

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup June 2008

Carrying the Message

News from Unity Intergroup

Administrative News:

Language of Unity. In January 2007, a motion was considered and passed by Unity Intergroup supporting our belief while meeting formats may differ, there is but one Overeaters Anonymous. We have included an excerpt of the explanation and language that first appeared in the February 2007 Society Pages with these Talking Points. Please take a moment to review this commitment with members at your meetings. (see page 4)

Get OA Inspiration on your MP3 player via Podcast! How cool is THAT! Overeaters Anonymous now has podcasts available via download (free!) on iTunes and the www.OA.org website. Simply enter "overeaters anonymous" in the search field in iTunes, and the podcasts will appear. You can also subscribe to get new podcast as they become available! To get the podcasts on the OA.org website, click here: http://www.oa.org/get_podcast.htm. Yup. WAY cool.



Region IV Spring Assembly – You, Too, Can Be a Rep

I love being a Region Representative! Thanks for the service opportunity. There is so much to learn about how this program works outside the meeting level. See Intergroup's May meeting minutes and upcoming Society Pages articles for further Region Rep reports/experiences from the Spring Assembly that was held in Iowa

Unity is volunteering in several ways at the Region IV Convention in St. Louis next month. From the Planning Committee, to speaking, to fund raising. The Intergroups are being asked to consider assembling a basket to be raffled or auctioned off, too. Thanks to all who are working hard on carrying the message at the Region level. This is our region's only income-generating event – show your support with your attendance. It's going to be a blast! More details at www.oaregion4.org.

Did you know that OA's 50th anniversary is coming up in 2010? The OA World Service Convention will be held Aug. 26-29, 2010 in Los Angeles at the Hilton LAX. It would be great to have a flood of members from our local meetings there! Make your plans and read about past WSO conventions at http://www.oa.org/ws_convention.html.

Some WSO web site news includes a young people's page available with downloads (http://www.oa.org/youth_in_oa.html)! A Spanish version of the site is in the works, also. The fall assembly will be held on Oct. 24th-25th, 2008 in Winnipeg! Along with other business we will be electing 3 Region IV officers: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

The Region Rep position is a two year term with the responsibility of attending and reporting on two assemblies a year (spring and fall). A few of the Reps terms will end after the fall conference. Consider this position and the experiences it has to offer! Interested parties should attend our monthly Intergroup meetings in preparation for the next vote. Qualifications for this role include working the 12 steps, regular attendance at a meeting for 1 year, familiarity with the 12 traditions and concepts, 6 months of current abstinence, and served as group rep for 3 months.

Yours in fellowship,

Becky T.
Unity Chair

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

Step 6 makes us grow up. We give up all the excuses for being who we are.

Do you mean I have to give up my righteous self-pity over my very difficult childhood? (Yes.) Do you mean I have to give up my long-standing envy of an older sister? (Yes.) And give up my resentment towards an older handicapped brother who took almost all of the family’s attention? (Yes.) And give up my shame, about not feeling good enough, not belonging, not being lovable, and having no right to live a happy life? (Yes.)

Step 6 is hard work. It requires us to give up the coping strategies and defenses we have used in the past to keep ourselves safe and protected. At one time they made life work for us in some ways, but really not very well. Now they no longer work for us because we are becoming new people from the inside out. In step 6 we give it up, we give it all up. Now that we are in recovery and have a program, we think differently, feel differently, and act differently. Step 6 helps our Higher Power work a miracle within us. We are indeed becoming new people.

We need to remember each one of our defects has a plus side. Being stubborn turns into being determined when our Higher Power gets a hold of it. Anger turns into constructive energy and positive action when our Higher Power takes it over. In step 6, being in control to keep ourselves safe becomes surrendering and trusting our life and our will to a Higher Power who loves us and cares for us better than we can for ourselves. Depression finds hope that we can change, that life can indeed be better, that we are not alone, and that we can come out of isolation with the unconditional support from our fellows. We learn to love and accept ourselves because others first love and accept us.

