

THIRD STEP CEREMONY AFTER SLIP

(SPONSOR READS ALOUD): Welcome back. You have been again given a reprieve from the destruction of compulsive overeating. Through a recommitment to weighing and measuring, phone calls, meetings and reporting to a sponsor we have once again been offered the chance for life based on a positive commitment to a spiritual ideal.

In OA action is the magic word. When we forget this in any one of our daily acts; when outside commitments take precedence over the commitment to recover we end up back into EGO. Until we so reduce and surrender that EGO we are destined to fight everyone and everything that might offer an end to our affliction.

(SPONSOR): I am glad that you have returned to the fellowship and have asked me to sponsor you. You must now get ready to work the program at all cost so that you never have to retread the path of eating, bingeing and the sorrow that follows.

(SPONSOR): Let's join hands and repeat the "Serenity Prayer".

--LIGHT FIRST CANDLE-- I am lighting the candle of honesty. It is the beginning of our recovery. We need honesty for a cornerstone of a new and more consistent philosophy of living. It is the admission that you cannot control your food or your actions without a spiritual set of principles. It is the light of truth that says that acceptance is the realization that OA program is a one day at a time commitment to turn our lives around.

(SPONSOR ASKS):

- a. Can you emotionally accept that you have an incurable disease?
- b. Do you believe you can accept the reality that you will never be a normal eater?
- c. Discuss your feelings about the first compulsive bite.
- d. Discuss what you feel you give up once you return to food.
- e. Discuss what dignities befall you when you do not take that first bite. (responsibility, decision making, etc.)
(Read Chapter. 3, Big Book - pg. 30-31 until "ad infinitum.")
- f. How long did it take you to realize that only OA had a solution for you?
- g. What did you try while you were out there?

- h. What does the statement "Once an overeater, always an overeater" mean to you? (Read pg. 34 - Big Book - "For those who are unable ... to ... wish.")
- i. Discuss your feelings about returning to the fellowship.
- j. Do you still have the feeling that there is something softer and easier waiting for you "out there"? (Read page xxviii "Doctors Opinion" in Big Book - from "There is the type ... to ... is entire abstinence.")

STEP UP - Discuss with returnee the need for recognition of symptoms that characterize a return to eating. Does he recognize the tell-tale signs:

1. Too busy to attend meetings.
2. Too involved in "life" to sponsor.
3. Too long on abstinence to make reach out phone calls.
4. Too important a person to do service.
5. Too much program to honor anonymity.
6. Too little time to read.
7. Too much serenity to write and burn.

(SAY) "You have just taken the First Step:"

--LIGHT SECOND CANDLE-- This is the candle of openmindedness. It designates the second step on the road to recovery. The openmindedness aspect of recovery does not require a definition of a power greater than myself, it just asks that we believe that if such a power does exist, it could restore our sanity. How much further we go with this depends on our openness. This is the candle of belief in something you cannot prove but are open enough to seek.

(SPONSOR ASKS):

- a. Can you define what sanity means to you?
- b. Emotional maturity in all areas is sometimes called Sanity--do you agree with this?
- c. Discuss the idea of faith as it applies to the non-spiritual areas of you life (belief in people, places and things or events...faith in a team effort, etc.)
- d. Discuss the idea that if You are able to prove something is so then you no longer need faith. How does this apply to the second step to recovery?
- e. Discuss your mood swings and how they give you insight into your disease. (Read in Big Book pg. xvi – "Doctors Opinion" to top of xviii.)
- f. Discuss the remorse and resolution cycle as it applies to your eating. How does this give you insight into the insanity? (First you eat ... then you're sorry ... so you eat to cover the sorrow..etc.)

- g. Do you still feel that you are doing this or have you accepted the help of the group? Do you still dabble with food (go out to eat often ... forget to measure periodically ... etc.) (Read Big Book pg. 37-38 until "absolutely unable to stop drinking...self knowledge...")
- h. What have you learned about your insanity during this recommitment period?
- i. What actions must you take to guard against the return of your obsession? (Page 43, last para. Big Book).
- j. Discuss under what conditions you foresee the insanity returning:
 - 1. Your kids are screaming.
 - 2. Your husband doesn't understand.
 - 3. The meeting was depressing.
 - 4. Your sponsor slips.
 - 5. You feel denied and unloved.
 - 6. You want that "old" feeling.

HOW will you mobilize against such feelings?

(SAY) "You have just taken the Second Step!"

--LIGHT THE THIRD CANDLE--This is the candle of willingness. Being willing to turn your will and your life over to the care of God. It is a decisive step but it does not mean that the action is taken. Since we are working a one day at a time program, the decision is good just for today-- therefore we are working on the desire to be willing. We must believe that our desire to turn our will and life over to the care of God is a necessary stage in the remission of our disease and that decision in fact, does please God.

(SPONSOR ASKS):

- a. Discuss some important decisions you have made since your abstinence has returned.
- b. If God is our navigator, then he must have given us some charts to sail through the troubled waters of life. Discuss what you feel are the charts he has given you. (Religious commitment ... family ... fellowship...etc.)
- c. Discuss your concept of God as you understand Him.
- d. Where do you seek examples of a power greater than yourself? (Read in Big Book pg. 44 "If a mere code of morals ... or entirely ignored.)
- e. Discuss your willingness to change your old ideas.

- f. Are you still now or periodically a controller? How does this detract from your recovery? (Pg. 60-Big Book to 61 ... than harmony?)
- g. Are you ready to have your Higher Power run the Show? How have you shown evidence of this willingness?
- h. Discuss the things you must do to negate self-will as it reappears in your life.
- i. How do you intend to seek God?
- j. Discuss what actions you will take to prevent yourself from taking control again:
 - 1. In the area of food.
 - 2. With your family.
 - 3. In quest of money.
 - 4. In manipulation of friends.
 - 5. In dealing with character defects.

(SAY) "You have just taken the Third Step!"

--LIGHT THE FOURTH CANDLE--This is the light of action. It is the thing we need, to clear away the wreckage of the past. Without this we cannot recover. We must accept that vigorous action is a vital and crucial step. Perhaps, a lack of action helped trigger our return to food. Whenever we stop at any place along the road we fail to reach our destination. Therefore an inventory shows us a block that we must overcome if we are to find surcease from this disease.

(Read outline of survey and then read Page 64 in Big Book -- and have newcomer finish this after ceremony.)