulsive overeating — physical, emotional and spiritual. The OA program is an anonymous fellowship open to any person with an eating disorder or weight problem; there are no dues or fees. Enclosed for your information is an OA local meeting directory. Please feel free to attend any of the open meetings listed in the directory. These are open to anyone: compulsive eaters, visitors or anyone who wants to learn more about OA. A few meetings are designated “closed” and are for compulsive eaters only.

For your information, I have also included several pamphlets explaining the OA program in more detail. If you would like more information about OA, please contact [*fill in name*] at [*phone number*]. It is my hope that you will consider referral to Overeaters Anonymous for patients you believe would benefit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

Name of service body

Enclosures: Meeting directory

Selected literature

[PLEASE NOTE: Signing your full name is not a break in anonymity. It is your decision whether or not to use your full name or last initials. However, using your full name does make it easier for future contacts.]

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Appendix 5a

## Sample Institutions Contact Letters

(Modify as needed.)

### LETTER #1

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

I am writing this letter as a member of the [*name of committee*] of Overeaters Anonymous. I have been a member of OA for [*years/months*], and consider myself a beneficiary of this program.

Our organization, Overeaters Anonymous, is a fellowship of individuals who support one another in solving their common problem, compulsive eating, and is patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. To most of us, food is not a nutrient, but a comforter, a weapon, an enemy or perhaps an equalizer.

In your capacity as a [*physician, therapist, etc.*], you have probably had contact with compulsive eaters in a client relationship, and I would like to familiarize you with our program and the fact that we do have groups meeting in your area. Perhaps our group can be of some assistance to your clients.

We are *not* professionals. We in OA believe we have a threefold illness — physical, emotional and spiritual. There are no requirements for membership, no dues or fees and no weigh-ins. We are not affiliated with any other organizations, nor are we in competition with any professional services or weight loss programs. We simply want to work in cooperation with you, and share our recovery experience with others who desire to stop eating compulsively.

I would like to schedule an appointment with you to explain OA's program and how it can benefit your [*clients/patients, residents*]. OA literature and a local meeting directory are also available upon your request. I will call your office in the next two weeks to arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Name

Name of service body

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## LETTER #2

[This is a sample letter suggested for use in making initial contact with an eating disorder unit within a hospital, eating disorder treatment centers, psychiatric hospitals or any other treatment center as applicable.]

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Re: Offer of Informational Panel on Overeaters Anonymous

Dear :

The [*name of service body and city*] of Overeaters Anonymous would like to bring our group to your attention. Enclosed are some pamphlets which explain the OA program in more detail. Our program, patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous, brings together a group of individuals who gather to give strength and support to each other while dealing with their common problem of compulsive eating.

We are self-supporting through our own contributions; there are no dues or fees. Our policy of anonymity requires that the identity of individual members not be revealed at the level of press, radio, television and films. This ensures unity and harmony in public relations work. If you use OA members in this capacity, we would be grateful if you would respect this tradition.

One of our members would be willing to arrange an appointment with your staff to discuss a panel presentation for your facility. We would also be happy to visit and speak to any individual or group.

The OA program has improved the quality of life for all of us, and in some cases, saved lives. If you would like more information, please call [*name of contact*] at [*phone number*]. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Name

Name of service body

Enclosures: [*Suggested literature*:]  
Professional Presentation Folder  
*Treatment and Beyond*  
Local meeting directory

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**LETTER #3**

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

Because you are working with people with eating disorders, we would like to bring to your attention our self-help group. If you have patients/clients who continue to overeat in spite of your advice, we believe we can help.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) believes compulsive overeating is an addiction which, like alcoholism and drug abuse, can be arrested but not cured. OA does not concern itself with the medical aspects of obesity; our approach complements professional care as we address the compulsive nature of overeating. We claim no nutritional expertise; our members are referred to the medical profession for guidance and for approval of a food plan.

Overeaters Anonymous is a program with no dues or fees, patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. There are no scales or food plans at our meetings; rather our recovery comes from joining together to share experience, strength and hope with one another to solve our common problem. Many people have achieved their desired weight loss and maintained it by following this program of recovery. I have lost a total [*fill in*] and have kept it off for over [*fill in*].

If you would like more information about OA, please let me know. We would be happy to have a member of our committee talk with you or to any group of people who might be interested. Should any of your patients/clients wish to find a convenient meeting, please have them call our service body office at [*phone number*].

Yours truly,

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Name of committee

Name of contact

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**LETTER #4**

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a nonprofit fellowship of individuals whose primary purpose is to refrain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message to the still suffering compulsive overeater. Our program is based on Alcoholics Anonymous. We emphasize the need for a physical, emotional and spiritual program of recovery to deal with our eating problem. As part of our recovery, we have outreach service committees to inform the public, professional community and individuals in institutions about the Overeaters Anonymous program.

