

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup May 2009

www.overeaters.org

Carrying the Message

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Springboard Into Recovery

Talk about a springboard into recovery! This step is liberating! After working the first four steps, I was ready and willing to do this. Of course it took me too long to write my Fourth Step, and I spent time researching just who I wanted to hear my Fifth Step. But the point is, I did not skip this step. There is no wrong way to do this step, except to not do it. And our literature tells me clearly that if I don't, I will die, because "unless I tell someone else all of my life story, I won't learn enough humility, fearlessness, and honesty in the sense necessary" to not relapse.

In the end, I picked my sponsor to hear my step, because I knew that she would be a loving, listening, confidential witness, and she was. It was important that I told her everything, withheld nothing, and then continued to see her week after week. It

told me I was not rotten, and I was not rejected. So what else happened afterward? Since it was the first time I was finally completely honest with someone, it felt like I could stop living a double life. Without the barrier of shame, I could live fully again. My attitude changed. It was a spiritual experience. I continued to release physical weight too, because there were things that finally came out that it wasn't necessary to eat to push them down any more.

If we don't feel this way after a Fifth Step, we may need to work it again. There may have been something we left out. It's where we face the scars of this disease and truly heal.

~Barb B.



Terrifying Thoughts

When I came into OA, one of the most terrifying thoughts I had was that I would have to reveal my deepest, darkest mistakes and secrets to another person.

After working a thorough Step Four, I eventually became willing to turn it all over to God and trust another person. Instead of the anticipated feelings of humiliation and embarrassment, I felt love, acceptance, and understanding when I revealed those mistakes and secrets I had been keeping inside for so long. I no longer had to carry that burden in my heart, mind, or soul. There was another person who knew "everything" about me.



I was able to leave that meeting feeling peaceful and amazed that this step was so freeing. I thank God and my sponsor for making this such a positive, growing experience.

~Anonymous

Secrets

When I first joined OA I thought of ways to get away with not telling certain secrets. I planned on doing Step Five and keeping some to myself. Secrets like I thought parts of my body were disgusting and unlovable—that I could never show my body to anyone, that I lacked any sexual experience and thought that I wouldn't do anything right. I truly believed I wasn't likeable. I'd plan and scheme about how to get through life keeping these things to myself. They lived large in my head, caused me great damage, pain, and ruled my thoughts. I was crazy over these secrets, and others.

Then, for some reason I cannot explain, I just said them during my Step Five. I got to my part, and the miracle happened. I felt part of the world. I felt proud, valid to be in the world, and free. It wasn't necessary to keep these secrets from everyone. I could tell them to others as I chose or needed to. Now I tell my secrets, because I don't want them to rule me.

What I thought was necessary in life—to keep secrets—was completely false. Step Five and anonymity are parts of OA that have saved my life.

~Anonymous

Trust the Steps

When I first came into the program and read about this step, I was horrified! My goodness, I didn't want ANYONE to know the things I did. I knew that my Higher Power 'saw all things, knew all things' and He accepted me for who I was. But what about the person that would be listening to my Fifth Step?! I was really afraid of what they might think of me. Would I be judged? Would that person shame me? Would they look at me with disdain? I had no idea what to expect.

All I knew is that I needed to trust the people in program who said it was one of the most freeing steps. They said that when I share about the wrongs that I am responsible for and why I did them, I would feel more relief than I could imagine.

Also, I knew that if I didn't clear away the wreckage of the past I was sure to compulsively overeat again. I stepped out on faith and trusted the process.


The sponsor that heard my first Fifth Step was very kind and non-judgmental. All of the other Fifth Steps I have completed have been the same experience. There was only compassion and empathy. In fact, they shared that they had done some of the same things. I had never experienced that level of honesty with myself or with others. I am so incredibly grateful for the love and care of the people in this fellowship. I am not alone anymore!

~Anonymous

Two-Part Dilemma

This step has a two-part dilemma for me. First, it is hard for me to admit my faults. In my family it was easier to keep bad things hidden. The repercussion for honesty was worse than the deed. Often I was told if I told the truth I would not be punished. The reality was punishment was worse because it was loaded with guilt and shame. It has taken a lot of healing and some very understanding friends to bring me to the point where I can see the value of being honest no matter what the outcome.

