

# ROADS TO RECOVERY

## NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Warren Washington Association for Mental Health to support individuals in recovery

*A newsletter for you and about you*



## SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

### Coping With Change

BY GINGER MILLER

Change is often difficult to accept, sometimes, even when we know it is good change. People deal with change in different ways. For me coping with change felt impossible sometimes, especially the big stuff like break-ups, death, or loss of work for example. Sometimes I just couldn't process how quickly things were happening or identify feelings I was having much less know how to cope with them. But even smaller changes could be stressful, like needing to change something in my routine or having to accept a new doctor. I noticed even good change or changes I intentionally made could be overwhelming and cause anxiety or depression, getting a new apartment with more space or closer to work or family, or getting a better paying job for example. I asked myself why, why is change so difficult? Is there anything I can do to cope with it better?

One of the things I learned as to why change is hard sometimes has to do with comfort zones. Even though things might have been difficult or bad before the change, I had a routine and knew what to expect so I wasn't thrown off by unexpected challenges or surprises. Knowing what to expect carries a level of comfort with it, even when the situation itself isn't a good one. When a routine is disrupted, I have to adapt to a new situation that perhaps I wasn't expecting or prepared for that pushes me outside of my comfort zone.

Trouble is, when a person is stressed, the pillars of healthy living – eating well, exercise, sleep and social time – can tend to slip off our priority list. It's not uncommon for stress to mount slowly. We might not even recognize it in ourselves. I've found that one great way to assess my level of stress is to pay attention to the comments of the people around me, even their body language helps me to see if I'm getting a little snappy for example. So, paying attention to when friends, colleagues and family members mention that you seem irritable or distressed can be very helpful.

Most importantly, build a reserve of personal resources so you're equipped to navigate a change when it strikes. Eating well, exercise, get enough sleep - I see these as building my reserve of resources so I can navigate change, especially when it comes at me unexpectedly. Without those reserves even something minor can make my life more difficult to cope with. I might not be able to stop changes from happening, but I can take greater control of how I respond. Here are some strategies I've found to help me cope, be more resilient to stress, and make it easier to adapt to the transitions in my life:

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## Coping With Change (Con't)

1. Reframe my thinking. When I figure out what's going on in my mind when I'm feeling sad or angry, for example, I can work on breaking the negative thinking pattern. I can't change what I'm not aware of, so once I recognize what's going on I can work on changing my thinking about it. I can't change other people, situations, or circumstances but I CAN change me! And closely related is positive quotes and affirmations. I start focusing on ones like: "We grow through what we go through", "I am braver than I believe, stronger than I realize, smarter than I think, and loved more than I know", "Resolve to be a master of change rather than a victim of change", among others.

2. Slow down and reflect. It can be easy to get wrapped up in a jam-packed schedule. I find it is important to sit with my feelings. I got really good at numbing my feelings or stuffing them down with distractions. Allowing my feelings to have a voice and hear my thoughts, acknowledging them and respecting them for a brief time, makes it easier to manage them. I do that by talking with friends or my therapist, journaling, or just taking time to sit with them for a short while.

3. Look for things I'm grateful for. Gratitude is a powerful tool. When my thoughts are more negative than positive making myself think of some things I'm grateful for can usually help turn my thinking around or reset it. Keeping a gratitude journal works even better. There is something a little more powerful about writing them down. When I first started coming up with 3 was a little challenging and as that got easier, I would come up with 5, now I do 10 at a time. If you're really opposed to writing them down perhaps consider a gratitude buddy; someone to call or visit with and tell them what you are grateful for.

4. Make time for a little stress-relief. Sometimes I really have to talk myself into making the time for some stress-relieving activities, I think I'm too busy dealing with what is going on to take time for 'unnecessary things.' I have to remind myself that that I DO need it, it IS necessary to allow some decompression so that I don't get even more stressed or trigger some symptoms of my depression or anxiety – which would take even longer to recuperate from. It doesn't take any extra time to turn on relaxing music while I work on something. Taking 10 minutes to meditate or go for a relaxing walk, or taking a little extra time for a bath instead of a shower, isn't a lot of extra time at the moment and will really help in the long run. Sometimes I color or work on an art/craft project for a short time, read a chapter in a book, anything relaxing or comforting, and it doesn't have to be for hours, just 10 or 15 minutes can make a big difference in the big picture.

