

OA GUIDELINES



Contributor Guidelines for *Lifeline: Stories of Recovery* Blog on OA.org

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Imagine this: You are still suffering from compulsive eating or compulsive food behaviors and you're desperately searching online for a solution. How great would it be if an OA story of recovery popped up as your first search result?

This is the inspiration behind *Lifeline: Stories of Recovery*, a new blog on oa.org where we can broadcast our experience, strength, and hope—both to attract newcomers to the Fellowship and inspire OA members as they work their programs of recovery. By giving service to *Lifeline*, you will not only provide your share to OA members but also improve OA's ability to attract newcomers online.

Our Requirements

1. Are you an OA member who is abstinent and working your program?
2. Are you willing to give service by creating an original work focused on your personal recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA?
3. Are you willing to release the rights of your original work to OA so that we may edit your story, make it anonymous, and share it on the internet?

If you said yes, then we'd love for you to send us your story!

What We Publish

Put simply, we accept any work that demonstrates personal recovery and abstinence from compulsive

eating and compulsive food behaviors as the result of working the Twelve Steps of OA. Your work can be:

- Writing, including poetry
- Recorded audio or video
- Photography, illustration, or animation

For written works that are not poetry, we prefer at least three hundred words. Works that are 1,500 to 2,000 words is ideal, and even longer pieces are welcome.

For audio and video, three to seven minutes is a good rule of thumb, but your piece is welcome regardless of length.

If you submit a photograph or illustration, we recommend you include some written or recorded commentary to better relate the image to your OA recovery.

To submit your work, go to oa.org/lifeline and use the online form.

Non-English Submissions

Our primary purpose is to carry the message, no matter the language, but just as we do with English-language submissions, we must ensure the OA message is clear and correct in every language. Therefore, all non-English submissions must first be reviewed and approved by a registered OA service body, such as a national or language service board, that can support a Traditions review and edit your submission for grammar and style in your language. If your *Lifeline* work is not in English, we encourage you to contact the primary service body for your language and ask for a *Lifeline* review. If no review committee exists, maybe you can help get one started!

Suggestions for Creating Your Share

If you like, include your first name at the beginning of your piece. "My name is ____." Don't include any other personally identifying information or identifiable pictures of yourself or other members (especially considering facial recognition technology). Share how long you've been abstinent and whether you are

maintaining or working toward a healthy body weight.

As you create your share for *Lifeline*, think about someone who is still suffering and, today, is just like you were before you found OA. What parts of your story are important for them to hear? If that person were searching online for a solution to their problem, what words or phrases might they use that are also a part of your story? There will be plenty of space to focus on the solution, so be sure to include enough of the problem in your share so that this newcomer might find your story online and identify. Include descriptions of your physical, emotional, and spiritual states before you found OA.

Describe what happened after you found OA. What important or memorable things do you want to say about your journey of working the Twelve Steps of OA to find abstinence and recovery? What was it like to change physically, emotionally, and spiritually?

How has OA changed your life? What is it like now to be abstinent and living in recovery? Share your joys!

Sharing as Service

Lifeline also welcomes shares that give service to the Fellowship—for example, by examining or celebrating aspects of your personal journey through the Twelve Steps and how you have experienced your gifts of abstinence and recovery. You can give service to OA members in any of these suggested ways:

- Observations about our Steps, Traditions, Tools, Principles, or Concepts of OA Service, including how they have related to your recovery
- Shares that give your Twelfth Step Within, providing hope to those in our Fellowship who are still suffering
- Relating your positive OA experiences in a lively, colorful, or humorous way
- Addressing your difficult OA experiences in a constructive, nonjudgmental, and nonpreaching manner
- Describing how your OA program has helped you resolve a conflict, improved your self-esteem, or made your life manageable
- Sharing your experience and questions as a newcomer
- Giving a positive history or account of OA in your service area

There are many ways to give service through sharing. For more ideas, see the **More Suggested Topics** list below.

