

Society Pages

February 2005

The
Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup – Overeaters Anonymous

There Is A Solution

Intergroup Board elected on 01-08-05

New Board members were elected on 01-08-05. Representatives from area groups attended the meeting and voted for the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary

The new Chairperson of the board is Sharon R.S., Sarah L. was elected to the position of Vice Chairperson, the new Treasurer is Maggie Rose M. and Judy M. was elected as Secretary. Region IV Representatives were also elected.

Randy F. will continue in his role as representative along with Anne Mc. Two alternates were chosen, Barb and Etta.

A heartfelt THANK YOU goes out to last years' board members who gave so much to the Overeaters Anonymous community. Etta W.- Chairperson who served for two full years. Sharon S.-Vice-Chairperson, Sharon R.S.- Treasurer, and Sarah L.-Secretary. Thank you for your many hours of service. Thank you also to Patty M. who rotated her position as Newsletter Editor to Robin B. and Barb N. who has printed stapled, collated and distributed hard copies of the newsletter for two years. Becky P. has volunteered to work on printing and distribution of the Society Pages. Thanks also to David K., who has been Registrar for the past two years, and Joe W. who held the role of ISP Administrator. Michelle has volunteered to take on the role of Registrar. The ISP Administrator position is open for anyone who would like to take on that service.

Thank you also to all of the Intergroup volunteers, for showing up to support Unity Intergroup and for being of service in so many ways.

Outreach

- An ongoing outreach project on the group level has been well received. Groups are encouraged to collect past issues of Lifeline from group members, and donate them to health care professionals. If your group has copies to distribute, contact Anne Mc. at 763-473-3672. She will send you stickers to put on the magazines. These stickers direct readers to contact the Unity Intergroup for information about Overeaters' Anonymous.
- The outreach committee sent 100 letters to Diabetes educators in the area. They plan on sending these information letters to nutritionists and dieticians in the coming months. This is a way to educate medical professionals about Overeaters Anonymous.
- Unity Intergroup sponsored a booth at the Minneapolis Women's Expo in January. Thank you to all the volunteers who showed up to share their recovery! There was a lot of interest in OA.

Unity Sponsored Events

Unity Intergroup sponsors two retreats throughout the year. The first one is the Buffalo retreat which will be held April 8-10, 2005. It will be at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo Minnesota. The registration form is available on the Unity Website, www.overeaters.org. You may contact Laura D. 763-535-4865 or Jason R. 952-942-2903 for information. The second retreat will be held this year at the Farmington Retreat Center, June 24-26. Registration forms are not available on line yet, but Judy M. 763-473-4920, can answer questions

Group Contributions January 2005

Meeting Day, Time & Location	Contribution Amount
Saturday a.m.—Golden Valley	60.00
OA MN Convention	1200.00
Mon. p.m.,HOW—Rochester (delegate fund)	51.00
Saturday a.m., Mac-Plymouth—St. Paul	120.00
Wednesday p.m., HOW—St. Louis Park	120.00
Tuesday p.m., 7 th Tradition—Eagan	120.00
Saturday a.m., 7 th Tradition—Apple Valley	30.00
Friday a.m.—Woodbury	69.00
Monday—La Crosse	30.00
Monday—La Crosse (delegate fund)	25.00
Sunday p.m., HOW—St. Louis Park	240.00
Tues p.m.—Brooklyn Center (delegate fund)	25.00
Thurs p.m., HOW—Burnsville (delegate fund)	100.00
Sat a.m., Courage to Change—Roseville	126.00
Sat. 7:30 a.m., Early Bird—St. Paul	300.00
Monday p.m., Step Group—Minneapolis	20.00
Monday p.m., Lynhurst—Minneapolis	131.50

Thank you to all groups for your support of Unity Intergroup. Thanks also to groups that have donated to the special delegate fund. To date, seven groups have contributed to this fund for a total of \$641.00. Unity is still accepting donations from groups to finance the delegate fund. This is a collection that is being taken so extra delegates from Unity may attend the region and world service conferences this year.

