

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

## October 1

*All music jars when the soul's out of tune.*

*Miguel de Cervantes*

Being human, there comes a time when I can't seem to do anything right. I'm out of whack and irritable. I don't want to pray, take the steps, go to a meeting, or talk to anyone. I feel I need relief; maybe a light snack ...?

Am I still trying to prove that, like normal eaters, I can occasionally eat just for pleasure, for a “pick-me-up” or to pass the time? Do I really believe I can handle such eating?

When I'm out of sorts and think of food, it is “nature's” way of telling me to get to a meeting—fast.

**For today:** Thinking of eating is *not* eating; I can't do anything about my thoughts, but I can certainly go to a meeting, call my sponsor, read program literature or say the Serenity Prayer.

Question: Which specific actions have I learned to take when thoughts of eating try to get my attention?

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**October 2**

*How nature loves the incomplete.*

*She knows*

*If she drew a conclusion it would finish her.*

*Christopher Fry*

There is never an end to change, to growth. I have seen selfish desires vanish, self-pity disappear; I have attained qualities that at one time seemed entirely out of reach. All are the products of growth, the ongoing rewards of struggle. I often think, in the midst of pain, "If I can just get through this, I will be fine." But no sooner do I get through it than another problem shows up, and the process begins again.

How far can I go? Beyond my wildest imagination. The quality of my life has no limit.

**For today:** Do I draw conclusions such as, "I am always like that" and "I can never learn that"? Now that I am living one day at a time, I can take *always* and *never* out of my vocabulary.

Question: What "always" and "never" attitudes about myself can I ask God to remove from my thinking today?

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

## October 3

*When we are unable to find tranquility within ourselves, it is useless to seek it elsewhere.*

*François de La Rochefoucauld*

Surely something, someone can fix me. A little this, a little that, a new combination, a new person or place, a new goal. Can you fix me? The question, in a thousand different guises, is still asked. The wise person answers, “I would if I could, my friend, but—as it is for me—the problem is within.” It is not the weather, the dog, the neighbors, my house, my spouse or lack of spouse, my job or lack of one; it is within me. Nothing on the outside changes that. When I am feeling bad about myself, I can put the blame on anything and everything. When I am feeling good about myself, I accept all things that make up my life on the outside.

**For today:** I am completely honest in taking stock of myself so I can learn why I feel as I do about myself.

Question: How can I become more honest in taking stock of myself so as not to blame others for my behaviors?

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**October 4**

*Not to go back is somewhat to advance, And men  
must walk, at least, before they dance.*

*Alexander Pope*

Nothing in nature grows at the speed human anxiety would wish it to grow. It takes time to halt a retreat, more time again to overcome inertia and begin to take a new direction. I cannot expect the difficulties in my life to be erased because I wish it. I am learning to walk one step at a time, and I look forward to dancing.

I am grateful for the upturn in my attitude, for my patience, my ability to reach out, then step back and wait. Yes, indeed, I am on my feet, thanks to my Higher Power and Overeaters Anonymous.

**For today:** I rejoice in the broken bonds of obsession, and I am content with my progress.

Question: Where have I made progress with God's help?  
How can I share that joy with my Higher Power?

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## October 5

*Hatred is a feeling which leads to the extinction of values.*

*José Ortega y Gasset*

Hatred is the result of not accepting the world and its people—myself included—as they are. It makes little difference whether I fall into a blind rage or repress my anger; either course plunges me into a kind of madness, an unreasoning state in which everything I value is snuffed out.

The twelve-step program is a great help in dealing with anger. It feels good to get angry without hating anyone. I can separate a person's behavior from the person. The process starts with getting to feel better and better about myself.

**For today:** I do not have to give another person's actions the power to knock me off balance.

Question: Where do I still confuse hatred with anger, disappointment, or sadness?

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**October 6**

*Where much is expected of an individual, he may rise to the level of events and make the dream come true.*

*Elbert Hubbard*

The best person to expect anything from is myself. Yet the very thought of excelling makes me shrink back and say, “I can’t.” I have experienced the joy of jumping in without self-consciousness and rising to my own and others’ expectations. What keeps me from attaining my full potential most of the time is the negativity of self-obsession. When my attention is constantly focused on myself and my performance, I am strangely hobbled. Getting out of my own way gives me the freedom to rise to the highest level of which I am capable.

**For today:** Step three is the compulsive overeater’s prescription for making the dream come true. I turn everything over to God as I understand God, and take the plunge.

Question: What negative thoughts prevent me from being more successful or productive? How can I turn these thoughts over to my Higher Power?

