

# OA Desert Recovery April 2026

## Freedom from Dishonesty

Dishonest? Who, me? I would have sworn I was honest. But, then I started working on my weight issue, using the steps of the program. In step one, the true meaning of my powerlessness over the compulsion to eat more than I need became so apparent. If a serving used a certain measure, they told me it meant a level measure, not heaping. And, if a grain of some food fell on the floor, it went into the trash, and one grain replaced it... not "about so much." I heard them say that my eyeballs made terrible measurers.

All the steps teach honesty. But I will do a quick look at step four. I always had an image of myself, sitting in a chair, and someone sneaks up and hits me on the head. When I got honest, I had to admit that scenario never, ever, not once, happened. Sometime before, my my mouth, guided by my demanding ego, had spoken controlling or belittling words which initiated the retribution. Of course, physical harm was not okay. But I had a part in the incident.

Honesty is the beginning of the miracle in the program. If I know I need help changing, I reach out for Higher Power. And, that conscious contact somehow opens me to true abstinence. So, very grateful.

*Becki B*



I didn't have a big dishonest streak. I was more likely to lie to save someone's feelings (Yes! I love that dress!) than I was for any self-serving reason. And then I found myself hiding food wrappers under the milk carton in the garbage. I stored the chocolate on the bottom shelf behind the Kleenex in my office and not in the kitchen cabinet. I ate the ice cream when my husband was conveniently running errands. OK, so they weren't top secret sorts of deception. Nobody was going to come after me with a warrant for felonious chocolate hoarding or ice cream embezzling. I didn't think it mattered. Who was it hurting? My husband doesn't even like chocolate that much, I rationalized.

It wasn't until I became abstinent and didn't have any wrappers to hide or ice cream to eat covertly that I thought about what I had been doing. Of course someone was being hurt. That someone was me. I wasn't kidding anyone except myself. Those pounds had come from somewhere, and it wasn't from the salad I ate in public. So, abstinence brought me not only the end to cravings, a relationship with my HP, a circle of new friends, and a sponsor as my guide, it brought me -- through new honesty -- a better relationship with myself. *Jeri H.*

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I have been reading and hearing a lot about dishonesty recently. Perhaps it is due to changes in the world around me, or - just an inner prompting from my HP. It nudges me to self-examine the many ways and instances in which I am still dishonest with myself. It's a deeply held survival skill. As a child, I was told "if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." So, if it's not good news or I just can't find something "nice" to say, I won't respond. I lie by omission. It damages relationships. When I'm confronted about my silence, I hide out in justification or rationalization (close cousins). I'm left feeling that I've hurt or disappointed someone. Often in a business meeting, I will sit back and listen, wanting to hear all sides before I speak. There are times when that works and is helpful to the group, and times when others go on pressing one view or another and I never find the opportunity to share what I've learned. My biggest defect, though, is dishonesty with myself. I can brush off evidence that I'm off track in one moment and then be extremely critical and perfectionistic about myself in the next. The humble truth is almost always somewhere in between. Today I see the opposite of dishonesty as more than just telling the truth. It is "being myself", my sometimes fallible, always beautiful, kind, and intelligent, self. I am growing and learning. A work in progress, so long as I work and live the Steps and Traditions. This is not an overnight thing. Reflection, inventory, and disclosure are constants. It takes perseverance and as much honesty as I can muster – one day at a time. At the bare minimum – just keep coming back. And be sure to say something true and kind about yourself today. I'm pretty sure that when it is kind, it is also true.

Blessed to be in recovery,

*Neva*

