

## Who joins OA?

OA members are men and women of all ages, from the United States and abroad. Some of us have been obese; others have been anorexic, bulimic, or so obsessed with food or weight that we could not freely live our lives.

## Does the program really work?

Typically, OA members have tried any number of solutions to their problems with food, including (for many of us) years of diets or exercise. In OA, we have finally found an answer that is long-term. Some OA members have maintained normal weights and found freedom from obsession for more than twenty years. As more and more newcomers enter the program, the number of people with five or ten years of recovery continues to grow.

## Read what our members have to say about OA:

*"I joined OA in 1998 and have not eaten compulsively since then. Working the OA program has relieved my pain from the past. What surprises me most is that my attitude about life has changed while my circumstances are nearly the same. This is miraculous..."*

*"I joined OA because I was emotionally unhappy. Sure I was fat, and couldn't stop eating, but I didn't recognize that my unhappiness was a byproduct of my eating..."*

*"After many years of struggling with anorexia, bulimia, and bingeing, I found OA. Food went from being the center of my life, to not. I experienced freedom for the first time in my life..."*

*"Two years ago, I weighed 360 pounds and was unemployed and suicidal. I didn't care if I lived or died, I just wanted to be thin. Today my physical weight loss is 123 pounds and my mental weight loss is immeasurable..."*

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## Many Symptoms, One Solution

The membership of OA is varied, both in its makeup and in the eating behaviors and experiences that brought each individual to OA.

In OA, you'll find members who are:

- ✓ Extremely overweight, even morbidly obese
- ✓ Only moderately overweight
- ✓ Average weight
- ✓ Underweight
- ✓ Still maintaining periodic control of their eating behavior
- ✓ Totally unable to control their compulsive eating

There are many different patterns of food behaviors experienced by OA members.

These "symptoms" are as varied as our membership. Among them are:

- ✓ Obsession with body weight, size, and shape
- ✓ Eating binges
- ✓ Grazing
- ✓ Preoccupation with reducing diets
- ✓ Starving
- ✓ Inducing vomiting after eating
- ✓ Constant preoccupation with food
- ✓ Inability to stop eating certain foods after taking the first bite

Our symptoms may vary, but we share a common bond: We are powerless over food and our lives are unmanageable. If you feel you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms.

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## 15 Questions:

This series of questions may help you determine if you are a compulsive eater. Many members of OA have found that they have answered yes to many of these.

1. Do I eat when I'm not hungry, or not eat when my body needs nourishment?
2. Do I go on eating binges for no apparent reason, sometimes eating until I'm stuffed or even feel sick?
3. Do I have feelings of guilt, shame, or embarrassment about my weight or the way I eat?
4. Do I eat sensibly in front of others and then make up for it when I am alone?
5. Is my eating affecting my health or the way I live my life?
6. When my emotions are intense—whether positive or negative—do I find myself reaching for food?
7. Do my eating behaviors make me or others unhappy?
8. Have I ever used laxatives, vomiting, diuretics, excessive exercise, diet pills, shots or other medical interventions (including surgery) to try to control my weight?
9. Do I fast or severely restrict my food intake to control my weight?
10. Do I fantasize about how much better life would be if I were a different size or weight?
11. Do I need to chew or have something in my mouth all the time: food, gum, mints, candies or beverages?
12. Have I ever eaten food that is burned, frozen or spoiled; from containers in the grocery store; or out of the garbage?
13. Are there certain foods I can't stop eating after having the first bite?
14. Have I lost weight with a diet or "period of control" only to be followed by bouts of uncontrolled eating and/or weight gain?
15. Do I spend too much time thinking about food, arguing with myself about whether or what to eat, planning the next diet or exercise cure, or counting calories?

