



## Suggested Online 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 member retention. Each group should modify this format to better suit its needs.

*Note: The Suggested Online Meeting Format includes readings of Our Invitation to You (which includes the Twelve Steps of OA), the Twelve Traditions of OA, the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, Welcome Home (abridged), the Tools of Recovery (abridged), and the OA Promise. Find, print, and/or download these resources in the Document Library on [oa.org](http://oa.org). Links to these resources are embedded and listed at the end of the Meeting Format.*

- 1. OPENING:** “Welcome to the *[day and time]* \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a compulsive eater and your leader for this meeting. Please silence your phones at this time.

“Our host will keep everyone but the leader and the volunteer timer muted at all times, except during introductions and individually when it is your turn to share. Please be aware that your anonymity cannot be fully protected when attending a virtual meeting. We suggest you change your name so only your first name appears. If you need help, contact the host or cohost through chat.” *[Give meeting attendees a few minutes.]*

“We will ask for volunteers for the readings and sharing. To volunteer, please raise your virtual hand.

“Is someone willing to give service as the timer? Our shares will be limited to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. Please raise your virtual hand if you are willing to be the timer.” *[Wait for volunteer.]*

“Thank you \_\_\_\_\_ for being our timer. Timer, how will you let us know when time is up?”

- 2. SERENITY PRAYER:** “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.”

- 3. WELCOME:** “Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous; we are a growing, evolving Fellowship with in-person and virtual meetings around the world. In OA, there are opportunities for recovery and to give service at local and virtual group, intergroup/service board, region, and world service levels. We strive to provide literature and support in every language, worldwide, to meet still-suffering compulsive eaters wherever they are.

“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 attribute.”

“Are there any compulsive eaters here besides me?”

“Is there anyone here for the first, second, or third time? Would you please tell us your first name so we can welcome you? [*Welcome each person by name.*]

“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.”

**4. PREAMBLE:** “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.”

**5. READINGS:** [*Ask someone to read “[Our Invitation to You](#),” which includes the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Then ask someone to read the [Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous](#). Some meetings may also decide to read the [Twelve Concepts of OA Service](#) or to read the Concept corresponding to the month of the year.]*

*Optional:* “We will now read an abridged version of ‘[Welcome Home](#)’ from the book *A Taste of Lifeline*.”

**6. ABSTINENCE AND RECOVERY:** “The definitions of abstinence and recovery in Overeaters Anonymous are:

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 and working the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program on a daily basis.”

**7. 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, an action plan, anonymity, and service. For more information, read [The Tools of Recovery pamphlet.](#) [Or read [The Tools of Recovery \(abridged\).](#)]

8. **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 they are achieving it. Will all abstinent sponsors please identify themselves by raising their virtual hand and putting their contact information in the chat?"
9. **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. If you'd like to purchase OA literature, visit the OA bookstore at [bookstore.oa.org.](#)"
10. **REPORTS:** "Are there any OA-related announcements?" [Announce next scheduled business meeting, which may include intergroup representative's report and treasurer's report.]
11. **SEVENTH TRADITION:** "According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Expenses are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. We 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 US\$5.00 or more. The process for how to [give a contribution](#) will be entered in the chat."
12. **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. We are reading Step \_\_\_\_\_ and/or Tradition \_\_\_\_\_."  
[Leader begins reading from [The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition](#). Members share about the Step or Tradition.]

**Topic Meetings:** "This is a topic meeting. Today's OA program topic is \_\_\_\_\_."  
[Members are invited to share for three to five minutes on the topic.]

**Speaker Meetings:** "This is a speaker meeting." [Leader describes their story for about twenty 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 reading \_\_\_\_\_."  
[Choose from any OA-approved literature. Members may read and share or read and then share at the end.]

13. **SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR SHARING:** "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. Using the chat function to speak to members during others' shares is also considered cross talk. Please limit chats to providing your contact information and sponsorship availability.

"We ask everyone to respect our group conscience. This meeting has decided that the chair for each meeting has the discretion to suggest to anyone sharing that they are off-topic or is speaking too long. This meeting asks you to accept this suggestion in order to keep the meeting on track." *[Add here any other guidelines your group conscience has decided to follow.]*

**14. 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, you will find a link in the chat to the OA pamphlet [Where Do I Start? Everything a Newcomer Needs to Know](#). We suggest attending at least six different meetings to learn the many ways OA can help you.

"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. Find information on other OA meetings at [Find a Meeting](#) on oa.org.

"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.

"Thank you for asking me to be your leader. After a moment of silence, will those of you who wish please join us 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...').]*

**Find, print, and/or download the resources mentioned in this meeting format in the Document Library on oa.org:**

- [Our Invitation to You](#)
- [The Twelve Traditions](#)
- [The Twelve Concepts of OA Service](#)
- [Welcome Home \(abridged\)](#)
- [The Tools of Recovery \(abridged\)](#)
- [The OA Promise](#)

**OA Responsibility Pledge**

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

OA Board-approved. Overeaters Anonymous®, Inc.  
Mail Address: P.O. Box 44727, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4727 USA  
1-505-891-2664 • info@oa.org • oa.org  
©2023 Overeaters Anonymous®, Inc. All rights reserved. Rev. 1/2024.