

My Journey in this thing called life

I would like to share my journey in this thing called life. I was raised in a religious home with a domineering mother and passive father. Life was not pleasant. There were some pleasant memories but there was a lot of chaos and volatility.

I started restricting my food at the age of 12 due to stress at home, not to control my weight (though that would be the reason later) but because my stomach was in knots most of the time. Once I left home, I continued restricting to control my weight as well as the lack of finances to buy food.

I was looking for someone to love me because I did not feel loved in my family of origin. I met and married my husband and promptly started making his life miserable due to my insecurity and anger. We had 2 kids and the anger escalated to outbursts of rage. My husband endured my outbursts for 10 years. I don't know how he stayed with me at times.

As time went on I was no longer able to restrict for very long before I would start bingeing. During this period, I went to an OA meeting. I related to what I heard but was thinking I still was in control because I could take the weight off. Years later that would not be the case.

In 1985 I walked back into OA knowing I was defeated by my compulsion. I came back because I could not get through one day/one meal without overeating. I was gaining weight, and I could not stop the bingeing, and it was taking more and more food to numb out. I was scared there would be a day I could not consume enough.

My obsession controlled my thoughts. I ate so fast I didn't remember eating my food. I was planning my next meal while eating the current one. I related everything to when I could eat again and what I would have. I was crazy and I knew it so I went back to OA because I wanted to be around people who understood how I could eat the way I did.

Walking into the meeting room is when I began to live again. I found a sponsor, one that was agnostic like me. She took me through the steps, explaining how she worked them and patiently listened to me. Step 4 was an important step because I knew that was the step to rid myself of this all-consuming anger. From that, I was able to look at thoughts and ideas I had about myself and identify where I needed to make changes.

I love the steps because that is where the recovery was for me and still is. I changed my life for the better by working with my sponsor and following the suggestions in the 12 steps. I became a better mother and spouse to my husband.

Where I used to eat fast and never put anything down, including my fork, I now make a point to eat slowly, put down my fork at least twice, and to chew.

Where I wasn't aware of eating food, I now am mindful of my meal and pay attention when I am full.

When I used to eat my binge food while cooking, now I don't.

When I ate all the leftovers over the sink after dinner instead of putting them in containers for the refrigerator, I now put them away. I do not eat standing up because it reminds me of those days. When I catch myself eating standing up, I sit down at the table like a normal person.

I no longer pour over cookbooks or recipes in magazines. I gave away a lot of my unused cookbooks and only look for recipes when I am planning a meal, not before.

These are just a few of the behaviors I had to change. It was a lot of work, but I found a happiness that I never expected to experience. Am I perfect? Do I still make mistakes? Yes, but this program shows me how to correct my mistakes and improve my life.

For anyone reading this, I wish you the success and joy I found in OA.

- Anonymous