

OA GUIDELINES



Guidelines for Translation of OA Literature and Materials

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INTRODUCTION TO (AND IMPORTANCE OF) TRANSLATION

Translating OA literature and materials helps:

- Carry the OA message of recovery from compulsive eating.
- Encourage the working of all Twelve Steps of OA.
- Attract newcomers.
- Retain existing members.

OA encourages literature translations to help carry our message around the world. This is an important service to our fellow compulsive eaters. OA grows in countries where compulsive eaters can read program literature in their own language.

If you have questions or need additional support, contact others who have experience with the process of translating OA literature and recovery materials. You will find a list of suggested contacts at the end of these *Guidelines*.

Before starting a translation, take these steps:

- Check the *Translated OA Recovery Materials* and *Translated OA Literature* chart at oa.org/document-library under “Translation.”
- Check with the World Service Office (WSO) to see if the literature you want to translate has been or is being translated into your language. You can also ask if the literature is scheduled for major revisions soon.
- Check with your region board, your region

trustee, or the WSO to see if financial assistance is available.

- Consider the use of widely available translation tools. Translation software is being continually developed and may assist you.

It’s a good idea to find out what AA Conference-approved literature is available in the language you are thinking of translating into, especially the Big Book (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed.). The AA literature may serve as a starting point while OA literature is being translated.

Remember to use OA-approved literature: Check the *OA-Approved Literature List*. Go to oa.org/document-library under “Literature.” Your service body may consider having a selection of OA literature and materials available to members in English in limited numbers. OA members and prospective members may speak English and may be of the opinion that it is better to read the literature and materials in English that may not yet be available in their own language.

ACCURATELY CARRYING THE MESSAGE OF RECOVERY THROUGH THE TWELVE STEPS OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

As a service body that translates literature, you are trusted by OA members to translate accurately. This means your translation will meet these guidelines:

- Nothing in the original text is left out.
- Nothing is added to the original text.
- As closely as a different language allows, the translation has the same meaning and implication as the original text.

An inaccurate translation may damage a fellow compulsive eater’s chance of recovery. For ideas about making and testing accurate translations, refer to the *Suggestions for Translations Committees* section below.

THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

Review OA Literature Translations Licensing Requirements

OA has a two-step licensing process for translation approval:

- License 1 gives permission to translate a particular piece of literature and to circulate the translation for the purpose of validating its accuracy.
- License 2 gives permission to publish and distribute the approved translation.

These licenses are formal, legal agreements between your service body and OA, Inc. They state exactly what OA and your service body have agreed to do. These licenses make it clear that you have permission to translate OA's copyrighted literature. If you translate and distribute the literature without permission, you are breaking copyright law. Copyright permission requirements are covered in more detail below.

All registered OA groups and service bodies have permission to translate and reprint any OA print material currently on the OA website (downloadable PDF files or text) without written permission. *This does not include permission to reprint photographs on the OA website.* The translated manuscript must include the following in the language of the translation:

"This is a translation of OA-approved literature.
© [date of translation] Copyright Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. All rights reserved."

Groups and service bodies who translate any OA material are also required to provide a digital copy of the published translated literature to the WSO. The digital copy can be in PDF or text format and should include the English-language name of the translated publication, the language of translation, and the group or service body name and registration number.

Create a Translation Committee

In the beginning, it is common for one or more committed OA members to carry out the service of translating literature. However, the earlier you can form a translation committee with a capable chair, the better. This will avoid overdependence on specific members and will form a structure that allows the process to develop and continue smoothly.

Establish Priorities for the Translation Work

One of the first things your committee will do is establish priorities for the translation work. The committee also needs to decide whether it has bilingual members who can do the translation or whether to hire a professional translator.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF TRANSLATIONS

Which literature ought to be translated first? You may begin anywhere you choose, but the following is a suggested sequence:

Translate a Glossary of OA's Special Program Words

It is helpful to start by compiling a list of program terms in the local language, for example: "Higher Power," "abstinence," "plan of eating," "food plan," "sponsor," "surrender," "one day at a time," "relapse," "program." A list has been compiled in English to assist you; find the *OA Glossary* at oa.org/document-library under "Translation."

These words and terms appear often in OA literature and need to be translated the same each time they appear. If possible, compile the translated glossary with your translation committee or group members so your translator or translation professional or service can begin with a consensus. It can be useful to prepare notes on difficult words and perhaps create a list of idiomatic English phrases. Explain that it is important to translate every word in its proper context.

Translate the Lists of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

These lists occur frequently in the literature, and if you translate them at the outset you will not need to translate them each time you translate a new piece of literature.

