



Dear chapter –

If you find that you need “Rescue & Rejuvenation”, then perhaps the exercises that follow will help you in becoming a better chapter. Work through each exercise honestly as a chapter and take the actions that you feel will lead you in the right direction to the making of a “Great” TOPS Chapter.

As always, please feel free to call on your field staff whenever you are need of assistance.

We are – HERE FOR YOU!

Your TOPS[®] Field Staff

Chapter Rescue and Rejuvenation Kit

My Chapter is **Unmotivated** Frustrated *Stagnant* Dwindling

This is the battle cry from many chapters who feel they are failing in their mission as a support group. If you are struggling to keep current members, let alone get new members, you are not alone. Many TOPS chapters feel that they are not successful or that they lack motivation. Many factors play a part in this thinking. Officers tend to take it personal when their members aren't losing weight and likewise, the members tend to expect the officers to be constantly motivating them. Maybe you feel you've been in TOPS so long that you've heard it all and done it all and the chapter has become stagnant. Motivating people each week can feel overwhelming to the officers, especially to the Leader. They get burned out and the whole chapter suffers. If this negative energy is left unchecked for too long, the chapter leaders and its officers feel that their only option is to quit or disband.

WAIT!!

Let's work together and get back on track!!

Turning Your Chapter Around

The purpose of this rescue kit is to help chapters re-focus and revitalize their efforts. Its principle is based on everyone sharing in the responsibilities of keeping the chapter going forward in a positive direction.



There are 3 steps involved. This should be a chapter project and to be effective, each step should be done with as many of the members present as possible. If you feel a member of Field Staff should be present for the first step to help keep everyone focused, just ask them. Think TEAMWORK!

Step 1 Recognizing the Challenges

- Identifying specific trouble spots without pointing fingers
- Prioritizing what your chapter needs

Step 2 Restoring Your Strengths

- Getting members involved
- Layout a plan

Step 3 Rejuvenating your Chapter

- Adding New members
- Keeping Motivation alive

Step ONE – Recognizing the Problems

The 1st step in rescuing your chapter....

Is to acknowledge all the areas that need attention. While this is meant to be an open discussion, the goal is to honestly address the problem areas. Therefore, it may be necessary that the answers be kept anonymous. This discussion is not meant to isolate or blame any person(s) and should be handled in a positive and constructive manner.

Suggestion: Pass these out at the end of a meeting, asking members to fill out and turn in before they leave. Then the officers or someone who volunteers can put all the information together so that it can be presented the next week for discussion. Ask members to think about the subjects and let them know if they want to make suggestions the next week, you will be all ears.

Areas of Concern or Ideas on what you want to see your Chapter offering. Please rate your chapter with "X" in the appropriate column.

Item	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Is really an issue for us	Suggestions
Attendance					
Member Participation					
Administrative Duties					
Financial					
Program Material					
Motivation					
Attitude					
Interaction between members					
Contests/ Incentive program					
Other					

Step 2 *Recognizing the Strengths*

Step 2 in rescuing your chapter is to begin to find solutions to these challenge spots. To do that, you must look at your strong points and rely on the willingness of the members to work together.

The beauty of our organization is that it is made up of thousands of unique individuals who have hundreds of ideas and thoughts everyday.

Building a Winning Team

Every Idea Counts - Everyone pitches in - Discover Member's talents

Expand Comfort Zones - Come Prepared

Hand in Hand...

All TOPS members have hidden talents within themselves but may not be aware of what these talents are or are comfortable sharing with a group.

The challenge is that we often lack the self-confidence needed to share ideas. We think we aren't smart enough or talented enough to share with the group.

This low self-esteem is a commonly engrained behavior that goes with being overweight. We'd rather sit in the background than be noticed.

Finding, uncovering and even expanding the comfort zone of each member is what Step 2 is all about. When everyone helps out, even in small ways, the task is made easier.

....together we can!!



Where do I fit in?Make copies of this page and have each member circle each of the following statements that apply to them.

