

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 1

*One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life:  
that word is love.*

*Sophocles*

Sometimes the word does not have to be spoken: it is felt. Small children are picked up and hugged. A warm and tender tone of voice can say anything and bespeak love.

And more: when the milk is spilled, the new toy broken, the rug stained—love is cleaning up the mess quietly, without recrimination, in mutual understanding that accidents can't be helped.

An OA shared at a meeting an incident that took place at a birthday party when she was five years old. She burped, and her brother called her a pig. She felt so humiliated she wanted to run from the table. But her father went to her, gave her a hug and whispered, "It's OK." The power of her father's love far outweighed the sting of her brother's remark.

Love is a great deal more than saying I love you.

**For today:** How do I show love?

Question: In what ways do my words, thoughts and deeds reveal my love of family, friends and fellow OA members?

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## November 2

*Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom  
must undergo the fatigue of supporting it.*

*Thomas Paine*

Freedom isn't free; it costs something. The source of all the blessings I have received needs my support to stay alive and strong. I support my freedom from compulsive overeating by:

— being willing to give up the pleasure as well as the pain of excess food, abstaining no matter what.

— nurturing my spiritual condition through daily contact with a Power greater than myself, even if it is limited to an expression of thanks.

— practicing the twelve steps to the best of my ability.

— taking responsibility for keeping OA alive by attending meetings as a personal commitment and doing service at whatever level it is needed.

— contributing as much as I can afford toward the cost of carrying the message and maintaining OA services at all levels.

**For today:** Does the support I give my freedom come close to this checklist?

Question: What actions do I take each day to demonstrate my commitment to abstinence and recovery in OA?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 3

*When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.*

*Confucius*

I did not deliberately choose my faults, but neither do I have to be afraid of letting them go. I can establish what they are (I have many more faults than I am aware of) by taking steps four and five, and I can abandon them in steps six and seven. What would any thinking person give for such simple, direct therapy? And it doesn't cost a dime.

Do my faults include any of these: sloth, bad temper, promiscuity, rudeness, dishonesty, child abuse, violence? God, who loves me and wants me to be free, will accept them all.

**For today:** I need not be afraid to admit anything to God and to another person, under God's guidance.

Question: What personal defects can I see objectively today and what price am I paying holding on to them?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 4**

*He is not poor that hath not much, but he that craves much.*

*Thomas Fuller*

“You can’t be too rich or too thin.”

I’ve said this in jest, but how far is it, really, from what I believe? Why do I always want more? More things, more gadgets, more clothes, more money, more weight loss.

The truth is I have what I need. I am grateful for my abstinence and the weight loss that goes with it. Having turned my will and my life over to God as I understand God, I no longer need to agonize over what I eat and how much I weigh. In this, as in every area of my life, God is doing for me what I cannot do for myself.

**For today:** I accept with gratitude the many blessings that are mine thanks to the OA program.

Question: Looking back are there times in my life when it's clear that I was being given what I needed rather than what I wanted? Do I accept those blessings with gratitude and thanks to the OA program?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 5

*In the carriages of the past you can't go anywhere.*

*Maxim Gorky*

I need not wallow in the pain of yesterday, nor shun it out of shame. The lesson of my past is part of me, and I use it for greater understanding of myself, greater empathy for those who still suffer and as a solid foundation for my recovery. The past is the sum total of experience that made possible what I have today.

The OA program helps me to keep my past in perspective. As I practice each of the steps, the guilt, shame and self-pity engendered by defects and wrongdoings are dissipated. With my amends, I sweep it all away. I belong to the world today, and I will be part of its tomorrows.

**For today:** I have no desire to live in the past; rather, I embrace it and feel joyous about the experiences that have brought me to Overeaters Anonymous.

Question: How have the Twelve Steps helped me overcome guilt, shame and self-pity and allowed me to use my past to carry OA's message?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 6**

*A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.*

*Lao-tzu*

An OA member who has maintained a weight loss of more than 200 pounds for nearly ten years is the same person who was barely able to walk in the door of her first meeting. There are a few people around who remember her as she was then—grotesquely obese, wearing a size 52 dress that was bursting at the seams, and unable to sit on any of the chairs in the meeting room.

