

GUIDE TO DAILY SPONSORING

Note: This set of sponsorship guidelines and writing questions were developed and used since the last 1960's in New Jersey OA. They have been referred to as the **"Westminster" writing questions**. The Westminster OA came from California to the east Coast and preceded OA/HOW, emphasizing the discipline of using the tools our program offers and the Grey Sheet food plan.

The critical period of sponsoring a baby thru the first three steps of abstinence and program requires an absolute commitment by the sponsor to "give it away" so that the baby can gain a firm foundation upon which to rely, a day at a time, for the rest of his life.

It is the purpose of our first three steps to allow the compulsive overeater to firstly realize that he is without power over his disease and, secondly, to be able to find power he must look to a source that is greater and stronger than him self.

All of this requires humility and willingness to surrender one's ego and perhaps, it is these two states of mind which you, as his sponsor, must contribute to the baby's newfound psychic rebirth. When we have achieved humility and the reduction of our ego, it follows we are then far more willing to let our minds be open to new ideas. Let us never forget that new ideas are the foundation of OA.

Our means of offering all of the above to our babies is by directing them, daily, to do acts of obedience.

In issuing acts of obedience we, as sponsors, must make it clear we are doing so only to achieve the desired effect, only in love, and we are not to use these obediences as tools of hegemony over your baby's lives. To do otherwise would be acts of destruction to our new found humility and would surely jeopardize our holding onto program. It would then follow that the acts of obedience would best be in areas of strict program so that the newcomer will be not only more open, willing and humble, but will also find a positive introduction to program.

Foremost, that baby must be abstinent. Abstinence to Westminster-Long Island means the grey sheet. There are good reasons for this. First, Grey Sheet is an obedience. Second, Grey Sheet is low in carbohydrates; those elements of diet which OA believes are principal allergens to compulsive overeaters. Thirdly, Grey Sheet, over the years in California, has been proven most scientifically to be the only plan of eating effective to the rock bottom cases. This is indisputable from the evidence of more than ten thousand compulsive overeaters. Fourth, Grey Sheet will act as one of our great unifiers: we have the same disease, we believe it operates in all of us in the same way and we will conquer it in the same way.

Were we to take a more permissive attitude in allowing the newcomer to choose any eating plan, without realizing so, we might be doing that person a great disservice. We must understand that the newcomer has come to us in a drunken state and, according to our tenet, he is not sane. It is then ludicrous to believe he is in a position to decide on his proper course of eating. Likely then, if left to his own devices, his choice of an eating plan will carry features designed to pander to his sickness. Don't we all want to eat in as permissive a fashion as we can and "still lose weight?" The sad truth, as we understand it, is that we are unable to handle food in such a way.

With this in mind, it is plain and clear that to offer the newcomer his choice of an eating plan, or to believe that the Grey Sheet is only a suggested aspect of our great program, fails of its own weight.

The second area of obedience must be in exposure to OA ideas and therefore the expansion of the newcomer's awareness. This is best accomplished by instructions to read OA literature, to write ideas relating to what was read and to attend as many meetings as possible.

All of the items discussed above are but tools to induce surrender. Without surrender there can be no effective recovery (*AA Comes of Age*, pg. 247). Be constantly aware that egos reduced to surrender, unfortunately, have marvelous recuperative powers. So, if we are to induce sustained surrender it must be essentially a matter of discipline (thru acts of obedience) and of experience (*AA Comes of Age*, pg. 249).

Below are listed some of the directions you as a sponsor should give to your baby. Always keep in mind the need to be firm, the need not to compromise, the understanding that without compromise you are being most therapeutic and in that way you will have given the program in the manner which will produce the desired results.

General Instructions

1. Daily readings
2. Daily writings (a few minutes each day on reactions to readings)
3. Telephone calls each day to sponsor at a prearranged time (obedience) to read menu of days
4. Telephone calls to 3 other OA'ers
5. Instructions to pitch at a meeting on a specific problem and how the problem was resolved according to the concepts of our program
6. Attendance at meetings
7. By our example direct the newcomer against idle gossip, taking of another's inventory, and the like. Lead him to feel and know that our program is one of love, of concern, and therefore, of positive achievement.

If you give the program, as it is outlined herein, you will have given your baby a great gift leading to his sanity. You will experience great satisfaction for having contributed so enormous a gift to his life. Let each of us not compromise that gift by experiencing false sympathy for any of the multiple reasons that may be given for straying from abstinence. The period of 30 days abstinence prior to the taking of the first 3 steps is the only element of our program which is suggested. Your obligation to the newcomer is to permit him the security of not taking those steps until he is firmly ready.

Literature to be used for the following questions:

AA Big Book and AA 12 & 12

DAY 1: Read all of Step One and meditate for 5 min. on the effect food has had upon you over the years.

DAY 2: Reread Step One and find reference for the following; (Keep the reference until we take the 3 steps)

- A. Progressive nature of disease

- B. The need not to push a person until he is ready
- C. The allusion to the critical nature of our disease

DAY 3: Write for 15 minutes on the fatal nature of our disease as referred to on pg. 24, paragraph 2 (AA 12 & 12). Keep what you have written until we take the step. Include, when speaking of the fatal nature of the disease, how, at the very least, it has diminished your life.

DAY 4: In the Grapevine, August, 1961 the following quote appears: "The deception of others is nearly always rooted in the deception of ourselves." Write for 15 minutes how that quote relates to your eating history. What are the things we did in the past due to compulsive eating, which would tend to affirm this idea. Save what you have written until we take the steps.

