

Confessions of a food addict
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Hi, my name is John and I'm a recovering food-aholic. I enjoy food. Good times call for celebration – bring on the good stuff! Bad times call for comfort – I love comfort food. And what's a good gathering without some munchies making it better? I found I was eating when I was happy, eating when I was sad, eating when I was bored, when I was active, when I was stressed, and even when I wasn't really aware I was packing it away. Some have a hard time understanding how a person can down a half gallon of ice cream without realizing the amount that was consumed. I don't. Some don't understand late night or closet munching. I do. I've been there. Some people can eat anything and not gain weight. I can't. I have always half-seriously joked that I could gain three pounds just by smelling something. Behind the laughter of the joking there are tears.

Last year, God got in my face and I lost 132 pounds. To accomplish it, I had to change my lifestyle. The only surgery I had for my weight loss was the removal of bad habits and the grafting of new ones.

Now comes confession time. Over these last months, some of the bad habits (and pounds) started creeping back. My new and healthier lifestyle was eroding away. A little treat here, a little there – nothing bad in itself, but the accumulation started taking its toll. To quote the Apostle Paul, “What I want to do I do not do, but what I hate to do I do.” Little bit by little bit, pound by pound – nothing noticeable at first – but then the clothes weren't as loose as they once were – the belt had to be let out another notch or two. I woke up one morning and realized my ship had changed course from the direction of my heart. I realized I needed once more to shift my compass to get back on track, and that constant vigilance is needed to stay on course. I have come to realize that nothing tastes as good as being healthy and whole feels.

It dawned on me that this was very similar to sin in my life. My old damaging lifestyles can erode my desired life-giving way of life. Not that these lifestyles were necessarily bad in themselves, but they were not good for me. For my better health, change had to happen. There will be times when I slip and stumble, but I need to keep the bigger picture in sight, and get back on course.

The hardest part always seems to be getting started. Staying with it and not getting discouraged is also difficult. Let me share with you some steps that I have found helpful for beginning and for staying on course, not just in weight issues, but in any issues which might weigh us down.

First, I had to own I had a problem and commit to doing something about it. Second, I made a searching and brutally candid inventory of my lifestyle (and eating habits) and came to an honest accounting of what I wanted and needed to change. Third, I turned to God and friends for help. I made a decision to turn my will, my life, and EVERY aspect of it over to the care of God. I admitted to God, to myself, and others about my desires to change, and humbly asked for support. I followed up with prayer and commitments each morning and sought continued help throughout the day.

Change doesn't always occur quickly. It takes time for a large ship to turn around. But even the longest journey begins with a single step. I found that once started, blessings began flowing which encouraged me to keep going. The same can happen for you.

No matter how far up or down the scale we have gone, we can know a new freedom and a new happiness. We can come to know the peace that passes understanding. Our whole attitudes and outlooks upon life will change as we become more whole and healthy, and we realize even more that we have a God who will do for us and in us what we could not do for ourselves.