

Shades of Grey

Editor's Note

Hi! Greetings from the New York Newsletter Staff. As you know, the Grey Sheet community is growing in all areas of the world, and it is our intention to bring all of us together in a monthly newsletter. From California to Israel, Grey Sheet abstinence is strong, and your experiences help keep us that way. By sharing our experience, strength and hope, we are able to refrain from compulsive overeating one day at a time. Help maintain your abstinence by spreading the word through Shades of Grey. For together we can do what we cannot do alone. Please send all contributions to:

WHY I JOINED THE GREY SHEET COMMUNITY

"I, like you, weigh and measure ..." I joined for the support and commitment to a common goal, abstinence. For me, having always emphasized the importance of being "original and different", it is very soothing to be part of a group, one among many, and to share the process of recovery. It has been a wonderful experience to learn that, even despite individual and personal differences, we all work together for recovery. We are really forced to support one another because we know that none of us can do it alone, and I am most grateful that it is this way. It is helping me to become a more open and trusting person.

I joined, of course, for the "Without exception". Before coming to Grey Sheet I never knew which little trick of my thinking, which variation, whatever the cause, would lead me to a binge. I only knew that a next binge was inevitable. By weighing and measuring my food, there are no decisions to be made except about which abstinent food I will choose. There is never a choice of whether to eat destructively or not.

I joined Grey Sheet for the clarity I come to these meetings to maintain abstinence from compulsive eating, not for friendship, not for validation that I am a good person, or that I am still a good person even if I am "uncomfortable with my food", not to give or receive therapy. Being clear about my food opens the way for me to be clear about all other areas of my life.

I joined Grey Sheet because I was tired of losing my life to compulsive eating, tired of hurting myself, tired of scraping by through life, desperate, hysterical and fearful, working all the time to keep from falling apart, never getting an opportunity to experience the beauty, joy, serenity, inner strength, and sense of dignity that come with abstinence.

Linda R.
Queens, NY

VACATION!!!

I'm abstinent today and it's the most important thing in my life. I weigh and measure my food from the Grey Sheet three times a day without exception and I'm grateful for the freedom this gives me. I'm also grateful for the information about allergy and addiction to food.

Recently I was away on vacation for two weeks. One week I had access to a kitchen, and one week I ate in restaurants, but always my
(cont.)

(continued from front)
food was weighed and measured.
My food was in its place so I
was able to participate and
play. I relaxed, had fun and
more importantly, came back to
the city abstinent.

I also want to say WELCOME
to the newcomers! It's wonder-
full to see so many new faces
at the meetings. Keep coming.
*It will be the best thing that
ever happened to you. We need
each and every person who
comes into these rooms. -AND-
thank you to the people who
are putting this newsletter
together.

Kathy
Westchester, NY

A MIRACLE?

"...I'm sorry there is
nothing we can do for you..."
The words pierced through my
soul. After five months of in-
patient hospitalization, 30lbs
heavier, seven anti-depressants
tried, and \$1,000 a night, I
was hopeless. An 'expert' tell-
ing me there was nothing he
could do, and certainly I had
tried everything.

Well, almost. I hadn't found Grey Sheet. The day I crawled into a
Grey Sheet room, I was finally willing to try anything. On one end, I
really did not want to give up the only security I'd ever (thought I) had -
Food. On another level, I knew it didn't work for me anymore and I felt like
I was dead. The last house on the block, nothing had worked. Nothing. It's
now over a year later, and I am not bingeing today. A miracle? Some would say
so. All it took was honesty, openmindedness, willingness and a cup and scale.
Today by the Grace of God and Grey Sheet, I am recovering from the fatal dis-
ease of compulsive overeating. Today I am not on any anti-depressants,
appetite suppressants, and am free of any bullimic activity, all because of
Grey Sheet. No doctor, diet or pill has been able to relieve me of this
terrible addiction, but Grey Sheet has! I don't question it, I just do it.
If it works don't fix it, and why would I want to? The effort to carry a cup
and scale seems dim in comparison to the weighty burden of bingeing. I thank
Grey sheet for the miracle it is performing in my life, one day at a time.

Adina K.
Millburn, NJ

HUMOROUS ABSTINENCE

I pictured myself
in the Womb
Thus began my ninety days
Asked my higher power
To be born
Thus began my Abstinence days
Weigh and measure
without exceptions for
one, two, three years
always saying
Without exception, Without exception
Can that be right, can that be right
It must be right!
It must be right!
Scales don't lie
My H.P. told me that
So I weigh and measure
(3) three meals a day
Without a doubt
Without a shout.
So if you want
To try this out
Weigh and measure
Without a doubt.
There is a guarantee
You'll see...

