

# *Expressions of Unity*

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

[www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)

## **STEP SEVEN: “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings”**

### **Turning My Defects Over to God Every Day**

#### **HOT LINE**

**Call our  
24/7 hotline at  
612-377-1600  
and one of our  
volunteers will  
return your call.**

#### **Editor's Note**

**Thank you to  
everyone who  
submitted an  
article for this  
month's  
newsletter. It is  
greatly  
appreciated!**

***I am so done with my character defects!*** Why is it that after close to 15 years of disciplined and structured recovery following the HOW concept that God has failed to render me perfect?!? HA! Of course, that very question lacks the most important word in Step Seven: *Humbly*. Humility. Demanding that I be made perfect on my terms and on my timeline is guaranteed to have the opposite effect. That's not how I've been able to maintain my abstinence for more than a dozen years.

Abstinence comes from humbly following the program to the best of my ability one day at a time. Likewise, in order to have my defects removed, I must be committed to looking honestly at them every day in my daily inventory, accepting with humility the fact that I continue to be an imperfect human being and that God loves and accepts me even in spite of those defects. I need to commit daily to turn over my defects to God every day and trust that if I am committed to humbly working on my defects, they will go in God's time, not mine. And I must remember how far I have come, how many of my glaring character defects have been removed, how many other are vastly improved, how my relationships and view of myself have been transformed. If I can keep these facts in mind and live in a state of gratitude for them, it helps me be more accepting of myself when I fail, and more willing to humbly turn to God and ask for help in letting them go.

Rebekah M

## Okay...take my defects...and help me.

The first time I went through the 12 Steps, I moved past Steps 6 and 7 fairly quickly. They seemed so obvious and easy to me. Of course I was willing to have my Higher Power remove my shortcomings! Who wouldn't be willing to have that done? After that, all I had to do was ask my Higher Power to take them away...and then I would be perfect!

Being perfect, without defects...that seems like what I had been trying to do my whole life. I could be right all the time, finally truly being the smartest person in any room. Wait a minute, this sounds like a trap. Let me look at those steps in the Big Book one more time.

In Step 7 I am asking that God remove all of my shortcomings, my defects, all of those wonderful habits that I came to rely on during times of emotional distress!

I used to be frustrated with anyone who wouldn't listen to me, because, of course, I had the right solution. When others disagreed with me, I resented them for it. I would spend hours, often when I should have been sleeping, justifying my anger and fantasizing about the fate that would befall them for not listening to me.

In order to keep the truth at bay, I would eat. Eating is a strange way to deal with those rebellious feelings, but it put me in a kind of daze. When I was eating I couldn't be thinking of my role in the altercation. I had to concentrate on the food I was eating. It takes a lot of eating to push some anger and resentment into the background.

Well, the second time around with the steps, I spent more time with this request. If those defects are gone, I need a new way to deal with my resentment. Perhaps I could call someone and talk to them about it. Surprisingly, that works for me. Also, I practiced writing about the issue and looking at it from other angles. Seeing my culpability in the problem helped me. I also began to pray about my difficulties and I sincerely asked for help. I had to practice all of this many times.

By the time I got around to Step 7 the third time, I approached it very carefully. I was a regular at meetings, I kept reading about other people's responses to their issues, and I kept writing about all of this and calling fellows for help. Yes, I thought, I am kind of ready to have my Higher Power take my defects, if my Higher Power will help me to handle all of these emotions. Okay. Yes, I'm pretty sure...Okay...take my defects...and help me.

Kevin Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

## Why Tradition Seven Matters

Tradition Seven says:

**“Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, defining outside contributions.”**

I totally agree with this concept. The OA 12 & 12 says that Tradition Seven follows naturally from Traditions Five and Six which state that we fulfill our primary purpose and to do that we need to remain free of outside influences. I see that if we are to remain free of outside influences we need to be fully self-supporting. If we were to accept outside donations, then whoever we received that donation from might just want to influence us in some way and that is not what OA is about. Many times churches offer a room for our meetings rent-free. If we accepted that offer, then, just maybe, that organization would try to influence us in some way, so we do not accept those offers. In OA we do not promote any outside organizations, so we can concentrate on carrying the message to those who still suffer without promoting any organizations.

We, of course, do have expenses that need to be covered and we cover those expenses by passing the basket at every meeting and asking for our group members to donate towards those expenses. Of course, Tradition Seven is not all about financial support. In order for our meetings to work and survive there is much service that is necessary and is donated. It takes a lot of people to keep a meeting going and for me being of service to my group is paramount in my ongoing recovery.

I have been a member of OA now for 15 plus years and our group has always been able to meet our expenses and our service needs from our members.

If everyone “does what they can, when they can” we will be successful in carrying the message of recovery to those who still suffer.

Marian N. Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

## The Value of the Step 7 Prayer

Humbly asked God to remove my shortcomings works well when I practice it in the morning. When I get in the shower, as I’m washing up, I say the 7th Step prayer and I have a little conversation with God. I thank my Higher Power for all I have received and all that I’ve been shown. I don’t do this perfectly or 100 percent of the time, but I know my day goes so much better when I do. Honestly, sometimes it’s in the form of begging, “Please, please, please God; let me release anything that gets in the way of my usefulness to my fellows, in your name. Please remove the stumbling blocks, boulders, and any such obstacles that might throw me off course.”

I’m grateful for the level of recovery I have made it to and I want to continue on this path of “sane and happy usefulness.” One glaring shortcoming is compulsive overeating and then there’s the more subtle, micro-shortcomings that when not addressed can snowball into the compulsion or further harm to myself and/or others. I want to remain teachable and I know that I may miss the lesson when I’m not paying attention. Step 7 helps me pay better attention to the day-to-day lessons and joys. It reminds me that they’re out there and it grounds me to the present moment.

