

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
Unity Intergroup June 2007

## Carrying the Message

### World Service Business Conference (WSBC)

After being in OA 11 years, the experiences of being Intergroup Chair, Region Representative, and World Service Delegate in the last 5 months is changing my program. It is also changing the core of who I am.

The main points I carry back to you from the WSBC are:

- to spread the **recovery virus** – via email and by introducing myself in meetings as an *abstinent* compulsive overeater
- to talk about our “**12<sup>th</sup> Step Within Handbook**” (which contains ideas/tools to reach out to members, offering support for achieving and maintaining abstinence and member retention – check out *Been Slippin’ and Slidin’* on pg. 19.)

I never really considered member retention before the WSBC. But I learned that meetings are now about half of what they were in the 1990’s. **Who is responsible for making our meetings healthy and welcoming to newcomers or longtimers?** It’s us. You and me. The best things we can do are get and stay abstinent, do our step work, call each other in between meetings genuinely reaching out in fellowship, and DO SERVICE OUTSIDE THE GROUP LEVEL.

My attitude was “this is a selfish program”. Whether it was right or wrong, I could make it all about me and take a very “hands-off” attitude when it came to your program. When I stood up at the microphone at the WSBC voicing my opinion, however, it suddenly came together for me: the reason I have this privilege and the quality of life I have today is because of all those that have come before me (and alongside me.) They have helped one another with abstinence, had the awareness of and done something about member retention, and have served in various positions outside the group

level to provide a recovery program that gives us our lives back. **I am now committed to my relationships with my sponsees and the people at my meetings on a new level.**

The WSBC Board of Trustees has a plan to help focus on carrying out our primary purpose. These focus categories are: abstinent members, strong meetings, committed service bodies, public/professional awareness, and financial health. I was overwhelmed by all the ideas that came out of a few minutes of brainstorming. **We (OA members from all over the world) gathered, held hands and recited, “I put my hand in yours and together we can do what we could never do alone...”** My body was racked with tears of gratitude for our fellowship and its ability to save people from our disease. I found myself heading straight for my hotel room and falling on my knees to thank my H.P.

My first experience at WSBC was dramatic, and **dramatic is the difference between my life before OA and now.** Doing service outside the group level truly is an experience beyond my wildest dreams. **I feel more connected now than ever.** My journey is just beginning...Thank you to Unity Intergroup for the opportunity to serve. Thank you to my HP for a new understanding.

[In service and fellowship,](#)  
[Becky T., Unity Intergroup Chair](#)

**SAVE THE DATE!!**  
**MINNESOTA OA**  
**CONVENTION**  
**NOVEMBER 2, 3, 4, 2007**

**Step Six: “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”**

**Getting Ready**

Step 6 at first glance would seem to be easy...who doesn't want to get rid of all the garbage that's been keeping us from connecting with our HP? But when I really began working step 6 I discovered that it was going to take some prayer and action to really be ready for God to remove all my defects of character.

Although my defects have costs me some of the most important things in my life (i.e., friendships, relationships, financial security, etc.), I did get some "feel good" from these defects. I got the illusion of controlling my life, I bought whatever I wanted (material things will fill that spiritual hole, right?), and when life got hard, I could rent a movie, get some gooey treats (which now I know are like poison for me) and hide in my house. I actually called this "having a date with myself"! The insanity of this disease never ceases to amaze me!!!

To be ENTIRELY ready to have God remove these defects of character, I had to be ready to let go of EVERYTHING associated with those defects. When I took an honest look at how unmanageable my life had become, I was ready to have God remove ALL my defects of character and their results.

This program has helped me live a sane and abstinent life, one day at a time. These days, I clearly understand that I can't control anyone but myself, I buy the things I can afford and when life gets hard I have an entire fellowship to carry me through. I thank God for OA and all the beauty in my life!!!!

~ Christine

***Thanks to the Monday Night Lynnhurst Meeting for sponsoring this month's Society Pages.***

**Help Me Be Willing**

From the Big Book of AA, "Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps. Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last. Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly in place? Have we skimmed on the cement put into the foundation? Have we tried to make mortar without sand? If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at Step Six. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all, everyone? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing."

When I complete a 4th and 5th step, I like to think I'm done. Ahh, relief. But really, steps six is so pivotal to my recovery. Step 6 seems so small until I read the description above from the Big Book. Step 6 suggests being "entirely ready." When am I ever entirely ready for anything? When am I, Ms. Procrastinator, ever entirely ready for even those events I'm supposed to be ready for? It's out of character for me to be entirely ready. Maybe that is one of the first defects of character I could ask God to remove (my inability to be in the present, be ready). And I remember that last line, that if I still cling to something that I cannot let go of, I ask God to help me be willing to let go.

