World Service Business Conference 2024
Ask-It Basket Questions

1) **What are the requirements and responsibilities of a Region Two trustee?**
The responsibilities of all trustees, including the Region Two trustee liaison, can be found in OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VII, Section 2, entitled Duties and Responsibilities. The requirements for serving as a trustee can be found in OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VII, Section 4, entitled Qualifications. At the 2024 World Service Business Conference the qualifications were changed to include at least two years of service as a region representative, region committee chair, region board member, region trustee liaison, or as a national service board member. This information can be found on oa.org/document-library under category: Bylaws. The Bylaws are in the process of being updated and the 2025 changes to the Bylaws will be added to the website at a later date. At the present time, the Region Two trustee liaison is also a member of the Region Two Board with voice but no vote and attends the Region Two monthly board meetings.

2) **Do diabetic patients have a specific focus in OA meetings?**
OA does not currently have any meetings or service bodies registered as specific focus for diabetic patients. There are over forty meetings that are identified as having a specific focus on health issues, and some are specific as to the issue: Bariatric Surgery, for example. They vary by type of meeting (face-to-face, telephone, online, non-real-time), language, and time zone. Please use the Find a Meeting search function on oa.org to find one that might work for you.

If you want to start a meeting with specific focus for diabetic patients, you can certainly do that. With the prevalence of diabetes in modern times, it seems likely some of our members would find it a great service. Such a meeting would appear under “Health Issues” in the dropdown list, and the specific focus on diabetes would be noted in the meeting notes section. You can find help with how to do this at https://oa.org/how-to-start-a-meeting/.

3) **Should a service body have a prudent reserve?**
Thank you for the question. I would suggest visiting oa.org/service-bodies/fundraising-and-prudent-reserve-guidelines/ which has the following information available.

**What is a prudent reserve?**
A prudent reserve is an amount of money set aside to provide a source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses or an unanticipated loss in contributions with the intention of reserves being used and replenished within a reasonably short period of time. Each group or service body should establish its own prudent reserve policy.

**How much money should be in the prudent reserve?**
The amount may be determined by figuring operational expenses for a given period of time. For example, the World Service Office has selected three months to calculate its minimum reserve funds. Expenses include such things as rent, telephone, postage, printing, utilities,
and salaries, if applicable. The fund should be periodically reviewed to make sure it meets the present and projected needs of the group or service body.

4) Why do board members keep changing their committees every year? I feel so bad that they have so many “jobs” to perform and to learn another job each year. It’s a delight to change committees every year two years. We get to learn different areas of OA. I believe it makes us better service volunteers. We do get a choice of which committees we get to serve on.

5) I worry about our future, but we don’t ask trustee candidates what their priorities for the Fellowship. Could we change the application to ask that? We as trustees cannot make the change. We do what our members tell us to do through the World Service Business Conference. The upside-down pyramid shows us that the members in the meetings are the ones that are most important. The trustees do not govern. We keep recovering and growing spiritually and look out for the next suffering compulsive overeater through the Concepts of Service as well as the Traditions and Steps.

6) I know it changes often. BOT will there ever be a workshop on how to navigate oa.org website? The Website Review Committee works to make the website as user friendly as possible, yet the idea of a workshop on how to navigate the website is a good one. Some regions have offered similar workshops in the past. The Website Review Committee has a new chair. I will speak to them about offering such a workshop. Thank you for the suggestion.

7) Can an individual meeting leave their intergroup in their region and join the Virtual Region? Can that meeting be associated with both their geographical intergroup and the Virtual Region? Thank you for your question, and I am assuming that this group is a virtual meeting and not face-to-face. Yes, an individual group can decide by group conscience to leave their intergroup and region and join the Virtual Region. If the group is virtual and is remaining virtual, they would not need to apply to change their group number. The group would need to edit their information at [oa.org/add-a-meeting/edit-a-meeting/](http://oa.org/add-a-meeting/edit-a-meeting/) in order to affiliate with the Virtual Region instead of their current geographic intergroup. Any group or service body may participate in the activities (including voting) of another intergroup, national service board, language service board, and/or specific focus service board, and region with their permission. Please see this link for more information on Affiliation and Participation: [oa.org/service-bodies/affiliation-and-participation-flow-chart/](http://oa.org/service-bodies/affiliation-and-participation-flow-chart/).

