



Temporary Secular Step Sponsoring | For the Sponsee

Some people are lucky and find a long-term sponsor right away, but it's also very common to have a short-term sponsor. And, most people in OA go through several sponsors. Having a temporary secular sponsor provides a solid introduction to secular resources in case your next sponsor is more traditional.

Goals and Expectations

During this 10-week Temporary Secular Step Sponsoring program you will:

- Read and review the OA brochure [Where Do I Start](#)
- Read Steps 1-3 using traditional OA literature as well as a secular 12-Step book
- Work Steps 1-3 in the OA 12&12 Workbook
- Find an Accountability Buddy
- Start looking for a more permanent sponsor to start Step 4 with

Sponsees can expect 1-3 hours of homework a week, in addition to attending OA/SO meetings and communicating with their temporary sponsor weekly for an hour.

Even though this is a temporary arrangement, you should take the relationship seriously by committing to arriving on time and doing your homework. You are “working” the Steps, which means you need to work!

Required Materials

Your initial financial outlay may be around \$50-60. Think of how much you've spent on binges or at a “pay and weigh,” and you'll find this a good deal! Be sure to have all eight pieces purchased/printed out before meeting with your sponsor.

Required Materials

TIP: It's a good idea to create a folder on your desktop to hold all the digital files so you can find them easily.

Free: Download or Print These Out

- OA's [Where Do I Start](#) brochure (free, pdf)
- SO's [Welcome Secular OA Newcomers!](#) (free, pdf)

Note: You can get hard copies of both of the above at: <https://bit.ly/SOnewcomer>

- [Secular Translations of the “God” Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#) (free pdf, print this out and keep it in your OA workbook)
- [Freethinker Alternative 12 Steps for Overeaters](#) (free pdf, print this out and keep it in your OA workbook)

Purchase (If You Don't Own Already)

- A Journal
- OA's [The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous](#), Second Edition (\$16.50, available in print, digital or audio versions)
- OA's [The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#), Second Edition (\$15 print, \$9 digital)
- Secular 12-Step guide (choose one): [The Alternative 12 Steps: A Secular Guide to Recovery](#) (Martha Cleveland, 2014, \$13.95 print or \$5.99 Kindle) **or** [Staying Sober Without God](#) (Jeffrey Munn, 2019, \$13.79 print or \$5.99 Kindle) **or** [The Proactive Twelve Steps](#) (Serge Prengel, 2021, \$9.99 print or \$5.99 Kindle) **or** your favorite secular 12-Step book



Temporary Secular Step Sponsoring | Syllabus

Before Week 1

- Introductions/expectations
- Figure out meeting time/day/venue
- Decide on the secular 12-Step book
- Read [Where Do I Start](#) OA brochure

Week 1 Meeting

Date:

- Confirm all required materials are in hand
- Review any questions from the [Where Do I Start](#) OA brochure
- Discuss Food Plans
- Discuss Abstinence
- Look at OA's 9 Tools (pages 5-7 in [Where Do I Start](#): Plan of Eating, Sponsorship, Meetings, Telephone, Writing, Literature, Action Plan, Anonymity). Plan on using these tools every week!
- Identify at least three different meetings to attend (check [here](#) for secular meetings)

Homework for Week 2 Meeting

- Create a Food Plan
- Make a list of your Red/Yellow/Green (RYG) Light foods
Red = I no longer eat these foods because they cause me to binge, and I may decide to remove them from my home.
Yellow = I eat these foods with caution because they may sometimes trigger cravings. To be on the safe side, I may measure my Yellow Light food portions.
Green = I can eat all of these foods in moderation, and they do not trigger cravings.
- What is your abstinence?
- Go to at least three meetings in the next week ([secular meeting list](#))
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 2 Meeting

Date:

- Review Food Plan
- Review RYG Food list
- Review Abstinence
- Review Meetings (Did you like any?)
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 3 Meeting

