



Suggested Telephone Meeting Format

We have found that consistent use of this format keeps meetings focused on OA recovery, reinforces our program, and encourages unity. It also provides a reassuring feeling of continuity—an important factor in member retention. Each group may modify this format to better suit its needs.

Important Information About the Meeting

Phone Bridge Number: _____

Access Code/Pin: _____

Moderator Code: _____

Important: Please call in **NO** later than ten minutes before the meeting starts. There are times when you may have trouble getting on. Earlier is better.

If you call in as a moderator, you may be muted. Check with the conference line host for options.

Note: The Suggested Telephone Meeting Format includes readings of Our Invitation to You (which includes the Twelve Steps of OA), the Twelve Traditions of OA, the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, the Tools of Recovery (abridged), and the OA Promise. Find, print, and/or download these resources in the Document Library on oa.org. Links to these resources are both embedded and listed at the end of the meeting format.

1. OPENING: “Welcome to the [day and time] _____ phone meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is _____. I am a compulsive eater and your moderator for this meeting.”

2. SERENITY PRAYER: “After a moment of silence, will those who wish please join me in the Serenity Prayer by pressing * _____ [usually *1 or *6] to unmute?”

[Note to moderator: Please pause for ten to fifteen seconds to give callers a chance to unmute themselves.]

“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.

“I will now mute the line. [* _____ Check with the conference host to see how this is done.] To unmute, please press * _____. After sharing, please remember to press * _____ to mute. This allows us to have a quiet meeting.”

3. WELCOME: “Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous; we are a growing, evolving Fellowship with in-person and virtual meetings around the world. In OA, there are opportunities for recovery and to give service at local and virtual group, intergroup/service board, region, and

world service levels. We strive to provide literature and support in every language, worldwide, to meet still-suffering compulsive eaters wherever they are.”

“As we extend the heart and hand of the OA Fellowship to those who still suffer, let us be mindful of OA’s Unity with Diversity Policy, which respects our differences, yet unites us in the solution to our common problem. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting, regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other attribute.

“We encourage you to:

- get a sponsor to help guide your recovery;
- develop a plan of eating and, if you wish, write it down and report daily to your sponsor; and
- read OA-approved literature to develop a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.”

4. PREAMBLE: “The following is the OA Preamble:

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.”

5. READING: Ask someone to read *“[Our Invitation to You](#),”* which includes the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. **Note to moderator:** *It may take some time for a volunteer to come forward to read. Please be patient; someone will likely volunteer to do this service. If after twenty seconds or so there is no volunteer, read the literature yourself.*

“Would someone please do service by reading the [Twelve Traditions of OA](#)?” [Printed in the back of *For Today, Voices of Recovery*, Second Edition, or the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition.] *Some meetings may also decide to read the [Twelve Concepts of OA Service](#) or to read the Concept corresponding to the month of the year.*

6. ABSTINENCE AND RECOVERY: “The definitions of abstinence and recovery in Overeaters Anonymous are:

Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.

Spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery is the result of living and working the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program on a daily basis.”

(Business Conference Policy Manual, 1988b [amended 2019, 2021])

7. **TOOLS:** “The OA Tools of Recovery help us work the Steps and refrain from compulsive overeating. The nine Tools are: a plan of eating, sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature, an action plan, anonymity, and service. For more information, read *The Tools of Recovery* pamphlet.” [Or read [The Tools of Recovery \(abridged\)](#).]

8. **CONTACT INFO:** “We now need a volunteer to take down contact information and share it after the meeting closes. Please press * _____ to volunteer for this service.

[Ask the contact-info volunteer to:] “Please give your contact information now so that if someone has to leave or misses the information, they can contact you later.

“Let us all remember to speak slowly and clearly when leaving contact information.”

9. **TIMEKEEPER:** “We also need a timekeeper to do service and give a gentle reminder at three minutes. Please press * _____ to volunteer for this service. Try to keep your share two to three minutes long so that everyone who wishes to share will have time to do so. If you are the person sharing, please acknowledge that you have heard the timekeeper.”

10. **GUIDELINES FOR THIS PHONE MEETING:** “Please limit your comments to your experience, strength, and hope in living with the disease of compulsive overeating. We refrain from cross talk. Cross talk during an OA meeting is giving advice to others who have already shared, speaking directly to another person rather than to the group, and questioning or interrupting the person speaking or sharing at the time. Your share is very important to us. So, if we cannot hear you clearly, we may stop you to let you know.

“We encourage those of you who are new to the meeting, or who do not often share, to do so today. If you have shared in the last week, please wait a bit today to provide a chance to others who haven’t spoken up recently. You may give your name, number, and email after you share. Please speak slowly and clearly. There is time after the meeting closes for sharing and repeating contact information. Everyone is welcome to share.”

