

## **Compulsive Eaters Anonymous - HOW Relapse Prevention Meeting Format**

Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting of Compulsive Eaters Anonymous-HOW. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a compulsive eater and the leader for this meeting.

Will you please join me in the Serenity Prayer?

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Is there anyone here for the first time or a returning member? Please give us your first name so we may get to know you.

Compulsive Eaters Anonymous-HOW is a group of individuals, who, through shared experience and mutual support, are recovering from compulsive eating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. CEA-HOW is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer.

*The next four readings can be found in the Forever Abstinent book and on the CEA-HOW website.*

Will someone please read "The 12 Steps of CEA-HOW"?

Will someone please read "The 12 Traditions"?

Will someone please read "The CEA-HOW Concept"?

Will someone with at least 30 days of back-to-back CEA-HOW abstinence please read "The Seven Tools of CEA-HOW"?

This is a CEA-HOW Relapse Prevention meeting. This meeting ends at \_\_\_\_\_. (On the fourth week of the month, we have a speaker who shares their experience, strength and hope for 15 minutes.) We normally hold our business meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ for a maximum of 15 minutes.

Everyone is offered a chance to share provided they have at least 30 days of continuous CEA-HOW abstinence. Those members who have at least 7 days of continuous CEA-HOW abstinence may pitch if their pitching has been discussed with their sponsor.

We ask that no one give advice and please no crosstalk. Crosstalk during a meeting refers to expressing a compliment, commenting on someone's share, any form of disruption, advice giving, or speaking directly to another person rather than to the group. Sharing our own experience, strength and hope and avoiding crosstalk frees us from worry about negative or positive judgment. We further ask that those who share keep to the subject at hand, avoiding outside issues, such as: religious creeds, other 12-step programs (except in passing), or outside literature or philosophies. Remain positive by offering experience, strength, and hope as it relates to CEA-HOW.

Shares will be self-limited to 3 minutes and please no second shares until everyone who wants to has had a chance to share.

We all need to be loved and accepted, not because we are abstinent, not because we are at goal weight, but just for who we are. This is especially true of CEA-HOW members who are still suffering. We

have been in program for some time, perhaps for months or years, but either we have not attained abstinence or we are in relapse. When asked what helped us the most, people who have gone through this painful experience agree on one thing: being loved and accepted--even when they were eating compulsively, even when they were falling apart emotionally, even when they felt hopeless and unlovable--was the key to their eventually loving and accepting themselves and, from there, getting abstinent.

### **First Week of the month** – Symptoms and Solutions

*(Leader chooses one topic to discuss. If there is time, leader chooses a second topic.)*

1. Increased Stress: Loss of abstinence not being as important as once was, letting a relationship become more important than our program, all the little stresses or stuff that we just ignore, or not working a program the way we used to.
2. Thinking: Old ways of thinking slip in, we ignore them and don't talk about them with anyone in the program.
3. Feelings: A change in the way we perceive ourselves; everything is great, when it really isn't; we are depressed and do nothing about it.
4. Behavior: We start to act differently, like, covering up what's really going on inside. "I look good on the outside, because that's the behavior I want others to see, but I know something is wrong."
5. Denial: Our thoughts go something like this – "I feel different, everything about me is different, my thoughts, my behavior, feelings - but these pass quickly and, besides, I don't want to think about this." This will get progressively worse over time.

*(Leader reads)* Please stop right now and identify not how you are feeling but what you are feeling.

If any of these items apply to you, please discuss them with your sponsor or another compulsive eater and discuss it immediately. You may not have the luxury of time!

The floor is now open for discussion.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Week of the Month**

*(Leader chooses one or two of the following topics to discuss))*

*(Leader reads)* The most common cause of relapse is that we have stopped doing what kept us abstinent. We cut back or stopped going to meetings. Cut back or stopped praying every day. Cut back or stopped calling our sponsors daily. Stopped reading and writing daily. Never started or stopped making our daily outreach calls. Never started or stopped doing service. Stopped applying the 12 Steps into our everyday lives.

#### **Relapse Prone Thinking:**

I deny my fear.

I convince myself I'll never break my abstinence.

I become overconfident about my recovery.

I decide that "not eating compulsively" is all I need.

I become critical of how others work their programs.  
 I behave compulsively: I overwork or under-work; I over-talk or withdraw: I oversleep or under-sleep.  
 I start isolating.  
 I view my problems as insolvable.  
 I make unrealistic or haphazard plans.  
 I live in the “there and then”.  
 I avoid having fun.  
 I overanalyze myself.  
 I become irritated by friends and family.  
 I am easily angered.  
 I begin blaming people, places, things, and conditions for my problems.  
 I begin doubting my disease.  
 I experience periods of deep depression.  
 I hoard money, sex or power.  
 I develop an “I don’t care” attitude.  
 I openly reject help.  
 I rationalize that eating can’t make my life any worse than it is now.  
 I feel sorry for myself.  
 I have fantasies of eating like normal people.  
 I begin to lie consciously.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Week of the Month** – Recommitment to Steps 1, 2 and 3 **OR** My Relapse 911 Plan

Recommitment to Steps 1, 2 and 3

1. Are you ready to have your HP run the show? How have you shown evidence of this willingness?
2. How do you intend to seek HP?
3. Discuss what actions you will take to prevent yourself from taking control again?
  - a. In the area of food
  - b. With your family
  - c. In manipulation of friends
  - d. In dealing with character defects

- - - **OR** - - -

My Relapse 911 Plan

Make a list of CEA-HOW actions you can do instead of using your compulsive eating as a coping device. Keep your list in a place where you can find it when you need it!  
*(Ask for members to share what they listed and open for discussion.)*

### **4<sup>th</sup> Week of the Month** – Speaker Meeting

The Leader introduces the Speaker; a Timekeeper times for 15 minutes.