Translate Basic OA Materials and OA Pamphlets

The list below gives basic information about the OA program and how we use the program to recover from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors as well as ways to find OA. Translating these gives your committee a good grounding in working together while gaining an understanding of the process. Because they are short, you can soon have materials and literature available for all who speak your language.

Choose any of the items below that have not already been translated into your language:

- *About OA* (#751K)
- *A Guide for Sponsors* (#200)
- *A New Plan of Eating* (#144)
- *In OA, Recovery Is Possible* (#135)
- *A Lifetime of Abstinence* (#155)
- *Carrying the Message* wallet card (#425)
- *Is Food a Problem for You?* (#750)
- *Just For Today* wallet card (#410)

- *Many Symptoms, One Solution* (#106)
- *Pocket Reference for OA Members* (#435)
- *Recovery Checklist* (#105)
- *Strong Abstinence Checklist* wallet card (#415)
- *Think First* wallet card (#109)
- *Tools of Recovery* (#160)
- *To the Newcomer* (#270)
- *Twelve Stepping a Problem* wallet card (#420)
- *Twelve Traditions Pocket Guide* (#445)
- *Welcome Back: Suggestions for Members in Relapse and for Those Who Care* (#185)

Find these items online at oa.org/document-library:

- *Guidelines for Translation of OA Literature and Materials* under “Translation”
- *Newcomers Meetings: A Leader’s Kit* under “Meeting Formats”
- *Strong Meeting Checklist* under “Group Resources”
- *Suggested Meeting Format* under “Meeting Formats”
- *Importance of Working the Steps Workshop* under “Workshops and Fellowship Ideas”

Please also refer to the *Translated OA Literature* and *Recovery Materials* charts at oa.org. Go to oa.org/document-library under “Translation.”

Translate *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition* Book (#990-2)

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition is probably the most important OA book to translate for our recovery.

We’ve found it helpful to begin by translating one or two chapters. This enables you to see how well things are going and to have part of the book available for members to use much sooner than if you attempt the whole book at once. How you decide to do it depends partly on whether it is being translated by a professional translator or by OA members.

If you start by translating one or two chapters, you need to apply for License 1, which allows you to translate and distribute for validation purposes part of a piece of literature or the whole document. OA literature that is not downloadable from oa.org requires License 1.

Translate Other OA Books

- *Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition* (#980) (the Brown Book) specifically the Forewords to all editions and the Appendices: “The Role of a Plan of Eating in Recovery from Compulsive Eating,” “A Disease of the Mind,” “A Disease of the Body,” “A Disease of the Spirit.”
- *The OA Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide, Second Edition* (#960-2)
- *For Today* (#984)
- *Voices of Recovery* (#986)
- *Abstinence, Second Edition* (#994)

Note: In order that members can commence working the Steps with OA material, you may consider translating the specific parts of books used by the *Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide, Second Edition* (#960-2). The *Guide* uses parts of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*; *Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition* (Big Book); *For Today*; *Voices of Recovery*; and *Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition*.

For other OA books to translate, please refer to the *OA Literature List by Copyright Date* at oa.org/document-library under “Literature” and the *Translated OA Literature* chart at oa.org/document-library under “Translation.”

Translate OA Service Material

- OA’s inverted pyramid, found at oa.org/service-bodies
- *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities* (#120)
- Public Information Posters, found at oa.org/document-library under “PI Posters”
- *Seventh Tradition of OA* (#802), found at oa.org/document-library under “Seventh Tradition”
- *The Professional Community Courier*, found at oa.org/document-library under “Outreach to Professionals”
- *The Twelve Traditions of OA* (#230), found at oa.org/document-library under “Traditions”
- *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* (#330)
- Traditions Videos, found at oa.org/podcasts

From time to time, service-related materials need prompt translation. Service bodies receive service materials in English that often require a response within a short period of time. The relevance and usefulness of some materials received (in English) may not be clear.

Some issues are not part of our everyday lives. In this instance, the use of footnotes explaining the issues and giving further information regarding the context in which they were raised can be helpful.

If there is not time to translate everything, a suggestion is to highlight the most important information from the material and use that in the local newsletter or other medium of communication. Some intergroups and service boards have special newsletters to summarize the most important information coming from their regions and the WSO.

SELLING OA LITERATURE

OA group conscience has agreed that we as a Fellowship sell OA literature. This is normal practice in the English-speaking Fellowship, where books and pamphlets are sold via the OA bookstore. This concept ought to be considered by your service body as you review the details below regarding copyright, licenses, and your service body selling arrangements.

