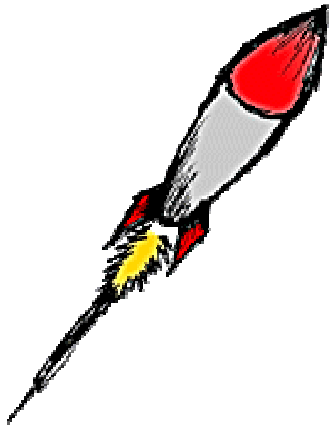


Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup October 2006

Carrying the Message

THERE IS A SOLUTION!



Rocketed into the Fourth Dimension

Minnesota State Convention November 3-5, 2006

Greetings OA Fellows. The 2006 MN Overeaters Anonymous State Convention is just around the corner! Only three weeks to go! This year's convention is being held at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Plymouth.

On behalf of the Convention Steering Committee, I would like to extend an invitation for you to join us in celebrating the solution that we've found. ***"We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful... B.B. page 17"***

Under the guidance of our Higher Power, we have taken great care in planning every single detail of this convention with you in mind. There will be two dynamic keynote speakers, over twenty abstinent OA speakers, two meetings, entertainment and abstinent meals. We know that you will have a great time as we celebrate

recovery and spread the message to those still suffering. If you are still deliberating on whether or not to attend the convention, here are a few reasons why we believe that you should be there:

1. We are approaching the "eating season". Come and take out additional insurance to guard your abstinence.
2. Meet other OA members from all across the country face to face.
3. Reunite and rekindle old friendships with people in the fellowship whom you have not seen in a while. ***"To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you MUST NOT MISS." B.B. page 89.***
4. Come share your experience, strength, and hope.
5. See people who are just like you with similar experiences around food. You are not alone.
6. Offer your service: ***"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from eating as intensive work with other compulsive overeaters. B.B. pg. 89"*** (If you are interested in being a volunteer, please call Lisa R. at 952-944-2772 or Mary R. at 763-537-0336.
7. All registration funds in excess of the convention costs, supports the Unity Intergroup to carry the message of recovery a little further.
8. Get a roommate and stay at the hotel. Become immersed in the whole convention experience. Use this weekend as a retreat...Enjoy the pool,

bike or walk the trails; get pampered at the hotel spa for an additional cost.

- 9. If you are struggling, this may be just the boost that you need. And remember, somebody needs you.
- 10. Come for the fun, stay for the recovery! .

See you on November 3rd, 4th, and 5th at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Plymouth. Do not delay! Register today! Registration forms and additional information can be found at www overeaters.org.

Yours In Humble Service,
Ann D.
2006 OA Convention Chair



PI / Outreach Committee

The Public Information Group and the Outreach Committee meet just before the Intergroup meetings at the same location from 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Join us and help find ways to reach others who suffer from food addiction.

We need you!

Contact Peg M at 952-920-9496, Nea D. at 612-227-3854 or Robin H. at 612-724-5506 for more information.

Diabetes Expo

Minneapolis Convention Center, Saturday, **October 14, 2006**. Contact: Robin H., 612-724-5506.

Women's Expo

Minneapolis Convention Center, **January 26, 27, 28, 2007**. Contact: Peg M., 952-920-9496.



Links

- List of Local Meetings www overeaters.org
- Region 4 Web Site www.oaregion4.org
- World Service Web Site www.oa.org

News from Unity Intergroup

Unity PI/Outreach & Calendar

Please take a look at our PI/Outreach Information Page and Calendar. Post it on your bulletin board or cube wall. Important meetings and deadlines will be at your fingertips!



Receiving the Newsletter at Home

Society Pages is available via the Internet or e-mail. Go to www overeaters.org to download a copy of current or past newsletters. A hard copy of Society Pages is available by subscription for individuals outside the Unity Intergroup region. The cost is \$6.00 for one year. For a subscription, 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 Unity Intergroup, Attn: Kathleen C., 3208 W Lake St, #45, Minneapolis, MN 55416.



November Society Pages

The November Society Pages will feature the Minnesota State OA Convention. Members of Intergroup and the MN State OA Convention committees have volunteered to write for that issue. Articles about convention or a personal story are still accepted from other OA members, however. Please send your contributions to knitleslieknit@aol.com for publication in Society Pages.

The deadline for submission of articles is 12:00 noon on Sunday, October 22, 2006.

Personal Stories

The State Convention Saved My Life

The MN O.A. Convention of 2002 saved my life. I had been in O.A. on and off since 1988. In the late 80's early 90's, I got sober, became abstinent from sugar and was eating three healthy meals a day. I was attending several meetings a week, working the steps and finding serenity through recovery. Somewhere along the road I took that first bite of sugar. That moment of my life is lost from my memory. I suffered from a strange mental blank spot. The Big Book says, "Will power and self knowledge would not help in those strange mental blank spots." I was in a full-blown relapse. By some miracle, I stayed sober but I was back into the sugar and compulsive eating deeper than ever. I stopped going to O.A. meetings. The shame was too painful.

