



Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop Manual

*A Guide for Planning
and Leading Service, Traditions,
and Concepts Workshops*

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Introduction

This manual has been created to educate members about how OA's Traditions and Concepts of Service unify and strengthen the Fellowship. The ideas and recommendations have been drawn from members' service experiences worldwide. They are offered as suggestions to help all members understand the wisdom and purpose of service through the Traditions and Concepts.

This manual concentrates on how to conduct Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshops. Depending on the needs of the workshop participants, you can offer a workshop on one, two, or all three of the topics.

We suggest that leaders and participants read and have a good understanding of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*, *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* pamphlet (available at oa.org), and *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* pamphlet. We suggest that these be available at your workshops.

The manual is divided into five sections, followed by appendices.

Section I: *Holding Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshops*—An overview on arranging and conducting workshops. Includes time considerations, topics, and guidelines for the workshop facilitator(s).

Section II: *OA Service Structure*—How OA's service structure works, the role of the volunteer, and how service benefits individual and group recovery.

Section III: *Traditions*—How the Traditions affect group survival and individual recovery.

Section IV: *Concepts*—How the Concepts provide guidance and Spiritual Principles for all levels of service. Includes tips on communicating the value of the Concepts.

Section V: *Sample Exercises*—Problem-solving exercises are included.

Appendices: *Visual Aids and References*—Includes a glossary, the region map, group inventories, and suggested workshop presentation aids.

By adhering to the simplicity of our program of Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts, we nurture our recovery. "*Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity*" (Tradition One).

OA Responsibility Pledge

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

Section I: Holding Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshops

Why Hold a Workshop?

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone.” So says our OA Promise. However, it may be hard for many of us to understand how giving service and practicing the Twelve Traditions and Concepts are meaningful in our daily program of recovery. The purpose of these workshops is to relate that information to OA members.

Study of our Traditions and Concepts is a procedure done regularly by healthy OA groups and service bodies. You do not have to wait until you are experiencing difficulties to sponsor or attend a workshop. Sharing your experience, strength, and hope and how your group maintains unity is helpful to other members of the Fellowship. It is also helpful to be able to express how you achieved success so that it can be repeated.

If your meeting, intergroup, service board, or region is having difficulties due to unresolved issues or questions concerning service, Traditions, and Concepts, consider sponsoring a workshop to address these issues.

Workshops are facilitated by experienced OA members who share their personal recovery and have served OA in different capacities within our service structure. Often, the workshops are facilitated by current or past members of OA’s Board of Trustees and members of region boards. Having a neutral person facilitate a workshop encourages people to share without concern of judgment or bias, especially if a service body is trying to deal with specific problems.

If you decide to hold a workshop, the following section can help you prepare and decide what format the workshop will take. Contact the trustee assigned as liaison to your region or a region board member to assist you in arranging a workshop.

Preparation for Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshops

STEPS

LEAD TIME

1. Set the date and time. (Allow adequate time to prepare for the event.)

The timelines shown are only suggestions.)

3–12 months

- A. Check the calendars of your intergroup/service board, region, and trustee serving as liaison to your region to see if any events are already scheduled that would impact attendance at the workshop. Also, check for major religious and national holiday conflicts.
- B. Decide who will chair your event.
 - a. Select the committee.
 - b. Schedule a planning meeting.
- C. Determine how long your workshop will be. Is it a stand-alone event?
 - a. Is it part of a retreat or convention?
 - b. How large will attendance be?
- D. Contact the region board and/or the trustee who is the liaison to your region regarding workshop leader(s).
- E. Resolve financial issues.
 - a. Investigate sources for funding (e.g., the WSO funds trustees' workshop expenses; some regions fund officers' expenses to do workshops).
 - b. Decide how much the suggested contribution will be.

2. Select a location.

once date and time is set

- A. Is it centrally located?
- B. Is it easy to find?
- C. Is it close to an airport and/or public transportation?
- D. Is there disability access? Are there a lot of stairs?
- E. Will its costs be reasonable? (Will the workshop be self-supporting?)
- F. Are there sufficient bathroom facilities?
- G. Will babysitting be provided?

3. Create a flyer.

once location is set

- A. Include date, starting and ending time, and location.
- B. Include workshop theme, if applicable.
- C. Use titles. (Be creative, e.g., “How to Help Your Meetings Grow,” “How to Strengthen Your Group,” “An Insurance Policy for Your Recovery,” “Practicing Recovery.”)
- D. Add current service title or generic description of your speaker(s). (“Twenty Years of Abstinence,” trustee assigned as liaison to your region, or other general statement may be used. In accordance with Tradition Eleven, no names, please!)
- E. Use artwork.
- F. Include a phone number/email address for a contact person.
- G. Incorporate a map.
- H. Add the facility’s information: coffee, whether to bring a lunch, accessibility, other accommodation details.
- I. Include preregistration/registration information if desired.

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- 4. Distribute flyers.** **once flyer is created**
- A. On region and local websites
 - B. At intergroup/service board meetings
 - C. By mail or email to other intergroups/service boards
 - D. At region or area gatherings: assemblies, conventions, retreats, marathons
 - E. At meetings
 - F. By email to unaffiliated (lone) groups or other nearby meetings (Email addresses of group contacts and other intergroups/service boards can be downloaded from the Find a Meeting page at oa.org.)
 - G. Get the word out early and send a reminder close to the date.
- 5. Set up committee(s) to plan details.** **30–60 days**
- A. Set schedule of regular committee meetings (as needed).
 - B. Assign tasks, which may include:
 - a. Greeters
 - b. Beverages
 - c. Literature: What to bring? Who will staff the table? Who will handle money?
 - d. Facility-liaison person: someone to contact the facility if issues arise (e.g., regulate room temperature, ensure that microphones work)
 - e. Coordinator: introduces speakers
 - f. Registration, name tags, donations
 - g. Set-up and cleanup crews
 - h. Fundraising coordinator
 - i. Someone to handle other responsibilities that arise (e.g., posters, signs, timekeeping)
- 6. Coordinate facility set-up with workshop leader.** **30 days**
- A. Contact workshop leader.
 - a. What items will the leader need? Flip charts, chalkboard, paper, supplies for Ask-It Basket, other materials?
 - b. What room arrangement will suit this presentation best? Circle, rows, and/or small rooms off main room for break-out sessions?
 - c. Will everyone be able to see and hear the leader?
 - B. Set up schedule.
 - a. Do not schedule another meeting opposite a Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop when the workshop is part of a larger event, such as a retreat or convention. It deserves to stand alone and be a primary focus.
 - b. Make a schedule by breaking the event into various time periods, such as introductions, topic presentation, and group exercises.
 - c. Give people breaks to get up and move about.
- 7. Hold a post workshop wrap-up session.** **day of event**
- A. Send thank-you notes or letters where necessary, such as to the facilities manager.
 - B. Be sure to remove signs, banners, and other materials before leaving—make it someone’s specific job.

Suggested Workshop Formats

When preparing for workshops, you should have acquired the following information:

1. Duration of the workshop
2. Participants' knowledge of the Traditions and Concepts (approximate)
3. Number of participants (approximate)
4. Which combination of service, Traditions, and Concepts should be covered (one, two, or all three)
5. Specific problems that the group is having that they may want you to emphasize during the workshop

General information for leaders

1. Start the workshop by briefly sharing your personal recovery and service background, including how service has supported your recovery.
2. Try to get a feel for your audience. Have each person share how long they have been in program, what their expectations of the workshop are, and if there is any aspect of service, Traditions, or Concepts they have particularly come to hear.
3. If there is some reluctance to ask questions, encourage participants to write questions in an Ask-It Basket format.
4. During the workshop, try to stay focused on issues that concern the group as a whole. Try not to get focused on obviously personal agendas or issues that seem to concern only a few in the room. Feel free to stop a discussion that is veering off the point.
5. Don't hesitate to say "I don't know" about something that comes up. Questions may come up for which you don't have an answer or are not sure how the Traditions or Concepts address the issue.
6. Remember that you are only a messenger. Keep reminding the group that you are presenting your best understanding of OA's Traditions or Concepts, and try to present different points of view.
7. Prepare some handouts so that the group gets all the material, even if you don't get to cover all of it during the workshop.
8. Remind the contact person that people should bring with them *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*, *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* pamphlet (available at oa.org), and/or *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service*, and that literature should be available at the workshop.
9. Encourage group participation with breakout discussions and sharing.
10. Where possible, use examples that you have had to deal with in your experience.

The following are outlines of different approaches to conducting workshops. Please consider your time restrictions:

1. Full-format workshop (probably requires a full weekend)

A. Service structure (*approximately 1 hour*)

Explain what the region and WSO do for intergroups/service boards, groups, and individual members.

- a. What is service?
- b. Why is service important to our recovery?
- c. What are the different levels of service and how do they enhance the support of the individual groups?
- d. How do individual members get their issues addressed through the different levels of service?
- e. What is the World Service Office and how does the office serve the Fellowship?
- f. How is the service structure laid out? (Provide graphic.)
- g. Service responsibilities for individuals:
 - i. Review responsibilities of world service delegates and region representatives before, during, and after World Service Business Conference/region assembly.
 - ii. Review responsibilities of chair and other officers (intergroup/service board/region)— setting schedules, active committee work, reports, and delegating responsibilities.

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- h. Service responsibilities for groups:
 - i. Review how to raise awareness of the intergroup/service board, region, and world service.
 - ii. Review how to create or contribute to a good working and service atmosphere.
 - iii. Review ways to improve the function of region and intergroup/service boards, retaining the commitment to our primary purpose.
 - iv. Review ways to make contacts, use the media, and get the word out that OA is available.

B. General topics (15–20 minutes each topic)

Ask hosting group to select two or three of the following topics that are of interest to their group. Be sure to allow time for questions.

