

WHAT CEA-HOW HAS DONE FOR ME

PAULA'S STORY

CEA-HOW has helped me immensely. This program has helped me maintain my weight loss of 80 pounds in mostly a sane way. I lost my weight in another 12 step program, but I do not feel that I would have been able to maintain my weight for these last 9 years. CEA-HOW is a very strong recovery program for which I am extremely grateful. I have become closer to my higher power and believe that God loves me unconditionally.

I am bipolar and I have Parkinson's disease. CEA-HOW has such a wealth of love, nurturing, and support. I have been loved through so many issues related to my bipolar disorder. I cannot say how fortunate I am to have so many friends all over the country. This is a result of our outreach calls that we make to one another. The Parkinson's society says that one of the best ways to treat a chronic illness is to be part of a loving, supportive community. CEA-HOW has done that for me, for which I am eternally grateful. Thank God for Fred S. and Rae Z, our co-founders.

CEA-HOW structure and accountability make recovery from compulsive eating very possible for someone like me, despite my bipolar and Parkinson's disease.

Paula N.

LORETTA'S STORY

I have been diagnosed with chronic fatigue immune dysfunction syndrome and fibromyalgia which is also called Myalgic Encephalomyelitis. I have been sick since Christmas time 1986. At that time I was a member of a different 12 step food program, that did not have the structure of CEA-HOW. I respond well to healthy structure, which I find in our CEA-HOW program of recovery. I was abstinent at the time of my illness and had been for 2 1/2 years, weighing and measuring 80% of my food, refraining from sugar and eating only three meals a day. Through various circumstances, I lost that abstinence and with it any semblance of sanity and health that I had come to know. My world slowly started to crumble, both from the physical illnesses and the loss of abstinence. I was like a ship without a rudder. Not only did my body weaken, tire and contract infections easily, I was in severe pain much of the time. Days and nights often blended into each other. I became very depressed and anxious as well. Without going into further details of the illness, I regained abstinence from compulsive eating and from the inability to eat for five years.

I attended my first HOW meeting in the summer of 1993. Eventually CEA-HOW was born and I entered it in 1995 or 1996. I again lost my abstinence to the physical illnesses in 1997.

God has blessed me with a recommitted CEA-HOW abstinence of 8 years and 8 months today. Slowly, my life has gained a semblance of healthy abstinence, sanity

and purpose. On a daily basis, I wake up and look forward to the day. I start my day with gratitudes, the eleventh step guide on pages 86-88 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and then an early morning meeting. My day is structured around working the seven tools and the twelve steps of CEA-HOW and much of the time I am a fairly happy and free human being. Sometimes I am even joyful.

As I have increased my involvement with CEA-HOW service I have come to feel part of the human race again. I have been given the grace to deal with people, including the medical profession with a semblance of dignity and self-respect. It's taken time, however it is definitely happening. I structure my day around my three abstinent meals, and insert life in between. I have been blessed with a very powerful and available Higher Power upon whom I depend for decisions great and small and the ability to get through the most challenging weakness and ongoing pain that I have ever known. I also treasure some invaluable friendships with other CEA-HOW members. I have also been blessed with the release of food compulsion and obsession for the last 8 years and eight months. The more involved with CEA-HOW I am, the greater the feeling that the food problem has been lifted, though I have been able to remember that it is only for this day, one day at a time.

Thank you Higher Power who has given me CEA-HOW, a way of life worth living and the wonderful people of the fellowship. It just keeps getting better, one day at a time.

Loretta R
Ohio