~ Stephanie

**Links**

List of Local Meetings [www overeaters.org](http://www overeaters.org)  
 Region 4 Web Site [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org)  
 World Service Web Site [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)

## RECOVER - Y

I love words. They're like music to me – my emotions live in words. So when confronted with the truth of my being a compulsive overeater, I needed to know the meaning of all the *words*. I quickly researched the definitions of *compulsive, overeater, obsessive, addict*. I needed desperately to find myself in these words before I would really believe that my life had become unmanageable. I thought somehow knowing the words intimately would shine a light on the truth. I knew my life depended on it.

After a great deal of kicking and screaming, I did find myself in those words. I am indeed a compulsive overeater. I am indeed obsessive. Food had definitely become a pain-deadening medication. Although I could see myself so clearly *those* words, I also found myself in the meaning of the word *recovery*. Upon a deep search into the definition of that word, I discovered something very interesting. You see...the root of the word *recovery* is actually a 12th century word that means "to regain consciousness." For me, pain had become so unbearable that I had ceased to exist – I had become unconscious. I was absent from my own life, and I didn't even know it. What OA and my sponsor have given me are not only a safe place to face the source of my pain and obsession, but the chance to "regain consciousness", a chance to be present one day at time...sometimes one minute at a time.

The word *recovery* itself is a noun...a thing, but the word *recover* is a verb...an action. It's an act of the will. And in my case, it will continually be an act of working the steps and giving my will over to a Power much greater than myself. But I will always be searching for the noun...that thing I want for myself. Recovery. And I want to be awake for every part of the journey.

~ Eileen F.



## Unconditional Love – a Search for the Unknown

I could admit I was powerless and that I had an unmanageable life despite all my efforts to be a powerful manager. Then, why was it so difficult to believe in a Higher Power that could love and help me? Was it fear of change and faith in the unknown without my own defenses? Was it my comfort with the known misery of my own defense mechanisms?

I have always had trouble with prayer – asking for anything from anyone was difficult for me, let alone some unknown, a stranger, someone whose will I confused with fate. Depending on something outside myself was so foreign, even though depending on myself was clearly not working.

I began to reflect on some concepts of a Higher Power: Creator, Judge, Friend, All-knowing One, Creative Intelligence, Caretaker, Brother, Infinite Love, Powerful Spirit. And then Parent? If our concept of God is based somewhat on our relationship with our parents, then I have a concept of absence, distance and neglect. Perhaps this insight could help. But could it help me connect with my Higher Power.

I would have to create my own concept that would not be a result of unconditional love, security and stability in childhood. So, I revisited other concepts intellectually. Infinite Love, Spirit of the Universe and Friend came to me as broad, roomy, unconditional, all inclusive, open to all, understanding...never exclusive or forbidding. Have I sought a relationship with God as a friend? I believe in the importance of relationships in community and learning—why not in my spiritual life?

Often I have worked through a process like this in my mind, because of my comfort level with thinking and being alone. But to make it a reality, I have to trust, make a leap of faith, "Be still and know that I am Loved." In the few times that this has happened, I feel blessed and overwhelmed, in a way that I have never felt before. Thanks to all of you for your help in my journey.

~ Sandy B.

## Still Getting Something from Defects

When I look honestly at Step 6, I need to not only recognize my character defects, but also see if I am truly ready to have my higher power relieve me of them.

One of my character defects is procrastination. For example, I procrastinate house cleaning. I love having a clean house, but have a hard time getting the work done. Even though I don't like this aspect of myself, I still get something out of putting these chores off. I get to be lazy and avoid the nagging tasks. I get to have fun doing other activities that I would much rather engage in. When company is about to arrive, I then get a rush from "panic cleaning" and doing everything that needs to be done in a short amount of time. The coping element of dealing with my procrastination has worked for years and it is overwhelming for me to think about how I will need to change. So, if I am honest, am I entirely ready to have God remove this defect?

Gratefully, I had a wise sponsor who reminded me that all I need to do to start Step 6 is be willing. I am willing to not procrastinate and find healthier, more productive ways of dealing with my defects. I am willing to look at my defects honestly and see how negative they have been for me. I can see that procrastination with house cleaning turns me into a crazed, desperate, embarrassed person. I do not like that part of me and don't want to be controlled by my defects.

Willingness has helped me become entirely ready to have my H.P. take away my defects. Working Step 6 again and again helps me uncover other defects and also acknowledge which defects have been miraculously removed with Step 7. Step 6 gets me ready to have my defects removed so I can live the life I want and be the person I truly want to be.

~ Julie G.



## Of Course I Want My Defects Removed – Don't I?

After recently completing my 4th step and then giving my 5th step to my sponsor, I assumed Steps 6 & 7 would be easy. I also didn't expect my 5th step to leave me so emotionally numb and drained for several hours/days. I thought I was entirely ready to have God remove my numerous defects of character. But when I was doing the step, it just didn't seem to really gel or sink in for me. I knew I wasn't quite there yet.