My God is a very loving and forgiving God and I have come to realize He knows my faults anyway. Over the years He has shown me how He can use those faults and turn them into virtues if I surrender them to Him. The more experience I have with that, the easier it becomes.



Literature Committee is looking for volunteers to assist with assembling of new meeting packets. Please contact Jane S janiebanes@yahoo.com or 612-483-6335.



The second part of the dilemma is seeing the nature of my wrongs. When my mind is clogged with food thoughts or self absorption, I can not see any of my wrongs. I can definitely see everyone else's faults, but not my own. So I find my abstinence is vitally important in being able to see the truth. Often if a food thought arises, it is a red flag to look deeper and see what is really going on. It never fails that some anger, bitterness, fear or resentment is at the root. If I worry too much about myself or my needs, I also cannot see the wrongs in my own life. Service always pulls me out of myself.

For today, I am grateful to have a program that continually helps me live a peaceful, useful, and serene life.

~Anonymous

Mark Your Calendars!

2009 OA MN State Convention

The 2009 OA Minnesota State Convention is coming! Join fellow OAs from all across the United States at this special event occurring in November and read on to learn what makes the convention so special for some fellow members:

Nancy from Illinois writes, *"I am always psyched [to attend the Minnesota convention] cuz I know infectious enthusiasm awaits me! My soul and spirit always get nourished by great speakers...workshops...and fellowship! And I love all the hugs from people I have only 'met' over the telephone and reconnecting with OA'ers from the past, present and future! The MN State convention rocks!"*

**Save These Dates:
November 6, 7, & 8**

Taking Accountability

Step Five is the opportunity to stop living life as a victim and stand true to our humanness. Until we begin to take more accountability for who we are and what we have done, we will not fully recover. Since 1980, I've given away three Step Fives. My first witness was a priest, the second a Fifth Step servant and the third, my sponsor. Each time has granted me the occasion to face my life, which then created a fertile springboard from which to work on repairing the damage I had caused. Making the best use of my preparation (Step Four) enabled me to reach into a deeper truth of who I am and my commitment to recovery. Each session was different and its significance was strengthened from the one before.

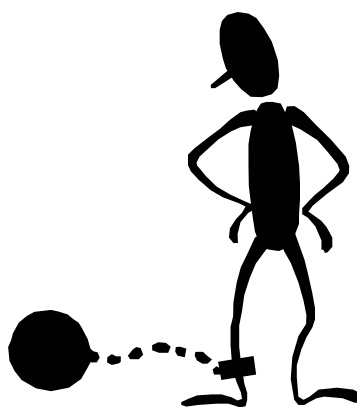
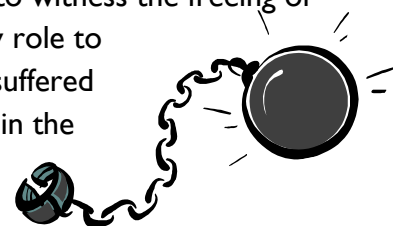
In our disease of compulsive overeating or restricting, we are tempted to wail over misdeeds done onto us. But the program of recovery is about facing ourselves, calling out our disgruntlements and walking into the light of day with our heads high and our hearts humbled. It can be easy to slip into whining and whimpering about having to take a Step Four inventory. It can also be easy to act cute about how hard it is going to be. Both are a form of fantasizing – inaction. Neither propels us into working the steps.

If you want to recover, schedule that Fifth Step with a trusted servant and get writing. Join the ranks of those who can and indeed do recover. As it states in the Big Book, “We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny” From this experience, “We can look the world in the eye” (p. 75).

As an honored Fifth Step servant, I am neither shocked nor dismayed at the sharing of others. I am only to witness the freeing of bondage. It is not my role to judge, as I too have suffered and caused suffering in the midst of my disease.

While this step requires gritty determination, our recovery is dependent on facing our truth of resentments, fears, and sexual misconduct. Whether this is the first or tenth Step Five, this honest recounting of our lives frees our soul and allows us to be of better service to ourselves and our fellows.