COPYRIGHT AND LICENSES

OA owns the copyright for all OA literature and spends considerable time and money to develop the literature.

OA's licenses are formal agreements permitting you to translate, duplicate, and distribute OA's copyrighted literature. The OA World Service Office processes licenses quickly. The licensing process is a necessary logistic. The licenses tell the world that your service body has permission to use, translate, print, and distribute OA texts, which are all copyright protected. If you do not have OA's permission, you are breaking copyright law. This is called copyright infringement.

Books and pamphlets belong to the author(s) who create them. This kind of ownership is copyright and allows an author to be paid for writing books. The author owns the arrangement of words, the text, and the intellectual property. It is normal practice for any entity to protect its intellectual property in this way. OA owns the text of the OA literature and materials we as a Fellowship create and in whatever language it is written. Because OA holds these licenses, it is easier to prevent people and organizations outside OA from misusing our literature, for example, distorting our message or making profits for themselves.

When a service body prints an OA book, the physical book belongs to the service body. The service body has paid the printer and can now sell

the book. However, the text belongs to OA. Revenues from literature sales in English make up a large portion of OA's income that is used to pay for costs such as development of new literature, salaries, warehousing, and more. Royalties payable by service bodies from the surplus of their sales of OA literature is comparable to the surplus that is created when purchases are made from the OA bookstore. Please refer to the licenses and explanation for deducting costs before calculating royalties due.

You can download the appropriate license agreements at oa.org/document-library under "Translation." After a license agreement is completed, it must be signed on behalf of your service body or group. Your group or service body must then email, fax, or mail the license to the WSO. The managing director will sign on behalf of OA, Inc. and the WSO will keep a copy on file. The signed license agreement is returned to you, and you may then begin translating and validating, or printing, distributing, and selling the literature.

License 1: Agreement to Translate and Distribute for Validation Overeaters Anonymous Literature

Your group or service body does not need a license to translate and reprint any OA print material currently on the OA website that exists in downloadable PDF files or text format.

OA literature that is not downloadable requires License 1. Your group or service body may not start translating any literature until you complete License 1 and receive an approved, signed copy from the WSO. License 1 grants your group or service body these rights:

- to translate a part or the whole of the copyrighted literature named in the license, with a period of up to eighteen months to complete the translation
- to circulate copies of a translation draft among all members who might be able to help test and validate the translation, with up to six months to complete the validation

After License 1 is signed by both parties, the WSO can send you electronic copies of the current version of the literature to be translated. (OA literature is periodically updated, so it's important to be certain that you are working from the most recent version.)

Testing and Validation: Why and How to Do It

Your goal is to help OA members who speak your language get exactly the same message from the translation as that given in the English text. When you translate, be careful not to change the meaning

of the original text. This text has been approved by the worldwide Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous, through the service structure that we as a Fellowship have agreed on.

During the testing period, you will be actively soliciting feedback on the clarity and accuracy of the translation. The purpose is to allow interested OA members who are working the program in the language of the translation to comment on the translation. This process may require tough face-to-face discussions about the exact meanings of words. Such discussions can lead to a better translation and a deeper understanding of the program. You are free to organize the testing period in whatever way works in your area.

At the end of the testing period, all comments and suggestions are to be given to the person or committee that made the translation. It is important to rely on the judgment of our trusted servants—the translator or translating committee. They will prepare the final draft with the increased understanding they have gained from members' comments and suggestions. We recommend that you make sure all drafts are returned and destroyed. People need to use the final approved version, not the drafts. Having different drafts causes confusion and controversy.

As soon as the final draft is finished, you need to complete License 2.

License 2: Agreement to Publish and Distribute Overeaters Anonymous Literature

This is the final license, giving your service body permission to print and distribute the final draft of the translated text. License 2 grants full permission to print and distribute the translation in the way that works best in your area.

At this stage you need to obtain permission to use a customized OA logo on your printing of the translation. The OA logo is a registered trademark and may not be used without permission. When you fill in License 2, be sure to complete and sign the final pages. These pages are your application for permission to use a customized version of the OA logo.

When you sign License 2, you agree to abide by these terms:

- to make certain that every copy has the precise copyright notice, in your language, as given in the “Markings” section of the license agreement: “Translated and reprinted from [*Title, item number, and latest copyright date of English version*],

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- to make certain that the printed final copy has the exact form of the OA logo as agreed
- to send one digital copy and one printed copy of the final, published, translated OA publication to the WSO
- to send revenues from sales of the literature to the WSO at the royalty rate agreed upon in the license
- to make certain that the remainder of all surplus funds from sales of the translation will be used for OA purposes

As soon as you have printed your translation, send a digital file to the WSO. Send a print hardcopy as soon as possible. The WSO staff labels these copies with the English title of the work, date of the translation, date of the English version that was translated, and translating service body information.