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

**October 7**

*The first point of courtesy must always be truth.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

If my friends won't tell me the truth, who will? When someone asks me what I think, I can speak the truth without either hurting or flattering. It is tempting to be evasive when I fear someone may not want to hear the truth, but I cannot distort reality out of kindness for another person without myself living a lie. I seek the clarity and the honest communication with another person that come from telling the truth. Excess in anything—even consideration for others—is an expensive indulgence.

**For today:** Do I really believe that withholding the truth to protect someone's feelings is doing that person a favor?

Question: How do I express the truth to others without hurting or flattering them?

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

**October 8**

*The man who acts the least, upbraids the most.*

*Homer*

It is safer to criticize than to act. Doing takes courage and self-confidence.

We are encouraged to become doers early in life. When parents react positively to a child's efforts, giving praise regardless of the outcome, that child will have the confidence to try again. On the other hand, untempered criticism is devastating to a child; it is that child who is likely to become the person who acts the least and upbraids the most.

The doers of the world are almost invariably people who as children were criticized as little as possible, and then only in a constructive manner, with parents and teachers offering suggestions in an easy, loving way that builds up rather than destroys self-esteem.

**For today:** I pray to be less critical and more helpful toward others, especially children.

Question: Where can I be more gentle, accepting and less critical of others and myself?

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**October 9**

*The moral deteriorations attendant on a false and shallow life are among the most pitiable wrongs that mortals suffer.*

*Nathaniel Hawthorne*

At one time I needed to make a good impression, put up a facade that said everything was fine. That's all I had, a facade. Today I have more, but sometimes I still play the game, "If it looks good, it is good."

Thank God, there is a part of my consciousness that is not impressed by appearances. I may try to silence it with distractions but it forces me to look at the truth. Once again, the tenth step brings incredible relief. It feels good to plan to correct myself, to make amends where possible.

**For today:** Making a list of my worst faults and the problems each of them creates in my life today helps me see what I can do to change.

Question: When I work the Tenth Step, am I grateful to my HP for the ability to see the truth?

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

**October 10**

*You never know what is enough until you know what is more than enough.*

*William Blake*

I have had my lesson in excess. Eating more than enough to satisfy emotional longing became a compulsion—cunning, baffling, powerful and incurable. Today I find great comfort in knowing and accepting my limits, in saying, “Yes, I have had enough for today.” Because I am unable to discipline myself with food, I depend on a Power greater than myself to guide me; for this I maintain conscious contact with God as I understand God, and I share my experience with others who suffer as I do.

**For today:** In prayer and meditation, and in communication with other compulsive overeaters, I find the ability to distinguish enough from surfeit, in food as in other things.

Question: Where in my life has God enabled me to differentiate between enough and too much?

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

**October 11**

*Lying to ourselves is more deeply ingrained than lying to others.*

*Fyodor Dostoyevski*

I am with myself every minute of every day. I have no respite from my frailties, no leave of absence from myself. It's hard to have to listen to that relentless inner voice forever pointing out my faults and mistakes. So I fall back on the familiar pattern of self-deception. In that never-never land, things are not what they really are; they are what I want them to be.

As I work this program of recovery, I find better ways of seeking relief. I call time out to express my feelings, either verbally or in writing. Funny, how much more bearable the truth becomes when I can look at it openly and honestly, without having to be defensive about it.

**For today:** To the extent that I take time to express my feelings, I can be comfortable with myself and learn something important at the same time.

Question: How has the daily pursuit of self-honesty helped me stay abstinent one day at a time?

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

**October 12**

*Success can corrupt; usefulness can only exalt.*

*Dimitri Mitropoulos*

One of the great strengths of Overeaters Anonymous is our usefulness to one another. Just by being present at meetings, we are doing a useful service for our fellow members as well as ourselves.

Once we've met the qualifying requirement— a desire to stop eating compulsively—nothing is mandatory in OA. We make no pledges to anyone about anything. What we eat and how much we weigh are not matters to be publicly determined and sworn to; indeed, even practicing the twelve steps is our own affair.

Attendance at meetings, however, is a minimal commitment each of us makes to ourselves. If we can do nothing else, we can go to a meeting.

**For today:** The first criterion of usefulness in OA is a member's presence at meetings.

Question: In what ways has my attendance at meetings been helpful to me, the meeting, and the Fellowship of OA?

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

**October 13**

*Understanding is the beginning of approving.*

*André Gide*

When my head was muddled from compulsion, I trudged through the anxious world of fear and despair. Coming to OA was the beginning of a new life. I am thankful for my new capacity for understanding, for acceptance of all that I had to go through in order to become the person I am today. OA is my reward, abstinence my gift.

