

# *Expressions of Unity*

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

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

**STEP NINE: "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"**

## **This Is Where I Belong**

**Check out  
the new  
Unity  
Intergroup  
website  
at**

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



### **Editor's Note**

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

Today on a call with my sponsor, I was looking at an amends that kept popping up in my mind, but I wasn't sure how to approach it. And repeating what my sponsor said to me, "What are my motives for the amends?" "Is it to gain control or influence or to really let go?"

Humbly and selflessly?

It really caused me to pause and consider all angles of this amends. It was a great question to ponder and reflect on. Then in one of my telephone calls, as I was further discussing it, the person said, "Well, I don't know the whole back ground, but if it's been going on a while, it can wait a while longer"

Ahhhhhh. Yes.

Meaning I don't have to decide today on the amends! What a concept. Ha! I don't have to figure out my whole life today! How many times have I tried to do this instead of seeking God's will, not mine be done.

The space the program gives me in my head goes way beyond food these days. I can reflect further on my motives and come from a place of true humility, love and service in the amends.

All I need to do is be 100% abstinent, open, and willing and the answers come in different forms. Writing, talking and connecting with others. This is a miracle for me -- to wait instead of knee jerk reactions and flying through the Step like it's a box to be checked off. No, it's a process of constant evolving and progressing.

This type of feedback and the tools we use in OA How give me clarity on things. For example, Wait. Act. Do. Rest. Be. It's a pretty remarkable program that works when I am willing to do the next right thing, as they say. And by doing this Step work in a rigorous, thorough way, a really interesting thing is happening in my life. I'm done fighting food and the process, and the obsession on food is lifted. That was never the case for me before. I came into the program and it was truly a diet. I kept relapsing, and never got out of the first 80 questions. Now working the Steps, I am finding more relief than ever before.

My attempts at controlling my eating on my own have never worked. I know I am home and this is where I belong. So grateful for my fellowship and all those working a program, one day at a time. With gratitude.

Jenny S. OA HOW

## Feeling Comfortable In Your Own Skin

The Big Book *Into Action*, p.76, "Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves."

Here is some info that my sponsor gave me on Step 9, "Remember that when you do your 9th Step and we decide to whom and how you will make your amends to ensure that you are not creating any further harm. Remember that this is only to right the wrong, it is not to get the person to like you or to get them back in your life. You are cleaning up the wreckage of your past. You are becoming humble by realizing that your actions have had a negative impact on others and you are willing to fix this. You are also becoming humble by realizing that other people's feelings are just as important as yours. One of the purposes of doing this step is **so that you can go anywhere and no matter who is there you will still feel comfortable in your own skin**. Also, remember that the word amend means to change something –so the main thing is to amend your ways so that you don't cause this harm to anyone again. We will re-view what you have done when we get together to discuss your 8th step list. In Step 5, you only told me your character defects, now we will discuss the harms you caused and what restitution, if any, needs to be made."

My experience with Step 9 overall has been good. I've been in OA since Oct 2014, so almost 5 years. My first exposure to working the steps was through a 5 day food recovery retreat here in the Twin Cities about 4 years ago. I was in a safe and abstinent environment to write out my 4th Step and give away my 5th Step. When I left the facility, I knew I needed to continue with the rest of the Steps, so I found a sponsor who helped me work Steps 6, 7, 8 and support me in Step 9 as well. I worked up the courage to make some of my first and most challenging amends with her support. Being new to the 12 Step rooms and 12 Step process at the time, I didn't know what to expect. I really felt like I was just going through the motions and doing what people said to do in order to get better. Today, I know this amends process has saved my life because little by little, person by person, relationship by relationship, I am healing and I no longer feel the need or desire to turn to food for comfort. I am finding comfort in my Higher Power. Today I chase the "effect" of ease and comfort from the Steps rather than chasing my tail in the food. With each consecutive step, we get closer to a spiritual awakening and we are promised in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous that we "will be amazed before we are half way through (the 9th Step)," It wasn't until I got into Big Book recovery about 2 years ago, that my amends process and overall 12 Step experience was rocketed to a whole new level. My new sponsor in Big Book recovery took me through the steps again after I had relapsed and when we got to Step 9 again, she helped me with each amends. She gave me a sample script to use as a template and then I personalized each amends from there. She listened to the script as I read them out loud to her over the phone and then she supported and coached me on each detail. An important detail was with prayer and Higher Power's guidance, to discern the proper timing and approach to finding the people I needed to make direct (face-to-face) amends to. How to politely ask someone to meet with them at their convenience. Details like that. Seems simple, but being the self-centered, self-absorbed person that I am, that was one of my first attempts at being humble and not just vomiting things out at people to make myself feel better. Most of my amends have been direct and I find that to be the most profound jumpstart to a spiritual experience. I really started to feel God in my heart and soul when I would embark on the amends and even though I was nervous a lot of the times, God would give me the words and the humble heart I needed to face these people that I had hurt in the past and admit my wrong and ask what I could do to make it right and patiently listen for their feedback without getting defensive or reactive. Some of the people receiving my amends, for example, past employees, did give me constructive criticism...some of it was hard to swallow. Family members were the easiest on me and most of them said they had long forgiven me, "chin up buttercup" kind of thing, and told me to quit being so hard on myself. Most everyone except one commented that they admired what I was doing and considered it courageous. One person did not want to see me or talk to me and that was the most painful to accept. I continue to pray for her and hope she is doing well. I pray for the opportunity to make things right with her but for now I need to be patient and respect her boundaries and love her from a distance and maybe that's the best I will ever be able to do for her and that's ok. When all else fails, I just try to remember: don't do further wreckage, NO MORE WRECKAGE! Take it Easy. Let it go. Some things are better left unsaid if it's going to harm someone. Move on and start being the change in the world you want to see. Like Mother Theresa said, "If you want to change the world, go home and love your family." Living amends, that is something that I get to do daily. That is my homework so to speak in "practicing these principles in all of our affairs," just as Step 12 suggests. God bless and Happy Amending!!