DAY 5: Read the Big Book beginning (the prefaces)

DAY 6: Read chapter 3 in the Big Book, "More About Alcoholism".

DAY 7: Reread Step One in the AA 12 & 12. Write a 15 minute declaration as to what the knowledge of Step One can do for you . . . do not go beyond the ideas presented in the step (open minded and willing to listen (pg. 24, last paragraph)_____will go to any end). Save what you have written until we take the steps.

1. Memorize the first three steps.
2. Memorize the prayer on pg. 63 of the Big Book, "God, I offer myself____"
3. Emotional feelings that appear during the day are to written down on a separate piece of paper and burned daily.
4. Set aside ½ hour each morning to do reading and writing and meditating.
5. Write a history of your overeating starting with the first time you can remember overeating. How much weight you gained, what doctor you went to, how much weight you lost, how long you kept it off, what happened then, etc.

DAY 8: Read Step Two (AA 12 & 12). Meditate for 5 minutes on Steps One and Two. How do they come together in your mind?

DAY 9: In a scientific or logical way, demonstrate the effectiveness of OA from your personal experience, and from what you have observed in others. In doing so, use a very free translation or definition of a Higher Power.....could what you have experienced emanated solely from you and, if so, why did it not happen before?

DAY 10: Write for 10 minutes on the substitution method of accepting the presence of a Higher Power. How it operates in you (the collective group).

DAY 11: Write for 15 minutes short resumes of your ideas on the following:

- A. The reason it is more difficult for the wanderer from faith to believe in a Higher Power than the atheist, the agnostic or the religionist (all the others have convictions, if he is bewildered), pg. 29, AA 12 & 12.
- B. Why the intellectually self-sufficient man or woman finds it difficult to find faith (we believed intellect could conquer nature and that made us prideful, HUMILITY can be compatible with intellect only when humility comes first ...then we can be open minded), pg. 30, AA 12 & 12.
- C. Where is the fallacy in our loss of faith when our premise is based on the fact that the religionists are so hypocritical, bigoted, and self-righteous, pg. 30,31.

DAY 12: Write for 15 minutes on the concept of insanity as it applies to OA.

DAY 13: Memorize the following quotations and think of them in the OA context.

- A. The hoop you have to hump through is a lot wider than you think, pg. 26.
- B. Defiance is an outstanding characteristic of any compulsive overeater, pg. 31.
- C. Belief means reliance, not defiance.

DAY 14: Write for 15 minutes on your childhood exposure to any religious concept. Keeping in mind your positive and negative feelings.

Go to the dictionary, write down the definition of the following words;

1. Life
2. Spirit
3. Spiritual
4. God
5. Breath, breathing
6. Cerebellum, medulla, cerebrum
7. Meditation
8. Universal
9. Peace
10. Serenity
11. Religion
12. Posture
13. Discipline
14. Prayer
15. Love
16. Hate
17. Anger
18. Sex
19. Pride
20. Resentment
21. Read

22. Write
23. Conscious mind
24. Subconscious mind
25. Healing

DAY 15: Write all the reasons you can think of for not believing in God.

DAY 16: Write all the reasons you can for believing that God does exist.

DAY 17: "FAITH ALONE CAN AVAIL US NOTHING." Write for 10 minutes how that expression can translate into our Third Step.

DAY 18: Write on dependence as you understand it in the OA context. How can dependence lead to greater independence?

DAY 19: Write on the idea that having taken Steps One and Two...the degree of our success in the whole program depends on how far we take Step Three. You can make reference to the other steps in the context of taking Step Three.

DAY 20: Write for 15 or 20 minutes on what your concept of God is today and how He manifests himself in your life.

DAY 21: Reread Step One in the morning. Read what you have written on Day 20 at night, and, in prayer, commit yourself to God in all you affairs, a day at a time.

You have completed the Westminster 21 day Beginners' Program. You have maintained Grey Sheet abstinence, and completed all the reading, writing, and meditating assignments given to you by your sponsor. Compare these 21 days to any other treatment you have had in the past in your search to cure your obsession. At this time it is up to you to decide whether or not this program is for you. Your experience with daily obedience's do not stop here, you must continue your reading and, of course, begin your Fourth Step inventory which must be done on a daily basis. Your emotional writing and burning of same was heretofore an introduction to the Tenth Step, which again, you must continue. We also suggest that each individual find a method of meditation that is effective for them (transcendental meditation, yoga, etc.). Your early morning quiet time should now be considered as the most important part of your day. For it is here, you will, in time, feel the complete freedom that you were born to have. But it will not happen unless you work for it. And it cannot happen unless you follow the above disciplines. And it does not happen just by staying on a diet. You will also be responsible to become a sponsor and work with other compulsive overeaters, committed to follow the training program that you have experienced. For it is only by strength that we will ever recover from this dreadful disease. And strength for us as per the article states, comes from surrender, daily surrender you will make by following the above. Total surrender will

come upon you, slowly, as the missing pieces your life are filled in by you just by living and giving.

You have begun to give to the most important person, yourself, and by learning how to give to yourself, you will start to give to others, and by starting to love yourself, you will start to love others....food will take its proper place in your life, a day at a time. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions will be your way of life. We believe that you will grow and mature and will not need to spend the rest of your life at daily meetings. That the inner you will feel strong and confident and become, from your experience and growth, your own constant reminder in your daily existence. You will have found the only thing you ever, ever need....yourself.