- a. Strengthening the intergroup, service board, or region
- b. Supporting struggling meetings
- c. Retaining members—Twelfth Step Within
- d. Dealing with the practicing compulsive overeater who is doing service
- e. Supporting groups in your intergroup/service board that are geographically distant
- f. Starting new meetings
- g. Knowing when to help and when to let go
- h. Learning how to run a good meeting—the importance of preparation
- i. Communicating effectively within your intergroup, service board, or region
- j. Helping with specific paperwork, such as group registration forms, bylaws, and/or starting a newsletter
- k. Placing “principles before personalities”—how important is it?
 - l. Encouraging people to be sponsors
- m. Getting members involved in giving service
- n. Fostering unity
- o. Carrying the message
- p. Finding, exploring, and using resources at oa.org

C. Traditions or Concepts Workshop

Traditions or Concepts discussion

Note: Come to the workshop with a flip chart or at least twelve pieces of posterboard and plenty of markers.

- a. Divide the group into twelve groups. If you have a larger group, assign both newcomers and longtimers to the groups. (Leader may also choose to distribute one copy of *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* pamphlet or *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* pamphlet to each group.)
- b. Assign a Tradition or Concept to each group. Give them thirty minutes to read the material, prepare a five-minute presentation of the Principles of their assigned Tradition or Concept, and determine what problem(s) it addresses. The highlights should be summarized on the poster board or flip chart in any format they like (graphic, written, etc.).
- c. Allow ten minutes for each presentation, including questions and discussion from the whole group. Your role is to facilitate rather than lecture. Discuss interpretation and experience, focusing on whether the Tradition or Concept specifically says what is being presented. Indicate important points that may have been missed.

Problem-solving exercises

- a. Divide the group into five or six groups.
- b. Assign each group a typical problem or situation (some are found in Section V). Bring a choice of problems or situations because some may have been covered adequately during discussion. Assign problems or situations that have not been covered.

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- c. Ask the groups to evaluate the problem or situation, decide which Tradition(s) or Concept(s) applies, and determine how it helps us make decisions and resolve problems.
 - d. Each group presents their response, with up to ten minutes per problem or situation.

D. Personal sharing/Ask-It Basket (*remaining time*)

An Ask-It Basket helps to eliminate embarrassment or individual judgment. Members are free to express themselves anonymously, which is especially helpful if there are sensitive issues that need to be addressed.

E. Feedback

Allow time for feedback from the members: what they liked and didn't like, what they are going to take home, and what was useful and beneficial. You may wish to use the evaluation form at the end of this manual.

You need a total of eight hours to conduct a full workshop in this way. This format is very effective because it creates involvement for everyone attending. If you can run a complete weekend this way, add some sharing meetings at different times.

Be sure to schedule breaks in the proceedings for people to attend to their needs: bathroom, stretching, and lunch.

2. Suggested format for a six- to seven-hour workshop

If a full day is planned, you can lengthen the service structure, general topics, and/or the Traditions or Concepts exercises portions of the four-hour format or incorporate whatever is needed from the weekend format, depending on what is most helpful to the attendees. You can hand out prepared materials from the workshop.

3. Suggested format for a three- to four-hour workshop

A. Introduction and workshop overview

- a. Service body workshop host introduces the leader who spends a few minutes (up to twenty) sharing about themselves.
- b. Participants introduce themselves and say where they are from.
- c. Leader reviews the agenda (distributed at registration).

B. Understanding the Traditions or Concepts: History, purpose, and meaning

Leader relates a history of the Traditions or Concepts as they have been passed on, explaining the purpose of the Traditions or Concepts and what they mean to the OA program of recovery.

C. Group brainstorm

- a. Twelve large sheets of blank paper are hung (in six pairs) in different sections of the workshop room. At the top of each sheet is a Tradition or Concept. The leader divides the group into six groups. Each group is given two Traditions or Concepts to discuss. The leader reviews the brainstorming guidelines below, if needed. Each group has fifteen minutes to identify issues, concerns, and questions about their two Traditions or Concepts.

- i. Brainstorming guidelines

1. Select volunteers for the following roles:

Facilitator—This person keeps the group moving and focused on the task. The facilitator attempts to include everyone in the task and keep to the time allocated for the task. Please be careful to not dominate the discussion.

Recorder—This person writes clearly on the paper the results of the discussion.

Reporter—This person reports back to the larger group the results of the discussion.

2. Read each of the Traditions or Concepts on your paper. Refer to appropriate resources at oa.org. As a group, identify questions, concerns, points of confusion, and real-life examples of the Tradition or Concept. Write them on the paper.

Remember, your task is only to identify the issues, not to discuss them. That comes later. You have fifteen minutes to complete this task (for both Traditions or Concepts) and three minutes for the reporter to read and, if necessary, explain to the larger group what is on your paper.

- b. After questions and issues have been read, individuals have the opportunity to go to the set of Traditions or Concepts they are interested in exploring and discussing. *Note: Favoring specific Traditions or Concepts should be avoided, if possible. All Traditions or Concepts will be discussed by the end of the session.*

D. Group discussion

Using the same volunteer positions (facilitator, recorder, and reporter) used in the brainstorming session, groups take thirty-five minutes to discuss the issues, concerns, and questions identified on the paper under each Tradition or Concept. The group should identify specific questions they would like the leader to address.

E. Reporting back

- a. The reporter for each group has five to ten minutes to report back to the group as a whole the results of the discussion of each pair of Traditions or Concepts.
- b. The leader participates by sharing insights and clarifying issues.

F. Wrap-up

Leader has the opportunity to comment on the discussion and make any appropriate recommendations.

4. Suggested format for a two-hour workshop

- A. Ten minutes of personal sharing followed by a general poll of the group—how long they have been in the program and what particular Traditions or Concepts they would like to talk about. Distribute paper for an Ask-It Basket session.
- B. Service workshop: Give a short talk, no more than twenty minutes, on why we need to do service and, if the group has a majority of newcomers, a description of the levels of service. If there are more longtimers, talk about the need to continue to do service and to support the different service bodies in the Fellowship.
- C. Choose four Traditions or Concepts on which to focus, including requests by the group
- D. Have someone read a short passage from the OA *Twelve and Twelve* on the Tradition or Concept. An alternative would be to ask three or four people to describe in two sentences what the Tradition or Concept means to them, and then refer to that in your presentation.

Give a five- to seven-minute presentation of your own, talking a little about how the Tradition or Concept came about and what kind of boundaries they present to us. Ask individuals in the group what the Tradition or Concept means to them and if anyone would like to briefly share an experience relating to this Tradition or Concept.
- E. Keep to fifteen minutes per Tradition or Concept. If you run overtime because of extended

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- discussions, decide which Tradition or Concept will be discussed in the remaining time.
- F. If there are very few newcomers in the group, minimize the service side. Give a short pitch on service and then spend more time on the Traditions or Concepts.
- G. At the end of the session, hand out all the materials that you would have handed out for the full session. Suggest to the group that they continue studying the material and that, if possible, you would be happy to return sometime to cover more material.

Section II: OA Service Structure

Introduction: The Service Structure

Overeaters Anonymous is not organized in the conventional sense. There are no governing officers, no rules or regulations, and no dues or fees.

However, to meet the needs of compulsive eaters worldwide, a World Service Office was established to answer inquiries, publish literature, and provide other services to OA groups and individuals everywhere. The World Service Office is in Rio Rancho, New Mexico USA.

A Board of Trustees, which is composed of seventeen OA members elected to serve OA as a whole, functions as guardian of the OA Traditions and Concepts and interpreter of policies affecting OA. An executive committee of the board, composed of officers and other trustees elected by the board, is responsible for the operation of the World Service Office.

The World Service Business Conference, held annually, has voting membership consisting of delegates sent by intergroups (associations of groups), service boards (associations that provide support for groups and intergroups outside the US and Canada, or those that share a common language or specific focus), regions (associations of intergroup/service boards as defined by OA Bylaws), and trustees.

OA has groups throughout the world. The groups are divided into ten geographical regions and one virtual region. Regions One through Eight include groups in the United States of America, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Bermuda, the Virgin Islands, and South and Central America. Region Nine includes groups in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Western Asia, including all of Russia. Region Ten includes groups in South East Asia, East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and the Western Pacific Basin. The Virtual Region includes virtual meetings and virtual intergroups.

While every trustee serves OA as a whole, eleven of the trustees serve as individual liaisons to the membership within a particular region.

At the group level, there is minimal organization. Established groups may have a steering committee and a small number of officers, whose functions are generally limited to arranging meeting programs, providing literature, participating in intergroup, service board, and region activities, and maintaining contact with the service bodies and the World Service Office.

Responsibilities at all levels in OA are rotated on a regular basis. In groups, it is suggested that service jobs rotate every six months or annually. Conference delegates usually serve two-year terms, and OA-member trustees are elected by the Conference to three-year terms (with a maximum of eight consecutive years).

Tips for Increasing Service Participation within a Service Body

Often there is a great deal of enthusiasm when a new group or intergroup/service board is formed. As time passes, however, that enthusiasm may wane. The following are suggestions to help keep that initial spark alive.

Adopt a group: Intergroup, service board, or region representatives can visit meetings that are not represented at that intergroup/service board or region. Share about how the intergroup, service board, or region works and how it helps personal recovery; invite members from the group to come to the intergroup, service board, or region; offer them a ride to the meeting or provide them with the login information for an online meeting.

Provide orientation packages for new representatives: Orientation packets may help answer some new representatives' questions. Packets might include the following items:

1. Welcome letter
2. Intergroup/service board bylaws
3. Intergroup/service board suggested guidelines
4. *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies* (See bookstore.oa.org.)
5. Three pamphlets: *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* (available for purchase at the OA bookstore), and *Seventh Tradition of OA* and *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* (both available at oa.org)
6. A simplified explanation of parliamentary procedure
7. Intergroup/service board contribution form
8. OA literature order form and information about both the literature catalog at oa.org and the OA bookstore at bookstore.oa.org
9. Meeting list
10. Previous minutes and treasurer's reports
11. Flyers and other noteworthy group materials

Mentor a newcomer at the intergroup/service board. Longtime representatives at our intergroup/service board can help make newcomers feel at home and comfortable with the procedures and the topics being discussed.

