

My Story

It has been about five and one half years since I came through the doors of OA. At that time, I was full of despair and very sure that OA would be just another thing that didn't work in trying to lose weight. I had diabetes which demanded injecting myself weekly, taking medicine daily, and pricking my finger daily to monitor blood sugars. I was also on blood pressure medicine.

At one of my earliest meetings, I heard an Inner Voice calmly say, "Get a sponsor." "What?" I retorted. "I most certainly WILL NOT get a sponsor. I don't know how to choose a sponsor. What does 'Look for someone who has what you want' mean anyway? I don't know what I want. I certainly don't know what that means." Again came the calm response, "Get a sponsor." I escalated the debate (completely held in my head while at an OA meeting. "There is no one here. How do I know who to ask?" And then I heard the group leader say, "Will all abstinent sponsors please identify themselves." And there were a couple of people who spoke up. I ended up picking one of the people, and that's how I got my first sponsor. It can be scary and calls for courage to ask a stranger to sponsor you. It was very scary for me, but I found out THAT IS HOW WE GROW.

Five and one half years later, I have released 75 lbs., my diabetes is no longer active, so no injections or pin pricks or daily meds, and my blood pressure has reduced to the point of no longer needing meds. Two miracles right there!

But OA has given me so much more. In embracing this way of life, emotionally I have learned to STOP the negative self-talk and second guessing regarding every single thing I do. I have learned to forgive myself when I make a mistake (and I make many). My expectations are lower in my relationships with my friends, and I have become a better friend in the process. My fears have shrunk and I can accept the fact that not everything is wonderful, but it is doable with my faith in my Higher Power. And one of the best things? My Higher Power springs from **my own definition** of what a "power greater than

myself” is: outstretched arms waiting to enfold and accept me no matter what. I am learning to trust this Power when my life becomes unmanageable and it works.

OA is teaching me that I am not only physically sober, but also emotionally and spiritually sober, too. To me, OA has become a way of life for all my life. It is a sturdy and realistic way of living.

I am most definitely not perfect, but, as the Big Book of AA states, “We claim spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.” I am happy to be on the road with all the rest of you, “trudging the road of Happy Destiny.” May it be so.

Pat H., August, 2022