This program has made possible tremendous changes in attitude. It has given me many dimensions, a Higher Power, a lighter step and a liking of myself. I have put aside the standard of perfection in favor of understanding and approving myself as I am.

**For today:** I pray to remain open to understanding and approving life.

Question: How has becoming open-minded made me more self-accepting and a better friend to others? Am I open to understanding and approving of myself and of life?

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

**October 14**

*The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger.*

*William Shakespeare*

The road to compulsive overeating is built for comfort. It promises the satisfaction of every need and desire, and it stretches out invitingly from whatever spot on earth I may find myself. I am on another path now, but I am always aware of that old road. I can get back on it anytime, as, indeed, some do.

I do not choose to return to that road today. I may do it tomorrow, but, just for today, this road I'm traveling in OA is exactly where I want to be.

**For today:** The OA path is not always smooth and comfortable, but it is leading me to freedom.

Question: When the road to recovery is narrow, what can I do to remain as close to the middle of it as possible?

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

**October 15**

*Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.*

*Victor Hugo*

Prayer is a habit now—a way to be free of immobilizing defects. Often in the course of a day, I may think or act with a certain spontaneity, accepting virtually everything about life. That, to me, is a form of prayer. Prayer comforts me, so I waste no time in wishing things were different. It allows me to deal with what is before me, and gives me the energy to work at coping with situations I may be able to do something about, such as illness, flat tires, a leaking roof. Prayer allows me to like and enjoy life and to live without suffocating in guilt over past mistakes.

**For today:** I am open to prayer throughout the day, wherever I am and whatever I am doing.

Question: During the day, how do I remember to use prayer when I need to find peace and calm?

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

**October 16**

*How shall we expect charity toward others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves?*

*Sir Thomas Browne*

The injustice we do ourselves was aptly expressed by a member who said, “If someone treated me the way I treat myself, I’d sue.”

While it may be true that I tend to be harder on myself than I am on others, in a larger sense, if I do not feel kindly toward myself, I cannot extend kindness to others.

I am allowed to make mistakes, and so are other people. Errors can be pointed out and corrected without harsh measures or cruel words, without venomous self-recrimination.

**For today:** Steps four through nine are a highly effective way to deal with my inability to accept imperfections—my own and others’.

Question: How have I learned to deal kindly with my own imperfections and those of others?

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

**October 17**

*We carry our homes within us which enable us to fly.*

*John Cage*

Where I live is inside myself. My home is mine to keep exactly as it has always been—or to change it. The steps tell me how to clean and rearrange my home; when I am ready, my Higher Power removes stubborn defects I can do nothing about. I alone can clutter up the space I live in with resentments, anger, self-pity—and I alone can deal with that clutter. I have the tools I need and helpers standing by. I no longer have to be a victim, letting old ideas creep in and destructive thoughts pile up. The OA program shows me how to keep my home in good order.

**For today:** Am I comfortable within myself? Do I give myself the cleanliness, warmth and caring I need?

Question: What actions can I take today to ensure that the home within me is clean, warm and bright, and not cluttered with destructive defects?

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

**October 18**

*Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit.*

*Aristotle*

Friendship is sharing experience over time, coming to love and care for one another. Like the OA program of recovery, it is ongoing and changing, growing in strength and depth. I cherish old friendships—people with whom I've gone through the ups and downs of life, learning and growing.

Much as I treasure my friends in OA, however, I am careful not to yield to the temptation to gravitate into small cliques at meetings. Practicing the twelfth step does not end with getting compulsive overeaters to come to meetings; it means speaking to newcomers at the meeting and making them feel welcome. It may be from the ranks of these newcomers that new friendships will arise.

**For today:** Friendship, like the longest journey, starts with a single step.

Question: In what ways do I cultivate relationships and friendships in Overeaters Anonymous? Do I make newcomers feel welcome?

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

**October 19**

*Only in a hut built for the moment can one live without fear.*

*Kamo no Chomei*

Fear comes from projection. My mind does not say, “This is a fine, pain-free, worry-free moment in which there is nothing to fear. Therefore, enjoy it.” Instead, it leaps ahead, conjuring up all sorts of mishaps and calamities.

As difficult as it is to shed old habits, I keep remembering the relief and freedom and joy that came the first time I tried abstaining one day at a time and not worrying about what would happen tomorrow.

**For today:** My life consists of single moments. I occupy them one at a time, savoring the fullness of each, and find there is no room for fear.

Question: How many of today's moments will I enjoy, feeling the presence of my Higher Power?

