

A New Life

I have been a compulsive eater most of my life. I learned early in my childhood that I could numb strong feelings through food-especially sugar. Like many people in OA, I have tried many different diets, finally settling on one commercial program that I tried over and over again. I was successful enough to reach my “goal weight”, only to discover I was still unhappy and still felt very fat. At one point someone asked my sister if I was anorexic or something and when I heard about this, I was secretly very pleased to hear it, yet still didn’t see a thin person when I looked in the mirror. The addiction won the battle, and I put all the weight back on several times over the years, always adding a few more to go with them.

This disease creates insanity. At one point in my life I actually wished I would get Diabetes, because then I would HAVE to be careful about what I ate. I am grateful that the closest I got was pre-diabetic. I would also eat a pound of M & Ms and dare my body to gain weight. Guess who won? Not my body and certainly not my mind or spirit.

By the time I came to OA I was walking around physically, but certainly was not “alive”. Emotionally I was flat and depressed. I have a friend who loves me enough that she told me she was afraid “they were losing me”. I sought help, and believe it or not, my first full day of abstinence was Thanksgiving Day 2008. Through the grace of my Higher Power, I have maintained my abstinence from “recreational sugar” and enriched flour products since that day. As I near my third abstinent Thanksgiving, I am filled with gratitude for my Higher Power, my friend who loved me enough to urge me to get help, and for my OA sisters and brothers.

I have been relieved of 30 excess pounds and have gotten my blood work numbers into normal range. I am still what doctors would label “obese” and I don’t know if my Higher Power intends for me to lose more weight or not, but the most important thing is that I have been able to let go of the shame I harbored for years and have my spirit back. When I experience strong emotions I can recognize them for what they are, and trust that they will not last forever and they will not be unbearable. My relationship with my Higher Power is stronger than ever. HP is a friend who is with me every step of the way.

I am currently working step 8 “Made a list of all persons I have harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.” I am told that after doing steps 8 and 9 things get even better than they are now. The 12 step promises will come true before I am half way through. This year I turn 50 and am very much looking forward to many years of new life and adventure. Thanks HP for the gift you have given me in recovery!

Brenda T