

## **Beth's Story – My Body is the Temple of My Soul**

When I started Suppers, I wasn't expecting to have a spiritual experience. I went because my way of eating had gotten me into a lot of trouble. I had dug my way in with a fork and spoon and I needed to dig myself out with the same tools. I had church and a 12 step program to take care of my spiritual needs, so I imagined that the spiritual side of Suppers for me would be about penance. I looked at what wasn't on the menu and knew I would feel sorry for my sins.

I didn't know what to do with it when I read the line, "Caring for the body is the primary spiritual act because the body is the temple of the soul." I'm not sure I agree with the "primary" part, but I got it that no matter what we're doing, we're doing it from a physical body. I have firsthand information on how illness affects my emotions and relationships and turns my prayers into pleas for help.

It has been really challenging for me in my spiritual practice to get quiet enough to hear God's plan for me. Every day I ask for guidance, but there's been so much noise in my head I couldn't hear.

It was a long process acquiring a personal appreciation of how deeply my physical body related to my spiritual experience. As I weaned myself off refined sugars and started eating more fresh food, my anxiety started to go down. I had been praying for years for help with anxiety and depression. I had no idea that part of the problem was my diet. I also learned that managing stress isn't just about getting into quiet meditative states, I also needed to move. A walk along the canal is just perfect for me. It locates me closer to God. Now that I've let go of most sweets, the spiritual difference is crystal clear. I'm spending a lot more time saying prayers of gratitude than pleading for help.