8) Our local meeting has decided that if there is only one volunteer for a vacant position, we don’t take a vote, and that person will be automatically selected. Is this against the Traditions? It is important to have a group conscience on positions in meetings, especially if there are requirements on abstinence. Do they have a sponsor? Are they regular attendees of the meeting? Putting those in place first and if only one person meeting the requirements steps up and your meeting [as a group conscience] decides that this is their process, it is not against the Traditions. Also, as a member of your meeting, you have the right to question the process.
9) Is it against the Traditions to play music during an OA recovery meeting?
Thank you for your question and your commitment to upholding the Traditions in your meeting. I believe the decision of whether to play music in an OA meeting is up to the group conscience and is a matter of group autonomy (Traditions Two and Four). Such a discussion should include careful consideration of all the Traditions. For instance:

- **Tradition Four:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole. If your group decides to include music, be sure that your group has proper permission and has paid any licensing fees, if required. In the USA, playing music in “public” (outside of a private dwelling, such as a home) requires a music license through a performing arts organization (ASCAP, BMI). For example, OA pays a license fee annually to play music at the Conference/Convention banquet. It is very important to protect OA as a whole by respecting license and copyright requirements. Please be aware that even though groups are autonomous, Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. can be (and has been) sued for copyright infringement at the local level.

- **Tradition Five:** Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers. Does the inclusion of music enhance or detract from carrying the OA message? It may be that in a meditation meeting, calming instrumental music could be an enhancement. However, music with lyrics would likely be the equivalent of bringing outside literature (and outside issues) into the meeting.

I hope these points are helpful in your group conscience discussion.

10) Is there any difference between “overeater,” “compulsive overeater,” or “acute overeater”? How should I identify and introduce myself?
These terms are defined as:

- An overeater is someone who occasionally eats too much but can control it.
- A compulsive overeater is someone who feels compelled to continue overeating even after they want to stop. They have little or no control. This is usually a chronic condition happening over a long period of time.
- An acute overeater is experiencing problems with overeating but can moderate their eating with help from a doctor or dietitian.

In OA we use “compulsive overeating” and “compulsive eating” interchangeably. These terms include, but are not limited to, overeating, under-eating, food addiction, anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, overexercising, purging, and other compulsive food behaviors. No matter what form our disease takes, anyone having a problem with food can find help in Overeaters Anonymous.

11) Does OA have any guidelines that an intergroup or service board can look at and review before starting their websites (to avoid copyright infringement and about posting their finances to the general public)?
Thank you for your question. Here are two resources which may be helpful:

Regarding copyright, it is very important that all OA websites are created and maintained to carefully follow copyright laws, only using images, audio, etc. for which appropriate permissions have been acquired. Please be aware that Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. can (and has been) sued for copyright infringement at the local level.

I am not aware of any specific OA guidelines for posting financial information to your website, provided members’ anonymity is respected. Many service bodies do post their annual budget and meeting minutes, including financial reports. This provides for quick reference and transparency to members. If a service body is registered as a nonprofit, laws may require members to be notified of financial status, and the website may be a good way to make that information visible.

Thank you, and I hope this information is helpful.

12) Isn’t it against Tradition Two that specific topic 90-day meetings require 90 days of consecutive days of abstinence to participate in the voting process of their business meetings?
To be in line with our Traditions, the only Tradition is to have the desire to stop eating compulsively. Our OA 12x12 states, “all those who consider themselves a group member are welcome to speak or vote.” Therefore, the group conscience happens to be those group members attending that particular meeting, all present have the right to speak and vote.

