

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup October 2008

Carrying the Message

Service Opportunities

Society Pages

We Need You! The Society Pages needs a Group to Sponsor the December 2008 issue and beyond. Volunteer your group to share through short personal stories, and members' experience, strength and hope. Contact Amanda A. at 763-639-7224 or corter_0506@hotmail.com for details. Steps match the months (i.e. January = Step 1, etc.). We truly cannot do this without you!

Volunteer at the Diabetes Expo

The Diabetes Expo will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Saturday October 11th. To sign up please call or email Rebecca at 612-803-6060 or rebecca.parrell@gmail.com.

Newcomers Meeting Chairs

The current chair people for the monthly Newcomers Meeting will be stepping down in November. Please consider becoming a co-chair. They have 5 chairs now- sharing the responsibility - contact Sarah D. 612-227-3854.

Convention Slideshow

It is time to send me your pictures you want in the slide show at the November convention. Pictures of before and after OA are fine, yet it would enhance the show if you include activities you are now doing due to your weight loss or gain. Some folks have given charts of past efforts, progress or lack of progress, pictures' that show the effects of the problem and the results of the solution found by living the OA way of life. Feel free to include your favorite readings, quotes, slogans etc. or other items of interest. I will try to work them in with your pictures. Have your group picture sent in for the show.

These pictures will only be shown at the convention and safeguarded to the best of my ability. If your last name appears I will only show the 1st name and last initial. If you have only pictures I can scan them and send them back if you provide the return address. We heard many great comments about last years show.

To those who sent in pictures last year I need you to contact me to use those pictures again and it would be great to have newer picture for this year. Please send them by e-mail if you can or mail them to:

Jimmie L. Coulthard
201 West Roosevelt
River Falls, WI 54022
Phone # 612-735-7276 cell
Home # 715-426-5587
E-mail tigerbasellc@comcast.net

Links

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

Step Ten: “Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

10th Step Creates Gratitude from Disaster

Using the 10th Step allows me to look back over my day and see clearly where my compulsive overeating thinking and behavior has affected my daily living. This thinking and behavior can range from disaster to you had a great day in recovery by the grace of a Higher Power. Practicing this step gives me a chance to move forward and become the woman God truly wanted me to be. It starts with the self discovery of who I am versus who I want to be. It gives me a chance to have a daily action plan to be the best I can be. Instead of reacting to life compulsively I can have a “design for living that really works.” When I react to life I rarely feel good about my behavior. I realize that just not compulsively eating, even with a meeting or two is not enough, in fact it can be dangerous. It can be fatal. I heard a speaker say, “The woman I was will always eat compulsively.” If I don’t want to be that woman I need to CHANGE. How do I change? I change through the 10th Step. This step is an opportunity to see if I still have any emotional baggage because of resentment, fear, selfishness or dishonesty. The 10th Step is the way I take an honest look at who I was in that day. The 10th step also gives me the opportunity to celebrate what I did right. I’m so glad that I can answer to myself that I have been kind, loving and of service to others. When I want to be better than I was, I can ask myself the nagging question; “What could I have done instead?” I call this my do-over button because by brainstorming with my sponsor and with people in the Fellowship I have a plan to do things differently the next time. It’s amazing that when I change my actions to the positive ---positive things happen in my life. Positive creates more positive and today I can live in the “Sunlight of the Spirit” versus the darkness of addiction. Today I chose the 10th Step because it is the way to becoming happy, joyous and free. It is the way out that people who practice 12 step programs agree on. I have enjoyed over five years of continuous abstinence punctuated now and then with serious attacks of serenity because of Step 10. You can have this serenity too.

~Anonymous

Pray before speaking

Step 10 in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous reads: “With those we dislike we can begin to practice justice and courtesy, perhaps going out of our way to understand and help them.”

Recently at my job several personalities have clashed among members on my immediate team and one individual in our department. I am becoming aware and working the steps more and more on my own reaction and contribution to this conflict. This individual also grates on me and one person on my team also pushes my buttons for his penchant to create friction and factions. My resentments were getting the best of me over this situation, and one morning after reciting my 4th consecutive day of resentments, fears and other recovery killers, toward these co-workers, I said to my sponsor “Gee, maybe I should do a 4th Step on this.” She said, “No maybe, it’s time.”

As I was reading pages 63 to 67 in the Big Book, I stopped cold at: “We realized that the people who wronged us were spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, *like ourselves*, were sick too.” Like them, I am spiritually sick and full of all sorts of defects of character that breed like bacteria when placed in a culture where these personality conflicts are festering. When I listed the actual causes for these resentments, I found that the basic personality defects of these individuals that burned me up, as the Big Book says, were also mine: Know-It-All-ism, Pot-Stir-itis, Self Righteousness, and Fear.

I also learned during this process that I have mistakenly confused peace at all cost with serenity. Peace at all cost is a result of people pleasing and not speaking a truth that needs to be spoken. For example, I found myself asking one of these individuals how to do something, even though I knew how to do it just so I would look good in her eyes. I also have not said anything about how these current factions were impacting my morale and productivity, hoping that they would just get better on their own.