The WSO staff also adds your translation to the master list of approved translations. When someone asks the WSO for literature in languages other than English, the WSO can provide the inquirer with a list of approved literature in that language, along with the service body contact information.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATION COMMITTEES

Choosing Translators

There are pros and cons to using OA members or professional translators for translation of OA material and literature.

OA members working on a translation committee generally understand our literature well. They will put love and effort into the task of translation. On the other hand, an OA member may start a translation but not finish it. Nevertheless, OA members are usually the best choice. No professional translator, as good as the person might be, will understand our literature as well as an OA member (unless they are also an OA member). If OA members are doing the translation, it is suggested

that teams be formed with one person translating the literature and another checking it. This way, a piece of literature can be broken down into manageable parts. Two members can then review the work: one member can read the translation aloud in the local language and the other follow it in the English version. This way, you can make sure the translation sounds good in your own language and can also check how accurate it is in relation to the English version.

Professional translators who are employed to do the work tend to get the job done in a timely manner. If you work with a professional translator, we suggest giving the person your glossary of OA terms, along with any notes or explanations. Ask them to translate a small piece of literature. If you like the result, you can build on that relationship, but if you're not satisfied, you can find another translator. If the translator doesn't want to use your glossary, it may be better to find a different translator.

We suggest that your group or service body use a signed contract with the translator right from the start. This makes certain both parties fully understand what is being asked of them. Also, you will be protected from any attempt by the translator to put their name on the document or include additional text from an outside source.

Some service bodies have found it helpful to do some translation work themselves and employ professionals for other parts of the work.

Testing and Validating Translations: Questions and Answers

The purpose of testing a translation is to highlight lack of clarity and show areas where the translator's understanding of the text varies from the general understanding. Here are some ways you may test a translation:

- Use the draft in meetings. A group may read a few paragraphs in each meeting and then discuss the clarity of the message.
- Small groups or committees may meet to discuss the translation.
- Sponsors may use the draft in their conversations with sponsees.

Q: How can people who do not speak English play a part in validating a translation?

A good translation is not only accurate but is clear and well-expressed in the language of translation. Someone may make a valid point about the way

something is expressed without understanding the English from which it was translated. This may spark a discussion with those who can read English, and from that discussion, a new and better translation may be reached.

Q: How can we address members' comments most effectively?

Probably the simplest method is to use printed copies with a separate sheet for comments. By using printed copies instead of electronic copies, you can avoid the problem of people amending or corrupting the draft. Also, it helps make certain you can take all the draft copies out of circulation at the end of the validation period. Your service body may want to number each copy as it is distributed during this validation and testing process; this will assist in being sure that all working-draft copies are returned.

Suggestions:

- If you must use electronic copies, it is safest to create a PDF file and ask for comments on a separate sheet.
- Number the lines of text. This can make it easier to relate a comment to the draft.
- Make certain everyone knows how to submit their comments.

Q: Distributing printed copies is a cost to the group or service body. How can a service body with very little money afford this?

Once your service body has published some items, you can set the price of that literature to fund drafts of the next items you translate.

Another idea is to charge members for the draft. When the literature is published, they can receive a discount on the final version when they return the draft to the service body. This has the added advantage of encouraging the return of all the drafts. If you do this, you will need to allow for it in the price you set for the final version.

General Comments

Use of former translations as a reference can be very helpful, especially when you find quotes from other pieces of literature. (This includes AA. However, there is a need to be objective as their translation choices are not necessarily the best ones).

Always keep communication lines between translating members open. If possible, promote the translation committee meetings and encourage attendance from visitors. Discuss problematic points in

committee meetings.

PRINTING AND SELLING TRANSLATIONS

Before printing, consider accuracy and quality, print quantity, costs, and pricing.

Starting to Print

Check carefully for typographical errors before printing. Some errors can be overlooked even though the text has been circulated and validated.

In addition to including the copyright notice and the address of the WSO, be sure to include the contact information for OA in your country.

Where possible, the WSO asks that you make your final product match the overall appearance of the original in layout, graphics, color, and style of binding. When your version matches the WSO version, the WSO can send you a digital file of the cover in most cases. This may enable you to print at a slightly lower cost.

