

NOVATIONS

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The Monthly Newsletter
of the Northern Virginia
Overeaters Anonymous
Intergroup



Step One -

Food Is The Symptom

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Spiritual Principle: Honesty.

I heard at a meeting, “Step One is the only step that mentions food.” We all enter Overeaters Anonymous looking for an answer to our problems with food. “Free us from our obsession,” we plea. Step one tells us that food and food behaviors are the symptoms, not the problem. The problem lies deeper. We have a problem dealing with life.

We have a compulsion with food because it numbs us to the problems with life. We are powerless over it. We are addicted to what it brings to us. We feel less powerful when we overeat or under-eat, but we are powerless over food. It becomes our master and our lives become unmanageable.

When we first come into program we look for the perfect diet: a way to lose weight. But weight also is not our problem. It is a symptom of the problem.

The problem is that our lives have become unmanageable.

“Not me!” we respond. We are powerful in our work lives. Some of us have fabulous marriages. Well, mostly. We are fine. We are just fat, or feel fat, and if someone could help us fix that, we would be fine.

Step One demands that we recognize that we are *powerless*. How dare they!?! But we come to believe that we are not powerful enough to defeat this disease that draws us to food. Now what?

1. We recognize that we are powerless over food. How we deal with food is the symptom of our insanity. We know we need to leave certain foods alone. We know we need to limit some foods. We have heard we should only eat three meals a day with nothing in between. Why can't we do that?

(Continued in the next column)

Step One Continued

2. “My life is just fine, if only I wasn't fat” we plead. Really? When we get thin, we feel the craziness of not having the food to turn to when we feel fear, vulnerability, anxiety, anger, etc. We go back to the food. And that is when we realize ... Our lives have become unmanageable.

Oh, how we wish it was about food. We have to put the food down in order to find the problem, but food and food behaviors are the symptoms, not the problem.

We put the food down and work the program, and then we find sanity.

How do we get there?

1. Read the literature.
2. Get a sponsor. (Find someone who has what you want and ask them to sponsor you.)
3. Go to meetings
4. Keep coming back.

That's it. Keep coming back, one day at a time. We've all been where you are and we have hope for you. This program works if you work it. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home.

– Cathy C

What's Happening in OA?

Go to oanova.org !!

The home page has the most current
OA happenings
in and around Northern VA

Tradition One: Spiritual Light

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.

Spiritual Principle: Unity

Some meetings and OA members do not often emphasize the OA Twelve Traditions, but these Traditions are essential to the health of our meetings, our members, and our recovery. I think the steps teach us how to recover from the disease of compulsive overeating, but the traditions teach us how to keep OA alive. Without our OA groups, none of us would find recovery and no one would hear the OA message. It is through the amazing concepts in the Traditions that we learn to interact with people inside and outside of our meetings.

In OA, we must be unified in order to survive individually and as a group. There is an old saying, "This is not an 'I' program. It is a 'we' program." Other traditions teach us how to put the group ahead of our individual concerns. The first thing we learn in OA is that we are powerless ... when we are alone! In OA, we are not alone. The Steps put us on the pathway to recovery, but the traditions keep us there. - Anon

From the Editor

Dear Readers - NoVAations brings you articles to support your recovery, and gives you information about Overeaters Anonymous Intergroup in Northern Virginia.

If you are interested in writing a short article about a Step or Tradition please contact me for details.

Keep Coming Back, Cathy C., Editor
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Northern Virginia Intergroup
of Overeaters Anonymous

OA Promises Step One:

Most of us have heard and read of the promises after Step Nine (pages 83-84) in the Big Book of Alcoholic Anonymous, but there are promises in each of the Steps of the Overeaters Anonymous program starting with Step One. Beginning in January 2024 and with each month thereafter, the promises for that corresponding month's step will be featured. As you read, study and work each of the steps, you may find other promises in addition to the ones cited. All of the references below are from the 2nd edition of the Overeaters Anonymous 12 & 12.

- A promise – "Once we honestly examine our histories, we can deny it no longer: Our eating and our attitudes toward food are not normal; we have this disease." (p. 5)
- A promise – "Later we discovered that, far from being a negative factor, the admission of our powerlessness over food has opened the door to an amazing newfound power." (p. 6)
- A promise – "Once we have become teachable, we can give up old thought and behavior patterns that have failed us in the past, beginning with our attempts to control our eating and our weight." (p. 7)
- A promise - "Honest appraisal of our experience has convinced us that we can't handle life through self-will alone." (p. 7)
- A promise – "First we grasp this knowledge intellectually, and then finally, we come to believe it in our hearts." (p. 7)

-Anonymous