

## I Surprised Myself! (How I Use the Telephone Tool)

A while ago, a member asked me how I use the Telephone tool in my recovery. So many examples sprang to mind that I thought I had better make some notes. I quickly filled up my note paper!

Daily & weekly action:

- Morning: My morning text buddy and I try to start off our day by setting an intention. Our commitments always start with "JFT" (just for today).
- Evening: My evening text buddy and I try to text each other when we are done eating for the day. If food thoughts enter my mind after I've texted, my next thought is, "I don't want to have to text her to tell her I ate more, so I'm not eating more."
- Daily Tenth Step call: One OA and I have a call where we each give a brief review our day's food, feelings, and behavior.
- Weekly: One OA and I have committed to always thinking about each other the same day of the week. Most weeks we make a point of reaching out via text, phone, or e-mail. Sometimes we are short and sweet, and at other times we detail our solution for the day.

Asking for help:

If I have a question regarding OA or my recovery, I identify two or three people I think might be able to help and give them a call. I say at the beginning of the call that I'm looking for advice.

Service:

- If I hear someone share at a meeting that they are struggling, I may either text them some words of encouragement after the meeting or try to give them a call in the next day or so.
- I often take the We Care List from a meeting. When I have a time gap between walking into the house and the next activity, I pick up the list and just start calling. These in-the-door calls are an effective alternative to making a beeline to the fridge.
- One OA asked me if she could e-mail me her food every day--the day after. I've set my own intention in those interactions to be supportive and reflect back to her patterns and changes I observe in her food/mood.

Sponsorship:

- Each of my sponsees and I develop our personalized pattern for phoning, texting, and e-mail. I've found it so important to identify my boundaries with regard to this tool and to share them at the beginning of the relationship.
- I call my sponsor two to three times a week before a certain time of the day. I can call at other times, and if she is able, we talk. When my schedule gets tight, I sometimes prefer to e-mail her later in the day.

After writing out my list, I was surprised that I have time to pick up any of the other tools, much less the food! But, the bottom line is that I have to work this program diligently every day and when I don't, the obsessive thoughts and behaviors seep back in. So, I organized my long list into the categories above and hope you find them helpful. I know the Telephone tool is not for everyone, but if you do feel comfortable and you work it, it helps.

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