In a country where OA is just starting and has little money, it may not be possible to match the WSO versions exactly. The most important point is to make accurate translations available. The text, not the appearance, enables members to recover. As literature becomes available in your language, OA will start to grow in your country, and it will not be long before you can print better-quality copies. At the beginning, when there are only a few OA members, you may not be able to use a professional printer. You can print from your computer or make photocopies as people wish to buy literature.

When you do use a professional printer, consider ways to keep costs down. It is usually less expensive to print literature in just one color. You can also save money by having OA members fold, collate, and staple pamphlets themselves.

Work toward producing better-quality items as soon as possible. It's important that, as much as possible, our OA literature and materials look professional. When you progress to printing books, you need to use a professional printer. In whatever form you produce your first printing of the literature, send the WSO one digital copy and one printed copy of that version. As you are able to improve the quality of the printing, you need to send the WSO one digital and one printed copy of your updated versions.

Selling Prices and Royalties

Your service body needs to make a surplus on sales

of literature, so you can establish a prudent reserve that will enable you to translate and print more literature. This means charging more for books and pamphlets than it costs to print them. The cost of printing is not the only cost involved in producing and distributing literature. For example, you may make several visits and phone calls to the printer, or you may need to pay for storage space of your stock. As your sales of literature increase, the quantity you need to order from the printer will increase. Yet you will only receive money for this larger number *after* you have paid the printer. You will have money already expended in the value of the stock held while you sell items to pay for that stock. The cost of printing may increase over time.

You need to set up a line item in your budget and accounts to allow for paying royalties to the WSO on the literature you sell. You need to build up a cash reserve for printing literature.

We suggest selling the literature at a price that produces a surplus you can use for OA service in your country. To help calculate what your service body should charge for literature, we suggest that you set prices to realize a gross profit of 60 percent of sales. The recommended formula to achieve this is to multiply production costs by 2.5 and divide that figure by the number of books or pamphlets printed.

For example, your service body is about to organize the printing of 500 books at a cost of US\$1,500:

$\$1,500 \times 2.5 = \$3,750 / 500 = \$7.50$. This is the recommended price you charge for each copy.

As soon as a small prudent reserve for literature service has been established, your service body must send royalties to the WSO annually. Royalties must be set at the rate established in License 2 as a percentage of net income from sales. This small amount helps OA continue to serve the Fellowship worldwide. Please remember that the WSO can incur high international bank charges, so it is best to send a few large sums instead of frequent small ones.

SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES

Two Service Bodies Want to Translate the Same Literature

If your service body discovers that the text you want to translate has already been translated into your language, you can work with the service body that has the translated text.

If the text has been translated and drafts are being circulated, perhaps you could circulate drafts in your area also. This can be particularly useful if language usage is slightly different in the two areas.

If the translation has already been validated, you can agree on the best way to share the translation.

Here are two possibilities:

- Ask the other service body if it will sell copies to you. Usually the cost of printing each item is reduced when a larger number of pamphlets or books are printed. Even if you pay shipping costs, it might be less expensive for the other service body to do all the printing.
- Ask the other service body if it will send an electronic file you can print from. If it does this, you can print the literature and include contact information for your country.

Remember:

- If you print the translation without changing the text, you need to obtain License 2 from the WSO so your service body has permission to print and distribute the literature.
- If you change the text to reflect differences in language, you need to obtain both License 1 and License 2 from the WSO.

When OA Revises or Updates Literature You Already Have Translated

If you've already translated a piece of OA literature and still have copies in stock, but find that OA has updated the item, we recommend that you insert a correction sheet to reflect the changes. If the changes are substantial, it is recommended that you update the literature before the next printing.

FINALLY . . .

Remember you can download the following documents at oa.org/document-library under

“Translation”:

- License 1 to translate and validate OA literature
- License 2 to publish and distribute OA literature
- *OA Glossary* (in English)
- *Guidelines for Translation of OA Literature and Materials*
- Translation Fund Application (for assistance from the OA, Inc. budget)
- *Translated OA Literature* chart
- *Translated OA Recovery Materials* chart

You may find more translation files on your region website.

Thank you for helping to carry the OA message in translation. You are not alone. These *Guidelines* try to convey as much information and experience as is possible. But other problems may present themselves. Please reach out and look for fellow members with more experience with translation. This is possible within your area where there are certainly a good number of intergroups and service boards that have faced similar problems.

For more assistance with translations, use this list of contacts:

- national or language service board
- region translations committee/task force
- region board
- region trustee
- trustee representative from the International Publications/Translations Committee World Service Office (WSO)

If you have any questions, please contact the WSO at info@oa.org. The WSO and the International Publications/Translations Committee will do their best to help you. Together we can!

OA Board-Approved

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