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This book was developed as a workshop leader’s guide but has other uses, sponsor/sponsee–discussion for example. To make it user-friendly for the widest range of readers, text that is repeated from session to session is set in gray-shaded boxes.

Homework for the Introductory and Step One Sessions is handed out at the first session. Thereafter, homework for each Step is handed out at the previous session in order to be completed before that Step is discussed face-to-face. This homework is primarily reading and journaling. Further work is done during the session.

Introduction

In Overeaters Anonymous, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is:

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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.¹

Recovering members of OA are abstinent. They may follow many different plans of eating, have widely divergent ideas about a Higher Power, and represent a spectrum of life and compulsive eating histories.

What we have in common is deep gratitude to the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous for saving our lives and to Alcoholics Anonymous as the originator of these Steps. We work these Steps daily, along with the other aspects of the OA program. With bodies at or approaching a healthy weight and sometimes experiencing significant improvements in our health, we are no longer tortured by obsession with food. We describe our lives now as filled with joy, purpose, clarity, peace of mind, positive relationships, and strength to face life’s challenges, without using food as a drug.

We tell newcomers or struggling OA members who ask how we did it: “Put down the fork and work the Steps.”

How do struggling members find abstinence when they have tried everything they know time and again without success? How do abstaining sponsors help more people when they already have multiple sponsees and no more hours in the day?

As a path to recovery, this guide provides fifteen scripted sessions to take participants through an accelerated, intensive Twelve Step workshop. Completing the Twelve Steps does not have to take a year or more. The book Alcoholics Anonymous, the Big Book, describes early members taking many of the Steps—however imperfectly—in the first few days of their recovery, although this guide suggests a slightly longer process. This workshop blends some of the original methods described in the Big Book with ideas

described in our OA literature. Whichever path we take, we learn to trust a Higher Power, clear away the wreckage of the past, and help others in order to enjoy lifelong abstinence, one day at a time.

Only the first half of Step One has anything to do with food and compulsive eating. The rest of the Steps all deal with living. Some members have the mistaken belief that if they can follow a plan of eating for a short time and get their weight “under control” life will be great. We have a better solution: Work the Steps. The Big Book promises that if we surrender control to a Power greater than ourselves, “We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us” (Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed., p. 84). However, that promise appears after Step Nine. Abstaining OA members, who have incorporated the Twelve Steps into their way of living, work the Steps daily. The Steps help us stay abstinent by identifying the causes of our compulsion and by learning healthy behaviors. How can we learn to use these Steps in order to be abstinent and to have a life that is happy, joyous, and free?

The Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide provides detailed directions on how to organize and run a fifteen session workshop leading OA members through all Twelve Steps. Although the structure of this guide describes holding weekly two-hour sessions, the workshop could be configured in another way—as long as each session’s entire contents stay intact, the workshop moves along at a rapid pace, and participants have adequate time to do their homework between sessions. Regardless of the duration, this workshop is designed to be closed to new participants after the Introductory Session; each session builds on the previous ones, and consistent membership fosters the trusting and supportive atmosphere conducive to in-depth Step work. Because it is closed, this workshop cannot be registered with OA World Service as an OA meeting.

Using the OA-approved literature referred to in this guide, participants can work the Steps, not just study or read about them. They can read, reflect, write, discuss, and take action as described in the Steps. These actions include writing and giving away an inventory, asking their Higher Power to remove shortcomings, making amends, taking a daily inventory, praying and meditating, reaching out to others, and practicing the Principles embodied in these Steps in all aspects of their daily lives. There are homework assignments between each session. Participants are expected to attend all sessions, complete assignments, and contact other participants between sessions. In addition, participants are expected to simultaneously continue their regular OA practices: attend meetings, make outreach calls, work with an abstinent sponsor, follow a plan of eating, and so on. If there are no available abstinent sponsors who can support participants in this workshop, participants are encouraged to work together as partners in recovery.

Participants who benefit most are those who are willing to go to any length to recover. They probably have some familiarity with the OA program, have admitted they are

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2 The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous; Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (the Big Book); AA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions; Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition; and the OA daily readers, Voices of Recovery and For Today
compulsive eaters or have compulsive food behaviors, have given up searching for other solutions to their problem, and are willing to be abstinent one day at a time. They must also be willing to devote the time and attention this recovery process requires. They should understand that this rigorous workshop represents just one way to stay abstinent and work the Steps; there are as many approaches to Step work as there are individuals in OA.

Ideally, an abstaining OA member who has worked all Twelve Steps will lead the group. Responsibilities could also be shared with a co-leader. Participants are encouraged to give service by leading this workshop themselves after they've completed it. However, this workshop is designed to produce results even if there are currently no locally qualified sponsors to lead it.

The goal of this guide and workshop is to help as many people as possible achieve and maintain abstinence. Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working all Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.

Information for Leaders

The leader (and co-leader if responsibilities are shared) will:

Initiate the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop.

- **Determine if there is enough interest to start the workshop.** We recommend four to twelve participants. Speak with others to get an idea of how many are interested.

- **Specify that the workshop is fifteen, two-hour sessions.** Potential group members should be willing to commit to attending all sessions.

- **Specify that this is a closed workshop.** There can be no new members after the first (Introductory) session. As such, it cannot be registered as an OA group with OA World Service.

- **Select a meeting time, place, and frequency.** Meeting weekly allows time for completing homework assignments between sessions. Do what works for the group, but keep in mind that it is very important to complete an entire session as a single, intact unit during the two hours allotted for that session.

- **Produce and distribute flyers about the workshop.** A sample flyer is included on page tbd.

Facilitate the workshop.

- **Open and close the meeting space.**

- **Start and end the workshop on time.**

- **Guide participants through each session.**
• **Decide how responsibilities will be shared** if there are co-leaders for the workshop.

• **Collect the Seventh Tradition** during each session to pay rent and other costs as needed.

• **Gather the materials.** Prepare what is needed before the beginning of every session in order to avoid feeling rushed or forgetting something. Read through the next session’s script. Make sure to have enough handouts for all participants. Sometimes they get two of each.

• **Explain the homework until Step Four is completed.** At the appropriate time, hand out the homework sheets, read them aloud to the participants, and ask for questions.

• **Provide contact information during the Introductory Session.** It will be on the Participant Contact Information list following the Step One Session.

• **Remember that this workshop is presented in fifteen, two-hour sessions.** Each session is written as a script for the leader to read. The script includes the amount of time allowed to complete each section as well as handouts and homework related to that session.

• **Stick to the time indicated in each section of the script.** It is important to get through all of each session’s material during that session. Each session builds on and reinforces the previous session. New material presented prepares participants for the homework following the session. The workshop conducted as outlined helps participants learn structure, order, and discipline.

• **Observe the time guidelines in the script.** If workshop participants ignore the timer, let them finish their sentence. Then politely stop them. If this isn’t done consistently, the timer will be ignored. Say something like, “I’m sorry, Susan. Time is up. Thank you for sharing. Who would like to share next?”

**Bring necessary supplies.**

• **Timer.** We recommend using a timer that keeps track of seconds in case the leader wants to give the speaker a ten- or thirty-second warning that his or her time is almost up.

• **Container such as a basket, jar, or envelope for collecting the Seventh Tradition**

• **Envelopes addressed to the facility where the rent is to be paid**

• Extra pens and paper

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\(^3\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Overeaters Anonymous
Workshop on the Twelve Steps

A 15-session workshop designed to help participants achieve and maintain abstinence through working all Twelve Steps

June 12 – September 18, 2016
Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
June 12 is the Introductory Session

The following OA-approved literature will be used in the workshop sessions and homework assignments:

• The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous
• Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (the Big Book)
• Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions by Alcoholics Anonymous
• Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition
• Voices of Recovery
• For Today

Participants need their own copies.

Workshop Location:
Holiday Inn, 1122 Willow Lane, Hometown, XA 12345

Questions? Contact Donna R: (999) 555-1212

This is a closed workshop for 4 to 12 participants. No new members may join after the Introductory Session. Participants commit to attend and fully participate in all sessions.
Introductory Session

**Explain the Fundamentals of the Workshop (15 minutes)**

☐ **Opening (15 minutes)**
  - Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

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4 This book was developed as a workshop leader’s guide but has other uses, sponsor/sponsee–discussion for example. To make it user-friendly for the widest range of readers, text that is repeated from session to session is set in gray-shaded boxes.
LEADER

“There are many ways to work the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. To recover from the fatal disease of compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors, it’s vital that we work all Twelve Steps. In this workshop we will learn one way to do this. If we’re willing to follow directions and fully participate, this workshop can help us become and remain abstinent and be well on our way to recovery in fifteen sessions.

“Each session of this workshop is designed to last two hours. Because it’s important to get through all the material in each session, we’ll use a timer to help us stay on track. We begin each session with a check-in, a short meditation, a summary of the previous session’s Step, and a question about whether we’ve taken that Step. If you haven’t, discuss this with a sponsor to determine any action you need to take. Keep moving forward. Because of time constraints we will not discuss the previous session’s homework. It’s up to us to do our homework between sessions. However, this is not a “do-it-yourself” workshop. To discourage isolation and encourage fellowship, share the homework with a fellow participant and a sponsor.”
“In general, most sessions follow the same format: After checking in, we focus on the Step we’re working on during the session. We take turns reading passages from our literature and discussing those passages. After the Seventh Tradition, we take a break. Following the break, a reading, writing, and sharing exercise based on selected entries from our OA daily readers reveals more to us about the Step. Some sessions include longer in-class exercises.

“At the end of the session, we pass out homework that will help us reflect, write, and take action related to the work we did during that session. The homework includes reading assignments to prepare us for the next session. We then close with a prayer and the OA Promise, which encourages us to keep working together no matter what.

“To be prepared to fully participate, bring books, spiral notebooks, writing implements, and handouts to each session.

“Please note that after this session, the workshop is closed to new participants. Each session builds on the previous session, and consistent membership helps us build trust and support each other as we undertake in-depth Step work. Because this workshop is closed, it cannot be registered with OA World Service as an OA meeting.

“Here are handouts with a list of participant responsibilities, the Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise, and the homework assignments for today’s Introductory Session and for the Step One Session when we meet next time. These assignments are typical of future homework assignments. Please take five minutes to read them, and then we’ll take a few minutes for questions.”

[Leader hands out Participant Responsibilities, the Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise, and the homework for the Introductory and Step One Sessions. Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“We will need the required books for this week’s homework. Are there any questions? If so, let’s take five minutes to discuss them.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐ Reading and Group Discussion—Going to Any Length? (25 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now consider why we might want to participate in this workshop by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the Big Book\(^5\) to chapter 5, ‘How It Works,’ (p. 58).

Please remember that when we read Alcoholics Anonymous literature aloud in a group, we read it exactly as written. When reading it silently, many of us find that we can identify more easily by substituting words such as ‘compulsive eating’ for ‘alcoholism,’ and ‘food’ or ‘binge food’ for ‘alcohol.’
We will take turns reading a few paragraphs from the beginning of the chapter through 'We asked His protection and care with complete abandon' on page 59. May I have a volunteer to begin reading?"

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

"Let me reread the statement on page 58: ‘If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.’

“What do I think recovering OA members have that I want? What qualities or attitudes do I need to be successful in the OA program?

“We have twenty minutes to share on these questions or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?"

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Let me reread the statement on page 58: ‘If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.’

“What do I think recovering OA members have that I want? What qualities or attitudes do I need to be successful in the OA program?

“We have twenty minutes to share on these questions or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?"

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“If you think you may be a compulsive overeater, give yourself a chance for recovery by trying the OA program. Our way of life, based on these twelve steps and twelve traditions, has brought us physical, emotional, and spiritual healing that we don’t hesitate to call miraculous. What works for us will work for you, too.”

![Contributions (3 minutes)]

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are _______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need _______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

![Break (10 minutes)]

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Welcome Reading and Writing from *For Today* and *Voices of Recovery* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back from our break. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to starting our journey to recovery. Please follow along. Then we'll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read February 4 from *For Today* on page 35?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read December 11 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 346?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

Handout: Readiness Assessment Questions (15 minutes)

LEADER

“Here are questions to help us decide whether we are ready to participate in this workshop and recover from compulsive eating. Please follow along as I read.”

[Leader passes out and reads the Readiness Assessment Questions handout.]
Readiness Assessment Questions

[For discussion during Introductory Session.]

Am I ready for this Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop? To decide, answer the following questions. Consider discussing the answers with a sponsor or partner in recovery.

- Am I a hopeless compulsive eater?
- Am I finished searching for other methods to try to control my eating?
- Am I teachable?
- Am I willing to go to any length for recovery?
- Am I willing to find and work with an abstinent OA sponsor or partner in recovery?
- Do I have a plan of eating? Does it work? If not, am I willing to accept help in developing one?
- Am I willing to list and forgo my trigger foods, binge foods, and compulsive eating behaviors and share that list with my OA sponsor or partner in recovery?
- Am I willing to use the OA Tools of recovery, especially as they apply to this workshop?
- Am I willing to set aside everything I think I know about myself, my disease, the Steps, and especially my Higher Power?
- Am I willing to develop and deepen my relationship with a Higher Power?
- Do I have the willingness and capacity to be open-minded and honest with myself, my sponsor, and my fellow workshop participants?
- Am I willing to attend and participate in each workshop session and do the related homework?
- Am I willing to complete the entire workshop, putting Principles before personalities, to support myself and my fellow participants as I work through the Twelve Steps?
“Please take five minutes to honestly answer these questions, praying and meditating for the sincere desire for recovery and the willingness to fully participate in this workshop.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

“Now let’s take three minutes each to share our answers with the person sitting next to us. We ask our Higher Power’s guidance in helping us decide if we’re ready. Before our next session, call me with a decision.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐ Guarantee (1 minute)

“Can we guarantee you recovery from compulsive eating, a life beyond your wildest dreams? Please follow as I read from page 99 of the OA Twelve and Twelve.”

LEADER READS

“We who have worked the...steps of the Overeaters Anonymous program have had a spiritual awakening, and we now have a message of hope to carry to other compulsive overeaters. We who once suffered from complete powerlessness to control our eating and our lives have now discovered the saving strength of a Power greater than ourselves. We have experienced the miracle of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing, just as we were promised when we began these steps.”

☐ Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

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6 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

**Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

**LEADER**

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

**LEADER**

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

*Homework for this session includes Introductory and Step One Homework, Participant Responsibilities, and the Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise.*
**Introductory Session Homework and Reading for Next Session**

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

- **Reading for review of Introductory Session**
  - Read February 23 from *For Today* on page 54.
  - Reread the Readiness Assessment Questions handout.
  - Review Participant Responsibilities
  - Review the Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise handout.

- **Writing**
  - What is the current state of my recovery or relapse? What am I doing and what am I feeling?
  - How do I use food to escape life’s problems?
  - Why do I want to be in this workshop? List several reasons.

- **Action**
  - Do I have a sponsor? Is my sponsor abstinent? Does my sponsor work all the Steps? If not, we are strongly encouraged to find an abstinent sponsor who continues to work the Steps. (If we cannot find an abstinent sponsor who actively works the Steps, choose a partner in recovery from this workshop to work with.)
  - Discuss the actions I am being asked to take to participate in this workshop with my abstinent sponsor. Will my sponsor help me follow this workshop’s directions to work all the Steps?
  - Contact the workshop leader regarding my commitment to participate in this workshop.

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7 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
• Gather materials: spiral notebooks, books, writing implements, and a folder to keep handouts.

Reading Assignments for the next session on Step One

• OA Twelve and Twelve
  - Introduction to the Twelve Steps (pp. ix-x)
  - Step One (pp. 1-7)
• AA Twelve and Twelve, Step One (pp. 21-24)
• Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition, both Forewords (pp. ix-xiv) and Appendices A through D (pp. 191-208)
• Big Book, “The Doctor’s Opinion” (pp. xxv-xxxii)

Please remember that when we read Alcoholics Anonymous literature aloud in a group, we read it exactly as written. When reading it silently, many of us find that we can identify more easily by substituting words such as ‘compulsive eating’ for ‘alcoholism,’ and ‘food’ or ‘binge food’ for ‘alcohol.’

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8 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

9 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Participant Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in all sessions, as they build on each other. Contact the leader ahead of time if we are unable to attend. Read, reflect, write, discuss, and take action in class and through our homework assignments.

- Arrive early enough to be ready to start on time.

- Bring materials to each session: spiral notebooks, required books, writing implements, and a folder to keep handouts.