Gratefully recovered compulsive overeater. Liz T. Chaska OA Thursday 7pm Big Book meeting

## To Amend Means To Change Something

Good day and thanks for reading the article. Not only do I want to share about Step 9, I would also like to point out the Promises, Principle, Tradition and the Concept of this Step. Step Nine says "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

I believe the purpose of amends is to clear away the guilt and ill will so that we can establish a better relationship with people whose lives and behavior we have touched. It takes a lot of bravery to do the 9th step with those you have put on the list in your 8th Step.

There are three types of amends:

**Direct Amends** – taking personal responsibility for your actions and confronting the person whom you would like to reconcile with.

**Indirect Amends** – finding ways to repair damage that cannot be reversed or undone by doing things like volunteering, service and helping others.

**Living Amends** – when you show others as well as yourself, that you have made a genuine lifestyle change and are making a commitment to yourself and those that you have hurt. That you will & have discarded your previous destructive behaviors.

I had great shame when I think about my actions of the past. I have found that doing amends has brought me peace with a lot of the people I harmed. I no longer cringe when I think about them and it's an experience that I use to help others. The feelings that poisoned my heart went away. I was free! Had I not worked the first 8 Steps, I wouldn't have built the foundation that I needed to do these amends.

At the start of each amend prior to the meeting with the person I used this prayer; *"God give me the strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the consequences may be. Help me to consider others and not harm them in any way. Help me to consult with others before I take any actions that would cause me to be sorry. Help me to not repeat such behaviors. Show me the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, and Love and help me live the spiritual life. AMEN"*

I had to let go any expectation I had how the other person would receive the amend. For me, some of the actions I took in making the amends were as follows: I called the person and asked if it's OK to meet and make an amend, I felt if possible, wanted to do them face to face. It was my job to clear my side of the street, by doing whatever it took to right my wrongs. I had to SHOW UP WILLING, be there to set the record straight. At the end, I asked how can I make it better? Is there anything I left out? It was a statement of things I did wrong and that caused harm, I was there to express my regrets.

Some amends needed to be made anonymously to avoid hurting people but I didn't use it as an excuse to avoid embarrassing myself.

Remember an apology is not an amend. We must be sincere when making the amends – we owe the persons an honest straightforward acknowledgement of our mistakes ---not just a simple apology. Recently, I took a cross country motorcycle trip to Oregon, and down the coast of California. I had some amends on the West coast I needed to make. I remember riding to one of them and the grip on the handle bars was so tight my hands hurt. I hadn't talked to this person in years. They had said that they would give me 15 minutes of their time, turned out to be a two-hour time together. Once I finished the amends said my goodbye, it felt like I was floating, I realized I was free.

The most special amends I did was sitting on a beach, staring at the ocean in Northern California "talking and making amends" with my grandfather whose ashes we had spread years ago. It was a moment I don't believe I will ever forget. My HP was very present in the moment.

This step has freed me from the ties of my past in miraculous ways, my life has changed, and most broken relationships became whole again. There was freedom that was gained by cleaning up the past, a freedom to live peacefully in the present.

**TO AMEND MEANS TO CHANGE SOMETHING- WE CHANGE OUR ACTIONS OF THE FUTURE.** Step 9 is completing a process where we are a changed person.

In closing...

STEP 9 - "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

*It's worth the work, Amends are hard, but they are so fulfilling and freeing*

PROMISE- "Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us."

*\* When I finished most of my amends, I have felt closer to my higher power than ever before, my spiritual awaking became a reality, I am at peace with the world, I no longer fear people or economic insecurity.*

PRINCIPAL- Love

*\* Love and accept yourself as you are, GOD made you in his vision.*

TRADITION- Structure

*\* The steps are set up in a structure each built off another, follow them and build your foundation.*

CONCEPT - Ability

*\* We all have the ability to work the steps and succeed in this fellowship.*

We can't be grateful for everything, but we can be grateful in every moment. Thank you!

Marque "Q" Thursday Night Chaska

## Prayer of Willingness

The 9th Step Prayer of Willingness on page 76:

"We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes."