May I always remain teachable.

Stephanie T. Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

## Men and OA

I am not sure why we don't have more men in Overeaters Anonymous. There's plenty of obesity, over-exercising and overeating among men so there should be more of us men in the rooms. Maybe there is a machismo thing. We men think we have an answer to everything so we find it harder to acknowledge our inability to control our own eating. That was a big reason why I resisted attending OA meetings for so many years. And I also didn't know that there was a solution through OA.

It also has to be a bit daunting when a guy shows up at an OA meeting in which all, or virtually all, of those in attendance are women. I am grateful that there are four or five men who regularly attend the OA HOW meeting in Burnsville on Thursday nights.

When a man shows up at a meeting, I would encourage our women OA members to assure them that there are men across the Twin Cities who are active in OA. I would encourage OA women members to pass along the phone numbers of OA men they know. It may help them to stick around and begin to assimilate.

Randy F. Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

## Spreading the Word About OA Meetings

One of our meetings made a flier announcing a new meeting starting and made business cards to hand out at other meetings and Unity Intergroup functions.

We printed posters with the OA Quiz URL on tear-offs, filled in information about our local meetings and hung them at area libraries, community centers, grocery stores, etc.

We also purchased a good supply of OA pamphlets and some plastic racks, and put them in four of the local libraries with a little sticker on the front of the rack saying that it was donated by that group and the date/time/location of the meeting.

Our meetings are held in churches that are kind enough to put it in their weekly bulletin and on their church calendar website, so that people attending their church know that our open OA meeting is there for them to check out.

We also put notices in the free local Shopper and sent information to the SW Metro newspaper who put a free notice in their community events calendar. The information includes the website URL along with a contact name and phone number.

We would love to hear ideas from other groups about what they are doing to spread the work out there. We do not want OA to be the best kept secret!

Kendra

## Ready and Willing to Help

Some days when I look at myself honestly, I am overwhelmed with the magnitude of my shortcomings. And, Step Seven implies by its wording the removal of all my shortcomings! The reality is that I only have to work on one at a time. The hardest thing for me to remember in all of this is that this Step is about me asking God for help. I do not have to do this on my own. I must remember not to expect too much of myself, but to ask for and accept the help that God gives me in regards to making improvements in my behavior and attitude. I am grateful that He is there, ready and willing to help me toward better living.

Diane Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

## When Precious Assets Are Actually Liabilities

I identify closely with this quote from "Drop The Rock" by Bill P., "In contemplating surrender we come face to face with our self image in an honest fashion for the first time...We've spent a lifetime building an image of who we are and how we operate, a fantasy story, then we're asked to put it aside when it's in conflict with the new principles we've decided to follow in the program. No wonder we have fear and misgivings...Steps 6-7 don't say who we'll become but who we DON'T want to be." Before joining HOW I was quite proud of my self-will and perfectionism. I saw these as some of my greatest strengths, not as defects. I was confounded by my inability to control my weight the way I controlled everything else in my life through self-will. I spent the last 30 years or so struggling to understand this riddle. I was convinced that if I could just get to the bottom of why I was unable to stop eating compulsively, then I could adjust my approach and conquer this challenge on my own through refocused force of will. I clung to this conviction and desperately sought insight through self help books, many failed diets, personal trainers, therapists and treatment programs. It wasn't until I went through Steps 4-5 that I began to look at these "strengths of character" as part of the problem, not part of the solution. Once reclassified, I realized these precious assets were actually liabilities--obstacles standing between me and my path to recovery. Step 7 helped me realize they had a grip on me as much as I clung to them. This Step gave me permission to let go of them.

Mike B. Thursday night Burnsville OA HOW

The August 2019  
**Expressions of Unity**

will focus on

Step Eight: "Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all."

Although one meeting or group generally sponsors each newsletter, articles from anyone are welcome. Please indicate if it is okay to print your name with your article.

Send all articles to  
[ExpressionsofUnity2018@gmail.com](mailto:ExpressionsofUnity2018@gmail.com).



**Be Part of Unity Intergroup in**

**Action!** The next meeting is

July 13 from 12:30-2:30 at the Sumner Library, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55411.

All OA members are welcome to join us in person or on the phone

(515) 604-9700

Access code: 896976#

**Intergroup Board**

Chair - Cathy G.	612-867-9804	<a href="mailto:cathyunityig@gmail.com">cathyunityig@gmail.com</a>
Vice Chair - Betty C.	763-535-3939	<a href="mailto:books1216@gmail.com">books1216@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer - Sheila L.	612-845-3604	<a href="mailto:sheilaklawson@yahoo.com">sheilaklawson@yahoo.com</a>
Secretary - Lonna R.	763-438-0596	<a href="mailto:lonna.rubesch@comcast.net">lonna.rubesch@comcast.net</a>

**New Storage Unit**

Unity Intergroup has a new storage unit. Lock Up Self Storage located at 701 North 7th St. in Minneapolis, MN 554511.

Contact Betty C. for more info

763-535-3939

**Mark Your Calendar...for 2019**

July 20	Jordan Sponsorship Workshop
September 7 & September 21	Quick Steps in Rochester
October 4 & 5	OA Convention

All articles written are the opinion of the writer and not of OA as a whole or of the *Expressions of Unity* newsletter.



**Unity Intergroup** meets the **second** Saturday of each month at Sumner Library.

**Newcomer Meeting** is the **third** Saturday of each month at Sumner Library. All are welcome.

**Newsletter articles** are due the **week before the end** of each month.