OSPA
obsessive skin pickers anonymous

Guidelines for OSPA Literature

An Overview of the Writing, Reviewing, and Approval Process

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Purpose

These guidelines serve as a foundation for writing, reviewing, and approving literature for Obsessive Skin Pickers Anonymous (OSPA). They help ensure consistency across all OSPA materials: past, present, and future.

The items approved and published by the OSPA World Service Organization (WSO) include the main content available on the OSPA WSO website, as well as any written, audio, or visual resources distributed from OSPA WSO online accounts. OSPA owns the copyright to all its publications.

Materials that are not defined as OSPA-approved include documents and slides created by individual OSPA groups and meetings.

Please note that certain sections of this document are in development, and updated regularly.

Principles & Standards

OSPA literature respects and follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OSPA.

> The Twelve Steps of OSPA, adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous, establish the OSPA program of recovery related to obsessive skin picking. Similarly, the Twelve Traditions of OSPA, also adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous, establish the principles for how OSPA members, OSPA groups, and the OSPA fellowship work together as a whole.

OSPA literature shares only the OSPA message of recovery.

> OSPA avoids mixing its message with outside media, programs, issues, or causes. OSPA literature is written by OSPA members who have experience with recovery and abstinence in the OSPA program. If necessary, OSPA literature may quote or reference conference-approved literature from other 12-step programs, as long as copyright laws are observed, proper credit is given, and written permission is obtained in advance.

OSPA literature has an identifiable purpose.

> OSPA literature is published to share the OSPA message of recovery. In order to do this, OSPA literature must establish who it will help and in what way. Both defining and fulfilling these needs are essential for OSPA literature.

OSPA literature is clear, easy to read, and can be translated into other languages and accessible formats.

OSPA's message must be able to reach obsessive skin pickers regardless of reading ability, native language, or accessibility needs. OSPA literature may include some difficult words, such as "powerlessness," provided that they are defined or include an example. These words may also be used if they are already common in OSPA and necessary for understanding the OSPA program.

OSPA literature discusses skin-picking behaviors or addiction in a responsible way.

The purpose of OSPA literature is to support recovery. OSPA literature avoids slang, offensive terms, and overly descriptive language, including graphic descriptions about picking episodes, methods, or tools related to skin-picking behaviors. OSPA literature uses general terms and considerate language.

OSPA literature helps OSPA members connect with each other.

OSPA literature must speak to obsessive skin pickers as equally as possible, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, culture, region, sexual orientation, or skin-picking behaviors. OSPA literature may be written for a specific group, such as newcomers, as long as the audience is clearly stated in the publication.

OSPA literature represents the shared principles practiced by OSPA members around the world.

OSPA literature speaks for the entire OSPA fellowship. Literature published under the OSPA name affects every OSPA member, OSPA group, and OSPA as a whole. For this reason, OSPA literature needs to reflect how OSPA groups practice the principles of the Tools, the Twelve Steps, and the Twelve Traditions of OSPA. OSPA literature may also include recovery practices that have emerged in OSPA groups over time.

Personal Stories

Personal stories, written by OSPA members, are valuable pieces of OSPA literature. They help carry the OSPA message of recovery. At the same time, it is important that each story be presented as the author's personal experience, not as representing the OSPA fellowship as a whole.

The voice of the author should be preserved as much as possible. However, edits may be made whenever necessary to align with OSPA literature principles and standards. Special care should also be exercised to safeguard the anonymity of the author and any other persons mentioned.

The following are suggestions for authors:

- Each story should be written in the words of the author, using first person or “I” statements. Statements about “we” or "you" should be avoided, as should generalizations about all obsessive skin pickers.
- Stories may include instances of powerlessness and unmanageability, but should equally contain hope and the solution found in the OSPA program. They should be more than just the author's skin picking history.
- Each story should have a clear sense of how using one or more elements of the OSPA program—the Tools, the Twelve Steps and/or the Twelve Traditions of OSPA—have led to the author’s abstinence and/or supported their recovery.
- Identifiable people, places, and things should be generalized or edited out as much as possible. This includes items such as personal last names, online and in-person locations, media brands, specific types of therapies, and businesses.

Approval Process

Members of the OSPA fellowship may submit ideas or content to the OSPA Literature Committee for consideration. Each proposal is evaluated to determine whether it supports the OSPA message of recovery, serves an identifiable purpose, and meets the current needs and priorities of OSPA literature. Some proposals may be held for future consideration. If accepted, the Literature Committee develops the proposal into a working draft in accordance with the Guidelines for OSPA Literature.

Once the draft is completed, it is submitted to the OSPA World Service Organization (WSO) at the following month’s meeting. If the draft is accepted, it is then posted on the OSPA website for a minimum of 30 days. During this time, OSPA members are invited to read the proposed literature and submit written comments, questions, or suggestions to the Literature Committee.

After the end of the review period, the Literature Committee revises the draft as needed. Following this revision period, the draft will be submitted a second time at an OSPA WSO meeting.

If approved, the literature is then published in accordance with the current formatting and design standards for OSPA literature.

If rejected, the literature authors must start the approval process over again.

On occasion, OSPA-approved literature may need to be updated. The older literature will be archived for historical reference, and the revised edition will replace the former version.