

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
Unity Intergroup September 2008

## Carrying the Message

### Service Opportunities

Share your experience

Eden Prairie High School is looking for OA members to speak at their health classes this quarter. We are in need of people willing to share their experience, strength and hope for around 10 minutes during one (or more) of the following classes. The date is September 22nd.

1st hour: 7:55-9:22

2nd hour: 9:30-11:00

3rd hour: 11:10-12:30

LUNCH

4th hour: 1:13-2:40

Please contact Carrie at 612-247-0655 or [cnelson@goeastdesign.com](mailto:cnelson@goeastdesign.com) if you would like to do this service for the youth who may be suffering in silence with an eating disorder.

### 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](mailto:corter_0506@hotmail.com) for details. Steps match the months (i.e. January = Step 1, etc.). We truly cannot do this without you!

### DIABETES EXPO

This is a big one. Sue B. Pat S. and Storm S. are the new Outreach committee for the Diabetes Expo. This is where we can give hope to those people suffering and dying from our disease. This is vitally important and we need your help. To sign up to volunteer for this event please contact Rebecca – Public Information Chair 612-803-6060.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:tigerbasellc@comcast.net)

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**Step Nine: “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others”**

Do's and Don'ts of One Member's 9<sup>th</sup> Step

- Do talk to my sponsor. Don't do this step alone.
- Do remember that the purpose of step 9 is to clear away guilt and ill will. Don't do it for others' forgiveness.
- Do it in person where possible. Don't use snail mail, email or the phone if I can meet them instead.
- Do express my regret. Don't forget to change my behavior.
- Do make appropriate restitution. Don't justify or minimize.
- Do pay my debts. Don't hold out until I am paid in full.
- Do be willing. Don't shrink at anything.
- Do write a letter to those who are dead or I can't find. Don't skip those or make excuses.
- Do share the letter with my sponsor. Don't injure them or others further.
- Do this step. Don't skip it and the promises will come true!

~Anonymous

Except When To Do So Would Injure Them or Others

Once upon a time before OA, a compulsive overeater married a man. She was young, insecure, and very jealous of her new husband's relationship with his mother. The young compulsive overeater wanted all of her husband's attention to herself. Sad, but true!

One dysfunctional day, as she was moving out of an apartment, she came across a painting her mother-in-law had done and given to the new couple. The sight of it triggered resentful feelings and she spewed her hatred to the person who was helping her pack. That person had this great idea – “Why don't you just throw it away and say it got lost in the move?” Without hesitation, the compulsive overeater triumphantly stuffed it into the dumpster never to be thought about again...until sitting in a meeting one night years later on step 9!

Aha! This is something an amend has to be made for! The compulsive overeater went DIRECTLY home, without making ANY contact with her sponsor, and confessed to her husband what she had done. WRONG! This action injured him (and potentially others if his mother found out).

With her tail between her legs, not understanding what had possibly gone wrong, the compulsive overeater called her sponsor. Now what does she do? Now she has to make an amend for the sloppy amend. Now she has to think through the amend to the mother-in-law. Now she is not doing this alone!

With her sponsor's help, the compulsive overeater worked out a way to make an amend to the mother-in-law without adding more hurt. The compulsive overeater admitted there were things she had done to come between her and her son. She expressed her regret and promised to do whatever she could to encourage their relationship from that day forward. The compulsive overeater also vowed to herself that should the day come her mother-in-law actually asks her where the painting is that she not lie. The compulsive overeater would have to tell her the truth that the painting is in the garbage.

The moral of the story is amends can be trickier than meets the eye and could injure others in spite of our best intentions. Work with a sponsor to help you sort out “...except when to do so would injure them or others.”

~Anonymous

The Three Columns

I think there is something to the “Ready to Make Amends To” column, the “Could Make Amends with Some Work” column, and the “No Way in Hell” column. It helps me to look at my 9<sup>th</sup> step in smaller, more manageable chunks. It helps prevent me from getting overwhelmed! I took the willingness I had in the first column and went to it, felt better, and slowly moved my amends from the second and third columns to the first – believe it or not! I thought I would DIE from doing this step! I lived to tell the story. It's not so bad. I am free from guilt and ill will. At least about these amends, anyway. To be continued in my step work...progress not perfection.