~Anonymous

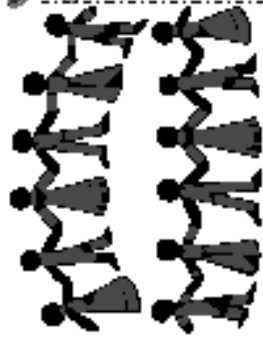


World Broadcasting

We will now be broadcasting our monthly Intergroup meeting to the world. Go to www overeaters.org to get the list of the current dialing contact, procedures, and participant key templates. Please contact the Telephone Conferencing Coordinator through our website 'Contact Us' page for the call-in number and pass code.

4th Annual

Upper Peninsula Anonymous Spring Retreat



THERE IS NO THEM—THERE IS ONLY US
Page Center, Little Lake, MI
May 15-17, 2009

Discount Registration Deadline: March 31, 2009

On-Site Registration starts at 3pm, Friday, May 15
Retreat begins at 7pm Friday and concludes at Noon Sunday

Fill Out & Mail Registration Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Email: _____
 Home Meeting: _____

Fee Schedule:

Early registration on or before 3/31/09	\$40
Saturday only registered before 3/31/09	\$35
All Registrations after 3/31/09	\$50
Kelsey Cottage Room for 2 nights	\$60
Rustic Cabin lodging for 2 nights	\$20

(please circle)

Assign me a roommate
 I am an Early Riser _____ I am a Night Owl _____

I would like to share a room with _____

Please consider ordering the meal package as this helps to accommodate the whole group. (4 meals - Saturday; Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner and Sunday breakfast)
 Meal Package \$25 _____

I am contributing an extra amount toward the Scholarship Fund. Thank You \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please contact me with volunteer opportunities at the retreat
Regrettably there are NO REFUNDS, though replacements are accepted

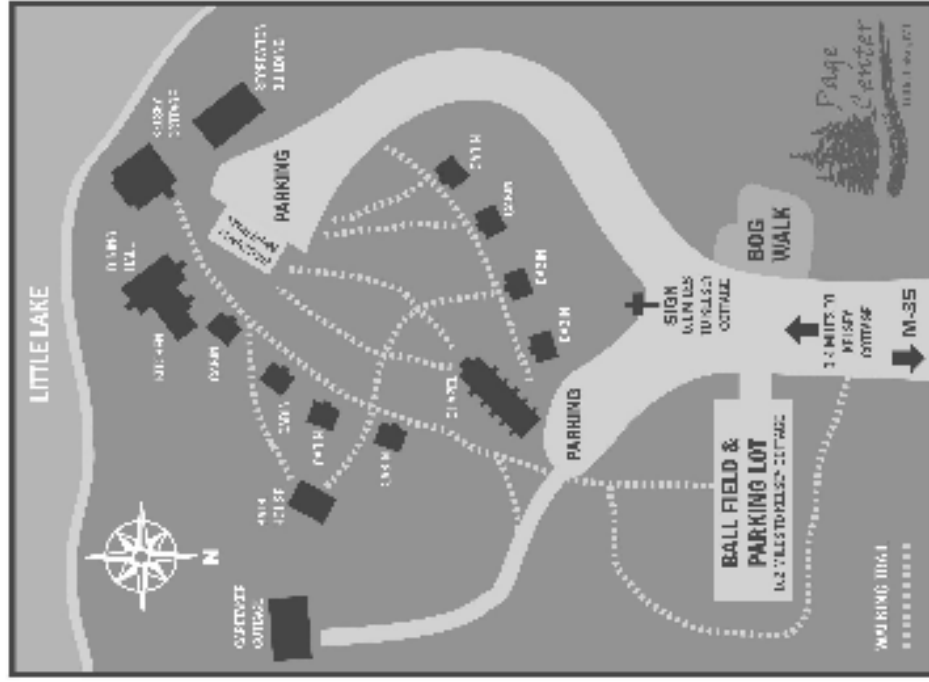
Make checks payable to: Overeaters Anonymous Retreat
 Mail to: Sandra K., P.O. Box 624, Gwinn, MI 49841

Partial scholarships are available -
 Contact Sandy W. at cwachter@charter.net or 906-249-1379

For volunteer opportunities—
 Contact Angie M. at angles1407@yahoo.com or 906-869-1452

