

OA DESERT DIGEST

Step Two Principle: HOPE

I started recovery being mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually bankrupt. I had NO HOPE, nobody who cared, no reason to go on. I could not find a way out of that miserable black hole. I prayed, "God, please help me." Then, I growled, aw, he doesn't care anyway. At the time, I was agnostic, and thought prayer went nowhere. But, instead of being punished for blasphemy, the prayer was answered. I found recovery. But, as grateful as I was, ego caused me to leave the program. Fast forward to 2009. Every night I prayed to not binge on sugar, and the next afternoon, I could not stop myself. Again, a desperate prayer. That prayer was answered. I was able to put down the sugar and have been sugar-free since. Today, even the sight of sugar causes me to think, nope, not me. This was not my old reaction to sugar. Instead, it is the result of **HOPE** that comes from knowing my Higher Power is doing what I cannot. ~Becki B~



Acronym for

B-I-N-G-E

Believing I'm Not Good
Enough!



Page 152 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* perfectly describes how I felt when I came to OA 15 years ago: "He cannot picture life without alcohol. Some day he will be unable to imagine life either with alcohol or without it. Then he will know loneliness such as few do. He will be at the jumping-off place. He will wish for the end." I was completely without HOPE and could not imagine life with or without the food. It seemed like food was my only friend, my only comfort, but it was destroying me, and I was miserably unhappy—completely unable to see the blessings in my life.

I was desperate, praying each night that I would not wake up in the morning. In my first meeting, I heard people share about the same things I did, felt, and believed, but they were happy. They were able to change themselves and act differently. They had found peace around food. I felt a *small glimmer of HOPE*. I learned that "*There is a solution*" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 25) if I was willing to get honest and do the work. What a simple but beautiful promise that filled me with **HOPE**.

I put down the food, got honest, worked the steps with a sponsor, found a Higher Power, and began to apply the principles to all areas of my life. Now I go to bed at night and count my blessings after doing my Tenth Step with a friend. I start and end my day by thanking my Higher Power and wake up each morning with a sense of **HOPE** and wonder about what my Higher Power has in store for me for the day because it is infinitely better than anything I could have imagined 15 years ago. ~Michelle S~

I was given the desire to get free. You and the Big Book gave me **HOPE** that it was possible. If *you* could walk free, then I could walk free. You shared your experience, strength, and **HOPE**. You shared what it used to be like what happened and what it is like now. I knew you knew what I knew. I knew you had experienced the hurt, pain, guilt, fear, as I had, and you now walked free. I knew you ate like I ate, and thought like I thought, and felt like I felt. I knew you had 'been there'. ~Janet R~



I have a choice today. I have the choice to live a life full of negativity and spew bad energy onto those around me—which leads me feeling *hopeless*-- or I can live in the solution of the program. The point is that today I have a choice. Before program, the only option was a continuation of the chronic disease that is an eating disorder. It was a place of defeat, depression, and *hopelessness*.

Today I can make the choice to focus on those things that bring me joy in life and not stay stuck in what my disorder wants me to believe. A quote from one of my favorite movies describes what program is to me: "Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times...if only one remembers to turn on the light."

Program is that light. OA is the light that guides me towards **HOPE**, happiness, and a life free from the obsession over food and all the rituals that surround it. ~Haley R~



When i walked into the rooms of OA, 37 years ago, I heard recovered members share about release from this deadly food obsession, which brought me tremendous **HOPE**, since I was *hopeless*. Acronym for **HOPE** – "Hearing Other People's Experiences". From then on, I had **HOPE** that this program could help me too, I learned to have **HOPE** in my God, who was and does keep me abstinent each day at a time as I live the 12-step principle of **HOPE** in step 2, and steps 3-12.

HOPE has enabled me to thrive and to experience a quality of life I never thought possible. ~Jenny R~



We Remember These Voices:

I will *never* do that again.

Just one won't hurt me.

I'll start Monday.

No one will know.

I don't need to be honest with HP, Myself, or my Sponsor.

Editor's Note: The focus for the March newsletter will be the principle for Step Three – **FAITH**. Your submissions will be gratefully received. Please send them to newsletter@oasouthernaz.org by March 15th. Thank you!

"HOPE and Willingness are the springboards to recovery. The **HOPE** of being healed of my illness is a risk I'm willing to run today and every day."

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[Room for your article next month]