But she took that first step. She came to the meeting, got help in dragging a bench to the table where she sat with the others.

She kept right on coming back, parlaying that single step into a size 3 dress, a 110-pound body and a brand new life.

**For today:** Now is the time to begin; tomorrow is too late.

Question: With God's help, what actions can I take today to ensure a day of abstinence and recovery?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 7

*There is no fruit which is not bitter before it is ripe.*

*Publilius Syrus*

Experience is not acquired without bruises and pain. That's why I say I am grateful to be a compulsive overeater. Without the disease, I would not know of Overeaters Anonymous and the twelve step program of recovery, which has been called a blueprint for a sane and happy life.

To wish for the rewards of growth without having to go through the growing pains is futile. Avoidance of pain stops growth cold; and when growth stops, regression is next. Recovery calls for going through each step, feeling all the feelings and having the patience to wait for results.

**For today:** I accept with gratitude whatever progress I am making, however small.

Question: What painful times have I endured in recovery that ultimately led me to gratitude and appreciation?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 8

*I choose to put in order my thoughts and hang the walls of my mind with pictures of whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.*

*Joseph Murphy*

Do I have the power to choose my thoughts, my moods? Yes! I can choose to put love at the center of my being, so its warmth and cheer will be with me always. I do not have to let the world's doings dictate my moods. I can determine what I want to think about, how I want to be.

When I pray and meditate, I choose faith; I expect the best and make room for it in my mind. I choose to let God's light be my strength and my joy.

**For today:** I choose things that are lovely to put in my mind.

Question: What thoughts can I choose to fill my mind today that will lead me toward the light of recovery?



# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 9**

*Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch.*

*James Baldwin*

Are there any compulsive overeaters who do not want to be free of the consequences of their disease? No one wants to suffer the effects of obesity and/or enslavement to food. But the real question is, am I willing to give up the temporary oblivion food provides? That crutch enabled me to hobble through life when nothing else seemed to help.

Yes, the thought of losing that crutch is frightening. But in Overeaters Anonymous, no one is asking me to give up the food and go out and try to make it as a normal eater. Instead, they give me the one solution OA has: the twelve-step program of recovery. Step one administers the first dose of truth: I am powerless over food; and steps two and three tell me what to do about that powerlessness.

**For today:** I surrender my crutch of food to a Power greater than myself, which is doing for me what I could never do for myself.

Question: What am I powerless over that I can surrender to my Higher Power today?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 10**

*Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves, but deal in our privacy with the last honesty and truth.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

I cannot play games with myself where my disease is concerned and expect to be sane and spiritually fit. I won't be arrested for driving under the influence of compulsive overeating, but I can be just as irrational in my thinking, just as estranged from my values as a drunken driver. I played that game before I knew a better way to live.

Once I took the first step—admitted food had me beaten—I found I could look for other honest answers without fear.

**For today:** My abstinence and my sanity depend, above all, on being honest with myself.

Question: How has my honesty regarding food led me to become honest in other areas of my life?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 11**

*Mingle your joys sometimes with your earnest occupations.*

*Linnaeus*

We OAs can be very somber indeed. To be sure, compulsive overeating is a serious business, but so is alcoholism—and there is a great deal of joy and laughter at AA meetings. AAs love a good joke, especially when it is on themselves.

Oh, it is entirely true that fat is no laughing matter, and God knows we've been ridiculed enough. Still—it's good to laugh, to blow away that "heavy does it" attitude when it descends on me like a thundercloud.

**For today:** Joy and lightheartedness are never out of place.

Question: How can I make room for joy, laughter and lightheartedness when serious thoughts invade my mind?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 12**

*There never were, since the creation of the world,  
two cases exactly parallel.*

*Lord Chesterfield*

When I am tempted to give advice to newcomers, expecting them to work the program my way, let me remember that each person is different, with different experiences and background. Sometimes the only thing we have in common is our disease. I gladly share what works for me, but if a newcomer resists my suggestions, I let go my notions of what is right and what is wrong. I encourage and support a person's decision to try another way.

**For today:** There is only one hard and fast rule in sponsoring: to let those I sponsor know that in OA they have freedom of choice in what they will eat, how much they will weigh and how they will work the program.