Share the message that we do not come to our intergroup/service board to “get” recovery, but to “practice” recovery, bringing that message back to our individual meetings.

Invite a speaker from your region board to speak about service at all four levels (World Service Business Conference, region, intergroup/service board, and group).

Publish attendance at meetings; send reminders to groups and representatives.

Maintain an accurate meeting list. List only registered OA groups on the meeting list. Keep Find a Meeting at oa.org up to date as well.

Observe punctuality. Make sure meetings start and end on time.

Keep the focus on the issues. Hold a meeting of officers and interested delegates to deal with business procedures and to prepare the agenda for intergroup/service board meetings. Meetings can then more efficiently cover substantive issues.

In addition:

1. Designate someone to call new representatives after the meeting to see if they have questions and to welcome them to the intergroup/service board.
2. Emphasize the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts, always remembering to place principles before personalities.
3. Rotate the meeting location if appropriate for your area.
4. Have an agenda so people are focused and know what to expect. If possible, send the agenda and reports for your meeting to the representatives in advance.
5. Use *Robert's Rules of Order* to ensure equal participation.
6. Ask people to do something specific rather than just saying, "Who is willing to help?"
7. Involve new people immediately by encouraging them to participate and find a place to apply their strengths in a variety of service opportunities.
8. Revise your bylaws to allow more than one representative per group.
9. Have a newsletter to keep groups informed of intergroup/service board business and activities.
10. Send minutes to each group.
11. Hold a special recovery event before or after your intergroup/service board meeting.
12. Don't compete with other intergroups/service boards—schedule meetings and events at non-conflicting times.
13. Provide services to your group, such as meeting lists, sponsor lists, and speaker lists.
14. Encourage longtime members to stay involved to demonstrate the value of service.
15. Encourage sponsors to involve their sponsees in service.
16. Provide more service opportunities by dividing responsibilities into manageable tasks.
17. Fund delegates to attend region meetings and World Service Business Conference.
18. Share information about these meetings to attract more trusted servants. Remember, enthusiasm creates enthusiasm!
19. Form committees and encourage committee chairs to seek members from meetings.
20. Rotate service positions.

Where Do I Fit In?

Many members ask how and where they can involve themselves in OA service. Below is a list that can be discussed and distributed during the service portion of a Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop.

Group level

1. Attend meetings.
2. Provide coffee.
3. Arrange for meeting leaders/speakers.
4. Lead a meeting.
5. Make contact: telephone, text, and/or email.
6. Greet newcomers.
7. Unlock and/or help set up the meeting room, whether in-person, online, or hybrid.
8. Stock literature or provide information on how to order from bookstore.oa.org.
9. Be a sponsor and/or get a sponsor.
10. Be a liaison between a group and service bodies by:
 - A. attending intergroup/service board meetings, reporting actions, and asking for group member input;
 - B. sharing mailings from intergroup/service board, region, and world service with the group; or
 - C. becoming a designated downloader and translator. (Prints and translates WSO information sent electronically to share with those group members who don't have electronic access and/or don't speak English as their first language.)

Intergroup and service board level

1. Participate in the group conscience as an intergroup/service board representative.
2. Participate in intergroup/service board committees that:
 - A. plan events (retreats, marathons, conventions),
 - B. carry the message to non-OA bodies (public information),
 - C. plan ways to raise funds (finance),
 - D. assemble speakers lists,
 - E. keep all groups informed of coming events (internal information), and
 - F. assemble and distribute a newsletter.
3. Qualify and be willing to serve as an intergroup/service board officer.
4. Volunteer to answer the phone or to work in the intergroup/service board office.
5. Act as liaison between the intergroup/service board and other service bodies by being a representative to the region, reporting actions, and asking for intergroup/service board input.
6. Qualify and be willing to serve as a World Service Business Conference delegate, reporting actions and asking for intergroup/service board input.

Region level

1. Participate in group conscience as an elected/appointed representative at region business meetings (region assemblies).
2. Serve on a region committee.
3. Act as liaison between your intergroup/service board and the region.
4. Translate region newsletters and announcements if needed.
5. Qualify and be willing to serve as a region officer.
6. Qualify and be willing to stand for election as a trustee willing to serve as a liaison to a region.

World service level

1. Participate in group conscience for OA as a whole by being elected or appointed a World Service Business Conference delegate.

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2. Participate on a Conference committee.
 3. Participate in workshops at the World Service Business Conference.
 4. Act as liaison between your intergroup/service board and the WSO.
 5. Translate WSO newsletters and announcements if needed.
 6. Become a world service trustee who:
 - A. oversees the operation of the World Service Office,
 - B. may act as liaison between the Board of Trustees and a region,
 - C. implements the group conscience of the World Service Business Conference, and
 - D. chairs or cochairs one or more Conference or board committees.

Frequently Asked Questions about Service

The following questions can be used for two purposes:

1. To assist a workshop leader with generally accepted answers to frequently asked questions regarding service-related issues, and
2. To help kick off a brainstorming discussion at a workshop.

This list of questions is not meant to be complete. There are more questions regarding service than could ever be addressed in this manual. These questions and answers are provided to assist you in learning how others have dealt with situations that arise within our Fellowship.

No one member of Overeaters Anonymous is expected to know every answer in every situation. If a question arises for which you do not have an answer, it's okay to say, "I don't know." Whenever questions like these arise, ask the group for their input. Offer to contact another region officer or member of the Board of Trustees. Most issues are not unique. There is probably someone who has had a similar experience.

How do we motivate people to give service?

1. Personal approach: Approach people personally and ask them to take a service position, stressing recovery through service. Ask new people to assist with or share a service position until they are ready to do the service alone.
2. Advertising: Advertise vacant positions, with job descriptions, in your OA newsletters.
3. Support: Facilitate a meeting where everyone (committee chairs, officers, members, and service body representatives) can safely air their feelings and express their opinions. If there are resentments or personal agendas threatening to harm the intergroup/service board harmony, they can be dealt with appropriately.

How can we deal with an officer in relapse?

1. Don't assume: Ask the officer what is happening regarding a noticeable weight gain (or loss, depending on the individual). There may be medical reasons for this. Abstinence is a personal process—between the recovering compulsive eater, their sponsor, their health care professional, and their Higher Power.
2. Bylaws: Write clear job descriptions and requirements so that groups can refer to these whenever needed.
3. Sponsors: Encourage the current officer to ask a previous officer to serve as a service sponsor.

How can we encourage Seventh Tradition contributions from groups?

1. Be an example.
2. Education: Have intergroup/service board members visit groups and tell them what the money is used for and how to contribute electronically.
3. Contributions: Encourage groups to pass the basket at meetings or post contribution information in the chat for online meetings.

How can we establish a prudent reserve?

1. Events: Hold an annual event (or more often) for the purpose of opening a prudent reserve account.
2. Budgeting: Place a set amount in a prudent reserve account regularly (i.e., each month or quarter) until a prudent reserve amount is reached.
3. Education: Inform members of how the prudent reserve amount is calculated.

Where can intergroups/service boards take problems and seek solutions?

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1. Region assemblies have developed or are developing different variations of forums for intergroup/service board communication and the exchange of ideas.
 2. Send representatives to region or contact a member of your region board and/or the trustee assigned as the liaison to your region.

Who do we contact if we feel our area has problems understanding and upholding the Twelve Traditions and Concepts?

1. Review and use the Conflict Resolution Worksheet found on oa.org.
2. Talk with your region chair or trustee acting as the liaison to your region.
3. Contact the WSO with your questions and they will have the appropriate staff or board member respond.
4. As a courtesy, inform the local group prior to bringing concerns to a region officer or the trustee who is your region's liaison.

How do we prevent the same handful of people from doing everything and then burning out? Who will do the work?

1. Place term limits in your intergroup/service board bylaws or policy manual. If rotation is specified and adhered to, people will become available for positions. If members are not interested in a position, you may need to review whether the position is necessary or not. Leaving a position open without a replacement is not necessarily bad.
2. Ask the intergroup/service board chair (or others) to talk to the people involved about the need to rotate service and train others.
3. Include the training of potential officers or committee chairs in the job description of the officers and committee chairs.
4. Have a workshop where those who are doing service share the benefits they are receiving.

How do we prevent one person from running things? They intimidate everyone.

1. Hold regular group conscience meetings.
2. Set time limits on sharing and discussion.
3. Develop guidelines for equality of participation.
4. Request input into agenda development.
5. Practice rotation of service.
6. Discourage cross talk; practice anonymity.
7. Incorporate these decisions into the meeting format.
8. Use the Conflict Resolution Worksheet to clarify an ongoing issue and bring the discussion to the group.
9. Invite an outside, neutral OA member to facilitate a group conscience or inventory.
10. Remember, we are all equal in OA. Each of us, however, has a different personality. We put principles before personalities and assert our own autonomy by using our voice despite being intimidated. We also accept the group conscience decision.
11. Use the *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies*, intergroup/service board bylaws, or other relevant literature and consult with other trusted servants to help determine when anyone has overstepped boundaries.
12. Use parliamentary procedure to help deal with the problem if it occurs at a business meeting.

How do we get meetings to account for their Seventh Tradition funds and to contribute to their intergroup/service board?

1. Communicate information regarding where money goes and what it is used for. If members know how their money is used, they are more likely to contribute financially.
2. Make groups aware that their responsibility doesn't end when they collect the money. Pass it on.
3. Report intergroup/service board successes as well as needs.
4. State needs in a simple manner (e.g., if each group contributes \$10 per month to intergroup/service

board, we'll have enough money to cover our expenses).

5. Assign active intergroup/service board members to visit meetings that are not involved at the intergroup/service board level and educate them about the intergroup/service board.
6. Publish a Seventh Tradition contribution list regularly, as many service bodies (intergroup/service board, region, and world service) do. This lets the membership know if their group is contributing and, if so, how much.