- Work with an abstinent sponsor who continues to work the Twelve Steps and will help us with this workshop. If no abstinent sponsors are available locally, expand the search by participating in additional workshops and intergroup, telephone, or online meetings. See oa.org for directories of these meetings. Until we find a sponsor who can help us follow the directions presented in this workshop for working the Steps, work with a partner in recovery from this workshop.

- Practice anonymity. “Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.” We are encouraged to discuss the content of the workshop from our perspective—without naming names—with fellow participants and our sponsor.

- Continue our regular OA practices, such as attending meetings and making phone calls.

- Required Reading Material:\(^{10}\):
  - The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous
  - Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (the Big Book\(^ {11}\))
  - Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions by Alcoholics Anonymous
  - Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition
  - Voices of Recovery
  - For Today

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\(^{10}\) OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

\(^{11}\) In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
We also suggest using the latest edition of the following OA literature to guide and support us in achieving and maintaining abstinence:

- *Tools of Recovery*, OA pamphlet #160
- *A Commitment to Abstinence*, OA pamphlet #141
- *A Plan of Eating: A Tool for Living*, OA pamphlet #145
- *Dignity of Choice*, OA pamphlet #140
- *A Guide for Sponsors*, OA pamphlet #200
- *Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps*, OA pamphlet #220

12 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
Strong Abstinence Checklist and Writing Exercise

Use this valuable tool every day to support you in keeping your abstinence strong and intact. You may also use it as the focus for meetings and workshops.

CHECKLIST
1) Have I been abstinent today?
2) Did I pray and meditate today?
3) Am I maintaining or working towards a healthy body weight?
4) Did I rely on my Higher Power to get or stay abstinent today?
5) Is what I am currently doing working for me to remain abstinent?
6) If I am having problems have I asked someone else what they are doing?
7) Have I made an OA call today?
8) Did I have an attitude of gratitude today?
9) Did I plan my food today?
10) Have I helped someone else today?
11) Did I have an action plan in place to stay abstinent today?
12) Do I have a sponsor and am I working the Steps with that person?

WRITING EXERCISE
1) What is compulsive eating for me?
2) What are the foods and food behaviors that trigger me to eat compulsively?
3) Am I afraid to get abstinent and if yes, why?
4) Why do I think abstinence is important?
5) What do I do to stop eating compulsively?
6) What Steps do I take to remain abstinent in all circumstances?
7) What is the difference between abstinence and a plan of eating?
8) What actions do I take to maintain my abstinence and achieve or maintain a healthy body weight?
9) How do I begin my day in order to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors?
10) What Tools do I regularly use?
11) How does remaining abstinent improve the quality of my life?
12) What place does food have in my life today?

Our next session will be held at [location] and start promptly at [time] on [date]. Please come prepared to work. If you need assistance in acquiring any of the required books, please talk to me after this session. And please contact me with a decision about committing to this workshop.

☐ Closing (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say _______.]

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Suggested Openings and Closings for All Sessions

**Serenity Prayer** (use for all sessions as opening)

“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.”

**OA Promise** (use for all sessions as final closing)

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.” (*I Put My Hand in Yours*, p. i, and *Beyond Our Wildest Dreams*, p. 207)

**Third Step Prayer** (use for Steps Three through Six closings, followed by OA Promise)

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed., p. 63)

**Seventh Step Prayer** (use for Steps Seven through Twelve closings, followed by OA Promise)

“My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed., p. 76)
Step One Session

We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)
  - Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

  - Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

  - Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

  - Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
Summary

“In summary, I’ll read a passage from the ‘Doctor’s Opinion’ in the Big Book—beginning with ‘Men and women drink...’ through ‘...very little hope of his recovery’ (p. xxix). Please turn to page xxviii and follow along.”

[Leader reads the passage.]

Reading and Group Discussion of Step One (up to 45 minutes)

“We will now begin our work on Step One: ‘We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the Big Book to page 20.

Please remember that when we read Alcoholics Anonymous literature aloud in a group, we read it exactly as written. When reading it silently, many of us find that we can identify more easily by substituting words such as ‘compulsive eating’ for ‘alcoholism,’ and ‘food’ or ‘binge food’ for ‘alcohol.’

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13 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
We will take turns reading the passage beginning with ‘How many times people have said to us: ...’ through ‘So many want to stop but cannot,’ at the top of page 25. Please take turns reading a few paragraphs. Who would like to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“What have I told myself, my therapists, doctors, friends, and family about why my eating is out of control or why I can’t maintain a healthy body weight? What’s the truth?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 3 and take turns reading the passage, beginning with ‘Part two of step one, ...’ through ‘We never grew up’ on page 5. Who would like to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“How has my eating career affected me and those around me? What have I done to try to control life—mine and others? Has it worked?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on these questions or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are _______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need _______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

Break (10 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Participant Contact Information

LEADER

“Please fill in the Participant Contact Information list that’s being passed around. I’ll email everyone a copy. We’ll need this contact information to share our homework and make outreach calls before our next session.”

[Leader passes the Participant Contact Information list.]

Reading and Writing on Step One from *For Today* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step One. Now we will read passages from *For Today* related to this work. Please follow along. Then we'll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read July 15 from *For Today* on page 197?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read October 24 from *For Today* on page 298?”

[Volunteer reads the passages.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]
Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

Homework Assignments (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

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14 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
☐ **Closing (2 minutes)**

**LEADER**

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

*[Leader and participants say _______.]*

**LEADER READS**

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop
Participant Contact Information
Just for today—Am I willing to work my program as if my life depends on it?
**CALL BEFORE YOU TAKE THAT FIRST COMPULSIVE BITE!**

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Step One Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

Writing

- Here are two passages from the OA *Twelve and Twelve*:
  - “A normal eater gets full and loses interest in food. We compulsive eaters crave more” (p. 2).
  - “Most of us have tried to deny to ourselves that we have this disease. In OA we are encouraged to take a good look at our compulsive eating, obesity, and the self-destructive things we have done to avoid obesity—the dieting, starving, over-exercising, or purging” (p. 3).

- What experiences have I had in my eating career or in trying to have a “normal-looking” body that helped me relate to these statements?

- The disease of compulsive eating is threefold: physical, emotional, and spiritual. What happens to my body, my emotions, and my spirit when I eat compulsively?

- From the AA *Twelve and Twelve*, read the first and the last two paragraphs of Step One (p. 21 and p. 24).

- How can there be strength in admitting weakness when it comes to compulsive eating and food-related behaviors?

- Why is it necessary to “hit bottom” before beginning to start practicing the OA program of recovery?

- How has my life been unmanageable—especially with respect to family, friends, and work?

Action

• In the Big Book\textsuperscript{15}, read chapter 3, “More about Alcoholism,” (pp. 30-43).

Please remember that when we read Alcoholics Anonymous literature aloud in a group, we read it exactly as written. When reading it silently, many of us find that we can identify more easily by substituting words such as ‘compulsive eating’ for ‘alcoholism,’ and ‘food’ or ‘binge food’ for ‘alcohol.’

• List the specific foods and food-related behaviors that trigger compulsive eating or obsessions around food and eating. Share this information with a sponsor or partner in recovery and one other person in this workshop.

• Have I discussed my plan of eating with an abstinent sponsor or partner in recovery? Do I agree that this a sensible plan for me?

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Two Session\textsuperscript{16}

• OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Two (pp. 9-17)
• AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Two (pp. 25-33)
• Big Book\textsuperscript{17}, chapter 4, “We Agnostics” (pp. 44-57)

\textsuperscript{15} In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

\textsuperscript{16} OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

\textsuperscript{17} In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Two Session

Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)

- Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the ________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step One, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step One from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (pp. 6-7).

LEADER READS

“Once we have become teachable, we can give up old thought and behavior patterns which have failed us in the past, beginning with our attempts to control our eating and our weight. Honest appraisal of our experience has convinced us that we can’t handle life through self-will alone. First we grasp this knowledge intellectually, and then finally we come to believe it in our hearts. When this happens, we have taken the first step and are ready to move ahead in our program of recovery.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step One? Am I convinced that I am powerless over food—that my life has become unmanageable?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

Reading and Group Discussion of Step Two (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Two: ‘Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to the beginning of Step Two on page 9. We will read through ‘... began to cause us misery’ on page 11. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

Volunteers take turns reading the passage.

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘How has my eating behavior been irrational and self-destructive, in other words “insane”?’
“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book\textsuperscript{18} to the beginning of chapter 4, ‘We Agnostics’ (p. 44). May I have a volunteer to start reading, ending with ‘So it was comforting to learn that we could commence at a simpler level’ on page 47? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs each.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Let me reread the question on page 47: ‘Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?’

‘Has food been my higher power? If a Higher Power could restore me to sanity, what would that Higher Power be like? What can I do to believe in such a Power?’

“We have fifteen minutes to share on these questions or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Contributions} (3 minutes)
\end{itemize}

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are \________ [\textit{specific amount for this workshop}]. We need \________ [\textit{specific amount}] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Break} (10 minutes)
\end{itemize}

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

\textsuperscript{18} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Two. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read February 1 from For Today on page 32?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read March 25 from Voices of Recovery on page 85?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what any part of these passages means to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

□ Abstinence\(^{19}\) Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

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\(^{19}\) The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ **Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

☐ **Closing** (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say ________ .]

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Two Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Writing

- In the OA Twelve and Twelve, read the passage starting on page 11 with “The more we ate the more we suffered, ...” through “Clearly a Power greater than ourselves had to be found if we were to be restored to sanity” at the bottom of page 12.
- How has my insanity around food—the lie, “It won’t hurt this time”—affected my life, family, friends, work, and relationship with the world around me?
- In the Big Book20, read “Appendix II: Spiritual Experience” (pp. 567-568). Did I come to OA with a belief in a Higher Power? Or did I come to OA rejecting or not believing in a Higher Power?
- Do I believe I can recover without spiritual help? How well does that work?
- Have I allowed contempt for certain religious practices or spiritual beliefs to limit my acceptance of a Higher Power? If so, in what ways?
- The key to Step Two is willingness to act on faith. How willing am I? If I’m not willing, what can I do about that?

☐ Action

- Discuss the concept of a Higher Power with my sponsor or partner in recovery.
- Write a paragraph describing a Higher Power that I believe could restore me to sanity.
- Practice acting as if I have faith in that Higher Power.

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Three Session21

- OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Three (pp. 19-27)

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20 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

21 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
• AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Three (pp. 34-41)

• Big Book\textsuperscript{22}
  
  o Chapter 2, “There Is a Solution” (pp. 17-29)
  
  o Chapter 5, “How It Works” (pp. 58-63, to “... was felt at once.”)

\textsuperscript{22} In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Three Session

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

- **Opening** (15 minutes)
  - Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the ________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

  [Leader sets the timer.]

  - Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

  [Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
To summarize our work on Step Two, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step Two in the OA *Twelve and Twelve* (p. 17).

LEADER READS

“This willingness to act on faith, then, was the key to Step Two. It was the beginning of a healing process that would relieve us of the compulsion to overeat and bring stability to our unbalanced lives. As we responded with action to the love we have been shown in OA, the result was a new faith in ourselves, in others, and in the power of that love. We had begun to develop a new relationship with a Power greater than ourselves, and we were ready to move ahead with our program of recovery.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Am I willing to consider that there is a power greater than myself that can restore me to sanity?’ Please discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

**Reading and Group Discussion of Step Three** (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Three: ‘Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 19. May I have a volunteer to read, starting at ‘It is impossible to take step three until we have taken the first two steps...’ through ‘Our primary purpose is to abstain from eating compulsively, and we know that in order to do so we will need help’ on page 20?”

Twelve Steps (5 minutes)

LEADER

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Please open *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* to page 213. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns.”

[Volunteers read the Steps.]
Volunteers take turns reading the passage.

LEADER

“How can taking Step Three help us achieve and maintain abstinence?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA Twelve and Twelve to page 35. May I have a volunteer to read, starting at the bottom of the page with ‘But suppose that instinct cries out, ...’ through ‘One good look in the mirror ought to be answer enough for any alcoholic’ on page 37?”

Volunteers take turns reading the passage.

LEADER

“How do I feel about being dependent on a Higher Power?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book23 to page 62. May I have a volunteer to read, starting at ‘This is the how and why of it....’ through ‘... an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once’ at the bottom of page 63? Please take turns reading a paragraph each.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“As we ask for help from our Higher Power for willingness and direction, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide or page 63 in the Big Book and join me in saying the Third Step Prayer?”

[Leader and participants read the Third Step Prayer.]

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23 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Three. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read April 29 from For Today on page 120?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read December 19 from Voices of Recovery on page 354?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]
☐ **A**bstinence\(^{24}\)** Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ **Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

\(^{24}\) The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
Closing (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say _______.]

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Three Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

Writing

• In the OA *Twelve and Twelve*, read from page 24, starting with “Inexperienced in this way of living,...” through “… spiritual principles in learning our Higher Power’s will for us” on page 26. How do I know what is my Higher Power’s will as opposed to my self-will?

• What evidence do I have of a Higher Power working in my life—caring for me personally—or in the lives of those around me?

• In the Big Book, on page 62 read from “Selfishness—self-centeredness!...” through “… we passed to freedom.” What is the root of our troubles? What happens when we try to play God?

Action

• Memorize the Third Step Prayer on page tbd of this guide or page 63 of the Big Book. Recite it daily.

• In the Big Book, read page 60 beginning with “The first requirement ... ” through “… confusion rather than harmony?” on page 61. Now, let’s read this passage aloud to ourselves, substituting “I” for “he.” For example, I am like an actor...if only people would do as I wish.

• Read and discuss the same passage with a sponsor and another member of this workshop. What do we conclude?

• “Once we compulsive overeaters truly take the third step, we cannot fail to recover” (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 27). Reflect on this promise.

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25 In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Read the above text.
Step Four: Session One of Three

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)

- Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Three, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step Three from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 27).

LEADER READS

“Once we compulsive overeaters truly take the third step, we cannot fail to recover. As we live out our decision day by day, our Higher Power guides us through the remaining nine steps. When we falter, we are reminded of our commitment to live by God’s will alone, and we trust that the willingness and ability will come if we only ask for them. When we get off track, our Higher Power will guide us back, as long as we are sincerely trying to know and do God’s will. We can confidently face any situation life brings, because we no longer have to face it alone. We have what we need any time we are willing to let go of self-will and humbly ask for help.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Three? Have I sincerely turned my will and my life over to the care of my Higher Power—as I understand Him?’ If not, please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

Reading and Group Discussion of Step Four (25 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Four: ‘Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.’

“There are as many ways to make a searching and fearless moral inventory as there are members in OA. In this workshop, we will teach one specific method so that we can all complete Step Four in a short amount of time and move on through the remaining Steps.
In this, the first of three sessions planned for Step Four, we will discuss the purpose of the Step and how to use the worksheets designed to guide us through the inventory. During this session we will focus on the Resentments and Strengths Worksheets. During the next two sessions, we will cover other inventory worksheets. Homework between sessions will be to complete the inventory worksheets we’ve discussed. Because we need time to present and discuss how to use this inventory method, I will frequently use the timer, and the format of these three sessions will be different from that of other sessions.

“We will now begin by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to the top of page 30. We’ll take turns reading one paragraph at a time, beginning with ‘The self-analysis we do in step four …’ through ‘… faithfully until it is completed’ on page 32. Who would like to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“What might keep me from beginning my Fourth Step Inventory?

“We have ten minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book\textsuperscript{28} to the bottom of page 63. May I have a volunteer to read the passage, beginning with ‘Next we launched…’ through ‘We were “burned up” ’ on page 65?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“We ask ourselves, ‘In what ways will I benefit by conducting a personal inventory?’

“We have ten minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“To close our reading and discussion section, please turn to page 66 in the Big Book. May I have a volunteer to read two paragraphs, beginning with ‘It is plain …’ through ‘These things are poison’?”

\textsuperscript{28} In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
General Guidelines for Completing the Fourth Step Inventory (10 minutes)

LEADER

“Here are the General Inventory Guidelines as well as the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines, the Resentments Worksheet, the Resentments Worksheet Examples, and the Step Four Glossary. There are two copies of the Resentments Worksheet—one for practice in this session and one for homework.”

LEADER

“We will take turns reading the General Inventory Guidelines. Please read a few paragraphs. May I have a volunteer to begin?”

LEADER

“After the Seventh Tradition and a break, we will:

• Read the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines.

• Look at a few examples of how to use the Resentments Worksheet.

• Practice completing the Resentments Worksheet.

• Read the guidelines for completing the Strengths Worksheet.

• Look at a few examples using the Strengths Worksheet.”

Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are _______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need _______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

Break (10 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”
Homework Assignments (60 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Four. Our homework for the next session is to complete the Resentments and Strengths Worksheets as the first part of our Fourth Step Inventory. To prepare for this homework, we will now review the worksheets, see examples, and practice completing them.

“We will take turns reading the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines. Please read a few sections each. May I have a volunteer to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading.]

LEADER

“Now we’ll take fifteen minutes to review the Resentments Worksheet and the Resentments Worksheet Examples column by column. To provide a variety of life situations, several OA members contributed the resentments examples. They do not represent one person’s inventory.”

[Leader sets the timer for fifteen minutes to review the worksheets.]

LEADER

“In column one we list the people, institutions, and principles we resent. May I have a volunteer to read the definition of ‘resentment’ and its synonyms from the Glossary?”

[Volunteer reads from the Glossary.]

LEADER

“Are there any questions or anything to discuss about what a resentment is and who or what we might resent?

“After listing everyone and everything we resent in column one, in column two we write a brief description of the resentment—what it is that we resent about the person, institution, or principle. After completing all of column two, we work on column three. Working vertically down column three, we check one or more of the aspects of self that the situation threatened. Will someone read the definition of one of those aspects of self from the Glossary?”

[Volunteer reads from the Glossary.]

LEADER

“We can read the other definitions later on our own. As we complete column three, review the suggestions in the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines. Are there any questions or anything to discuss about columns two or three?”
“After completing all of column three, we work on column four from top to bottom. In column four we briefly examine and describe our part, if any, in creating, contributing to, or sustaining this situation. After completing column four, we begin on column five. In column five, we select one or more of the character traits that may have triggered our resentment and circle the most important one. As we work from top to bottom in column five, our patterns may begin to appear. Will someone please read the definition of one of these character traits from the Glossary?”

[Volunteer reads from the Glossary.]

LEADER

“Would anyone like to hear another definition read? Are there any questions or anything to discuss about columns four or five?

“Now we’ll look at examples of how this worksheet is used. May I have a volunteer to read one or two of the examples in the Resentments Worksheet Examples? Please read across the row so we can see how the worksheet was completed for each one.

[Volunteer reads examples from the Glossary.]

LEADER

“Before we move on to practicing with the Resentments Worksheet, we’ll take five minutes to answer any questions or discuss anything we have covered so far—the General Inventory Guidelines, the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines, or the Resentments Worksheet Examples."

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Take one of the Resentments Worksheets and choose one resentment that you are willing to talk about in the workshop to use as practice. In the next ten minutes, complete the Resentments Worksheet for that one item. Review the Resentments Worksheet Guidelines and Examples and look up definitions and synonyms in the Glossary as needed.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Pair up with another person in the workshop and for the next five minutes share how you completed the worksheet.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Now that we have briefly used the worksheet, let’s take five minutes to discuss any questions we have about this worksheet or the process in general.”
“On page 33, the OA *Twelve and Twelve* says: ‘It is easier for most of us to proceed with step four if we take time to acknowledge our assets in addition to our shortcomings. No matter how many problems we have, each of us also has positive characteristics; it’s important that we recognize them at some point during the inventory process.’

“Please review with a sponsor or partner in recovery when the best time would be to complete the Strengths Inventory—as the first action to take, between other inventories, or at the end of the process. We will now pass out the Strengths Worksheet, Strengths Worksheet Examples, and Strengths Worksheet Guidelines.”

[Leader hands out the materials.]

**LEADER**

“Well, we will review the Strengths Worksheet and look at some examples of how to fill it out. We will take turns reading the Strengths Worksheet Guidelines. After one section or paragraph is read, the next person will continue. May I have a volunteer to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading.]

**LEADER**

“Now we’ll look at examples of how to use the Strengths Worksheet. May I have a volunteer to read one or two of the examples, reading across the row so we can see how the worksheet was completed for each one?”

[Volunteer reads examples.]

**LEADER**

“Before we continue, we’ll take five minutes to answer any questions or discuss anything we have covered about the Strengths Inventory—the Strengths Worksheet Guidelines, the examples, or the worksheet itself.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

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29 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
LEADER

“Before our next session, complete the Resentments Worksheet and the Strengths Worksheet.

“Before our next session, complete the Resentments Worksheet and the Strengths Worksheet.

Remember to pray, talk with a sponsor, make outreach calls, attend meetings, and generally support your program during this process. If perfectionism and procrastination are among our character defects, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove them, and then, if necessary, act as if they've been removed. Keep moving forward!”

**Abstinence** Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

**Homework Assignments**
General Inventory Guidelines

Follow these guidelines as we complete the Step Four Inventory worksheets.

Begin

Begin right after taking Step Three and completing the Step Four readings. Read the passage on page 63 of the Big Book, beginning with “Next we launched ...” through “… had been blocking us” at the top of page 64.

Copy the worksheets

Make copies of the worksheets provided before beginning to work on each one:

- Resentments
- Strengths
- Fears
- Sex Conduct
- Harms (Guilt and Remorse)
- Other Problem Areas
- and Old Beliefs

Make more than one copy.

Set aside time

Set aside time to work on the inventory. Many of us found that setting aside thirty minutes or an hour in the morning on a daily basis kept us moving forward. Some suggested not working at night, just before bedtime, because their minds couldn’t stop revisiting the past and they couldn’t go to sleep. Others focused their efforts and completed the inventory in one weekend.

Choose someplace private

Choose a private place to write where we won’t be interrupted, if possible.

Pray/Meditate

Before beginning each session, we ask our Higher Power to give us the honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness to see ourselves clearly.

Use the Glossary

Review the worksheets and use the Glossary not only for definitions of the terms used in the worksheets but also for synonyms.

Read the worksheet guidelines

Before beginning each worksheet, read the individual worksheet guidelines (for example, Resentments Worksheet Guidelines) and the relevant worksheet examples.

Work vertically

Complete each worksheet vertically, moving from left to right: Complete all of column one before moving on to column two, complete column two before moving to column three, and so on. For example, on the Resentments Worksheet list people, institutions, and principles we resent. After the list is complete, move on to the second column and, in four or five words, describe why we resent each one.

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30 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Keep moving
If perfectionism and procrastination are among our character defects, humbly ask our Higher Power to remove them. Then, if necessary, act as if they’ve been removed. Ours is a program of action. If we are unsure how to complete one column or, for example, which trigger to check, leave it blank for now. Talk with a sponsor or ask for help during the Fifth Step. Go on to the next item.

Be thorough
Step Four says we took a “searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves,” which includes “take it to my grave” issues. List everything. It is the only way to take an effective inventory. Our recovery depends on it. As we complete each worksheet, we may find it helpful to review the relevant section of the Step Four questions in the OA Twelve and Twelve to jog our memory.

Look for patterns
After we complete each worksheet or when we complete them all, we may find it illuminating to review them and look for patterns. Did we frequently feel like a victim? Did we often feel insulted? Were we often fearful? Did people frequently fail to meet our expectations? There are many possible patterns.

Pray/Meditate
Close each session with a prayer thanking our Higher Power for support, courage, honesty, and insight.

When going through Step Four, be as honest as possible but don’t waste time digging for problems. Our mind and heart will tell us what we need to deal with. In time, more will be revealed as needed. Most people begin with their resentments. Some work on the Strengths Worksheet first or between the other worksheets.

However, any resentment or guilt knowingly omitted is like covering an infected sore with a bandage and hoping it will heal by itself. Usually a sore, particularly an old and infected one, needs to be cleaned before it heals. The Fourth through Ninth Steps are the cleaning and healing process.

Begin here, not as an opportunity to blame ourselves, but as an opportunity to learn more about ourselves, about how we learned to handle life. Knowing ourselves is the first step to growth by choosing new patterns and allowing our Higher Power the opportunity to guide us into a more fulfilling and enjoyable life.
Remind ourselves why we are doing this inventory by reading the following passage from the OA Twelve and Twelve, (pp. 29-30).

"Those of us who have completed step four have found that taking this searching and fearless moral inventory was one of the most loving things we ever did for ourselves. As we took an honest look at the past, at who we’d been and what we’d done, we began to understand ourselves better. That understanding was the beginning of emotional healing. Many of us had lived our lives up to this point with a secret feeling of shame. We carried deep in our hearts the feeling that we were worthless or insignificant. Often this shame stemmed from unresolved guilt over mistakes we’d never fully dealt with. We had never faced our wrongs honestly and acknowledged them, so we were left feeling ashamed. Writing our step-four inventory enabled us to begin cleaning up the messes of the past so we could start life over, afresh.”
Resentments Worksheet Guidelines

Column One

List all people, institutions, and principles we resent:

People such as spouses, significant others, family, and friends often come to mind first. We also include ourselves.

Institutions such as churches, government, races, nationalities, authorities, correctional systems, education systems, and so on

Principles such as affirmative action, speed limits, etiquette rules, sin, heaven, hell, and so on

Although we want to include everyone and everything we resent, for the purposes of this workshop, we may want to complete the remaining columns for only the top ten or twenty that keep us awake at night or fill our thoughts during the day.

Column Two

Describe, briefly, why we resent each one.

Choose a few words to capture the essence of the situation and move on to the next one.

Do not let our mind waste time by diving into the past at length, replaying all the painful details, and sinking into the mire of the feelings.

Column Three

Which aspects of self, such as pride or security, are threatened by the resentment?

Indicate one or more with a check mark. We are looking for general patterns. If we check more than one, circle the one that is the driving force. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean that the others are unimportant.

As we think about each aspect of self in relation to a particular incident, the questions below may be helpful. Use the Glossary as needed.

Ambition

Is this situation or person blocking me from getting what I want or need?

Do I fear losing something I already have?

Pride

Do I feel insulted? Do I feel the other person doesn’t recognize how important I am?

Does this situation or person affect my sense of my status in the world?

Am I afraid of what other people will think of me?
Does this situation or person criticize me in any way?
Is this person not being useful to me in a way I think she or he should?

**Relationships**
Does this situation or person actually or potentially hurt my relationships with another person, myself, or my Higher Power?

**Security**
Does this situation or person affect my financial, emotional, or physical security?
Do I feel unsafe?
Do I feel alone or disconnected from others?
Do I feel uncared for?

**Self-Esteem**
Do I feel undervalued in this situation or by this person?
Do I feel invisible or unheard?

After completing the first three columns, turn to the Big Book. It suggests that we stop and consider our work so far. Read the paragraph on page 66 beginning “We turned back...”

So, what do we do with these feelings? Read the paragraph in the Big Book starting on page 66 that recommends praying for tolerance, pity, and patience, beginning with “This was our course...”

We then return to our inventory.

**Column Four**
Briefly describe our role in each scenario. How did I cause a problem or make the situation worse?
Put aside thoughts of what this person did or what that situation caused. Ask where have I been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened. Even if an event isn’t entirely my fault, where was I to blame?

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31 In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
We ask ourselves what we did or said to make others retaliate against us, or how we treated them badly in the past. In some cases, this column is left blank (being abused or molested as a child is one example). If in doubt, leave it blank and discuss with a sponsor.

**Column Five**

Which character defects or thoughts triggered our reaction to each situation?

Indicate one or more with a check mark. We are looking for general patterns. If we check more than one, circle the one that is the driving force. Circling one, or even two, does not mean the others are unimportant. If none of the triggers listed fits the situation, write the appropriate word in the “other” column.

As an example of completing this section, I might write:

I was angry with my mother because she made a derogatory remark about fat people— not directed at me, but in my presence—and my feelings were hurt. I was 100 pounds (45 kg) overweight, and I thought she should have been more sensitive to me. What was my character defect? It turned out to be more than one:

- My expectation that she should behave differently (my rules about appropriate behavior and my lack of acceptance that she was self-centered too)
- My own low self-esteem about my weight
- My self-centered thinking that everything is about me
- My fear that if she doesn’t like fat people she can’t love me. If my own mother can’t love or accept me because I’m fat, who can? I must be unworthy.

When I was growing up, I accepted her opinion of fat people and felt unworthy and unacceptable when I was overweight. If asked then, I would have circled Fear and Low Self-Esteem in column five. As an adult in program, I was stunned by her insensitivity, so I checked those but circled Expectations.

Remember, the other character defects are important and will not be ignored. However, I was looking for patterns in the present and my expectations of how other people should behave often disrupted my serenity, to say the least. Looking ahead, all those character defects ended up on my list for Steps Six and Seven. Today all I had to do was complete Step Four.

What if we can’t identify our part and leave column four blank? In column five we might list feelings of being a victim in the “other” column. Consider how those feelings might be affecting our reactions to life and people now.

Regardless of what happened to us before and how resentful we feel, we are adults now and responsible for our actions. We don’t have to let the past determine our future. Healing is possible.
Resentment Worksheet Examples

