

Society Pages

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

Sharing experience,
strength and hope

December 2004

(the opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not represent OA as a whole)

A Message to Professionals

Unity will be sending letters to Certified Diabetes Educators in the Unity Intergroup region in December, informing them of Overeaters Anonymous and its hope of recovery for those who have, or are at risk of contracting, obesity-related diabetes.

The letter states, in part, "In your capacity as a Certified Diabetes Educator, you may have contact with compulsive overeaters in a client relationship. Because you are working with people who may have food issues, we wanted to familiarize you with our program and let you know that we have groups meeting in your area. Perhaps our group can be of some assistance to your clients who have diabetes."

The letter will be accompanied by OA brochures and testimonials from diabetic OA members in recovery.

Thanks to Unity Outreach Committee for spearheading this effort!

Retreat Name/Place Change

The event formerly known as the Farmington Retreat is getting a new name and new location. The event will now be called the Summer Retreat. Negotiations are underway for a new retreat center, because we need a facility that will allow OA members to bring in outside food. The organizing committee has narrowed its facility search and is negotiating prices with a potential site.

Region IV Meeting - St. Louis

Overeaters Anonymous delegates from across the Midwest gathered in St. Louis Oct. 15-16 to exchange ideas and craft strategies to reach the still suffering compulsive overeater.

The OA world structure is broken into ten regions and Minnesota is part of Region IV, which stretches from Winnipeg to Kansas City. Delegates attended from 16 Intergroups.

Regional IV decided to hold the next regional convention in the Twin Cities in 2006. This is a recovery event, not a business conference. Regional conventions are held every two years.

The regional convention will draw people interested in OA from across the

Midwest, and we hope for a large turnout from Minnesota. Most of the preparation for the convention will be shouldered by other intergroups, but we in the Twin Cities expect to play a big role, so we hope that members here will be ready to volunteer when the time comes! The theme will be "There is a Solution: Together We Can." Scholarships will be available.

Lots of ideas for outreach were shared during the weekend. The Central Minnesota Intergroup has been drawing in new members with an advertisement in a local newspaper. The Cedar Rapids, Iowa Intergroup set up a booth at a conference of helping professionals. The Red River Valley Intergroup in the Fargo-Moorhead area recently had a retreat. The Winnipeg Intergroup has had articles in the local newspapers about OA and is running public service announcements about OA. They have had interviews on local radio shows and are organizing a mailing to family doctors. They said many of the OA groups have doubled in size as a result of the public information efforts.

The Central Iowa OA Intergroup put up a billboard in November promoting OA. It reads, "Overeating and Can't Stop?" and lists a phone number for people to call. Another Iowa Intergroup put up a billboard with a phone number and a website. The Springfield, Mo. OA Intergroup is promoting a "Super Saturday" to attract people to OA.

A workshop was held at the regional conference where Intergroups were encouraged to set up meetings with people at eating disorder clinics and talk to support groups for people considering bypass surgery. We were also urged to

set up tables at health fairs and to find out about local events where we can set up OA tables. Schedules of these events can be found by contacting our local convention and visitor bureaus.

Theresa, the chair of the Region IV assembly, attended a world service meeting of region chairs in August where they discussed outreach to professionals and plans for a table at a national convention of dietitians.

Connie, our Region IV Trustee (and who represents us at World Service), urged members to look for new materials on the OA World Service website. She noted that OA has guidelines for fundraising, which are available on a PDF file. She also said that OA World Service is asking for professionals, including doctors and dietitians, to write for the Courier, our World Service newsletter for professionals. There are pamphlets for professionals which are on the World Service website at www.oa.org. -Randy F.

*New Address for Region IV
Region IV Office
P.O. Box 455
Florissant, Missouri
63032-0455*

Other addresses:
Unity Intergroup
3208 West Lake Street #45
Mpls, MN 55416

World Service Office
P.O. Box 44020
Rio Rancho, NM 87174

Appeal for Special Funds

Donations sought to help send delegates to OA Region and World Meetings

The Unity Intergroup is making a request to all Unity groups for a special financial contribution so that we may send additional delegates to our region and world service conferences.

The Intergroup budget for the current year allows for sending one delegate to the annual World Service Business Conference and one delegate to the Regional Assembly which meets twice a year. Unity would like to send two delegates to these important gatherings. At our monthly Nov. 13 meeting Unity voted to ask our affiliated OA groups to consider making a special donation to help with this effort.

We need to raise around \$2,500 to cover the cost of sending at least one additional delegate to both service bodies.

The World Service Business Conference is the annual meeting of Overeaters Anonymous which develops programs, procedures and literature to continue to reach out to the huge population around the globe still suffering from compulsive overeating. It is also a large “networking” body that brings together people in recovery from across the planet to share their experiences and lessons of recovery, an extraordinary process that helps all of those in attendance to carry the

message back to their own cities, states, and countries.

Last year’s conference voted to publish the breakthrough pamphlet, Dignity of Choice, which many of our groups have now ordered to help newcomers find a way to abstinence. There will be other proposals before the upcoming World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque, N.M. in April, 2005. There were 216 delegates at last year’s conference, and some states and countries sent quite a few delegates. We sent just one delegate, even though, as our recent state convention demonstrated, we are a big and growing fellowship in Minnesota.

