

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup December 2007

Carrying the Message



Minnesota OA State Convention

“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

On behalf of the 2007 OA Convention Team, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for supporting the 34th Minnesota Convention of Overeaters Anonymous. It was great to see old friends and also to make new ones. If you were not there, we missed you.

There were over 500 members registered for the convention. This was a twenty-five percent increase in attendance from last year. This year Minnesota OA members ***“Celebrated The Miracles Of Recovery...Happy, Joyous, and Free”*** with OA members from fellowships in California, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. We also celebrated with OA

members from Nova Scotia and Vancouver, B.C.

A special thank you to the over 250 volunteers along with the convention steering committee, who helped to make this weekend possible. ***“I am responsible.... When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hands of OA always to be there and for that; I am responsible.”***

Because of your support and contributions we were able to cover the cost of the convention along with making a substantial donation to our local Unity Intergroup. This contribution will help to further spread the message of recovery.

If you enjoyed the experience of this last convention, please take this opportunity to volunteer for the upcoming 2008 Minnesota Convention of Overeaters Anonymous. More details will follow in subsequent issues of the Society Pages. Get convention updates by visiting the Unity Intergroup’s website at www.overeaters.org. ***“I put my hand in yours, and together we can do what we could never do alone.”***

Yours in Humble Service,
Ann D.
2007 OA Convention Chair



We’re Open on Holidays!

The Minneapolis Tuesday morning HOW meeting will meet on both Christmas day (with child care available) and New Years day.

Step Eleven: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry it out.”

Step 11: Just Do It

Step 11 says that I will seek, through prayer and meditation, a conscious contact with my Higher Power. It also says that I will not seek things for myself, but instead I must accept His will for me and ask for the strength to carry it out. When I look at my recovery, Step 11, like everything in this program, came to me piecemeal. I have read the histories of AA, like *Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers* and *Pass It On*, learning that our fore bearers in this program used morning and evening prayer as the key ingredient to this step. Sometimes that level of commitment frightens me. I sometimes felt silly praying, but I have had true spiritual experiences when I did drop to my knees and seek God’s help. I heard a speaker say that Step 11 is like the Nike ad: Just Do It.

Still for me, the most instinctive thing is not to drop to my knees and pray. As an addict, worry, obsession, and anger were my most common reactions to life and using food was a way to cushion these feelings. Although dropping to my knees is still not my most common reaction, I check in with God through the telephone and by saying those great prayers in the Big Book. (Fear and Anger prayers seem to be my favorites) Although I am still working on consistency, when I use prayer, it works. Sometimes my old addict mind wants to have its way and I enjoy indignant anger, that cool feeling of superiority, and, of course, the confidence that “I-am-right-and-you-are-wrong.” Because of committing to abstinence, seeking my Higher Power, and working these steps to the best of my ability, I have found that I can’t stay in those emotions for very long, they will kill me.

Sometimes my prayer comes in the actions of my program. My sponsor and I meet with God every morning, through my daily committed food plan and my reading and writing assignment. I weigh and measure my breakfast and pack a committed, weighed and measured meal for my lunch. I tell those I love most, that I love them. I call another OA person on my way to work. Sometimes I pray in my car on the way to work, asking for relief from those defects of character and to focus my attention on others, especially when I know I have a particularly stressful day in store. I contact others throughout the day, and when those obsessions and defects of character seem to be getting the best of me, I can pause. But the true miracle is I am starting to *want* to pause. This shift has happened lately after a particular outburst of anger at my husband over something completely inconsequential. When I see those around me as gifts from my Higher Power, I can start to make that shift and I can see that I am not doing it; God is. I don’t have to fix my defects. I can treat myself and those in my life with compassion and forgiveness, as I would a newcomer. When I accept my warts, I can let God handle their removal, not on my timeframe, but on His. I am not struggling against those negative emotions, but accepting them and being honest about them. But most importantly I have become willing to take that action, prayer, by seeking and accepting God’s will in my life. I have learned that my obsessive thinking is diminished through prayer, but I also need my fellows. So for me my fellows act as a surrogate God when those patterns stick to me. God speaks through each of us in the fellowship.

The speaker also said, “There is no wrong way for doing Step 11, except by not doing it.” I am grateful for my imperfect way of doing this Step, because it does work, when you work it.