“Anger and resentment are common manifestations of our disease. In fact, most of us ate compulsively when we felt anger or resentment. As we continue writing our inventories, it is important to list the people and institutions we’ve held grudges against” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 38).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People, institutions, principles I resent</th>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>What aspect of self is hurt or threatened?</th>
<th>What is my part in creating this situation?</th>
<th>What character defect/trait triggers my reaction?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Came late to my Mother’s memorial service.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Wanted everything to be perfect.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Collectors</td>
<td>Their rules are unfair.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>I lied in order to save money by saying my vitamins were medicines.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mother</td>
<td>Made me feel unacceptable when I wasn’t thin.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Was overweight.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My boss</td>
<td>Laid me off.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Didn’t follow his direction because I knew a better way.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitress</td>
<td>Took too long to bring the food.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Want things when I want them.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td>Molested me when I was a young girl.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- **Ambition**: Arrogance
- **Pride**
- **Relationships**
- **Security**
- **Self-esteem**
- **Dishonesty**
- **Expectations**
- **Greed/Envy**
- **Fear**
- **Low Self-esteem**
- **Self-centeredness**
- **Other**
“Anger and resentment are common manifestations of our disease. In fact, most of us ate compulsively when we felt anger or resentment. As we continue writing our inventories, it is important to list the people and institutions we’ve held grudges against” *(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 38)*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People, institutions, principles I resent:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What aspect of self is hurt or threatened?</td>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is my part in creating this situation?</td>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Greed/Envy</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Low Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What character defect/trait triggers my reaction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Synonyms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>eager or strong desire to achieve something; goals, plans, designs for the future</td>
<td>zeal, longing, appetite, craving, drive, initiative, yearning, desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>unease and distress about future possibilities</td>
<td>fearfulness, worry, excessive concern, fretting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogance</td>
<td>offensive display of superiority or self-importance; overbearing pride; contempt or disregard for others</td>
<td>haughtiness, snobbery, insolence, disdain, conceit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>something accepted as true</td>
<td>strongly held opinion or view (the truth) about how self, others, and the world are; always happens: “Just what I expected”; could be seen as a pattern or a label</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character defect</td>
<td>“exact nature of our wrongs”: ways of handling life that interfere with our happiness, good relations with others, and conscious contact with our Higher Power</td>
<td>shortcoming, deficiency, flaw, fault, character trait</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceit</td>
<td>overdeveloped opinion of one’s abilities, personality, or worth</td>
<td>vanity, egotism, self-importance, arrogance, pride, swellheadedness, selfishness, boastfulness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (excessive)</td>
<td>going to extremes to influence or dominate people or situations</td>
<td>trying to make things turn out MY way; manipulative, domineering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>to judge harshly</td>
<td>to take someone else’s inventory; blame, condemn, disparage, find fault, knock, nag, nitpick, trash, take down, bash, carp, denounce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourteous</td>
<td>behavior that is ill-mannered or impolite.</td>
<td>crude, disrespectful</td>
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<td>Dishonesty</td>
<td>a disposition to cheat, steal, deceive, or lie by commission or omission</td>
<td>lying, lack of integrity, evasiveness, cheating, fraud, stealing, unscrupulousness, living in denial; not speaking my truth or doing what is best for me; not setting boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doormat</td>
<td>to allow mistreatment of oneself by others</td>
<td>passive, compliant, wishy-washy, afraid to speak up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Envy</td>
<td>resentful desire for another’s possessions or advantages</td>
<td>covetousness, jealousy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>personal rules about how one and others should behave, how the world should work, or how things should be done</td>
<td>rule, standard; normal way for polite or considerate people to behave; believe other people will know what I am thinking without telling them</td>
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<tr>
<td>False pride</td>
<td>feeling one is entitled to things not earned; feeling a need to stand out or be above others; craving attention and notoriety; feeling better than or less than others</td>
<td>denial, phoniness</td>
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<td>Fear</td>
<td>alarm and anxiety caused by the expectation or realization of danger—real or imagined—such as, fear of harm, losing something you have, not getting what you want, snakes, heights, public speaking, success, failure, and so on</td>
<td>alarm, dread, terror, dismay, cowardice, anxiety, apprehension, distrust, uncertainty, phobia; resentful about something that hasn’t happened yet; blowing things out of proportion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
<td>habitual repetition of intimate or private and often sensational rumors or facts</td>
<td>defamation, grapevine, malicious talk, meddling, scuttlebutt, whispering campaign, hearsay, telling secrets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greed</td>
<td>overwhelming desires to acquire or have, such as wealth or power, in excess of what one requires or deserves</td>
<td>avarice, lust, gluttony, voracious appetite, always wanting more, chronic dissatisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grudge</td>
<td>reluctance to admit or give up a resentment</td>
<td>bitter resentment; wanting revenge or feeling vindictive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>remorseful awareness of having done something wrong or having failed to do something required or expected</td>
<td>self-condemnation, remorse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harm</td>
<td>physical or emotional damage</td>
<td>damage, injure, insult, wound, embarrass, debase, hurt, cause a loss, bruise, kill, scar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hate</td>
<td>to feel great animosity or dislike</td>
<td>despise, loathe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impatience</td>
<td>inability to wait patiently or tolerate delay; inability to endure opposition or irritation</td>
<td>restlessness, intolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inconsiderate</td>
<td>not taking the needs and feelings of others into account; see also self-centeredness</td>
<td>thoughtless; not seeing situations from another’s perspective; not considering a situation may not be about me</td>
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<td>Term</td>
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<td>Synonyms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insincerity</td>
<td>to put up a false appearance</td>
<td>hypocrisy, deceitfulness, phoniness, artificiality, pretense, falseness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intolerant</td>
<td>unwillingness or refusal to tolerate or respect differences in opinions or in beliefs or persons of different races, religions, backgrounds, or other characteristics; impatient with annoyances</td>
<td>bigoted, prejudiced, biased, narrow-minded, opinionated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>fearful or wary of being replaced by a rival, especially in regard to another's affections</td>
<td>green-eyed monster, envious, distrustful, suspicious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laziness</td>
<td>resistant to work or exertion; avoiding or shirking work</td>
<td>sloth, shiftless, idle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
<td>lack of acceptance, approval, and respect toward oneself, manifested by personal nonrecognition of one’s abilities and achievements and lack of acknowledgement and acceptance of one’s limitations</td>
<td>insecurity, underappreciation, underrated, undervalued, self-deprecation, worthless</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>concerned with the principles of right and wrong behavior and the goodness or badness of human character</td>
<td>ethical, virtuous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative attitude</td>
<td>tendency to take the most unfavorable view of most situations</td>
<td>chip on one’s shoulder; expecting the worst; defeatism, gloomy outlook, negative thinking, pessimism, cynicism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over-sensitive</td>
<td>unduly sensitive; feelings easily hurt</td>
<td>touchy, thin-skinned, fragile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>tendency to set overly high standards; using one’s own idea of the right way to do things, and being displeased with anything less; may try too hard or not at all</td>
<td>intolerance, nitpicking, hairsplitting, faultfinding, pettiness, quibbling; need to do everything right; giving up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>what I think others think of me; an inflated sense of one’s personal status (negative aspect); having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of others who one views as unworthy; see false pride</td>
<td>conceit, egotistical, boastful, phony, vain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procrastination</td>
<td>putting off something until a later date</td>
<td>dawdling, taking one’s sweet time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>social, business, or sexual connections with other people</td>
<td>ties, links, relations, kinship, association</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Synonyms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remorse</td>
<td>bitter regret for past misdeeds</td>
<td>feeling terribly sorry or guilty about previous words or actions; regret</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resentment</td>
<td>indignation or ill will felt as a result of a real or imagined offense; life not going as expected or desired</td>
<td>bitterness, annoyance, anger, grudge, righteous indignation, animosity, hate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>basic desire for money, property, and possessions; general sense of emotional and physical well-being; feeling of physical, emotional, or financial safety</td>
<td>protection, armor, shield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>what I think of myself; an attitude of acceptance, approval, and respect for oneself while recognizing one’s abilities and limitations</td>
<td>self-respect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-centeredness</td>
<td>concerned only with or primarily with one’s own interests, benefits, and welfare without regard for others</td>
<td>selfishness, self-seeking, egocentricity; wanting others to do things my way; wanting praise from others; wanting to control the situation; wanting my needs taken care of before others; feeling that I know more than others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-pity</td>
<td>feeling sorry for oneself; especially exaggerated or self-indulgent pity</td>
<td>poor me, hopelessness, despair, depression, spoiled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-righteousness</td>
<td>having an exaggerated feeling of one’s own virtuousness or rights; confident of one’s own rightness, especially when smugly moralistic and intolerant of the opinion and behaviors of others</td>
<td>Sanctimonious, superior, smug, holier-than-thou, preachy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>a feeling, belief, or perception that the self is defective, unworthy, unacceptable or fundamentally damaged; different from guilt, which is remorse about a specific behavior, not the entire self</td>
<td>unworthy, not good enough, self-disgust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>positive emotional characteristics</td>
<td>assets, positive attributes, strong points, capabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>a statement accepted as true or reality</td>
<td>current understanding or view</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>one harmed by an action, a condition, or a circumstance</td>
<td>sufferer, prey, martyr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>tormenting oneself with disturbing thoughts</td>
<td>fret, stew, feel distressed, be overly concerned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worthlessness</td>
<td>having no value, importance, or usefulness</td>
<td>low, despicable, without merit, insignificant</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Strengths Worksheet Guidelines

A thorough inventory looks at both what works and what doesn't work to draw an accurate picture and establish a foundation for the future. The AA *Twelve and Twelve* includes some pertinent passages. Starting on page 42, at the beginning of the Step Four chapter, read through “... far exceed their proper functions.” On page 44, the underlying cause of our compulsion is attributed to “instinct run wild.”

We can, therefore, look at many of our character traits as being on a continuum, such as stingy to prudent, passive to energetic, stubborn to persistent. In recovery we often find our strength in balance and moderation. On this worksheet we look at our assets today.

Column One

List our personal assets—what we recognize and value as strengths.

Read through the Partial List of Character Strengths below for ideas. Think about what gives us joy or what we have accomplished. Some of us have a much harder time acknowledging our strengths than we do our defects. True humility is having an accurate view of ourselves—and that includes our strengths.

Partial List of Character Strengths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artistic</th>
<th>Grateful</th>
<th>Open-minded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Astute</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Hopeful</td>
<td>Perseverant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Humble</td>
<td>Prudent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Industrious</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Ingenious</td>
<td>Self-disciplined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diligent</td>
<td>Insightful</td>
<td>Socially adept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eager to learn</td>
<td>Intense</td>
<td>Socially responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Light-hearted</td>
<td>Teachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Loving</td>
<td>Thorough</td>
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<td>Forgiving</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>Thoughtful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generous</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Trusting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>Nurturing</td>
<td>Wise</td>
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</table>

Column Two

Briefly describe situations or instances when we used our strengths.

Choose a few words to capture the essence of the situation and move on. Although we do not want to dwell in the past, it is refreshing to spend a few moments here remembering good feelings.
Strengths Worksheet Examples

“No matter how many problems we have, each of us also has positive characteristics; it’s important that we recognize them at some point during the inventory process” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 33).

<table>
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<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I recognize and value about myself:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I appreciate my ability to learn.</td>
<td>I do not hesitate to take on new projects, knowing I can learn what I need to know by researching or asking people for help.</td>
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<td>I work hard and always try to do a good job.</td>
<td>I am proud of my work and my bosses appreciate me.</td>
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<td>I care about other people.</td>
<td>I enjoy helping people when I can and am considered a good listener.</td>
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<td>I am honest.</td>
<td>I can be trusted with money and have been treasurer for many organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I love beautiful things like art and music.</td>
<td>I delight in going to museums and concerts. I enjoy decorating my house and creating a pleasant environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I appreciate nature.</td>
<td>Walking along the beach nurtures my soul. I also love animals, enjoy my cat, and donate to animal rescue organizations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
"No matter how many problems we have, each of us also has positive characteristics; it's important that we recognize them at some point during the inventory process" (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 33).

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<td>Examples:</td>
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</table>
Closing (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say ________.]  

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Four: Session One of Three Homework

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Action

• Call a sponsor or partner in recovery if stuck or don't know how to use the worksheets.

• Complete the Resentments Worksheet. Use as many sheets as needed.

• Complete the Strengths Worksheet. Use as many sheets as needed.
Step Four: Session Two of Three

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

□ Opening (15 minutes)

• Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the ________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“Last session we began writing our inventories by looking at our resentments. To summarize our work so far, I’ll read a paragraph on page 66 from the Big Book\(^{32}\) beginning ‘If we were to live…. ’ Please follow along.”

[Leader reads the passage.]

LEADER

“In addition, we are making a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, not others. The Big Book reminds us of this on page 67: ‘Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes.’

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I started a fearless and moral inventory and am I willing to identify the mistakes I have made? Have I truly acknowledged all my strengths?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—especially if feeling stuck or confused about the inventory process.”

READING AND GROUP DISCUSSION OF STEP FOUR—FEAR (20 MINUTES)

LEADER

“We will now continue our work on Step Four: ‘Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.’

“In this, the second of three sessions planned for Step Four, we will discuss how to use the Fears, Sex Conduct, and Harms Worksheets. Homework during this week will be to complete these worksheets. In the next session, we’ll cover the remaining worksheets. We will now begin by reading from our texts and discussing what we read. Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 37. We’ll take turns reading one paragraph at a time, beginning

\(^{32}\) In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
with ‘As we take inventory we also look at our fears...’ through ‘Have we ever abandoned a person we had a responsibility to help?’ on page 38. May I have a volunteer to begin reading?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Let’s discuss this question: How has fear motivated the choices or behaviors in our life?

“We have ten minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book to the bottom of page 67. May I have a volunteer to read the passage, beginning with ‘Notice that the word “fear”...’ through ‘... to match calamity with serenity’ in the middle of page 68?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“How have we been dealing with our fears, and how has that been working for us?

“We have ten minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer]

LEADER

“To close our reading and discussion section on fear, please turn to page 68 in the Big Book. May I have a volunteer to read the paragraph beginning ‘We never apologize...’?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

☐ Instructions for Completing the Fears Worksheet (35 minutes)

LEADER

“To help us complete this part of our inventory, here are the Fears Worksheet Guidelines, the Fears Worksheet Examples, and two copies of the Fears Worksheet. We will use one as practice now; use the other one for homework. Make extra copies as needed.”

---

33 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
LEADER hands out the materials.

“We will take turns reading the Fears Worksheet Guidelines. Please read a few sections. May I have a volunteer to begin?”

Volunteers take turns reading.

“Now we’ll review the Fears Worksheet and the Fears Worksheet Examples column by column.”

Leader sets timer for ten minutes to review the worksheets.

LEADER

“In column one write a list of our fears. May I have a volunteer to read the definition of fear and the synonyms in the Glossary?”

Volunteer reads from the Glossary.

LEADER

“Are there any questions or any discussion?

“In column two write a brief description of why we were afraid. In column three, check one or more of the areas of self that the situation threatened, such as self-esteem or relationships. Will someone read one of those areas from the Glossary?”

Volunteer reads from the Glossary.

LEADER

“We can read the other definitions at a later time. We might want to review the suggestions given in the General Inventory Guidelines for completing column three. Is there any discussion or are there any questions about columns two or three?

“In column four briefly examine and describe our part, if any, in creating, contributing to, or sustaining the situation. In column five select one or more of the character traits that may have triggered our reactions and circle the most important. Will someone please select one of the traits and read the definition and synonyms from the Glossary?”

Volunteer reads from the Glossary.

LEADER

“Would anyone like to hear another definition read? Are there any questions about columns four or five?”
“Column six asks us to write briefly about what our Higher Power would have us be if we didn’t have this fear. Notice that the word is ‘be’ and not ‘do’; for example, ‘be more loving,’ not ‘fix my friend’s problem.’ Are there any questions about column six?

“Now we’ll look at some examples of how this worksheet is used. May I have a volunteer to read one or two of the examples from the Fears Examples Worksheet? Please read across the row so we can see how the worksheet was completed for each one.”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“Before we move on to practicing with the Fears Worksheet, we’ll take five minutes to answer any questions or discuss anything we have covered so far: the Fears Worksheet, the Fears Worksheet Guidelines, or the Examples.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Take one of the Fears Worksheets and choose one of the fears that you are willing to talk about in the workshop. In the next ten minutes, complete the Fears Worksheet for that one item. Review the Fears Worksheet, Fears Worksheet Guidelines, and Fears Worksheet Examples, and look up definitions and synonyms in the Glossary as needed.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Pair up with another person in the workshop and for the next five minutes share how you completed the worksheet.”  [Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Now that we have briefly used the worksheet, let’s take five minutes to answer any questions about this worksheet or the Fears Inventory process in general.”  [Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER
“After the Seventh Tradition and a break, we will work on the Sex Conduct and Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet.”

Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are _______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need _______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]
“How does examining our past sex conduct help us to work toward a sane ideal for the future?

“We have five minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many of us as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 40. We’ll take turns reading one paragraph at a time, beginning with ‘How about lust?’ through ‘... risk of physical intimacy?’ on page 41. Who would like to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“How do the readings help us broaden our ideas of what we can include in our Sex Conduct Inventory?

“We have five minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐ Instructions for Completing the Sex Conduct Worksheet (10 minutes)

LEADER

“Here are the Sex Conduct Worksheet Guidelines, the Sex Conduct Worksheet, and the Sex Conduct Worksheet Examples.”

[Leader hands out the materials.]

“We will take turns reading the guidelines. Please read a few sections. May I have a volunteer to begin?”

[Volunteers take turns reading.]

LEADER

“Before we continue, we’ll take five minutes, if needed, to answer any questions or discuss anything we have covered about the Sex Conduct Inventory—the Sex Conduct Worksheet Guidelines, the examples, or the worksheet itself.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Instructions for Completing the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet (10 minutes)

LEADER

“Most of us can probably recall incidents from the past that still make us cringe with embarrassment, guilt, or remorse. Perhaps, without intending to, we have hurt others and then done nothing to correct the situation or to make amends. Perhaps we thought we could turn our backs on these incidents, that they would somehow evaporate into thin air without our having to do or say anything. But these are the very problems that can fester within us, making us feel bad about ourselves and leading us back to the food. This part of our inventory gives us a chance to face these issues, to bring them into the light of our consciousness, and to examine our behavior without trying to hide, deny, or ignore it.

“Here are the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) materials—the guidelines, the worksheet, and the worksheet examples.”

[Leader hands out the materials.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet Guidelines?”

[Volunteer reads the guidelines.]

LEADER

“Please take three minutes to look at the Harms Worksheet and the Harms Worksheet Examples.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Before we continue, we’ll take five minutes to answer any questions or discuss anything we have covered about the Harms Inventory—the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet Guidelines, the examples, or the worksheet itself.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
☐ Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ Homework Assignments

1480 1481 1482

LEADER

Before our next session, complete the Fears, Sex Conduct, and Harms Worksheets.

Remember to pray, talk with a sponsor, make outreach calls, attend meetings, and generally support your program during this process. If perfectionism and procrastination are among our character defects, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove them, and then, if necessary, act as if they've been removed. Keep moving forward!”
Fears Worksheet Guidelines

Column One
List all our fears.

It's likely that we will include many of the same people from our resentments list on this fears list.
For example, we might be angry at our spouse (resentful), but also afraid—a afraid that he or she might leave us because of our weight. Some people include religious institutions, government agencies, or tax collectors. Another person might fear his or her boss. Other fears might be fear of dying, insanity, heights, public speaking, hospitals, feelings, getting old, violence, gangs, guns, change, failure, success, losing a loved one, sex, loneliness, creditors, men, women, poverty, other races, the unknown, abandonment, disapproval, confrontation, rejection, and so on.

Column Two
Describe briefly why we are afraid. Choose a few words to describe what we fear will happen or won’t happen.

Column Three
Indicate with a check mark one or more aspects of self that are threatened.
If we check more than one, circle the one that is the driving force in this instance. Circling one, or even two, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns.

Column Four
Briefly describe our part.
In the example about fear of losing a home, the person admitted to buying a house he or she couldn’t afford.