Question: How can I encourage and support other members of OA and help them find what works for them?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

## November 13

*I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know.*

*Mark Twain*

How truly gratifying it is not to be afraid to say, "I don't know." One man confided that his fear of admitting ignorance was so great he made up "facts" to support his position in an argument.

It sometimes happens that, as children, we are rebuked by teachers or parents for failing to give a correct answer, perhaps leaving us with a resolve never to admit ignorance again. But we no longer need to act on that resolve; we can sweep it away along with the other "wreckage" we discard when we take inventory.

**For today:** Recognition of one's limitations is a mark of intelligence, not ignorance. If I don't know the answer, I am not afraid to say so.

Question: Where do I still have to be smart enough., goodenough or competent enough in order to feel all right?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 14**

*Nothing, I am sure, calls forth the faculties so much as the being obliged to struggle with the world.*

*Mary Wollstonecraft*

Struggles with the world take different forms. Where some people actively engage in combatting society's evils, others fight the battle within themselves. Compulsive overeating is a struggle with oneself. Obsession drives its victims to eat, even as they recoil, weeping in their helplessness.

Once the spiritual remedy is found, it can be seen that this kind of struggle, too, calls forth the faculties, sharpening the awareness of danger and fine-tuning the ability to distinguish truth from illusion.

**For today:** Struggles of the past are not to be regretted or ignored, but used to live in freedom.

**Question:** In applying the OA principles when dealing with my struggles, how has my spiritual awareness grown?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 15**

*Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.*

*Thomas à Kempis*

It is only through the help of this program, and continuously working at letting go and letting God, that I can detach myself from the problems of those I love. I can best help my mate, my children, my parents and my dear friends by loving them as they are.

It is when I stop trying to make others be what I think they should be that they begin coming closer to their true potential. This is because, in accepting them as they are, I am clearly changing myself and acting only to fulfill my own highest potential.

**For today:** The influence I have on others by practicing the principles of the program in my everyday life is far more effective than anything I can do or say to change them.

Question: What are some recent situations where my actions influenced others more positively than my words?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 16**

*There is no security on this earth—there is only opportunity.*

*Douglas Mac Arthur*

We who are recovering from compulsive overeating believe that we “never have it made.” But we also know that each day is an opportunity to begin anew.

Recovery is for those who want it and are willing to grab hold of every opportunity to achieve it.

There are no guarantees that we will be free of our disease six months or a year from now. Recovery, like abstinence, is attained one day at a time.

**For today:** OA offers opportunity, not guarantees.

Question: How can I align my thinking so I see today's happenings as opportunities rather than problems to be solved?



# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 17**

*The deepest need of man is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness.*

*Erich Fromm*

If a sense of separateness is endemic to the human condition, how much more keenly do compulsive overeaters feel their apartness! People eat occasionally for pleasure, to be sociable, to comfort themselves, to pass the time. We who are food-obsessed try long and hard to be like normal eaters, only to find that we cannot limit ourselves to the occasion; our eating goes on and on, past need, past sociability and past sanity. Recovery in OA is based on the recognition that we are not—and never can be—normal eaters.

**For today:** Yes, I am different from those of my family, friends and colleagues who are not compulsive overeaters. But there are thousands of people like me in Overeaters Anonymous.

Question: How am I different from a normal eater? How can I express my gratitude to OA for showing me where I belong?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 18**

*If you want to understand others, look into your own heart.*

*Johann Schiller*

If I have no understanding of what makes me think and act as I do, then I can have little understanding of other people's behavior. If I do not admit anger, fear, hate and other emotions and steadfastly ignore the reasons for these feelings, how can I maintain balanced relationships with spouse, friend, parent or child—all of whom have similar feelings?

People who practice the twelve-step program seldom say, "I'll never understand So-and-So." Having looked into their own hearts, they understand why other people behave as they do.

**For today:** If people's actions continue to surprise me, it's time to do another fourth-step inventory.

Question: What do I see when I look into my own heart? Is it time to do a Fourth-Step inventory?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 19**

*How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees?*

*William Shakespeare*

Sociologists call it “benign neglect.” What it is, is patience. If only I can keep myself from rushing about to *do* something, things generally turn out fine. I first do what I can, then let go.

