

## **Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous!**      *WELCOME HOME....*

Are you increasingly unable to control your behavior around food? Whether overweight, bulimic, or very thin, we all share a common problem. If you have lost the ability to control how much and when you eat, you are in the right place! We are not a 'diet' club. There are no weigh-ins, packaged food to purchase, no violation of privacy, and there are no dues required.

Our O.A. program is based upon the **12 steps (directions)** of recovery taken from the "**Big Book**" of **Alcoholics Anonymous** – which is the 'textbook' on how to beat this addiction. As we read this insightful book, we replace (in our minds) the word 'alcohol' with 'food', often being amazed at how similar our two addictions are. Our group (fellowship) also offers our own specific literature- (books, pamphlets, CD tapes) which you are welcome to look over and ask us about. These materials are available at all meetings for rental or purchase.

**\*\*We encourage you as a newcomer to do five things right away:**

**1- Visit our website:** [www.oautah.org](http://www.oautah.org). This offers all kinds of great information: meeting times/places; our monthly newsletter; video clips; magazine subscriptions; updates, etc.

**2- Read the helpful information included in your newcomer packet.** Many of your questions are answered therein. Like any new experience, all of the information may seem overwhelming at first, but you will learn more and more as you read and study it.

**3- Begin attending a weekly meeting.** Give us a chance! This is the place to meet and share with others and to ask questions. Before deciding if this fellowship is for you, please attend at least 3 to 4 different meetings. Each one has a different format and focus; different, interesting personalities, and every meeting you choose to attend will absolutely help you in your journey toward recovery from compulsive overeating.

**4- Obtain a 'sponsor'.** A sponsor is a man or woman who is very well versed in our program, has had success with it and is willing to voluntarily share their recovery from compulsive overeating. A sponsor instructs and guides you over a period of time on how to effectively overcome destructive food behaviors to get your happy, joyous and free life back again!

**5- Begin working (doing) the 12 steps of Overeaters Anonymous.** Ideally, your sponsor will help you do these more effectively. Many of us have learned you cannot work this program alone! Sponsors give willingly of their time and expertise. They are invaluable.

Lastly, the most important word in our program is **recovery, recovery, recovery!**

## Words and phrases you will hear a lot at meetings:

**“12 steps”** – specific directions on how to effectively curb this addiction.

**“We Care phone list”** – a paper passed around at meetings to encourage attendees to write only their first name, phone number, additional information (if you choose), in order to enable other members to contact you for encouragement and help. We will also help you obtain a sponsor to begin your recovery from compulsive overeating.

**“OA Fellowship”** – our organization and close circle of recovering friends.

**“Recovery”** – the end goal of our program, which is to effectively arrest our food addiction.

**“Abstinence”** – refraining from the act of destructive food behaviors which trigger and prolong our addiction.

**“Intergroup”** – a voluntary group of members who meet monthly to support the Overeaters Anonymous groups. They help direct, disperse information, plan activities, workshops, hold elections, maintain our hotline, etc. Any member is welcome to visit or fill a position at anytime. Group representatives are always needed.

**“Big Book”** – the ‘textbook’ of Alcoholics Anonymous that we follow to better understand and overcome our compulsive overeating.

**“Anonymity”** – this protective principle enables our members to be honestly open and to share with others their hearts and minds at meetings, on the phone, email, etc. We only ask that you share your first name when speaking or writing. You are never forced to do anything in OA. We close each meeting with: “what you hear here, who you see here, what you say here, when you leave here, let it stay here.”

**“Higher Power”**- believing in someone stronger than us helps us to rely not only on ourselves to recover from this illness. So, we ask God to help us. If the thought of a belief in God is uncomfortable to you, then you are welcome to consider something else as your higher power- other members, a trusted friend or sponsor, something in nature- this is your choice.

**“Sponsor”** – a person who aids you in your recovery from compulsive overeating. This program is simple but not always easy. You may request to see a sponsor contact list, or you may choose to attend several meetings, find someone “who has what you want”, and if they are available, ask them to sponsor you!

**“Pass the basket”** – we are self-supporting through our own contributions, which go toward rental of our meeting spaces, purchase of literature, etc. This is completely voluntary.