



Men's Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

Suggestions to Service Bodies and Individuals for Attracting and Retaining Men in OA

Let us be mindful of Overeaters' Anonymous (OA)'s Unity with Diversity Policy, which respects our differences, yet unites us in the solution to our common problem. Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome, regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or any other attribute.

While men make up roughly half of the human population, their numbers in Overeaters Anonymous are much below fifty percent. Our hope is that the suggestions mentioned in this document may help other groups attract and retain men in OA.

How can Service Boards, Regions, IGs, and meetings increase the number of men in OA and support men in OA with their recovery? Helping men connect with other men recovering from compulsive eating is the key to fostering a sense of belonging. The lack of current representation of men in OA may result in a struggle for new men coming into OA to feel like they belong. The following suggestions can help service bodies with few men to attract and retain male OA members.

Ways to Attract Male Compulsive Eaters to the Rooms of Overeaters Anonymous:

1. OA members who attend multiple 12 Step fellowships and other groups may carry the message by sharing about their recovery from compulsive eating.
2. Outreach to compulsive eaters of any kind will help reach men as well. A full Public Information / Professional Outreach Resource listing is available at this webpage:
<https://oa.org/app/uploads/2020/12/pi-resource-list.pdf>

Ideas for Service Bodies to Create Resources for their Male OA Members:

1. Meetings with a special focus on men can be found at OA.org. Please check all options for meetings; face-to-face, online, telephone and non-real-time. Refer newcomers and male members to male-focused OA meetings. See a shortcut to OA's Special Focus for Men meetings at this webpage: <https://www.oamen.org/meetings/>
2. Start a new in-person or virtual OA male focused meeting.
3. Consider printing business card sized handouts to give to new and existing male members. An example business card is shown to the right.
4. Develop a list of men in your local area who are available to sponsor other men.
5. At the meeting level, create a "Male to Male Outreach Committee." Designate a male OA member to contact male newcomers or men who are noticed to be missing from meetings they regularly attend.

Men of OA – You're not alone!

Are you the only man in your meeting? Do you have trouble freely sharing in meetings of mostly women?

OAMen.org

- Men's Face-to-face Meeting Schedule
- Men's Phone and Online Meeting Information
- OA Men Email Discussion Groups
- OA Men Phone Outreach List

Resources and Support to Service Bodies to Help Connect the Male Compulsive Eater with Others Worldwide:

1. An additional resource is oamen.org. The web site provides links to a sponsorship workshop and over 125 podcasts of male speakers at OA men focus meetings.
2. The OA Men's Helpline, 1 + (347)201-0914, is available 24/7. The phone number is in the Central Time Zone. If a call comes in during the night, any messages left will be responded to the next morning.
3. There is a Tuesday night men's focus meeting from 7-8:15 PM ET which currently has a Google Group (GG) of 444 men and an Outreach List of 422 men. On its Outreach List there are 80 men who are willing to consider sponsoring men anywhere in the world. There is a Men's Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous (MIGOA) which is part of the Virtual Region.

Suggestions for Individual Members of OA to Welcome Men

1. Greet him warmly: treat him just like any other newcomer and tell him that there are other men in the program. Don't overdo it by greeting him with excessive enthusiasm.
2. Give him a copy of the OA pamphlet "To the Man Who Wants to Stop Compulsive Overeating. Welcome" available at: <https://oamen.org/pamphlet>
3. Refer men to the oamen.org web site where they can connect with other men.
4. Encourage members to establish appropriate boundaries between men and women in our fellowship so we can share their experience, strength, and hope with each other.
5. Try a temporary sponsoring commitment with a male newcomer.
6. Consider starting a men's focus meeting within your OA local service structure.
7. Volunteer to support your local OA service body to provide information to men in your area about OA.

OA is a fellowship of men and women who share the disease of compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors. Our goal is to reach as many compulsive eaters as possible, regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or any other trait. You will find hope and encouragement in Overeaters Anonymous