

Annapolis Area OA News

SUMMER
2021

No matter what your problem with food — compulsive overeating, under-eating, food addiction, anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, or over exercising —
we have a solution.

Annapolis Area Intergroup Officers
Chairperson: Kurt
Vice-Chair: Mark
Secretary: Kathy SW



[Keep coming back.](#)
[Don't quit before the miracle happens.](#)

Stamping Out Terminal Uniqueness
Kurt T.

Growing up, I learned that I was unique and was told that that set me aside. I grew up believing that. It wasn't always a positive thought. I soon fell into the pit of "terminal uniqueness."

Though there is no medical definition for "terminal uniqueness," as a compulsive overeater, from a very early age, I felt alone, isolated, and a square peg in a world of round holes. I just didn't fit in, or so I felt. This uniqueness issue also kept me from a loving Higher Power. If I couldn't fit in with people, how was I ever going to meet the expectations of God (my Higher Power). The answer I came up with was there was no way for me to be OK enough to be loved by HP or any human.

So therefore, I was going to die, however long that was going to be, isolated and unable to connect with humans on the planet. Sometimes I wasn't even sure I was human. So was the depth and range of my "terminal uniqueness."

By the Grace of HP and the recovery I gained through working the Twelve Steps, particularly steps 4 and 10, I found that I am uniquely human, imperfect, and I will and do make mistakes.

Through the steps, I found out that I am unique. I also found out everyone else is unique. What we all have in common is being human.

I'm grateful that my HP has allowed me to grow out of my "terminal uniqueness" and into being a true and unique human. Without HP and the steps, I wouldn't have gotten here.

If you need to stamp out your own "terminal uniqueness," find a sponsor and work the steps. I'm happy today being an imperfect human, just as my HP made me and loves me.

PROGRAM TRUTHS

There are lies I tell myself and truth programs teach me.

The "I don't care how I look" lie - the truth is I do care and it affects my mood, my thoughts, and my actions.

The "God doesn't care if I'm fat" lie - the truth is God cares about everything about me.

The "I can't do this" lie - the truth is I can't but God can if I ask him and then let him.

The "who cares?" lie - the truth is, God cares, my fellow away members care and my friends and family care, even when I'm not able to.

The "I can still be spiritual and fat" lie - truth is, I can be more deeply spiritual when food is not blocking the sunlight of the spirit.

The "I am a failure" lie - the truth is, I am only a failure if I walk away.

The "I should just quit trying" lie - the truth is I can see a glimmer of hope no matter what.

The "It's only food" lie - the truth is food is the cross I bear, and I'm not alone.

The "I can eat trigger food moderately" lie - the truth is, my trigger foods lead to binges.

The "I'm not worth the effort" lie - the truth is I am worth the effort because my heart still cries out for the freedom of recovery.

The "I have too much weight to lose" lie - the truth is, a journey of 1000 miles starts at one step. My one step is being abstinent, just for today.

All of you who have abstinence, please pray for those of us who still struggle. All of you who struggle, please join me in taking more action. Stop believing the lies.

Laurie

Lifeline Magazine

July 2016



Spiritual Principles in the Twelve Steps

Step One: Honesty
Step Two: Hope
Step Three: Faith
Step Four: Courage
Step Five: Integrity
Step Six: Willingness
Step Seven: Humility
Step Eight: Self-discipline
Step Nine: Love
Step Ten: Perseverance
Step Eleven: Spiritual

*Keep It Simple,
Sweetie.*

Together
we are
doing what
we could
never do
alone?

Confessions of a compulsive eater:

I can tell myself 1 million times that food is not the answer. But somehow that doesn't stop me from overeating when I'm stressed, lonely, bored, angry, afraid or sad.

And there are those times of joy that my diseased brain tells me I **should** be able to celebrate!

If this life is a journey, or perhaps a kind of a school, what is it I'm supposed to learn from this incredibly powerful disease of compulsive eating?

Perhaps I need to learn that I cannot do all things alone.

Perhaps I need to learn to depend on a power greater than myself.

Perhaps I need to learn to be with others who suffered the same disease.

Perhaps I need to learn to serve.

My first day in OA, I was desperate and helpless. I had reached bottom and thought I could not recover. After that first meeting a kind man gave me a Big Book and a Lifeline to take home and to read. He told me there was hope and to keep coming back. With tears in my eyes, I left the meeting believing just that.

My first meeting was five years ago and I have been coming back ever since. Now I get service and cherish my new found friends. I love doing outreach service. I will be forever grateful for the loving support I have had on my path to recovery. I pay it forward every chance I get.

Christine D.

Chula Vista

California

Lifeline magazine



*Trust God and do the
next right thing.*



*Just
for
Today*

Motivation

What moves you

What brings tears to your eyes

What makes you want to get up in the morning
Focus on the things that are good and full of
beauty

Draw energy from the good things in life

Don't allow the world to drag you down

So that you could drown

Never forget that you are fighting a war

The choices you make impact those around you

Make choices that build you

Tami
2019

**what
is acceptance?**



IT'S RAINING

I don't like rain.
I wish it wasn't raining.
my day would be better
if it wasn't raining. my day is
ruined. every day is like this.
it's always like this. why does
it always rain when all i want is
for it to be sunny?



IT'S RAINING

yup.

Step one

A friend of mine told me recently that she was getting ready to take step one. Her comment made me think about what it means to take this step.

I think that I (because I can only speak for myself) took step one before I came to (and came back to) OA. There was never even the slightest shred of doubt in my mind that I am powerless over food.