13) There has been some focus that young people are the future of OA. Perhaps you could encourage everyone to attend a young people’s meeting and connect the experience of WSBC delegates to young people.
Interesting suggestion. I attended [observed] and I did not speak at the young people worldwide workshop. Their generation is so different from mine. I learned so much and was so amazed at the integrity, honesty, unity, and love at that workshop. I listened. I did not suggest. I also refrained from the grandmother thing, “Oh, I wish I’d found this program at your age.” I just listened and I heard so much. My belief is the more I listen without comment, unless asked, the more I learn. So, I believe if the member has intentions to learn, go for it. If the member wants to go, and has an agenda, please stay home. Attending helped my recovery.

14) Among all the Tools of recovery, which one has a priority? Based on one of the pamphlets, sponsorship has priority, however, meetings are more important. Any idea?
No one Tool has priority over another. It depends on which Tool would be helpful at the time. Recovery is achieved by working the Twelve Steps and all the Tools support members in this.

15) What is a member role to create/work on unity in a distressed and troubled service board?
Thank you for your question. Staying in the unity is the key to our program. However, when we serve, we may face unexpected situations without being able to handle them in a welcoming and heartfelt way. From my experience, the moment I feel uncomfortable, I try to share it immediately to prevent the situation from worsening, especially with the members of the board or service body where I have a position of service.
There are many available resources:

I also find this document very useful https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2023/03/26114600/oa-intergroup-or-service-board-inventory.pdf. It’s a chance to grow altogether.

16) Can a meeting be on two intergroups? Or can a person serve on two intergroups?
Thanks for your question! From OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VI – Service Bodies, Section 3 – Affiliation and Participation:
- A group may choose to affiliate with an intergroup. The group shall be affiliated with the intergroup’s region.
- Should a group choose not to affiliate with an intergroup, but affiliates with a national service board, that group shall be affiliated with that national service board’s region.
- Groups that choose not to affiliate with an intergroup or a national service board shall be affiliated with the region where the group exists, either the geographic region or the Virtual Region.
- Any group or service body may participate in the activities (including voting) of another intergroup, national service board, language service board, and/or specific focus service board, and region with their permission.
- A meeting may belong to only one intergroup but may participate and vote in another intergroup with that intergroup’s permission.
- An individual can serve in two intergroups depending on the intergroup’s bylaws. Its always best to contact the other intergroup and ask.

17) Which committees are board committees? Can this be clearly indicated in future WSBC Binder and reports?
Thank you for your interest in improving our communication with our Fellowship. To provide clarity, there are four main categories of reports prepared for Conference delegates. These reports are intended to inform members about the work accomplished over the past year. The main categories are:
   a) Officer Reports: Written by the chair, treasurer, and managing director.
   b) Region Reports: Written by the trustee liaisons along with the region chairs.
   c) Conference Committee Reports: Prepared by the seven Conference committee delegate and trustee cochairs

This year, thirteen board committees served our Fellowship. Their reports were submitted by the chairs of each committee. The board committees are:
- Board-approved Literature
- Board Reference Manual Review
- Conference Planning
- Convention 2025
- Delegate Support Fund
• Digital Download Ad Hoc
• Internal Information
• International Publications/Translations
• Literature Review
• Public Awareness/Professional Tradeshows
• Realignment/Reapportionment Ad Hoc
• Strategic Planning
• Website Review

These reports can be found in the Binder on pages 137 to 155.

To enhance clarity in future Binders, I will suggest to the Conference Planning Committee that the Binder index includes headers for each section of the reports to distinguish them clearly. Additionally, I will propose including the subheader “Board of Trustee Report” on relevant report titles.

18) **Please could you explain why an intergroup would affiliate with a specific focus service board? What would this bring to the intergroup? What would be some challenges and benefits for the intergroup?** Please note that we already have several specific focus recovery meetings in our intergroup.