Step 6 brings us to our knees. We are humbled by this willingness to let our Higher Power have full control and management of our character. Once humbled, we are ready for step 7, to humbly ask our Higher Power to remove these defects of character. Our defects start to disappear and our serenity and strength get stronger. It’s a good deal.

~Anonymous

“Try”

My first reaction to the 6th Step is like that of the 7th, 10th and 11th. I have a sense of guilt that I’m not doing it right and not doing enough. But when our group volunteered to write about the 6th Step for this issue, I started reading about it. I started with the AA 12 x 12 because it was within reach.

I was surprised to see the word “try” in the first paragraph. I’ve heard a phrase something like “to say you’ll try to is to lie to,” so I didn’t expect to see the word in AA literature.

“...any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly on all his faults — *without any reservations whatsoever*—has indeed come a long way spiritually, and is therefore entitled to be called a man who is sincerely trying to grow in the image and likeness of his own Creator.”

Perhaps I was looking for perfection in my being entirely ready for God to remove all my defects of character. After all, the wording (entirely and all) suggests perfection.

The reading says that most of our character defects are natural instincts gone bad and that we are never going to completely get rid of our natural instincts. So we are asked to work toward using them as intended.

“So Step Six . . . is AA’s way of stating the best possible attitude one can take in order to in order to make a beginning on a lifetime job.”

Many of my defects have been lifted entirely. The ones that remain are “core” to me —jealousy, selfishness, procrastination, etc. I see them ebb and flow as I go through my life. When one is rearing its ugly head, it’s a sign to me that I need to get serious about working the Sixth Step again —trying to work to have them removed.

~Anonymous



Trying and Willing - what's the difference?

I'm a "trying" expert. I "try" to make myself be serene. I "try" to make myself be abstinent. I "try" to make myself have a spiritual awakening so I get all the recovery goodies and graduate. I "try" to not have a problem with food. I "try" daily to make my life look like I think it's supposed to in recovery. And you know what? I'm worn out. I'm finally coming to the awareness that "try" is simply three letters meaning "CONTROL". And control is not recovery. Control is self-will. I never feel that quiet presence of God when I'm "trying". Trying involves strain, pushing, force, and at some level I am being violent with myself. Yikes! Violent? Me? Oh, yes. My violence is honed from decades of silently ripping myself to shreds for how I ate, how I looked, how I acted in the past/present/future. And you know what? I'm worn out with this too. Thank God. I've zigged and zagged in my learning process so now I have a clear, clean picture of what I don't want to do anymore. I don't want to "try". And whoo-wee, is that scary. I heard once that a r'ship with God is like being in a rowboat with my Higher Power. I can either have a hand on the tiller, but God won't row, or I can row with God's hand on the tiller. My choice. The scenery isn't that great just sitting there with my hand on the tiller. That leaves "willing", which is somehow related to acceptance and surrender. Lately as I've recommitted to abstinence and using the tools daily, I find myself reliving an experience I had last fall. I was slipping a lot last fall and my sponsor asked me to call people around the country and ask them about surrender. I got an interesting array of responses, but most of them had the same thread - that they had had a spiritual experience that freed them from overeating. Some got it through working the steps, some got it from prayer, and some got it from getting free of the food. And I still didn't understand what they meant. I was straining to surrender. I didn't know that straining to surrender was putting the cart in front of the horse.

Acceptance of myself as a compulsive overeater comes *before* surrender. And I can't "try" to make acceptance happen.