The main thing for someone as compulsive as I am is to find something to occupy me while I’m waiting. This keeps me from wringing my hands and mopping my brow and eventually jumping in to fix things again.

It is positively amazing how well my troubles are resolved when I sit them out.

**For today:** The common cold takes about ten days to run its course, and nothing I can do can alter that fact. With variations in time, this is true of most of my troubles.

Question: What can I do to cultivate patience when every bone in my body wants to see change right now?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 20**

*As I watched the seagulls, I thought, “That’s the road to take; find the absolute rhythm and follow it with absolute trust“*

*Nihos Kazantzahis*

Compulsion is self-will gone berserk. It is the polar opposite of effortless abstinence—of being in harmony with the rhythm of the universe, “going with the flow,” letting go and letting God.

When I surrendered my compulsion to God, I found the absolute rhythm and followed it with absolute trust. It is as close as a human being can come to being a part of nature.

In speaking of her experience of surrender, an OA recalls sensing rather than hearing a kind of music that seemed to be made by all of nature’s elements—herself included—acting in harmony.

**For today:** There is more to be experienced in surrendering my life to a Higher Power than I can ever imagine.

**Question:** What I surrender to God today so I can be in harmony with the universe?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 21**

*There is no more mistaken path to happiness than worldliness, revelry, high life.*

*Arthur Schopenhauer*

Many people spend their lives yearning for the “good life” they imagine is being lived by those who are written about in the gossip magazines.

Contrary to popular opinion, worldliness, revelry and high life are the enemies of happiness because each of them represents *excess*—too much of a good thing. Certainly, it is a good thing to celebrate joyous occasions, to mark the passage of time with festivities; but these events are valued precisely because they are indulged in with moderation. A party every day would mean the total extinction of happiness.

**For today:** Good and bad times come and go, but the only real and lasting happiness is feeling good about myself. The first requirement for this condition is abstinence.

Question: Where am I still in danger of confusing excess with happiness?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 22**

*It is impossible to live pleurably without living wisely, well and justly, and impossible to live wisely, well and justly without living pleurably.*

*Epicurus*

Living pleurably meant giving myself all the food I wanted when I wanted it. Unlike normal people, who partake of the pleasure of eating with moderation, I was hooked on food. Soon, what once seemed pleurable began exacting a price that drained all my resources—physical, emotional and spiritual. I learned what all addicts eventually come to know: it is impossible to use any substance or activity to excess—be it food, alcohol, drugs or gambling—and live either wisely or pleurably.

**For today:** I ask the help of a Power greater than myself to moderate my eating and give myself the pleasure of living wisely, well and justly.

Question: In order to live wisely, well, and justly, what can I ask God to help me with today?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 23**

*You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance,.*

*Kahlil Gibran*

With the accumulation of days, months and years of abstinence, it is easy to forget the pain of compulsive overeating. The expression of gratitude for blessings received keeps alive the awareness of who I am and where I came from.

When practiced daily, prayer and meditation become a channel through which consciousness of the presence of God in my life is heightened. This consciousness not only comforts me in times of stress and trouble, but it gives new dimensions of peace and contentment to the joy and freedom of recovery.

**For today:** Prayer can be only “Thank you”—which is as appropriate in my need and distress as it is in my abundance and joy.

Question: How can I show my gratitude for the blessings I have received?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 24**

*The absurd man is he who never changes.*

*Auguste Barthelemy*

The compulsive overeater in me never changes, but the recovering member of Overeaters Anonymous does.

I am aware that my thinking has changed in many ways. Where once I dieted for a specific length of time, only to break loose on holidays and other occasions, I am now thankfully abstinent every day.

It is an incomparable pleasure to use the power this program gives me to eat moderately even on days when excess is the norm.

**For today:** I thank God and Overeaters Anonymous for my abstinence and for the new life it has given me. I wouldn't trade it for any food on earth.

Question: How has my thinking changed as I continue to recover in Overeaters Anonymous?



# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 25**

*All who joy would win Must share it. Happiness  
was born a twin.*

*Lord Byron*

From my first day of abstinence, I discovered the truth of the saying, “I can’t keep what I have unless I give it away.” What joy there is in telling an OA newcomer or friend or sponsor of the miracles that have come about in my life thanks to OA. I never get tired of sharing “what I was like, what happened and what I’m like now.” Even when I have something troubling me that I intend to discuss, I am aware of the gratitude in my heart and I want to express it. Remembering the joy this program has brought me is enough to lift my spirits; sharing that with someone brings the joy back to me.

**For today:** Here’s a good OA pick-me-up: Call some OAs, including at least one newcomer and one person I have never called before; give them a nutshell version of why I am so thankful to be in OA, and then tell all of them how glad I am to have them as fellow members.

Question: As I share my gratitude for the gift of recovery in OA, with whom can I express my appreciation of having them as fellow members?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 26**

*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

*George Santayana*

The diet-and-binge syndrome experienced by many compulsive overeaters is a classic example of “forgetfulness.” Each time I dieted myself down to a satisfying slimness, the danger of regaining weight seemed remote—despite repeated proof that gaining back the lost pounds is a natural consequence of diet-and-weight-loss regimens.

Thank God I am in a program that does not talk about dieting and losing weight, but rather tells me what I can do to like who I am right now.

**For today:** To keep it fresh in my mind, I share my experience with other compulsive overeaters.

Question: How is my plan of eating different from a diet? Is a healthy weight a byproduct of my recovery or an end unto itself?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 27**

*People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Unsettledness may be said to be a state of becoming. Which is what we in Overeaters Anonymous are doing. Just as growth is a process that is never finished, so is recovery an ongoing process: I am recovering, not recovered. Being settled is never forever. I can say, “When this is over, I’ll be all right.” But then something else arises, and the process begins again. That is the natural pattern of growth—one step after another. If there is no pain, what is there to work through, to learn from and to grow beyond?

**For today:** I rejoice that the feeling of being unsettled—having many problems to deal with, much adjusting to do—sends me to my Higher Power instead of the refrigerator.

Question: Am I feeling unsettled about something today?  
What is the healthiest thing I can do with that feeling?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 28**

*Hope is the risk that must be run.*

*Georges Bernanos*

Have I tried and failed? Try again. The Big Book says, “If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.”

Going to any length means taking twelve specific steps, one day at a time, and never being finished. In the process, sanity will be restored and abstinence will become a reality.

Hope and willingness are the springboards to recovery. The hope of being healed of my illness is a risk I’m willing to run today and every day.

**For today:** I have hope, or I wouldn’t be in OA. Do I have the willingness to take that leap into the steps; into abstinence?

Question: In what ways am I cutting corners or settling for "half measures" in the way I work the OA program?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 29**

*Our knowledge is a little island in a great ocean of non-knowledge.*

*Isaac Bashevis Singer*

The pride of humankind often edges into arrogance. Comparing ourselves with the rest of earth's inhabitants tends to give us a sense of godlike superiority. Human history shows that, individually and collectively, those who are overly impressed with their knowledge may have closed their minds to anything new. The annals of science and medicine are filled with such examples.

The assumption of knowledge is incompatible with humility, which is the state of being teachable. "We know only a little," states the Big Book; and "more will be revealed to us."

In this program, it is suggested that we put aside our knowledge and keep an open mind.

**For today:** I may know what I think I know, but I can put it aside for what I have yet to learn.

Question: How can I benefit by becoming more teachable? Am I able to put aside what I think I know for what I have yet to learn?

# We are in a 5 minute meditation. Stay tuned...

**November 30**

*Chance is perhaps the pseudonym of God when He did not want to sign.*

*Anatole France*

People who are brought to the brink of destruction and then one day awake to find themselves restored to perfect health do not believe in coincidence.

We are held breathless, awestricken by personal stories in which recovery—indeed, life itself—hinged on blind “chance,” on a series of events so incredible they would be dismissed in other circumstances.

There are the members who cancelled intestinal bypass surgery because, between the time the operation was scheduled and the day they were to check into the hospital, they found OA. Others, whose doctors gave them only a short time to live, tell us about a literal “bottom” where physical deterioration is all but total. They, too, were directed to our door and are recovering.

**For today:** The powerful force that brought me to OA is ready to lead me to the promises of this program.

Question: Can I look back and see the hand of a Higher Power that brought me to OA?