



**PODCAST #13: CAROLINA
(Translation from Spanish)**

INTERVIEWER: Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous podcast number 13. This podcast will focus on individual stories of recovery.

Joining us today is Carolina. Throughout this podcast we will be referring to Overeaters Anonymous by its acronym CCA in Spanish or OA, it's initials in English.

Carolina, where are you from?

CAROLINA: I am from Mexico. I was born in Tamaulipas but I was raised in Mexico City.

INTERVIEWER: Tell us please what you were like. What was your relationship with food prior to coming to OA?

CAROLINA: Well, my relationship with food was crazy. In addition to my three daily meals, I ate junk food between meals. Food was my moral support and I did not know it until I got to OA. I was told there that the disease has three phases: physical, emotional and spiritual. When I had problems, I used to eat, and it was to hide those emotions.

INTERVIEWER: How did your eating or your weight affect the way you lived your life?

CAROLINA: When I first came to OA I was about five kilos (*eleven pounds*) above my healthy weight, so it did not affect me too much. Now, I am aware that the disease is in my mind because I have seen pictures and I look fine but I feel fat anyway. This is the disease speaking. There are people who are very thin and still feel pretty badly about themselves, and this is my case. In spite of that, I am in the program, work the steps, have a sponsor; although now I accept my body and accept myself. It is a blessing.

INTERVIEWER: How did it affect your family and friends?

CAROLINA: Well, my friends and family had to deal with me because I was a difficult person. I was intolerant and, in addition was very prideful. All of these are defects of character I learned to identify them when I arrived in OA and did a 4th step.

INTERVIEWER: What happened? How did you first hear about OA? What brought you to OA?

CAROLINA: Well, I came to OA in July of 1996. One day in 1995, I heard on the radio something about OA: Do you want to stop eating? That caught my attention, and it took me a year to go to OA. Since then, I have learned that each person has her own time and pace. When I went, it was wonderful and gave me HOPE TO LIVE.

INTERVIEWER: Tell us about what you saw in OA when you first came, and what made you want to come back.

CAROLINA: When I arrived, people greeted me warmly. The woman who welcomed me was very friendly and shared her experiences. I immediately I identified with her and when I went into the meeting room and listened to others tell their stories I identified with them too. I am sure that is what made me stay.

INTERVIEWER: What are you like now?

CAROLINA: When I arrived at OA, my self-esteem was too low. My self-esteem had hit rock bottom – terribly! Now, I have confidence in myself. I am a better person and have been working on becoming more humble. All of this has helped me to share and understand people and to listen to others.

INTERVIEWER: Talk about the miracle of the freedom from the obsession.

CAROLINA: This is very important. Before if I ate a chocolate, I felt guilty and now I visualize what I want to eat and also listen to my body and do not punish myself anymore. I know that I can eat moderately what my body needs. Occasionally, when I am nervous, for example, after I have just finished eating and still feel hungry, I look at the notebook where I write my meals and tell myself: “you ate enough to nourish yourself.” I sum up and try to identify the emotion that is affecting me. When the emotions appear, I analyze them and feel relaxed.

INTERVIEWER: How is your life different?

CAROLINA: My life is different because now I appreciate everything and everybody that surrounds me. I value people. There is no difference between one person and another. What has really helped me is to write my meals down. Also, I thank God for three things daily. For example, I thank God for my abstinence, for my daughter, for my job, etc. This has helped me to appreciate what I have, and therefore I cannot complain because I have what I is most important.

INTERVIEWER: How long have you been abstinent from compulsive overeating?

CAROLINA: I have been in OA for 13 years and have been abstinent for the last 9 years. I have lost the five kilos (*11 pounds*) and have maintained a healthy weight.

INTERVIEWER: I can see that you are at a healthy weight.

CAROLINA: Definitely!

INTERVIEWER: In your mind, what is the best gift OA has given to you?

CAROLINA: The best gift OA has given to me is to be in touch with my Higher Power. I have been a believer and always have believed in God, but OA has given me the strength so I can feel God by my side and guiding me in all the large and small actions that appear in my life. I always see the hand of a Higher Power taking care of me and helping me.

INTERVIEWER: Carolina, please tell us how someone in your country, in Mexico, can contact Overeaters Anonymous.

CAROLINA: The website where you can contact us is: www.comedorescompulsivosmx.org – or call area code (55) 52 73 24 97.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you for joining us for this podcast. For more information about OA please go to: www.aa.org. or call the World Service Office in the United States area code 505-891-2664.