On behalf of our [*name of committee*], I would like to extend an offer for members of our committee to speak to you, your staff or individuals within your organization. In addition to speakers we can provide the following:

- A sixteen-minute DVD about OA
- Setup for a meeting either on a one-time or an ongoing basis
- A presentation for your staff
- Literature and a directory of meetings
- Sponsors for individuals in institutions

Thank you for your interest in our program. If you have any questions, please contact me at [*phone number*]. We would welcome the opportunity to cooperate with you in reaching the still-suffering compulsive overeater.

Sincerely,

Name

Name of service body/committee

## Sample Follow-Up Letters To Institutions For Panel Presentations After A Phone Call

*(Modify as needed.)*

### LETTER #1

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

It was a pleasure talking to you on [*date*] about Overeaters Anonymous. Enclosed is one of our pamphlets, "About OA," for your review. After consideration, we hope you will direct your [*staff, students, inmates, residents, employees*] to our organization. Please feel free to request further information. One of our members would be willing to arrange an appointment with you or your [*staff, students, inmates, residents, employees*] to discuss our fellowship in greater detail. We would be very pleased to visit your facility and speak with an individual or group interested in our service.

Our fellowship follows a policy of anonymity for individual members by not revealing personal identities at the level of press, radio, films and television; this ensures our unity. If you should choose to use any of our members in presentations, we would be grateful if you would respect our tradition of anonymity.

In addition to the above, we can provide a sixteen-minute DVD about Overeaters Anonymous, a list of meetings in your area and names of people willing to sponsor individuals in institutions.

Overeaters Anonymous has improved the quality of life for all of us and, in some cases, saved lives. If you would like more information please call [*contact name, telephone number, address and zip code*].

We look forward to meeting with you again in the future. Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us.

Sincerely,

Name of committee and service body

Overeaters Anonymous

Enclosure

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**LETTER #2**

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

It was a pleasure talking to you the other day about Overeaters Anonymous. I have enclosed some literature which I hope will be helpful, and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future.

On behalf of our [*name of committee*], I would like to offer our services in establishing an Overeaters Anonymous meeting at the [*name of institution*]. As we discussed, my preference would be a modified hour-long speakers' meeting. The first fifteen minutes of the meeting would be devoted to introducing the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program of recovery. This would be followed by a speaker who has a minimum of six months of recovery from compulsive overeating. The last fifteen minutes would be open to the group for general sharing. Of course, this proposed format is flexible, depending on how we can best meet your needs.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Name of committee and service body

Overeaters Anonymous

Enclosure

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Appendix 6

## Sample Phone Dialogue

*(Modify as needed.)*

*It is very important that you do not read this dialogue.*

*This is only a guideline — use your own words.*

“Hello, this is Jill Brown calling from Overeaters Anonymous. May I please speak with Dr. Jones?”

“Good morning/afternoon, Dr. Jones. My name is Jill Brown. I’m a member of Overeaters Anonymous. I’m calling in regard to the letter I wrote you last week requesting a brief appointment for myself and another OA member to sit down and talk with you about our program. Did you receive our letter?” [*Await response.*]

“We were recommended to you by one of your patients, Mary Clark (or: “by one of your colleagues, Dr. Brown”). I would appreciate it if it is possible to set up a brief appointment with you.”

Caller should be prepared to answer questions — there are no “have tos.” If the professional wants to talk on the phone, do so!

### Alternative Dialogue

“I’m sorry, Dr. Jones isn’t available right now. May I help you?”

“Yes, my name is Jill Brown and I’m a member of Overeaters Anonymous. I wrote Dr. Jones a letter last week requesting a brief appointment for myself and another OA member to sit down and talk with him about our program. We were referred to him by one of his patients, Mary Clark (or: “one of his colleagues, Dr. Brown”). I wonder if it would be possible to set up a brief appointment with Dr. Jones.”

“Would it be helpful if we were to drop off or mail some of our pamphlets ahead of time?” (Only if the appointment is a few days away. Again, be prepared to answer some questions.)

“Thank you very much for your help. May I please have your full name and title? Thank you again, goodbye!”

## Panel Instructions

*(Modify as needed.)*

### Organization of a Panel

*To serve:*

1. Fill out a volunteer profile form (see Appendix 2).
2. Review the agenda for appropriate qualifications.
3. Have a “mock panel” with sample questions for practice. For example:

*What is the recovery rate in OA?*

Answer 1: I don't know, but it works for me.

Answer 2: For those who keep coming back, it's very good.

Answer 3: We don't keep exact statistics, but a member survey in 2010 showed that since coming to OA, 69% of members have lost weight and 51% are currently maintaining a healthy weight.

