

# Letting go, being an atheist in recovery

I have been in the program off and on for 50 years. Yikes. I have been sugar-free for over 7 years, when I was diagnosed with diabetes. 5 years ago, I was placed on several drugs and lost 70 pounds. I was within 15 pounds of a normal weight. I was a wreck though, anxious and angry.

I found myself back in the rooms and I've been following a plan since that time. Unfortunately, once I was off the diabetes medication, when the diabetes resolved, my body seems to have returned to a set point and following the same food plan has not changed that. Right now, the weight I am now is my goal weight for today.

The reason OA has been off and on is that I found I could not engage in the basic concepts. I have worked the steps and done the studies but I found I spent a lot of time translating what was being said into what I could understand.

I don't think that it is the actual words, not "God" that I don't identify with, but the intent behind them. I don't believe in original sin, that there is something inherently wrong with me for which I need to be forgiven. I don't believe that there is an entity that is judging me and will either punish or save me.

I believe that I have a compulsive obsessive personality and that I have used food as a soothing technique when life was painful or overwhelming, Step 1. I saw others in the room dealing with life without using food or other behaviors to cope, Step 2. I felt I could learn what they learned and do the same thing, Step 3.

I don't believe that there are character defects. I believe that I learned coping strategies that might have worked in the past but have not worked for me for a long time. I could look at my past for patterns of the strategies and see where they had caused me, and unfortunately others, difficulty or pain, Step 4. I did a reality check with a trusted friend. Well, I actually have done this process a lot so, a bunch of friends, Step 5. I have had to go to some of those other people and clear the air, Step 6.

The biggest change though was step 7 and 8. I realized that what I needed to do was learn other ways to deal with the people in my life. Those range from loved ones to people with whom I barely have contact. I went to meetings and read, listened and absorbed what was said. What worked for others and what might work for me. This became a reservoir of knowledge.

Now, when something comes up, I sit and let my mind rest. Sometimes I will write what comes to me to write. I LET IT GO. I find that when I stop trying to figure out everything by what I have done in the past, I leave room for the knowledge of the reservoir to bubble up. Answers generally come to me then. Yes, meditation.

I use the tools a lot, and when the reservoir needs refilling or the answers don't come, then I move on to phone calls/texts/Zoom, readings or meetings. I have found such a wealth of information and support in Secular OA.