

# My Life and Food Habits as a Humanist

My mom threatened to abandon me around age 10, over the fact that I finally got up the nerve to definitively say I no longer wanted to go to Sunday School and Church, and tried to stand my ground. Sunday School became more irrelevant as public school became ever more so.

Public School was safe compared to my home life. They also taught more reasonable and understandable things. I could ask questions, and the teachers often seemed to appreciate it. The answers they gave made sense to my young, developing mind.

At Sunday School, many teachers didn't like questions, or gave inadequate answers. Mostly I felt we were just supposed to have faith and believe whatever they said. That felt a lot like my severely dysfunctional parents. Needless to say, I've been a real skeptic from an early age.

I also had trouble from early childhood with sweets, eating too fast, bingeing, and extreme fasting. I was over 6' tall upon entering high school. I then weighed 245 lbs; dropped to 180 over the summer before senior year, wanting to date; then never more than 200 for roughly the next 15 years.

My unhealthy eating patterns didn't change, but from losing all that poundage, I found I was a better than average athlete. I came to really like the sweaty exertions of jogging and running, some weight lifting, and competitions with good club and business teams playing softball and volleyball.

I went to my first 12 Step meeting in the autumn of 1988, although for years before I had seen psychiatrists for panic attacks, and later intermittent severe agoraphobia, for several years starting in 1977, senior year at my university. In the ensuing years after 1988, I tried various other 12 Step recovery communities, including OA, deciding I was cross-addicted.

When my only son was born in the early 1990s, I quickly lost much of my interest in athletic pursuits. I was terrified of being a dad, worrying I might be in any way like my own father – an often brutal, raging, career ex-military man, mentally and physically maimed in older adulthood, from his several, earlier battlefield tours, and his own military dad's parenting while growing up.

I became a stay-at-home dad, as my lovely wife was a better business person than me. But by the time my son was in high school, not paying enough attention to my weight inexorably creeping upward, from fear and depression, believing I was an inadequate father, I tipped my bathroom scale at 277 lbs, my highest weight ever!

Realizing I was cross-addicted from the extensive trauma during my upbringing, with so many ways to zone out from having to deal with the oceanic hurt, I instinctively understood I couldn't deal with everything at once. I had to prioritize. So while I was heavily involved in recovery from codependency and unhealthy sexual boundaries, I kept going occasionally to OA meetings and several other recovery groups.

It is only now, with enough recovery overall, I feel ready to focus more on my life long OA issues. It was also helpful to prioritize my OA problems more when I developed diabetes about 10 years ago, from too little exercise for a couple decades and always eating too much.

Nearing my 70s, I am exercising on an in-home upright elliptical due to my questionable knee joints. Also, I've always enjoyed bicycle riding from childhood. Now I ride a 21-gear adult tricycle as I live in a town called Hillsdale, an appropriate name for our town. I get some interesting stares and comments riding, but I don't care, as I enjoy the riding too much.

These days, with recovery well underway from other childhood deficiencies, I'm ready to prioritize my OA issues. I'm attending a weekly, secular OA meeting. I am a theoretical agnostic and practicing atheist, and 'omnist' (years ago I had to look that up in a dictionary, chuckle). I have learned much from theists – God believers – for which I'm very grateful. There was just too much physical religious trauma, and ultimate threat of mom's abandonment, that I don't see myself ever becoming a traditional God proponent.

I've developed a viable agnostic High Power as I see it. I am very open to fitting as many HP/God ideas and feelings from theists, and positive Philosophy ideas from atheists that my own HP and personal modern moral and ethical systems can accommodate for my well-being.

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