How can we acquire the necessary funds to continue intergroup/service board work?

1. Refer to the *Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Service Bodies* available at oa.org.
2. Take a separate collection at your meetings.
3. Hold marathons, workshops, and retreats.
4. Sell recordings from events.

If we can't support our own intergroup/service board, why should we contribute financially to region and world service?

Refer to literature addressing financial contributions for suggestions on how to disburse funds above the regular group expenses and why.

How can we encourage more members to participate in intergroup/service board committee work?

1. Place articles in service body newsletters and on websites describing committee activities.
2. Place ads in service body newsletters and on websites.
3. Schedule periodic committee meetings.
4. Schedule committee activities rather than discussions.

How can we encourage members to stay involved in service?

1. Teach that service is a responsibility and encourage participation.
2. Remind sponsors that service mentoring is a part of sponsorship.
3. Encourage members involved in service to accept responsibility for teaching newcomers how to do service.
4. Ensure that service bodies keep the OA program at the forefront. For example, hold an OA meeting with board members prior to a service meeting to get focused.
5. Encourage members to serve by always sharing the benefits of service. Service is both a Tool and a part of Step Twelve. Service is an investment in personal recovery and the dividends are plentiful.
6. Remember that pushing people too fast can lead to resistance and burnout.
7. Speak at meetings and share how participation at all levels of service has strengthened your recovery and why that participation is important to you.

These questions can be used to facilitate a discussion on the hows and whys of giving service.

The ABCs (and DEFs) of Service

A. Anyone can do it.

1. Is this the truth? Is there anyone not suitable to do service in OA? Who?
2. What about members in relapse? Members who never seem to lose any weight? Members with serious mental and emotional problems?
3. At what level of service does time in program and/or length of abstinence make a difference?
4. How about those who take on every service position in sight and then burn out or just stop showing up? How is this evidenced in your area? Is it preventable?

B. Beyond comfort and convenience

1. How much time and energy does a member in recovery owe OA? How can you tell when it's really too much?
2. When is it time to let go? When is it time to try harder, stretch further?

C. Common welfare

1. What is it? How do we work toward it with such diverse members, each of whom has ideas about how it works?
2. What part do the Traditions and Concepts play?
3. How do we address those doing service for power and prestige?
4. How do we balance striving for our common welfare versus benefiting personally from doing service?

D. Dealing with the Traditions and Concepts

1. How do we make sure our leaders remain trusted servants? How do you remain a trusted servant?
2. How do we maintain anonymity at high-visibility levels of service?
3. How do we work with others whose ideas about the program are different than ours?
4. Since financial stability ensures the continuation of service body work, how do we stay focused on OA's primary purpose and carry the message even when funds are scarce?

E. Extraordinary opportunities for growth

1. How has doing service benefited our personal programs? Be specific.
2. What have we learned about ourselves that we might not have learned otherwise?
3. What skills have we gained by giving service?
4. Do we share our service histories whenever we tell our OA stories? Why or why not? Do we hear speakers share their service histories? How does that affect us?

F. Fun!

1. How often do we hear people talk about the fun they have doing service? Do we talk about this whenever we share?
2. What fun have we experienced while doing service? Can it help us learn to have fun in the rest of our life?
3. Does everyone think service is fun? Are some forms of service more fun than others? Or does having fun while giving service depend on the individual?

Section III: Traditions

Introduction to the Twelve Traditions

It is often heard at meetings that “the Steps apply to an individual’s recovery; the Traditions address group issues.”

This is not true. Perhaps this is why many members of Overeaters Anonymous don’t fully comprehend the power of the Twelve Traditions. It may be a long time before a member of OA realizes that the Twelve Traditions are as necessary to each individual member of the Fellowship as the Twelve Steps of recovery.

In fact, sometimes the Twelve Traditions are harder to practice than the Twelve Steps. After all, the Steps are the personal work: admission of powerlessness, Fourth Step inventories, and so on. The Traditions, however, apply to the part of our lives where we deal with others. They help us learn about cooperation and teamwork to achieve a common goal.

Working with others by giving away what we have been given is the only way we can keep the recovery that we’ve received and continue to grow in the program ourselves.

By working the Twelve Traditions, both within the group and to the extent possible in our lives outside of the OA meeting rooms, we learn valuable lessons. We learn that we don’t always have to be “right.” We learn about the power of consensus and unity. We learn that together we can do what we could never do alone.

Tips for Communicating the Value of the Traditions

1. Read all Twelve Traditions at every meeting.
2. Stress how the Traditions are applicable to the individual's program of recovery.
3. Schedule one meeting a month to discuss a Tradition.
4. Reserve time at the beginning or end of intergroup/service board meetings to discuss a Tradition.
5. Read the section on a Tradition at meetings from the pamphlet *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* (available at oa.org).
6. Share about how the Traditions enhance your recovery in addition to how the Steps and Tools help.
7. Add a Traditions column to your monthly newsletter.
8. Start sponsoring members in the Traditions.
9. Cover the Traditions in your Step study meetings.
10. Have your sponsee write about Traditions.
11. Share how the Traditions keep your group strong and well.
12. Share how you practice the Traditions at home, at work, and in family situations.
13. Stress how the Traditions apply to the individual's relationship with people outside of OA.
14. Refer to the Traditions for a possible answer whenever people are having a relationship problem.
15. Plan a workshop on different Traditions (with appealing titles) at marathons that break into workshops.
16. Read a "Tradition of the Month" at meetings each week.
17. Give a five-minute presentation on the "Tradition of the Month" at intergroup/service board meetings.
18. Start a Traditions meeting.
19. Hold a Traditions Workshop.

Suggested Topics for a Living-the-Traditions Workshop

“We have evolved a set of traditional principles by which we live and work together and relate ourselves as a fellowship to the world around us.”¹

“Overeaters Anonymous has Twelve Traditions that are designed to keep our meetings and service bodies on track, functioning in such a way as to nurture the recovery of all compulsive overeaters who seek help in this Fellowship.... These twelve suggestions have worked to help individuals, groups, and OA as a whole solve problems, thrive, and be effective instruments for carrying the message of recovery to those who still suffer.”²

1. How do the Traditions help us live and work together within the Fellowship?
2. As a Fellowship, how do we use the Traditions in our relationships with outside organizations, such as health professionals, newspapers and other media, or landlords of meeting rooms?
3. Give examples of what might happen, both inside the Fellowship and in our dealings with the outside world, if we don't adhere to the Traditions.
4. How do the Traditions protect us from our own defects at the personal, group, and intergroup/service board levels?
5. How can we use the Traditions in our personal lives to help us practice these principles in all our affairs?

¹ *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, ©1967, page 79. With permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.

² *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, 2nd ed., ©2018, page 89

Carrying the Message to Those Close to Us Workshop

Membership surveys consistently show that more people come to OA through friends and family than any other avenue. Many of us devote a lot of time, money, and energy to public information activities. How much time do we spend carrying the message where it is most effective, free, and most likely to bring us recovery?

1. Who in my life knows I'm in OA and knows what OA is? When and why have I told them? What was their reaction?
 - A. Among my family (including extended family)?
 - B. Among friends?
 - C. Among people I socialize with?
 - D. Among people I share hobbies and pastimes with?
 - E. Among people I share other fellowships with (religious, Twelve Step, etc.)?
 - F. Among people I meet casually?
2. Who in my life doesn't know I'm in OA? Why not?
3. Think of a few occasions when you've shared your membership in OA, and perhaps what OA means to you or has done for you. On what occasions has this been most successful? How have you approached people on these occasions? How have they responded? What factors contributed to their reacting that way?

Frequently Asked Questions about Traditions

How do we use the Traditions to strengthen and unify our Fellowship? What if there is disagreement about whether a meeting's practices are in keeping with our Traditions (e.g., endorsing a non-OA enterprise or selling/using non-OA-approved literature)? How should the disagreement be resolved?

The Traditions are open to interpretation. They are not rules set in stone. They are meant to guide us and to reflect the experience and wisdom of those who have gone before us. A group discussion about the meaning and application of the Traditions is always useful and instructive. Request that a group conscience meeting be held to discuss how OA Traditions, Concepts, and policies apply to these practices.

If needed, contact with other trusted servants (e.g., intergroup/service board chair, region chair, or trustee who is the liaison to your region) may prove helpful. Additional information and experience referring to the Traditions and Concepts to guide us in the decision-making process may help. If a member believes that a group decision affects other groups or OA as a whole, the decision can be appealed to the intergroup or service board. A service body or individual member can request help to resolve the issue.

Where does group autonomy stop and "OA as a whole" begin (Tradition Four)?

These points shall define an OA group:

- a) As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
- b) All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
- c) No member is required to practice any action in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
- d) As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
- e) It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.³

When the practices of a group do not conform to the definition of an OA group, it gives a misleading message about OA. This includes actions that are not in keeping with our Traditions or policies that were voted on by the World Service Business Conference.

May we set requirements for leaders?

Yes. Requirements for speakers and group officers come under the group autonomy of Tradition Four. The right to participate is not the same as the right to lead.

What can we do when we don't like a decision that the group/service body makes?

If we don't like the decision that the group makes, even if it is in keeping with our Traditions, we can request another group conscience. If the group conscience does not come out the way we want it to, we either accept the group's decision or find another meeting to attend. If the intergroup/service board, region, or world service makes a decision that we do not like, we can go to our representatives for that body and ask for more information regarding the decision and/or propose a change to the policy that can be voted on by the delegates to the particular body.

What is approved literature?

In general, approved literature is included on the *OA-Approved Literature List*. The list is available at oa.org.

³ OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V

Can we display our own intergroup, service board, or region documents and newsletters?

Yes. Intergroup/service board newsletters, region newsletters, and flyers are regarded as “local literature” that fulfill a specific need within the OA Fellowship. Check to see that they follow the Traditions and do not conflict with the approved literature policy in *Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature*, also available at oa.org.

Is it in keeping with our Traditions to sell OA literature at a profit?

