



# STEP 12 MAGAZINE

*Carrying A Message of Hope in Recovery*

## *The Comfort of Traditions* OLD AND NEW

NEWS - Step 12 Magazine  
**Walks the Talk of Recovery**

*by Karen VanDenBerg, Publisher*

EXCLUSIVE - Pt. 2:  
**The Neurobiology of Opiate Addiction**

*by Dr. Keerthy Sunder*

Present for the March:  
**Moments in Recovery History**

*by Mark Gladden, CEP Present Moments Recovery*

**Fortifying Your Strength Against Relapse**

*By Batista Gremaud*

**The Power of Giving**

*by Joe Sigurdson*

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- Puzzles
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*50% of all proceeds from the sales and subscriptions of this magazine will go back into the community -- Carrying the message and delivering the resources for recovery is our honor.*

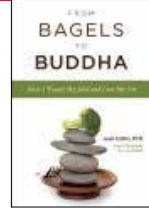
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# Dr. Judi Hollis

## Experience, Strength, and Hope For People Struggling with Food Obsession



### Avoiding the Avalanche this Holiday Season

The holidays can be a huge trigger for people working on their obsession with food. So many events of the season revolve around traditional foods cooked with ingredients that we may be trying to avoid. We might feel as if we are being “insulting” by not having a piece of the famous family fudge or the rum-soaked fruitcake.

There is a way to practice recovery from food obsession **without shame, blame or sabotage**. It’s possible to get through the holidays with your head held high — even if you do taste the fudge or nibble on the mashed potatoes. We are first and foremost human beings. We aren’t expected to be perfect.

One of the primary principles of recovery is honesty. We are encouraged to be as absolutely honest as possible about our thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Often, our truths are hidden behind a veil of denial (**Don’t Even Notice I Am Lying**). A different perspective can shed light on things that we cannot see behind that veil.

Fresh, honest and valuable feedback about our thoughts, feelings and behaviors is a key component in fighting food obsession. Having a non-judgmental, knowledgeable, open-minded confidante is critical to successful recovery. Whether you talk to a sponsor, a therapist, a coach or a spiritual advisor, the important thing is to share honestly and candidly about your behavior.

The best gift you can give yourself this holiday season is a “sponsor check-up.” If you don’t feel like you can be completely honest with your sponsor about what you plan to consume, or about where you may have slipped, there will be no opportunity for valuable feedback and enlightenment. If you feel like you have to sugar-coat a situation or avoid discussing it completely for fear of scornful reprimand, it may be

time to consider finding a new sponsor. If punishment and reprimand works for you, just acknowledge that. **The point is to be completely honest with yourself, your higher power, and another human being.**

If you intend to eat your mother’s special stuffing at Thanksgiving, or you think you can’t pass up the delicious pumpkin pie, talk about it. Make it part of your food plan. Give yourself permission to explore the effects of that on your body (which may manifest several days later). If you intend to stick to no sugar, no flour and minimal fats, talk about that, too. The point is to be realistic about your choices, make reasonable plans before you sit down at the table, and be completely transparent about how well (or not) the execution of your plan unfolded. **Gift yourself with accountability to another human being so the slip doesn’t turn into an avalanche.**

It’s a good idea to “bookend” which means going to a meeting or calling someone both before and after an event. Then you know you can take your recovery along with you. Most AA clubhouses hold marathon meetings on holidays. Most of all, remember, our literature instructs, “We absolutely insist on enjoying life. Decide which behaviors will contribute to that enjoyment or which will render you full of remorse

Experiencing the holidays with a witness will help get the skeletons out of the cupboards, the devil off our shoulder, and the gravy off our plates. Having a sponsor witness our deviations along with our accomplishments takes the veil of denial out of the kitchen and makes room for the master chef to create a life we can really sink our teeth into.

by Karen VanDenBerg based on interview with Judi Hollis in May 2015

*(c) 2015. Dr. Judi Hollis is a Licensed Family Therapist, author of several books and educational materials, motivational speaker, radio and television expert. Judi would love to hear from you! You can ask Judi questions and access her materials, at [www.judihollis.com](http://www.judihollis.com) or call 1-800-8-ENOUGH*

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