Attendance

- I am faithful at coming and staying for meetings
- I inform officers when I'll be absent

Member Participation

I'm fairly comfortable sharing in front of the group

Administrative

- I can take notes
- I like to plan ahead for things
- I am generally a well organized person
- I have access to a copier
- I have a computer and printer
- I can put new members folders together

Financial

- I can keep track of money/balance checkbook
- I pay my dues and turn in my renewal on time
- I'm somewhat familiar with fundraisers and am willing to share my ideas
- I'm willing to help with fundraising when needed

Contests/Incentives

- Contests motivate me and I participate willingly
- I would like to organize and oversee a contest
- I'm good at making crafts

Program Material

- I like to read articles on health and weight loss
- I'm willing to read in front of a group
- I am willing to work with a teammate to present materials
- I look for weight loss information during the week (TV, books...)
- I rely solely on the officers to educate me
- I'm willing to present a program if the information is given to me
- I'm willing to provide information if someone else presents it
- I enjoy teaching others

Motivation/Attitude

- I have a positive outlook about my weight
- I enjoy coming to TOPS
- I enjoy coming to meetings as long as I don't have to participate very much
- I'm comfortable sharing my ideas with the group
- I like to lead a group as long as I have help from other people
- I'm more of a follower, but will help when needed.
- Motivating others, motivates me.
- It's hard for me to be enthusiastic because I've been in TOPS a long time
- I'm too new to TOPS to be involved at any great lengths
- TOPS is more of a social group for me

What I like best about our chapter.....

The Game Plan...

This next step involves making a game plan that your chapter can follow for the next few weeks. By working as a team, hopefully the chapter can pull together and make weight loss a success.

The most significant issues should be addressed first (taken from step one)	Next – Everyone recognizes where they might contribute their talents (Taken from step two)
The primary focus of Rejuvenating our Chapter is:	To achieve these goals, we are going to do the following:
1.	a. b. c.
2.	a. b. c.
3.	a. b. c.

Step 3...Rejuvenating Your Chapter

Adding New Members

You may be wondering why this section is at the END of the project.

Here's why:

When a whole chapter is struggling with lack of motivation and negative attitudes, it's easy and common not to want new members. Deep down they may feel that their chapter is not good enough for new members and even embarrassed by how things are done. This way of thinking only weakens the chapter further.

Let's make you PROUD!!!

Hopefully after working through the first 2 steps, your chapter has worked through its challenges and is more organized, focused and revitalized. Now we're ready to bring in new members!

Tips for Getting New Members

- Have your TOPS meeting place and time listed in the local paper. If you are already doing this, consider changing the wording.
- Have a chapter website or Facebook page
- Sponsor a Health Fair in your community – we do have some step-by-step instructions on how to do this. It's not as hard as you may think.
- Host an Open House
- Have a Contest which involves bringing in a new member
- Give TOPS literature to medical doctors, chiropractors, nurse practitioners, or any health care professionals where they have patients who are overweight.
- Leave a copy of TOPS NEWS in waiting rooms and place label over your name with eye-catching wording like "TOPS is here for you!" with a graphic.
- Use chapter business cards with contact information.

How do you get your friends to join?

Actions speak louder than words...

But words can move mountains.

Lose weight yourself!

*Success follows
success!*

Word of mouth is a great way to attract new members.

Give your friends something to talk about!



Getting the Conversation Started

We know it isn't polite to just go up to someone who is overweight and say "You need to lose weight. Come join our TOPS group". Trust me, they know they are overweight, and may not be ready at that very moment to undertake the task of losing it.

Instead, here are a few tips that may get the idea planted in their head, then when they ARE ready, they'll know where to turn.

1. Tell them something fun or motivational or educational that happened at your chapter meeting. Do it every week. Then when they are open to the idea, THEY will talk about it themselves. Depending on what your chapter 'awards' the best loser(s) of the week, take it to your work and display on your desk. This works great if flowers are given or fruit. If not, maybe your chapter could come up with something, like a small stuffed animal, that the best loser(s) take home each week.
2. If someone says, "I know I need to lose weight", you can just smile and say "Our TOPS group meets on _____, we'd truly love to have you join us. We are always looking for new members".
3. When you are standing in line at the grocery, start a conversation with someone behind or in front of you when you notice they have vegetable or fruit in their basket or low calorie "x". You can ask how is the taste? What's the best way to prepare? Is it low in calories? This can lead into "I am going to share that info with my weight loss support group... to which they might ask you about your group.
4. Keep your answer simple and sincere, not pushy.
5. Be energetic in your response and show the pride you have in your chapter.
6. Make it sound like a place they truly would want to come to.

Hand in Hand, Together We Can!!! Good Luck!!!