Thank you for your question. The topic of affiliation and participation can be a bit confusing at first. It was for me, too. So, I went through the definition of the specific focus service board and affiliation and participation just to understand it better.

A specific focus service board may affiliate with one region. When the specific focus service board spans more than one region, it may choose which region to affiliate with it. Should a specific focus service board choose not to affiliate with a region, the Board of Trustees chair shall assign a trustee to serve as liaison to that specific focus service board. The groups that participate in a specific focus service board retain their original affiliation.

The purpose of affiliation is to help us count groups and service bodies for fair representation and to encourage the flow of support and information to all. The purpose of participation is to facilitate the support and flow of information within groups and service bodies that have a common need (language, anorexia bulimia, LGBTQ+, men, BIPOC, etc.)

So, let’s imagine several groups spread throughout the world that have the same common need. Although they are already affiliated with their area intergroups, they join a specific focus service board because together they share a common need. At this point, this specific focus service board is not affiliated with an intergroup, but if it wishes, it can be affiliated with a region, as shown in the diagram: [https://oa.org/service-bodies/affiliation-and-participation-flow-chart/](https://oa.org/service-bodies/affiliation-and-participation-flow-chart/).

19) **Can a sponsee be taken through the Steps if they are NOT abstinent?**

The degree to which one can successfully work the Steps under various conditions, including not being abstinent, varies by the individual. For many people Step Three, fully surrendering their will, means by definition they are not compulsively eating. Others find they cannot be
rigorously honest with themselves, their higher power, or another person in Steps Four and Five while using food as an addictive substance. Some go so far as to say euphemistically they have to take “Step 0: Put down the food” before they can take Step One. Still others find their recovery path to be elliptical: They edge slowly forward through the Steps as they learn one day at a time to reflect on how they may be using food to live life on life’s terms and/or they slowly begin to refrain from trigger foods or compulsive eating behaviors. One of the most common patterns is people become abstinent and begin working the Steps at the same time. They have short-term success with both, then have a slip or suffer relapse, only to return and start over.

The bottom line is there is no set rule or combination pattern where abstinence and Step work are concerned. Abstinence may be a prerequisite for working the Steps for one person and taking one or more of the Steps may be necessary to achieve abstinence for someone else. Often the only way to know is to try. What is probably most important for the sponsor trying to get someone started is to help them self-assess their readiness for the Steps. Then guide them through the process with love and understanding, sharing their own experience strength, and hope about what works.

20) **If a national service board is not able to translate the literature due to lack of translation committee because no one is volunteer to do that, can an intergroup/group ask for translation license from World Service Office?**

Thank you for your question. A group or service body is not required to have a dedicated translations committee to apply for the license to translate. It is suggested to have a translation committee, because what makes the difference is that those who are OA members already know the OA language, while the outside professional can translate faster, but then there should be a review of the translated words.

In the absence of a registered OA group or service body, a small group of interested members can begin the translation process while working towards registering as a service body. Once a small group of interested members registers as a group or service body, then License 2 will be granted upon completion of the translation and validation (License 1).

Links that may be helpful:

If the problems are due to the resources available within the service body, there is the possibility of applying for funds to translate and/or distribute OA material. Funds can be used to hire a professional translator/translating service.
Just to let you know that many pieces of OA literature have been translated. Check the Digital Files in Translation list: https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2023/04/16105251/digital-files-in-translation.pdf.

This is a very broad topic, so I suggest that you contact your trustee liaison, who will be able to guide you in resolving your situation.