Yes.

Is it okay to announce events for other Twelve Step programs in our meeting or have their flyers or non-approved literature on our literature table?

No, Tradition Five guides us to keep our focus on the message of OA, which is recovery from the disease of compulsive overeating through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA. In Tradition Six, we are further guided to maintain our single-minded focus by not allowing the OA name to be used in conjunction with any other organization. Making an announcement or setting out flyers or non-approved literature for *any* other organization—no matter how worthy or like-minded—can imply an endorsement of that organization. Other Twelve Step organizations are independent organizations, and display of their flyers is not in keeping with our Traditions.

Is it in keeping with our Traditions to have to pay a preset registration fee at special events (e.g., conventions)?

Yes. A portion of every registration fee is an allocation for the cost of the facility. The remainder of the registration fee is a financial contribution to the sponsoring group. There are no dues or fees for OA membership; however, we are self-supporting. Therefore, it is the responsibility of people who attend OA special events to help defray group expenses.

Is OA free?

No. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. Our Seventh Tradition does not relieve us from the responsibility of making sure that OA meetings and services are able to continue to flourish. For many of us, it didn’t matter what it cost us to find the food we needed to support our disease. Even a small portion of those costs placed in a basket passed at a meeting or contributed online will help keep OA viable.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS— ILLUSTRATED



Tradition One Unity



Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

Tradition Two Trust



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.

Tradition Three Identity



The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Tradition Four Autonomy



Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

Tradition Five Purpose



Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

Tradition Six Solidarity



An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Tradition Seven Responsibility



Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Tradition Eight Fellowship



Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Tradition Nine Structure



OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Tradition Ten Neutrality



Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Tradition Eleven Anonymity



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.

Tradition Twelve Spirituality



Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Section IV: Concepts

Introduction to the Twelve Concepts of OA Service

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service may be considered from two perspectives: first, as practical guidelines for world service and, second, as an intentionally ordered set of principles enlightening all who seek to serve. Our primary purpose unifies the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts as guidelines for carrying the message.

The Concepts offer guidance for our trusted servants, from group secretaries to trustees. They remind us that we serve not just ourselves but the entire OA Fellowship. The Twelve Concepts describe the service structure of OA and the Spiritual Principles that effectively connect our servants to their work and to each other.

These Concepts depict the chain of delegated responsibility we use to provide service throughout the world, with qualifications and responsibilities clearly defined in job descriptions. They provide the basis for individual members and groups to participate in our worldwide Fellowship. They direct all of OA's trusted servants to well-considered actions for group participation, decision-making, voting, and expressing minority opinions. The spiritual foundation ensures that "no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy" and that we "shall always remain democratic in thought and action" (Concept Twelve, e and f).

The Twelve Concepts work hand in hand with the Twelve Steps, which are spiritual principles applied in our individual recovery, and the Twelve Traditions, which are spiritual principles applied to relationships and to our groups.

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.
8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.
12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
 - a) no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
 - b) sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
 - c) no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
 - d) all important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
 - e) no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
 - f) no OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Tips for Communicating the Value of the Concepts

1. Emphasize how the Concepts apply to the OA service structure.
2. Discuss how the Concepts are guidelines to carry the message.
3. Read the Concepts at all business meetings.
4. Set aside time during a business meeting to discuss a Concept.
5. Share personal experiences about how the Concepts help OA members to be better trusted servants.
6. Create a column for Concepts in monthly newsletters.
7. Hold a stand-alone Concepts Workshop or in conjunction with a Service and Traditions Workshop.
8. Make efforts to acquaint all OA members with the Concepts.
9. Introduce the Concepts to sponsees who are getting involved in service.
10. Arrange for a short presentation on a “Concept of the Month” at business meetings.
11. Whenever feasible, have the Concepts on the program at OA events (e.g., weekend retreats, marathons, conventions, assemblies, and conferences).
12. When trusted servants experience challenges integrating with one another, encourage them to refer to the Concepts.
13. Talk about how the Concepts can strengthen personal recovery.
14. Encourage members to apply the Concepts in all aspects of their lives whenever appropriate.
15. Discuss why we need the Concepts.

Concepts Workshop Topics

Frequently asked questions about the Twelve Concepts of OA Service:

1. What is meant by “ultimate responsibility and authority” and “collective conscience” of the OA Fellowship (Concept One)?
2. How do the Twelve Concepts help service bodies function effectively? Give examples.
3. How is “effective leadership” possible (Concept Three)?
4. Explain “right of participation” (Concept Four).
5. What might happen if there was no appeal process?
6. What can be done to help avoid duplication of service efforts?
7. Discuss OA’s spiritual foundation for service as explained in Concept Twelve.

Section V: Sample Exercises

Given the following scenarios, what Traditions, Concepts, or policies might you refer to in order to resolve any issue?

1. A group votes to start each meeting with a reading from the Bible.
2. A prominent sports figure who has been in program for seven years offers to represent OA on a local talk show.
3. A ten-year member of OA is hired to be the new intergroup/service board office manager.
4. A member requests a group conscience to discuss asking another member to stop attending meetings because they always come late and cause a commotion.
5. An OA member lists her service position in OA under the heading of “Community Involvement” on her resume.
6. At a meeting, a member comments, “I know we’re not supposed to give advice, but I just have to tell Mary how to handle her problem.”
7. John is elected for his third two-year term as intergroup/service board chair, even though the bylaws state the limit is two two-year terms.
8. A local restaurant offers to serve “OA-approved” meals to OA members at a 20 percent discount if the intergroup/service board newsletter will run a free ad for the restaurant.
9. A member who owns a printing shop offers to print the intergroup/service board newsletter free of charge.
10. The flyer presented to an intergroup/service board for approval indicates that an out-of-town member with fifteen years of abstinence would be the leader for a local retreat.
11. A group decides to accept a discount on rent from their landlord and reduced fees from the bank.
12. An OA member decides to host an OA meeting in their home and provide babysitting. After rent and other group costs have been met, can they use the rest to pay for babysitting?

Appendices: Visual Aids and References

A. Reference Materials

1. *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*
2. *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* pamphlet on oa.org
3. *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service* (pamphlet)
4. *Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (Big Book)*
5. *AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
6. *AA Comes of Age*
7. *Public Information Service Manual*
8. *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies*
9. *Anonymity* (pamphlet)
10. OA guidelines at oa.org
11. Current World Service Business Conference Final Conference Report at oa.org
12. OA resources on Traditions and Concepts (videos, podcasts, workshops, etc.)

For further information, please check the current OA literature catalog, contact the World Service Office, or go to the OA website at oa.org.

B. Glossary

<i>Ad Hoc Committee</i>	A special (<i>temporary</i>) committee formed for a specific purpose or project.
<i>Affiliate</i>	To choose to join with another service body for the purpose of communication and support in conducting OA business.
<i>Affiliated Group</i>	A group that chooses to join a specific intergroup or national service board for the purposes of communication and support in conducting the business of OA. This allows for consolidation of resources and eliminates duplication of effort. Any group may participate in the activities (including voting) of another intergroup, national service board, language service board, specific-focus service board, and/or region with their permission (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 3.</i>)
<i>Affiliated Intergroup</i>	An intergroup associated with a national service board and/or region for the purposes of communication and support in doing the OA business of carrying the message. This affiliation allows for consolidation of resources and eliminates duplication of effort. Any service board may participate in the activities (including voting) of another intergroup, national service board, language service board, specific-focus service board, and/or region with their permission. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 3.</i>)
<i>Anonymity</i>	A Tradition in OA where members are not identified via public media or by a third party. Overeaters Anonymous members are anonymous; the organization is not.

