



Abstinence

What is abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous?

Current Definition:

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

Let's look more closely.

- What does “refrain” mean to you?
- What does the idea of “compulsive food behaviors” mean to you?
- What does the word “obsession” mean to you?
- What does the word “compulsion” mean to you?

Can YOU be completely honest about the food?

❖ I am struggling with my plan of eating.

Now what?

- What if I have an extra piece of fruit after I have finished my meal?
- What if I am still frequently weighing myself and looking at myself in a mirror?
- What if I can't make up my mind about what I am going to have at the next meal, even though I had a plan for it?
- What if I am picking up the food (bingeing or slipping) about every three weeks, with “abstinence” in between?
- How can I get out of this cycle?

“I” can't! - This is the whole point of the program.

❖ Each person defines his or her own plan of eating.

- It is suggested that we define our own plan of eating. Does that work for you?
- What part does fear play in not liking the suggestions from your sponsor or health care professional?
- What does “contempt prior to investigation” mean?
- Will it take more will power? More research?

Are you ready to “give up”? To surrender?

We are either abstinent or we are not!

- How can we get **true** abstinence?
- Am I honest about my food and my food behaviors?
- Am I willing to go to any lengths to get abstinent and stay abstinent?

**For true freedom from compulsive eating,
honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness are essential!**

Plan of Eating

- Who should decide what you should eat?
- What works for you and why?
- Do you eat what your sponsor believes you eat?

- **SUGGESTIONS:**

- Follow your doctor/nutritionist's plan.
- A plan from the *A New Plan of Eating* pamphlet.
- Use a weighed and measured plan.
- Hand your plan over to HP each day.
- Make a plan for the day -- ahead of time.
- Other . . .

❖ A plan of eating is more than just what you eat!

- What time do you have your meals? Do you have definite mealtimes?
- How much do you eat? Who is the judge of “moderate”?
- Do you sit or stand to eat?
- How fast do you eat?
- Are you enjoying the moment, or do you read, listen to the radio, text, or watch TV while you eat?
- Do you eat in your car? Or eat on the way to . . . ?

Body Image and Weight

- Do you determine your own “healthy body weight”?
- Do you find yourself obsessing about your weight and body image?
- How often do you weigh yourself?
- Are you dissatisfied with your body image?
- Do you find yourself regularly doing more exercise than you had planned?
- How do you stop these thoughts?

Are you ready? Are you tired of the same thoughts week after week? Are you willing to hand them over?



Higher Power

- What if I haven't got a Higher Power?
- How can I make contact with a Higher Power?
- What does “act as if” mean?
- Am I scared to let go of my old ideas?

How can I turn my fear into faith?

The Importance of a Sponsor

- How can your sponsor help you with your abstinence?
- How can a sponsor help you with your plan of eating?
- Are you completely honest with your sponsor so they can help you?

The Value of Service

- Will service get you abstinent?
- How can doing service help you to stay abstinent?
- Can you think of a time when service helped you stay abstinent?
- What kind of service helps you stay abstinent?

The Importance of Meetings

- Why do you go to meetings?
- How can going to meetings help you stay abstinent?
- Are you sometimes distracted when others are sharing?
- How can you help someone else with their abstinence in a meeting?

Action Plan - H A L T

- Why is it important not to get too “Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired”?
- How long does it take you to realize you are in this space and you need to take action?
- What can you do to take care of yourself (other than eat)?

❖ Reasons why abstinence is important:

- Progressive nature of the disease -- it gets worse!
- We die without it -- sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly!
- Helps emotional and spiritual recovery!
- Improves health -- both physical and mental!
- So we can learn better attitudes and get a life that wasn't possible while we were in the disease!

So, tell us . . .

- How do you know you are abstinent?
- What do you do to prevent a slip or relapse?
- Was the worst day you had since you have been abstinent better than the best day you had when not in recovery?
- Do you thank your Higher Power for your abstinence?
- If you are not abstinent, will you have a better chance of becoming so if you keep coming back?

SURRENDER, HUMILITY, HONESTY, WILLINGNESS



❖ It doesn't need to be uphill!



By working the steps, we get good recovery.