



# VALLEY VOICE

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*We publish Valley Voice for your information and enjoyment. Any mistakes you may find are there for a purpose.  
We publish something for everyone and some people are always looking for mistakes.*

## JOURNEY THROUGH RECOVERY

BD—HEART2HEART

**I**t was 9 1/2 years ago that I first walked through the doors of OA. Close to 250 pounds and desperate to try anything to feel better, I came in ready for recovery - whatever that meant! My first 6 1/2 years in OA, my abstinence was 3-0-1. Three meals a day with nothing in between, one day at a time. It worked for a couple of years, I lost weight and was a "normal" size. I was working the steps, going to meetings and doing service. And yet the food was still controlling my life. I got this attitude that I was going to eat as "normally" as possible so I could show everyone that even though I was in OA, I could still have whatever I want. My meals slowly started to get bigger and bigger, and I kept adding more things back into my food plan. And I do mean "I" added things in. Even if I worked with a sponsor, I still wasn't being honest about foods that triggered me. I didn't want to "give things up" because deep inside I didn't think I could handle life without them.

Eventually I found myself back up at a size 20, hating myself and adding everything back into my "food plan". I was adamant that it wasn't about the food, because I had spiritual and emotional recovery. I worked the steps, participated in life, and seemed to be doing all the right things. And I felt so

unhappy and so out of control. I knew I was missing something, but what was it? I had a higher power, prayed and felt like I was doing HP's will. I went back to school and got my Master's degree and life seemed to be great. Why couldn't I get this OA thing? I was constantly obsessed with finding the right sponsor, just the right combinations/amounts of foods that would be the magical solution and make me stop wanting food.

Around 3 years ago, another program person asked me, why I wanted to, "Do all this work, and go to all these meetings, and still be overweight?" Of course I was offended, and in fact have never spoken to that person again. But inside I knew she was right, and for the next year as I

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frantically looked for the answer inside the rooms of OA, the seed had been planted. I eventually got to a place of desperation. I knew the answer was here, and I started to pray for the willingness to do or try something new. I ended up hearing the lead of a person who sounded happy, joyous and free, and was maintaining a weight loss of over 100

pounds for many, many years. I thought I should go up and talk to her, but I got pulled away by someone else, and just ended up leaving without even introducing myself.

The next day I was at another meeting, and the same person was the lead again! This time I felt like HP was telling me something. I went up after the meeting and started talking to her about program and how unhappy I was. She invited me to meet her the next day, and although I felt scared, I went anyway. I had to say a prayer to have the willingness to get there, because I knew that life was going to change, if I was willing to do the work. I had hope again.

She told me how she works the tools every day, doing committed reading and writing to her sponsor and also committing her food on a daily basis. Well, so far this was all stuff I had tried. Until she shared her food plan. She was sugar, wheat and flour free! The first thing I said was, "This looks like a diet". And she told me that my intentions were what made this different. Was I doing this to lose weight, or was I doing it to be free from the obsession for food? Well, at this point the weight was secondary to how crazy and out of control I felt. So I Made a Decision to give this plan a try just for that day. I prayed, I made a lot of phone calls, and I felt angry. I didn't want to have to do this. I wanted to be normal.

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But I am not normal when it comes to eating, and I never will be. Putting the food down is the only way I can truly connect with my Higher Power and get to the root of why I need to stuff down my feelings. In July I will have two years of abstinence on this food plan, and I cannot even put into words how much I have grown emotionally and spiritually since putting the food down. I am relieved of the obsession, which has opened my mind to so many other things, since I don't waste so much time thinking about food. Losing weight has been a happy side effect of working the program instead of the focus like it used to be when I WASN'T losing weight! I am grateful to say that God has relieved me of over 80 lbs.

But I know that my recovery is just for today, and I have to keep doing the work if I want to keep what I've got. I am a sponsor, I do other service, make phone calls, journal, commit my food every day and try to remain open, willing and teachable. I am so grateful to have found the magic formula - put down the food and do the work!

### I'm Anonymous

You don't know me yet because I don't know me either.

Do I belong here?

Do I fit in here?

Who am I?

Who are you people?

So much swirling around inside my head.

I don't speak your language.

I don't have the right vocabulary.

All I want is to lose weight and be happy.

I don't want to be part of your cult.

I don't want to be powerless; I want to be tall and thin and powerful

I don't want you to come close.

Don't hug me or be friendly to me.

I might cry.

Then I will be weak.

Besides, I don't believe you really mean it.

I think I will remain back here in the obscurity of the shadows.

I will remain anonymous awhile longer.

I hope you're there if I come out.

- Anonymous, Medina Heart2Heart

### STEP 12

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

### TRADITION 12

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

### Abstinence Definition Amended

WSBC Policy 1988b (amended 2002, 2009) defines abstinence and recovery as follows:

**Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.**

Remember to make corrections in the printed material at your local meetings.

### Editorial Policy

The deadline for copy is the fifteenth of the month for the following month. Payment cannot be made for material. All articles must be signed and when published will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request. The Valley voice reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Send submissions to: [oanewsletter@sacvalley.org](mailto:oanewsletter@sacvalley.org).