Retreat Highlights	Page Center	Things to Bring to the Retreat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Traditions of OA • Mindful Meditation • OA-HOW Meeting • Silent Auction • Clothing Exchange • Bonfires • Outdoor Water & Land Activities • Handicap Accessible 	<p>http://www.pagecenter.org</p> <p>A totally renovated lakeside cottage with cabins located on Little Lake outside of Gwinn, MI, with lakeside deck and dock, nature trails, and many spaces for quiet reflection throughout the Page Campus.</p> <p>Onsite Accommodations—limited: Dorm style in Kelsey Cottage on the lake and rustic cabins w/ electricity</p> <p>Contact Martha K. for more info. about lodging at Page Center or other options @ 906-360-8718 or dmkoers@charter.net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Book • All Season/Weather Clothes • Camp Chair For Sitting By The Bonfire • Your Favorite Outdoor Activity Equipment for Land or Water • Your Gently Used Clothing for Exchange or Sale • Your Experience, Strength & Hope

The Page Center is located on M-35 in/on Little Lake; 3 miles East of the M-35/553 intersection. There is a sign on M-35 indicating the turn into the Page road; this road is ½ mile into the main campus. Parking is available in the main lot as well as in the Chapel lot. The telephone number is 346-3165.



Welcome to the Page Center
Little Lake, MI

www.pagecenter.org

OA TO HAVE BOOTH AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The National Eating Disorders Association will hold their National Conference at the downtown Minneapolis Hilton September 10-12. Intergroup will sponsor an information booth which will be open throughout the conference. We will need many volunteers to help man the booth in two hour shifts. We will be passing sign-up sheets around at the Intergroup meetings. For anyone willing to volunteer that cannot be present at an Intergroup meeting, please contact Dianne M. at diannemahoney@tds.net or call her at 320-485-2544 (toll-free). Special interest was expressed in having members to man the booth who are representatives of the broad spectrum of manifestation of illness which our disease represents.

Intergroup has also submitted a proposal to have a panel presentation for one of the Conference sessions. If our proposal is accepted, again, we would like to have panel members representing the broad spectrum of manifestation. If you are interested in being on this panel and comfortable speaking before large audiences, please contact Dianne M. for more information.

SUPER SATURDAYS Unity Intergroup is planning to have Super Saturday on a regular basis. Mark your calendar for June 13 for the first Super Saturday. The June Super Saturday will focus on Service, outreaching to encourage members to participate in Service at Unity Intergroup level. We will be having host locations for future Super Saturdays.

Are you looking for an early fall retreat? Think about attending the Frontenac Retreat in September 2009. It is a beautiful weekend in the River Valley area of Frontenac, MN. An intimate retreat of recovery.



Looking For Speakers

The following meetings are looking for speakers. What a great way to do service and strengthen your own recovery!

Owatonna, Mon 7 PM. Please contact Michelle M mundt68@yahoo.com

Faribault, Tues 5:30 PM. Please contact Roxie B brennanroxie@hotmail.com

Bloomington, Tues 6 PM. Please contact Julie C at danejulie@hotmail.com or call 612-558-3687 if interested.

June Society Pages

The June Society Pages will focus on Step Six: “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.” and needs a group to sponsor. Although one meeting generally sponsors each newsletter, we welcome articles from anyone. Please indicate if it is okay to print your name with your article and email your contributions to Julie C. at juliecoaig@earthlink.net by Saturday, May 16.

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, May 9	Intergroup Meeting
Friday, May 15	Web updates deadline
Saturday, May 16	Newcomer Meeting
Friday, June 4	Web updates deadline
Saturday, June 13	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, June 20	Newcomer Meeting

More information available at www.overeaters.org



Link Into Recovery at the Unity Intergroup Website

www.overeaters.org

What you'll find on our Website:

- Calendar of recovery events and happenings in the OA community
- Flyers for retreats, conventions, workshops, and Newcomers meeting
- Local meeting list
- Society Pages newsletters
- Unity Intergroup meeting minutes and financial reports

The creation of a new “Our Stories” section is underway. OA members are invited to submit their personal stories of recovery. This is a great opportunity to share your experience, strength and hope with newcomers and the fellowship. If you'd like to share your story online, email flycurvewhirl@yahoo.com.

Intergroup Board

Catherine W., Chair	612-205-0930	oaforme@gmail.com
Amy D., Vice-Chair	952-270-0098	unityig@yahoo.com
Rebecca P., Treasurer	612-803-6060	rebecca.parrell@gmail.com
Sheri O., Secretary	651-437-2052	olese1@yahoo.com