11. **STATE THIS MEETING’S CHOICE:** *Some meetings vary or combine options, as decided by group conscience. Sample options are listed below.*

Step and Tradition Meetings: “This is a Step meeting. We are reading Step _____ and/or Tradition _____.”

[Leader begins reading from The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, Second Edition. Members share about the Step or Tradition.]

Topic Meetings: “This is a topic meeting. Today’s OA program topic is _____.”

[Members are invited to share for three to five minutes on the topic.]

Speaker Meetings: “This is a speaker meeting.” *[Leader describes their story for about twenty minutes and shares experience, strength, and hope. Members are invited to share for three to five minutes.]*

Literature Meetings: “This is a literature meeting. Today we are reading _____.”

[Choose from any OA-approved literature. Members may read and share or read and then share at the end.]

12. SHARING: “The meeting is now open for sharing. Press * ____ to unmute and press * ____ again when you are done speaking; this allows us to have a quiet meeting. Who would like to share?”

*Note: If people aren't muting after sharing, you can press * ____ to mute everyone. This is also useful to mute excessive background noise. Please remember that if you have noise on the line, it is usually because callers are unmuted.*

13. HALF TIME: (Halfway through meeting) Some conference lines have the capability to check the number of callers. If that is possible, mute, check the number of callers, unmute, and announce the number of callers.

14. SEVENTH TRADITION: “According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Our group number is _____. Please use the group number when making your contribution. While this meeting has no direct expenses, our Seventh Tradition reminds us of the importance of supporting our Fellowship as a whole. Our [World Service Office](#) needs our support to help carry the message to other compulsive eaters. The World Service Office maintains the OA website, oa.org, and provides a worldwide meeting list so people can find our meeting. They print and distribute OA literature. They also assemble a quarterly e-newsletter and have an email distribution of important information for members. Give as if your life depends on it! We encourage OA members to give as much as they are able to help our group be self-supporting. The suggested contribution is US\$5.00 or more. You can go to oa.org and set up a recurring contribution or a single contribution, or you can mail in a contribution. Please remember to mention our group number _____ when you do.”

15. INTRODUCTIONS: “If you are new to this meeting, returning, or new to OA, we would like to welcome you. Please give us your first name only and your contact information if you care to do so. Press * ____ to unmute and * ____ to mute after speaking. We invite you to join us after the meeting to discuss any questions you may have.”

16. SPONSORS: “Sponsorship is one of our keys to success. Sponsors are OA members committed to abstinence and to living the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to the best of their ability. If you are an available sponsor, or are willing to help someone get started in the program, now is the time to identify yourself. Please give us your name and contact information slowly and clearly. Please also share your time in program, length of abstinence, and relief from food obsession. Press * ____ to unmute and * ____ to mute after speaking.

17. LITERATURE: “Only [OA-approved literature](#) is discussed at this meeting. Many OA members find that reading our literature on a daily basis further reinforces how to live the Twelve Steps.”

18. REPORTS: “A group conscience will be held on a _____ basis and will be announced two weeks prior so all members may attend. If there is a need for a group conscience sooner, please ask and we will then hold that meeting after two weeks' notice has been given.”

19. ANNOUNCEMENTS: “It is now time for announcements. We encourage you to download a complete list of phone meetings at oa.org. If you do not have access to a computer, you may call the OA World Service Office at 1-505-891-2664 and they will send you a list.

“Our group conscience meeting is held on _____, immediately following our regular meeting. You are invited to stay on and participate.

“We are always looking for moderators and backup moderators for this meeting. If you are interested in this rewarding service, please give our moderator coordinator, _____, a call at _____ *[give time zone]* or you may email them at _____.

“Are there any announcements related to this meeting or this line?”

20. REOPEN MEETING *for all to share.*

21. CLOSING *[5 minutes before close of meeting]:* “By following the Twelve Steps, attending meetings regularly, and using the OA Tools, we are changing our lives. You will find hope and encouragement in Overeaters Anonymous. To the newcomer, we suggest attending at least six different meetings to learn the many ways OA can help you.

“There are many different types of meetings, all of which are available to support your recovery from compulsive eating. We welcome you to this meeting whenever you would care to attend. There are other face-to-face meetings and virtual (phone and technology-based) meetings that you may find helpful. Information about these meetings can be found on oa.org.

“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.

“Thank you for asking me to be your leader. After a moment of silence, will those who wish please join us in _____ *[Select one of the following closings: Serenity Prayer, Seventh Step Prayer, Third Step Prayer, or the [OA Promise](#) ‘I put my hand in yours...’]* followed by ‘Keep Calling Back! It Works!’ Press * _____ to unmute if you would like to join in the closing.”

Find, print, and/or download the resources mentioned in this meeting format in the Document Library on oa.org:

- [Our Invitation to You](#)
- [The Twelve Traditions](#)
- [The Twelve Concepts of OA Service](#)
- [The Tools of Recovery \(abridged\)](#)
- [The OA Promise](#)

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. Overeaters Anonymous®, Inc.

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