

**Before
you take
that bite,**

read this pamphlet
and remember—
today you have a
choice.

Before you take that bite, read this pamphlet and remember—today you have a choice. You do not have to deviate from your committed food plan. Do not be afraid of cravings you may have for foods you used to eat or of feelings of anger, fatigue, or confusion. When we first stopped eating addictively, all of us had such feelings. They will pass. Read this pamphlet. It will help you to take actions and to remember. You can be abstinent this one day—no matter what. Take an action.

Use the Serenity Prayer.

If you are anxious or upset, slow down, easy does it, and pray. Ask your Higher Power for help to accept the things you cannot change, the courage to change the things you can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Say the prayer until your upset feelings pass and serenity returns.

Remember that feelings are not facts.

No matter how you may be feeling, you do not have to eat. The cravings you have now will pass and you will soon be glad that you did not eat. Remind yourself of how grateful you were to wake up abstinent this morning. These feelings of discomfort are temporary.

Think it through to the end.

Instead of allowing yourself to fantasize about the supposed pleasures of eating, stop and think. Where has food taken you every time you picked it up in the past? Remember: the morning after—the bloat, fatigue, nausea, and aching; lying or stealing in order to get food and then going to any lengths in order to be alone to eat it; the pain of struggling to fit into your clothes; waking up with those awful feelings of shame and hopelessness.

Practice an attitude of gratitude for your abstinence.

Think again and again of the benefits of abstinence and what it gives you: freedom from shame and guilt about your eating; structure to each day and each meal; freedom from ever having to diet again; hope for the new life that is now possible for you.

Let the program carry you.

Lean on the group and the FA fellowship. Remind yourself that you are not alone. Hundreds of other people are just like you and they are not eating. If they can be free from food, so can you. Look for a meeting to attend as soon as you can. Reach out for help.

Make a telephone call.

Call an FA member and ask for help, or stop focusing on yourself and ask how the other person is doing. We recommend that you make a practice of making several FA phone calls each day. If you get to know others and let them get to know you, it will be easier to reach for the phone when you need it.

Remember that you only have to do this “just for today” or “just for this moment.”

Tell yourself that you can eat tomorrow if you want to, but not today. Remember that we live one day at a time, just twenty-four hours a day. You can do it today.

Remember that the Power behind you is always greater than the problem in front of you.

Practice faith and trust. Remind yourself that if you got through yesterday without eating, you can surely get through this moment and this day. You are not eating now. You have already experienced a miracle. Get out of the way, let go, trust the FA program.

Remember that you are not alone and that “we do service by staying abstinent.”

You are now part of a fellowship of people just like yourself. By abstaining, you can receive help and you can give help too!

H.A.L.T.

Are you too **H**ungry, **A**ngry, **L**onely, or **T**ired? Be gentle with yourself. Be sure to eat each of your meals on time—not too early and not too late. If you are feeling fatigued or sick, get extra rest, take a nap, or plan to go to bed early. Make a phone call or write about whatever may be upsetting you.

Take an action.

FA is a program of action. Do something that is the opposite of eating: leave the kitchen, take a bath or a walk, make a list of all the things you're grateful for, read a book. Give the FA program a chance to work. The obsession will remain if you allow yourself to stay focused on food. When you do your one percent, the program can do the rest.

Don't eat no matter what.

There is always help and there is always hope. Reach out! You are not alone anymore.

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 Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Service, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AA is in any way affiliated with this program. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only—use of the Steps and Traditions in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.

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.

What is FA?

Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) is a program based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). There are no dues, fees, or weigh-ins at FA meetings. FA is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience and mutual support, are recovering from the disease of food addiction.

FA was formally organized in 1998, although it began as part of another twelve-step program in the early 1980s. Some FA members have been continuously abstinent since that time. Abstinence in FA is equivalent to AA's "sobriety" and is clearly defined: weighed and measured meals with nothing in between, no flour, no sugar, and the avoidance of any individual binge foods.

Who joins FA?

FA members are people of all ages from every part of the world. FA includes people who were morbidly obese, substantially underweight, or even at a normal weight. Regardless of their size, they were tormented by cravings, dieting, bulimia, and/or an obsession with exercise.

Does the program really work?

Many FA members tried other solutions to address their problems with food, including years of diets or exercise. FA offers a long-term answer. Abstinent members find freedom from addiction and maintain healthy weights. The number of people with years of unbroken abstinence continues to grow.

foodaddicts.org

FA World Service Office

400 West Cummings Park, Suite 1700
Woburn, MA 01801 USA

Phone: +1 781.932.6300

email: fa@foodaddicts.org

FA World Service Conference-Approved Literature Revised June 2012