Subscriptions

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

One year = \$6.00

Please send your name, address and zip code, along with a check made payable to Unity Intergroup (with Society Pages in the memo section) to:

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New Prague, MN 5671-1821

Intergroup Board

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cricket@alumni.lyon.edu

Maggie Rose M., Treasurer 612-382-5257
maggie_muldoon@mac.com

Judy M., Secretary 763-473-4920
dobedoberjjudy@soncom.com

The next Intrgroup meeting will be on March 12, 2005 at 12:30. Every group can send two voting representatives to the meeting, but all are welcome to attend. Please join us! 1660 Parkdale Dr, St. Louis Park.

Corrections

The January newsletter incorrectly reported a group contribution for the Saturday Early Bird meeting. The contribution should have read - \$900.00 for the general Unity fund and \$300.00 for the delegate fund.

Step Two – Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

To be an adult, to be of service

Step 2 is an important step in my recovery process. This step acknowledges that I, as a compulsive overeater cannot do recovery alone. It very graciously does not spell out for me what I have to believe in. Step 2 points out, in order to get sober, stay sober, and find sanity, my way did not and does not work. I must believe in something outside of myself for help.

I tried my way for over 30 years. This included most diets, self-help books, hypnosis, pills, and lots of therapy. I lost a lot of weight, only to gain it back and then some, and was never truly at peace. I felt quite hopeless. I thought I was one of those people, as it states in the Big Book, Chapter 5, “..who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves....They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty.”

Step 2 in the 12 x12 states, “OA does not require that I believe in anything, the 12 steps are but suggestions.” Second, the 12 x 12 states, “to get abstinent and stay abstinent I don’t have to swallow all of step 2 at once”. And third, “All I really need is a truly open mind.”

I was at my bottom and willing to do whatever it was to be free from my mental obsession with food. For years I would pray to the God of my understanding and felt that I was given this burden to have for life. I was also not too willing to do much about it. If God wasn’t going to give me a miracle, which meant take away the obsession, and I would still be able to eat

whatever and whenever I wanted, and be thin, I wasn’t going to trust that a miracle could happen to me. Prayer became bargaining, whining and feeling sorry for me. I had a superficial relationship with my Higher Power and wanted something for nothing.

I became self sufficient, defiant and bitter. Those attributes landed me 100 lbs. overweight, miserable and my life out of control.

For me, Step 0 had to come first, which was putting down the food. I have an allergy to sugar, white flour and other ingredients, and an obsession of the mind. That accomplished I have now begun to work the steps as they were intended to be worked.

Step 2 states, “ Belief meant reliance, not defiance.” I can no longer afford to be defiant in any area of my life. I use all of the tools each day to maintain a 100 lb. weight loss and have serenity in my life. I am learning what it means to be an adult, to be of service, to be kind, loving and let go of negative thinking. Is it easy? Not always, but I wouldn’t trade my life today for one second of the past while I was in the food. My Higher Power is restoring me to sanity and guides me in my life today. For that I am forever grateful!

Anonymous

Belief meant reliance, not defiance.

I always believed there was a God. I was raised in a very religious family, and never doubted God’s existence. Even in my rebellious years. After many years in 12 Step Programs, I was baffled. Why couldn’t I ever really turn my will and my life over to my Higher Power? Many years ago, I wrestled with my concept of God, and was able to replace the image of God as the strict, punishing father, and embrace a more nurturing and gentle Creator. But that didn’t seem to help much either, as far as getting me to surrender my

control. Then, in doing my daily writing early in my abstinence two years ago, these words jumped out at me: Belief meant reliance, not defiance. I had been defiant most of my life. (Of course, I called it “independence” not “defiance,” and was rather proud of this trait.) In my family, for various reasons, I had learned very early that there was no one I could really rely on. As with most people, my experience of my parents and other adults in my life had influenced my understanding of God.

As I began to see how this “independence” had affected my relationships with others, and how it was really God I was defying, my hard shell began to soften and I could let my Higher Power in. My defiance was the defense that I had constructed to feel safe in this world. But instead of being safe and cared for, I was isolated and miserable. I had pushed away everyone who cared, and had hurt many people. I gradually began to replace this defiance with reliance. I still catch myself at times, devising my own “backup plan” just in case my Higher Power doesn’t come through for me. Whenever I realize that is what I am doing, I pray, “Thy will, not mine be done,” and I see how deep that resistance to reliance goes. Today, I have a God I can and do rely on, and life is so much better.