### Suggested Agenda for a Panel Presentation

*Panel setup:*

1. Panel should have at least three members
  - Panel Leader (two years of recovery recommended)
    - a) Welcomes audience
    - b) Gives history of OA
    - c) Gives a summary of OA beliefs, for example, Twelve Steps and eight tools, anonymity, other applicable Traditions
  - Other panel members (ninety days to six months or more of recovery recommended )
    - a) Discuss various stages of physical recovery
    - b) Target to audience (for example, young people, men, women)
    - c) See other topics below
2. Each member shares seven to ten minutes
3. Open panel for questions *after* entire panel shares
4. Distribute a question basket for those unable to ask aloud

### Topics to Cover in a Panel Presentation

1. Compulsive overeating is a dangerous illness with many serious consequences. Willpower, emotional health and self-confidence are no defense against it.
2. The disease is progressive, debilitating and life threatening.
3. The illness has many symptoms besides excess weight.
4. The illness causes problems with:
  - isolation

- 
- finances
  - job
  - health
  - social life
  - family
5. We're not sure what causes it, but probably a number of factors have an influence:
    - environment
    - certain way of reacting to life
    - biological predisposition
  6. There's an effective workable method to arrest the illness:
    - working OA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
    - facing the truth about oneself and the illness
    - attending OA meetings and events
    - talking and listening to recovering compulsive eaters
    - reading OA and AA literature and listening to audio recordings
    - keeping an open mind
    - becoming willing to rely on a power greater than oneself
  7. The disease causes or contributes to our illness on three levels:
    - emotional
    - physical
    - spiritual
  8. We're not a diet and calories club.
  9. We don't endorse any particular plan of eating.
  10. We practice abstinence from compulsive overeating. Each member is free to choose his or her own definition of a healthy eating plan. OA recommends that members seek the advice of a qualified medical professional, if needed, to help them choose an appropriate eating plan. Many individuals choose to avoid individual binge foods and eating between planned meals.
  11. No amount of willpower or self-determination could have saved us.

## Sample Panel Volunteer Letter

*(Modify as needed.)*

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear [*Volunteer*]:

Thanks for your interest in carrying OA's message to the community in general and specifically to people connected with hospitals and institutions.

Before we send you out, we feel a need to bring clarity and confidence to the panel volunteers: clarity about how to explain OA's opinion and position, and how to observe the Traditions when sharing; and confidence about what to expect in various situations and how to respond in ways that are respectful to you and OA. This will also provide an opportunity for you to ask any questions that you might have.

Please join us for a committee meeting on [*date, time and location*]. If this date does not fit into your schedule, but you're sincerely interested, please call me to arrange a time to prepare you for panel volunteering.

We look forward to seeing you on [*date*].

Sincerely,

Name of committee chair and service body

Overeaters Anonymous

cc:

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Appendix 9

## Welcome Memo To Panel Leaders

*(Modify as needed.)*

Date:

To: All New Panel Leaders

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

Re: Panel Leader Instructions

Welcome! Glad to have you aboard. I look forward to the opportunity to do service with you by carrying OA's message.

1. I am the chairman of this [*committee/panel*]. My name and number should be written in the "chairperson" box in the upper right hand corner of the Leader's Worksheet [*Appendix 12*]. Please call me with any questions or problems you may encounter.
2. Please fill out and mail the Speaker's Confirmation and Instructions Form [*Appendix 10*]. This informs your speakers of their assignments and responsibilities.
3. If there is a problem at the [*name of institution*], please notify me. Do not go to the [*name of institution*] personnel before you talk with me.
4. The telephone number in the uppermost right-hand corner of your Leader's Worksheet is the number to call if you must cancel at the last minute. Also put that number in the appropriate place on your Speaker's Confirmation and Instructions form.
5. Panel leaders are responsible for making every effort to find their own replacements to cover vacations, holidays or schedule changes. I will try to cover for you personally if you are in a real bind.
6. If you're going to be late, be sure to take a moment to call the institution. They will appreciate it a lot. Frequently there is no specific contact person at the institution. Please do your best to communicate with the institution and ask who to notify in case of an unexpected delay or problems.
7. If the panel falls on the day or the weekend of a major national holiday, call the hospital in advance. Find out if there will be any [*patients, clients, etc.*] in-house. If there aren't, you may cancel if you wish. It is your decision, but please remember that this is when the loneliest need your support the most.
8. Each panel leader brings two speakers to each panel. If needed, the leader may share if the two speakers were not obtained. Of course, it is encouraged to have new speakers and keep your involvement to a minimum.
9. There may be an emphasis at some Eating Disorder Units (EDUs) on bulimia and anorexia.
10. Patient loads may be light at first, so don't be discouraged if no more than one or two patients attend in the beginning.

If this list is difficult to understand, call me and tell me what you need. I hope this will be a rewarding experience for you. Thank you for volunteering to give service.

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*Appendix 10*

## **Speaker Confirmation And Instructions**

*(Modify as needed.)*

[Name of service body]

[Name of committee]

You are confirmed to speak at:

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of an emergency please notify your panel leader \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ at ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

To cancel within eight hours of your panel, and your leader is not available, please contact the institution at ( ) \_\_\_\_\_, as close to your panel time as possible, and leave a message for the panel leader.