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

**October 20**

*Patience is a bitter plant, but it has sweet fruit.*

*German proverb*

Waiting is one of the worst things to ask of a compulsive overeater. If I don't see results immediately, I get discouraged. In the days when I fought one obsession with another, I dieted compulsively and jumped on the scale compulsively. I could put up with any discomfort, any deprivation—for varying lengths of time—as long as I did not have to suffer a “plateau”; to diet and lose no weight was intolerable. Clearly, when something is intolerable, it is abandoned—and so went every reducing scheme I ever tried.

Thank God I am not here to diet and lose weight.

**For today:** I am in OA to turn my life around—and I'm willing to wait.

Question: What can help me see that being made to wait could be a source of rest and renewal, not just a cause for frustration?

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

**October 21**

*Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted.*

*Aldous Huxley*

OA was there when I came in, and it will always be there. Or will it? I must admit, I took it for granted that there would always be someone to open the meeting room, make coffee, put out literature and clean up afterward. I didn't volunteer to do anything like that because I had too many other responsibilities and, besides, there were plenty of people who liked to do those jobs.

Then something happened: two people moved away, another began working nights and had to find a day meeting to attend ... and suddenly there wasn't anyone to do all the things I took for granted. I'm grateful that was all it took to wake me up.

**For today:** What am I doing to ensure the continued existence of my home meeting and OA as a whole?

Question: Do I take for granted that my OA meetings will always be there? How strong would my meetings and OA as a whole be if everyone put in the same amount of energy to maintain them as I do?

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

**October 22**

*The man who looks for security, even in the mind, is like a man who would chop off his limbs in order to have artificial ones which will give him no pain or trouble.*

*Henry Miller*

Under the heavy anesthetic of compulsive overeating there was perfect security. I felt no pain or confusion. In fact, I didn't feel a thing. The price I paid for such peace was to chop off all my connections with reality, and with life itself.

In my fondest dreams, I did not imagine that such a life could be turned around; yet, that is exactly what happened when I found OA. Today I have no need to cut myself off from anything. Feelings are feelings—they have only as much power over me as I am willing to give them.

**For today:** I do not have to be afraid that my feelings will blow me away. I can allow myself to feel them, talk about them, write about them—and watch them dissipate. I do not need the fake security of compulsive overeating.

Question: Do I allow myself to feel my feelings and take appropriate actions to help them dissipate?

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

**October 23**

*Discord gives a relish for concord.*

*Publilius Syrus*

Fighting the disease of compulsive overeating is fighting myself. That struggle gave me a deep appreciation of the peace I found in OA. That is one reason not to regret what I had to go through to get here.

Being human, however, I still bring discord into my life: I sometimes get angry over my own and others' mistakes; I argue over minor matters as though my life depended on it; I eat too much and hate myself for it.

Thank God, I can accept all that today. I am a human being and a compulsive overeater recovering one day at a time.

**For today:** I am aware of the progress I have made in this program. My moments of discord show me how great my blessings are.

Question: What former "moments of discord" are now incentives to work the program and enjoy my new way of life?

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

**October 24**

*All the mind's activity is easy, if it is not subjected to reality.*

*Marcel Proust*

My best thinking got me into trouble. I could “think” my life to suit me; the only problem was that it didn’t work. There was too great a gap between what my mind dreamed up and reality.

For a compulsive overeater certain convictions are the bitter enemies of truth. The conviction that if I had enough willpower I could overcome anything pushed me ever deeper into the mire of addiction. This program is helping me to let go some long-cherished opinions and attend more to the real nature of things. I am coming to understand myself as I free my mind of conventional ideas about human strengths and weaknesses.

For myself: I am powerless over food. No matter how much I wish to control my eating, I cannot. I am a compulsive overeater, no matter what my mind may have to say on the matter.

**For today:** I turn to my experience with compulsive overeating to help me distinguish conventional thinking from reality.

Question: How have my unsuccessful attempts to overcome compulsive eating changed the way I view my powerlessness over other circumstances?

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

**October 25**

*Better hazard once than always be in fear.*

*Thomas Fuller*

My fears are just below the surface. I am not aware that much of my fear is of looking ridiculous or finding out I'm not too bright or that I'm narrow and small-minded underneath my civilized veneer.

But it's better to jump in and examine my fears than to let them haunt me the rest of my life. I take a fourth-step inventory, skimming the surface at first, then digging deeper. The more honest I am, the more freely I breathe. *This* is what I feared? I want to shout to the world: Don't be afraid!