I kept reading the Big Book and the OA 12 x12 and saying my prayers. It finally felt real after several days of repeating it over and over to myself and to my Higher Power. I came to realize I still had trust issues with my Higher Power. I found it hard to believe anyone – even God – would take my garbage and dispose of it for me. I had to do more soul searching, praying, and forgiveness of myself so I could really and truly be entirely ready.

Once I reached that point I was able to give God everything.

~ Cathy D.

## Welcome Home

"Welcome home." I've heard this phrase a lot over the last three weeks since I joined OA. At first I was caught a little off guard. "How can these people welcome me home if I've never been here before?" and "They don't know me. How can they welcome me home?" I wondered. I've since come to the realization that even though they may not have met me before they do indeed "know" me. They know me because they have been down the same road I have been on for so long. It's home because we are all the same on so many levels. Oh, we are sometimes as different as night and day, but we all share compulsive overeating and the struggle to stop.

I'm just beginning my journey but I just want to say thanks to all the wonderful people who have said "Welcome Home" in their words and deeds.

~ Doug M.

UNITY INTERGROUP CALENDAR

June 2007		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	-Outreach/PI Mtg -Intergroup Mtg NEW LOCATION
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Newcomer Mtg
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Deadline for submitting articles to Society Pages
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
July 2007							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Convention Planning Meeting 1-3pm
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	-Outreach/PI Mtg -Intergroup Mtg NEW LOCATION
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Newcomer Mtg

For more information on any of these events, please check [www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)

## Region IV Assembly

The Region IV Assembly 2007 was held in Omaha, NE. Unity Intergroup had fantastic representation with six region reps attending! The weekend was well organized and our time together was efficiently utilized.

We started out with a formal gathering of all the intergroups coming together to share ideas and brainstorm. That was a valuable experience. Details are listed in our report that will be given to the group reps attending Intergroup in June. (Please remember we will be meeting at our new location - Sumner Library in Minneapolis).

The six representatives split up and went to work on the Convention, Ways/Means, and Outreach committees. See the report about these details, as well.

New literature: "Suggested Step-Study Meeting Format" is available online now at [www.oe.org](http://www.oe.org) (item #516) and is structured to guide us through the steps in a six week period.

Unity was invited to consider participating in the Region IV Convention to be held in St. Louis June 27-29 2008 by heading up the Planning Committee. We have agreed as there are three willing members who will work together to fill out the committee. Thanks to those who volunteered!

If you have never held the position of Region Representative before, I encourage you to consider it. It has given me a sense of belonging I have not had by just doing service locally. Thank you for this great experience!

~ Becky T., Unity Intergroup Chair

### New OA Meeting!

OA is now spoken at the Falcon Heights United Church of Christ on Saturday morning at 8AM. The church is located at 1795 Holton

Ave.(corner of Garden and Holton, located between Hamline Ave. and Snelling Ave. just north of Larpenteur Ave.). Join us! If you have questions, contact Janelle N at 763-780-2794.

## OA Softball Games

Fellow OA's,

I attend St Joan of Arc's Wednesday OA meeting. I am trying to organize "come-as-you-are" OA softball games late this summer which would be open to any OA members. The intent is to have an OA activity that will further promote good fellowship and body-acceptance. Many of us have lost touch with the fun of sports due to our food issues. Everyone would be welcome, especially bad players!

I am attempting to get a regular spot at a ball field in Minneapolis. Once I have the location and equipment established, I will post an announcement in the newsletter.

If you are interested in participating, helping to plan, or donating equipment for the group to use, please contact me at 612.824.6886.

~ Kathryn O.

## July Society Pages

The July issue will feature Step Seven: "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings." The Thursday 7:30p Mankato Bell group will be sponsoring the July issue. Articles are welcome from other OA members also. Please indicate if it is OK to include your name with your article and e-mail your contributions to [ellen\\_oe@hotmail.com](mailto:ellen_oe@hotmail.com) with the words "Society Pages" in the subject line. The deadline for submission of articles is 12:00 noon on Friday, June 22, 2007.

## Intergroup Board

Becky T., Chair	952-423-1527
Julie B.H., Vice-Chair	715-381-8470
Amy D., Treasurer	952-270-0098
Janelle N., Secretary	763-780-2794

<a href="mailto:beckytio@frontiernet.net">beckytio@frontiernet.net</a>
<a href="mailto:jbhgold@hotmail.com">jbhgold@hotmail.com</a>
<a href="mailto:amydunker@yahoo.com">amydunker@yahoo.com</a>
<a href="mailto:janelnelson1@mac.com">janelnelson1@mac.com</a>