

Ellen's Story – I'm a Dahl

I thought I'd heard every personal label there was, but I was wrong. I've heard "I'm an alcoholic"; "I'm a drug addict"; "I'm a sex addicted, drug addicted alcoholic"; "I'm an overeater..." You name it.

When I was new to Suppers meetings, a young woman introduced herself saying "I'm an O." She meant blood type O, and she went on to explain the diet and lifestyle changes she decided to make based on something we read at Suppers. If you're going to label yourself at all, this sounded to me like a much gentler way of going about it: identifying oneself in terms of personal, individual biological needs that need to be met. Another woman dealt with her personal biology by honoring her family history and allowing coconut fat back into her life. Polly's skin cleared up and her mood swings leveled out when she discovered she "really is a coconut". My story was different. I reported on a book about different metabolic types and realized I need lots and lots of vegetables and not so much protein as my friends. I can tell I just feel better this way.

In practical terms, the most important things for my "O" friend were eating breakfast and getting off all foods with gluten, like wheat and oats. Once she did that, she had a much easier time avoiding binges and panic attacks. It was key to controlling her weight without going crazy. The biggest improvement for me came when I started eating dahl -- lentils -- or an omelet for breakfast. I noticed right away I lost interest in afternoon coffee to give me a lift. And my mood became more even. Although our conclusions are very different, sharing our stories has helped me see there is one common denominator: real food. No matter what other truths revealed themselves about our needs, real food topped the list. I believe that anybody who comes to Suppers to work on making sobriety more comfortable or their blood sugar easier to control will benefit just from heading in the direction of real whole food. But those of us who have made the biggest strides are the ones who took the time to understand our personal biology.