Column Five
What character trait/defect triggered our action or reaction?
In the decision to buy an unaffordable house, the action might have been triggered by low self-esteem (feeling like we have to live in a big house to be worthwhile), or greed/envy (always wanting more), or unrealistic expectations about future prospects. We may identify more than one trigger, but one or two may be more important as the driving force in this situation. This list of character traits/defects will be used in Steps Six and Seven.
What would my Higher Power have me be?

As part of the inventory process on fear, the Big Book\textsuperscript{35} has a suggestion. Read the paragraph on page 68 beginning “We never apologize to anyone....” We don’t need to wait for Steps Five through Seven to begin.

In column six, after following the suggestions from the Big Book, write what we believe our Higher Power would have us be.

\textsuperscript{35} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
# Fears Worksheet Examples

“As we take inventory we also look at our fears. For many of us, fear, worry, and anxiety have played a key role in our lives, robbing us of joy and keeping us from fulfilling our dreams” (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 37).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who or what am I afraid of?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What aspect of self feels threatened?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What is my part in creating or maintaining this situation?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What character defect/trait triggers my action/reaction?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What would my Higher Power have me be?</strong></td>
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<td>Gaining weight</td>
<td>Would feel and look terrible, be embarrassed.</td>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Security</td>
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<td>Men</td>
<td>Was raped.</td>
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<td>Losing my house</td>
<td>Can’t pay the mortgage.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>Losing my job</td>
<td>Poor review with deadline to improve.</td>
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- Faithful in my practice of the program and less concerned with my appearance.
- Now I feel like a victim.
- Aware my value does not depend on what I own; more prudent and realistic in handling my finances.
- Diligent in my work without letting procrastination or perfectionism interfere.
| **Husband can’t find work—has been looking for 18 months** | **He’s depressed. I’m working 50 hours/week.** | + | + | + | 🟢 | + | **Not sure.** | **Financial insecurity** | Trusting God as my source while doing what I can do and caring for myself and my husband. |
| **Losing my boyfriend** | **He feels distant, often angry** | 🟢 | + | + | **I frequently nag and complain.** | **Controlling, self-centered** | **Grateful, supportive, and caring for my boyfriend in words and actions. Less controlling. Trusting God, rather than one person, as the source of my love.** |
Fears Worksheet

“As we take inventory we also look at our fears. For many of us, fear, worry, and anxiety have played a key role in our lives, robbing us of joy and keeping us from fulfilling our dreams” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 37).

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<td>What aspect of self feels threatened?</td>
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<td>Self Esteem</td>
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<td>What is my part in creating or maintaining this situation?</td>
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<td>What character trait/defect triggers my action?</td>
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<td>What would Higher Power have me be?</td>
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Sex Conduct Worksheet Guidelines

OA is not an arbiter of sex conduct. Standards of behavior vary significantly from country to country and culture to culture. A passage in the Big Book\textsuperscript{36} describes how human opinions can run to extremes: “One school would allow man no flavor for his fare and the other would have us all on a straight pepper diet” (p. 69). We are asked to review our sex conduct, to see where we have been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate and to list whom we have harmed. On pages 40 and 41, the OA \textit{Twelve and Twelve} asks us how we have misused our sexual drives.

\textbf{Column One}

List everyone we have hurt.

Hurt is a broad avenue. In addition to the obvious reason for sex, sex has been used to, for example:

- Bolster self-esteem through conquest or having a desirable mate.
- Secure material possessions.
- Punish someone for her or his infidelities.
- Demonstrate power over someone.

Other harms might include:

- Cheating on our significant other, even if we think he or she doesn’t know.
- Withholding sex. The OA \textit{Twelve and Twelve} (p. 41) mentions that compulsive overeating has left many of us uninterested in sex. In those cases, have we been inconsiderate of our partners? Have we used withholding of sex as punishment?

\textbf{Column Two}

For each person on the list, indicate with a check mark if we were selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate.

If we check more than one character defect, circle the one that was the driving force in this instance. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns.

\textbf{Column Three}

For each person on the list, indicate with a check mark if we aroused jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness.

If we check more than one of these feelings, circle the one that predominates in this instance. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns.

\textsuperscript{36} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
1561 Column Four
1562 Was anyone else hurt by our actions? If so, list them.
1563 This conduct may have hurt our spouses or the children of either party due to their neglect or the creation of bad feelings in the home between the parents.

1565 Column Five
1566 What might have triggered our action?
1567 Look at what might have triggered our action and indicate with a check mark one or more of the options provided. If more than one is checked, we may want to circle the one that was the driving force in this instance. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns. If the trigger is not listed, write it in the “other” column.

1569 Column Six
1570 Describe briefly how we were at fault, capturing the essence of the situation in just a few words.

1575 Column Seven
1576 Describe briefly how we will handle similar situations in the future.

1577 The Big Book has a suggestion about how we might want to conduct ourselves in our future relationships. On page 69, reread the paragraph beginning “In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal….” We pray and ask for God’s or HP’s guidance.

37 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Sex Conduct Worksheet Examples

“Some of our actions will be painful for us to recall, but we write them down anyway. When we face the guilt that truthfully tells us, ’You made a mistake,’ we’re freed of shame that falsely tells us ’you are a mistake’” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 43).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who did I hurt?</td>
<td>Was I:</td>
<td>Did I unjustifiably arouse:</td>
<td>Who else was hurt, if anyone?</td>
<td>What character defect/trait triggered my action?</td>
<td>How was I at fault?</td>
<td>In the future...</td>
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<td>Glenn</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Glenn’s friend</td>
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<td>My wife</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Jane, the kids, and I</td>
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Sex Conduct Worksheet

“Some of our actions will be painful for us to recall, but we write them down anyway. When we face the guilt that truthfully tells us, ‘You made a mistake,’ we’re freed of shame that falsely tells us ‘you are a mistake’” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 43).

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<td><strong>What character defect/trait triggered my action?</strong></td>
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Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet Guidelines

Column One
List each instance of remorse or guilt we have been carrying, often for years.
Remember this is a list of people we have actually harmed in some way, not a list of people we don’t like. We review our Resentments, Fears, and Sex Conduct Worksheets to find names we need to list here. We may also want to briefly review the questions in the OA Twelve and Twelve to help our memory (pp. 34-43).

Column Two
Describe briefly what we did or failed to do. Choose a few words to capture the essence of the situation and move on.

Column Three
Indicate with a check mark one or more aspects of self we were trying to protect or benefit.
If we check more than one, circle the one that was the driving force in this situation.
Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns.

Column Four
Indicate with a check mark one or more character defects or thoughts that triggered our reactions to each situation.
If we check more than one, circle the one that was the driving force in this situation.
Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns. Use the “other” column to write in another trait that is more appropriate.

After discussing it with our sponsor, use the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet not only for Steps Four and Five but also for Steps Six through Nine as we ask our Higher Power to remove our character defects and to prepare us to make amends. We might also want to discuss with our sponsor what we could have done differently.
**Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet Examples**

“We’ve lied to ourselves about our other problems, too, denying that we’ve made mistakes, that we’ve been wrong about things, that we need to change. We must change if we are to recover” (*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 30).

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<td>What did I do or fail to do?</td>
<td>What aspect of self did I seek to protect or benefit?</td>
<td>What character defect/trait triggered my action?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A girl at school</td>
<td>I flushed her clothes down the toilet during gym.</td>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sylvia</td>
<td>She loaned me a book and I didn’t return it.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>Johnny</td>
<td>I started a fight with him because he was the teacher’s favorite.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My church community</td>
<td>Haven’t done my fair share of volunteering.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My husband</td>
<td>Spent too much money.</td>
<td>+</td>
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</table>
Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet

“We’ve lied to ourselves about our other problems, too, denying that we’ve made mistakes, that we’ve been wrong about things, that we need to change. We must change if we are to recover” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 30).

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<td></td>
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<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
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☐ **Closing (2 minutes)**

**LEADER**

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

*Leader and participants say ______.*

**LEADER READS**

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Four: Session Two of Three Homework

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

- Call a sponsor or partner in recovery if stuck or don’t know how to use the worksheets.
- Complete the Fears Worksheet.
- Complete the Sex Conduct Worksheet.
- Complete the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet.
Step Four: Session Three of Three

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

- Opening (15 minutes)
  - Serenity Prayer

  LEADER
  “Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

  LEADER READS
  “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.”

  - Check-in (5 minutes)

  LEADER
  “Welcome, everyone, to the ________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

  [Leader sets the timer.]

  - Meditation (3 minutes)

  LEADER
  “We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

  [Leader sets the timer.]

  - Workshop Goal

  LEADER
  “The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
• Twelve Steps (5 minutes)

LEADER

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Please open The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous to page 213. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns.”

[Volunteers read the Steps.]

☐ Summary (5 minutes)

LEADER

“To summarize our work thus far on Step Four, I’ll read the second paragraph of Step Four from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 29).

LEADER READS

“Those of us who have completed step four have found that taking this searching and fearless moral inventory was one of the most loving things we ever did for ourselves. As we took an honest look at the past, at who we’d been and what we’d done, we began to understand ourselves better. That understanding was the beginning of emotional healing. Many of us had lived our lives up to this point with a secret feeling of shame. We carried deep in our hearts the feeling that we were worthless or insignificant. Often this shame stemmed from unresolved guilt over mistakes we’d never fully dealt with. We had never faced our wrongs honestly and acknowledged them, so we were left feeling ashamed. Writing our step-four inventory enabled us to begin cleaning up the messes of the past so we could start life over, afresh.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Am I beginning to have a sense of the freedom possible when this process is complete?’ If not, please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

☐ Reading and Group Discussion of Other Problem Areas (20 minutes)

LEADER

“In this, the last of three sessions planned for Step Four, we will look at other problem areas in our lives that have caused us to feel shame, guilt, or discomfort. We’ll also examine old beliefs about ourselves that we’ve carried with us for far too long. Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 43. We’ll take turns reading one paragraph at a time. May I have
a volunteer to start reading, beginning with ‘After writing our inventory, …’ and continuing to the end of the chapter (p. 44)?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Let’s discuss how to balance the desire for thoroughness, which can be another name for perfectionism, versus the advantage of finishing our inventory in the time we have. It may help to remember that in this workshop, in addition to working on our inventory, we are learning the process of self-examination. No doubt we will repeat the Fourth Step in the future. Completing it now will help us recall how to do that. In addition, we will apply this process in the Step Ten Session when we learn how to take a Spot-check Inventory.

“We have ten minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA Twelve and Twelve to page 48. May I have a volunteer to start reading, beginning with ‘Now let’s ponder the need.…’ through ‘These are the first fruits of Step Four’ at the top of page 50?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Let’s discuss how we think doing a Fourth Step Inventory will help us change for the better.

“We have five minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

Instructions for Completing the Other Problem Areas Worksheet (20 minutes)

LEADER

“Here are the Other Problem Areas Worksheets and Examples, as well as the guidelines for this topic. There are two copies of the Other Problem Areas Worksheet. We will use one as practice shortly.”

[Leader sets the timer for five minutes to hand out materials and review the guidelines and worksheets.]
“May I have a volunteer to read the Other Problem Areas Worksheet Guidelines?”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read the introductory quote and headings on the Other Problem Areas Worksheet?”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“Now may I have a volunteer to read some of the entries on the Other Problem Areas Worksheet Examples? Please choose the ones that appeal to you the most.”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“Are there any questions or discussion about this worksheet?

“Please take five minutes to write about one or more problem areas that are causing discomfort.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Pair up with another person in the workshop, and for the next five minutes, take turns sharing about how you completed the Other Problem Areas Worksheet.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Now that we’ve started to use this worksheet, let’s take five minutes for questions or to discuss the process in general.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“After the Seventh Tradition and a break, we will work on the Old Beliefs Worksheets.”
Reading and Group Discussion of Old Beliefs, Patterns, and Labels (15 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Four. Over the years, we have accumulated many negative ideas about ourselves. These ideas may be in the form of beliefs that we have about ourselves or names we may call ourselves, such as stupid, lazy, slob, or liar. If we are to recover, we must not shy away from examining the accuracy of these beliefs or names, which may have been with us since early childhood. May I have a volunteer to read June 10 from Voices of Recovery on page 162?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“How can we move from feelings of shame about ourselves to a life of abstinence and recovery?

“We have five minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]
“Please open *For Today* to September 21 on page 265. May I have a volunteer to read this page?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“What can we hope to achieve by shining a light on our old beliefs?

“We have five minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐  Instructions for Completing the Old Beliefs Worksheet (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Here are the Old Beliefs Worksheets and Examples for working with old beliefs, patterns, and labels as well as the guidelines for this topic. There are two copies of the Old Beliefs Worksheet. We will use one as practice.”

[Leader sets the timer for five minutes to hand out materials and review the guidelines and worksheets.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to begin reading the Old Beliefs Worksheet Guidelines? Please take turns reading one paragraph at a time.”

[Volunteers read from the guidelines.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read the introductory quote and the headings on the Old Beliefs Worksheet?”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“Now may I have a volunteer to read two or three examples from the Old Beliefs Worksheet Examples?”

[Volunteer reads from the worksheet.]

LEADER

“Are there any questions or discussion about this worksheet?”
“Please take five minutes to write about two or more old beliefs, patterns, or labels that you have carried with you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]  

LEADER  

“Pair up with another person in the workshop, and for the next five minutes, take turns sharing what you’ve written during this exercise.”

[Leader sets the timer.]  

LEADER  

“Now that we have begun to fill out this worksheet, let’s take five minutes for questions or to discuss the process in general.”

[Leader sets the timer.]  

☐ Abstinence Check-in  

LEADER  

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ Homework Assignments

39 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“Before our next session, please complete the Other Problem Areas and Old Beliefs Worksheets. Make extra copies of the worksheets as needed. One of our old labels might be 'I never finish anything!' If so, begin to affirm something like 'I finish whatever I start in a timely way.' In addition, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove this character defect (old label), and then act as if it has been removed: Stay in action and complete our inventory.”

Remember to pray, talk with a sponsor, make outreach calls, attend meetings, and generally support your program during this process. If perfectionism and procrastination are among our character defects, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove them, and then, if necessary, act as if they’ve been removed. Keep moving forward!”
Other Problem Areas Worksheet Guidelines

Experience has shown that some of us have other behaviors, such as overspending, people-pleasing, being late, or collecting clutter, that cause problems in our lives and have not been included in the other parts of our inventory. This worksheet provides us with the opportunity to further unburden ourselves.

Column One
List any other behaviors that create problems in our life.

Column Two
Indicate with a check mark one or more aspects of self we were seeking to protect or benefit by this behavior.

If we check more than one, circle the one that is the driving force for this behavior. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns.

Column Three
Indicate with a check mark one or more character defects or thoughts that triggered our actions.

If we check more than one, circle the one that is the driving force for this behavior. Circling one, or even two on occasion, does not mean the others are not important. We are looking for general patterns. List other traits that are more appropriate in the “other” column.

Column Four
Briefly describe what alternative behavior would be more constructive.
“Our past problems have been controlling our actions and feelings for years, often in ways of which we are not aware. As we face the problems, they lose their power to overwhelm and control us. The chains of self-obsession drop from us one by one, and we are able to know and do our Higher Power’s will more easily, without the need to protect ourselves from uncomfortable feelings by eating compulsively” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>These behaviors create problems in my life:</th>
<th>What aspect of self am I seeking to protect or benefit?</th>
<th>What character defect/attribute triggers my action?</th>
<th>What behavior would be more constructive?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One or more areas in my home are so cluttered I am embarrassed to have people visit.</td>
<td>Ambition: +, Pride: +, Relationships: +, Security: +, Self Esteem: +, Dishonesty: +, Expectations: +, Greed/Envy: +, Fear: +, Low Self Esteem: +, Self Centeredness: +, Other: +</td>
<td>Sloth, lack of discipline, poor time management</td>
<td>Plan time to clean up and do it regularly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Problem Areas Worksheet

“Our past problems have been controlling our actions and feelings for years, often in ways of which we are not aware. As we face the problems, they lose their power to overwhelm and control us. The chains of self-obsession drop from us one by one, and we are able to know and do our Higher Power’s will more easily, without the need to protect ourselves from uncomfortable feelings by eating compulsively” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 30)

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<th>These behaviors create problems in my life:</th>
<th>What aspect of self am I seeking to protect or benefit?</th>
<th>What character defect/trait triggers my action?</th>
<th>What behavior would be more constructive?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
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</thead>
</table>
Old Beliefs Worksheet Guidelines

“Working this program helps me ... to cut away old beliefs so that new truths may be revealed and a light and useful spirit may grow strong” (For Today, p. 265).