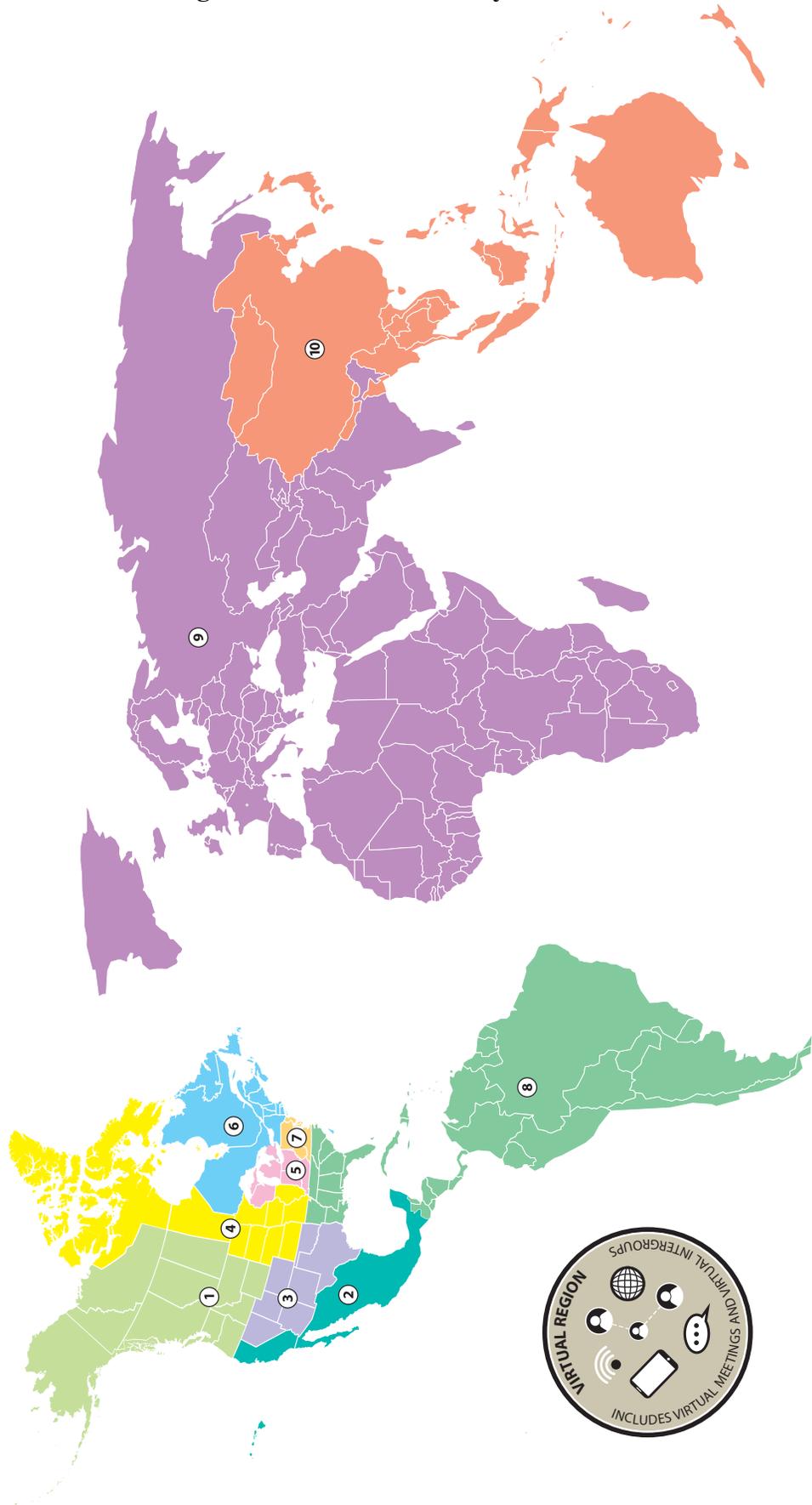
<i>Automatic Recurring Contribution (ARC)</i>	An easy and safe way to make a monthly or quarterly Seventh Tradition contribution directly to the World Service Office.
<i>Board-Approved Literature</i>	Literature that has been approved by the Board of Trustees, including but not limited to meeting formats, literature that originated from a Board or Conference committee and is not intended for the Fellowship as a whole (such as committee handbooks), and literature that has been compiled from already existing OA-approved literature or <i>Lifeline</i> .
<i>Board Committee</i>	A permanent or special (ad hoc) committee formed by the Board of Trustees.
<i>Board of Trustees (BOT)</i>	The OA, Inc. board is composed of seventeen trustees. Wherever possible, a minimum of two trustees shall come from outside North America. All positions are elected by the WSBC. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VII, Section 1.</i>)
<i>Business Conference Policy Manual</i>	A summary of continuing effect motions (i.e., policies) passed by World Service Business Conferences. These policies represent the group conscience of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole. The manual is posted at oa.org. <i>This document may only be amended by the delegates at WSBC.</i>
<i>Bylaws, Subpart A</i>	The governing document of the corporate organization for Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart A, Article II.</i>)
<i>Bylaws, Subpart B</i>	The governing document setting out the identity, rights, and privileges of members and service bodies of Overeaters Anonymous with respect to the corporation. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article IV, Section 1.</i>) <i>This document may only be amended by the delegates at WSBC.</i>
<i>Conference</i>	See <i>World Service Business Conference</i> .
<i>Conference-Approved Literature</i>	Literature that has been approved by Conference and granted the Conference Seal of Approval. (<i>Refer to WSBC Policy 1985.</i>)
<i>Conference Committee</i>	A standing (permanent) or special (temporary/ad hoc) committee of the Conference at the world service level. Committee membership is limited to a delegate cochair, a trustee cochair, and an equal percentage of the year's registered delegates. Each committee will include delegates from across the regions, whenever possible. Additionally, a combination of up to six former trustees, current trustees, and nondelegate members may be appointed to participate in the work of the committee during the year. (<i>Refer to WSBC Policy 1991a (2).</i>)
<i>Convention</i>	See <i>World Service Convention</i> .
<i>Delegate</i>	The individual who is elected at the service body level to represent that service body at the annual WSBC and bring back to their local area the results of the WSBC meeting. Trustees and region chairs also serve as Conference delegates. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VIII, Section 3.</i>)

Executive Committee (EC)	A subset of the Board of Trustees with the duty of overseeing the World Service Office. The Executive Committee consists of the officers and up to five additional trustees; preference is given to trustees who are not region liaisons. The Executive Committee meets in person or by video conference each month.
Group	<p>These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service. b) All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group. c) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting). d) As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous. e) It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office. <p><i>(Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V.)</i></p>
Group Conscience	The collective conscience of the group membership. Although OA arrives at a group conscience through the voting process, it is spiritually more than a simple majority vote; rather, the term “group conscience” is the collective will of a specific OA group (perhaps taken by simple majority vote). The term “group conscience” comes from the Second Tradition: “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.” Each individual member of OA, each group, and each intergroup/service board become a part of the collective group conscience of OA as a whole.
Intergroup (IG)	The service body that is composed of groups within its geographical proximity or virtual community and provides services to those groups. <i>(Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1a.)</i>
Intergroup Office/Service Center	An office that may provide services such as literature, meeting information, and responses to telephone and email inquiries to local groups.
Language Service Board (LSB)	The service body that provides services to groups and/or intergroups that share a specific language regardless of geographic proximity. An LSB may choose to affiliate or not affiliate with a region. Groups, intergroups, and national service boards may participate with an LSB. <i>(Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1c and Section 3c.)</i>

<i>National Service Board (NSB)</i>	The service body that provides services to groups and/or intergroups within a country. In some cases, an NSB may serve more than one country. The NSB is affiliated with the region where their nation exists and may participate in one or more LSBs. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc., Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1b and Section 3b.</i>)
<i>Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.</i>	The formal legal structure of the organization (corporation) subject to the laws of the state of New Mexico. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart A, Article I.</i>)
<i>Policy and Procedures (P&P)</i>	Manual that contains ongoing policies adopted by the group conscience of the service body to which it applies.
<i>Parliamentary Procedure</i>	An established or official way of accomplishing business at a meeting. In many cases, procedures are general and based on <i>Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised</i> . The OA, Inc. Bylaws (including the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts) and policies supersede <i>Robert's Rules</i> when they differ.
<i>Region Assembly</i>	The meeting to do the business of the groups and/or intergroups associated with the region as defined in OA Bylaws, Subpart B. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 4b.</i>)
<i>Region Representatives</i>	The individuals who are elected by the service body to represent it at the region assembly and bring back the results of the assembly to the local area. Unaffiliated meetings may also send a representative and may have a vote depending on the region bylaws. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1e.</i>)
<i>Regions</i>	Ten geographic areas plus a virtual community specifically defined in the OA, Inc. Bylaws. (<i>Refer to the region map at oa.org or OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1e.</i>)
<i>Region trustees</i>	The eleven members of the Board of Trustees who, in addition to other duties, act as liaisons between OA's geographic areas, virtual community, and world service. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article IX, Section 2c</i>) 2.)
<i>Service Board</i>	The service body that provides services to their affiliated groups. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1.</i>) (<i>See also language service board, national service board, and specific-focus service board.</i>)
<i>Service Body</i>	Any service entity that provides services beyond the group level (intergroups, service boards, regions). (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI.</i>)
<i>Specific Focus Service Board (SFSB)</i>	The service body that provides services to two or more groups and intergroups to serve the common needs of groups/intergroups with the same specific focus, regardless of geographic proximity. An SFSB may choose to affiliate or not affiliate with a region. The groups that participate in an SFSB retain their original affiliation. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI, Section 1d and Section 3d.</i>)

<i>Substantial Unanimity</i>	Concept Twelve states in part: “The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that d) all important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.” Being unanimous means that we are one mind or have the agreement and consent of all. Substantial means being largely but not wholly that which is specified. In practice, and according to <i>Robert's Rules of Order</i> , therefore “substantial unanimity” is defined as two-thirds affirmative vote for some things and majority vote for others.
<i>Trustees</i>	See <i>Board of Trustees (BOT)</i> .
<i>Unaffiliated Registered Group</i>	A group that is unaware of or chooses not to associate itself with a specific intergroup or service board.
<i>Workshop</i>	An event that addresses topics of interest to OA members. Attendees are encouraged to take the information from the workshop back to their service bodies and groups.
<i>World Service Business Conference (WSBC)</i>	The annual OA business meeting that ensures the OA process is maintained through the group conscience of the worldwide Fellowship as determined by the delegates present. (<i>Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VIII, Section 1a.</i>)
<i>World Service Convention (WSC)</i>	The recovery event put on by the WSO every five years. The Convention is geared toward maintaining and enhancing members’ recovery and fellowship; a great way to introduce newcomers to the OA recovery program.
<i>World Service Office (WSO)</i>	The World Service Office is in Rio Rancho, New Mexico USA, and has paid staff to conduct OA’s day-to-day operations. (<i>See Appendix E.</i>)

C. Regions of Overeaters Anonymous



Refer to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VII, Section 1 for current composition of regions.

Region One

Pacific Northwest Region composed of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, and Yukon

Region Two

Pacific Southwest Region composed of California, Hawaii, Reno/Tahoe area of Nevada, and Mexico

Region Three

Southwest Region composed of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah

Region Four

West Central Region composed of Illinois (except the Greater Chicago area and Central Illinois Intergroup), Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Manitoba, Northwestern Ontario, and the territory of Nunavut

Region Five

Central Region composed of the Greater Chicago area and Central Illinois Intergroup, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Southwestern Ontario

Region Six

Northeast Region composed of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Bermuda

Region Seven

Eastern Region composed of Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia

Region Eight

Southeast Region composed of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, the US Virgin Islands, the Caribbean Islands, Central America, and South America

Region Nine

Composed of countries and territories in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Western Asia, including all of Russia

Region Ten

Composed of countries and territories in Australia, East Asia, New Zealand, South East Asia, and the Western Pacific Basin

Virtual Region

Non-geographic and primarily composed of virtual meetings and virtual intergroups

D. Group Inventories

It is suggested that a neutral, experienced OA member facilitate an inventory for a group or service body. Region boards can assist with finding members who can provide this type of support.