Maintaining Our Traditions

Lifeline: Stories of Recovery is committed to upholding the Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous. Before you submit your share, we suggest you, your sponsor, and/or OA friend review your work for Tradition issues. OA World Service will also edit your work if possible, or may reject your work if Tradition issues are found.

More about Online Anonymity

Carrying the message online means upholding a higher standard for anonymity. We are sharing our recovery via public media, and the risks of breaking anonymity on the internet are different. For example, voice recognition technology could be used to expose an OA speaker's identity if that member also has a prominent online presence outside of the rooms.

In your share, you should do your best to obscure personal details that could give away who you are, what you do outside of the rooms, and where you live or visit. This also applies to anyone you reference in your share, such as a family member. This is especially important if you record audio or video because it won't be as easy for the World Service Office to make editorial changes.

Anonymity and File Metadata

Be advised that the software we use for text, images, audio, and video will almost always add metadata to a file to describe who, what, where, when, and how the file was created. Your software may be configured to add your full name and GPS coordinates (latitude and longitude) to the file you create. If it is not deleted, that metadata will be accessible to anyone who views the file.

To protect your anonymity, WSO staff will review your file and delete personally identifying metadata before your work is circulated internally for editing and review.

After You Submit Your Work

After you submit your work using the online form at oa.org/lifeline, WSO staff will file your submission. When it is selected for publication, WSO staff will first make your work anonymous by removing any identifying information except for your first name if you use it in the body of your share. Next, your work will be edited, as needed, to meet our publication standards. Additionally, your work may be enhanced. For example, if you send a

written share, your work may also be used to create an audio recording or a video. Enhancements will be created by WSO staff or by a WSO-led team of OA members giving service through their talents with digital arts. If you are interested in joining this team, contact the World Service Office.

You will receive notification from the WSO when your work is published.

More Suggested Topics

We invite you to write first from your heart. You may also find inspiration among these suggested topics. We recommend you write directly to the topic you have chosen and relate this topic to your personal recovery from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors through working the Twelve Steps of OA.

Meeting Special Topics recognized by OA

90 Day
Ask-It Basket (questions are sent to OA trustees)
Literature
Maintenance
Newcomer
OA-HOW
Recovery from relapse
Speaker
Spirituality
Teen-friendly
Tools
Writing

Meeting Special Focuses recognized by OA

100-pounders (45 kg)
Anorexia
Bulimia
Asian Pacific Islanders
Atheist/Agnostic/Secular
Bariatric Surgery
Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
Health issues
LGBTQ+
Men
Women
Young People

Other Topics You Can Relate to Your Recovery

Abstinence
Action plan

Addiction
Aging
Anonymity
Anorexia
Asking for help
Attitude
Attraction
Bingeing
Body image
Character defects
Compulsion
Cross talk
Deadly disease
Difficult situations
Education
Emotions
Events (your experience at an OA workshop, retreat, etc.)
Exercise
Fear and resentment
Feelings
Fellowship
General observations about recovery in OA
Goals
Gratitude
Grieving and loss
Higher Power
Hitting bottom
Holidays
Honesty
Humor
Illness
Infertility
International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA)
Isolating
Keep coming back
Letter to the editor (Share-It)
Loners
Longtimers
Meetings
Membership retention
Miracles
Motivation
OA Birthday
Perfectionism
Physical recovery
Plan of eating
Prayer
Pregnancy

Professional outreach
Program maintenance
Promises
Public information
Recovery
Recovery from relapse
Relationships
Self-esteem
Seniors
Serenity
Service
Sexuality
Slogans
Sponsorship
Sponsorship Day
Starving
Threefold recovery
Twelfth Step Within
Twelfth Step Within Day
Unity
Unity Day
Vacation and travel
Virtual support
Withdrawal
Working the program

OA Responsibility Pledge

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

OA Board-Approved

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