- Read Introductions and Step 1s in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book, highlight passages of interest
- Listen to [Alternative Versions of Step 1](#) recording and follow along in the [Discussion Guide](#), pages 4-5.
- Answer the 6 questions on pages 3-4 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 3 Meeting

Date:

- Discuss Step 1 and any passages of interest in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book
- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 3-4
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 4 Meeting

- Answer the 6 questions on pages 5-6 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Think about action plans you may need (e.g., "I made this treat just for you," traveling, holidays, restaurants, potlucks, free food at work, etc.,)
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 4 Meeting

Date:

- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 5-6
- Discuss getting an Accountability Buddy to build support network
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 5 Meeting

- Answer the 5 questions on pages 7-8 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Listen to [Accountability Buddy](#) Podcast
- Read [Accountability Buddies in Secular Overeaters](#) handout (pdf, 1 page)
- Create an Accountability Buddy ad to post in the Zoom Chat or Secular Overeaters Facebook group
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 5 Meeting

Date:

- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 7-8
- Do you feel like you have a compulsive eating issue? If yes, yay—you're done with Step 1!
- Review Accountability Buddy ad
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 6 Meeting

- Read Step 2 in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book, highlight passages of interest
- Listen to [Alternative Versions of Step 2 recording](#) and follow along in the [Discussion Guide](#), pages 6-7
- Answer the 6 questions on pages 9-10 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Post Accountability Buddy ads at meetings and/or SO Facebook group
- Follow up with interested people
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 6 Meeting

Date:

- Discuss Step 2 and any passages of interest in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book
- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 9-10
- Be sure to keep a copy of this handout with the workbook: [Secular Translations of the "God" Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#)
- Check in about finding an Accountability Buddy
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 7 Meeting

- Answer the 6 questions on pages 11-12 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook—Higher Power questions are going to start cropping up, so refer to the [Secular Translations of the "God" Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#) to reframe questions
- If an Accountability Buddy is still needed:
- Post Accountability Buddy ads at meetings
 - Follow up with interested people
 - Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 7 Meeting

Date:

- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 11-12
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 8 Meeting

- Answer the 7 questions on pages 13-15 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Use the [Secular Translations of the “God” Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#)
- Think about what kind of sponsor you want and how you will find them
- Read the information on this SO webpage: <https://secularovereaters.org/so-sponsors/>
- Write an ad for a sponsor
- If an Accountability Buddy is still needed:
 - Post Accountability Buddy ads at meetings
 - Follow up with interested people
 - Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 8 Meeting

Date:

- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 13-15
- Do you feel like you need help with compulsive food behaviors? If so, yay—you’re done with Step 2!
- Review sponsor ad (include start date!)
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 9 Meeting

- Read Step 3 in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book, highlight passages of interest
- Listen to [Alternative Versions of Step 3](#) recording and follow along in the [Discussion Guide](#), pages 8-9

Week 8 continues next column

- Answer the 6 questions on pages 16-17 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Use the [Secular Translations of the “God” Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#)
- Post sponsor ad at meetings
- Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 9 Meeting

Date:

- Discuss Step 3 and any passages of interest in the OA 12 & 12 and the alternative Step book
- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 16-17
- Discuss progress on finding a new sponsor
- If time, how did you use the 9 Tools this week?

Homework for Week 10 Meeting

- Answer the 6 questions on pages 18-19 in the OA 12 & 12 Workbook
- Use the [Secular Translations of the “God” Questions in The Twelve Step Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous](#)
- If a new sponsor is still needed:
 - Post sponsor ad at meetings
 - Use all nine tools sometime this week

Week 10 Meeting

Date:

- Review OA 12 & 12 Workbook answers on pages 18-19
- Do you believe that OA/SO can help you with your compulsive food behaviors? If yes, yay—you’re done with Step 3!
- Action plan: what are next steps now that the temporary sponsorship has ended?
- Any feedback about the past 10 weeks—the process or the relationship? (What went well, could be tweaked, too fast/slow, etc.,)