1. Group Inventory

Use an entire meeting for an honest and fearless discussion of the group's weaknesses and strengths.

This inventory is divided into two parts. A is an inventory of the group as a whole; B is a personal inventory of a member's behavior in the group.

A. Group Inventory⁴

1. Does our meeting start and end on time?
2. Are all attending, including newcomers, greeted and made to feel welcome and accepted?
3. Does our meeting focus on OA recovery through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions?
4. Do we offer our own experience, strength, and hope, sharing the solution we have found?
5. Is the group contributing financially to all levels of OA service as per our Seventh Tradition?
6. Are sponsors available and identified at the meeting?
7. Does our group practice anonymity by reminding members not to repeat who is seen or what personal sharing is heard at a meeting?
8. Does our group follow a meeting format?
9. Is only OA-approved literature on display and for sale?
10. Are group conscience meetings held regularly?
11. Are all service positions filled, and is rotation of service practiced?
12. Is our meeting information readily available, and is the World Service Office informed of all meeting details and changes so that newcomers and visitors can find our meeting?
13. Are cross talk and advice-giving avoided?

B. Determine your part in the group

1. Do I make a point to welcome new members, talk with them, and offer my phone number?
Do I sponsor new members?
2. Do I interrupt speakers or other members who are sharing?
3. Do I give my full attention to the speakers, the secretary, and other group members?
4. Do I ever repeat anything personal I have heard at meetings or from another member?
5. Do I put pressure on the group to accept my ideas because I have been in the Fellowship a long time?
6. Do I take part in meetings, or do I sit and listen?
7. Do I volunteer or willingly accept a group office (e.g., secretary, treasurer)? Do I offer to help set up, clean, etc.?
8. Do I criticize others in the group or gossip about them?
9. Do I try to give advice?
10. Is it difficult for me to realize that my point of view may not always be the group conscience?
Can I accept disagreement?
11. Do I use the telephone or electronic communication to help myself and others, not just for complaints and gossip?
12. Do I make it a point to speak with newcomers who are having a difficult time in the program?
Do I let them know they are welcome?
13. Do I monopolize the conversation and explain every Tool, Tradition, etc.?
14. Do I feel no one can lead a meeting as well as me?

⁴Part A of this inventory is the same as the *Strong Meeting Checklist*.

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15. Do I go to meetings to learn instead of teach?
 16. Do I cross talk and cause meetings to go off on tangents?
 17. Do I wait until announcement time to make proper OA announcements?
 18. Do I have a topic so everyone can participate at meetings I chair?
 19. Do I try to cause dissension?
 20. Do I follow the meeting format completely?
 21. Do I commit myself to the OA program?
 22. Do I have a sponsor and work the Steps?
 23. Do I give service to promote group growth and benefit my own growth as well?
 24. Am I only interested in my own welfare, or am I concerned for my fellow OA members as well?

2. Intergroup or Service Board Inventory

This inventory is divided into three parts:

- A. A look at the function of the intergroup or service board
- B. Twelfth Step work within the Fellowship
- C. Carrying the message to the still-suffering compulsive overeater

When you have completed the inventory, you will probably discover that your intergroup or service board has more strengths than you realized. After all, it takes commitment to be willing to do an inventory in the first place. You may also find some weaknesses. Just as in your personal recovery, appreciate your strengths. As for your weaknesses, remember that help is available to you from your region, the trustee serving as a liaison to your region, and the World Service Office.

The following sets of questions are suggestions only. Their purpose is to evaluate the intergroup's/service board's present performance and to share some ideas about service from other intergroups/service boards.

Take a deep breath, and good luck!

Preliminary Questions

1. Are we satisfied with the function of our intergroup/service board? If not, why not?
2. Have we ever taken an intergroup/service board inventory? If not, why not? If so, what were the results?

A. The Function of the Intergroup/Service Board

1. What is the purpose of our intergroup/service board?
2. Do we have a statement of purpose or bylaws?
3. Do we use *Robert's Rules of Order* and our bylaws during our business meetings?
4. Do the Twelve Traditions take precedence over Robert's Rules in our intergroup's/service board's bylaws?
5. Do intergroup/service board bylaws and policies protect and/or extend the tenure of certain "trusted servants"?
6. Does our intergroup/service board "dictate" or "suggest"?
7. Are we incorporated? Do we have nonprofit tax status?
8. Do we set realistic short- and long-term goals?
9. Does our intergroup/service board have a need for regular steering committee meetings or board meetings?
10. Are there frequent steering committee meetings for discussions and decisions beyond the

-
- purview of the entire group conscience?
11. Does a select group make most of our intergroup's/service board's "important" decisions?
 12. Is ours an exclusive club or an inclusive intergroup/service board?
 13. Are all our intergroup's/service board's activities open to the scrutiny of each member of the Fellowship?
 14. How can we keep the WSO group registrations up to date?
 15. Are committee meetings open to all members?
 16. Are committees' recommendations presented to the entire intergroup/service board for consideration and deliberation?
 17. Do we choose our service people with care and consideration, placing principles before personalities?
 18. Is anonymity honored within our intergroup/service board?
 19. Is an opportunity given to each member to participate in the intergroup's/service board's activities?
 20. Do we have a budget that includes a prudent reserve and contributions to region and the WSO?
 21. Have we done all we can to provide an attractive and convenient meeting place?
 22. Are we committed to participating in the region and world service structure?
 23. Do we make every effort to fund our representatives to region assemblies and the World Service Business Conference?
 24. How often do our "trusted servants" say, "Trust me, I know what's best"?
 25. Is there a frequent need for quick decisions?
 26. Is there a place on our intergroup's/service board's agenda for open sharing and expressing group concerns?
 27. Who decides how our intergroup/service board spends money?
 28. Do we see complete monthly financial reports, or just the general fund's beginning and ending balance?
 29. Does our intergroup/service board have special savings accounts?
 30. Are funds readily available, or are they invested?
 31. Is the prudent reserve truly prudent, or is it a hedge against a worldwide recession?
 32. Are the requests for intergroup/service board contributions consistent with expenditures shown on the financial reports?
 33. How long has the treasurer been in control of the books?
 34. Are there multiple signatories on all accounts?
 35. Does someone other than the treasurer reconcile bank accounts?
 36. Have the books been audited lately?

B. The Twelfth Step Within

1. Do all the groups in our geographic area know about our intergroup/service board and the services we provide?
2. Are all the groups in the area affiliated with an intergroup/service board?
3. Do we keep in touch with groups who don't send representatives or contributions to the intergroup/service board?
4. Do we let all groups know how they can support the intergroup/service board through service and financial contributions?
5. Do we encourage the Seventh Tradition's 60/30/10 (or another) contribution formula, making sure our area groups know about it?
6. Do we inform all members and groups of the structure of OA?
7. Do we sponsor OA workshops and marathons for OA members in our area?
8. Do we keep our meeting list current?
9. Do we publish a newsletter for the groups in our area?
10. Do we maintain a stock of OA-approved literature for sale?
11. Do we help new members find sponsors?
12. Do we arrange a system for groups to obtain abstinent OA speakers?

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13. How do we help floundering groups?
 14. Do we assist unaffiliated groups in nearby areas to form their own intergroups/service boards?
 15. Do we address the specific needs of our members, e.g., young people or the physically challenged, and try to find ways to meet their needs without isolating them?

C. Carrying the Message

1. Do we have a permanent address and phone number that is answered twenty-four hours a day?
Can we be reached:
 - a. by mail and email
 - b. by phone
 - c. by internet
 - d. by social media?
2. Is our intergroup/service board contact information listed in local directories?
3. Are we reaching compulsive overeaters in our community through:
 - a. meeting listings in local newspapers/directories
 - b. radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs)
 - c. calendar notices
 - d. newspaper, magazine, and online articles
 - e. news releases about special OA events
 - f. bulletin board notices
 - g. OA literature in libraries
 - h. special newcomer meetings
 - i. speakers list for various community organizations
 - j. social media ads
 - k. blogging
 - l. podcasts
 - m. other _____?
4. What have we done to bring the OA message to the attention of the professional community, such as:
 - a. medical professionals
 - b. physicians
 - c. nurses
 - d. dietitians
 - e. nutritionists
 - f. medical technicians
 - g. psychiatrists
 - h. psychologists
 - i. counselors
 - j. teachers
 - k. social workers
 - l. clergy
 - m. military
 - n. employee assistance counselors
 - o. other _____?
5. What are we doing to carry the message into institutions, such as:
 - a. schools
 - b. prisons and detention centers

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- c. hospitals
 - d. training facilities
 - e. nursing homes and retirement communities
 - f. other _____?

Final Question

Are there other alternatives to the present intergroup/service board structure that might be more useful in meeting the area's needs? If so, what?

We all know, of course, how to identify dysfunction. So, it isn't so much an issue of not knowing there's a problem as it is about doing something. Being long on *wisdom*, do we opt for *serenity* or *courage*? Do we accept it or change it? Intervention or avoidance? If not you, who?

3. Region Inventory

This inventory is divided into three parts and can be used at three separate meetings, or a special meeting could be planned specifically for using this inventory.

The three parts of the inventory are:

- A. A look at the function of the region
- B. Twelfth Step work within the Fellowship
- C. Carrying the message to the still-suffering compulsive overeater who may not know about OA

When you have completed the inventory, you will probably discover that your region has more strengths than you realized. After all, it takes commitment to be willing to do an inventory in the first place. You may also find some weaknesses. Just as in your personal recovery, appreciate your strengths. As for your weaknesses, remember that help is available to you through the trustee assigned to your region.

The following sets of questions are suggestions only. Their purpose is to evaluate the region's present performance and to share ideas about service from other regions. Of course, many of these ideas may not apply to your region.

Take a deep breath, and good luck!

Preliminary Questions

1. Does our region have room for improvement? In what ways?
2. Have we ever taken a region inventory? If not, why not? If so, what were the results? Were the suggested improvements implemented?

