

The OA in Action Program

The OA in Action program format was designed so that we may grow on all three levels, physically, mentally and spiritually. This disease is not just about the food. Our meeting format is 1 1/2 hours long, we have a leader and a speaker who speaks for 20 minutes. Tools are read by those attending and the attendee can share for a couple of minutes on the value of the tool and how it has helped them. If time we break into small groups at the end.

At the first meeting of the month we have a recovery story on the Step of the month. The second meeting a recovery story. The third a recovery story on the Tradition of the month. The last meeting of the month we have a recovery story around the gifts of recovery.

Physical recovery

Our abstinence is clearly defined for those of us who have crossed the line and need help in refraining from abnormal behaviors around food, be it be it compulsive eating, chronic dieting, bulimia or anorexia.

Many of us have tried to define our own food plans with little success. We believe that a plan of eating helps us abstain from abnormal behaviors around food. This tool helps us deal with the physical aspects of our disease and achieve physical recovery. Some refer to this as step zero!

In OA in Action, we use a food plan from the OA Dignity of Choice, a health care professional or nutritionist. We do not consider three meals a day with nothing in between a food plan. A food plan specifies the amount of protein, starch, vegetables, fruit and fat that our body needs every day. We write down our food and report it daily to our sponsor; any food changes are reported to our sponsor by the next day. We do not eat in between our committed meals/snacks and refrain from all our binge or trigger foods. No added sugar in food or beverages unless 5th in the ingredient list or if listed earlier, 2 grams of sugar or less on the nutrition label. We do not use alcohol.

We weigh and measure our food at home for the first 90 days, then work with our sponsor to determine if we continue weighing and measuring. Most of us have found freedom in continuing to weigh and measure at home. When eating out it is not a requirement to weigh and measure our food, but either commit or report our food to our sponsor.

We do this to ensure that we are eating the amounts of food in our food plan and using food as fuel, not to medicate our feelings.

Mental and Spiritual Recovery

Many of us have tried to fix our problem ourselves with little success. We have tried doctors, counselors and religious leaders to no avail. While these experts can guide us in many areas, there is no guidance better than that given from one who has been in the bondage of food addiction and found recovery.

The 12 Steps are used as a guide for daily living and we find that reading the OA approved literature provides us with proof that recovery is possible and helps us find the strength to abstain from our compulsive behaviors around food and give hope to those who still suffer. In OA in Action, we start our homework in the *Overeaters Anonymous* (Brown Book) and *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*. We work through questions based on these two books, we read our writing to our sponsors every day.

By working the 12 Steps to the best of our ability we learn to live life on life's terms. Our goal is to get our sponsees through the 12 Steps in 6 months. Too often members don't work past the first three Steps. and fear doing the 4th Step inventory. Yes, we are to take a good look at our life, our resentments, our fears, and where we have harmed others...but *we are not to do this alone*. We will do so with our sponsor who has done this before and we will talk to others in our circle of support who have done inventories before. They survived and found peace and freedom from continuing through the steps.

Growing spiritually requires work...it starts with defining a Higher Power of the members choice, practicing Step 11 through prayer and meditation. Our hope is that you will take our hand and walk the recovery path with us. If you join us, you too will be able to find the experience, strength and hope for a life beyond your wildest dreams.