Darie S.
Manhattan, NY

WITHOUT EXCEPTION

"You're wierd" he laughed, as I emptied my measured cup of salad onto my plate. Trembling inside, I heard him wondering out loud why on earth I would put mayonaise on the salad if I was measuring it in the first place. Didn't I know how fattening that was?

I barely tasted that meal, and was definitely not a '10', but compared to the last time my boss took me out to lunch, it was fantastic. That had been almost six months ago while I was struggling to get abstinent. Even though I had brought my abstinent lunch with me that day, I hadn't eaten it, too concerned about what my boss would think of me, and instead ordered that first compulsive bite from the waiter.

In the few months since I finally got abstinent, my boss has become used to seeing me eat 'wierd' foods, and I've become used to his comments. I no longer get defensive - now I laugh him off. It is only because of the Grey Sheet that I know that what I am doing with my food today is proper, and that I no longer need to feel ashamed. Today I am gifted with the desire to be abstinent. I am grateful to the Grey Sheet community for showing me how to keep that gift. I would rather my boss not see my cup and scale, but whatever discomfort I felt at that lunch was nothing compared to the anguish of eating compulsively.

Robin O
Queens, NY

IT'S GREY ALL OVER!!



Bravo for the Newsletter Idea! When I think about two very special people on the island of St Croix way out in the caribbean, I can't help but feel this is meant to be. Now we can share our experience strength and hope with eachother over miles! I remember when I was first coming around, just knowing ther were two hundred other people in Cambridge doing this reinforced my own commitment. It is a simple program for complicated people. I only know I have a specific problem and this is a very specific solution. I don't eat no matter what. I weigh and measure three meals a day from the Grey Sheet and with the help from a higher power and this community I get a reprieve on a daily basis from this fatal disease. It's comforting to know that there is no excuse for eating. I thank all those who travel and live in various parts of the world because they show me that this can be done one day at a time. My prayers are with all of you.

Let this newsletter serve as a reminder that we know you are out there and how hard it is to do this without the fellowship and the intense support available in some cities. One thing I do know is that it can be done, and you are never alone. As long as you are reaching out and asking for help and showing others that you want this, it too can be yours.

Thanks for all of your abstinence. It supports and invigorates my own.

Jennifer P.
Manhattan, NY

DON'T EAT NO MATTER WHAT

Abstinence isn't always easy, but it's do-able. I recently went through an in-vitro fertilization cycle. Infertility is emotionally painful and I don't think I could have made it through without bingeing if it wasn't for all the love, support and encouragement offered by this program.

The real tests, for me, came when I was admitted (twice) to "Ambulatory Surgery". The two experiences were different from each other, and both showed me that when you want to be abstinent - you can be.

The process of the egg retrieval is done under light or general anesthesia, depending on how much pain you can bear. I was fortunate enough to survive under heavy sedation. Still, I spent six hours in the recovery room and the hospital rule is that you cannot be discharged until you eat something. As with all day surgery, no food or drink was allowed after midnight the day of surgery. I brought a piece of fruit and 2oz of cheese with my belongings, but I was worried they somehow wouldn't make it to the recovery room. God was looking out for me because they did, so I ate my breakfast before being discharged in the afternoon. Together with my sponsor we worked out a timetable for eating lunch and dinner in the remaining hours. I was so tired that I was sure I would sleep and not eat all my food. Still, I managed to eat every weighed and measured bite - and enjoyed it.

Two days after the egg retrieval, I was back in the hospital for the embryo implant. This procedure is also considered surgery since it is done in the sterile operating room. No anesthesia is required but I am still supposed to eat before being discharged. The very act of eating was very difficult because I had to stay flat on my back for 4 hours - NO MOVING. I thought I had eaten under all conditions but this was a new one. It's hard to eat when you can't even lift your head from the bed! The nurses were very busy so they asked my husband to help feed me. I was so glad because he understood that I wanted my weighed and measured amount - no more but also no less. This was brought to light when he missed my mouth and some of my weighed and measured amount fell down the side of my face into my hair. I told him to pick it out, that's my food.

When we got home I was supposed to stay in the same position (flat on my back) for another six hours. He brought all the ingredients for my dinner into the living room where I was laying so that I could watch him weigh and measure. I had to keep telling him to keep packing that salad into the measuring cup. I remember saying "Come on, you know I get more in there than that." He patiently fed me again. I took great solace in knowing that I was abstinent. All I had to do was ask for help. For me, that's a lot of what this program is about: feeling worthy enough to ask for what I need.

Helena B.
Manhattan, NY