21) **Can our region or groups host the World Service Business Conference in the future?**

Thank you for your question. Currently, the Board of Trustees Conference Planning Committee is the committee that oversees the planning of the World Service Business Conference (WSBC) each year in coordination with our World Service Office (WSO) staff. One of the main reasons why the in-person WSBC is held in Albuquerque, New Mexico is that our WSO headquarters is located in Rio Rancho, New Mexico which is very close to Albuquerque. The benefit of holding the WSBC close to Rio Rancho is to allow our WSO staff to attend and to keep their travel costs and expenses to the WSO budget to a minimum. If we were to move the WSBC outside of the Rio Rancho area, there would be an increase in cost, and therefore, the registration fee for each delegate would likely increase. The Conference Planning Committee and the WSO staff are open to suggestions, but ultimately it may come down to the budget cost of moving the WSBC to another location. It is more likely for a service body to host a World Service Convention, which is usually held every five years in various locations around North America.

22) **Please explain the decline in membership to 55,000. Perhaps numbers for the last ten years.**

Thank you for the challenge. I thought this would be difficult, but then I realized the statistics were in the managing directors report and it only took a little research. I’m not sure when the number 55,000 was mentioned, but according to our records we averaged between 6,131 and 6,726 meetings over the past ten years.

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To determine the number of members in OA is difficult as we do not track these statistics. I have always taken the number of meetings and multiplied it by ten. As we know there are many smaller meetings, but there are also meetings with as many as 100 members. Even in our lowest year that would be 61,000 members.
When looking at the numbers here, I can see what happened during the past few years where our numbers increased in 2017 but then dropped significantly from 2017 to 2018. I have no history on the why. I do believe the increase in 2021 was due to our discovery of the technical wonder of virtual meetings, and the fact that many of us were confined to home.

I want to use this opportunity to remind all our group secretaries to update their meeting information through the Find a Meeting page on oa.org. We rely on meetings to keep this information current and if our statistics are skewed it’s because this is the only window we have into the number of new people who walk through the doors looking for OA recovery. Each one of us is responsible to reach out and encourage the newcomer and the longtimer to keep coming back. More meetings indicate more members, but as you can see from these numbers, our Fellowship is not growing, but it is stable.

23) Regarding Article VIII, Section 3b 2, as representatives from Conference Support Committee speak at the World Service Business Conference, wouldn’t it be good to include them in nondelegates who may speak?
Yes, thank you for noting an oversight on our part. We will need to amend that section and the Standing Rules before the next Conference.

24) Regarding Article VIII, Section 4a 2, isn’t region trustee liaison already a trustee?
Yes, all trustees are elected as a trustee liaison and some trustee liaisons are assigned to serve as a trustee liaison to a region per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VII, Section 2, c.2.

25) What is the criteria for a specific focus meeting? How is that criteria determined? Can any OA group come up with a criteria?
Thank you for the questions. Specific focus meetings have been a part of OA since 1994. They are defined in WSBC Policy 1994b.

Overeaters Anonymous recognizes the existence of specific-focus meetings comprised of persons with similar attributes. For a list of these meetings, see the oa.org Find a Meeting page. According to the Traditions, bylaws, and policies of OA, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. Therefore, we ask each person attending a meeting to respect and consider the group conscience of the whole Fellowship and welcome and give a voice to any person who has a desire to stop eating compulsively.

The current list is: 100-Pounders; Anorexia/Bulimia; Asian Pacific Islander Desi; Atheist/Agnostic/Secular; Bariatric Surgery; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; Health Issues; LGBTQ+; Men; Women; and Young People.

The management of the criteria falls to the Board of Trustees. The current list is comprised of topics that have been approved over the years.

If you desire to have a new specific focus added to the list, contact your trustee liaison, or send your suggestion to info@oa.org. Provide your reason for requesting the new topic and it will be considered at a Board of Trustees meeting. It will either be added to the list, or you will be informed of the reason for it not being approved.
26) **How can we cultivate and focus on unity when it comes to the different manifestations of the disease?**

It’s who we are. We are from different backgrounds, different cultures, and different in so many ways, except that we found a common solution to our illness. Unity makes us stronger together. We have more compassion and empathy for members with different struggles. We see what we have overcome to get to the other side of this killing disease. We get to see we are all one. It helps us live our Twelve Step recovery program in and out of the rooms. “What would God have me do?” It helps us navigate the world outside OA.

