

## **CAIOA Love, Light & Harmony Meeting Format**

*Sundays 3:00 - 4:00 pm CST (Zoom Only)*

### **Welcome**

“Welcome to the Sunday, 3 pm Love, Light & Harmony meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a compulsive overeater & your leader for this meeting. Please be mindful of background noise & keep your device muted unless you are speaking. Thank you.”

### **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 & the wisdom to know the difference.”

### **OA Preamble**

“Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength & 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 & compulsive food behaviors & to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.”

### **Abstinence & Recovery Definitions**

“Here are the definitions of ‘abstinence’ & ‘recovery’ in Overeaters Anonymous:

- Abstinence: The act of refraining from compulsive eating & compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.
- Recovery: The removal of the need to engage in compulsive eating

behaviors.

Spiritual, emotional & physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.”

### **Invitation To You**

“Could I have a volunteer read our ‘Invitation to You’? This can be found at the bottom of our meeting format or in the Brown Basket Book (3rd edition) starting on page 1 & ending on page 5.”

### **Tradition Of The Month**

“During this meeting, we read the Tradition that corresponds to the current month only. Since it is the \_\_\_\_\_ month, I’ll read the \_\_\_\_\_ tradition, which is \_\_\_\_\_.”

*Note to Leader: For example, we read the 5th Tradition during the month of May. The Traditions can be found on the last page of this meeting format.*

### **Introductions**

“Let’s go around the room & introduce ourselves. I’ll start. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ & I am a compulsive overeater.”

“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 as well.”

### **Sponsors**

“Sponsorship is one of our keys to success. Sponsors are OA members committed to abstinence & to living the Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions to the best of their ability. Sponsors share their program up to the level of their experience & they strengthen their recovery through this service to others. To find a sponsor, look for someone who has what you want & ask how he or she is achieving it. Will all available sponsors please identify themselves?”

### **7th Tradition**

“According to our 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We send contributions to our intergroup to help carry the message to other compulsive overeaters. A donation by you, unless you are a Newcomer, helps ensure this meeting will continue.”

### **Guidelines for Sharing**

“We as a group have elected to read from one of our daily readers: Voices of Recovery.”

“As you share your experience & strength in OA, please also share your hope. Confine your sharing to your experience with the disease of compulsive eating or compulsive food behaviors, 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 about your difficulties & seek solutions, we suggest you speak to your sponsor or other members after the meeting.”

“Feedback, cross talk, & 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 & questioning or interrupting the person speaking or sharing at the time.”

“In keeping with our 1st Tradition & our group’s commitment to honoring diversity & unity, please remember Tradition 1: ‘Our common welfare should come first. Personal recovery depends upon OA unity.’”

### **Meeting Topic**

*Note to Leader: As the leader you can choose any topic from Voices of Recovery. This is the part of the meeting when you inform the group of the topic you’ve chosen & the page the first reading is on. If there is a Newcomer present, please use the “Newcomer format” detailed below instead.*

### **Newcomer Format**

“Since we have Newcomer(s) today, we’ll start by reading today’s reading in Voices of Recovery & open the floor to anyone who’d like to share about the

reading. Then we'll give members a chance to share about their experience in OA. Finally, we'll have time at the end of the meeting for Newcomers to ask questions.

“Let's open our Voices of Recovery books to *[insert today's date]* which is on page \_\_\_\_\_. Can I have a volunteer to read this page for us?”

“Now is the time for members to share about their experience in OA. We encourage members to keep their share to 5 minutes or less so everyone has a chance to speak. Suggested topics may include:

- What life used to be like before OA, what happened & what it's like now
- Share your favorite OA tools & how you use them
- Share about your experience with Step 1”

*Note to Leader: Leave the last 5-10 minutes of the meeting for questions.*

“Now is the time for questions. Do any of the Newcomers have any questions about OA, our stories, the Twelve Step program, etc.?”

“If you would like, please put your contact information in the chat so we can continue to support each other outside of this meeting. We also have lots of helpful information for anyone who is new to OA on our website. This can be found at [oa-arkansas.org/newcomer-information](http://oa-arkansas.org/newcomer-information)”

### **Closing**

“Are there any burning desires or questions? Announcements? Who would like to lead next week's meeting?”

“By following the Twelve Steps, attending meetings regularly & using the OA Tools, we are changing our lives. You will find hope & encouragement in Overeaters Anonymous. To the newcomer, we suggest attending at least six different meetings to learn the many ways OA can help you.”

“Please remember our commitment to honor each other’s anonymity. ‘What you hear here, who you see here, when you leave here, let it stay here.’”

“Thank you for allowing me to be your leader. After a moment of silence, please join me in saying the Serenity Prayer.”

**Serenity Prayer**

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I can,  
& wisdom to know the difference.

## 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, & that willpower, emotional health, & 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 & the illness; if you will keep coming back to meetings to talk & listen to other recovering compulsive overeaters; if you will read our literature & that of Alcoholics Anonymous with an open mind; &, most important, if you are willing to rely on a power greater than yourself for direction in your life & 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, & 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 & compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Once we become abstinent, the preoccupation with food diminishes & 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 & the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience. As a result of practicing the Steps, the symptoms of compulsive eating & 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 & our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching & fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, & 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 & 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 & when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us & 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 & 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 & 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 & to a higher power & 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 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 Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, & 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, & other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.