I am learning to say my truth in a courteous and fair-handed way, without blaming but just sticking to my side of the street. I can do that if I remember that even if I don’t like someone, I can be respectful and pray before I speak, and remember: They are me, with the exception they haven’t been lucky enough to be brought to their knees by addiction and found the Twelve Steps.

~Sue L

Convention Corner

COME TO THE CONVENTION & STAND TOGETHER IN RECOVERY

Greetings OA Fellows. The 2008 MN Overeaters Anonymous State Convention is swiftly approaching! Only 5 weeks to go!! **This year's convention is being held at the Holiday Inn Select in Bloomington, near the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport; one mile from the Mall of America on November 14-16.**

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. Under the guidance of our Higher Power, we have taken great care in planning every single detail of this convention with you in mind. The steering committee has 25 members and each one has given their time, energy and enthusiasm to make the 2008 MN OA Convention the best yet. The program includes 2 dynamic keynote speakers. Our male keynote has had his cholesterol drop from 415 to 145. He is active in OA at the World Service Level and has a passion for studying the Traditions. He will bring this passion to our Minnesota Convention in his Traditions Workshop. Our female keynote has maintained her 40 pound weight loss for 17 years. She puts abstinence and seeking her Higher Power as daily goals in her life and she is a dynamic speaker. There are more than 25 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 thinking about attending the convention, here are a few reasons why we believe that you should be there:

1. Come and take out additional insurance to guard your abstinence as we approach the "eating season" of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Eve and Day, etc.
2. Meet OA members from all across the country, plus the opportunity to have a face-to-face meetings with people you know only from the OA telephone and internet meetings.
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. Share your experience, strength, and hope in person and in the Recovery Slideshow that will be running in the hospitality room. To contribute a brief account of your physical, emotional, or spiritual recovery to the slideshow, contact Jim C. at 612-735-7276 or send your video clip or pictures to tigerbasellc@comcast.net.
5. Listen to the stories of people who have food experiences just like yours, including gastric by-pass survivors, 100 pound losers, anorexics and bulimics, body image issues and those who have struggled with relapse. Help us build the Sunlight of the Spirit enthusiasm with your presence and also by putting a sunray on our OA Unity Wall. 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 eaters."* B.B. page 89.** (If you are interested in being a volunteer, please call Julie C. at 612-889-6544 or email her at jc762@comcast.net or Gwen S. at 612-715-2320 or email her at pgstevens@msn.com)
7. Support OA in carrying the message of recovery—all registration funds in excess of convention expenses will be donated to Unity Intergroup.
8. Get a roommate and stay at the hotel. Become immersed in the whole convention experience.
9. If you are struggling, this may be just the boost that you need.
10. Enjoy the entertainment. Sing, dance and be part of the audience for a Recovery Vaudeville Show. Participate in a group sing-a-long of contemporary songs with recovery lyrics.
11. Come for the fun, stay for the recovery!

See you on November 14, 15 and 16 at the Holiday Inn Select in Bloomington as we bask in the **Sunlight of the Spirit... Do not delay! Register today! Registration forms and additional information can be found at www.overeaters.org.**

Yours in Humble Service,
Linda N
2008 MN OA Convention Chair

“IF THIS PERSON CAN DO THIS PROGRAM ... THEN I CAN TOO!”

God Is In Control

My first convention was in November of 2005. I had been in OA for a little more than a year and was about 2 months pregnant at the time. I was experiencing a lot of morning sickness, which made abstinence and eating well difficult to say the least. I was in the hospitality room eating, or should I say trying to eat, my evening snack. I was with another fellow from my home group who was encouraging me to just to the best I could. Two other OAs was sitting across from us and we started chatting about babies, abstinence, and the wide array of inspiring speakers and topics at the convention. Basically I just wanted to take my mind off the creeping feeling of nausea that kept rising in my throat.

For me, my first pregnancy (not abstinent) was just a license to eat and my food addiction loved it. It also loved morning sickness since it meant large binges to make up for all that lost food. With my second child, I was abstinent and the nausea scared me, because another way I dealt with feeling sick was with food. So the conversation about fellowship, babies, and the convention highlights with my OA friend and these two fellows kept my mind off that fear. I believe God had them there to help me.

What I love about the convention is that those connections are made and I have nothing really to do with it. God puts all the players in the right order, all I need to do is suit up, show up, even when I am pregnant, nauseous and scared. Those fellows helped me simply by taking my mind off that sick feeling and giving me enough clarity to finish my snack.

But the true miracle of that simple exchange would not be revealed to me until the following year's convention, when one of the women who sat across from me at that table, approached me and thanked me. She told me that she had been dabbling in OA, without a solid commitment for a long time. When she saw me, pregnant and near puking, she thought if this person can do this program while pregnant, then I can too. I don't really think I inspired her by my strength or resolve, because truly I was frightened much of the time during that pregnancy, but I believe God was there making that chance meeting happen.

