

Sunday Serenity Group #22852

“Welcome to the Sunday 5:30pm meeting of Overeaters Anonymous.

My name is _____. I am a compulsive eater and your leader for this meeting

“Will those who wish, 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.”

Please mute your phones or other devices at this time and keep them muted, unless you are speaking

“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, regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other trait.

“Are there any compulsive eaters here besides myself?

“Is there anyone here for the 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 it down and report daily to your sponsor; and
- read OA-approved literature to develop a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.”

“**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 behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.”

[If there is a newcomer, the reader also reads (or asks someone else to read) the abridged version of ‘Welcome Home’]

I have asked _____ to our read “Our Invitation to You,” which includes the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous.

I have also asked _____ to read The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous.

THE DEFINITIONS OF “ABSTINENCE” AND “RECOVERY” IN OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS :

Abstinence: The action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working
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towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.

Spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery is the result of living and working the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program on a daily basis.”

TOOLS: “The OATools of Recovery help us work the Steps and refrain from compulsive overeat-ing. The nine Tools are: a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature, an action plan, anonymity, and service. For more information, read *The Tools of Recovery* pamphlet.”

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 they 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 in the chat, as well as what type of sponsor they are.?”

[We also ask members and newcomers to add their names and numbers to the chat, if they would like, so we can contact each other after the meeting, and so we can keep you informed of events]

LITERATURE: “Only OA-approved literature is used at this meeting. Many OA members find that reading our literature on a daily basis further reinforces how to live the Twelve Steps. Literature can be purchased online at www.oa.org. Our local website is www.centralmidlandsoa.com has lots of information to keep you connected and informed locally.

SEVENTH TRADITION: “According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Expenses are newcomer literature and anniversary chips. We also send regular contributions to our intergroup or service board, our region, and the World Service Office to help carry the message to other compulsive overeaters. Give as if your life depends on it! We encourage OA members to give as much as they are able, to help our group be self-supporting. The suggested contribution is whatever you can give.” Is someone here able to place our venmo account in the chat?

REPORTS: Are there any OA related announcements?

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR 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 or sharing at the time.

OPTIONAL MEDITATION: This group has decided that the leader may choose to have a three minute meditation before each meeting. The leader may use a prepared meditation format (such as a guided meditation app) they may choose to play soothing music, or have silent meditation.
(The leader may also ask another to provide this service.)

STATE THIS MEETING'S CHOICE: *[As decided by group conscience, this meeting has a rotating format each week of the month.*

WEEK ONE: This is a Steps Meetings: We are currently on Step ____ page ____ reading from the conference approved literature *OA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. Who is willing to get us started?

WEEK TWO: This is a speaker meeting. _____ has agreed to share his/her experience, strength, and hope. _____ will share his/her story for about twenty minutes and members are invited to ask questions or make comments afterwards.

WEEK THREE: This is a literature meeting. Today we are reading and discussing from the conference approved literature *Overeaters Anonymous*, third edition. We are currently on page _____. We will read and then open up for discussion. Who is willing to read the next section? (if discussion falters, read the next entry).

WEEK FOUR: This is a literature meeting. Today, we are reading from the new OA conference approved literature *Body Image, Relationships and Sexuality*. We are currently on page _____. We will read and then open up for discussion. Who is willing to read the next section? (if discussion falters, read the next entry).

WEEK FIVE: (when applicable) Newcomer Connect Meeting. This is a more informal meeting where newcomers can ask questions, seek guidance, connect with others, etc.

CHIPS: It is now time to give out the chips! This meeting uses chips to mark time in program or length of abstinence, etc. Would someone please give out the chips?

Leader reads "The Promises", or asks someone else to read them

CLOSING: “By following the Twelve Steps, attending meetings regularly, and using the OATools, 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 honor each other’s anonymity. **Whom you see here, What you hear 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.

“There are many different types of meetings, all of which are available to support your recovery from compulsive eating. We welcome you to this meeting whenever you would care to attend. There are some face-to-face meetings and other virtual (phone and technology-based) meetings that you may find helpful. Information about these meetings can be found on www.oa.org and www.centralmidlandsoa.com

"Thank you for allowing me to be your leader. After a moment of silence, will those who wish please join me

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in _____.