## Trust The Process

The prospect of proceeding through the 9th Step amends was daunting to me from the position of Step One. It is part of my pattern to project forward through worst case scenarios and catastrophic consequences of practically anything in my life. Sitting at Step One, I didn't recognize that pattern. I didn't have any practice in doing the next right thing. Doing the steps in order, with the guidance of my sponsor and fellows, kept me focused on now. Moving through all of the preceding steps and becoming willing to make those amends. By the time I got to Step Nine, I was positioned to move forward.

It didn't mean I enjoyed humbling myself to admit my mistakes and harms, but I was willing because I wanted to stay on the path to recovery. I had already experienced a greater connection to my Higher Power and some freedom from the obsession with food. One of the things I heard over and over again as I worked on my Fourth Step inventory, made my Fifth Step, continued on through Six, Seven, Eight was "trust the process." Learning to see my part in the unsatisfactory encounters I have with others, has given me new skills for building healthier, more satisfactory relationships. The footwork of each step, taken out of context, doesn't really seem logical, but it works.

Jean K.

# Information Open Meeting

## Overeaters Anonymous

### Informational Open Meeting

If you are interested in learning more about Overeaters Anonymous, if you want to support a family member or friend in OA, or if you would like to find out more about how OA works, please be our guest at this meeting.

**Saturday, September 28, 2019 at 9:00 am at Pax Chris**

This meeting is held at our regular meeting time (9:00 to 10:30 am) and features the following:

**An explanation of abstinence and how it differs from dieting.**

**The tools we use to achieve and work the “program.”**

**Personal stories of recovery by working the 12 Steps of OA.**

**A time for you to ask questions and get answers about how OA works.**

Our regular meetings are “closed” (open only to those who consider themselves to be compulsive Eaters). The open meetings are for anyone who wants to learn more about OA.

**Eden Prairie Overeaters Anonymous**

**Pax Christi Church**

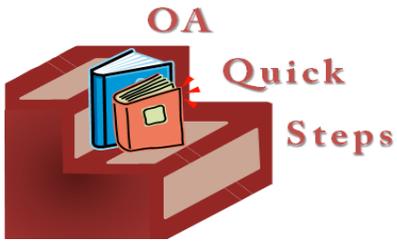
**12100 Pioneer Trail**

**Eden Prairie, MN 55343**

**For more information**

**Jean 612-867-7458**

[odat0487@aol.com](mailto:odat0487@aol.com)



**Are you new to OA or just need help getting through the Steps?**

**Completing this two-part  
OA Quick Steps Workshop  
may be just the answer.**

**Dates: Saturday, September 14, 2019  
and Saturday, September 28, 2019  
Time: 9:00 am to 12:30 pm**

**Location**

**Living Spirit Methodist Church  
4501 Bloomington Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN 55407**

**One of the promises in the AA Big Book is that before you're done with Step Nine, the obsession is lifted. Increase your chance of success—join the OA Quick Steps series, get abstinent**

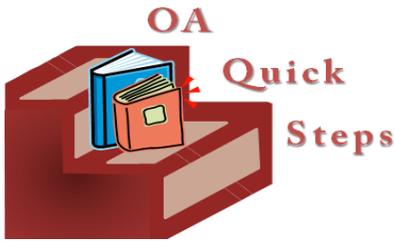
To register, contact Cecelia at 205-292-5242 or [calaurie78@gmail.com](mailto:calaurie78@gmail.com). Registration is required as class size is limited.

You will need to have a sponsor who can help you through the 4th and 5th Steps.

There are no fees for this workshop, but we will be collecting a 7th Tradition donation.

Time commitment is two Saturday sessions, plus homework. ***Expect to be very busy*** working on recovery for these weeks!

**The purpose of this workshop is to get people through the 12 Steps quickly, to help people obtain a successful, life-long recovery, and aid in retention and growth of recovered compulsive eaters in OA.**



**Are you new to OA or just need help getting through the Steps?**

**Completing this two-part  
OA Quick Steps Workshop  
may be just the answer.**

**Dates: Saturday, September 7, 2019  
and Saturday, September 21, 2019  
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Location**

**Zumbro Lutheran Church  
624 Third Ave SW  
Rochester, MN 55902**

**One of the promises in the AA Big Book is that before you're done with Step Nine, the obsession is lifted. Increase your chance of success—join the OA Quick Steps series, get abstinent**

To register, contact Kendra at [LKYGRL61@yahoo.com](mailto:LKYGRL61@yahoo.com) or 952-270-5258. Registration is required as class size is limited.

You will need to have a sponsor who can help you through the 4th and 5th Steps.

There are no fees for this workshop, but we will be collecting a 7th Tradition donation.

Time commitment is two, Saturday sessions, plus homework. ***Expect to be very busy*** working on recovery for these weeks!

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The October 2019  
**Expressions of Unity**

will focus on

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

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 September 14 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**

September 7 & September 21	Quick Steps in Rochester
September 14 & September 28	Quick Steps in Minneapolis
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.