A. The Function of the Region

1. What is the purpose of our region?
2. Do we have a statement of purpose or bylaws?
3. Do our bylaws state that the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service take precedence in all region business practices?
4. Do we use *Robert's Rules of Order* and a parliamentarian to assist us during our business meetings?
5. Are we incorporated? Do we have nonprofit tax status?
6. Do we set realistic short- and long-term goals?
7. Does our region have regular board meetings?
8. Do we choose our service people with care and consideration, placing principles before

personalities, for the welfare of the region as a whole?

9. Is an opportunity given to each member to participate in the region's activities?
10. Do we encourage the Seventh Tradition and the 60/30/10 contribution formula and make sure our area groups know about it?
11. Do we have a budget that includes a prudent reserve and contributions to the WSO?
12. Do region assemblies adhere to an agenda?
13. Does our region make an effort to reach unaffiliated groups?
14. Does the region encourage intergroup/service board and unaffiliated group attendance at region assemblies?
15. Does the region encourage intergroup/service board attendance at WSBC?
16. Do we make every effort possible to fund our chair to Conference?
17. Is adequate advance notice of the region assemblies given?

B. Twelfth Step Within

1. Do all the groups in our virtual and geographic area know about our region and the services we offer?
2. Do we keep in touch with groups who do not attend region assemblies or send contributions?
3. Do we inform all new representatives of the structure of OA?
4. Do we have a region newsletter?
5. How do we help floundering intergroups/service boards?
6. Do we assist unaffiliated groups in close proximity to one another to form their own intergroup/service board?
7. Does the region supply adequate information to its representatives on upcoming motions to reach an informed group conscience?

C. Carrying the Message

1. Does our region offer committee meetings that correspond to the committees that are part of the World Service Business Conference?
2. Does the region make OA recordings and public service announcements available to the intergroups/service boards it serves?

Final Question

Are there alternatives to the present region structure that might be more useful or provide additional assistance in meeting our area's needs? If so, what?

E. What Does the WSO Do for You?

The Overeaters Anonymous World Service Office is dedicated to meeting the needs of the Fellowship around the globe. The WSO and staff serve as a central hub for the administrative, financial, logistical, public information, and literature production tasks of OA. These activities are at the direction of the Board of Trustees and funded by your contributions and literature sales.

For questions and comments, contact the WSO at info@oa.org.

Accounting Department

Financial and facilities management, literature order fulfillment, and program coordination.

<i>Literature Sales</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take, process, and ship orders• Maintain inventory of materials
<i>Mailing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process all outgoing mail and maintain postage machine

<i>Contributions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record contributions and mail receipts • Prepare annual contribution report • Record and manage Delegate Support, Professional Exhibit, and Translation Assistance funds
<i>Reduced Cost Literature Program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate program
<i>Banking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deposit all payments; maintain integrity of payments awaiting deposit • Reconcile accounts • Coordinate with financial advisors • Pay bills
<i>Financial Statements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare monthly balance sheet and income statement • Coordinate annual review or audit • Distribute periodic request for proposals to rotate outside auditing services • File all required tax reports
<i>Facilities Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain physical structure of WSO and coordinate repairs • Receive all incoming shipments
<i>Human Resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain employee and payroll records; coordinate employee benefits • Prepare payroll tax reports as required

Executive Department

WSO management, budget administration, Board of Trustees support, organizational planning, special project direction, Conference support, and Bylaws or policy updates.

<i>Board of Trustees Support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and administer annual budget • Implement organizational planning and vision • Provide support and planning for meetings, Conferences, and Conventions • Serve as media liaison • Represent OA as a spokesperson • Record and format accurate meeting minutes • Organize and disseminate board and Executive Committee meeting agendas • Update Board Reference Manual, orientation manuals, and address lists • Maintain meeting files • Coordinate board communications • Provide miscellaneous support and guidance for trustees assigned as liaisons to regions • Oversee and provide maintenance of all OA, Inc. websites • Support board communication
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<p><i>World Service Business Conference (WSBC) Support</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record and format accurate minutes of business meetings • Update OA Bylaws and policy manual • Provide general assistance at registration and pre-Conference meetings • Provide support to chair; review and customize Conference script • Coordinate with parliamentarian • Provide information to delegates as needed • Review Conference Delegate Binder and Final Conference Report
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Member Services Department

Group support and meeting database administration, service body support and report generation, Conference and Convention planning, committee support, and public information coordination.

<p><i>Group and Service Body Support</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process hard copy and website registrations, cancellations, and changes in meeting database • Maintain website directories for face-to-face, online, and telephone meetings and service bodies; provide printed directories as requested • Provide customer services for all groups, including new groups and members
<p><i>Correspondence and Inquiries</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to telephone, email, mail, and fax inquiries • Download all email sent to info@oa.org and redirect to staff • Open and distribute daily postal mail
<p><i>Committee Support</i></p>	<p>Public Information and Professional Outreach Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as liaison between media and OA groups • Respond to inquiries from community professionals • Assemble and mail professional kits • Administer OA CARES (correctional facility outreach) <p>Twelfth Step Within Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide project support <p>Bylaws Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer intergroup bylaws files; coordinate trustee review of bylaws <p>Young Persons' Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward inquiries regarding youth to trustee cochair <p>Unity with Diversity Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide project support <p>All Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide project support
<p><i>Professional Exhibits Fund</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile fund applications monthly and submit to committee • Contact service body upon committee decision; maintain contact and support • Ship literature to service body; process when returned to WSO • Distribute final report
<p><i>Trustee/Region Chair Quarterly Reports</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and email group and service body reports

<i>Tradition Issues Response</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct inquiries to appropriate trustees; maintain notebook of trustee responses
<i>Information Technology Support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain WSO computer network; coordinate IT projects
<i>World Service Business Conference (WSBC)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research venues and submit information to Executive Committee; negotiate multiyear contract with selected venue • Annually, provide administrative and logistical support for all aspects of Conference, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Budget planning and tracking > Theme, colors, and logo > Business meeting support: agenda, script, documents, emails, binders, office supplies, and trustee ballots > Hotel coordination for menus, room block, meeting space, and special accommodations > Workshop topics, speakers, and meeting spaces > Audiovisual and entertainment needs > Volunteer scheduling and coordination > Lodging for board, parliamentarian, staff, and key volunteers > Post-event follow-up and reports
<i>World Service Convention (WSC)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Convention with the same services provided for Conference, with the following difference: In place of support for business meetings, provide support for OA literature sales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Work with Accounting Department to identify sale items for shipment > Coordinate shipping and receiving at Convention venue > Oversee sale operations and return of unsold items to WSO

Publications Department

Literature and materials development and production, website materials maintenance, copyright and trademark protection, literature translations, and materials archives management.

<i>Literature Development and Distribution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Conference- and Board-approved Literature Committees to develop, edit, proof, fact-check, design, and lay out new and revised publications • Compile Conference literature proposals for committee and board review • Manage ten-year literature review; serve on Literature Review Committee • Provide literature-project support for all Conference and Board committees • Maintain editorial updates on website resources • Research and provide Executive Committee with distribution and pricing information • Coordinate ordering and printing • Produce and distribute e-books, interactive PDFs, print-on-demand paperbacks, and large print literature
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<p><i>Periodicals</i></p>	<p><i>WSO News Bulletin</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan monthly e-newsletters; write articles and source images • Respond to member inquiries <p><i>A Step Ahead Newsletter</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan quarterly issues • Coordinate article submissions; edit and proofread articles • Design, lay out, and post issues on the OA website <p><i>Professional Community Courier</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update issues, annually • Update layouts and post on OA website <p>Internal Information Committee (IIC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support committee in review of periodical material for controversy and Tradition conflict
<p><i>Copyright and Trademark Maintenance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register OA-approved literature with US Copyright Office; establish copyright dates and maintain copyright files • Maintain registration of OA trademarks • Address issues of copyright and trademark infringements; work with intellectual property rights lawyer to protect and grant rights to use OA copyrighted materials and trademarks • Negotiate material-rights agreements with other fellowships and outside enterprises; manage trustee and region chair volunteer agreements • Respond to inquiries and assist groups, service bodies, and outside enterprises seeking rights to use and reproduce OA copyrighted materials and trademarked logos; maintain databases and files
<p><i>Literature Translations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide project support to International Publications and Translation Committee (IP/T) • Assist members, groups and service bodies seeking rights to translate, validate, publish, and distribute OA copyrighted materials; maintain database and files • Compile Translation Assistance fund applications for committee review; contact service bodies and Accounting Department upon committee's decisions; provide service bodies with translation materials • Work with international service bodies to produce and distribute translated OA literature as e-books
<p><i>Announcements and Flyers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write announcements for OA website and other outreach efforts to increase awareness of new and revised OA materials • Create and produce flyers for new products and other purposes
<p><i>OA Archives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain up-to-date material archive of OA literature and items; maintain database • Receive and archive translated OA literature and material from international service bodies; maintain databases • Maintain electronic database of OA literature and materials

<i>World Service Business Conference (WSBC) and World Service Convention (WSC)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Conference Delegate Binder; update Ask-It Basket and Ask-It Basket Archive• At Conference, provide support at Conference-approved Literature Committee meeting, Literature Q&A, business meetings, registration, and as needed• For Convention, help identify OA materials for sale; at event, provide support with literature sales, at registration, to attendees, and as needed
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F. Workshop Evaluation Form

Location of workshop: _____

Intergroup/Service Board hosting workshop: _____

Date/Time: _____

1. Information presented in this workshop was:

A. Useful: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

B. Interesting: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

C. What I expected: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

2. Handouts were:

Useful: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

3. Presenters were:

A. Easy to Understand: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

B. Interesting: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

C. Knowledgeable: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

4. This workshop will be:

Useful to my home area: __ Very __ Moderately __ Not at all

5. I would be interested in attending future workshops on the following topics:

A. _____

B. _____

Further comments and suggestions may be placed on the reverse.

Thank you for this input.

It will be used in planning future Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshops.

Please complete and return at the end of the workshop.