**For today:** I am not afraid to take the next step. Everyone I know who took the fourth and fifth steps lived to tell about it.

Question: What fears prevent(ed) me from doing Steps Four and Five?

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

**October 26**

*Whoever is aware of his own failings will not find fault with the failings of other men.*

*James Ross*

Other people's faults invariably match my own. When I notice some particularly objectionable shortcoming in a person, I can generally be sure it is a defect I detest in myself.

Without self-awareness, the habit of finding fault is a distraction that keeps me from seeing my own mistakes. As long as I look at another's wrongheadedness, I don't see myself—the only person I can change.

A daily tenth step turns my attention to myself so I will know what to do to put my life in order.

**For today:** I don't need to concern myself with other people's faults; I have all the detective work I can handle to ferret out my own.

Question: How can taking a daily Tenth Step help me look at my own shortcomings so I can live in harmony with others?

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

**October 27**

*We may with advantage at times forget what we know.*

*Publilius Syrus*

I have learned a great deal, and I know what I know. Don't tell me how to live my life. I eat because I was emotionally deprived as a child, and nothing—not this one's God or that one's Higher Power—can change it.

Somehow, in OA, I forgot all that. I went ahead and acted as if everything they told me was true. I prayed to a concept of God that was no more than three letters of the alphabet; but I prayed.

Abstinence was equally “dumb,” but I did it anyway.

I still know what I know but, thank God, I am no longer using it to keep me from getting well.

**For today:** If I find it difficult to forget what I know, it is just as effective to “act as if I've forgotten.

Question: Am I able to "act as if" ideas that were suggested to me by my sponsor and others will help me?

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

**October 28**

*You can be healed [of depression] if every day you begin the first thing in the morning to consider how you can bring a real joy to someone else. If you can stick to this for two weeks you will no longer need therapy.*

*Alfred Adler*

It's simple: every time I get my mind off myself, I feel better. Each day, I select a member of my family, a friend, a colleague or an OA member and think about what I can do for that person. (Of course, in making an effort to bring joy to others, I must be careful not to intrude on their lives. Giving advice to someone I am trying to cheer is a temptation I resist.)

I spend some of my free time planning what I will do; then, at the first opportunity, I carry out the project. It need not be a major undertaking: a phone call, a letter, a small surprise, an offer to babysit or take an elderly person for a drive. There are so many things to do, one lifetime is not enough.

**For today:** It isn't necessary to be depressed to adopt the practice of making others happy.

Question: What can I do to be of service to others today?

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

**October 29**

*Inside myself is a place where I live all alone, and that's where you renew your springs that never dry up.*

*Pearl S. Buck*

Discovering one's own inner resources is a reward of abstinence. Newfound energies and a soaring spirit take up the time and space of what was once compulsive overeating. Abstinence brings other substitutions: I have courage in place of fear, challenging ideas in place of shallow thought, action instead of wishful thinking and an honest desire to share in place of selfish interests. The longer I am abstinent, the more experience I acquire in the art of living and the more I am able to give myself and others.

**For today:** Part of my new way of life is looking within for inspiration.

Question: What spiritual work will help me gain access to inspired or intuitive thoughts?

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

**October 30**

*It were endless to dispute upon everything that is disputable.*

*William Penn*

A statement frequently heard in OA is, “I resigned from the debating society.” Debate is possible on virtually every subject under the sun. Do I want to spend the rest of my life arguing about the right and wrong way to proceed on everything from Higher Power to food plans?

If someone insists on practices that seem wrong to me, I have a number of options: call for group conscience; go to another meeting; give up graciously.

**For today:** I am in OA to recover from compulsive overeating, not to debate.

Question: In that areas of my life am I still debating, negotiating, or swimming upstream to get what I want?

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

**October 31**

*Nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose.*

*Mary Wollstonecraft*

I came to OA because I wanted to get well more than I wanted to eat. That is the steady purpose that directs my life today. I place freedom from compulsive overeating before everything else because I do not want to return to the life I had without it. Before OA, the only tranquility I knew was to anesthetize myself with food, an indulgence for which I paid dearly the rest of the time. Nothing could save me from the mental and emotional anguish and confusion of being fat, feeling guilty and hating myself for lack of control.

Today I am not confused about who I am and what I am doing. I am a compulsive overeater, relieved by the grace of God from the obsession, and recovering in this place I call home.

**For today:** Staying aware of my purpose in living by the OA program is my true source of peace of mind. Therefore it is my number one priority, and nothing—no food, no circumstance, no person—can tempt me to give it up.

Question: What is my "mission statement" for continuing to choose abstinence and OA one day at a time?