5. Maintain as much of my normal schedule as possible. I find that sticking to as much of my usual routine as possible provides my mind with the comfort that not everything is in chaos during times of change. Things like keeping the same sleep schedule, eating times, meditation time, walks on coffee breaks, and phone calls to friends are stabilizing activities. Another benefit to this is that during times of change it can be easy to let go of some of those 'unnecessary' things in my routine figuring when things settle down I'll go back to it, but I find it is harder to restart some things than it is to just make the time to maintain them.

6. Plan what I can. When I know that a change is coming I'll try to prepare as much as possible for it. That includes the things I listed above, a lot of positive self-talk, and keeping in mind possible directions the change could go and how I could handle those different directions – without ruminating, obsessing, or letting negativity spiral. Having a 'Keeping Some Balance Plan' to refer to and use when I feel like things are starting to get a little rocky is really helpful too. (That is a plan that as a Peer Specialist I can help people develop!)

What things help you to cope with change? If some of the tools I use are new to you and you decide to try them out, I'd love to hear if they help you too! Email me at [gmler@wwamh.org](mailto:gmler@wwamh.org)



# UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

## Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

BY GINGER MILLER

Binge eating disorder versus basic overeating, what is the difference? Eatingdisorderhope.com explains that overeating can be a normal tendency for many individuals, such as having an extra helping at a meal even when already full or eating beyond when you are satisfied such as at a special holiday meal or celebratory occasion. It can be confusing to figure out where to draw the line between overeating and binge eating, especially if you find yourself wondering “what is considered binge eating?”

It is important to make a distinction between overeating and binge eating. Binge Eating Disorder is different than simply overeating and is actually a diagnosable eating disorder. According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is defined as recurring episodes of eating significantly more food in a short period of time than most people would eat under similar circumstances, with episodes marked by feelings of lack of control. Men and women who struggle with binge eating typically experience feelings of disgust, guilt, or embarrassment and binge eat in isolation to hide the behavior. An individual with BED has recurrent episodes of bingeing without purging, often leading to both emotional and physical distress.

You might be wondering what counts as binge eating. The Mayo Clinic states that most people with binge-eating disorder are overweight or obese, but you may be at a normal weight. Behavioral and emotional signs and symptoms of binge-eating disorder include:

- Eating unusually large amounts of food in a specific amount of time, such as over a two-hour period
- Feeling that your eating behavior is out of control
- Eating even when you're full or not hungry
- Eating rapidly during binge episodes
- Eating until you're uncomfortably full
- Frequently eating alone or in secret
- Feeling depressed, disgusted, ashamed, guilty or upset about your eating
- Frequently dieting, possibly without weight loss



The severity of binge-eating disorder is determined by how often episodes of bingeing occur during a week. Binge-eating problems can vary in their course from short-lived to recurrent or they may persist for years if left untreated. To diagnose binge-eating disorder, your medical care provider may recommend a psychological evaluation, including discussion of your eating habits.

Your medical care provider also may want you to have other tests to check for health consequences of binge-eating disorder, such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, GERD and some sleep-related breathing disorders. These tests may include a physical exam, blood and urine tests, and a sleep disorder center consultation.

Treatment may include psychotherapy whether in individual or group sessions, psychotherapy (also called talk therapy) can help teach you how to exchange unhealthy habits for healthy ones and reduce bingeing episodes. Examples of psychotherapy include cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), Interpersonal psychotherapy, or dialectical behavior therapy. There are medications that can help as well as behavioral health weight-loss programs.

A person with binge-eating disorder may become an expert at hiding behavior, making it hard for others to detect the problem. If you have a loved one you think may have symptoms of binge-eating disorder, have an open and honest discussion about your concerns.



## Binge Eating Disorder (BED) Con't

Provide encouragement and support. Offer to help your loved one find a qualified medical care provider or mental health professional and make an appointment. You might even offer to go along.

If you have any symptoms of binge-eating disorder, seek medical help as soon as possible. Talk to your medical care provider or a mental health professional about your binge-eating symptoms and feelings. If you're reluctant to seek treatment, talk to someone you trust about what you're going through. A friend, loved one, teacher or faith leader can help you take the first steps to successful treatment of binge-eating disorder.

# IS THIS MEETING FOR YOU?

## S.O.S. Meetings

BY GINGER MILLER

A secular addiction recovery support organization that is also a nonprofit with no ties to any outside organization, S.O.S. is open to anyone who wishes to be free from drug and alcohol misuse. The only requirement of members is continued abstinence.

Membership is confidential and free, although donations are requested in order to keep the groups running, as no outside funding is permissible.

