

Bilingual Traditions Workshop

Introduction to the *[fill in language other than English]/English Traditions Workshop*

This weekly workshop series is inspired by *The Twelve Traditions Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous*. Two workshop sessions should be facilitated on each Tradition, using two focus questions in each weekly session. We hope this workshop will be used throughout OA as a blueprint for any two members who wish to run a bilingual workshop on the Twelve Traditions of OA.

This document includes a Twelve Traditions workshop format followed by a series of focus questions.

We hope that you find this resource inspiring as you reach out to compulsive eaters all over the world, no matter what language they speak!

Twelve Traditions Workshop Format

Opening

“Welcome, everyone, to our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Traditions Workshop. My name is _____. I am a compulsive eater *[or other self-identifier]*. *[Name of translating member]* and I are the leaders of this workshop.

“This workshop will be in English with some translation.

“The goal of this workshop is to familiarize everyone with the Twelve Traditions and the Spiritual Principles for living embodied in them. ‘Those who have studied them carefully have found that these Traditions can be applied effectively to all human relationships, both inside and outside OA.’¹

“We ask all members to attend each week and to talk about your answers to the focus questions with another member during the following week. *[If using a videoconferencing service:]* Whenever possible, please switch your video on to make communication easier. Please make sure you are in a private place to protect the anonymity of all OA members.

“In this workshop we will read from *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition* for five minutes. Based on the reading, we will focus on a question and write our answers for five to ten minutes.

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous. May I have a volunteer?”

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

¹ *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*, p. 89

9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Workshop Part One

"We will now start by reading two paragraphs each from *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*.

[Members read for five minutes. The leader sets the timer.]

"Thank you. The focus question is: *[Read the selected focus question.]*

[The leader then briefly shares their own experience, strength, and hope regarding the focus question, which is then translated into the language of the participants.]

"Please write your answers. You will have five to ten minutes. If you don't have enough time, you are welcome to continue writing after the workshop.

[The leader sets the timer for five to ten minutes.]

"Thank you. That brings the first part of this Tradition workshop to an end."

Workshop Part Two

"We will now continue reading two paragraphs each from *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition*.

[Members read for five minutes. The leader sets the timer.]

"Thank you. The focus question is: *[Read the selected focus question.]*

[The leader then briefly shares their own experience, strength, and hope regarding the focus question, which is then translated into the language of the participants.]

"Please write your answers. You will have five to ten minutes. If you don't have enough time, you are welcome to continue writing after the workshop.

[The leader sets the timer for five to ten minutes.]

"Thank you. That's all the time we have for writing today."

Closing of Workshop in English

"Please remember our Seventh Tradition: Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. *[Add Seventh Tradition contribution information here.]*

“This brings us to the close of this week’s workshop in English. Remember to discuss your answers to the focus questions with another member during the week. You might want to re-read these pages from *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition* during the week.

“We remind members that the opinions expressed here today are those of individual OA members and do not represent OA as a whole. Please remember our commitment to honor each other’s anonymity. **Whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.** Let us all reach out by phone or email to newcomers, returning members, and each other. Together we get better.

“To close this session, would those who wish, please join me in the Serenity Prayer: **God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.**

“Members are invited to stay in the room and share their answers to the focus questions in *[the language of the participants].*”

[English speaking leader leaves the videoconferencing or physical room and sharing in [insert appropriate language] takes place.]

OA Responsibility Pledge

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

Focus Questions for Twelve Traditions Workshop

Tradition One

1. What does unity mean to me? What does it have to do with OA?
2. How do I apply this Tradition to my personal life?
3. Am I tolerant of people who work the program differently or have a different background? Explain.
4. How do I react when someone disagrees with me? How do I use Tradition One in those situations?

Tradition Two

1. How have I tried to control a group or someone else?
2. How does my Higher Power work in group decision-making? How is that different from a majority decision?
3. How can I best get ready to discuss an issue?
4. How do I best participate in decision-making? How do I respond when someone forcefully makes their point? How supportive am I when others speak? Am I open-minded before starting and during a group conscience?

Tradition Three

1. How do I embrace the diversity of members? Why is this important?
2. Why should I accept the wide range of ways to work the program? Do I judge the recovery of other members?
3. Why is it important to let each person find their own path to recovery?
4. How do I set boundaries or create barriers in personal relationships?

Tradition Four

1. Why do we each need the freedom to find our own path of recovery?
2. How do I respect everyone else's autonomy?
3. How much do I think my behavior impacts others, inside and outside of OA?
4. How do I balance personal responsibility and responsibility to others?

Tradition Five

1. What is OA's message?
2. How do I carry that message?
3. How do I focus on what works rather than what does not work? How do I carry that message outside meetings?
4. How do I make a newcomer feel welcome and want to come back? How do I help those members who are struggling?

Tradition Six

1. What is meant by “promoting outside interests and beliefs”? Why is it important not to promote such things?
2. How does promoting outside interests and beliefs distract me from carrying OA’s message of recovery?
3. Why do we focus only on recovery in OA without giving an opinion on other ways of dealing with compulsive eating behaviors?
4. How does that focus on the OA program help my recovery?

Tradition Seven

1. What does “fully self-supporting” mean? How does it apply to me?
2. How do I help ensure OA is there for the compulsive eater? How does this carry over into my personal life?
3. How am I dependent on others? How do I recognize healthy and unhealthy dependencies?
4. Is a gift truly “free,” or are there consequences to accepting such gifts?

Tradition Eight

1. Do I believe I have all the answers in meetings and with sponsees? Am I honest when I’m having trouble working the program?
2. How do I deal with my dishonesty and isolation?
3. Do I think other members have all the answers? How does that affect me? How do I deal with expectations when giving service?
4. How do I share my experience, strength, and hope and not give advice?

Tradition Nine

1. How do I take personal responsibility?
2. How do I use the Tool of “action plan”? How does it help me?
3. How do I let go of a service position to give others the opportunity to serve?
4. Do I say something if I believe the Traditions are not being followed? How do I do it respectfully?

Tradition Ten

1. Why is it essential to leave outside issues outside the meeting?
2. Do I recognize that I should focus on our OA Fellowship in OA meetings, rather than bringing in examples from other Twelve Step fellowships?
3. How do I respect the opinions of other members? Do I still participate respectfully even when others do not respect or share my opinions?
4. How do I avoid trying to change people?

Tradition Eleven

1. How do I attract people to OA's message of recovery?
2. How do I keep personal anonymity?
3. How does personal anonymity strengthen my program?
4. How does anonymity benefit me in my life outside of OA?

Tradition Twelve

1. How do I practice spirituality?
2. What does "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions" mean to me and my recovery?
3. How does this Tradition help me practice humility?
4. What does leading a principled life mean to me inside and outside of OA?