



INTRODUCTION TO THE TWELVE STEPS

We of Overeaters Anonymous have found in this Fellowship a way to recover from the disease of compulsive overeating. We use “compulsive overeating” and “compulsive eating” interchangeably. These terms include, but are not limited to, overeating, under-eating, food addiction, anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, over-exercising, purging, and other compulsive food behaviors. No matter what form our disease takes, anyone having a problem with food can find help in Overeaters Anonymous. After repeated failures to control our eating and our weight, we now have a solution that works. Our solution is a program of recovery – a program of Twelve simple Steps. By following these Steps, thousands of OA members have stopped eating compulsively.

In OA we have no program of diets and exercise, no scales, no magic pills. What we do have to offer is far greater than any of these things – a Fellowship in which we find and share the healing power of love. Our common bonds are two: the disease of compulsive eating from which we all have suffered, and the solution that we all are finding as we live by the Principles embodied in these Steps. Since our program is based on the Twelve Steps, we would like to offer here a study of those Steps, sharing how we follow them to recover from compulsive eating. We hope in this way to provide help for those who still suffer from our disease.

If you think you may be a compulsive eater, give yourself a chance for recovery by trying the OA program. Our way of life, based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, has brought us physical, emotional, and spiritual healing that we don't hesitate to call miraculous. What works for us will work for you too.

THE TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS OF
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, SECOND EDITION. (C) 2018
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, INC.

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The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“But I’m too weak. I’ll never make it!” Don’t worry, we have all thought and said the same thing. The amazing secret to the success of this program is just that: weakness. It is weakness, not strength, that binds us to each other and to a Higher Power and somehow gives us the ability to do what we cannot do alone.

If you decide you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms. Whatever your circumstances, we offer you the gift of acceptance. You are not alone anymore. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous. Welcome home!

Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

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