Thank you.

Appendix 11

# Chairperson's Worksheet

*(Modify as needed.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
INSTITUTION

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE, ZIP

\_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE NUMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT PERSON

\_\_\_\_\_  
SUPERVISOR

DAY/TIME

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1st												
2nd												
3rd												
4th												
5th												
6th												
7th												

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Appendix 12

# Leader's Worksheet

*(Modify as needed.)*

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**WEEK / DAY / TIME**

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**INSTITUTION**

---

**TELEPHONE**

---

**ADDRESS**

---

**CONTACT PERSON**

---

**CITY/STATE/ZIP**

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**CHAIRPERSON**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>SPEAKER</b>

## Questions Non-OA Members Frequently Ask Volunteers

*(Modify as needed.)*

### **What is compulsive overeating?**

Compulsive eating is a progressive illness which cannot be cured but can be arrested. Compulsive eaters are “driven by forces we don’t understand to deal with food in irrational and self-destructive ways” (*Questions and Answers*).

### **How does OA work?**

The Twelve Steps are the heart of the OA recovery program. They offer a new way of life that enables the compulsive overeater to live without the need for excess food. Members who make an earnest effort to follow these Steps and to apply them in daily living get far more out of OA than do those members who merely come to meetings and don’t do the serious emotional and spiritual work involved in the Steps (*Questions and Answers*).

### **What are the Twelve Steps?**

The ideas expressed in the Twelve Steps, which originated in Alcoholics Anonymous, reflect practical experience and application of physical, emotional and spiritual insights as recorded by thinkers throughout many ages. Their greatest importance lies in the fact that they work. They enable compulsive eaters to lead happy, productive lives. They represent the foundation upon which OA has been built (*Questions and Answers*).

### **How does a person join OA?**

No one “joins” in the usual sense of the word. There are no membership applications to fill out. Those who believe they have an eating problem may join simply by attending meetings (*Questions and Answers*). “The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively (Tradition 3) . . . If you feel you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms” (*Many Symptoms, One Solution*).

### **How did OA start?**

OA was founded in Los Angeles, CA, on January 19, 1960, with an initial meeting of three compulsive overeaters. Our founder, Rozanne S., was assisted by the founder of Gamblers Anonymous in applying the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous to our particular compulsion (*OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Service Bodies*). From that first meeting, OA has grown until today there are thousands of meetings in the United States, Canada, and other countries throughout the world (*About OA*).

### **Why are OA members anonymous?**

Anonymity allows the Fellowship to govern itself through principles rather than personalities. Social and economic status have no relevance in OA; we are all compulsive eaters. Anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication provides assurance that OA membership will not be disclosed (*About OA*).

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Anonymity at the most basic level says we don't disclose the identities of individual members; their personal situations; or what they share in confidence at meetings, online or on the phone with us. This makes OA a safe place where we can be honest with ourselves and others (*Questions and Answers*).

**What does membership in OA cost? How is OA supported?**

There are no membership dues or fees. Most local groups “pass the basket” to cover the group’s expenses and to support our service bodies (*Questions and Answers*).

**Are there many men in OA?**

Based on a 2010 survey of members in the US and around the world, 13% of members were male.

**Can young people join?**

Yes, sometimes they attend meetings open to all who have a desire to stop eating compulsively and sometimes they attend special meetings targeted for teens and young people. A pamphlet for teens can be obtained from the World Service Office.

**Does OA work for everyone?**

OA, like AA, works for those who work the program. “Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 58).

**Are all OA groups alike?**

The essence of the program is the same, but some groups are more structured and disciplined, while others are more individualized. They vary in size, demographics, recovery profiles, and formats. Where possible, newcomers are encouraged to attend several different meetings to find what works for them.

**Is OA affiliated with any other organizations?**

No. OA is not affiliated with any other organizations of any sort. While someone’s first contact with the program may come from a treatment facility, OA itself is not affiliated with treatment centers (*OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Service Bodies; Treatment and Beyond*).

**Is OA a religious organization?**

“Overeaters Anonymous has no religious requirement, affiliation, or orientation. The Twelve-Step program of recovery is considered ‘spiritual’ because it deals with inner change. OA has members of many different religious beliefs as well as some atheists and agnostics” (*About OA*).

**Does OA recommend a particular diet?**

OA is not a diet club, and we do not endorse or recommend any particular plan of eating. While OA does make available to its fellowship a pamphlet which contains sample food plans OA members have chosen as plans of eating (*Dignity of Choice*), OA members are free to follow the food plan of their choice. It is strongly recommended that the members contact a health care professional before embarking on any particular plan of eating. The OA program works, not by following a particular food plan, but by working the Twelve Steps.

