

# OA GUIDELINES



## Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Intergroups

- Fundraising Ideas
- The Tradition of Self-Support
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### FUNDRAISING IDEAS

OA events are wonderful for fellowship and recovery, and the funds they generate can help groups and intergroups continue Twelfth-Step work. Fund-raisers which include the use of OA literature reinforce the program and help carry the message.

#### Suggested fundraisers

*Anniversary celebrations* Annual OA events such as Overeaters Anonymous' birthday may be celebrated with a marathon, banquet or dance. National holidays can also be special times for fellow OAers to be together. Valentine's Day dances, Independence Day picnics, Thanksgiving "thankathons" and Halloween and New Year's Eve balls are examples of events with a holiday theme.

*Games and activities* Fundraising doesn't have to stop once the admission fee is paid. A dance or carnival can include games and activities that can be enjoyed for a nominal charge. Examples: shaving-cream pie tosses, photo booths and face painting stands. Raffles/drawings, money boxes (participants insert dollar bills with their names attached; the winner gets half the contents, the sponsoring service body the other half), or other games of chance may be offered in areas where state and local law permits.

*Merchandise sales* T-shirts, mugs, book bags, and other items can be sold at OA events, and serve as ongoing fundraisers for groups and intergroups. In accordance with OA World Service Business Conference policy, it's suggested that all sale items be approved by group conscience and that sales be conducted in a manner that will not divert attention from our primary purpose or endorse an outside enterprise.

*Auctions* Items or services contributed by OA members can be purchased by the highest bidder.

*"Garage" sales* Clothing and other items contributed by members can be sold for set prices.

*Talent shows* Members can show off their creativity and raise money too.

*Gratitude pledges* Members may choose to make special Seventh-Tradition contributions to celebrate OA birthdays, memorials, or other occasions. Pledge envelopes can be made available at meetings.

*Contribution jars* These could be set out for special causes as well as ongoing needs such as the region representative or World Service Business Conference delegate travel funds, telephone funds, buying office equipment, or scholarships to OA events.

*"No Bake" sales* Members contribute money they used to spend on snack or junk-food items.

For additional ideas or guidance, contact other intergroups or your region.

### THE TRADITION OF SELF-SUPPORT

OA's Seventh Tradition states: "*Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*"

A question groups and intergroups must ask themselves is: "Are we truly self-supporting?"

#### How can our group increase the Seventh Tradition collection?

Group members may not be aware of how important individual contributions are to OA's continued existence. To bring this point home during meetings, the group treasurer might read aloud OA's Seventh Tradition and its explanation from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, as the basket is being passed. Group treasurers can also make monthly reports to their groups and make sure the basket circulates to all members.

### **How much should our group give to our intergroup and why?**

Many meetings never contribute financially to their intergroups—sometimes because they don't understand the importance of it, sometimes because they don't know how. A good guide for making appropriate financial contributions to intergroups is the pamphlet *Through Our Own Contributions, OA is Self-Supporting at All Levels*. It explains how contributions support intergroup services such as telephone hotlines, meeting lists, public information and Twelfth-Step-Within activities.

### **What can intergroups do to encourage contributions?**

Intergroup officers may want to attend meetings that haven't contributed to the intergroup and explain the concept of self-support. Monthly intergroup newsletters can print intergroup treasurers' reports to let members know how contributions are being spent. Newsletters can prominently print the intergroup, region and World Service Office addresses to help groups send in their contributions. Intergroup treasurers should keep in regular contact with group treasurers. Groups that do contribute could be acknowledged through thank-you notes and notices in the intergroup newsletter.

### **Am I giving enough?**

A personal question members may want to ask themselves is: "Am I still contributing in the same manner as when I first came into the program?" Sponsors might share with sponsees the meaning and importance of the Seventh Tradition.

## **THE PRUDENT RESERVE**

### **What is a prudent reserve?**

A prudent reserve is an amount of money set aside to meet an organization's operational expenses in the event that contributions decrease. For example, the

World Service Office has established a policy for its prudent reserve, which calls for a reserve "not to exceed one year's operating budget plus outstanding liabilities plus one-time capital expenditures." Each group or intergroup 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, three to six months. 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 intergroup.

### **What if our group doesn't have any extra money?**

If a service body finds it can't fully fund its prudent reserve all at once, fundraising activities such as those suggested in these guidelines may be undertaken to raise the needed monies.

## **GUARDING OUR TRADITIONS**

It's the responsibility of all OA members to act as guardians of our Traditions. Not upholding our Traditions often occurs through misunderstanding or misinformation. We need to be constantly alert that we don't inadvertently make a precedent setting decision that could adversely affect our own and other OA groups and thus OA as a whole.

For more information, see the *OA Handbook*; *Guidelines for OA Events*; *Through Our Own Contributions, OA is Self-Supporting at All Levels*; the pamphlet *The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*; and the book *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*.

**Note:** See *Budget Guidelines for Service Bodies* for help creating, monitoring and maintaining budgets.

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