

A recent reading dealt with differences between abstinence and compulsive eating behaviors. It sparked me to think about the blessings I have received over the years, by taking the simple but not easy act of surrendering.

Before coming into program, when I was wracked with low self-worth, surrender meant losing. But in recovery, surrender means to stop waging the war altogether and to go over to the winning side.

In fact, as I'm writing, I have a flashback memory to an OA retreat I attended a quarter century ago where we all were given black baseball caps emblazoned with white flags and the word "surrender" stitched in red.

That recollection, turn, reminded me of the sentence in *The Big Book* that reads, "We have ceased fighting anything or anyone--even alcohol (food) (4th ed., p. 84)".

I have taken this message to heart over the years. I no longer get in the ring with food, because I know it's the heavyweight champ. I can't win that fight, so I simply don't even engage.

Instead, I make a daily commitment to my Higher Power to stick to my food plan and I don't entertain thoughts of varying from it.

Again, as it says on pages 84-85 of *The Big Book*, "If tempted, we recoil from it (food) as from a hot flame....We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel we have been placed in a position of neutrality--safe and protected."

Yes, I *am* willing to do whatever it takes to stay abstinent. I make my food plan known to people before I eat outside of my home; I even have a business card printed up with a list of foods that I don't eat.

What I've learned is that restaurant chefs and people who invite me to their homes seem to enjoy the challenge of cooking without sugar, wheat, and alcohol to accommodate my food plan. Many of them will say, "You know, I should eat a more healthy food, the way you do."

So, not only am I adhering to my abstinent plan of eating, I often am giving others pause to think about what they put in their mouths.

Talk about a win-win!

Gil P.