

What is compulsive eating? Powerlessness over food.

Overeating, impulse eating, restricting, stress eating, binge eating.

Not being able to stop once we start

Thinking about eating all the time

Setting boundaries, taking oaths, making promises... and breaking them

Food hangovers - Personality changes in anticipation of or having eaten compulsively

Chapter Two - Alcoholics Anonymous - Page 24

"We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink "

Chapter 3 - More about alcoholism

"The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals-usually brief-were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization."

Chapter Four - We agnostics - Page 45

"Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power? "

"Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem."

What is spirituality?

Mature expression of love - to receive and to give

Ability to live in the moment, consciously

Belief in something beyond our understanding

Awareness of G-d's presence

Liberation from desire

A feeling of security and safety

Acceptance in things as they are

A partnership between man and G-d.

Consistency, integrity, honesty, humility, tolerance, patience, trust, lack of judgment, live by principles, ability to withstand desire, inner peace.

What is the absence of Spirituality?

Fear, distrust, desire, violence

The Ritual in Spirituality

Compulsive eating is a ritual - something that started out as a choice, but became an act of violence against ourselves - A replacement for other, more appropriate reactions to life..

Bingeing - bingeing and purging - starving & bingeing - stress eating - eating in secret - impulse eating - watching TV and eating - night eating - eating, then exercising

Consequences - What price did we pay for our eating?

We began to change the way we made decisions, the people and the activities that we involved ourselves with. The way we reacted to stress, or even success.

We assigned value to food greater than its intended function - nourishment.
We chased gratification, or we ran from responsibility.

The Power to NOT eat compulsively

So we're powerless over food....and we come to OA, but we haven't a clue how to transform compulsive eating into abstinence. I barely understood what compulsive eating was when I was new to OA.

So what do we do?

So how do we get from being powerless to learning how not to eat now?

We need to convert that desire to stop eating into something more.
We need to create an avenue for new thoughts and ideas to enter our consciousness.

We need to become willing to trust that what comes after eating will be better than what our compulsive eating had become.

I had to be reminded again and again that I was badly beaten down, and nothing I could do could stop it.

I needed to create new habits to replace the old ones.

I need to bring mindfulness into the process of securing, preparing and eating my food.
I needed to make the eating of my food a sacred experience rather than a reminder that I was weak and unworthy.

I needed to keep slowing down...

I needed to have a plan that I could count on without fail to get me through the tough times until I got strong enough to see beyond the next craving or hunger pang.

II

Spiritual Experience (Big Book Appendix)

The terms "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening" are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms.

... our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals.

... such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what psychologist William James calls the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time. Quite often friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before he is himself. He finally realizes that he has undergone a profound alteration in his reaction to life; that such a change could hardly have been brought about by himself alone.