27) **Regarding Article XII, Section 1f, when is the number of groups to meet 55 percent required to respond calculated? At the beginning of the six-month notification or at the end or at the World Service Business Conference where the proposal is accepted? (Refer to Proposal 3 WSBC 2024)**

Once the notification is sent, the 55 percent is based on the number of meetings registered at that time.

28) **We are dealing with athletes who are overexercising because of the fear of gaining weight. What suggestions do you have for these members? Can they have a specific focus?**

I do love the idea of a specific focus for overexercising. Our disease manifests physically, mentally, and spiritually. Together, we get better. Members need to hear how other members overcame their fear of gaining weight by not overexercising. It usually starts with asking for help from your sponsor or a fitness professional to suggest healthy limits on the amount of exercise in a day, week, or month when creating an action plan. Ask friends in the program to keep you accountable. Maybe get an exercise sponsor, someone who has what you want and has overcome your problem, one day at a time. Talk about it in meetings and on outreach calls. Write about it, pray about it. We are as varied as our food plans. What might be overexercising for one would be underexercising for another. Ask Higher Power for help.

29) **Why does the majority required remain 95 when there are fewer delegates than the original 188?**

Thank you. Your question combines two different things. According to Robert’s Rules of Order, the quorum is the number of people who must be present to conduct business legally. For the 2024 World Service Business Conference there were 188 registered delegates. The minimum number of registered voters needed to be present to conduct business would be 95. This quorum number remains that for the entire Conference whether delegates leave the Conference or not.

The majority depends on the number of registered delegates present at the time of voting. If the motion requires a majority vote, that number can change. For example, if there are 188 registered voters present, the majority vote would need to be 95 or above. If the number of registered voters changed to 176, then the majority vote would need to be 81 or above. If the number of registered delegates present dropped to 90, then a vote couldn’t be taken because the number of registered delegates dropped below the quorum of 95. This is the number of registered delegates who must be present to conduct business.
In short, the quorum stays the same, whereas the majority number can vary at the time of voting.

30) **Regarding Article XII, Section 1f, how long has this paragraph describing the Steps/Traditions ratification requirements been as is?**

This section has not been invoked since it was adopted approximately fifty years ago. The section does not state when the calculation is done. All motions at the World Service Business Conference take effect at the conclusion of the final business meeting unless the delegates adopt a provision to do something different. In the absence of a special provision, the World Service Office would start preparing the notification based on the current meeting list.

31) **Can we have a locally produced literature on the topic of vacations?**

Thank you for your question. Here is a resource which may be helpful: [https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/07/04195007/guidelines-for-locally-produced-literature.pdf](https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/07/04195007/guidelines-for-locally-produced-literature.pdf)

From these Guidelines: "Overeaters Anonymous supports the development of literature where current OA literature doesn’t fill a need. Locally produced literature may include stories of personal recovery unique to specific geographic areas, languages, or cultural groups."

Currently, there is no OA literature fully dedicated to the topic of “vacations,” however, I am guessing you likely mean “how to remain abstinent on vacation.” With that in mind, I looked at the stories in *Abstinence, Second Edition* and found there are at least seventeen stories which provide experience, strength, and hope on this topic.

I also searched the online *Lifeline* archives and found twenty stories that mention “vacation” and sixty that mention “travel”.

- [https://www.oalifeline.org/?s=vacation](https://www.oalifeline.org/?s=vacation)
- [https://www.oalifeline.org/page/6/?s=travel](https://www.oalifeline.org/page/6/?s=travel)

It appears that OA does have substantial literature on this topic.

Regarding the second criteria, the topic of recovery while on vacation is likely a global topic, rather than specific to a particular geographic area.

If you feel that OA would benefit from a more focused piece of literature on remaining abstinent during vacations, you could ask your service body to submit a literature proposal for consideration. You can obtain the form by emailing info@oa.org. Proposals are due by April 1 of each year. Thank you, and I hope this information is helpful.