For a really amazing addendum to this story, I ran into her at another OA retreat and she informed me she was pregnant! God truly knows what He is doing. **Go to the OA convention, make those connections, and trust your Higher Power to give you what you need. Because He will.**

~A Grateful, Abstinent Compulsive Overeater who loves the Minnesota State OA Convention :)

Help Out at the MN State OA Convention – Service is Slimming!

Volunteers needed! We will need approximately 150 volunteers to run the MN State OA Convention. If you are able to help us out please contact:

Gwen S. at 612-915-1302 or pgstevens@msn.com

Sue B. at 651-707-4836 or rsbona@msn.com

Julie C. at jc762@comcast.net

We need help in these areas: Greeters, Registration, Literature Sales, Timekeepers, Room Managers and Lunch and Dinner Hosts.

Be a part of this wonderful recovery event!!!

VIRTUAL NETWORKING RECEPTION

The MN State OA Convention will be hosting a Virtual Networking Reception on Saturday, November 15, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. in the Braeburn Room. All phone and on-line OA meeting members are invited to the reception so they can meet each other face to face. Other OA members who would like to meet phone and on-line meeting members are welcomed to join in the fun and fellowship!

<p>Help Us Celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the MN State OA Convention Spread the Word – Stand with us in Recovery!</p>

Don't miss the chance to be part of bringing the miracles of recovery alive by attending the 35th Annual MN State OA Convention. Register today! (download a form at www.overeaters.org). Be a part of the OA members who will stand together in and for recovery on November 14th – 16th at the convention. Each member who attends is part of our collective recovery and ongoing support. Come celebrate recovery with us! Please help us spread the news and encourage others to attend by:

- Inviting a newcomer to attend the convention with you
- Inviting your sponsor or sponsee to have lunch or dinner with you (good, abstinent food)
- Calling a member you have not seen at a meeting in awhile and personally inviting them to the convention (good time to come back to the program)
- Posting a flyer in a local business
- Inviting your healthcare provider so they can learn about OA
- Asking people in your OA network to attend and tell them about the **highlights** of the convention:

-**Two keynote speakers:** female from Iowa, male from Florida

-**25 Workshop speakers** on:

- the 12 steps and 12 traditions, Living in the Solution
- 100 lb loser, Gastric Bypass, Anorexia/Bulimia, Surviving Relapse
- Reaching Maintenance, Long Term Abstinence, **Getting Started**
- Men's Issues, Atheist/Agnostic, Sponsorship Panel, Body Image
- Friday Night Social and Sing-a- Long, Afternoon Singers
 - Abstinence Count Down
 - Saturday Night Vaudeville Show
 - Hospitality Room
 - OA Meetings, Literature Sales

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 the original published 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.

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, tool, 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.** Sending this message is especially important in our publications and communications. We may attend meetings with different formats, agreed upon by the individual groups’ conscience. We do not, however, belong to different types of OA, nor do we wish to or need to. The framework of OA is broad enough for us all. Therefore, in our language we do not want to directly or inadvertently give the impression that any of us are modifying OA.

It is with this intent that the following motion was considered and passed at the January 2007 Unity Intergroup meeting:

“There are not different kinds of OA. There are, however, different meeting formats such as HOW meetings, Step meetings, BB Study meetings, Traditions meetings and Literature Discussion meetings. In Unity Intergroup publications and communications, OA will always be referred to as OA. If distinctions are wanted or needed they

should refer to meeting descriptors or meeting formats. Meetings descriptors would be the day, time, location or group name. For example, a meeting could be referred to as the Tuesday morning HOW format meeting, or the Tuesday Minneapolis Meeting.”

This motion was passed in order to provide guidelines for OA’s to differentiate groups within our fellowship, should the need or want arise. The template is very simple – day of week, time of day, location, meeting format. (For example, the Thursday 7:30pm Minnetonka Big Book Study meeting or the Tuesday 9:30am Minneapolis HOW meeting (using the word format is not essential).) This motion’s goal is to provide a framework so that we do not end up implying, by using terms such as Traditional OA, OA-HOW, and the Regular OA in Unity Intergroup publications and communications, that we modify OA. After all, “our...personal recovery depends upon OA unity.” (Tradition One, OA 1 Steps and 12 Traditions.)

November Society Pages

The November Society Pages will focus on Step 11: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out" and also the topic of service. It will be sponsored by the the Unity Intergroup with the help of the Anoka Monday night group assembling the issue. 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](mailto:Amanda@hotmail.com) at corter_0506@hotmail.com with the subject “Society Pages” by noon on Monday, October 13th.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Saturday, October 11	Intergroup Meeting/ Super Saturday
Saturday, October 18	Newcomer Meeting
Saturday, November 8	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, November 15	Newcomer Meeting
Friday-Sunday November 14-16	OA Convention

