



June 2020

Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

NEWS & NOTEWORTHY

NEW MAILING ADDRESS!

Please note our new PO box:

Unity Intergroup
5115 Excelsior Blvd.
Box 325
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

UPCOMING EVENTS

Big Book Study

2-part Webinar
May 30 & June 6
9:00 am–5:30 pm

Region 4 Convention

Now on Zoom!
July 10, Friday @ 5 pm –
July 11, Saturday @ 12 pm
Questions? Call Annette:
763-447-3215

OA Recovery Bike & Picnic!

July 18, 2020
Details to follow

Quick Steps Workshop

2-part Virtual Workshop
August 8 & 22, 2020
Saturdays 9:00 am–12:30 pm
Registration coming soon

INTERGROUP MEETINGS

Join us on [Zoom](#)
Saturdays, 12:30–2:00 pm
June 9, July 11, August 8

Our topic this issue is:

“Staying abstinent through tough times and trauma”

We invite you to contribute articles for our upcoming issues:

July: “Thoughts on a Just for Today resolution” (on p. 6)

August: “Tips for traveling and vacationing abstinently”

September: “Positive recovery experiences”

Please send submissions to:

ExpressionsofUnity2020@gmail.com

PHONE & ONLINE MEETING RESOURCES

[Unity Intergroup Phone & Online Meetings](#)

[OA Phone Meetings](#)

[OA-HOW Phone Meetings](#)

[OA Speaker Recordings](#)

“A Vision For You” Big Book Phone Meetings

Ph: 712-432-5210, Code: 876148#

Monday–Friday

6–7 am CST (recorded)

7–8 am CST (not recorded)

9–10 am CST (recorded)

Sunday Special Edition

7:30-9:00 am CST (recorded)

UNITY INTERGROUP BOARD

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LIVING LIFE IN RECOVERY

The first trial, after getting into recovery in 2003, was my dysfunctional marriage. We were already on the rocks, but I never wanted to admit that I was part of the problem. However, once I got abstinent and things started to improve, there was no denying it. My sponsors helped me walk through situations with my husband that would normally have sent me diving back into the food. My lack of self-esteem was a huge reason for my overeating. Having a sponsor to talk to every day truly saved my life.

But it still wasn't easy for me to stay abstinent. My sponsors opened my eyes to the fact that I played the victim. My husband had a temper and I used this as an excuse to blame him for everything. Once I started working the steps, I could not get away with this anymore. He still had a temper, but I could control how I reacted. As I worked through all 12 Steps, I had to acknowledge I was contributing to the conflict.

My sponsors also helped me to see my part in our financial struggles. When I first started in OA, I had just lost a job which had allowed me to work from home and take care of our young daughter. With the help of program friends, I was able to become a nanny and simplify my life in order to put program and family first. This was a huge awakening for me. Daily sponsorship is one of the keys to staying abstinent in tough times.

The next major struggle came in 2004. I had been abstinent over a year and my husband and I were doing so much better. We wanted to have another child, but it wasn't happening. I learned from my doctor that years of gaining and losing weight had taken a toll on my body. I connected with a fellow who was struggling with the same difficulties and over the next two years, we supported each other through this tough situation. With the help of fertility treatments, I gave birth to twins girls in 2006. Abstinence in pregnancy is such a gift. When I compare this experience to my pre-recovery pregnancy, I am forever grateful!

The next big trial had to do with recession in 2009. The stress became overwhelming and I hit bottom spiritually. Through it all, I knew I needed to keep working all the tools and all steps, because if I stopped, I would be back into the food in a heartbeat. With the help of counselors and spiritual mentors, I also recommitted to my faith.

Today, God is my best friend. What I've learned from all these experiences is that no matter what is going on, I follow my food plan, do my writing, call my sponsor and my fellows, go to meetings, do service, spend time with God (talking and listening), and work the steps like my life depends on it—because it does.

~ Anonymous

ATTITUDE IS A CHOICE

In my readings recently, one of the themes has been attitude. When I entered recovery one of the first practical things I was taught was that I have a choice about my attitude. Recovery in times of stress or trauma requires committed effort, often in times when that seems impossible. This is where my relationship with a Higher Power is critical, and typically nobody wants to hear that in a crisis or stressful time.

I am conditioned to seek instant gratification or immediate solutions. My experience teaches me that my attitude about any situation is an active conscious choice. That does not mean I am unrealistic or head-in-the-sand oblivious about the circumstances. I have endured significant physical and emotional difficulty in recovery and grown from those experiences. How? Thankfully, by working the program of recovery, (yes, the 12 Steps!) I have learned and been taught to choose an attitude of acceptance and humility; I try not to ask, *why me?* Instead, I ask, *why not me?* The 12 Steps, my sponsors, my Higher Power have taught me to turn inward and take inventory.