The World Service needs significant representation from the Minnesota OA rooms and its annual conference, and the rooms of Minnesota OA need to deepen their connection to World Service.

The Region Assembly is a gathering of intergroup representatives from our region, Region IV (there are 10 regions across the world). Region IV includes eight states; Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri and most of Illinois, and includes Manitoba, northwest Ontario and the Canadian territory of Nunavut. Region IV holds a representative assembly twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The assembly addresses a broad array of subjects and projects that focus on how to spread the message of recovery. There’s a lot to be learned there, and extremely important that we share our ideas with these groups (see story on Region Assembly, pg 1).

In addition to your regular contributions, which are so important in sustaining the work of the Unity Intergroup, we urge OA groups to make a special donation for additional delegates to Region and World. Please mark on your check "Delegate Fund" so that we know the money you send will be earmarked for this purpose.

Send your checks to Unity Intergroup, 3208 West Lake St., #45, Minneapolis, MN 55416.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Unity Intergroup chair at 763-560-3493 or at ettawith@aol.com or randy_furst@msn.com at 612-822-0317 or randyfurst@msn.com
--Randy

Abstinence Definition

Unity Intergroup has voted to support a proposal to add an item to next year's World Service Business Conference agenda that would refine OA's definition of abstinence.

The proposed new wording (new wording is underlined) would be: "According to the dictionary, the word 'abstain' means 'to refrain from.' Abstinence in Overeaters Anonymous is the action of refraining from compulsive eating in a manner that reflects a desire to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. Physical, emotional and spiritual recovery are the

result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step Program."

The OA member who wrote the proposed new wording states, in part, "Food addiction warps our bodies, and dramatically impairs our health while it shortens our life. The effects of compulsive eating, to a greater or lesser extent, are reversible as we recover. Accelerated physical improvement generally accompanies movement toward a healthy body weight. A person who is significantly overweight after years in the fellowship will see in this change a guideline that didn't formally exist. An anorexic or bulimic who stops restricting or purging but resists gaining weight because they 'feel fat' will see the same loving suggestion to continue forward, addressing the physical consequences of a lifetime of abuse around food. This will further unify our diverse membership around a common goal...a healthy body weight."

The member also points out that the new Dignity of Choice pamphlet states that "...a plan of eating that helps us achieve a healthy body weight is an essential part of our recovery."

All OA Intergroups have been asked to vote on whether to send this issue to the OA World Service Business Conference agenda. If enough intergroups vote in favor of adding it to the agenda, the issue would go through a committee process before an actual vote. Inclusion on the agenda does not automatically mean the new wording would be added.

Step Twelve

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

The Twelfth Step is about service.

For me the 12th step is all about giving service; giving back what I have so generously been given. I remember when I thought that doing service was leading a meeting, being treasurer, carrying the books, doing anything to help my home group survive. It is, but it is so much more.

After reading in the Big Book and our OA 12 & 12, I can see that service is living the 12 steps to the best of my ability; the physical, the emotional, and most of all, the spiritual program must be a part of my life. Service is practicing all the principles of OA in all of my life-in all of my relationships with others in and out of the program. To let go of control of them, to allow my Higher Power take control-and to let God serve

others through me and my actions-that is true service. When we can attract others by our joy in recovery, we are carrying the message.

As the 12 & 12 states, "We don't simply carry the message-we are the message." True service is carrying the OA message however we can. I cannot help others unless I first take care of me and my recovery in all areas of my life. Living the 12th Step is giving the best service of all.

K.K.

Intergroup Elections

Unity Intergroup is having its elections in January! We will elect Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and Newsletter Editor.

Other positions (not elected):

Registrar:

Maintains OA meeting list

Newsletter Print Coordinator:
Prints/distributes newsletter

Date: Sat, January 8th, 2005

Time: 12:30 p.m.

*Place: Parkdale Plaza West
1660 S. Highway 100*

St. Louis Park, Minnesota?

*(one block east of Northwest
Tennis Club)*

Intergroup Board:

Etta W, Chair 763-560-3493

ettawith@aol.com

Sharon S, Vice-chair 651-334-5085

sharbobschranz@aol.com

Sharon RS, Treasurer 763-544-5955

ssund@skypoint.com

Sarah L, 612-929-1211

cricket@alumni.lyon.edu

Nov. Group Contributions

Tue Woodbury HOW \$80.00

Sat Golden Valley Unity \$60.00

Mon Walker Step Group \$120.00

Mon Minnehaha \$40.00

Sat Circle Pines HOW \$120.00

Correction:

Last month's contributions should have included the following:

Sat am Roseville \$55.00

(instead of Circle Pines HOW)

Subscriptions

Society Pages is now available by subscription for individuals outside the Unity Intergroup region.

One Year = \$6.00

Please print your name, address, and zip code,

along with a check payable to Unity Intergroup (with Society Pages in the memo section) to:

Sheila Hyde

311 First Street NE

New Prague, MN

56071-1821

"...since these things have happened among us, they can happen with you. Should you wish them above all else, and be willing to make use of our experience, we are sure they will come. The age of miracles is still with us."

Big Book, pg 153

In January, Society Pages will feature Step One, "We admitted we were powerless over food, that our lives had become unmanageable." Send your submissions to pmarsicano100@hotmail.com. Deadline is Wednesday, December 29th)