My family moved to the Twin Cities area 3 years ago. I soon found an O.A. meeting in the small town I lived and started going again. I was still into the compulsive eating and sugar yet kept going back to meetings praying simply for the willingness to let go of the sugar. Through this meeting I found out about the MN Convention. At first I was terrified to go for fear of running into someone I knew from Chicago. Then I was angry that the Convention was in November, right before the Holidays! All along, I kept praying for the willingness to let go of the sugar. I decided to put my fears aside and just go.

During the early Sat. morning meeting they were giving out medallions for people celebrating different milestones in their abstinence. 1 year, 9 month, 6 month etc. The last one was a 24 hr. medallion and it was for anyone who had a desire to stop eating compulsively. Several people got up and received one. The woman offered again and when no one else got up she closed the box and was returning to her seat. At that moment, I felt I was being lifted out of my chair and was walking down the aisle. She gladly opened the box and gave me a hug and medallion. I

became abstinent from sugar that moment and my journey back to abstinence and recovery began.

There were several speakers whose stories just blew my socks off. I was in an 8-year relapse and felt utterly hopeless. These people offered me hope where I felt completely desperate. Maybe I wasn't a lost cause after all. As I spoke to some of these folks I learned that they were working the OA/HOW concept; a disciplined, structured approach. It took me a few months to make it to a HOW meeting. I had remained abstinent from sugar but found my food was still a bit messy and compulsive.

Recovery is giving me the tools to look at my life honestly and to take action. I am still amazed by the fact that I have been relieved of the compulsion to overeat. I used to reside in a tangled web of lies, denial and fear. It got to the point that I didn't know what the truth was. I ran from it and numbed out with excess food.

For today: Just as the truth freed me of my obsession with food, so it can free me of other living problems. I am not afraid to seek the truth.

~ Julie B.H.

Coincidence?

I attended my first OA convention in November 2005. After more than 30 years in AA and 9 months of abstinence, I wasn't nervous. I was feeling better than I had in years. Imagine my surprise to see someone at a speaker meeting who looked very familiar. At first, I couldn't remember where I'd seen her before. Within 2 seconds, I realized she worked for the same company I do. Our employer is one of the largest in the state of Minnesota with dozens of buildings located in several cities and counties. Not only do we have the same employer, but she works in my building, on my floor, and we share the same employee kitchen area. Within the next 2 seconds, I thought to myself, "Oh no, there goes my anonymity." I have made it a practice to maintain my anonymity in both programs while in the workplace. So, within a minute I had begun obsessing. Of course, I'm an addict.

Later, we met in the hallway and discussed our time in program and agreed that neither of us would be alive today if it weren't for OA. We'd never known much of anything about each other except the occasional "hello" in the hallway. I had noticed a tremendous change in her physical appearance, but had no idea it was due to OA.

Today, we have many mutual colleagues and share a lot of the stress within the nature of our jobs. Who am I to assume that someone in this program is going to break my anonymity? I've been able to let go my worry about that. I'm learning to have trust. In fact, it is of great comfort to me knowing that I can simply walk a few feet away from my office and have a meeting with my new friend and fellow abstinent member of this program.

~ Anonymous

Serendipity

- The faculty of making fortunate discoveries by accident -
- The fact or occurrence of such discoveries -
- An instance of making such a discovery -

Last year I went to the OA convention to connect with others. I was a newbie & somewhat reluctant. So I volunteered to be a greeter at the door. That worked ok. I connected to someone who was very influential in my very early AA & OA recovery. That was nice. I thought she had died. What I came for I got about recovery. One of the promises is that we will enjoy a new freedom. I've been realizing this in my life. I met a fellow aviator. We connected in our love of flying and started the telling of our stories around flying and returning to flying, which we both did this year. A true shared joy and a champion for each other's joy and passion around this gift. Our relationship started by one friend pointing out to me about the airplane pin a person was wearing, which lead to all the joy that has happened since. The 2005 convention was a very serendipitous occasion for me. Who and what will 2006 bring? I'm looking forward to finding out!

~ Jim C.

Dealing With My Emotions

I began attending OA in May of this year. I came because I had spent the past five years on a yo-yo, losing and gaining weight. I felt that I was not "solving the problem". Really, for my whole life I was not "solving the problem".

I like what is said in the OA Brown Book about compulsive overeating: "it is a problem with physical, emotional and spiritual causes." The first few months on the program, I struggled with consistency. I believe that I was struggling because I was focusing on the physical cause. In other words, I was following a diet. Through self-control and self-will, I cannot "solve the problem."

During the past few months, I have "let go" and accepted the fact that I do have an addiction. That addiction is compulsive overeating. Only through acceptance that I have this disease, I am able to submit to the program. Through the tools of the program, service, a plan of eating, calling my sponsor, making at least three hook up calls, writing and reading each day am I able to achieve sanity. The spiritual part of the program is letting go and accepting that I have a disease and submitting to the program.