32) **Can one group be active on social media (Instagram)?**

The most important considerations with respect to social media are the protection of individual anonymity and respecting the Tradition of anonymity so as not to bring harm to the Fellowship.
It was for this reason that the 2019 WSBC addressed the issue of anonymity in public media and the Board of Trustees issued this specific guidance for users: https://oa.org/guidelines/anonymity-in-the-digital-world/.

OA is represented in many venues and at several levels in our modern digital world, and it has proven to be a very effective tool for outreach. OA itself has an Instagram account as do various service bodies around the globe. So, there is no reason an individual group could not establish one as well. Please if you choose to do so, make sure you follow the guidance provided, and if in doubt ask your affiliated service body for help.

And while you’re at it, please remember with all social media to use only photos, video/audio recordings, artwork, or other digital media that are properly documented with permission to use.

33) **How can we start a new youth meeting?**
OA does not have meetings that are focused specifically for youth under the age of 18. In the spirit of Tradition Four (Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.), it is recommended that a group or service body considering allowing individuals under 18 years of age to attend meetings, first obtain legal advice before allowing such individuals to attend and before creating or instituting any applicable policies.

For internet safety purposes, we discourage minors attending at online meetings. We also have this resource: https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/05/06144746/start-a-teen-meeting.pdf

34) **Can a group hire a special employee?**
This question is answered when we look at Tradition Eight. While the Tradition mentions that service centers may employ special workers, it may also be applied to a group should they require help from someone other than a volunteer member.

One example that comes to mind was a group that made the decision to hire an American Sign Language interpreter to support a member. Another, which used to be more prevalent, was to have a babysitter available during a meeting for mothers to participate more fully in their recovery meeting. It is up to a group conscience as to how the group contributions are used toward our primary purpose of carrying the message, so long as they are self-supporting.

35) **Can a service structure issue a statement against groups?**
OA has set forth a policy about qualification as a registered group. If there are violations of this policy, a service body can consider reaching out to a group in violation. Service bodies have found that the best approach is to contact a group to try to find a solution together.

From the OA, Inc. Bylaws:
Article V — Overeaters Anonymous Groups
Section 1 – Definition
These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:
1. As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

2. All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.

3. No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).

4. As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.

5. It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.

In rare instances, when it is felt that OA as a whole is affected by a group’s actions, a service body may consider making a general statement when our Traditions are violated.

According to Tradition Four, “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole”.

36) **The Twelve Concepts of OA are very important. Why don’t we have more references and content about them?**

That is a great question. Wouldn’t it be great to add the Concepts to current literature or as a stand-alone? If you have an idea, you can write to the World Service Office and ask the Literature Committee to consider that. There is a form that can be requested and you can ask for what you’d like to see.

37) **Why aren’t sharing at a meeting and exercise considered part of the Tools of recovery?**

**Same for quiet time.**

Sharing at a meeting, exercise, and quiet time can be part of an OA member’s action plan, one of OA’s nine Tools of recovery. The 2010 World Service Business Conference voted to add Action Plan as the ninth Tool of recovery. In the years since, motions to add additional Tools to the current nine have not been adopted by the WSBC delegates. A service body always has the option to bring a motion to WSBC to additional Tools.

In *The Tools of Recovery (abridged) (oa.org)*, an action plan is defined as: Creating an action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions to support our individual abstinence and emotional, spiritual, and physical recovery. This Tool, like our plan of eating, may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted as we progress in our recovery.

38) **The Steps for children are written on the website. Why don’t we have more explanations for them?**

*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeater’s Anonymous: A Kid’s View* is no longer published. It was discontinued. The publication is available only in the Document Library on oa.org under the category Historical Literature as a downloadable pdf. No revision will be done unless a decision is made to start publishing it again.