When we react with anger, fear, or jealousy to a particular event, our reaction is based on our belief about the event and how the world works. For example, if my boss criticizes me I may feel like a complete failure, like my job is in jeopardy, or stupid for not knowing how to do the job as expected. Or, I may listen calmly, listening for how I can do my job better, pointing out good reasons for my choices, feeling confident that my boss likes me and in my general capability.

The different reactions stem from what I believe about myself before the event happened. If my old belief is that I am not smart enough or that my boss doesn't like fat people and doesn't give me enough credit or that I am not worthy to have this job to begin with, I may overreact and feel devastated as described. Or, if I generally like myself and am confident in my abilities, I can handle the criticism, learning from it or discounting it based on its merit and not taking it as a personal attack.

Review the examples provided and then revisit the other worksheets looking for patterns. We ask ourselves:

• Have I frequently felt like a victim?
• Do I often feel worthless?
• Do I feel ashamed without a specific reason?
• Do I think I am a bad parent? Or bad friend?
• Do I feel safe in the world generally?
• Do I frequently have trouble with authority figures?

Review the items where people did not meet our expectations.

• Do I expect special treatment?
• Do I believe people should do what I suggest, like the actor who wants to run the whole show as described in the Big Book39 on pages 60 and 61?

What else? Look for the beliefs that support or drive those patterns. Labels, or how we talk about ourselves, often capture our beliefs. For example, do we frequently hear ourselves saying one or more of the following?

• “I never remember names.”
• “I am not a good mother.”
• “I don’t deserve...”

39 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
• “I’m shy and have a hard time making friends.”
• “I can’t lose weight.”
• “I always get lost.”
• “I always mess up.”

There are many possibilities.

Our beliefs provide the criteria by which we judge events. It’s as if we are wearing glasses and see the world through those lenses. The lenses may be “lack of self-worth” in some or all areas, “prejudice toward one or more groups,” or “fear about our experience in the world,” to name just a few. Looking at our underlying beliefs is an important aspect of our house cleaning.

Following are the guidelines for completing the Old Beliefs Worksheet.

**Column One**

List all old beliefs, patterns, or labels we have about ourselves.

**Column Two**

Briefly describe what happens based on that belief, pattern, or label.

**Column Three**

Write an affirmation about a new belief, pattern, or label, to replace the limiting one, based on our new understanding. On page 354 in *For Today*, December 19 provides an example:

“Believe that you can be abstinent. You will be. Believe that you can have
sanity, peace of mind and freedom to live the life you want. You will have
them. Believe that you will recover. You will.

For today: I affirm that I have within me all I need to live an abstinent, sober
life; and I believe that life is very much worth living.”

In a later Step, we ask God or HP to remove the old beliefs, patterns, and labels just like we will our other character defects. The affirmation here begins the footwork.
### Old Beliefs Worksheet Examples

“Working this program helps me distinguish what I no longer need from what is important, to cut away old beliefs so that new truths may be revealed and a light and useful spirit may grow strong” (For Today, p. 265).

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old belief about myself:</strong></td>
<td><strong>What happens because of it:</strong></td>
<td><strong>New truth:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not worthy.</td>
<td>I don’t defend myself when I’m treated poorly. I don’t take care of myself, like buying nice clothes or good food. Or sometimes, I go to the other extreme, buying what I can’t afford to show I am worthy.</td>
<td>I like myself unconditionally, just because I exist. “Feeling good about myself is the most basic requirement of happiness. It is liking myself unconditionally, feeling worthwhile just because I exist. My worth is determined by me and has nothing to do with public acclaim, the number of people I know or the size and decibel of the parties I attend” (For Today, p. 36).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I express my feelings, people won’t like me. Safer to go along with what they want.</td>
<td>When asked what restaurant or movie I prefer, I defer to what everyone else wants without saying what I want and often do what I don’t really enjoy. Or, I don’t say I don’t like the gossip or racist jokes that are being told.</td>
<td>I say what I mean and mean what I say, without being mean. “Being honest and open with friends and family is a sign of growth” (For Today, p. 116).</td>
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<td>The world is not a safe place.</td>
<td>I don’t go out at night or visit new places by myself and miss many interesting experiences. I restrict my own life.</td>
<td>I will take precautions and open myself to new experiences. “I have the strength to walk through my fears, to take a chance on a new way of life” (For Today, p. 99).</td>
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<td>Women/men can’t be trusted.</td>
<td>I overreact to comments because I assume that people will hurt me. I have few close friends.</td>
<td>Most people are trustworthy.</td>
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<td>I am not smart.</td>
<td>Even though I have a master’s degree, I do not feel smart and, therefore, can take offense at what people say or not apply for jobs because I think I’m not smart enough.</td>
<td>I am a smart person—not as smart as some, but smarter than others. I am enough.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't do enough.</td>
<td>I'll never get everything done that I have to do. I'm always in a rush and I feel exasperated.</td>
<td>I do enough.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I never have enough.</td>
<td>I can never eat enough to satisfy myself. I overspend on clothes because I never have enough clothes to satisfy me. I want to control everything so that I get more of everything. I hoard stuff.</td>
<td>I have enough food, clothes, and everything because my Higher Power satisfies my needs.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“Working this program helps me distinguish what I no longer need from what is important, to cut away old beliefs so that new truths may be revealed and a light and useful spirit may grow strong” (*For Today*, p. 265).

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Step Four: Session Three of Three Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Action

- Call a sponsor or partner in recovery if stuck or don’t know how to use the worksheets.
- Complete the Other Problem Areas Worksheet.
- Complete the Old Beliefs Worksheet.

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Five Session

- OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Five (pp. 45-52)
- AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Five (pp. 55-62)
- Big Book, “Into Action” (pp. 72-75)

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40 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

41 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
☐ **Closing** (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say _______.]

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
**Step Five Session**

Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

☐ **Opening (15 minutes)**

- Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Please open The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous to page 213. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns.”

[Volunteers read the Steps.]

☐ Summary

LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Four, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step Four from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 44).

LEADER READS

“Each of us who completes a fourth-step inventory in OA finds it essential to our recovery and a major factor in changing our lives. As we reach the end of step four, we discover that a promise made in Overeaters Anonymous’s ‘Our Invitation to You’43 has begun to be fulfilled. We are ‘moving beyond the food and the emotional havoc to a fuller living experience.’”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Four? Have I made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

☐ Reading and Group Discussion of Step Five (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Five: ‘Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

43 Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition (p. 1)
"Please open the Big Book\textsuperscript{44} to page 72. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning with
'Having made our personal inventory, ...' through ‘... until they told someone else all their
life story' on page 73?"

\begin{flushright}
[Volunteer reads the passage.]
\end{flushright}

\textbf{LEADER}

"In what ways is Step Five important and how will it benefit us?"

"We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as
many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?"

\begin{flushright}
[Leader sets the timer.]
\end{flushright}

\textbf{LEADER}

"Please open the OA \textit{Twelve and Twelve} to page 48. May I have a volunteer to read,
beginning with ‘It is important that we choose....’ through ‘... in a way we have not been
since childhood’ on page 50? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs."

\begin{flushright}
[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]
\end{flushright}

\textbf{LEADER}

"What thoughts do you have on who to choose and on the actual process of doing the Fifth
Step?"

"We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as
many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?"

\begin{flushright}
[Leader sets the timer.]
\end{flushright}

\textbf{LEADER}

"The Big Book provides an apt passage describing what to do after we give away our Fifth
Step. Please open the Big Book to page 75 and follow along as I read, beginning with
‘Returning home we find a place....’ through ‘We then look at \textit{Step Six}’ at the top of page 76."

\begin{flushright}
[Leader reads the passage.]
\end{flushright}

\textbf{LEADER}

"We may also want to review the OA \textit{Twelve and Twelve} on this topic (pp. 51-52). After the
break, we’ll read from \textit{Voices of Recovery}, which refers to this passage."

\textsuperscript{44} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for
the Fourth Edition.
Reading and Writing on Step Five from *For Today* and *Voices of Recovery* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Five. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read March 20 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 80?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read June 19 from *For Today* on page 171?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

☐ **Abstinence** Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ **Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

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45 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
Step Five Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Action

- Make an appointment with a sponsor or another person to hear our Fifth Step.
- Meet with that person and complete Step Five.

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Six Session

- OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Six (pp. 53-58)
- AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Six (pp. 63-69)
- Big Book, chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “Returning home ...” through “... us be willing” (pp. 75-76)

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46 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

47 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Six Session

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Opening (15 minutes)

- Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power's guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
To summarize our work on Step Five, I’ll read an excerpt of the last two paragraphs of Step Five from the OA *Twelve and Twelve*” (pp. 51-52).

As we complete step five, we may feel many emotions, among them humility, elation, and relief. We often feel nearer ... to our Higher Power and more loving and trusting of other people.... In the process of sharing our inventory we have become more honest with ourselves and others than we have ever been before. Honesty is a key factor in our recovery from compulsive eating, and so we will want to develop this trait. The best way to do so is to continue working the twelve steps.... From this point on, we begin to leave behind the character defects which have caused us so many problems in the past.”

We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Five? Have I admitted the exact nature of my wrongs to myself and my Higher Power and admitted and discussed them with another human being?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after we close this session.”

We will now begin our work on Step Six: ‘Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.’

We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.
“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 53. May I have a volunteer to read the first three paragraphs of the Step, beginning with ‘At first glance ..’ through ‘... the defects themselves?’”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“What is the difference between saying we’re entirely ready and being entirely ready?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA Twelve and Twelve to page 66. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning with ‘What we must recognize....’ through ‘... excessive misery’ at the bottom of page 67? Please take turns reading a paragraph each.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Our character defects do something for us, which is why we hang on to them. What are some character defects that we’d rather keep?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐ Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are _______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need _______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

☐ Break (10 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Six. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we'll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read November 3 from For Today on page 308?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read August 3 from Voices of Recovery on page 216?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

☐ Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ **Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”
Step Six Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as you need on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will prepare you to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share your homework between sessions with your sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

Writing

- Review OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Six, beginning with “Even when we do ...” through “We can’t do it alone” (p. 55).
- How have I been unsuccessful at removing my character defects?
- Review AA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Six, beginning with “So Step Six ...” through “Where do we stand?” (pp. 65-66).
- How do I know that I am now entirely ready to have God or HP remove all of my defects of character?

Action

- Review all the character defects/traits I identified in Steps Four and Five.
- Make a list of them in preparation for Step Seven. Our character defects do something for us, which is why we hang on to them. Are there any character defects I’d still like to keep? If so, pray for clarity about how each affects my life. Then pray for the willingness to be entirely ready to have them all removed.
- Review the list and ask if it is complete to the best of my knowledge at this time. If not, add whatever needs to be added.

Reading Assignments for the Step Seven Session

- OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Seven (pp. 59-66)
- AA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Seven (pp. 70-76)
- Big Book\(^{50}\), chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “If we can answer ...” through “… completed Step Seven” (p. 76)

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\(^{49}\) OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

\(^{50}\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Seven Session

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Opening (15 minutes)

- Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

- Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

- Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
• Twelve Steps (5 minutes)

LEADER

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Please open The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous to page 213. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns.”

[Volunteers read the Steps.]

2096 □ Summary

2097 LEADER

2098 “To summarize our work on Step Six, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step Six from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 58).

2100 LEADER READS

2101 “As with the five earlier steps, our rewards when we’ve taken step six are great. Although we may not realize it at first, our commitment to embrace the needed changes in ourselves has given us an extraordinary power to deal with life’s challenges. No longer do we go through life clinging desperately to the past, resistant to change. From now on, we will strive to keep ourselves entirely ready for any transformations our Higher Power wants to bring about in us. Having such an attitude, we cannot fail. We will become wiser, saner, more effective people as we recover from the disease of compulsive eating. We’ll find we can cope with both good times—and bad, learning and growing spiritually from each experience, as our Higher Power intended us to do all along.”

2112 LEADER

2113 “We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Six? Am I entirely ready to have God or HP remove all my defects of character?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

2116 □ Reading and Group Discussion of Step Seven (up to 45 minutes)

2117 LEADER

2118 “We will now begin our work on Step Seven: ‘Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.’

2120 “We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.
“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 60. May I have a volunteer to read the second paragraph, starting with ‘If we have earnestly ...’ through ‘... status-seeking, and self-righteousness’ on page 62? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Why is humility necessary to complete Step Seven?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA Twelve and Twelve to page 73. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning with ‘When we have finally ...’ and continuing through ‘... which can give us serenity’ on page 74? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“How can humility bring about serenity?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are [specific amount for this workshop]. We need [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

Break (10 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Reading and Writing on Step Seven from *Voices of Recovery* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Seven. We will now read passages from one of our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read July 1 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 183?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read July 2 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 184?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

☐ Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

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51 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

Homework Assignments (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”
Step Seven Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Writing

☐ Review OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Seven beginning with “First, we are not ...” through “... help can I change” (pp. 60-61).

☐ Describe how I will work toward achieving humility with regard to my character defects.

☐ Action

☐ Reread OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Seven beginning with “How do we complete step seven?” through “We have taken step seven” (pp. 62-63).

☐ Refer to the list of character defects/traits I compiled in Step Six. Humbly ask my Higher Power to remove them, one at a time, as described in the OA *Twelve and Twelve*.

☐ Memorize the Seventh Step Prayer found on page tbd of this guide and page 76 in the Big Book.* Or create and memorize a similar prayer for myself.

☐ Follow the suggestions given on page 64 of the OA *Twelve and Twelve*: Visualize how I will be without each particular defect. In the days and weeks ahead, when previously troubling incidents arise, pause before reacting, ask my Higher Power for guidance, and practice handling them differently.

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Eight Session**

☐ OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Eight (pp. 67-73)

☐ AA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Eight (pp. 77-82)

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* In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

** OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)
  • Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the ________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Seven, I’ll read the last paragraph of Step Seven from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (pp. 65-66).

LEADER READS

“Repeated practice of step seven enables us to form a working partnership with our Higher Power through which we are relieved of the defects which have blocked our effectiveness in the world. As we gain new humility and ever greater freedom from our character defects, God’s power flows more surely and freely through us, bringing healing to others as well as ourselves, and drawing to us all the things we once fought so hard to attain: self-esteem, a feeling of usefulness, joy, strength to surmount difficulties, fellowship, and love. Our simple prayers, humbly spoken, are answered in wonderful ways as we open our lives to God’s transforming power, and we find that God does for us what we could never do for ourselves.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Seven? Have I humbly and sincerely asked my Higher Power to remove my defects of character?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

☐ Reading and Group Discussion of Step Eight (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Eight: ‘Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

☐ Twelve Steps (5 minutes)

LEADER

“To help us focus on our work, we will now read the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous. Please open The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous to page 213. May I have a volunteer to begin reading? Please take turns.”

[Volunteers read the Steps.]
“Please open the AA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 80. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning with ‘We might next ask ... ’ through the end of the Step on page 82? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

**LEADER**

“Refer to the list of more subtle harms described on page 81. Which ones do I most readily relate to as harmful to myself and others? It might be helpful to refer to the Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet completed in Step Four.

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

**LEADER**

“Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 67. May I have a volunteer to read, starting with ‘Clearly, ... ’ through ‘ ... mercy and forgiveness’ on page 69? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

**LEADER**

“As the chapter states, our own names have to be somewhere near the top of the list (p.69). In what ways have I caused myself harm?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]
LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Eight. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read August 1 from Voices of Recovery on page 214?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read August 30 from For Today on page 243?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

☐ **A**bstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ **H**omework Assignments (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

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54 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
Step Eight Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

 Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

Writing

- Review AA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Eight beginning with “These obstacles, however, are very real...” through “...forgetting our own.” Identify any obstacles that still obstruct my willingness to make amends” (p. 78).

Action

- Refer to my Step Four Inventory worksheets. Consider the readings we discussed in our session. Is my list complete? Am I willing to make amends to them all? If not, identify the ones I am not willing to make amends to and discuss with my sponsor or partner in recovery. Pray for the willingness to make amends to them all.

- Is forgiveness of one or more individuals or situations an issue for me? If it is, I can begin by praying for the willingness to forgive and then progress to actually forgiving each individually, perhaps by following the suggestion in the story “Freedom from Bondage” in the Big Book (pp. 544-552).

Reading Assignments for the Step Nine Session

- OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Nine (pp. 75-81)
- AA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Nine (pp. 83-87)
- Big Book, chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “Now we need more action....” through “We work for them” (pp. 76-84)

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55 In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

56 OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
Step Nine Session

Made direct amends wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)
  • Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“Summary

To summarize our work on Step Eight, I will read the last paragraph of Step Eight from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 73).

