

March • April 2017

 **OVEREATERS
ANONYMOUS®**
Connecticut Intergroup

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP!!
SUNDAY MARCH 19, 2017
13th Anniversary Celebration
Southwick Congregational Church
10/202 and Depot St. Southwick, MA

WMI OA RETREAT
JUNE 2, 3, AND 4, 2017
A Weekend Walk through the 12 Steps
Genesis Spiritual Life Center
Westfield, MA
[www.oawmass.org/
wordpress/events/wmi-retreat](http://www.oawmass.org/wordpress/events/wmi-retreat)

TRANQUILITY WEEKEND RETREAT
JUNE 23, 24, 25, 2017
Incarnation Conference Center
Ivoryton CT
Call Beatrice (508) 596-0418
Annette (203) 671-4656
or SEC_intergroup@sbcglobal.net

For Today

April 4
May I have the wisdom to
remain teachable

PRODUCTION:

*Judi G., Janet N.,
Kathryn M.*

SUBMIT TO:

artistjudi@sbcglobal.net

KEEPING CONNECTED

SURRENDER THE FEAR • WORKING THE STEPS

I was appalled the first time I heard the Twelve Steps. Take inventory? Make amends? The Steps seemed punitive. But I kept coming back. I liked the honesty I heard. I took what I liked, the food plan; and I left the rest, the Steps.

After a year of Step meetings, the Steps seemed less negative. A slip scared me into writing a quarter-page Step Four and giving that away. A few months later I was at my goal weight and crying in the middle of the night. This scared me, so I did a more detailed inventory. It was too late. Over Christmas, I decided it was safe to binge on turkey because it had no sugar. This began my worst weight gain ever -- 20 pounds (9 kg) in two weeks. I kept coming back, but it was six months before I was willing to stop bingeing and nine more months before I was able to stop.

I had more willingness but stopped after one amend. Within a few weeks, I moved to Germany and started bingeing again. I ran three meetings over the summer. As a result, I met my sponsor. My sponsor shared that she repeatedly relapsed until she became willing to work all the Steps. Her message was that we eat over inner conflicts. Yes, we can stop bingeing temporarily but without Step work, those conflicts will drive us back into the food. Without finding nonfood coping strategies, we eventually binge again. That is just what happened to me. She told me that completing all the Steps was necessary for long-term recovery. This was not

what I wanted to hear, so I ate over it. Once I stopped bingeing, I reread Step One in the AA Twelve and Twelve and then asked myself if I was willing to binge and be miserable for the rest of my life because of the people I hated. I realized that somehow they would win if I continued to binge, so I became willing to make amends. It took a month to complete the letters. A few weeks later, I couldn't finish breakfast. I called my sponsor, and she explained that this was recovery. Once I had cleaned up my past, there was no need to emotionally overeat. A regular Tenth Step allowed me to stay abstinent. Continuing on, I explored ways to work Step Eleven as an agnostic. The Step Twelve spiritual awakening was for my food compulsion to be largely removed. A few months later, I tried one last time to avoid something difficult and binged over it.

Since then, many difficult life circumstances have come up. I haven't wanted to eat over any of them. To work my program, I go to Twelve Step meetings, meditate, and write my responses to daily readings in my journal. I do everything in my power to keep OA strong through service and sponsorship. My last binge was August 4, 1983.

What fears hold you back from the Steps?
What baby steps can you take to better manage those fears?

*~Barb G., Walkersville, Maryland
From OA's Lifeline - A Meeting on the Go,
Nov/Dec 2015, p.16*

ABSTINENCE DEFINED • ABSTINENCE IN OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS IS THE ACTION OF REFRAINING FROM COMPULSIVE OVEREATING & COMPULSIVE FOOD BEHAVIORS WHILE WORKING TOWARDS OR MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT. SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL RECOVERY IS THE RESULT OF LIVING THE OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS TWELVE-STEP PROGRAM

The opinions expressed here are the writers' and do not necessarily represent OA as a whole. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.