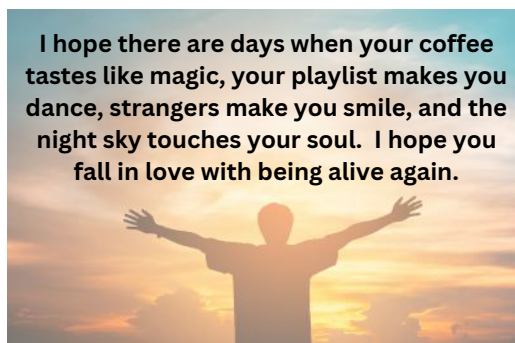
As an alternative to 12-step programs, S.O.S. prides itself on being its own entity and not deriving from another secular or religious program. S.O.S. continues to evolve with new research and does not subscribe to any one theory surrounding addiction.

Individuals are encouraged to use rational thought and take responsibility for themselves and their actions.

A typical S.O.S. meeting starts with announcements and the celebrations of sobriety anniversaries. The bulk of the time is spent on discussion and group interactions. A collection plate will be passed around for donations at some point.

Sobriety, responsibility, and confidentiality are the overarching themes of S.O.S. Members work together as a group to hold each other accountable and improve their own quality of life through sustained sobriety enhanced by peer support. There are meetings around the world. Individuals can find one nearby or online at [sossobriety.org](http://sossobriety.org)

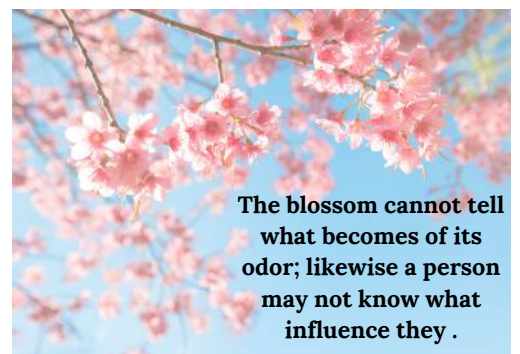
# INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION



I hope there are days when your coffee tastes like magic, your playlist makes you dance, strangers make you smile, and the night sky touches your soul. I hope you fall in love with being alive again.



A river cuts through rock not because of its power but because of its persistence.



The blossom cannot tell what becomes of its odor; likewise a person may not know what influence they .



# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Emotional Eating

BY GINGER MILLER

Did You Know  
April is Emotional  
Overeating  
Awareness Month?

Have you ever found yourself searching for the twinkies or that last piece of cake after a bad argument? Perhaps after a stressful day you sit on the couch mindlessly eating a bag of chips and before you know it, you're down to the crumbs? Or maybe you reach for the ice cream to comfort yourself after a depressing situation and wind up eating the whole pint... or half gallon. Many of us turn to food for comfort, stress relief, or to reward ourselves. Emotional eating is using food to make yourself feel better; to fill emotional needs, rather than your biological need for food. Emotional eating doesn't fix emotional problems though. In fact, afterward, it usually makes you feel worse. Not only does the original emotional issue remain, but you might also feel guilty for overeating. Sometimes negative emotions like anger, anxiety, or sadness can be triggers that create bad eating habits. The problem is the comfort foods we turn to can actually make us feel worse. When was the last time you grabbed carrot sticks or a piece of fruit for a feel-good pick-me-up? Usually, it's foods that are high in sugar or fat, right?

What can we do to work on not letting this behavior become a habit or damage our diet in the long run?

1. Awareness and preparation. Stop and ask, "Why am I eating, am I actually hungry?" By asking this it causes us to pause long enough to identify our motivation, to make a decision instead of just mindlessly trying to fill a gap. In doing this sometimes a pattern can be identified, and a healthy habit can be built to satisfy the need. For example someone pausing to ask themselves if they are hungry might notice that this is happening at a regular time, say 3:00 every afternoon. Then they could prepare and bring a healthy snack to have handy at that time, perhaps some air popped popcorn, roasted edamame or chick peas, fresh fruit (or frozen grapes!) or veggie sticks. Myself, I've noticed if I start with sugary foods earlier in the day, I end up craving them all day long thus eating more, that certainly doesn't help with weight management either.

2. Choosing foods that help fight stress. Hot tea can be soothing and contains antioxidants; green tea, white tea, and matcha contain L-theanine, an amino acid that can help reduce stress. Whole grains, nuts, legumes, fruits, vegetables, even dark chocolate (72% cocoa or higher) help with maintaining a healthy mind. If you are someone who likes a snack before bed, try dark cherries as they help boost natural melatonin, or the omega-3 fatty acids in salmon and other fish can help promote better sleep.

