

Carry the Message: Scenarios and Situations

Use these practice scenarios and situations with the ‘Things to Consider’ worksheet.

health care professional

You are visiting your family doctor. She looks at your history and notices an 80 lb (36 kg) weight loss in the last two years. Do you tell your doctor about OA and your experience? What can you offer the doctor?

newcomer

A newcomer comes to a meeting and asks about “the diet.” That’s what he really wants. What do you say to him?

health care professional

You are at the dentist and she notices that over the last few years you’ve lost significant weight. Do you tell your dentist about OA? What can you offer the dentist?

newcomer

A newcomer looks around the meeting room and sees people who aren’t at a healthy body weight. You are abstinent and working toward a healthy body weight but are not there yet. What do you say to the newcomer?

health care professional

Your doctor’s medical assistant weighs you during your visit. The assistant notes that you have really lost weight since your last visit and asks, “What did you do?” How do you respond?

member in relapse (in or out of OA)

You have called a member in relapse many times who hasn’t been to your meeting in several weeks. He hasn’t returned your calls. Do you keep calling?

health care professional

You visit a dietitian or nutritionist for help with a food plan. You explain what you can and can’t eat. She suggests a food plan that includes foods you currently abstain from. How do you let her know about OA? What information do you share with her?

member in relapse (in or out of OA)

You see a person at a meeting or event who you don’t know very well but is clearly struggling. What do you say or do?

young person

You are in the restroom. You hear your friend throwing up. It isn’t the first time you have heard him, but you weren’t quite sure before. Do you say anything to your friend? Do you tell him about OA and your experience?

struggling sponsee

You have a sponsee who wants to try another Twelve Step program instead of OA. What do you say to the sponsee?

young person

You are in line to buy lunch in the cafeteria at school or university. You’re uncertain about the best choices for your food plan so you call your sponsor. A person close to you overhears the conversation and asks you about it. What do you say or share with him or her?

struggling sponsee	You are on the phone with your sponsee. During the last month, he mentioned that he has screwed up again and again. He just can't seem to get it right. He does everything you ask and then some. What guidance can you offer?
young person	Your daughter or son has just started living on campus. The university has a meeting to inform parents that many of the students struggle with anorexia, bulimia, and eating disorders. The speaker asks if you will prepare a meal for the students on your child's floor. What do you do? Do you say anything about OA at the meeting or when you bring the food?
significant other	Your significant other met you when you were heavy. She fell in love with you and has been with you for years. Now that you are losing weight more people notice you. You're concerned your partner feels threatened. In fact, she has been unhappy with the amount of time you spend with OA. How do you talk to her about this?
young person	Your college-age niece is over-exercising, mentioning that she has stopped getting her period. She is high strung, and her mood swings are pretty severe. What materials and suggestions can you provide her?
significant other	Your significant other could use OA. What could you say or do to encourage them to try it?
health fair	Your service body has an information stand at the health fair with a newcomer video that repeats every ten minutes. What information do you provide? How do you approach those who stop to view the video?
organization	An organization with meeting space has heard about Twelve Step programs and is excited to hear you're in OA. The organization suggests that your group might meet at its facility—adding that rent will be waived because of the good work Twelve Step programs provide. What do you do about meeting there?
health fair	Your service body has a booth at a health fair. Someone who stops by to ask for information keeps telling you "my friend" needs OA information. You suspect it's really for the person asking. What do you say to them? What information do you give them?
traveling	You're eating out and your food is served. You get your scale out to weigh your food. Those who are dining with you are surprised and ask why you're doing this. What do you say?
at the airport or on the plane	The person next to you had to pay for two seats because he is obese. Do you tell him about OA and your experience, strength, and hope? How do you introduce the topic?
social worker, psychologist, therapist	You know a local therapist who works at a treatment center for eating disorders. She has never heard of OA. Do you protect your anonymity and say nothing or do you tell her about OA?
at the airport or on the plane	The person you sit next to comments on the (abstinent) meal you brought with you. He mentions he wishes he could eat more like that but says he

doesn't have the time. He is on vacation and wants to eat the free meal provided. What do you say?

OA member who is not giving service in OA

Your sponsees say that they don't have time; they work, they have family and friends. They ask, "Why bother giving service?" What do you say?

in the elevator

You are in an elevator and someone sees your WSBC badge and asks what it stands for. (There are other OA members in the elevator with you.) How do you respond?

in another fellowship

You are in a meeting for another Twelve Step fellowship. Someone comments prior to the start or at the break on how much better you look. She knows you're working *this* Twelve Step program, but she says that there seems to be something else. When do you discuss OA and what do you say?

in the elevator

In the hallway by the elevators, there is a spot to post community information. You post an OA public information poster there. You notice someone who has stopped to read the poster. What do you say?

OA member who is not giving service in OA

One of your OA friends tells you he loves doing service but won't go to intergroup or serve on a committee because he just hates working with difficult people—especially some of those in OA who are "so hard to get along with." What do you tell him?

family member

Your mom or dad tried OA but quit, believing that it doesn't work. Mom or Dad still needs OA. Do you mention it again?

public transit (metro, bus, train)

You and OA fellows are talking about OA while riding public transportation. Someone overhears your conversation and asks what OA is. What do you say?

family member

You know your cousin could really use OA. How do you tell her about it?

friend

You are at a local sporting event and a friend you haven't seen in quite a while notices your changed appearance. "How did you do it?" he asks. How do you reply?

family member

You continually see your siblings struggle with food and the many diets they try and discard for the next fad. They know you are in the program and say that it works for you, but they also say they aren't into all of that God stuff, are fine with being fat, or just aren't that interested. Your siblings say they don't want to have to eat all of that expensive "health" food and/or they don't have the time to shop for food either. They get irritated with you because, when you all go to a restaurant, it takes a long time for you to order that "healthy stuff." To them, it seems like too much of a hassle. What do you say or do?

at the community center

Your local community center is having a fitness and nutrition workshop. You find out the person who checks you in at the center is the presenter of the workshop. What do you offer her about OA?

at the grocery or library

You are in a local grocery store or library. You notice that OA is not

represented on its community bulletin board. You have the OA sticky notes (*Bulletin Board Attraction Sticky Notes, #440*) in your purse. What do you do?

coworker

You are at lunch with your coworkers. Someone comments about how super healthy you always are with your food. He asks questions about why you always eat this way, even though the meal that is provided is plentiful and *free*. What if your coworkers are fat? What if they are a normal body weight? What if one of them appears to be anorexic or bulimic? How does each of the scenarios alter what you say?

family member

Your brother-in-law is obese. Based on your knowledge of his eating habits, you think he may be a compulsive overeater. What can you do?

out to eat

You are out to eat with fellow members of a local organization and a leader gets second and third helpings of food. She is beginning to look a bit pale and sweaty and has gained a lot of weight. Do you say anything about OA?

OA member who is not giving service in OA

You have a sponsee who tells you that your program is different than what others have. He asks, "Why? What makes it different?" What do you say?

as a volunteer in the community

Other volunteers you serve with notice that you are changing—losing weight, happier, more engaged. Finally, one brave member of the group asks "What are you doing?" How do you reply?

traveling

You're traveling in Italy with a group. You're the only one not eating pasta, and every place you eat serves pasta! A waiter asks if the food is okay and "Why are you not eating pasta?" How do you reply?

OA Board-approved

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