~Anonymous



## The Promises

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. I have not done this step yet but because of OA, I feel that I will be able to do it. Already I have been able to make amends for some mistakes soon after they happen. I am not adding to "my pile". After all of these years I won't have to carry the guilt of my bad judgment. I have a new way of dealing with life. I need to be willing and ask for HP to guide and help me so as not to do further harm. The promises are worth all of my efforts.

1. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
  2. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.
  3. We will comprehend the word serenity.
  4. And we will know peace.
  5. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
  6. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
  7. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain insight into our fellows.
  8. Self seeking will slip away.
  9. Our whole attitude and outlook will change.
  10. Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us.
  11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
  12. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.
- These promises make life worthwhile----- OA can do this for each of us!

~Phyllis M. Apple Valley

## The Danger of Unfinished Amends

For a food addict like me who has spent my life avoiding and fearing conflict and confrontation, Step Nine is one step I would rather avoid. In the 10 plus years I have been in the OA Fellowship, I have gone through 4 relapses. Relapse is only inevitable if I don't take the actions, which includes completing amends.

The authors of the Big Book really knew me when they wrote these warning words on page 25: "*There is a solution.* Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation." The first 100 and I actually have something in common! We're not going to like this process. And then they really have me over a barrel when I am reminded that I *agreed*

*at the beginning to go to any lengths for victory over food* (pg. 76) when I reach the point of beginning this Step. My experience in returning to the horror of compulsive eating proves there is good reason for this reminder – I will relapse if I don't finish the amends process.

Making amends is simple but not easy – I admit the exact nature of my wrongs (how had I been selfish, inconsiderate, frightened, and dishonest in my dealings?), express regret for my behavior, ask the person sitting in front of me how I can make right these wrongs, and if there are any other ways in which I harmed them. My "sense of ease and comfort" is not important as I sit and listen to the other person respond. Nor does a mumbled "I'm sorry for hurting you" pay the bill. The Big Book tells me precisely how to approach different types of amends, whether they are business acquaintances and friends, financial, criminal offenses, domestic situations, and even wrongs we can never fully right. In this past year as a result making direct amends, years of hate fell from me when I admitted to my brother that I had not been the kind of sister he might have wanted. My manager sat with tears coursing down her face as I resigned from a position I held for seven short months and admitted my dishonesty in having accepted a job that in my heart I knew was not the right path for me. I was granted the grace to accept the rebuff that came when I requested someone's time to hear my amends. I am responsible for making the approach, but I am not responsible for nor can I control the outcome. Meanwhile, I hold myself ready to make amends if the occasion presents itself.

Today, I have two years of back-to-back abstinence, freedom from the bondage of compulsive eating, and the gift of a healthy body after having released more than 110 pounds. I am sponsoring two wonderful women – and it is by no accident that each of them is currently working their Step 9 (as well as the daily 10, 11, and 12)! I got the message this time – no more unfinished amends. My very life depends on it.

~Anonymous

## 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)

## Convention Corner

### Two National Speakers Share Experience, Strength and Hope

The Minnesota State OA Convention will feature 2 National Keynote speakers on November 14 & 15 at 7:00pm.

**Speaker # 1** is a male from Cape Canaveral, Florida. His cholesterol has dropped from 415 to 145. He has dropped 30 pounds and no longer feels over-full from eating too much of the wrong foods.

**He says:** “Strong sponsorship and deep sponsor involvement in the structure of my food plan are as necessary to my recovery as food is to my life. I eat clean, guilt free food. It is the source of my freedom.”

“To me food is fuel it is not an event. I fuel my body with the right amount of correct fuel. I would not put diesel fuel in my car’s gas tank. It would not run correctly, if at all. Similarly I cannot put sugar or flour into my body. It will not run correctly.”

“Real (12 Step) recovery cannot take place while a person is still compulsively eating.”

“I do what I can to strengthen OA and my own way of life.”

**Speaker #2** – Our female keynote speaker is from Ottumwa, Iowa and has been abstinent since 1992.

**She says:** “By God’s grace, I have maintained a 40 pound weight loss for 17 years. I was on a direct path for severe obesity, but God stopped me in my bingeing tracks and sent me to OA. My food plan is 3 meals a day with 2 planned snacks, one day at a time. I am caffeine free and my whole goal in life is to abstain from compulsive eating with God’s help.”

“I was pulled from the nightmare of bingeing and loathing myself by the 12 steps. I now have peace and serenity and self-worth by finding and seeking my Higher Power. I give all that I can to this program because I was given the precious gifts of recovery and abstinence. By giving it away, I am allowed to keep it. Am I blessed or what?”

