



FOOD ADDICTS
in recovery anonymous

THANK-A-THON MEETING FORMAT

Thank-A-Thons are run as consecutive 50 to 55-minute meetings with a speaker, optional sharing, and no break. Smaller/less established fellowships may choose to use the standard qualification meeting format with one or two speakers sharing on gratitude.

Be sure to insert a city or region on p.1 and a time on p.10.

❖ **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the *(region/city)* Thank-A-Thon of Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous -- FA. Before we continue, please silence your cell phone. [Pause.] Thank you.

My name is _____; I am a food addict and the leader for this meeting. [Pause.] After a moment of silence, will you please join me in the **SERENITY PRAYER?** [Pause.]

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.

❖ **PREAMBLE**

Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience and mutual support, are recovering from food addiction.

We welcome all who want to stop eating addictively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. FA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine. We take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from addictive eating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

- ❖ We would like to encourage those who do not yet have 90 days of continuous abstinence in FA to come to the front of the room to read. Would someone please read the **DEFINITION OF FOOD ADDICTION**? [*Call on a volunteer to come to the front, then give them the following page to read.*]

❖ **DEFINITION OF FOOD ADDICTION**

Food addiction is a disease of the mind, body, and spirit for which there is no cure, but it can be arrested a day at a time by our adapting to a disciplined way of eating and the Twelve-Step program of FA. When we abuse food by using it as a drug, our lives become unmanageable.

Food addicts have an allergy to flour, sugar, and quantities that sets up an uncontrollable craving. The problem can be arrested a day at a time by the action of our weighing and measuring our food and abstaining completely from all flour and sugar.

FA defines abstinence as weighed and measured meals with nothing in between, no flour, no sugar, and the avoidance of any individual binge foods.

- ❖ How many food addicts are here besides me? [*Pause.*] Welcome to you all. FA is based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- ❖ At AA's request, we read their literature as originally written, so the words "alcohol" and "alcoholic" remain. Would someone please read "**HOW IT WORKS**" from page 58 of AA's Big Book? [*Call on a volunteer to come to the front, then give them the following page to read.*]

❖ HOW IT WORKS

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. 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.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon. Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery.

- ❖ Would someone please read the **TWELVE STEPS** as adapted by FA?
[Call on a volunteer to come to the front, then give them the following page to read.]

❖ THE TWELVE STEPS

1. **We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.**
2. **Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**
3. **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.**
4. **Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**
5. **Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
6. **Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
7. **Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**
8. **Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.**
9. **Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
10. **Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**
11. **Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**
12. **Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to food addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

- ❖ The following passage is also from the Big Book, page 60: [*Leader reads.*]

Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! I can’t go through with it.” Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
 - (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
 - (c) That God could and would if He were sought.
- ❖ Would someone please read the **TWELVE TRADITIONS** as adapted by FA? [*Call on a volunteer to come to the front, then give them the following page to read.*]

❖ THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on FA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for FA membership is a desire to stop eating addictively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or FA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the food addict who still suffers.
6. An FA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the FA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every FA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. FA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the FA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

❖ The **DISCIPLINES** of this meeting are:

1. No smoking, food, drinks, or gum, please.
2. Please refrain from texting, doing handicrafts, or engaging in any activity that might distract others.
3. We ask that you not bring infants and children to the meeting. However, anyone who identifies as having a problem with food is welcome.
4. Please remember that naming specific foods, or even describing them without a name, may trigger cravings for some members.

❖ **QUALIFICATION**

Leader shares experience, strength, and hope regarding recovery in FA, with a focus on gratitude. [*Share until approximately__a.m./p.m. and then proceed to the **SEVENTH TRADITION.***]

(The length of the speaker's qualification depends on the number of attendees able to share but it is suggested that it is at least 15 minutes. End the meeting 5 – 10 minutes before the hour to ensure a timely start for the next session.)

- ❖ **SEVENTH TRADITION:** We will now collect the Seventh Tradition donation. The Seventh Tradition advises us to support ourselves through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. Our expenses include rent, literature, support of our intergroup or chapter, and support of the FA World Service Office. Please contribute generously to the Seventh Tradition.
- ❖ **SPONSORS:** Sponsors are FA members currently being sponsored and living the Twelve Steps. FA recommends that a sponsor be six or more months abstinent. Sponsors help us begin the FA program and guide us in our recovery. We recommend that newcomers and anyone without a sponsor speak with one of these people. Would all sponsors with time available please stand and identify themselves?
- ❖ **SHARING:** {OPTIONAL: Is there anyone who is visiting or who has recently reached 90 days and is working with an FA sponsor, who would like to share first? [*Pause.*]} The meeting is now open for sharing from all those with 90 days or more of continuous abstinence in FA who are working with an FA sponsor. Please focus your sharing on gratitude. We ask that you please refrain from clapping. [*Sharing should conclude three or four minutes before the end of the meeting.*]
- ❖ Would someone please read the **PROMISES** from the Big Book, page 83? [*Call on a volunteer to come to the front, then give them the following page to read.*]

❖ THE PROMISES

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook on life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

- ❖ Will you please remain in your seats, and, after a moment of silence, join me in the **SERENITY PRAYER**? [*Pause.*]

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.