LEADER READS

“As much as we might like to, we cannot skip the making of amends. The experience of OAs who have worked the steps before us shows that recovery depends on completing steps eight and nine. With this in mind, we turn once more to God, asking for the willingness to do the things we fear, to make the amends we owe. Having said this prayer sincerely, we are now willing, and we move quickly ahead to step nine.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Eight? Have I listed all people I have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

Reading and Group Discussion of Step Nine (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Nine: ‘Made direct amends wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 76. May I have a volunteer to read, starting with ‘Our sponsors will probably remind us....’ through ‘ ... hurts of the past’ at the top of page 79? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“What is meant by ‘We must let go of any expectations we may have’ (p. 76)? What expectations do I have about making amends?"
“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book\textsuperscript{57} to page 77. May I have a volunteer to read, starting from the last paragraph with ‘Under no condition ...’ through ‘... gratified with the result’ on page 78?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Why is it important to focus on our own actions that require amends?

“We have fifteen minutes to share. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

☐ Reading and Writing on Step Nine from Voices of Recovery and For Today (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Nine. We will now read passages from our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we'll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read March 8 from Voices of Recovery on page 68?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

☐ Contributions (3 minutes)

LEADER

“According to our Seventh Tradition, we are self-supporting. Our costs for this workshop are ______ [specific amount for this workshop]. We need ______ [specific amount] to cover costs. Please give as generously as you can.”

[Leader passes the basket.]

\textsuperscript{57} In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Break (10 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now take a ten minute break. Please return to your seats promptly when you hear the timer.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

May I have a volunteer to read January 18 from For Today on page 18?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

Abstinence Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

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58 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.

☐ **Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

**LEADER**

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

**LEADER**

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

☐ **Closing** (2 minutes)

**LEADER**

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say ________.]

**LEADER READS**

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Nine Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as you need on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will prepare you to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share your homework between sessions with your sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Writing

- “OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Nine from the beginning of the Step through ‘... toward them in the future’ (pp. 75-76).
- Why is it important to take Step Nine?
- What is the difference between making apologies and making amends?
- What amends do I need to make to each person on my list?

☐ Action

- Review the list I made in Step Eight. Choose at least three people that I am willing to make amends to now. Beside each name, write how I plan to make amends. Ask myself if these are true amends or merely an apology. Making true amends implies forgiveness of both myself and the other person. Before making amends, share what I plan to do with a sponsor or partner in recovery.
- Now it is time for the vital Step Nine. Make the amends I have discussed. Once I have completed one amend, share the experience with my sponsor or partner in recovery.
- We probably won’t finish all our amends before our next session, but keep going. The Big Book\(^5^9\) tells us “We will be amazed before we are halfway through” (p. 83).

☐ Reading Assignments for the Step Ten Session\(^6^0\)

- OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Ten (pp. 83-90)
- AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Ten (pp. 88-95)

\(^5^9\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

\(^6^0\) OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
Big Book\textsuperscript{61}, chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “This thought brings us …” through “ … more action” (pp. 84-85).\footnote{\textsuperscript{61} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.}
Step Ten Session

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

☐ Opening (15 minutes)
  • Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.’ Based on the experience of recovering OA members, the way out of despair and hopelessness into a life beyond our wildest dreams is through working the Twelve Steps. Together we can do what we could never do alone.”
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Nine, I’ll read the second to the last paragraph of Step Nine from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (pp. 80-81).

LEADER READS

“If we are to be restored to right relations with others, we must do whatever we can to square things with the people we have harmed. Much of what we need to do in order to make amends won’t be easy, but those who have gone through with step nine have always found it to be more than worth the effort. When we finish our amends most of us feel closer to our Higher Power than ever before. As we have dealt lovingly with every person in our lives, our spiritual awakening has become a reality. To the best of our ability, we've cleaned up the wreckage of the past, and we are at peace with the world.”

LEADER

“Step Nine states: ‘Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.’

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I begun making direct amends whenever possible? Am I clear that I must not make amends that will cause injury? Am I feeling any resistance to making my amends?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”
Reading and Group Discussion of Step Ten (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Ten: ‘Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.’

“The word *when* is important. It’s not *if* we were wrong. According to the Big Book\(^2\), we are fooling ourselves if we think our character defects are gone for good. Please turn to page 84 and follow along as I read the paragraph beginning with ‘This thought brings us to Step Ten....’”

[Leader reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Working Step Ten means actively working Steps Four through Nine every day, including both spot-checks throughout the day as needed and a daily review. Some believe that we only do Steps Four through Nine formally once, and then, when we take Step Ten daily, we review the concepts that are in Steps Four through Nine. We continue to take personal inventory and when we are wrong we promptly admit it or do what is necessary to make amends. We work Step Ten as a way of life. Now we’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to the beginning of Step Ten on page 83. May I have a volunteer to read from the beginning of the chapter through ‘... regain our emotional balance’ on page 84? Please follow along.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 90. May I have a volunteer to read the passage, beginning with ‘It is a spiritual axiom....’ through ‘... not for perfection’ on page 91? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“We now have fifteen minutes to discuss these passages. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

\(^2\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
“Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 85. May I have a volunteer to read the paragraph starting ‘There are many ways to take personal inventories’? Please follow along.”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

**Step Ten Spot-check** (up to 25 minutes)

“Here are the Step Ten Spot-check materials: the Step Ten Spot-check Example and two copies of the Step Ten Spot-check Worksheet. Keep a clean copy of the blank worksheet for the homework. We’ll work with the other copy now.”

[Leader hands out materials.]

“May I have two volunteers to read the Step Ten Spot-check Example? Reading row by row, one can read the left column and the other the right column.”

[Volunteers take turns reading.]

“Here are the Summary of Inventory Worksheet Headings. These headings may help us recall the inventory process we learned in working Steps Four through Nine.”

[Leader hands out the Summary of Inventory Worksheet Headings.]

“Think of a current or recent situation that disturbed you. Now take five minutes to fill in the right column, as best you can, on the Step Ten Spot-check Worksheet.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

“Turn to the person next to you and share what you wrote. Each person will have three minutes to share.”

[Leader sets the timer for six minutes.]
“We now have fifteen minutes to discuss the spot-check exercise. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Step Ten Spot-check Worksheet Examples

Step Ten is a process we use to help us continue to grow spiritually. When we work Step Ten, we actively work Steps Four through Nine. “In steps five through nine we ventured outside our isolation to share ourselves in depth with our Higher Power and with other people” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, pp. 84-85).

The past has been cleaned up. Now it’s time to practice Step Ten.

| “The purpose of Step Ten is to identify and remove from our path today’s stumbling blocks, those manifestations of pride, fear, anger, self-pity, greed, and other emotions which are bringing pain into our lives and keeping us from growing today” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 84). | Steps Four and Five: Identify and admit to God/HP, to yourself, and to another....

While I was driving my children to school, another driver cut me off. I was resentful and angry. I expected the other driver to follow my rules of the road. I feared for our lives. This threatened my security.

I overreacted. I screamed and cursed the other driver.

To myself and to my Higher Power, I mentally acknowledged my expectations, fear, anger, and overreaction. |

| In your mind, quickly go through the Step Four Inventory worksheet(s) to identify which character defects/traits triggered your reaction. Ask: “How was I hurt or threatened? What did I do or fail to do? Did I do harm? What aspect of self am I seeking to protect or benefit?” Identify and admit your part. | Remember we are only as sick as our secrets. |

| “Sometimes we’ll be caught off guard and fall back into the defective patterns, but if we persist in visualizing and practicing better ways of life, they will, with our Higher Power’s help, eventually become second nature” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 84). | Steps Six and Seven: Pray/Meditate.

God, save me from being angry.

Help me show love and tolerance.

Thank you, God, for keeping us safe.

Bless them; change me. |

| Seventh Step Prayer on page tbd of this guide and page 76 of the Big Book63. | |

63 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
| 64). | **Ask your Higher Power to remove the character defects/traits that flared up.**  
Say a prayer of your choice. |
| --- | --- |
| **“Step ten suggests that we make amends promptly, as soon as we realize someone has been wronged. By doing this, we bring a new honesty into our relationships”* (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, pp. 87-88).**  
Make amends, as needed. | **Steps Eight and Nine: Make amends.**  
Kids, I'm sorry I screamed and scared you. I love you. Are you OK? How about a hug? |
| **“Practicing the principle of love we learn to accept others as they are, not as we would have them be.... Slowly but surely we find we are establishing the best possible relationship with each person we know”* (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 105).** | **Closure: Show love and tolerance.**  
I let go and let God. I sang songs with my kids to take our minds off the scary moment and back into the present moment.  
In the future, I will strive to be more aware and alert while driving.  
When I got home, I made an outreach call. |
**Step Ten Spot-check Worksheet**

Step Ten is a process we use to help us continue to grow spiritually. When we work Step Ten, we actively work Steps Four through Nine. “In steps five through nine we ventured outside our isolation to share ourselves in depth with our Higher Power and with other people” ([The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous](http://example.com), pp. 84-85).

The past has been cleaned up. Now it’s time to practice Step Ten.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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In your mind, quickly go through the Step Four Inventory worksheet(s) to identify which character defects/traits triggered your reaction. Ask yourself: “How was I hurt or threatened? What did I do or fail to do? Did I do harm? What aspect of self am I seeking to protect or benefit?” Identify and admit your part.

Remember we are only as sick as our secrets.

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steps Six and Seven: Pray/Meditate.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask your Higher Power to remove the character defects/traits that flared up.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Say a prayer of your choice.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Step ten suggests that we make amends promptly, as soon as we realize someone has been wronged. By doing this, we bring a new honesty into our relationships” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, pp. 87-88).</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Make amends, as needed.</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

| **“Practicing the principle of love we learn to accept others as they are, not as we would have them be.... Slowly but surely we find we are establishing the best possible relationship with each person we know” (The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 105).** |
| **Closure: Show love and tolerance.** |
**Summary of Inventory Worksheet Headings Resentments and Fears**

**Resentments Worksheet**

“Anger and resentment are common manifestations of our disease. In fact, most of us ate compulsively when we felt anger or resentment. As we continue writing our inventories, it is important to list the people and institutions we’ve held grudges against” *(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 38)*.

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<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People, institutions, principles I resent:</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>What aspect of self is hurt or threatened?</td>
<td>What is my part in creating this situation?</td>
<td>What character defect/trait triggers my reaction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Greed/Envy</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Low Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fears Worksheet**

“As we take inventory we also look at our fears. For many of us, fear, worry, and anxiety have played a key role in our lives, robbing us of joy and keeping us from fulfilling our dreams” *(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 37)*.

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<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who or what am I afraid of?</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>What aspect of self feels threatened?</td>
<td>What is my part in creating or maintaining this situation?</td>
<td>What character trait/defect triggers my action?</td>
<td>What would my Higher Power have me be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Summary of Inventory Worksheet Headings Sex Conduct and Harms

**Sex Conduct Worksheet**
“Some of our actions will be painful for us to recall, but we write them down anyway. When we face the guilt that truthfully tells us, ‘You made a mistake,’ we’re freed of shame that falsely tells us, ‘you are a mistake’” *(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 43)*.

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<th>7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who did I hurt?</td>
<td>Was I:</td>
<td>Did I unjustifiably arouse:</td>
<td>Who else was hurt, if anyone?</td>
<td>What character defect/trait triggered my action?</td>
<td>How was I at fault?</td>
<td>In the future...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Harms (Guilt and Remorse) Worksheet**
“We’ve lied to ourselves about our other problems, too, denying that we’ve made mistakes, that we’ve been wrong about things, that we need to change. We must change if we are to recover” *(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p.30)*.

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<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who or what did I harm?</td>
<td>What did I do or fail to do?</td>
<td>What aspect of self did I seek to protect or benefit?</td>
<td>What character defect/trait triggered my action?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Ten. Let’s continue by learning how to write a daily review. As we read on page 86 in the OA Twelve and Twelve, ‘A more leisurely and careful analysis than the spot-check inventory, a daily inventory may be written or done mentally. Its purpose is to reveal those areas in which we’re having difficulties in our daily lives and help us determine what we can do about them.’

“There are many ways to practice Step Ten. We suggest a daily written review of what went well and what didn’t go well.

“We have learned from experience to promptly take inventory when our self-centeredness, fears, and resentments appear. If we don’t, they will cause us misery and loss of abstinence64. Living life in fear and resentment indicates a return to lack of conscious contact with our Higher Power, to willfulness, and to the unmanageability of our lives.

64 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
We also use our daily review to notice that we are outgrowing our self-hatred and lack of self-esteem. We acknowledge the thoughts, feelings, and actions generated by our strengths and our increasing reliance on our Higher Power.

“We can open our review with a prayer, asking our Higher Power for honesty and guidance. We can express gratitude for the blessings in our lives—especially conscious contact with a loving Higher Power. We can close by praying for forgiveness for ourselves and others, release from the character defects/traits that cause us problems, and willingness to continue growing in our program.

“It doesn’t matter where we write our daily review—just that we develop a practice to do it.”

☐ **Step Ten Daily Review** (up to 25 minutes)

**LEADER**

“Doing a Step Ten Daily Review helps us continue to deal with life on life’s terms without picking up the food. Here are the Step Ten Daily Review materials—two copies of the Step Ten Daily Review and a Self-Will / HP’s or God’s Will table. Keep a clean copy of the blank worksheet for the homework. We’ll work with the other copy now. You may find the table helpful as you review the day.”

[Leader hands out the materials.]

**LEADER**

“May I have a volunteer to read the Step Ten Daily Review? Please follow along.”

[Volunteer reads the Step Ten Daily Review.]

**LEADER**

“Reflecting on the day that has just passed, take five minutes using this worksheet to write a review.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

**LEADER**

“We now have ten minutes to share on this Step Ten Daily Review exercise. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]
LEADER

“Thank you for sharing. Longtime OA members with many years of recovery embrace the daily practice of Step Ten. They find it helpful and even vital to discuss this work with their sponsor or other OA members. In closing, I will read the rewards the Big Book promises—if we keep practicing Step Ten for a lifetime. Please turn to page 84 and follow along, beginning with “And we have ceased fighting ...” through “... fit spiritual condition” on page 85.

[Leader reads the passage.]

65 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Ten Daily Review

Date: ________ Sun Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gratitude—today I thank my Higher Power for:</th>
<th>Some things I like about myself are:</th>
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Today was I:

Resentful?

Selfish?

Dishonest?

Jealous?

Fearful? (Of losing something? Of not getting what I want? Of being found out?)

Restless, irritable, or discontented?

Was I kind and loving toward all?

Do I owe an amends?

What did I do for others?

What could I have done better?

What did I do well?
Refer to the prayer process described in “Freedom from Bondage” in the Big Book 66 (p. 552) and the Self-Will / HP's or God's Will handout to complete the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>God/HP, grant me freedom from:</th>
<th>And replace it with:</th>
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</table>

God/HP, I pray/wish for the health, prosperity, happiness, and well-being of:

All the things I want for myself, I pray/wish will also be given to this person.

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66 In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Self-Will / HP’s or God’s Will

May also be thought of as: Character Defect / Character Asset

Liability / Asset

Self-Defeating / Life Affirming

Dishonesty * Honesty
Fear * Faith/Trust in HP or God
Selfishness/Self-seeking * Interest in Others/Altruism
Self-centered * Love-centered/HP- or God-centered
Inconsiderate * Considerate
Pride * Humility/Seeking HP’s or God’s Will
Greed * Giving/Sharing
Lustful Thoughts * Respectful Thoughts
Anger * Serenity/Acceptance
Envy * Gratitude
Judgment * Acceptance
Sloth/Procrastination * Taking Right Action
Gluttony * Moderation
Impatience * Patience
Intolerance * Tolerance
Resentment * Forgiveness
Hate * Love/Concern for Others
Harmful Acts * Good Deeds
Self-pity * Gratitude
Self-justification * Humility/Truth
Self-importance * Modesty
Self-condemnation * Self-forgiveness
Suspicion/Jealousy * Trust
Doubt * Faith/Trust in HP or God
☐ Abstinence\(^{67}\) Check-in

LEADER

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

☐ Homework Assignments (5 minutes to hand out homework)

LEADER

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

LEADER

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

---

\(^{67}\) The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
CLOSING (2 minutes)

LEADER

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say ________.]  

