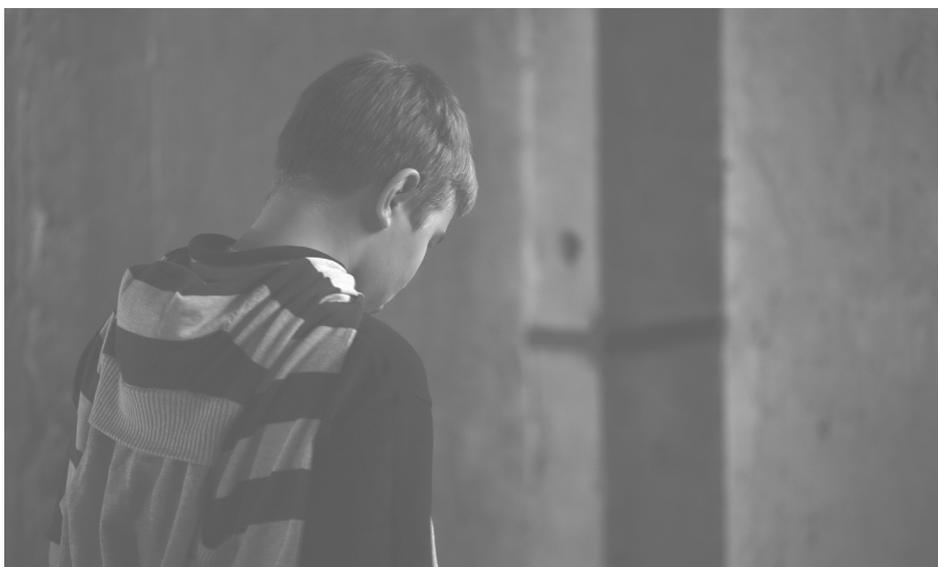


Coming in Young

— Matt S., Young People's Committee

Even in recovery, I wanted a magic pill that could cure uncomfortable moments. Sometimes I believe perhaps we as a Fellowship can do something more to ease the burden for those entering recovery young. At times, I have racked my brain with confusion, anger,

years old with one year of abstinence and to the men and women who openly shared about their body image issues; excess skin; feeling vulnerable with their shirts off; and their hurt, anger, and sadness regarding family struggles, sexuality, and abuse. Coming in young and at



and sadness looking for some way that we can carry the message better. But the truth is this: Overeaters Anonymous works! I am a young man who came to OA on the brink, and eight years later I am still abstinent. I am abstinent because OA is doing it right. I am grateful for every fellow in the program who is willing to share his or her experiences with me.

Through God and the Fellowship, I am moving toward a greater understanding of my own manhood and being a responsible fellow in OA and the world around me. While giving service this past year, I had a passionate response to some decisions. Others who were serving with me encouraged me to voice my opinion. I am grateful for the Board of Trustees' patience. I am grateful for my Young People's Committee cochair who encourages me to "bring it" and never hold back. Whether they agree with me or not, they encourage me, and that's amazing.

Thank you, OA, for your open-mindedness. Thank you to the man who nominated me for my intergroup board when I was only 22

340 pounds (155 kg), I received what can best be summed up in a quote from *For Today*: "The deepest need of man is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness" (p. 322).

Coming in young, I didn't know what I needed. You had the experience. With your honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness to share, I am freed a little bit more from my prison. I am being pulled into the sunlight of the spirit, and with each pull, I pray that I can turn back and grab the hand of another young person because for this I am responsible.

If your service body is looking for resources for young people, please do not hesitate to email youngpeople@oa.org. Under the "Young People" category at oa.org/document-library/ you can download the new *Young People's Meeting Format*, helpful publications, and suggestions for reaching out to young people. We also have a *To the Young Person* pamphlet that is free to download, and we encourage all intergroups and service bodies to share it with young people in their groups.