

**\*\*THE SERENITY PRAYER FOR OVEREATERS\*\***

**“GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT  
THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE...”**

As overeaters trying to stop overeating we cannot change the craving for food, but even if we can't change the craving we can accept it. The truth is that until we can accept our craving for extra foods, we will not stop overeating. Eating more food is what we do if we decide we cannot accept the craving.

It's that simple: If you want just a little more food, and you will not accept the craving, then you will surely overeat. Or maybe have “one bite” to get you through, but even one bite is not accepting the thing that you cannot change.

Accepting the craving does not mean we want the craving or like it. Accepting it means first, recognizing the craving for what it is: A strong physical or psychological desire, not a need for more food. That's all. We do not fight this craving; rather we look at it, letting it be, not getting panic stricken or feeling sorry for ourselves, but saying, “Yes I really am craving more food right now.”

We do not practice self-deception and try to trick ourselves into thinking we don't want to eat. This is an honest program. Nor do we try to hate the habit (or ourselves) so much that we quit. No, we cannot make ourselves stop overeating, but we can live with the craving, and so we pray for...

**“THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN...”**

The thing that we can change is our unwillingness to live, even for a short time, with the craving for the next binge. We can, with God's help and the support of the group, change our old ways of dealing with the craving, and we deal with it in a new way: We become willing to live with the craving. We no longer overeat to get rid of the pain of craving. Our overeating shows that we have not accepted what we cannot change and have not acted with the courage to change the things we can. Of course, living with a craving is hard. Sometimes very hard, but you are not alone – with God's help you can do it. That is what this Serenity Prayer is all about.

So we ask God to help us accept the craving and then we ask God to give us the courage not to take care of this craving as we have always done – by overeating one more bite. Thus, we need the strength to accept the craving and the courage not to overeat.

## **“AND THE WISDOM TO THE KNOW THE DIFFERENCE...”**

The wisdom we ask for here is to become aware of the difference between our old way of handling the discomfort of craving in the past (by compulsively eating) and the new way of dealing with cravings: Accepting the craving until it passes, uncomfortable though it may be for a few moments.

The strength and courage to live as overeaters with this discomfort does come if we ask for it, even though it may take time. What we receive is not raw will power, but power that comes from God, from the group, and from our inner most self! The power that we want is actually love. It is only with this kind of power that we can become ex-overeaters and receive a new life, free from food addiction.

The reason we did not recover years ago is that we chose not to live with the craving. Every time we craved extra food, we gave in and ate. And kept on hoping that in some magic way a day would arrive when the craving would disappear or we would find an absolutely painless way to stop overeating. That day never came. Each of us kept using our favorite rationalizations or excuses for eating and our own justifications for not living with the craving. And we kept on craving and eating, craving and eating, year after year, but now we can change all that. The moment we can accept what is – “I want to overeat” – and face it with the courage God gives us, we can say, “I choose not to handle this craving by eating,” then we become ex-overeaters.

If you continue to abuse food even though you say this prayer, then say it again and again, and keep on saying it while you reflect what it means to you, an overeater. Eventually it will work. It will not work if you are not sincere but if all you can do at first is to say the prayer without believing it, then at least do that. Some time may be needed for you to receive the power to live with the discomfort that comes from craving without eating, but eventually it will come. In time, the craving will diminish all together. If you have a slip, accept yourself reverently and say the prayer again the next time!

Remember, it is not the stress, frustration or even the craving that causes us to have another binge, but rather our lack of strength to deal with the craving. That strength comes from God, from the group and from our own healthy inner self. May God be with you now!

- Source Unknown.