## Speaker's Instructions

*(Modify as needed.)*

### **Please Do:**

- Reveal only your first name and explain why OA members remain anonymous.
- Explain that although you are here to represent OA, you speak only from your own experience, and do not speak for OA as a whole.
- Explain the tools of recovery.
- Explain the Twelve Steps and how they guide the individual to recovery on three levels: physical, emotional and spiritual.
- Talk about recovery and how you use the Twelve Steps to live abstinently.
- Explain the Twelve Traditions and their purpose of protecting the unity of the Fellowship.
- Remember OA's amateur standing. We are not professionals and offer no medical, nutritional or psychological advice.
- Explain that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
- Explain that no dues or fees are required.
- Bring some literature. (Distribute after the discussion and leave it with the director.)
- Offer to take someone to a meeting.
- Relax — you wouldn't have been asked to speak if you weren't capable.
- Thank everyone for the opportunity to share.

Presentations are better received when negativity is avoided. The following guidelines have been found to be very important.

### **Please Don't:**

- Talk down to a group or use profane or vulgar language.
- Use clinical or psychological terms. Also avoid program jargon.
- Argue or debate. Just say that OA takes no sides on outside issues (this includes nutrition).
- Give a prolonged binge-a-log.
- Make any negative remarks about a facility, its program or staff.
- Criticize another program or food plan. They can use whatever food plan they wish.
- Use names of specific professionals, institutions, hospitals, diet or nutritional products, etc.
- Give information about therapists, church attendance, food plans, exercise programs, self-help books, metaphysics, etc. Although these things may have been supportive and crucial to your personal interpretation of recovery, they are not part of the OA message. Think about what message you are sending to the newcomer.

## Sample Thank-You Letter

*(Modify as needed.)*

*letterhead*

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear :

We of Overeaters Anonymous thank you for the opportunity to share our experience, strength and hope with you and your [*staff, students, inmates, residents, employees*]. Your cooperation was greatly appreciated.

It was a privilege to share with you. Our individual recovery is based on reaching out to others. You have made this possible and it is indeed a great benefit to our organization.

If we can be of further service to you in the future, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Name of committee and service body  
Overeaters Anonymous

Enclosure

# Overeaters Anonymous Professional Outreach Committee Contact Form

*(Modify as needed.)*

Please complete this form for each individual contacted, retain one copy for your personal files and another copy for your service body committee files, and mail a copy to:

WORLD SERVICE PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH COMMITTEE  
OA WORLD SERVICE OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 44020  
RIO RANCHO, NM 87174-4020 USA

## Section 1 — Information Regarding the Person Contacted

FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DEGREE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EXT \_\_\_\_\_

FULL NAME OF SECRETARY/RECEPTIONIST \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK ONE:  OA MEMBER  SUPPORTS OA  FRIENDLY

NEUTRAL  SKEPTICAL  OPPOSES OA

IF THIS CONTACT IS AN OA MEMBER OR SUPPORTER, IS HE OR SHE WILLING TO:

REFER PATIENTS/CLIENTS

DISPLAY LITERATURE IN WAITING ROOM

FACILITATE PCC APPOINTMENTS WITH COLLEAGUES

FACILITATE OA SPEAKERS BEFORE PROFESSIONAL GATHERINGS

FACILITATE OA COVERAGE IN PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

SERVE ON PUBLIC PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

OTHER, SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT SORT OF COOPERATION OR ASSISTANCE DID HE OR SHE REQUEST?

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Section 2 — Information Regarding the Contact Itself**

DATE OF CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_

NATURE OF CONTACT:  LETTER  TELEPHONE  PERSONAL VISIT

OTHER, SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_

MATERIAL PROVIDED \_\_\_\_\_

FROM WHOM DID YOU GET THE CONTACT'S NAME:

OA MEMBER  PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUE OF CONTACT

OTHER, SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_

THEIR FULL NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3 — Information Regarding the OA Member Filing This Report**

YOUR FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SERVICE BODY \_\_\_\_\_ REGION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ TODAY'S DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL MEMBERS MAKING THIS CONTACT:

	<b>name</b>	<b>address</b>	<b>city/state/zip</b>	<b>telephone</b>
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____

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Appendix 17

## Professional Kits

The following kits are sent out by the WSO when responding to professional inquiries. A standard kit is composed of the following:

- Cover letter from the World Service Office, Member Services
- *Compulsive Overeating—An Inside View*
- The *Courier* newsletter
- *Hearing Is Believing* 5-minute CD
- *Introducing OA to Healthcare Professionals*
- *Is Food a Problem for You?* (10 copies)
- 2010 Member Survey Report
- Past issue of *Lifeline*
- *OA Members Come in all Sizes*
- *Questions & Answers*
- Literature catalog

Young People's Professional Kits are the same as a standard kit with the following items added:

- *To Parents and Concerned Adults*
- *To the Teen* (flyer)
- *To the Teen* (brochure)

Specialty pamphlets, if needed, are added to the standard kit in the front of the packet:

- *Fifteen Questions*
- *Introducing OA to the Clergy*
- *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*
- *Treatment and Beyond*

## Suggested Meeting Format

We have found that consistent use of this format keeps meetings focused on OA recovery, reinforces our program and encourages unity. It also provides a reassuring feeling of continuity—an important factor in membership retention. Your group may modify the format to better suit its needs.

