

OA Desert Recovery February 2026

Freedom from Insanity and Hopelessness



Such a beautiful idea, freedom. It reminds me to compare the hopeless state of mind and body from before recovery, to the state of acceptance, forgiveness, and hope when in conscious contact.

When living in the disease, my ego was king. If I catch myself today mentally arguing, "I am right," this is a cue that I am not with my higher power. But, instead, I am seeking to satiate the demands of my ego. Arguing that I am right is a cue that abstinence is the next thing to be affected.

So, I pay attention to symptoms of my disease:

Did I eat compulsively?

Did I eat more than my allotted amount? Leaving a bite also has merit. It shows that the food does not totally control me.

Good questions and good perspective. I might also ask myself why I sometimes still feel guilty about eating when my food is in order? This demonstrates that the insanity of the disease is only eased when I am in the serenity of conscious contact.

I do the footwork- food log, meetings, steps, reading daily meditations, writing a response, quiet time, and prayer. All of these are to put me in touch with my higher power, to experience the strength-building closeness from which abstinence somehow emerges.

Becki B.

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Early in recovery I heard someone share that, for them, insanity was doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results. I was certainly insane where food was concerned – whether I was bingeing and out of control or dieting, white-knuckling my way from meal to meal – restless, irritable, and discontented the whole time. There was never any relief. I was hopeless and resentful toward myself and those around me.

Today, through the Steps, I've found a new way of living. My food choices and amounts are mostly sane and healthy. I attend meetings regularly, communicate with sponsor and sponsees daily, connect with a Power greater than myself, try to be of service in and out of the rooms, make more conscious choices about how to live my life and stay active in all of my affairs.

Today I am grateful, willing, and hopeful. When insanity returns - mostly in the form of distorted thinking that leads me to make poor choices – I have God and trusted fellows to turn to. I correct mistakes rather than hide from them as I once did in the food. I keep learning. I'm "growing up" emotionally and spiritually. I'm changing the things I can and gratefully letting go and accepting the things I can't. It's a powerful freedom. Granted to me one day at a time.

Neva S.



Before OA, I was definitely loony tunes. I would sneak around late at night when everyone was sleeping, gobble down my favorite binge foods, floss and brush my teeth a few minutes before midnight ... vowing to start my new diet in the morning. I usually made it until mid-morning, and then the cycle would start again. When I came back to OA, 20 years later and 100 pounds heavier, I'd given up any chance of having a normal life. I hid in the shadows. I thought no one knew of my food compulsions. However, my clothes did not lie, and quite frankly, they did a fairly inept job of keeping me covered. Fast forward to now, after nearly 16 years of abstinence, I am a healthy body size and my compulsion to overeat has been lifted. I've got an honest life now ... I very rarely tell a fib ... and the Steps have changed nearly every detail of my life. I emptied my God Box a few months ago, and of the 12 requests, hopes, and dreams, 9 of them had happened! This program has blessed me beyond compare. Some may shake their heads when I claim sanity – especially the kids in my junior high classes where I am known as the “no-nonsense substitute teacher” – but anyone who knows me knows that I am now full of hope. And joy!

Joy V'Marie