

# People Like You

## Is OA for You?

### What is Overeaters Anonymous?

Overeaters Anonymous is a Twelve-Step program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. The OA program is so much like AA that OA groups use AA literature to study the program. Where the word alcohol is used, words such as food or overeating are inserted. The method of recovery is the same, only the addictive substance is different.

The primary purpose of any OA group is to help members abstain from overeating one day at a time using the principles of Overeaters Anonymous.

### How did OA begin?

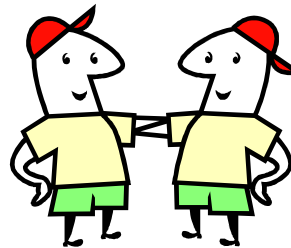
Overeaters Anonymous was started in Los Angeles, CA in 1960 by three women who wanted to apply the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous to their overeating problems. One of them had a friend, a compulsive gambler, who had successfully used Gamblers Anonymous, another recovery program based on Alcoholics Anonymous principles, to relieve his compulsion. These women felt that AA would work for their food problems.

OA has been helping compulsive overeaters abstain from overeating and recover from the emotional, mental and physical

aspects of the illness of overeating.

### Who attends OA meetings?

In OA, you'll find members who are extremely overweight, even morbidly obese; moderately overweight; average weight; underweight; still maintaining periodic control over their eating behavior; or totally unable to control their compulsive eating. You'll also find members who have been relieved of the compulsion to overeat for years. You'll find members who have been coming to meetings for years or a few months.



Meetings last about an hour and follow a simple format, usually using Overeaters Anonymous literature. Some meetings have speakers who share their recovery experiences.

In a typical OA meeting you'll find anywhere from 5 to 20 members in attendance.

Confidentiality is essential to the OA fellowship. What is said in the rooms stays in the rooms.

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### A Primary Purpose

OA is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience and mutual support, 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 contribution, 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 overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

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# OA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

## The Twelve Steps

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

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.