[Select one of the following suggested closings: Serenity Prayer, Seventh Step Prayer, Third Step Prayer, or the OA Promise 'I put my hand in yours....']

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 defense 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 behaviors 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 symptoms of compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors 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.

Here are the Steps as adapted for 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 an 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!

The Tools of Recovery (abridged)

We use Tools—a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, the telephone, writing, literature, action plan, anonymity and service—to help us achieve and maintain abstinence and recover from our disease. Many of us have found we cannot abstain from compulsive eating unless we use some or all of OA's nine Tools of recovery to help us practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

A Plan of Eating

A plan of eating helps us abstain from compulsive eating. (See the pamphlet *Dignity of Choice*.) This Tool helps us deal with the physical aspects of our disease and achieve physical recovery.

Sponsorship

We ask a sponsor to help us through our program of recovery on all three levels: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Find a sponsor who has what you want and ask that person how he or she is achieving it.

Meetings

Meetings give us an opportunity to identify our common problem, confirm our common solution through the Twelve Steps, and share the gifts we receive through this program. In addition to face-to-face meetings, OA offers telephone and online meetings.

Telephone

Many members call, text, or email their sponsors and other OA members daily. Telephone or electronic contact also provides an immediate outlet for those hard-to-handle highs and lows we may experience.

Writing

Putting our thoughts and feelings down on paper helps us to better understand our actions and reactions in a way that is often not revealed to us by simply thinking or talking about them.

Literature

We read OA-approved books, pamphlets, and *Lifeline* magazine. Reading literature daily reinforces how to live the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

Action Plan

An action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions that are necessary to support our individual abstinence. Just like our plan of eating, it may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted to bring structure, balance, and manageability into our lives.

Anonymity

Anonymity guarantees we will place principles before personalities and assures us that only we have the right to make our membership known within our community. Anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication means that we never allow our faces or last names to be used once we identify ourselves as OA members.

Within the Fellowship, anonymity means that whatever we share with another OA member will be held in respect and confidence. What we hear at meetings should remain there.

Service

Any form of service that helps reach a fellow sufferer adds to the quality of our own recovery. Members can give service by getting to meetings, putting away chairs, putting out literature, and talking to newcomers. Beyond the group level, a member can serve as intergroup representative, committee chair, region representative, or Conference delegate.

As OA's responsibility pledge states: "Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this, I am responsible."

See the full *Tools of Recovery* pamphlet for more information.

Welcome Home (abridged)

Have you ever wished you could lose ten pounds (5 kg)? Twenty (9 kg)? Forty (18kg)? A hundred (45kg) or more? Have you ever wished that once you got it off you could keep it off? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you sometimes felt out of step with the world, like a homeless orphan without a place where you really belonged? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever wished your family would get to work or school so you could get busy eating? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever awakened first thing in the morning and felt happy because you remembered that your favorite goodie was waiting for you in the fridge or in the cupboard? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever looked up at the stars and wondered what an insignificant person like you is doing in the world anyway? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever cooked, bought, or baked for your family and then eaten everything yourself so you wouldn't have to share? We know you in OA because we are you. Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever wanted to hide in the house, without going to work, without getting cleaned up or even getting dressed, without seeing anyone or letting anyone see you? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever hidden food under the bed, under the pillow, in the drawer, in the bathroom, in the wastebasket, the cupboard, the clothes hamper, the closet, or the car so that you could eat without anyone seeing you? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever been angry, resentful, defiant—toward God, your mate, your doctor, your mother, your father, your friends, your children, the salespeople in stores whose looks spoke a thousand words as you tried on clothes—because they were thin, because they wanted you to be thin, and because you were forced to diet to please them or shut them up or make them eat their words and their looks? We welcome you to OA; welcome home!

Have you ever sobbed out your misery in the dark night because no one loved or understood you? Welcome to OA; welcome home!

—*A Taste of Lifeline*, pp. xiii–xvi

The Twelve Traditions

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 Him-self 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.