

12 TIPS FOR ABSTINENT HOLIDAYS

Is this time of year the “Bermuda triangle” of recovery? The theory is that Halloween-Thanksgiving-Christmas (or Chanukah) can be rough sailing for recovery – you might come out abstinent, but not everyone does. But everyone CAN emerge from the holidays with their recovery intact, by living one day at a time and working the tools and steps of our program.

Here are twelve tips that have helped me and many others survive and thrive in this time of year that seems to have more focus on food than other months:

1. Line up extra OA activities (meetings, phone calls, service, intergroup).
2. Entertain OA friends, especially newcomers, at home or at a coffee shop.
3. Keep your OA telephone list with you at all times.
4. Find out about holiday meetings or celebrations in local groups.
5. Skip any parties/eating occasions you’re nervous about.
6. If there’s one you can’t skip, take an OA friend – or keep literature and a gratitude list handy – or text someone before and after the event.
7. Don’t think you have to stay late (plan an “important date” in advance).
8. Go to special places that are meaningful to you... church, a park, the shore. And don’t forget about extra meetings!
9. Don’t sit around worrying or brooding; catch up on reading, OA tools, museums, walks, letters.
10. Don’t project about holiday temptations; remember “One day at a time.”
11. Even if you cannot give material gifts, you can share the gift of your recovery and enjoy the beauty of the holidays.
12. Carry the message. Give joy away, and it will be yours to keep.