LEADER READS

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Ten Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Writing

- How will actively working Step Ten every day expand my spiritual life and support long-term abstinence\(^{68}\)?
- Review the OA *Twelve and Twelve*, Step Ten:
  - Beginning with “In taking daily inventory, ...” through “... allowing wounds to fester” (pp. 87-88).
  - Beginning with “A persistent effort to let go of our defects ...” through “... whatever we can to change” (p. 89).
  - Beginning with “As we repeatedly act on step ten ...” through the end of the chapter (pp. 89-90).
- What actions do I see myself taking to practice Step Ten?

☐ Action

- For guidance in working Step Ten, read the Big Book\(^{69}\), chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “This thought brings us to Step Ten....” through “... is our code” (p. 84).
- Choose a time and place to write a Step Ten Daily Review. Make copies of the Step Ten Daily Review so I can fill out one each day for the rest of the workshop. Doing so will help me establish a vital lifetime practice.

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\(^{68}\) The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)

\(^{69}\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
• As soon as I get an uncomfortable feeling—anger, fear, hurt, and so on—take a Step Ten Spot-check Inventory. As I process my feelings, refer to the Step Ten Spot-check Worksheet and to the Summary of Inventory Worksheet Headings, as needed. Make copies of the worksheet so I can quickly write this inventory. Practice this Spot-check Inventory for the rest of the workshop. Soon we will learn the process so well that we can quickly do it in our head.

• When taking inventory, notice which character defects/traits are involved—usually some form of selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, or fear. What do I need to do in order to be rid of the defect/trait?

• When I feel I’ve harmed someone—especially if I’m unclear about what amends to make—discuss the situation with my sponsor.

• When issues arise that need clarification during inventory, discuss them with a sponsor.

☐ **Reading Assignments for the Step Eleven Session**

- **OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Eleven** (pp. 91-98)
- **AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Eleven** (pp. 96-105)
- **Big Book**\(^71\), chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “*Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation....*” through “... way we have just outlined” (pp. 85-88).

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\(^70\) OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

\(^71\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Eleven Session

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.

Opening (15 minutes)

• Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those of who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _________ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Ten, I’ll read part of the last paragraph of Step Ten from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (pp. 89-90).

LEADER READS

“As we repeatedly act on step ten, we begin to see the remarkable way the steps will, from now on, continue to remove unnecessary turmoil and pain from our lives. The new attitudes of honesty about our problems and surrender to a Power greater than ourselves have become a part of us by now; they are the basis of every choice we make in our day-to-day lives. Reviewing our recent behavior, keeping our Higher Power in charge of our lives, asking for guidance, and promptly admitting our errors, becomes a sane and satisfying way of life—far better than nursing our fears or building a fresh set of resentments to harbor. Forced to adopt this new way of coping with life in order to recover from compulsive eating, we now find ourselves grateful for this program in its own right.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly taken Step Ten? Have I continued to take a personal inventory and when I was wrong, promptly admitted it?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

☐ Reading and Group Discussion of Step Eleven (up to 45 minutes)
“We will now begin our work on Step Eleven: ‘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 it out.’

“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

“Please open the OA Twelve and Twelve to page 91. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning at the second paragraph with ‘In OA we share a belief that ...’ through ‘... when we feel the need for guidance, strength, or serenity’ on page 93?”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“According to this passage, Step Eleven embodies freedom, action, and practice. What do each of these words mean to us in the context of this Step?”

LEADER

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the AA Twelve and Twelve to page 102. May I have a volunteer to read, beginning with ‘In the morning ...’ through ‘... intent of Step Eleven’ on page 103? Please take turns reading a few paragraphs.”

[Volunteers take turns reading the passage.]

LEADER

“What is the intent of Step Eleven and how can we practice it?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]
Reading and Writing on Step Eleven from *Voices of Recovery* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Eleven. Now we will read passages from one of our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we’ll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

“May I have a volunteer to read November 1 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 306?”

[Volunteer reads the passages.]

LEADER

“May I have a volunteer to read November 4 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 309?”

[Volunteer reads the passages.]

LEADER

“Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

[Leader sets the timer.]
“Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

[Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]

**Abstinence**

**Check-in**

“Am I abstinent today? If so, be grateful and thank your Higher Power. Your experience provides hope for us all. What am I doing to maintain my abstinence? Discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery and share the experience with another member of this workshop.

“If I am not abstinent, I will discuss this with a sponsor or partner in recovery—specifically the actions I will take to support my willingness to go to any length to recover from compulsive eating. I will ask my Higher Power for help and follow the guidance I receive. Pray/meditate; then do the footwork.”

**Homework Assignments** (5 minutes to hand out homework)

“Here are the homework assignments for the next session.”

[Leader hands out homework worksheets.]

“Let’s briefly review the homework assignments. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the homework with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop. The reading homework will prepare us to participate in our next session. We will not discuss writing or action assignments during our sessions.”

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The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
Step Eleven Session Homework and Reading for Next Session

Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

Writing

• Review the Big Book\(^{72}\), chapter 6, “Into Action,” beginning with “In thinking about our day …” through “... really does” (pp. 86-88).

• Step Eleven is about living life on a spiritual basis instead of “self-will run riot” (Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed., p. 62). What does practicing Step Eleven mean to me in thought and action?

• Refer to the OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Eleven beginning with “Step eleven implies that through our practice ...” through “... our Higher Power in the future” (pp. 97-98.)

• What are some ways in which I can begin to recognize my Higher Power’s will for me?

Action

• If I do not yet have a regular Step Eleven practice of prayer and meditation, begin. The OA Twelve and Twelve advises us about both prayer and meditation:

  “Remembering that our goal is to develop a closer conscious contact with God, prayer is simply what we do when we talk with our Higher Power ...” (p. 93) and

  “The only way to do meditation wrong is not to do it at all” (p. 96). Set aside a little time every morning, even if it is only five minutes. Allow myself to sit comfortably and quietly, and begin. Make this a daily commitment. Discuss my practice with my sponsor or partner in recovery.

Reading Assignments for the Step Twelve Session\(^{74}\)

• OA Twelve and Twelve, Step Twelve (pp. 99-106)

• AA Twelve and Twelve, Step Twelve (pp. 106-125)

\(^{72}\) In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.

\(^{74}\) OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.
• Big Book\textsuperscript{75}

• Chapter 7, “Working With Others” (pp. 89-103)

• Appendix II, “Spiritual Experience” (p. 567-568)

\textsuperscript{75} In this workshop, we refer to the book \textit{Alcoholics Anonymous} as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Twelve Session

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.

Opening (15 minutes)

• Serenity Prayer

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone. Would those who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer?”

LEADER READS

“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.”

• Check-in (5 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome, everyone, to the _______ of our Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step Workshop. Let’s do a brief check-in. Please turn to the person next to you and, in a few sentences, let’s share whatever we need to set aside about our day in order to be fully present. We have five minutes.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Meditation (3 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now meditate for three minutes, being open to our Higher Power’s guidance in our recovery.”

[Leader sets the timer.]

• Workshop Goal

LEADER

“The goal of this workshop is to help us achieve and maintain abstinence. In OA, the Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is ‘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 the
LEADER

“To summarize our work on Step Eleven, I’ll read an excerpt from the last paragraph of Step Eleven from the OA Twelve and Twelve” (p. 98).

LEADER READS

“OAs who have made prayer and meditation a regular part of their lives have found a resource for healing and strength which cannot fail.... Our Higher Power is the only source of help that is always available to us, always strong enough to lift us up and set our feet on the path of life. Prayer and meditation are our links to this unfailing source. Practiced regularly, they open our lives to the comfort we sought in food but could never find. Through prayer and meditation we align ourselves with a higher spiritual Power which gives us everything we need to live to our fullest potential.”

LEADER

“We ask ourselves: ‘Have I truly begun to take Step Eleven? Am I seeking through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God as I understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for me and the power to carry that out?’ Please share about this with a sponsor or partner in recovery after this session.”

Reading and Group Discussion of Step Twelve (up to 45 minutes)

LEADER

“We will now begin our work on Step Twelve: ‘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.’
“We’ll start by reading from our texts and discussing what we read.

Please open the OA *Twelve and Twelve* to page 99. May I have a volunteer to read, starting from the beginning of the chapter through ‘... instead of in compulsive eating’ on page 100? Please follow along.”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Have you experienced any kind of spiritual awakening? What was it like?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

LEADER

“Please open the Big Book\(^76\) to page 89. May I have a volunteer to read the first two paragraphs of the chapter, through ‘... bright spot of our lives’? Please follow along.”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

LEADER

“Think about how we have been helped by others in this program. There are many ways to help others, including sponsoring, leading a meeting, making outreach calls, and doing service beyond the group level. How do you plan to help others?

“We have fifteen minutes to share on this question or on the passage. Please be brief so as many as possible can share. Who would like to begin?”

[Leader sets the timer.]

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\(^76\) In this workshop, we refer to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Reading and Writing on Step Twelve from *Voices of Recovery* (25 minutes)

LEADER

“Welcome back to our work on Step Twelve. We will now read passages from one of our OA daily readers related to this work. Please follow along. Then we'll take twenty minutes to write on these passages and share our writing with a partner.

2816  “May I have a volunteer to read December 1 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 336?”

2817  [Volunteer reads the passage.]

2818  LEADER

2819  “May I have a volunteer to read August 14 from *Voices of Recovery* on page 227?”

2820  [Volunteer reads the passage.]

2821  LEADER

2822  “Please take ten minutes to write about what the passages mean to you.”

2823  [Leader sets the timer.]

2824  LEADER

2825  “Please take five minutes each to share your writing with another person.”

2826  [Leader sets the timer for ten minutes.]
LEADER

"Congratulations to us all! With guidance from our Higher Power and help from each other, we did it. We persevered and completed our workshop on the Twelve Steps! This process required the grace of our Higher Power and many of our strengths: honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, tenacity, dedication, faith, hope, and trust. Our experience will serve us well as we work our program daily, committed to abstinence and to sponsoring other compulsive eaters!"

"We never graduate from Overeaters Anonymous and we never stop working the Steps—especially as we live daily in Steps Ten, Eleven, and Twelve. Our primary purpose as members of OA 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—and, as early AA members discovered, doing so is the way to maintain our own recovery.

"May I have a volunteer to read the last two paragraphs of Step Twelve from the OA Twelve and Twelve (p. 106)? Please follow along."

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

77 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)

78 The Statement on Abstinence and Recovery is “Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous 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 the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” (WSBC Policy 1988b, amended 2002, 2009, and 2011)
“May I have a volunteer to read the last two paragraphs of “A Vision for You” from the Big Book, ending with ‘May God bless you and keep you—until then’? (p. 164)”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

“May I have a volunteer to read page 146 from the OA Twelve and Twelve, beginning with ‘Tradition five reminds us....’ through ‘... living by OA principles’ on page 147?”

[Volunteer reads the passage.]

“OA’s Responsibility Pledge states:

‘Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.’

Will I carry this message to other compulsive eaters and practice these Principles in all my affairs? If so, please stand and say ‘YES!’ ”

Homework Assignments

“This is the last session of our workshop, so there is no homework. But there are questions and readings suggested to help us continue our ongoing Step work. There are always more steps to take in our journey and in carrying the message of recovery. We recommend daily work, but spend as much time as needed. Share the work with a sponsor or partner in recovery, another member of this workshop, and fellow OA members.”

[Leader hands out the materials.]

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79 In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
☐ **Closing (2 minutes)**

**LEADER**

“To close this session, would those who wish, please turn to page tbd of this guide and join me in the suggested closing plus the OA Promise.”

[Leader and participants say _______.]

**LEADER READS**

“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone. No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now, reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours, and as we join hands, we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.”
Step Twelve Session Assignments

 Spend as much time as needed on this homework assignment. We recommend daily work. The reading assignments will help us to review the Introductory Session and prepare us to participate in our next session. Since we will not discuss writing or action homework during our sessions, please share the homework between sessions with a sponsor or partner in recovery and another member of this workshop.

☐ Reading

- OA Twelve and Twelve, Tradition Five (pp. 145-151)
- Big Book\textsuperscript{81}, chapter 11, “A Vision for You” (pp. 151-164)

☐ Writing

- Since I am the message, how can I carry the message to the best of my ability physically, emotionally, and spiritually?
- As I practice the Principles of the program, how do I act, think, and feel?
- Having completed this workshop, I am ready to sponsor! How am I going to use what I have learned to be a better sponsor?
- What support would I need to facilitate this workshop for other compulsive eaters who want recovery?

\textsuperscript{80} OA-approved literature found at bookstore.oa.org.

\textsuperscript{81} In this workshop, we refer to the book Alcoholics Anonymous as the Big Book. The page numbers cited are for the Fourth Edition.
Step Twelve Session Actions: Next Steps

What are the next steps we can take in doing service for our group, our intergroup (IG), our region, and the OA World Service Business Conference (WSBC)? Work with a sponsor to create an action plan. Include such items as:

- **Give service at the individual, group, and service body levels.**
  - Stay abstinent! Abstinence is a service to ourselves and to the Fellowship.
  - Facilitate this workshop.
  - Use the *Strong Meetings Checklist and Writing Exercise*.
  - Lead or volunteer to speak at meetings.
  - Attend our home group’s business meetings.
  - Take a service position in our home group.
  - “Call Five! Keep ’em alive!” (Call members who missed the group meeting to say “Hi!”)
  - Increase our Seventh Tradition contribution to support OA’s mission to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering compulsive eater. (Remember the cost of our last binge.)
  - Call or offer rides to newcomers.
  - Sponsor a newcomer.
  - Represent our group at intergroup meetings.
  - Join an intergroup committee.
  - Take a service position in our intergroup.
  - Qualify and volunteer to be a WSBC delegate.
  - Subscribe to *Lifeline*.
  - Write stories for *Lifeline*.
  - Ask our home group to purchase a *Lifeline* subscription.
  - Chair or co-chair an OA recovery event or retreat.
  - Qualify and volunteer to be a region representative.

- **Familiarize ourselves with oa.org and share such information as:**
• OA virtual services, such as podcasts and virtual workshops.
• Sources of recorded speakers.
• *Suggested Meeting Formats.*
• What’s in OA’s bookstore.
• Guidelines for service bodies.
• Local (face-to-face), online, and phone meeting directories.
• Free discontinued literature.
• *A Step Ahead* newsletter, available as a free download.
• Guidelines for service positions.
• What’s happening at WSBC. Look on the World Service Events page on oa.org.

☐ **Introduce OA to our health care professionals—doctor, dietician, dentist, therapist, and others.**

• Share our recovery: physical, emotional, and spiritual.
• Offer the *Introducing OA to Health Care Professionals* pamphlet.
• Offer a copy of the *Professional Community Courier* newsletter, available from bookstore.oa.org or as a free download on oa.org.
• Volunteer if we qualify or offer to help find a speaker for a professional association meeting.
• Offer a subscription to *Lifeline* magazine for the waiting room.
• Keep them supplied with local meeting directories.
• Invite them to an open OA meeting.
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.

Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

Spiritual Principles in the Twelve Steps

A spiritual Principle is associated with each of the Twelve Steps.

Step One: Honesty
Step Two: Hope
Step Three: Faith
Step Four: Courage
Step Five: Integrity
Step Six: Willingness
Step Seven: Humility
Step Eight: Self-discipline
Step Nine: Love
Step Ten: Perseverance
Step Eleven: Spiritual Awareness
Step Twelve: Service
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.

Permission to use the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

Spiritual Principles in the Twelve Traditions

A spiritual Principle is associated with each of the Twelve Traditions.

Tradition One: Unity
Tradition Two: Trust
Tradition Three: Identity
Tradition Four: Autonomy
Tradition Five: Purpose
Tradition Six: Solidarity
Tradition Seven: Responsibility
Tradition Eight: Fellowship
Tradition Nine: Structure
Tradition Ten: Neutrality
Tradition Eleven: Anonymity
Tradition Twelve: Spirituality

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.
8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.
12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
   a. No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
   b. Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA’s prudent financial principle;
   c. No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
   d. All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
   e. No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
   f. No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.
**Spiritual Principles in the Twelve Concepts**

A spiritual Principle is associated with each of the Twelve Concepts.

- Concept One: Unity
- Concept Two: Conscience
- Concept Three: Trust
- Concept Four: Equality
- Concept Five: Consideration
- Concept Six: Responsibility
- Concept Seven: Balance
- Concept Eight: Delegation
- Concept Nine: Ability
- Concept Ten: Clarity
- Concept Eleven: Humility
- Concept Twelve:
  - Selflessness
  - (b) Realism
  - (c) Representation
  - (d) Dialogue
  - (e) Compassion
  - (f) Respect