3. Is it a bigger issue? We all have a bad day where we've had an argument with a friend or a difficult day at work or school, these are short-term issues. But emotional eating can stem from bigger issues, too. Things like long-term stress, anger, depression, or other concerns. If this is the case for you, it might be beneficial for you to seek counseling, stress management, start an exercise routine, or there are many other techniques for coping.

Ultimately, these ideas might be helpful but it is important to identify and address (if there is) the deeper cause for your emotional eating.

HelpGuide.org offers this little questionnaire to help you identify if you might have an emotional eating problem:

- Do you eat more when you're feeling stressed?
- Do you eat when you're not hungry or when you're full?
- Do you eat to feel better (to calm and soothe yourself when you're sad, mad, bored, anxious, etc.)?
- Do you reward yourself with food?
- Do you regularly eat until you've stuffed yourself?
- Does food make you feel safe? Do you feel like food is a friend?
- Do you feel powerless or out of control around food?



## Emotional Eating Con't

If you feel you might have an emotional eating problem, talk with your doctor or therapist for additional help. The NEDA (National Eating Disorders Association) offers many resources as well as chat and text; their phone number is 800-931-2237

Information in this article was taken in part from the following websites:

- <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/5-strategies-to-help-you-stop-emotional-eating/>
- <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/diets/emotional-eating.htm>
- <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline>

HelpGuide.org also provides this chart that you may find helpful as well.

Emotional Hunger	vs.	Physical Hunger
~ Comes on suddenly		~ Comes on gradually
~ Feels like it needs to be satisfied instantly		~ Can wait
~ Craves specific comfort foods		~ Is open to options – lots of things sound good
~ isn't satisfied with a full stomach		~ Stops when you are full
~ Triggers feelings of guilt, shame, and powerlessness.		~ Doesn't make you feel bad about yourself.




### Riddle of the Month:

1. What can run fast but can't walk?
2. Why was Piglet looking in the toilet?



Riddle Answer  
 He was looking for Pooh!  
 Water!

- 2.
- 1.



April 14th is  
National Gardening Day



## CREATIVE WRITING CORNER



Did you know? Every April 17, The Haiku Foundation sponsors National Haiku Poetry Day. Haiku is one of the oldest forms of Japanese poetry composed of three lines with a syllable structure of five-seven-five. With no more than a total of 17 syllables.

You may be surprised  
Poetry can be easy  
Just give it a try

Fresh morning dew drops  
Kiss the grass blades and flowers  
A new day begins.



We would love to hear from you! If you'd like to share a poem you've written (try a Haiku!), some creative writing you've done or a piece of your recovery story we would love to add it to our newsletter to help support or inspire our readers. Not sure what to write about? I'll provide a prompt each month as an option.

April's prompt: 1 -Write about a memory of walking in the rain. 2 -Explain what a perfect spring day is for you. 3 -How do you connect more with nature in the spring? 4 - What does adventure mean to you? And when do you feel most adventurous?

Submit your writing please email it to [gmler@wwamh.org](mailto:gmler@wwamh.org), mail it to WWAMH, Dual Recovery Department, 230 Maple St., Glens Falls, NY 12801, or drop it off to me in the Peer Pod at the East Side Center at the address above.

# RECOVERY

## Resources

### PHONE NUMBERS

**Life Line Mental Health Crisis & Suicide Prevention:** 24/7 support for people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. **Call or Text 988** or visit [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)

**Mobile Crisis:** Meet a clinician in an agreed-upon location. 518-741-6099

**Crisis Text Line:** 24/7 for any crisis. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds, all from our secure online platform. Text 'HOME' to 741741

**United Way:** 24/7 Connects you to a community resource specialist who can put you in touch with local organizations that provide critical services. English and **Spanish** Dial 211

**Never Use Alone Crisis Prevention Center:** A toll-free nationwide overdose prevention, detection, crisis response and reversal lifeline services for people who use drugs while alone. The all volunteer peer-run call center operators are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. No stigma. No judgment. Just love! 800-484-3731

**Rose House Warm Line:** 24/7 A safe place to stay or someone to talk to. 518-502-1172

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** confidential support 24/7/365 **English, Spanish and 200+ languages through interpretation service** 800-799-7233 or Text 'START' to 88788

**National Sexual Assault Hotline RAINN** (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network): 24/7 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or visit [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org).