From an emotional standpoint, I have learned to deal openly with my emotions. I have grown up not recognizing my feelings. When I was angry, sad, disappointed, happy, bored, I used food to deal with my emotions. Now, I am dealing with my emotions assertively and maturely with people that I have resentment or anger with. Emotionally, I am "riding a rollercoaster", but I am on the path to recovery because I am NOT overeating!

The beauty of the program is that we must deal with our spiritual, emotional and physical challenges at the same time. Only through "solving the problem" through these three different avenues, can I live a life of abstinence and sanity. I am thankful for my abstinence. I am also thankful for my sponsor and the friends that I have made on the program. I am thankful to God for giving me freedom through abstinence.

~ Rob

Passion for Sponsorship

35 eager and exciting OAs attended the Sponsorship Workshop of September 23 from as far away as Georgia, Rochester, and all parts of the Twin Cities. Janice, Robin, Barb S. and Joanne spoke of their life stories with the passion for sponsorship that was motivating. It was Joanne who so clearly spoke of the wonders of all our differences that we need both traditional sponsors and those who follow HOW guidelines. The main tone was that of learning to walk with one another in the sponsorship relationship with acceptance and love as the guidelines. There were sixteen that signed up for a continuing monthly meeting to focus on sponsorship. The first of these will be held on Saturday, Oct 21 at 1660 Parkdale Dr. (the same room as the workshop).

~ Anonymous

Newcomer View of Sponsorship Workshop

Presenters and literature referencing the recent workshop indicated that there was a great need for sponsors in the fellowship. To be a sponsor requires working the 12 steps and working with your sponsor. Sponsorship is an imperfect human process but a necessary process for recovery. We all have seen or experienced relapses to old eating ways and the weight yo-yo when we thought we were "normal" or could "go it alone". Sponsorship is the service tool that keeps us abstinent and allows us to provide help to compulsive overeaters in pain and depression.

Sponsorship helps us live and work the 12 steps. It helps on three levels: physical, emotional, and spiritual. As frequently indicated, sponsorship helps the sponsor as well as the sponsee. It helps us from isolating behavior and keeps us abstinent. It strengthens our relationship skills as well as keeping us in touch with what brought us to OA to begin with.

Attitude is imperative. A sponsor is looking for one thing: understanding! Check with your own sponsor first to see if you are ready. Let

sponsee make the first contact and discuss his/her expectations.

I know that joining or committing to OA is a big step. Some of us are coming out of long periods of isolation, shy, and awkward. Our first steps are clouded with some shyness or fear. Therefore we have to encourage each other in a loving, nonjudgmental way. We must gently suggest that we control what we can control and move toward order and responsibility.

I am very thankful for the effort the trusted servants put into the meeting and feel it contributed to my growth.

~ Verlan

Frontenac Retreat

Thank you to all who attended the Frontenac retreat this year, and to those who gave their time in doing service. It was a great success and we raised \$287.00 at the auction. That money will be used for the scholarship fund. We are working on getting the retreat dates for next year. We hope to see you there.

~ Etta W. and Deb S.

Step 10
Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Today I Know When I'm Wrong

I have found that working a daily 10th step puts me back on the path of recovery when I find my self-centered character defects coming out to wreck havoc in my and others lives. Be it subtle or profound; today I know when I'm wrong and need to do another right thing for myself.... this is how I do that...taking this action connects me to the real me I want to be and can be.

~ Jim C.

Climbing the Road to Recovery

I picture a mountain road, strewn with large stones and boulders. As I walk, I step on one stone that rolls under my feet and throws me off balance. The next one trips me, and down I fall. I get up and walk some more, only to come upon a large boulder that forces me to leave my path altogether. And what are these stones? My defects of character. Pride, fear, envy, negative thinking, and food obsessions - all these things and more can cause me to lose my balance and my focus on my Higher Power's will for me. They can delay my recovery, and even turn into an avalanche that makes me plunge into a relapse.

The writers of our OA and AA literature repeatedly refer to defects of character as "stumbling blocks to our recovery". They talk about "losing our emotional and spiritual balance" when we encounter our defects. When we take the 4th and 5th steps, we name each of these obstacles to our growth, we ask our Higher Power to help remove them, and we begin doing what we can to help lift them out of the way.

But this process will take time, and I need to move ahead, and I guess that's what the 10th step is all about to me. Each day when I find myself acting in ways I know aren't my Higher Power's will, and stop to change my attitude and fix my mistakes, I'm doing what I can to clear away another stone and move forward. And I hope, as I learn better habits of thinking

and acting, the stones will be a little smaller, and I'll learn how to simply walk around them as I go through the day - to refuse to give in to anger or negativity, to turn away from trying to take control, to let go of old habits and fix my sights on new ones. And it sure helps that I'm not alone on the path - there are so many good people nearby, walking their own path, and we can call out advice and warnings to each other as we walk.

Keep walking, my friends, and don't give up!
~ Heather J.



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