The meeting is to begin at \_\_\_\_\_

**1.** “Welcome to the [*day and time*] \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a compulsive overeater and your leader for this meeting.”

**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 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 overeaters here besides myself?  
“Is there anyone here for a first, second or third time? Would you please tell us your first name so we can welcome you? If you are returning to OA or are visiting from another area, please tell us your first name so we can also welcome you. [*Welcome each person by name.*]

“We encourage you to:

- get a sponsor to help guide your recovery;
- develop a plan of eating and if you wish, write down and report daily to your sponsor; and
- read OA-approved literature to develop a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.”

**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 overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.”

**5.** [*Ask someone to read “Our Invitation to You,” which includes the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous.*]

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6. *[Ask someone to read “The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.”]*

7. **TOOLS:** “In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.’ 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. For more information, read the *Tools of Recovery* pamphlet.

8. **SPONSORS:** “Sponsorship is one of our keys to success. Sponsors are OA members committed to abstinence and to living the Steps and 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 sponsors please identify themselves and briefly qualify; for example, time in program, length of abstinence, Steps completed, weight change/relief from food obsession.”

9. *[Pass the meeting record book around and ask members to sign their names with phone numbers and email addresses, if they would like. Pass the record book around a second time so members may write down phone numbers and email addresses to call or write later.]*

10. **LITERATURE:** “Only OA-approved literature is displayed at this meeting. Many OA members find that reading our literature on a daily basis further reinforces how to live the Twelve Steps.” *[Ask someone to serve at the literature table during the break and after the meeting.]*

11. **REPORTS:** *[Secretary makes announcements; presents chips and medallions, if customary. Intergroup representative’s report and treasurer’s report are to be given once a month.]*

12. **SEVENTH TRADITION:** “According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Our group expenses are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. We send monthly contributions to our intergroup or service board, region and the World Service Office to help carry the message to other compulsive overeaters. Give as if your life depends on it!”

13. **OPTIONAL FIVE-OR TEN-MINUTE BREAK:** *[This can be used as a time for making newcomers feel welcome by offering meeting list information, directing them to the literature table and introducing them to sponsors.]*

14. **STATE THIS MEETING’S CHOICE:** *[Some meetings vary or combine options, as decided by group conscience. Sample options are listed below.]*

**Step and Tradition Meetings:** “This is a Step meeting, and we are studying Step \_\_\_\_\_ and/or Tradition \_\_\_\_.” *[Leader begins reading from The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous and members share about the Step or Tradition.]*

**Topic Meetings:** “This is a topic meeting. Today’s OA program topic is \_\_\_\_\_.”

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*[Members are invited to share for three to five minutes on the topic.]*

**Speaker Meetings:** “This is a speaker meeting.” *[Leader describes his or her story for about 20 minutes and shares experience, strength and hope. Members are invited to share \_\_\_\_\_ for three to five minutes.]*

**Literature Meetings:** “This is a literature meeting. Today we are studying \_\_\_\_\_.” *[Choose from any OA-approved literature. Members may read and share, or read and then share at the end.]*

**15. SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR SHARING:** *[We suggest you read the following before members begin 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, rather than just the events of the day or week. If you are having difficulties, share how you use the program to deal with them. 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/sharing at the time.

**“We ask everyone to respect our group conscience.** This meeting has decided that the chair for each meeting should have the discretion to suggest to anyone sharing that he or she is off topic or is speaking too long, and this meeting asks you to accept this suggestion in order to keep the meeting on track.” *[We suggest you add here any other guidelines your meeting has decided by group conscience to follow.]*

**16. CLOSING:** “By following the Twelve Steps, attending meetings regularly and using the OA tools, thousands have changed their lives. We offer hope and encouragement. 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 honor each others’ anonymity. ‘What you hear here, who 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.

“Thank you for asking me to be your leader. After a moment of silence, will those of you who wish to please join us in \_\_\_\_\_.” *[Closing of your choice. The 1993 Business Conference suggests that meetings be closed with the Serenity Prayer, the Seventh-Step Prayer, the Third-Step Prayer, or the OA Promise “I Put My Hand in Yours.”]*

***[Meeting may last one hour, one-and-a-half hours or two hours.]***

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# OA GUIDELINES

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## Guidelines for Health Fair Participation

### **Purpose**

An OA display at a local health fair is an excellent way of doing Twelfth-Step outreach work.

