



Overeaters Anonymous Office: 1219 East Glendale Avenue #23, Phoenix, AZ 85020 602-234-1195

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STEP ONE FOR THE NEW YEAR

This time of year is particularly difficult for me. Even if I am blessed with staying abstinent during the holidays, the first of the year brings the dreaded weight loss commercials.

Losing weight is a high for me. I love the feeling and I have jeopardized my health and my sanity to maintain it. Although I have close to 4 years of not restricting, the scores of diet propaganda feel ever so strong. As a society we are fed lies, from loving ourselves more if we're thin, to a promise of a better job, house, car and relationship. Each year it's the same promise that this is the year we'll succeed and find happiness by simply taking a magic pill, or eating the right mystery food. At times we're even promised that we can eat whatever we'd like and still become thin as their models.

Logically I know none of this true. I didn't like myself anymore when I was thin than when overweight. My car, house and job didn't change and my relationships were by far worse during my thin, obsessive days. But with a new diet, there's always the hope that this is the one. But each one has brought me a false sense of control over my life.

Step one brings me to my senses. I have no control over my eating disorder and no magic pill is going to give me that. No amount of will power is going to strengthen me for the battle. Only surrendering to my HP can give me relief. It's only through surrendering and accepting my situation that I am given the strength to maintain my sanity one day at time. I can't do this on my own, and even less so with diet gimmicks, so I must remind myself that I am powerless over my food behaviors and only my HP can help me.

As I start a new year and the commercials start taunting me, let me never forget step one. May my New Year resolution be to keep my HP in control of my life. May I take the necessary steps to keep my recovery strong and thin obsession obsolete.

Kym – Portland, OR

Are you signed up for ECares?

Once a week ASDI sends out an email with the latest news and updates of what is happening locally, regionally, and worldwide.

Just go to our website at oaphoenix.org and on the home page on the left side you will see where to sign up.

Don't miss out on the latest news, ideas, stories, or suggestions.



**Celebrating
Our 57th
Year!**

**Save the
Date
January
13-15, 2017**

**For the
57th OA
Birthday
Party
Weekend
Celebration**

For more information
and details about the
birthday party, go to
<http://www.oalaig.org/>
and click on
"The OA Birthday Party"

Step 4...Searching Out Shame

In OA, we rely strongly on AA literature, and we are truly blessed to have it. I am infinitely grateful to AA and its founders and members. I do find, however, one critical difference between alcoholism and food addiction that, once addressed, finally gave me the freedom of back-to-back abstinence that eluded me for decades.

Members of AA can walk away from alcohol. As hard as it must be, they can find new activities and new friends. With the support of their program, fellowship, and Higher Power, they do not have to engage with their substance again.

The Step Four inventory in AA literature focuses on fears and resentments and has been enormously helpful, but there is a critical difference for me as an overeater that requires additional probing in my personal Step Four inventory. My food addiction is not to individual foods but to eating itself. I have to go head-to-head with my addiction three times a day. In order to do that abstinently, I have to delve deep. I believe strongly that my food struggle is an emotional struggle. I cannot be in emotional discord for long without it leading to a food struggle. Since I have to engage with my addiction every day, it puts me on very shaky ground to be in a state of emotional "dis-ease".

I recently heard a helpful metaphor: If I wanted to replace the blades in a blender, I'd obviously have to turn the machine off. But would I then put my hand inside it? Of course not, because it might turn on if still plugged in. I'd first be sure to disconnect the power source, or the blades could start spinning and I could get badly hurt. Disconnecting the power source is key. So I had to ask myself, "What is the power source of my compulsion?"

For many OA members, the power source of our compulsion is not just fear and resentment, but shame, which is rooted in the codependency that developed in our dysfunctional childhoods. Shame is my power source. If I don't address it, the power can kick on again with the slightest trigger. Before I healed my shame, for example, a critical comment by a co-worker or supervisor was enough to send me into relapse. Trying to abstain without understanding the power of shame was like trying to stop the blender by only pressing the off button. It invariably kicked on again and cut me with a relapse.

