

Overeaters Anonymous

Friday night Hackensack HOW Leader Script

*****ZOOM Platform*****

Updated: 8-4-2022

Meeting begins promptly at 7:30 pm

1. Welcome to the Friday night HOW meeting of Overeaters Anonymous. My name is _____, I am a compulsive overeater and your leader for this meeting.
2. 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 trait.
3. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?
4. Will those who wish please join me in the Serenity Prayer. (UNMUTE IF YOU WISH)

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

5. ZOOM ETIQUETTE AS SUGGESTED BY WSO / NJIOA WEBSITE

During the entire meeting, when you are not speaking, please remain muted.

Tradition 12 states anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. Please make sure to respect our members' privacy by making sure that no one can see or hear other fellows except you.

Please switch off camera, and mute if you are taking a meal, need a personal break or other possible distraction.

6. Are there any OA members from *other areas* visiting us today? If so, please tell us your FIRST NAME, the TOWN you are from, and how long you've been in the program.
7. Is anyone here for the FIRST TIME, either to OA or to this meeting? If so, please tell us your FIRST NAME ONLY and the TOWN you are from so we can get to know you. WELCOME!

8. It is suggested that next week's Leader arrive 5 minutes early to the meeting to "hand out" cards and readings. Members can do service by arriving early as well to volunteer to read.

(To the leader: If readings were assigned in advance, please call by name to read).

9. Will someone please read The Only Requirement?

10. Will someone please read the *By Laws*?

11. Will someone please read *Our Invitation to You*?

12. Will someone please read *The 12 Steps of OA*?

13. Will someone please read *The 12 Traditions of OA*?

14. Will someone please read *page 549/550 from the Big Book*?

15. Will someone please read *the H.O.W. Concept*?

Leader:

16. In the absence of the "We Care" book, please feel free to post your first name and phone number in the Chat box, or you may add it to your screen name.

To the Newcomer, please feel free to add the word "NEWCOMER" so we may get to know you.

17. According to our 7th tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. World Service suggests a \$5 donation, but please give what you can.

Donations can be sent to the meeting Treasurer or directly to our Intergroup. Please see *NJIOA.ORG* for the PO Box address or Zelle/Venmo instructions.

Can someone please post the link to our website in the CHAT? Thank you!

18. Business meetings may be scheduled as needed, by group conscience and will be announced at least 2 weeks prior.

LEADER: The OA tools of recovery help us to work the Steps and refrain from compulsive eating behaviors.

Group conscience elects that if there are not 8 abstaining members present with 90 days, members with LESS THAN 90 DAYS abstinence may read a tool, but not share on it.

19. I wish to ask 8 abstaining member of this fellowship, with 90 days of continuous abstinence (HOW or non-HOW), to briefly read and share on the 8 tools we use to work our program.

1. The first tool is a PLAN OF EATING

2. The next tool is SPONSORSHIP.

(After the share): Will all Sponsors -HOW and non-HOW- please raise your hand – either physically, or virtually.

When called on, please give your name, weight-loss, and length of abstinence loudly and clearly so all may hear your recovery.

(Leader: after all names are called, ask if anyone is on the phone or was missed)

3. The next tool is TELEPHONE.

4. The next tool is SERVICE.

(After the share) Will all members who hold service positions for ANY OA meeting, including Intergroup, please raise your hand – either physically or virtually.

When called, please give your name, and tell which service position you hold.

5. The next tool is ANONYMITY.

6. The next tool is READING and WRITING

7. The next tool is ACTION PLAN

8. The last tool is the one we are working now, MEETINGS

Leader:

20. Are there any NEWCOMERS or RETURNEES tonight? (Some may have arrived late). If so, will the *Newcomer Welcomer* please give them a special welcome? (or ask a volunteer to welcome them).

21. Are there any Step-Ups or Tokens tonight? Coin presentations for less than 90 days should be presented without discussion.

22. It is time for the *Secretary's report*. Please announce current and upcoming events. All details can be found on our website at NJIOA.ORG.

LEADER: Are there any other OA related announcements?

On the FIRST Friday of the month, the *Treasurer* gives their report. Is the Treasurer here?

23. Now, it's time for the Leader/Speaker to share their experience, strength, and hope for 10-15 minutes: what they were like, what happened to them, and what they are like now. This will be timed.

The timekeeper tonight is _____. (Ask how the Speaker would like to be time).

If there is a Speaker, the Leader will now introduce him/her to the group **OR**
If there is no Speaker, the Leader/Group picks a TOPIC for discussion.

Leader (after the Speaker's share):

24. Now, the Leader/Speaker will pick a TOPIC for discussion.

Members may share 3 minutes, reminding everyone that part of sharing our recovery is to also share our time.

Please stay within the suggested time so that we may allow for as many shares as possible. Please try to keep pitches positive. We avoid crosstalk and do not give advice.

The topic tonight is _____.

To share, please raise your hand (physically or virtually). After sharing, please remember to "lower" your virtual hand.

25. At **9pm**, the Leader says: In closing, let me say the opinions expressed here tonight by those who shared are our own and not necessarily those of OA as a whole. Thank you for asking me to be your leader.

To anyone who has not had the opportunity to share, please don't leave without talking to someone. Don't take it with you – share before you go.

26. After a moment of silence, for those who are still suffering, in and out of the rooms – please join me in the SERENITY PRAYER. (Unmute if you wish.)

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

(Close the meeting)

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The Only Requirement

Overeaters Anonymous respects the autonomy of each OA group. We do suggest, however, that any group that has requirements in addition to the suggested 12 Steps & 12 Traditions inform its members that these requirements are what that particular group has found effective in working the program and do not represent OA as a whole.