39) **In parliamentary procedure, is it always necessary for the chair to call the question for a vote before voting on the motion, even if time for questions has run out?**

The chair actually does not “call” the question. Instead, they “put” the question as in put it to a vote. Calling the question means that someone wants to force an end to debate. The chair
does not have that authority although they are required at some point to put the “call” of the question to a vote in the OA rules.

Under Robert’s Rules of Order, whenever the chair asks either “are you ready for the question?” (verbiage I don’t use often) or “is there any (further) debate?” and no one responds, the chair is then authorized to simply start processing the motion for a vote. The next phrase would be “those in favor of adopting the motion to ________, say aye” or however you are voting.

40) We have a sponsors/sponsees WhatsApp group (registered with oa.org). Some members, privately, state that they are part of a group that self identifies as particular group. I understand they are not registered with OA, use techniques that may not follow our Traditions. What more can be done to protect our OA fellows?
The Board of Trustees is conducting an audit of OA group websites to determine that each group is following the guidelines of Overeaters Anonymous. If the OA website is using the OA logo or name, then it will be determined if the proper permissions of the OA trademark have been requested and granted to use the OA name and logo. If the OA group website is out of compliance, the Board of Trustees and the World Service Office staff will work with that group to become compliant. If the group does not want to abide by the OA trademark guidelines, then the group is asked to remove the OA logo and name. If the group chooses not to remove the OA logo and name, then legal avenues are then initiated.

41) Can we produce films, clips, or audio recordings for youth sessions? As you know, children and teenagers are less engaged in reading. This way, we can present the content of OA to them in a different format.
Thank you for this question. At this time, we will not be producing any information for youth. Our strategic plan (developed by the World Service Off staff, trustees, and region chairs) has us focused on our diversity and global reach to those aged 18 and above.

42) Can we have one World Service Business Conference outside North America every ten years?
Thank you for your question. Currently, the Board of Trustees Conference Planning Committee is the committee that oversees the planning of the World Service Business Conference (WSBC) each year in coordination with our World Service Office (WSO) staff. One of the main reasons why the in-person WSBC is held in Albuquerque, New Mexico is that our WSO headquarters is located in Rio Rancho, New Mexico which is very close to Albuquerque. The benefit of holding the WSBC close to Rio Rancho is to allow our WSO staff to attend and to keep their travel costs and expenses to the WSO budget to a minimum. If we were to move the WSBC outside of the Rio Rancho area, there would be an increase in cost, and therefore, the registration fee for each delegate would likely increase. The Conference Planning Committee and the WSO staff are open to suggestions, but ultimately it may come down to the budget cost of moving the WSBC to another location. It is more likely for the Convention Planning Committee to consider having the World Service Convention at a location outside North America.
43) **Any advice for sponsors who have sponsees who chronically slip?**

I think all of us who sponsor face this dilemma at some point or another and it is tricky. The *Sponsorship Kit* (item #210), available at our bookstore, offers good advice on sponsorship in many situations, including this one. Beyond that, let me say you will hear varied approaches if you ask around. I know one popular speaker who insists we should drop the “chronic slipper” in hopes that they will find a sponsor more able to reach them. Personally, I stick with a sponsee if they are willing to grasp the first step. I never know when will be the last time they slip. But that’s just me. The best course is probably somewhere between these two extremes. Purchase the *Sponsorship Kit*, pray if that’s something you practice, seek guidance, and trust. Remember also that we sponsor to be of service and to keep ourselves abstinent. The Twelfth Step says, “We tried to carry this message to the compulsive eater who still suffers…”. It says nothing about succeeding. Thank you for your question and for your obvious love and concern for your sponsees.

44) **Where can I find a summary of all regions information on one page including region number, geography of each region, number of meetings and virtual groups, number of intergroups, and number of other service bodies?**

The region map is available on oa.org and it shows all the territories within a region. The statistics on each region are in the Delegate Binder in the region reports. I do not know of anywhere this information is kept because as soon as you update the numbers, they are quickly out of date. But here’s the way the OA structure looked as of January 2024.