### **How to locate health fairs in your area**

Personal contacts can be a great starting point in finding out about health fairs in your area. Your group or intergroup's public information committee can make lists of people they know in the health care field. Another great resource is the Internet, where you can search for online community calendars or resources. Check local newspapers for health fairs in the area. If you find out about an event too late to participate, ask to be on the list for next year's event. Most health fairs are held annually.

### **Preparation and planning** (about three to four months prior)

*Form a committee and choose a chairperson:* Encourage participation within your intergroup at meetings or through the intergroup newsletter. Describe specific tasks and the time commitment needed to accomplish them.

*Questions to ask the fair organizers:* What are the days and times for setup, operation and breakdown? Are there any fees? What is your projected attendance? Who else will be exhibiting? Will other Twelve-Step programs be participating? Can we be situated near them? Will there be a speaker on compulsive overeating? Can we hold an open OA meeting at the site? Are there size limits or special requirements for our display? Will rental tables or chairs be available? Will an electrical outlet be accessible near our booth? Will copy machines or office supplies be available?

### **Materials** (about two to three months prior)

*Prepare the display:* Your intergroup or region might own a professional exhibit booth. If not, use

a simple table and chairs, the Public Information Poster Kit, and an attractive display of OA literature (see below). All signs should be professional looking. The Overeaters Anonymous name and logo should be prominent. Avoid a cluttered look.

*Stocking the booth:* Supplies may include an extension cord, tape, magic markers, scissors, glue, rubber bands, a stapler and staples, paper clips, volunteer badges, white-out, pens, pencils, a camera and film to record the event, clipboards, and notepaper.

*Literature:* Only OA Conference- or board-approved literature should be offered. Bring enough so that people may take some, but don't overwhelm the display with it. The literature suggested below is high in newcomer interest and low in cost:

*About OA*  
*A Program of Recovery*  
*Compulsive Eating: An Inside View*  
*Fifteen questions*  
*Many Symptoms, One Solution*  
*New-Prospect Cards*  
*To the Teen (flyer)*  
*The Tools of Recovery*  
*To the Family*  
*To the Newcomer*  
*OA Members Come in All Sizes*

For health fairs held in work environments, at or near military bases or at health care facilities, we also suggest:

*Treatment and Beyond*  
*Introducing OA to Health Care Professionals*

To attract people to meetings, bring a supply of local meeting lists without contact names. Be sure to include a handout that has the [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) Web site address, as well as the address of your service body's Web site, if you have one. Back issues of *Lifeline* and the *Courier* may be available from the WSO, as well as subscription forms and literature catalogs. Bring along a sign-up sheet for

people who want to receive more information or your service body newsletter via email. For display only, you might also include the books *Overeaters Anonymous*, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* (also available as a CD), *For Today*, *Lifeline Sampler and Abstinence*; as well as specialized OA pamphlets such as *To the Man*.

#### **Volunteers** (about one to two months prior)

*Get firm commitments from volunteers and make sure they know their areas of responsibility:* setup, breakdown, general staffing, backup, etc. Arrange the schedule so that two volunteers will be working the booth at all times in case one has to leave temporarily. We suggest shifts no longer than three hours, with two hours being optimum. Make sure all volunteers are comfortable with being seen by the general public, who may ask them about their OA membership or may assume it. Call volunteers one month before the fair and again one week before the fair to confirm their participation. Give copies of these *Guidelines for Health Fair Participation* to all volunteers.

#### **At the fair**

*Setting up:* Do this as early as possible. It's easiest to have those who put the display and arrange the literature take the first shift.

*Demeanor while working the table or booth:* Be friendly, but don't push information or literature. Sit back from the table—this allows people to feel free to take material without feeling intimidated. Look alert and interested, letting people know you're ready to speak with them if they wish. Be careful about socializing with others staffing the booth; if you appear too "busy," attendees may be hesitant to approach. When speaking with them, make eye contact. Remember that this is a program of attraction, not promotion. There should be no eating, drinking or smoking at the booth. Dress neatly and appropriately.

*Answering Questions:* Telling people that OA is "a Twelve-Step program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous" will answer a great many questions. Keep in mind that you're not expected to be an expert on compulsive overeating. You may, however, share your experience, strength and hope;

you might wish to bring your "before" pictures. If you give an opinion, make it clear that it is your opinion and not representative of OA as a whole.

Give people literature and meeting lists, and mention the Web site. Be sure to mention that if they have any questions, they are welcome to call the contact numbers on the meeting list or to visit the [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org) Web site.

#### **Followup**

*Send thank-you notes to the fair organizers.* Ask them to please put you on the mailing list for next year. Have a post-fair evaluation meeting with the volunteers to discuss how it went and collect suggestions for next time.

Just as you do for a public information event followup, try to determine how many health fair attendees went on to attend an OA meeting. Be sure to tell all your groups that you are trying to track the effectiveness of the health fair events. Please have them ask every newcomer, "How did you hear about OA?" This is the best kind of feedback because it is from your target audience and not an active member.