The members of this group have found the HOW concept to be effective in working the OA program.

The opinions expressed here this evening by those who share are their own and not necessarily those of OA as a whole.

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

Anyone who says he/she is a member is a member.

We of Overeaters Anonymous welcome all members with open arms.

BY LAWS

1. This meeting follows the H.O.W. format (Old Westminster Format of Steps, Tradition and Tools).
2. The meeting will have a Speaker on most nights, and when unavailable, a topic for discussion. Speakers must be HOW sponsors and have a current clean abstinence of at least 90 days.
3. This is a positive, upbeat meeting where we all come to learn how to recover. We suggest that pitches also be positive and upbeat and project recovery.
4. Sponsors at this meeting must have 90 days of abstinence plus completion of 90 days of writings under a qualified sponsor's supervision.
5. These are to be considered closed meetings, open only to those looking for recovery from compulsive overeating. One meeting per month (the last Friday of the month) will be considered an open meeting, allowing any person interested in hearing and attending an OA meeting to come with a family member or friend.
6. Neither this group, nor any OA group, can endorse food plans. We are not a diet club. If you see something you like or want to achieve for yourself, ask a sponsor how they got it. We can only advise what works for each one of us on an individual basis.

OUR INVITATION TO YOU

We at Overeaters Anonymous have made a discovery. At the very first meeting we attended, we learned that we were in the clutches of a dangerous illness, and that willpower, emotional health and self-confidence, which some of us had once possessed were no defense against it.

We have found that the reasons for the illness are unimportant. What deserves the attention of the still-suffering compulsive overeater is this: There is a proven, workable method by which we can arrest our illness. The OA recovery program is patterned after that of Alcoholics Anonymous. We use AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, changing only the words "alcohol" and "alcoholic" to "food" and "compulsive overeater". As our personal stories attest, the twelve-step program of recovery works as well for compulsive overeaters as it does for alcoholics.

Can we guarantee YOU this recovery? The answer is simple. If you will honestly face the truth about yourself and the illness; if you will keep coming back to meetings to talk and listen to other recovering compulsive overeaters; if you will read our literature and that of Alcoholics Anonymous with an open mind; and most important, if you are willing to rely on a Power greater than yourself for direction in your life, and to take the twelve steps to the best of your ability, we believe you can indeed join the ranks of those who recover.

To remedy the emotional, physical and spiritual illness of compulsive overeating we offer several suggestions, but keep in mind that the basis of the program is spiritual, as evidenced by the twelve steps. We are not a "diet and calories" club. We do not endorse any particular plan of eating. Once we become abstinent, the preoccupation with food diminishes and in many cases leaves us entirely. We then find that, to deal with our inner turmoil, we have to have a new way of thinking, or acting on life rather than reacting to it - in essence, a new way of living. From this vantage point, we begin the twelve-step program of recovery, moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience.

As a result of practicing the steps, the symptom of compulsive overeating is removed on a daily basis, achieved through the process of surrendering to something greater than ourselves; the more total our surrender, the more fully realized our freedom from food obsession.

"But I'm too weak. I'll never make it!" Don't worry, we have all thought and said the same thing. The amazing secret to the success of this program is just that: WEAKNESS. It is weakness, not strength that binds us to each other and to a higher Power and somehow gives us the ability to do what we cannot do alone.

If you decide you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms. Whatever your circumstances, we offer you the gift of acceptance.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE ANY MORE. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous.

WELCOME HOME!

The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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.
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.

Page 549(550) from the Big Book

The A.A. members who sponsored me told me in the beginning that I would not only find a way to live without having a drink, but that I would find a way to live without wanting to drink, if I would do these simple things.

They said if you want to know how this program works, take the first word of your question— the “**H**” is for honesty, the “**O**” is for open-mindedness, and the “**W**” is for willingness; these our Big Book calls the essentials of recovery. They suggested that I study the A.A. book and try to take the Twelve Steps according to the explanation in the book, for it was their opinion that the application of these principles in our daily lives will get us sober and keep us sober.

I believe this, and I believe too that it is equally impossible to practice these principles to the best of our ability, a day at a time, and still drink, for I don't think the two things are compatible.

THE HOW CONCEPT

The Overeaters Anonymous HOW meeting has been formed to offer the compulsive eater, who accepts the 12 steps and 12 traditions as a program of recovery, a disciplined and structured approach. The OA/HOW group is formed in the belief that our disease is absolute and therefore only absolute acceptance of the OA program will offer any sustained abstinence to those of us whose compulsion has reached a critical level.

Therefore, the HOW plan of eating, steps, traditions, and tools of recovery are not suggested. Rather, we accept them as requirements for our recovery.

Our meetings are dedicated to the concept of remaining honest, open-minded, and willing to listen...this is the **HOW** of the program. We pray that the collective group conscience and love that these ideals offer us will promote a strong sense of security that will enable us to experience a new unity and wholeness with all those around us and that the HOW ideal will help us to progress in our program of recovery on a daily basis.

To be certain, much of our strength is found in the structure of meetings and in the daily adherence to the program as it is written in our literature.

The Friday night HOW meeting also firmly understands that after our recovery has begun through abstinence and the taking of the first 3 steps, our further surrender to the additional steps of recovery offers us a promise of happiness, contentment, and achievement in all areas of our lives.

We ensure our continued and sustained abstinence from compulsive eating by being forever aware that God is doing for us what we have never been able to do for ourselves.

May God, as each of us understands Him, open our minds and hearts to the love which is manifest in this room. Amen.