**Come hear the full stories of our two keynotes and many other workshop speakers who will be speaking about:**

The Steps & Traditions  
100 Pound Losers  
Anorexia/Bulimia  
Surviving Relapse

## Convention Corner

2008 Minnesota State OA Convention  
November 14-16, 2008

Holiday Inn Select, Bloomington, MN  
Greetings OA fellows! The Minnesota State OA Convention is only a few short months away. YOU are cordially invited to register and join us for a weekend of recovery events, fun and fellowship.

Registration forms are available at meetings from Intergroup reps or boosters or they can be downloaded from: [www overeaters.org](http://www overeaters.org)

We would love to see you there!

Come learn about recovery... start your recovery... or enhance your current recovery.

**BE PART OF THE BIG PICTURE:** We will be presenting a slideshow at the convention depicting different levels of recovery. If you would like to be part of this dynamic production, please send pictures depicting your physical, emotional or spiritual recovery to Jim C. at 612-735-7276 or at [tigerbasellc@comcast.net](mailto:tigerbasellc@comcast.net).



## Convention Corner

### Members share what convention means to them.....

**From MN:** "The Convention was exciting and really boosted my recovery. Being surrounded by 400 people that understand me and live in recovery was life changing. So many great ideas were shared. I made new friends. Sharing the gift of recovery was a great experience. The speakers were terrific!"

**From MO:** "A convention is a great way to see the 12 Steps in action. And you can take it with you when you go. I have bought the tapes and listened to them 4 or 5 times. They help remind me of the program, whenever I need a boost."

**From NE:** "The past two conventions I have attended have provided me with unique opportunities to meet and form friendships with people from all over the Region. I always get to hear great speakers, and the opportunities for fellowship abound."

**From MN:** "Each convention gives my program a great boost. It is really awesome to meet people from all over who are recovering from this disease, just as I am, one day at a time."

### 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**

**[pgstevens@msn.com](mailto:pgstevens@msn.com)**

**or Julie C. at [jc762@comcast.net](mailto:jc762@comcast.net)**

**We need help in these areas:**

**Greeters**

**Registration Desk**

**Literature Sales**

**Timekeepers**

**Room Managers**

**Lunch & Dinner Hosts**

**Hospitality Room**

**Entertainment**

## Convention Corner

### Highlights of the 2008 M Program...Previews of Coming Recovery Attractions.....

#### Friday, November 14, 2008

7:35pm – Keynote Speaker Her Story

8:10pm – Keynote Speaker His Story

8:45pm – Social/ Sing-a-Long

#### Saturday, November 15, 2008

8:45am – Sponsorship Panel

9:20am–4:30pm Steps 1-11

10:30am - OA Meeting

10:30am–4:30pm–Traditions 1-12

10:30 am – Gastric Bypass

11:00am – 100 lb Loser

11:30am – Anorexia/Bulimia

12:00 noon - Surviving Relapse

1:45pm – OA Entertainment

2:00 pm – Reaching Maintenance

2:00 pm – OA Meeting (HOW format)

2:30pm – Long Term Abstinence

3:00pm – Men's Issues

3:30pm – Atheist/Agnostic

3:50pm – OA Entertainment

4:00pm – Living in the Solution

4:00pm – Getting Started/newcomers

#### Saturday Evening, November 15,

7:15pm – Keynote speaker

8:15pm – Abstinence Count Down

8:45pm – Entertainment

#### Sunday, November 16, 2008

9:15am – Step 12

10:00am – Re-Entry Speaker

10:45am Keynote speaker

**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.)

### October Society Pages

The October Society Pages will focus on Step 10: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it" and will be sponsored by the Rochester Monday night group with the help of the Crystal Wednesday afternoon 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) at [corter\\_0506@hotmail.com](mailto:corter_0506@hotmail.com) with the subject "Society Pages" by noon on Monday, September 22nd.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Saturday, September 13	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, September 20	Newcomer Meeting
Friday – Sunday, September 19 - 21	Frontenac Retreat
Saturday, October 4	Sponsorship Workshop
Saturday, October 11	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, October 18	Newcomer Meeting
Saturday, November 8	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, November 15	Newcomer Meeting
Friday-Sunday November 14-16	OA Convention



### Intergroup Board

Becky T., Chair	952-423-1527
Jane S., Vice-Chair	612-483-6335
Amy D., Treasurer	952-270-0098
Janelle N., Secretary	763-780-2794

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