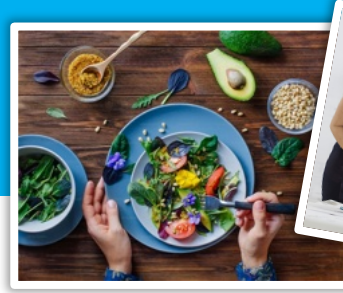


OA Desert Recovery

Tool: PLAN OF EATING

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ABSTINENCE: Is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.

PLAN OF EATING: Is a tool to help us achieve abstinence. We follow our plan, one meal at a time, one day at a time.

From the OA pamphlet, A New Plan of Eating

By Marge N

I have been in OA since the 1980's. I've had success but relapses seemed to be a reoccurring theme for a while. In November, after bingeing through my 71st birthday, I decided I needed to do something different. I had to let go of more alcoholic foods. But on the 8th of November, with the help of my Higher Power, I removed ALL wheat, caffeine, and my tortilla chips.

I am now 49 days into my new food plan. I do not crave or miss the foods that I let go of. I never thought that I would be willing to make this change, but with the grace of my HP, I am experiencing a shift. When I sit down to eat my abstinent meal, I turn off media, I light a candle, say a prayer, and have a mindful meal. I ask my HP for blessings on the food I am about to eat and that this meal nourishes my body and sustains me until my next abstinent meal. Higher Power is doing for me what I was not willing or able to do. Thy will be done, not mine.

By Becki B

I have long known what to eat. I was handed my first medical diet plan at age 19. Following the plan lasted briefly. My problem has not been knowledge, but instead, has always been the 'want to.' I did not want to eat those veggies. I did want my trigger foods.

The actual food plan is a framework through which daily decisions are made. Uppermost in my thoughts is to seek God's will, not my own, in all decisions – especially when it comes to the capability to make healthy food choices. Without God's strength and guidance, I would make choices based on the fantasy that some particular food tastes good enough or has enough magic to make me feel better. My disease lies to me. God puts the truth in there.



By Jody M

My food plan has changed and has been an on-going learning experience for me. Through painful trial and error, I've come to understand that I needed to first figure out what my alcoholic foods were and place them on my **RED** list for things I should not eat at all...ever! If that was too depressing, then I should find all the good healthy for me things that I CAN eat and place these on my **GREEN** list as items I can have at any meal as much as I want – within reason – as long as my meal has a beginning and an end. I'm leaning towards the 3-0-1 plan with approximately four or so hours in between meals and at least twelve hours overnight between last meal of the day and breakfast. I like the high-protein, low carb, with no sugar or white flour plan. Being a grazer from the get-go and not being a breakfast eater, I had to be guided to a better way of eating gradually and, by golly, as much as I fought it in the beginning, it has proven to be the solution to my bull-headed ways about food. After 40 years of laxatives, I am now free! For several years, I was afraid to quit nicotine due to fear of weight gain, but thanks to OA, I'm tobacco-free as well, Yay!!!

Oh yes and, by the way, there's also a **YELLOW** list of foods that won't trigger a binge that I can eat upon occasion (like if I'm out and about) but maybe I still should not keep them at my house, in case they call to me. I'm still learning and am so grateful for another abstinent day ODAAT.



By Janet R

My plan of eating is basically what God, my sponsor, and I have come up with. I keep in mind that the Plan of Eating is NOT the Steps. My Plan of Eating is: Three meals a day with nothing in between, one day at a time, and NO SUGAR. I have been abstinent now for 47 years, one day at a time. My plan of *Recovery*, on the other hand, is my living the 12 Step Spiritual Principles of the program. The tools help me get started. They are easy actions I can take. They explain to the newcomer what he or she needs: Food Plan, Sponsorship, Meetings, Telephone, Writing, Literature, Action Plan, Anonymity, and Service.

By Michelle S

I spent my life searching for physical recovery, so this Program work seemed familiar; however, a plan of eating is not a diet to be followed for the short term. Instead, it was a path to freedom for me. I defined what abstinence would look like for me. Then, I looked at my patterns of eating to determine which foods and behaviors were triggers and chose to refrain from them. In the beginning, I needed a LOT of structure. Today, with more than 15 years of back-to-back abstinence, I need less structure and have more foods that I can eat without triggering me. Other foods, like sugar, or behaviors, like second servings, are likely to always be an issue. The key to having a plan of eating that works for me is honesty.



By Joy V'M

For decades, my plan of eating involved stealth late-night binges and vows to start my diet the next morning. Now I've got a healthy meal plan that does not include any of my trigger foods. My first sponsor encouraged me to write down all of the foods or drinks that would lead me right into the wide-open jaws of this dastardly disease. I planned my three meals each day, eating healthy and nourishing foods. Over time, some foods were dropped and added to the trigger list. I stopped drinking sodas. I chose eating fruit rather than drinking juice. No longer did I chew gum. I put my food on a salad plate or in a soup bowl, making the same amount of food look like more. I use an hors d'oeuvre fork and spoon to eat with smaller bites. Years later, my trigger foods have no appeal; I much prefer their healthy alternatives. I'll never need to diet again. Instead, I've got a food plan that keeps me happy, healthy, wealthy, and wise. Okay. Maybe not wealthy – but certainly happy, healthy, and wise! 😊



February's topic will be "**SPONSORSHIP.**" We look forward to receiving your submissions about how sponsorship has helped you achieve abstinence. Your submissions will be gratefully received when you send an email to Judy G at newsletter@oasouthernaz.org by February 12th. Please send your articles as Word documents and not in PDF. Thanks! ~Judy