-MRM

Personal Story

Food had won the fight

In order to get through to the next sufferer it is important to tell your story. People usually don’t want to hear about spiritual or emotional things (there is no addiction to those) just dieting. Many of us know that the addiction goes much deeper than just our stomachs. People, whether they realize it at first or not, usually come to hear about

the food allergy we all suffer from. How it complicates our lives and hurts relationships.

My story starts at the early age of three. My childhood was very difficult and fearful. It was full of pain and loss. I found that food had a soothing, calming affect on me. It would help me lick my wounds so to speak. So, if you gave me a half dozen donuts and a big glass of chocolate milk; I was good to go. I associated happy times (seemed like the only non-scary times) with food. Great times spent at carnivals with my grandpa and pizza pie shops where they threw the dough up in the air. He would take us everywhere! I remember birthdays with cake and ice cream, Halloween and Easter with nothing but candy, Thanksgiving where there was food for miles and finally Christmas with our stockings (hung by the chimney with care) loaded with candy and cookies. We would throw away the fruit!

My brothers and I would have an eating contest whenever we ate together. If they had two Big Macs then I wanted two also. I was a tom-boy between two brothers. I was climbing trees and digging dirt. I would look at the other girls who were in cheerleading and baton twirling that were three sizes smaller than me. I was so jealous that I cried. This led through my adult years. I searched for God all my life. But I now understand it was for my own greedy purposes. I was a food addict! With my lunch money, I would buy an ice cream sandwich for lunch and candy bars on the way home from school. I would save the rest for more snack foods. I tried diets and would give up in less than a week. I would try to vomit like some of my skinny friends but couldn’t. I tried speed hoping my metabolism would pick up, but the result was that I just couldn’t sleep. I thought the peer pressure would end when I graduated, but I started really putting on the pounds, gaining about a size every six months.

I was afraid I’d end up single so I latched on to the first decent guy who came along. That helped me relax and before our five year anniversary, I

was 250 pounds! But I didn't stop there. My depression grew with my weight. I was very difficult to live with under the influence of my addiction. I have to hand it to my ex-husband, he really did try. But after I reached 346 pounds, I think he gave up on me. Food had won the fight. Did I blame the divorce on food? Of course not, I was deep in denial. I blamed my ex-husband for everything!

Pretty soon I was 1800 miles away from my children, single, no...divorced, and broke, uneducated, jobless, homeless and aching from my obesity. I didn't want to go on. I didn't want to continue this way. I couldn't go any lower so I might as well end it right there!

Then came OA HOW. I went up and took my first medallion hoping this would be the answer instead of death. But how could I give up my best friend of thirty-three years? Food was everything! So, with my mouth open wide, I was right back into bingeing and overeating. It took me several months to realize the death toll was near. So I came again to OA HOW and left with a sponsor that night! I wasn't messing around this time. I found myself in hospitals trying to cope without food. Food stuffed so much inside me that I crashed. I wasn't eating food, food was eating me. My OA HOW friends took a great interest in me and helped with my recovery. But I wouldn't surrender yet! It would take a while longer for me to surrender and gain enough strength from my Higher Power to do this program. I found that it took more than a desire to lose a few pounds for this program to work. I'm so very grateful.

Anonymous

News from OA groups

Beyond our wildest dreams

Come celebrate Unity with us at our fourth annual Unity Day!

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare Medical Center
700 West Avenue, La Crosse, WI

Second Floor in the Marycrest Auditorium.

WHEN: Saturday, February 19, 2005

TIME: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Beginning at 8:30 AM with registration and ending with the closing at 3:30 PM.

Come for part or all of the program.

Speakers, entertainment, door prizes and much, much more!

\$3 pre-registration - \$5 at the door

For more information call:

Ruth (608) 526-3257 or Elaine (608) 784-3194

Sponsored by: The La Crosse Area Overeaters Anonymous Groups.

Send Registration to: Elaine Patterson - 232 South 11th St. Apt. #106 - La Crosse, WI 54601

We would appreciate pre-registration, but you may register at the door.

The March Society Pages will feature Step Three, "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please send your reflections on the step, or a personal story to rboe@mn.rr.com. The deadline for submission of articles is Tuesday, March 1.

"crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?" *Big Book ed. 3-pg 53*