*(The Speaker selects one reading from the approved literature and shares on “Acceptance” or “Surrender”.*

*Examples: “BB” – “Acceptance”, pages 417-420, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, or “Surrender”, pages 58 and 63.)*

The Speaker reads the selected reading and then gives a 15-minute share on his/her Prevention Relapse Plan and how he/she has accepted or surrendered.

*(After Speaker's share, ask the Speaker to suggest a topic related to the share.)*

**5<sup>th</sup> Week of the Month** – Leader's Choice

*(If there is a fifth week Leader chooses one of the formats above.)*

**Seventh Tradition Break (about 10-15 minutes before the end of the meeting)**

Our **Seventh Tradition** tells us that every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. The Seventh tradition is the only source of income to support Phone Bridge operations, sponsorship of retreats, sending Area 10 delegates to represent us at the annual business conference, and spreading the message that there is recovery from compulsive eating. Your contributions are a primary source to help "CEA-HOW to continue to function." At phone meetings, we don't pass a literal basket or hat, but we do encourage you to please give generously.

Send your Seventh Tradition donations via check to:

CEA-HOW Bridge Meeting

PO Box 983

Duarte, CA 91010-9998

To make contributions using PAYPAL:

1. Go to [www.ceahow.org](http://www.ceahow.org).
2. Select "Meetings".
3. Click on "Phone Bridge Meetings".
4. Scroll down to the "PAYPAL DONATION" tab and follow the prompts.

Does anyone have any CEA-HOW-related announcements, including any open service positions?

To hear a recording of the weekly announcements you can call [605-475-4849](tel:605-475-4849), access code [605134#](tel:605134#).

You must have a CEA-HOW sponsor to receive the food plan. Sponsors in need of food plans and members needing literature can send an email to [phonebridgeliterature@gmail.com](mailto:phonebridgeliterature@gmail.com).

If you experience any difficulty accessing the conference line, please send an email to [phonebridgecoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:phonebridgecoordinator@gmail.com).

To receive a list of member numbers or to be added to the phone bridge outreach list, you can send an email to [phonebridgeoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:phonebridgeoutreach@gmail.com). When contacting our Outreach Coordinator, please include your name, phone number and time zone.

If you call a phone bridge meeting listed on the CEA-HOW website and find that the meeting doesn't have a leader or the meeting is not in progress as scheduled, please notify our Meeting Coordinator at [phonebridgemeetingcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:phonebridgemeetingcoordinator@gmail.com).

Are there any CEA-HOW step-ups or anniversaries?

For new members or returnees to CEA-HOW we have volunteers who will stay after the meeting to answer your questions and help you get a sponsor. You must have a sponsor to receive the food plan. Are there any newcomers or returnees here today? May I have a volunteer to stay after the meeting?

A sponsor is a CEA-HOW member who has 30 days of continuous CEA-HOW abstinence, has completed 30 days of questions and has taken the first 3 steps. A sponsor will help you work through the 12 steps. Will all available sponsors please tell us who you are, your abstinent date, weight loss, phone number, and if you are available as a Food, Inventory, Step and/or Maintenance Sponsor.

If you are in need of a sponsor or if you become an available sponsor, please send an email to [phonebridgesponsorcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:phonebridgesponsorcoordinator@gmail.com). When contacting our Sponsor Coordinator, please leave your name, phone number, time zone, and level of sponsor needed or the level that you can provide.

I wish to thank all of the members who took part in today's meeting. Please remember our cherished Tradition of Anonymity - Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.

The good news is that you never have to relapse again!

All you have to do is completely turn around your way of thinking about things and dealing with them. All you have to do is let your Higher Power do for you what you could never do for yourself. All you have to do is surrender and accept your Higher Power's love for you and commit to living your life with love...one day at a time.

Will someone please read page 11 from *As Bill Sees It*, "Quantity or Quality" (Optional)

"About this slip business—I would not be too discouraged. I think you are suffering a great deal from a needless guilt. For some reason or other the Lord has laid out tougher paths for some of us and I guess you are treading one of them. God is not asking us to be successful. He is only asking us to try to be. That, you surely are doing, and have been doing. So I would not stay away from A.A. through any feeling of discouragement or shame. It's just the place you should be. Why don't you try just as a member? You don't have to carry the whole A.A. on your back you know!

It is not always the quantity of good things that you do, it is also the quality that counts.

Above all, take it one day at a time."

The requirements of CEA-HOW are what this particular group has found to be effective in working this program, and do not represent any other organization or meeting except this one. The opinions expressed here today by those who shared are their own and not necessarily those of CEA-HOW as a whole.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead.

After a moment of quiet meditation, will those of you who wish to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.