For more information about doing health fairs or other public information work, consult the *Public Information Service Manual* and the *Professional Outreach Manual*, both available through the WSO.

OA Board-Approved

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Appendix 20

## Literature And Supplies

(Modify as needed.)

The following list is a guideline for ordering literature and supplies. Use a literature catalog from the WSO and plan on furnishing your own office supplies.

### ***Literature***

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
106	<i>Many Symptoms, One Solution</i>
110	<i>OA Members Come In All Sizes</i>
130	<i>Program of Recovery</i>
140	<i>Dignity of Choice</i>
145	<i>A Plan of Eating</i>
160	<i>Tools of Recovery</i>
170	<i>Questions &amp; Answers</i>
240	<i>To the Family</i>
320	<i>Compulsive Overeating: An Inside View</i>
437	<i>I Put My Hand in Yours</i> (wallet card)
751	<i>About OA</i>
755	<i>Fifteen Questions</i>
756	<i>To the Teen</i> (flyer)
757	<i>Treatment and Beyond</i>

### ***Display copy of each:***

976	<i>A New Beginning</i>
980	<i>Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition</i>
982	<i>Lifeline Sampler</i>
984	<i>For Today</i>
986	<i>Voices of Recovery</i>
990	<i>The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA</i> (book and cassettes-CDs)
994	<i>Abstinence</i>
998	<i>Beyond Our Wildest Dreams</i>
1000	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i> (Big Book)

### ***Films (available in DVD)***

622 (Betacam)	
and 625 (DVD)	“Many Symptoms, the OA Solution” (60-, 30-, and 15-second spots)
647	“Overeaters Anonymous — It Works” (sixteen minutes)

### ***Office Supplies***

Paper clips and rubber bands  
Ruler  
Marker pen and pens  
Scissor

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Scotch tape and shipping tape  
Scratch pad  
Stapler/staples and staple remover  
Volunteer badges w/blank cards (6)  
White out  
3" x 5" plain index cards

***Additional Exhibit Supplies***

Copies of The *Courier*, available to download from [www.oa.org/media-resources/courier.php](http://www.oa.org/media-resources/courier.php)  
Mailing list forms  
*Lifeline* subscription forms  
Back copies of *Lifeline*  
Literature order forms  
Current service body/region directories  
Camera to record event  
Clipboards (3)  
Glue  
Local meeting lists (local service body)

Appendix 21

## U.S. Military Contact Points

The following is a sample listing that you can use to contact the proper military personnel. They are listed by type of U.S. military service and position.

<b>AIR FORCE</b>	<b>NAVY</b>	<b>MARINES</b>	<b>ARMY</b>	<b>COAST GUARD</b>
Base Commander	Base Commander	Base/Air Station Commander	Post Commander	
Senior Enlisted Advisor	Command Master Chief		Sergeant Major	
Hospital Commander	Hospital Commander	Hospital/Branch Clinic Commander	Hospital Commander	
Chief Dietitian	Chief Nutritionist	Chief Nutritionist		
Head Weight Control Program	Physical Fitness Coordinator			Physical Fitness Program and Weight Policy Resource Guide
Chaplain	Chaplain	Chaplain	Chaplain	Chaplain
Drug & Alcohol Abuse Program Office	DAPA (Drug & Alcohol Program Advisor)	Substance Abuse Counseling Office		Office of Work-Life Program - Substance Abuse Program
Family Services	Family Service Center	Family Service Center		Office of Work-Life Program - Family Support
Air Force Aid	Navy Relief	Navy Relief	Army Relief	
	Ombudsman			Ombudsman
	CAAC (Counseling and Assistance Center)			

## Sample Letter to a Base Hospital Commander

Date

Commander USAF Hospital  
\_\_\_\_\_, AFB  
\_\_\_\_\_, CA \_\_\_\_\_

Dear :

The purpose of this letter is to better acquaint you with the program of Overeaters Anonymous (OA). We feel that the OA program can be a valuable asset in helping military personnel with weight problems.

OA 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 membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our sole purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

OA is not a diet club. We do not endorse any particular diet or food plan. That is the job of qualified professionals. OA's basic concept is that compulsive overeating is a disease which affects a person physically, spiritually and emotionally. OA members feel that they are unable to permanently control their compulsion by unaided willpower. OA offers a Twelve-Step program of recovery which enables the compulsive eater to live without the need for excess food.

We have included some pamphlets which should answer many of the questions that you may have about us. If we can assist you in helping the military compulsive overeater, or you need more information, please call us at \_\_\_\_\_. We would be glad to answer any of your questions. We also have members who are ready to discuss with you or your staff any information about our program.

The OA program has helped many thousands of people to overcome the problems of compulsive overeating. We desire to continue providing this assistance to all military personnel who need and want it. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

2 Enclosures: *About OA; Introducing OA to Healthcare Professionals*