~Sue L, Rochester Monday Night OA HOW

Links

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

Find What Works for You

I was really looking forward to step 11 after talking with a fellow on the phone and hearing the peace and serenity in her voice. She was explaining how Step 11 really enriched her program. I wanted that for myself. But when I reached step 11 I wasn't feeling what she did. I kept trying this meditation thing, but something wasn't right. I knew what meditation was. I know many people who meditate daily. Why was it feeling forced for me?

As I gave this up to my Higher Power a few things were revealed to me. Every minute of every day that I am abstinent IS a constant connection with my Higher Power. I could not put the food down without this relationship and if I don't have abstinence, I don't have recovery. Then, while reading the "No Boundaries" entry in "As Bill Sees It" I had another revelation. It says "Aided by such instruction and example as we can find, it is essentially an individual adventure, something which each one of us works out in his own way." What a relief to know that if it's not working for me to meditate 'how I think I'm supposed to', I have permission to find what works for me and evolve from there.

The first thing that came to mind was that when I swim I feel engulfed in my HP's grace. I also feel a deeper connection when I am outdoors and walking. So in the lake, pool or out for a walk, I am meditating.

Figuring this out was a turning point for me. I was really struggling with feeling like I had to meditate how everyone else does. These revelations have taken prayer and meditation to a whole new level and keep me reaching for more recovery.

~Lori A.



...and a little Step Twelve

Challenging

Working the steps and traditions in all my affairs is the most challenging piece of the program for me. My sponsor reminds me daily of times when I'm "off the mark." Gently, but persuasively, she helps me see where a little more kindness, a little more thoughtfulness, a little less selfishness would be appropriate. She comes at it without shaming. She shares her own struggles with whatever the issue may be. We laugh. She points out what it would be like to look at things a little differently, and has me write on that. She challenges me to ask for help whenever and wherever I feel restless, irritable and discontent. No more being in charge, directing the show, for me. I cannot rest peacefully at night knowing that I have reacted rather than reaching for the phone during the day.

Just the other day, a former client called to tell me some news to which I reacted negatively. I automatically went to old patterns of panic, phoning to verify the news, angry to the core as I thought about what I had been told. I wrote to a third party acting on this news, but being very indirect. The next morning, realizing I owed this third party an apology, I was more direct. Sharing this with my sponsor that evening, congratulating myself on recognizing my error, she pointed out that my first error was not picking up the phone. Calling a fellow OA would have prevented all the drama and missteps of this event. Having someone else tell me what I could not see for myself would have helped. Seeing a different point of view from the start would have helped.

As you see, my challenge of the day is to carry this program to all my affairs.

~Powerless in Minnesota

January Society Pages



The January Society Pages will focus on Step 1 "We admitted we were powerless over food, that our lives had become unmanageable" and will be sponsored by the Friday evening St. Paul OA HOW meeting. Although one meeting generally sponsors each newsletter, we welcome articles from anyone. Please indicate if it is OK to print your name with your article and e-mail your contributions to ellen_oa@hotmail.com with the subject "Society Pages" by noon on Sunday, December 23rd.

Wisconsin OA- News

The O.A. HOW meeting in Baldwin, Wisconsin has moved to the much larger town of Menomonie and will be on Thursday nights. We are excited about the change, and feel we'll be able to reach a lot more people. The new meeting place & time started on Nov. 8. Speakers and visitors are always welcome! Come share your message of hope! If you're interested in coming to our meeting, please call Heather at 715-308-3977 for information and directions.



Society Pages Editor Needed

Due to the normal service rotation within OA, Unity Intergroup needs a volunteer to edit the newsletter. The job responsibilities are

- Receive e-mail copy of articles each month
- Edit and format the submissions to fit the Society Pages format
- E-mail the newsletter copy to the Society Pages Print Coordinator & to the Unity Intergroup Webmaster

The job requires about 5 hours a month. The volunteer must have a computer and Internet access. Contact Ellen (952-925-3801 or Ellen_OA@hotmail.com) for more information.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

December 8	Intergroup Meeting
	Outreach/PI Meeting
December 15	Newcomer Meeting
December 23	Articles due for January Society Pages
January 12	Intergroup Meeting
	Outreach/PI Meeting
January 19	Newcomer Meeting
January 23	Articles due for February Society Pages

Intergroup Board

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