This past week God quietly showed me that I still did not accept the fact that I am bio-chemically different from normal eaters. I always will be. As long as I hang onto the delusion that my eating is a moral issue, I "try" to fix myself and straighten out. This awareness is seeping in slowly and gently. I'm not happy about this awareness. And I'm so weary of the excuse du jour to overeat. Ironically, it's the incredible consistency of the results of overeating that has moved me into acceptance. I ALWAYS end

up overeating. This is a biochemical problem with emotional/spiritual/physical consequences. When I'm abstinent and work the steps and tools, my life smoothes out. Life feels easier. Anxiety subsides as well as thoughts of food. The light and color of my days goes up several notches. Acceptance, like abstinence and serenity, is a gift from my Higher Power. There are things I do to allow the gift to get in, but I don't create the gift. I have had to live my way to this moment. So, if you are "trying", go for it! Wear yourself out! Keep at it until you're sick of it. God and the fellowship of OA are right there with you, as they've been for me.

Gratefully,

D.R.

Links

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

OA Convention 2008

The Committee for the OA Convention is still in need of volunteers. Please Contact the Convention Chair Linda N at 507-282-9331 or lindadnelson@gmail.com for more information. Mark Your Calendar with the dates of November 14, 15 & 16th. Will it be fun and inspiring? You Betcha

Convention Testimonial

I have a very strong emotional attachment to the Minnesota State OA Convention. My first convention was in 2005. I had been in the OA program for roughly 6 months and was at a loss. Two of our meeting members decided to go to the Convention and asked me to come along. I said "Sure, why not? I'll go." I figured I didn't have anything to lose! I had no idea of what a life-changing weekend it would prove to be!

There were many little miracles that happened that weekend, but three events spurred me on to my eventual spiritual experience. The first thing that blew my mind was the speakers. Here was not only experience and strength, but HOPE. I realized later that HOPE, one of the main ingredients of recovery, was missing in my life. Here were people suffering as much as I did—some even exponentially more--and they could recover! Why couldn't I? It was an exhilarating revelation!

Another thing that happened occurred when I went to an OA meeting during the convention. The leader of the meeting announced that they would offer a newcomer's chip to anyone who wanted to make a commitment to working the program. A couple people turned and looked at me. I hadn't quite heard what the leader said, so I whispered "What did she say?" Someone whispered back, "Go up there!" I said, "No, what did she say?" Then the leader noticed me and said "Well, do you want what we have?" Well, THAT was a no-brainer! "YEAH, OF COURSE!" I almost shouted! I got my chip...and made a serious public commitment to working the OA program to the best of my ability. It was the first huge step on my journey.

Another element of the convention that was important to me may sound insignificant. Strangers

talked to me. And they weren't selling anything! They greeted me and asked how I was doing and they sounded genuinely interested in the answer. They called me by name. They held my hand and were strangers no more. I was now part of a much larger community of OA. AND I BELONGED!

If you are hesitating about deciding to attend the convention, hesitate no more. Miracles happened to me at the Minnesota State Convention and I have been abstinent ever since. Go and get your miracle—or go and share the miracle you have received!

The Language of Unity (originally published in Society Pages, February, 2007)

Over the last few months, Unity Intergroup has been discussing "The Language of Unity". We agreed that what we call ourselves and each other can serve to unite or divide us.

One of OA's strongest assets is that there is not just one way or one right way to work the program. What works for one person may not work for another. As a result, there is a need for (and room for) many different meeting formats under the OA umbrella. We are all part of OA, joined by the desires to stop eating compulsively and to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering compulsive overeater. Meeting formats and the ways people work their programs may change. The steps, tools, traditions, and concepts of OA, however, do not change.

Unity Intergroup wants to make sure that it sends the message clearly – **we are all part of Overeaters Anonymous, and none of us is modifying OA.**

July Society Pages

The July Society Pages will focus on Step 7: "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings" and will be sponsored by the St. Louis Park Wednesday 7pm group. 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 Amanda at corter_0506@hotmail.com with the subject "Society Pages" by noon on Friday June 27th.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Saturday, June 14	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, June 21	Newcomer Meeting
Friday-Sunday, June 27-29	Region IV Convention- St. Louis, MO
Saturday, July 12	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, July 19	Newcomer Meeting
Friday – Sunday, September 19 - 21	Frontenac Retreat
Friday-Sunday November 14-16	OA Convention

Intergroup Board

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