**If you have answered yes to any of these questions, then you may be a compulsive eater.**

## Looking for a solution?

### Local Meetings:

- \*Acton** Acton Congregational Church, 12 Concord Rd., Room 20 (Wednesday, 7:30 pm) **(ST)**
- \*Andover** Ballard Vale Community Church, 23 Clark Rd. (Sunday 5:00PM) **(BBSS)**
- \*Boston** St. Anthony Shrine, 100 Arch Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room near the Auditorium (Mon and Fri at 12:15PM) **(T)(90)**
- Cambridge** Spaulding Hosp., 1575 Cambridge St, Conference Rm. 2 (Saturday 9:30AM) **(HOW)**
- Chelmsford** Unitarian Universalist Church, Int. of Rte. 110 & Westford St. (Sat 2:00PM) **(90)**
- Chelsea** Salvation Army Bldg., 258 Chestnut St. (Behind Town Hall) (Sat. 8:00AM) **(M)**
- Dedham** Allin Congregational Church, 663 High St. (Monday 7:30PM) **(FT)**
- Dorchester** Carney Hospital, Board Rm. (Sat.9AM) **(90)**
- Lynn** Bethany Congregational Church, 410 Eastern Ave. (Thurs. 7:30AM)  
**First Church of Christ, 678 Lynnfield Street** (Saturday 8:30-9:30AM) Please use side entrance with ramp.
- Malden** First Church of the Nazarene, 529 Eastern Ave. (Thurs. 7:00PM) **(M)**  
**(Can call-in: 605-475-4850, PIN 197132#)**
- Medford** Lawrence Memorial Hospital's Johnson Conference Room, 170 Governors Ave. (Fri. 7PM; Sat. 9AM and Sun 8AM) **(90, HC)**, and (Sun. 10:00AM) **(R&R)**
- Milton** Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, 199 Reedsdale Rd, Conf. Rm A. (Wed. 7PM) **(OABBSS)**
- Newton** Newton-Wellesley Hospital, 2014 Washington St., Room B2 (Sat. 7:15AM) **(90)**
- Newtonville** St. John's Episcopal Church, 297 Lowell Avenue, corner of Otis & Lowell Sts. (Sunday 5:00PM) **(90)**
- No. Andover** North Andover Senior Center, 120 R Main St. (Mon. 6:00PM, Sat. 8:00AM) **(FF)**

**Reading** Church of the Good Shepherd **(HC)**, 95 Woburn St. (Wed. 6:00PM) **(90)**, (Wed.9:30AM) **(90, B, FF)** (Tues. 9:30AM) **(BBSS)**, First Congregational Church, Woburn & Sanborn (Sat. 7:30-8:30AM) **(90)**

**Readville/Hyde Park** Sunset Bocci Club, 65 Danny Rd. (Wednesday 7:30PM)

**Stoneham** Senior Ctr., 136 Elm Street (Sun. 8:30-9:30AM) **(90 FF)** (Mon. 6:30PM) **(BBSS)**

**Sudbury** St. John's Lutheran Church, 16 Great Rd Rte 117, (Thurs. 7:30 PM) **(Bg)**

**Swampscott** Unitarian Universalist Church, 101 Forest St, (Tues. 7PM) **(FT)**, Saturday 8:30AM **(90)**, (Basement of church)

**Waltham** St. Mary's CCD Building, 30 Pond St (Wed. 7:00PM) **(90)**

**Wellesley** Christ Method. Church, int. of Rtes. 16/135 (Mon. 9:30AM) **(90)**, St. John's Evangel. Church, 9 Ledyard St., **Note:** Function Hall in the Church Basement. (Wednesdays 12PM) **(90)**

**Weymouth** Church of Nazarene, 385 Ralph Talbot St. (Thursdays 10:00AM)

**Winthrop** REW Home Health Care, 215 Lincoln St. (Tuesdays 7:00PM) **(90)** **(Can call-in: 605-475-4850, PIN 197132#)** St. John's Episcopal Hall, 222 Bowdoin St. (Thursday 7:00PM) **(L)**

**Winchester** St. Eulalia, 50 Ridge St (Tues. 7pm) **(90)**

**We look forward to meeting you.**

**Meeting list updated 2/12/2020 & subject to change.**

**Call 781-641-2303 for other meeting times and information sessions near you.**

**Massachusetts Bay Intergroup**  
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Mass Bay Intergroup

## Is food a problem for you?

- ✓ **Have you been worried about the way you eat?**
- ✓ **Do you resolve to go on a diet tomorrow, only to fail again and again?**
- ✓ **Is your weight affecting the way you live your life?**

**You are not alone.**  
**Overeaters Anonymous**  
**can help.**

**No dues, No fees, No weigh-ins.**

### What is OA?

OA is not a diet club, but a fellowship of individuals recovering from compulsive overeating. OA is dedicated to helping individuals recover from anorexia, bulimia, food addiction, and other food-related problems. If you are struggling with one of these issues, you are not alone any more.

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