SIX EMOTIONS THAT LEAD TO COMPULSIVE OVEREATING

- Anger
- Fear
- Dishonesty
- Resentment - Expectations
- Self-pity - Selfishness -
- Self-centeredness
- Intolerance - Critical
- Judgmental

—© Oasis Central Midland Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, April 2011



AM I IN THE RIGHT PLACE

When I first came into OA in 2004, I wasn't sure I was really powerless over food. I listened to the stories shared in meetings and I did not relate. I had not done all the things other people had done in the service of their disease or in their attempts to control it. Was I really in the right place?

On the other hand, my life was completely unmanageable. Extremely challenging circumstances swirled around me- things over which I truly had no control, and which had left me feeling utterly abandoned by God. I recognized that maybe, just maybe, I was eating in order to cope with my crazy life. That, at least, I could relate to. I got a sponsor and I said to her, "I'm not sure I'm really a compulsive eater." She replied, "Give it six weeks and you'll know." I knew in two.

How? First, I put down the food. I got a food plan, committed everything I was going to eat every day, and stuck to it. At the same time I jumped into the literature and started working the Steps. I read Step One in the A.A. 12 & 12. I re-read Step One. I wrote on it... again and again.

What jumped out at me most in that powerful reading were the following quotes: "In A.A.'s pioneering time, none but the most desperate cases could swallow and digest this unpalatable truth. It is a tremendous satisfaction to record that in the following years this changed. Alcoholics who still had their health, their families, their jobs, and even two cars in the garage, began to recognize their alcoholism. They were spared that last ten or fifteen years of literal hell the rest of us had gone through." (AA 12 & 12, pp. 22-23) This sounded like me. I had only been in what I consider truly active disease for about three years at that point. I only had 45 pounds to lose. I had only tried dieting three times in my life. I had never even been to Weight Watchers, for crying out loud! Step One then asked, "Since Step One requires an admission that our lives have become unmanageable, how could people such as these take this Step?" (p. 23) Yes!, I demanded, How? I really wanted to know how to avoid the years and even decades of literal hell I had heard described by so many in the rooms of recovery.



"It was obviously necessary to raise the bottom the rest of us had hit to the point where it would hit them." (p. 23) Or, as I have often heard in the rooms, "You hit bottom when you stop digging." Even though I hadn't reached the point so many shared about, it was clear to me that I was starting down the path. My disease was quickly escalating into dishonesty and frightening compulsion.

My bottom was what I refer to as "The Incident of the Cookie in the Kitchen." One afternoon I wandered through the kitchen and there, on the counter, was a plate holding a single sugar cookie. It was old and dry. No one wanted it. I didn't want it. I told myself, "I'm not going to eat that cookie. I'm supposed to be on a diet. It doesn't even look appealing. I am not going to Eat That Cookie." And then, as if in a dream, I watched myself pick up that nasty, dry, unappealing cookie and pop it into my mouth.

It scared the living daylights out of me. I wish I could remember whether I had already heard about OA at that point. It was either right before or right after I started working the program. Either way, it was enough. The bottom had been raised to hit me right between the eyes. If I did not get help, if I did not do something, I would soon be unable to cope with my unmanageable life because I would be too busy stuffing my feelings with everything I could get my hands on, completely detaching from my husband, my children, my job, my community, my life. I took Step One honestly, openly, willingly, and then kept right on going. Eleven years later, I continue to follow my food plan every day, work the Steps over and over, and live life on life's terms without eating compulsively. The promises have come true for me a thousand fold. I am no longer a victim of my circumstances. And I am here to tell you that it does not matter how far down the scale you have gone—or not gone! It is never too late, nor too early. Recovery is open and available to anyone who wants it. All it takes is the willingness to take that First Step

~Rebekah M., Expressions of Unity, January, 2016, Newsletter of Unity Intergroup, Minneapolis, MN

The CT Intergroup
Newsletter

WOULD LIKE TO
HEAR FROM YOU

Please email
Your Stories of Recovery to:
artistjudi@sbcglobal.net