My experience is that I only became able to abstain peacefully and consistently when I began a searching and fearless Fourth Step journey into my shame and codependence. I then began to enjoy the greatest gift of all: comfort in my own skin. This comfort is glorious and precious in itself, and it has protected my abstinence, one day at a time, for over five years.

Leslie O., Broad Brook, CT, USA, reprinted from Lifeline, April 2016

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Arizona Serenity in the Desert Intergroup: P.O. Box 47565, Phoenix, AZ 85068. Serenity Press is always seeking submissions on how the OA program of recovery works in your life. We reserve the right to refuse or edit submissions for punctuation and grammar. Permission to reprint original material found in this newsletter is granted to all Twelve Step groups and their publication provided that ASDI is credited. All opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of ASDI or OA as a whole. Please send articles, content, contact changes, OA-related events, etc. to the editor or specifically to the proper party as listed in the newsletter. Deadline is the 1st of the month, one month ahead of the next month's issue. Your newsletters will be distributed at the Intergroup meeting for your reps to bring back to your meetings.

Emily G. – 480-582-8061 – mycatbobby@yahoo.com

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(See Outreach Directory for e-mail addresses)

This is your newsletter!

We are always looking for contributions from our local fellowship.

Share your experience, strength, and hope of recovery with others.

It is as easy as emailing it to:
mycatbobby@yahoo.com

POWERFUL IN FAITH

For me, the First Step should read, "I am powerless over myself."

I said, "I want to lose weight," and I kept eating. I said, "I want to get back in shape," and I didn't exercise. I said, "I want my health," and I pursued unhealthy habits. I said, "I want to leave my job," but I wouldn't look for a new job or change my situation in the old one. I said, "I want to write," but I didn't write.

I said I wanted to change. I felt I wanted to change. I believed I wanted to change. Yet I didn't change. I said I didn't know where to start. I began to despair.

And I began to despise myself for not being able to make myself do what I wanted. No change began as long as I said, "I will . . . I want . . . I have to . . ." Change began when I asked, "How? What?"

I am powerless over the eating compulsion. But though my compulsion is strong in the dark, I have the power to turn on the light. I can open the windows and doors, and I can feel the feelings. I am free, and it makes no difference that I didn't vanquish my disease with a battle of will. Free is free.

— Lifeline, January 1997

STEP ONE

We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.

TRADITION ONE

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

CONCEPT ONE OF OA SERVICE

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Region 3 Representatives & World Service Delegates

Tori, Bobbi, Halina, Dottie, Harlan
Rosie/alternate

Will You Be My Sponsor?

I am new to OA, and I am confused. I hear about the importance of reaching out and breaking through isolation by calling people and working with a sponsor. But there are few people who indicate on the We Care list that they do sponsor. When I ask, they say they are not able to take new sponsees at this time.

Are you afraid to sponsor because you think you must have all the answers? Please remember the desperation you felt when you first came to OA and share the strength of your experience with me. I am told I have the answers inside, but how can I find the way out of this fear without help?

If you are committed to a plan of eating, you can help me overcome my fear of approaching a plan that can let me live sanely.

If you are working to be abstinent or are maintaining your abstinence, you can understand my difficulties and can support me through the rough spots.

If you have ever slipped, or even relapsed, you can share the lessons you learned and can help me accept myself while I regain my abstinence.

If you are working the Steps, you can sponsor me through the Steps you completed. Maybe our work will encourage you to work the Steps ahead.

You speak of spiritual experiences and your Higher Power. Maybe your connection can help me to find my Higher Power too.

I understand that you are busy. I'm busy too. But I'll bet there's a schedule that can work for both of us.

I am ready and willing. Will you be my sponsor?

— Lifeline, September 1997

Contact Information for Monthly Contributions

Please be sure to include you World Service Office group number with ALL of you donations.

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NEXT ASDI INTERGROUP MEETING

3rd Saturday of every month
January 21st

ASDI Intergroup Meeting ▪ 1:00pm – 3:00pm
OA Office ▪ 1219 E. Glendale Ave. ▪ Suite #23 ▪ Phoenix, AZ
85020