



RELIEF FROM FOOD OBSESSION – AND DEPRESSION

I believe I was born with this disease. As a child I ate more than what I was comfortable with on many occasions; eating the biggest apple in the fruit bowl, when I knew it wasn't a good idea because I wouldn't be hungry for dinner, but not being able to not do so, sneaking food, being overcome with the obsession to eat a can of cream corn in the middle of a Sunday afternoon, thinking I'm not sure that I want to do this but I can't stop myself anyway.

During my adolescence I used laxatives because I was often constipated. I was only a little overweight once or twice in my life and there were times when I was "nice and thin". One summer I thought I "had it made" because my stomach was flat enough to wear a bikini. I thought my eating was neurotic but I thought that other neurotic women like me ate like that and I would just grow out of it.

I was self-conscious. I didn't know how to "do life", especially relationships yet I presented a very competent front to the outside world. It appeared that I did whatever I wanted to do. I was successful on the outside at least until my late twenties. I was independent, I had a career and friends, yet I always felt there was something wrong with me and it was only a matter of time before I ended up in a mental institution. By my mid-thirties I had had two nervous breakdowns, and a diagnosis of depressive disorder. I didn't work for about seven years and was on and off antidepressants, did lots of counselling, psychodrama and other self-help therapies.

I never ever thought there was any connection between my eating and the depression. I came into a Twelve Step Fellowship at thirty-seven years old. I had been in AA for a year and had met woman there who also went to a Twelve Step Fellowship to do with food addiction. The seed was planted. I looked back over my life and I knew my eating had never been normal. I had eaten when I hadn't wanted to, things I hadn't wanted to, grazed my way through the day, not been able to organise food, nor to decide what I wanted etc.

I didn't want to be a food addict at first and wasn't convinced I was as bad as others. After all I had never been to Weight Watchers. At that time I didn't even think I had been a dieter. It just took time for me to admit that yes, I had been a dieter and although I may not have eaten the quantities that other people had day after day, there were many times when I had "stuffed my face" even though I had vowed never to do it again.



As a result of the Twelve Steps of this programme I have been relieved of the obsession and compulsion to eat. I accept that I am not a normal eater and never will be. As well as the relief from food obsession I have also been relieved of the depression that required me to be on and off antidepressants for seven years. I am no longer searching for an answer because I have found the solution.

I don't hate myself any more, nor do I hate anyone else. I have gotten better in areas that I didn't know I needed help with. I've learned to live life one day at a time. I don't regret the past and don't live in fear of the future. I have a feeling that I have been taken care of and that will continue to be the case provided I attend meetings regularly and try to practise the Twelve Steps in my daily affairs. I enjoy my life and the sense of belonging that I get from being a member alongside other people who are enjoying being free from the "want to eat". I'm not cured of this disease; I am given a daily reprieve. I'll keep coming back as I hear from older members that 'it' continues to get better!