Why have challenges, difficulty or traumatic events happened in my life? Many times, I have played a role, many times I have not, but I always have a choice about my attitude in any given circumstance. One of the most important things I have learned is that no single thing, situation, challenge or event defines my whole life or existence.

One day at a time I can slow down, ask for help, take the action indicated to face and walk through any challenges I may face.

I'll close with my simple formula:

1. I have a choice about my attitude.
2. My Higher Power is always present.
3. I am not alone and can ask for help.

Thank You for my life!

~ Patrick B.

THE SOLUTION IS SPIRITUAL

When I came into OA many years ago, I came to lose weight. I thought my problem was being a 100 plus pounds overweight. Little did I know that that was the least of my problems.

I started by surrendering my food to God and my sponsor by using a daily food plan and taking the first three steps and understanding that I had a disease... an allergy of the body and an obsession of the mind that said I could eat like normal people, but the truth was one bite of sugar or wheat could send me into a food frenzy. Thirty days of abstinence cleared my food-fogged mind.

After the food was down and the first three steps taken, my sponsor said we had to get down to the causes and conditions of our disease—which I was shocked to find were: an inability to handle my emotions, multiple defects of character and a lack of daily spiritual practices. She told me the 12-Step solution was spiritual... and she walked me through steps 4–12 to improve my spiritual condition. I released defects, resentments and fears, stopped doing harm to others or made amends when I did, took daily inventory, and started praying and mediating. Genuine self-esteem was restored in me.

This experience cemented my faith in God, the 12-Step way of life and my sponsor and fellows.

Today, I have faith in God, the 12 Steps and my sponsor and fellows and I know if I connect with them through prayer, mediation, phone calls, writing or meetings and do my other spiritual practices – attend church, gratitude lists, coloring, centering prayer, classes and listening to OA CDs. (Note: I do not do them all daily☺) I will remain in recovery—I may waiver sometimes, but then I call for program reinforcement from my fellows. They are always there for me.

Without spirituality, spiritual practices and faith, my recovery would be nowhere, and I would be face down in the food again.

~ Sue B.

SURRENDER, ACTION AND HONESTY

I've had my fair share of tough times, and recovery hasn't insulated me from any of them. But rather than focus on my struggles, I want to share some of the things that help me stay abstinent when I'm feeling stressed or sad.

DIG DEEPER. For me, that means instead of withdrawing from my life at tough times, I dig in. I offer myself for more Service. Service of any kind can help. It helps me get out of my head and helps me to feel useful. It also keeps me from isolating, which I have learned is the worse thing I can do if I want to keep my abstinence. In addition, I dig deeper into the tools of the program by making more phone calls to other members to talk program, taking to my sponsor more, and reading and journaling more to remind me why my abstinence is so precious to me. Basically, I do whatever I can to help me maintain my abstinence and stop thinking about the things I feel are dragging me down.

THINK SMALL. This is pretty much our slogan of "One day at a time," but sometimes when things are really tough, even one day can seem too long. When this happens, I try to break it down even more, hour by hour if I have to. I also remind myself to "think small" about my activities for that day. I try not to over plan or overdo what I'm capable of, especially if I'm already stressed.

ACT AS IF. This strategy comes straight out of the Big Book (p. 366, 4th Edition) from the story *Tightrope*: "It is easier to act yourself into a new way of thinking than to think yourself into a new way of acting." I have found that statement to be so true for so many things in my recovery, but it also works for me when I'm dealing with tough emotions. Acting as if I'm happy when I'm sad or acting calm when I'm afraid or stressed keeps me moving forward in the right direction. I have learned that if I can do it intentionally for a bit, eventually it comes naturally without me even thinking about it.

None of these strategies magically makes the hurt or stress go away. I have to keep at them, just like I do with my program. It's all about surrender, honesty, and action, about staying present in my life, not withdrawing or hiding from it. I'm so grateful to this program and my Higher Power for helping me find a better way—a happier way—to live.

~ In It With You

For the July issue, we invite you to write on one or more of these resolutions!

JUST FOR TODAY*

Just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle my whole life problem at once. I can do something for one day that would appall me if I felt I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today I will be happy. This assumes to be true what Abraham Lincoln said, that, "Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is and not try to adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my "luck" as it comes and fit myself to it.

Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will study. I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

Just for today I will exercise my soul in three ways. I will do somebody a good turn and not get found out; if anyone knows of it, it will not count. I will do at least two things I don't want to do, just for exercise. I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt; they may be hurt, but today, I will not show it.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly, talk low, act courteously, criticize not one bit, not find fault with anything, and not try to improve or regulate anybody except myself.

Just for today I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

Just for today I will have a quiet half-hour all by myself and relax. During this half-hour sometime, I will try to get a better perspective of my life.

Just for today I will be unafraid. Especially, I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and to believe that as I give to the world, so the world will give to me.

**from Al-Anon Family Groups*