Similarly, my life was unmanageable as a direct result of my bingeing. My weight was all over the place, as were my needs. I was working way too many hours, in an effort to be appreciated whatever my size. I was a mother and wife who wanted nothing more than to be left alone to binge!

And insurance, and older vehicle that has been in accident is often called a rolling total. The wheels move and the car starts, but the body damage is more than the value of the vehicle. I was a rolling total, with a mind and limbs that worked but they damaged soul and body. My merciful higher power is restoring me, so that I can be of value to him and others. Step one is recognizing where I am – nothing more.

On a different note, I heard from many away fellows that they've lost their abstinence and are back on step one. If I ask them about how they lost their abstinence, I hear about how they slipped up in one area of A rigid plan of eating. They might not have binged, but they feel that their abstinence is not perfect anymore and they start over.

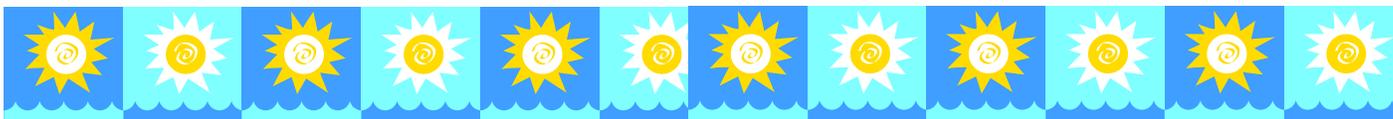
Again, my opinion is that a plan of eating needs to be flexible. My initial plan of eating is different now then the one I have now and will be different again at some point in the future. I report my food to my sponsor and trust that we can work together if my portions or choices could be better. I am genuinely afraid that if I told myself that I could start over, if I wasn't perfect, that my disease would see that as an opportunity to eat more and more. I am not sure I could pull out of bingeing if I went back in.

My higher power and my fellows are here to keep me looking at step one, but not to give up in despair. I pray that the same will be part of your experience as well.

Tori

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



BODY IMAGE AND RECOVERY

After 9 years of abstinence and time in the program, I still find body image to be an issue. Less of an issue, but still there. Sometimes I think I should be past this by now! But I realize it also keeps me working my program. It's a great motivating factor to keep me praying and working the steps.

I wanted to write about body image issues because I know so many of us share in this struggle and I figured it would do me good to write about it so that I can be reminded of the solution! Because there is a solution! What great news that is.

I came to OA 30 lbs heavier and obsessed with my body image. I had gained and lost the same 30 lbs many many times in my life. I found that no matter what weight I was at, I was never satisfied.

I didn't think I'd be fully satisfied until that scale says ZERO! Wishful thinking. So now what?

After a year in program and getting to a healthy body weight, I was still plagued with obsessive thoughts of being too fat. As a side note, my "healthy body weight" has been determined by my doctor. It is not where I would like to be but it's what works for me. I am able to enjoy life, enjoy my food, and maintain long-term abstinence. If my weight goes lower, I can't maintain my abstinence and I feel deprived. So, here in lies the problem....**I'm** not at the weight that I want to be so how can I reach acceptance? Well....it's the weight that my doctor says is healthy so there's that fact to bring me back down to earth when my "you're too fat" thoughts begin to circle.

The best thing I've ever heard about this topic is to treat obsessive body image thoughts as a character defect because they are! How self centered of me to sit around and think about me and my body over and over and over.

I certainly can't be of service to anyone or to God when I'm stuck in that tornado. This is great news really, because I know what to do with character defects! The steps teach me to become willing to have God remove them (step 6) then humbly ask God to remove my shortcomings (step 7).

When I feel those body image thoughts rising, I have a job to do....I have to ask God to remove those thoughts, and turn my attention to someone I can help. Sounds easy enough! Except my diseased laden brain often forgets to do this and I sometimes sit in those thoughts for hours before I remember how to help myself. I also get some sort of satisfaction by sitting in those thoughts or I wouldn't do it. The pay off of the obsession is that

it takes me out of my sometimes boring and mundane life and helps me to not feel other feelings that I might not like. So that's where the "become willing" part comes in.

Just now I was sitting in a chair with my adorable 3 year old daughter on my lap. We were listening to a kids meditation as we do each day, before nap. It's a sweet time that I usually enjoy and I like to kiss her head, breathe her in and smile with her as we relax and connect. But today was different. Today I have been feeling down about my body because I'm recovering from back surgery and I haven't been able to exercise as much as I like to. That's always a trigger for me. So I'm feeling fat today. I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror and didn't like what I saw. For the next few minutes, I was in my head and not present for this sweet moment with my daughter. I missed it....I missed that time with her and I can't get it back. BUT the good news is, I get many more chances. Tonight I will meditate with her again before bed and this time, I will be on guard. When I know these body image thoughts are looming, I need to stay close to God. Ask him to remove the thoughts at once, and get back to the business of living my life!

It also helps to remind myself that God has given me this amazing body and it is truly a gift! This body can run and jump and carry a 35lb toddler on my hip while I cook dinner! Many people are not blessed with the mobility that I have, as my cousin who has been in a wheel chair for many years. That's where the gratitude comes in. I have to switch my thinking.

On my own, my mind goes to the negative, goes to the things I don't have, the not good enough thoughts. God is the answer to it all but I have to do the work.

It's through gratitude and the 12 steps that I have found much healing. I had a rough body image day today but tomorrow is a new day! Nine years ago, every day was a rough body image day. Now God has blessed me with tools to help myself and he's blessed me with all of you so we can do this thing together.

Sarah

