

The Twelve Concepts of OA

In Overeaters Anonymous, the Twelve Steps serve as the spiritual principles that support our personal recovery from compulsive overeating. The Twelve Traditions aid us, individually and collectively, in maintaining unity of purpose within the Fellowship. The Twelve Concepts of OA Service, adopted by the World Service Business Conference (WSBC) in 1994, help us apply the Steps and Traditions in our service work, which is an important part of the OA program. The Concepts define and guide the practices of the service structures that conduct the business of OA.

These Concepts depict the chain of delegated responsibility we use to provide service throughout the world. Although they focus on OA world services, the Concepts direct all OA's trusted servants to well-considered actions for group participation, decision making, voting and the expression of minority opinions. The Twelve Concepts support our primary purpose of carrying OA's message of recovery to the still-suffering compulsive overeater.

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 the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the 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 acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

For more information about the Twelve Concepts, read the pamphlet *The Twelve Concepts of OA Service*, available from the OA WSO online catalog.