**The Trevor Project:** 24/7 crisis support services for LGBTQ young people. Text, chat, or call anytime to reach a trained counselor: [thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)/hotline: 866-488-7386 or Text 'START' to 678678

**National Center for PTSD Helpline:** 1-800-273-8255

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** Hotline staff are prepared to answer any mental health questions you may have. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** Available 24/7, 365 days a year: (800) 662-HELP (4357). The professionals on the phone can provide treatment information and referrals in English and **Spanish**.

**National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH):** Available 8:30am to 5pm EST: (866) 615-6464 or (866) 415-8051 (TTY). Professionals can answer any mental health related questions in English or **Spanish**.

**Boys Town:** Specially trained counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide crisis support specifically for children and their families: (800) 448-3000

**National Eating Disorders Association:** 24/7 crisis support Text 'NEDA' to 741741

### WEBSITES

**Al-Anon and Ala-teen Groups:** Hope and help for families and friends of alcoholics: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):** Local group schedule and information: [district13.aahmbny.org](http://district13.aahmbny.org) To speak to someone local call 518-463-0906

**Debtors Anonymous:** Debtors Anonymous offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others:

[debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org)

**Digital Recovery Support:** Online recovery support groups are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health conditions, and any other quality of life concerns. Meetings are led by peer recovery support specialists who have firsthand experience and understand what you're going through: [www.recoveryanswers.org](http://www.recoveryanswers.org)

**Gamblers Anonymous (GA):** Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: [gasteps.org](http://gasteps.org)

**Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP):** For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: [grasphelp.org](http://grasphelp.org)

**In The Rooms:** A free online recovery tool that offers 130 weekly online meetings. We embrace multiple pathways including all 12 Step, Non-12 Step, Wellness and Mental Health modalities. Other resources available also such as news, blogs, guides, and more <https://www.intherooms.com/home/>

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA):** local group schedule and information: [narcotics.com](http://narcotics.com)

**Overeaters Anonymous (OA):** Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: [oarecovery.com](http://oarecovery.com)

### PODCASTS

**Mental Illness Happy Hour:** Weekly interviews with comedians, artists, friends, and the occasional doctor.; exploring mental illness, trauma, addiction and negative thinking.

**This Naked Mind:** Some of the episodes discuss alcohol withdrawals, the link between drinking and binge eating, how to deal with loneliness, and more.

**Recovery Rocks:** Our varied paths show listeners that there are a myriad paths to recovery and countless songs to rock out to along the way.

**Mental Health - Hope and Recovery:** They share inspirational true stories and a host of recovery skills.

You'll learn about treatment options, coping skills, goal setting, relationships, and mindfulness.

### APPS

**Addiction Apps:** Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)

**Anxiety Apps:** MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free)

**Bipolar Disorder Apps:** IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)

**Counseling Apps:** TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)

**Depression Apps:** Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)

**Eating Disorder Apps:** Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (Free)

**General Mental Health Apps:** What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)

**Mindfulness & Meditation Apps:** Calm (\$), Serenity: Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free)

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Apps:** nOCD (Free), Worry Watch (\$), GG OCD (Free)

**PTSD Apps:** PTSD Coach (Free), Breathe2Relax (Free)

**Recovery Support Meetings:**

**Schizophrenia Apps:** UCSF Prime (Free), Schizophrenia Health Story Lines (Free)

**Suicide Prevention Apps:** MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)

**Wellness:** Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Goal Setting; Free)

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US AT [GMILLER@WWAMH.ORG](mailto:GMILLER@WWAMH.ORG) OR CALL 518-401-5991



### WWAMH DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY MONDAY  
2:00 - 3:00 PM EXPRESSIVE ARTS FOR RECOVERY  
EAST SIDE CENTER  
230 MAPLE ST, GLENS FALLS  
IN PERSON

EVERY TUESDAY  
4:00-5:00 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS  
HOPE & HEALING RECOVERY CENTER:  
2 MAPLE STREET, HUDSON FALLS  
IN PERSON OR  
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID: 844-2214-0148

EVERY THURSDAY  
3:30-4:30 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS  
OPEN DOOR MISSION  
226 WARREN STREET, GLENS FALLS

EVERY FRIDAY  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EMOTIONAL WELLNESS & RECOVERY  
EAST SIDE CENTER  
230 MAPLE ST, GLENS FALLS  
IN PERSON

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