



July 2020

Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

NEWS & NOTEWORTHY

UPCOMING EVENTS

Region 4 Convention

Now on Zoom!

July 10–11

Friday, 6 pm–Sat, 3:30 pm

Call Annette for info:

763-447-3215

OA Recovery Picnic & Bike Ride!

Saturday, July 18

Elm Creek in Maple Grove

Details to follow

Quick Steps Workshop

Now on Zoom!

August 8 & 22

To register, contact Cecelia at

205-292-5242 or

calaurie78@gmail.com

INTERGROUP MEETINGS

Join us on [Zoom](#)

Saturdays, 12:30–2:00 pm

July 11 & August 8

NEW MAILING ADDRESS!

Unity Intergroup

5115 Excelsior Blvd.

Box 325

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Our topic this month is:

“Reflections on *Just for Today*”

Looking for a service opportunity to do from home?

Write an article for the newsletter!

August: “Tips for traveling and vacationing abstinently”

September: “Positive recovery experiences”

October: “Service as a part of recovery”

Email 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 CT (recorded)

7–8 am CT (not recorded)

9–10 am CT (recorded)

Sunday Special Edition

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

UNITY INTERGROUP BOARD

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**Just for today, I will try to live through this day only
and not tackle my whole life problems at once.**

I remember a day when my partner said, "Isn't anything right?" I replied, "No, not one thing is right." It had been a bad day... a number of things had gone wrong. I was feeling overwhelmed and frustrated. My work was tough, and I had the thought "nothing is right" when more than one thing didn't go according to plan. Even in abstinence and recovery I don't handle stress very well at times. There's a belief that life should work out always. But life isn't like that. Things don't work out all the time. Challenges happen, glitches happen, mistakes and mishaps happen. In my negative thinking, everything is dark and wrong. My perceptions are off and I see nothing good.

Reading this slogan feels like a balm to me. I imagine my blood pressure dropping. I imagine my Higher Power saying "Easy does it child; you're following your rules, trying to push the river, trying to control and adjust life to suit yourself. Let go." This helps me remember I can only do so much in a day, and life is what it is. I'm called to acceptance. I can't solve many things in a day. I've found that the antidote to frustration and anger is acceptance. When I'm angry and wanting life and people to be different than they are, I'm usually not accepting life on life's terms. Acceptance helps me surrender to my HP and be here now; just be in this one day and trust HP will help me with tomorrow. Above all, I think to myself: "Don't take that first compulsive bite."

~ Anonymous

**I can do something for one day that would appall me
if I felt I had to keep it up for a lifetime.**

For me, this sentence means: "Don't awfulize the future, stay in the present moment, refrain from projecting." Sometimes one day proves difficult and challenging. Fear rears its head. Thoughts go round and round: "My life will be this way forever."

My natural default is negative thinking: "How will I survive and manage? I can't sustain living like this the rest of my life. What will become of me?" It's here that I remind myself of reality: today I'm in recovery, today I'm abstinent and today God is in charge of my will and life. I know this because at the start of most days I work Step 3. I remember what life was like in the disease: I ran the show and I ran myself into the ground. I wasn't a team player at work, I wasn't kind in my interactions with others, and I was mad all the time—at myself and everyone else. I was lazy, only moving when I had to. I wasn't positive or of service in any way. My life was circling the drain in isolation, depression, addiction and insanity.

OA HOW has been the gateway to a new life and a new way of thinking. I'm no longer paralyzed by fear because I talk with my sponsor and fellows everyday. I ask myself: "Where is my trust and reliance?" It has to be on the God of my understanding who gives me strength to get through the day. All I have to do is follow a few simple rules and be willing to ask for help.

~ Anonymous

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.

This is a pretty tall order if you really sit and think about it. I think I will probably spend the rest of my life trying to practice the principles listed here. It also would be interesting to use these as a daily inventory guide (or for that matter all of the principles in *Just for Today*). But, just for this article, I will share a little on each component.

Just for today, I will be agreeable. One definition of agreeable is pleasant or enjoyable. My dad recently provided me with a good example of what I believe is the opposite of this – what I strive not to do. I telephone my aging parents every day. On more than one occasion my dad has complained that my mom cleans their apartment too much. It occurred to me that if he were being agreeable, he would simply thank my mom for keeping a clean home for them. It is a good reminder to me that I should express gratitude for the nice things people do even if I don't understand them or think they are necessary.

Just for today, I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly. I put these two together because I think they go together. Lately I've noticed that I have become more comfortable with not wearing makeup and not always fixing my hair to look nice. But I do believe that it is important to present myself well especially when I attend meetings whether in person or online. I try to always at least pay a little attention to what I am wearing to make sure it is clean and looks nice. I will also take the extra step of brushing my hair and putting on a little makeup to attend my meetings. Our public relations are based on attraction not promotion. My most common relations with the public on behalf of OA are in connection with my meetings. I want to put my best self forward for the good of our fellowship.

Just for today, I will talk low. My husband has told me on more than one occasion that I talk loudly on the phone and when I am on Zoom meetings. The first time he said it, I simply dismissed it as ridiculous. But the next time I heard this read at a meeting, I reflected on my husband's observation. I realized that it is entirely possible that loudness "is in the ear of the beholder." I made a decision to ask that God help me be softer spoken and started practicing doing so. I think I am making progress as I haven't heard additional feedback. But even more than that, I like quiet time and this helps me incorporate more quiet time throughout my day.

(Cont'd on next page)

Just for today, I will act courteously. I think of myself as a pretty courteous person. But one thing I can work on is not interrupting people when they are speaking. I know it is rude and don't like it at all when people do it to me. I believe that the God of my understanding would have me treat everyone with respect and grant common courtesy to everyone I encounter. I try to do small gestures like letting someone into the lane while driving or stopping to let a pedestrian cross. Acting courteously helps me more than it helps others and it promotes unity with those around me.

Just for today, I will criticize not one bit, not find fault with anything, and not try to improve or regulate anybody except myself. This is another one that can be insidious. I don't necessarily notice I am doing it, but I made a demonstration in my earlier reference to my dad. I was critical of him because I think he should thank my mom more. I often try to regulate my aging parents. I try to get them to eat better and have worked with them to reduce their footprint from a full off-site storage space to a half-full, much smaller space in their apartment building. I occasionally try to regulate my husband too—but that never works.

Thanks to the program, I have found it is best if I focus on myself and what God is trying to change in me and to be helpful to others. That way I have a better chance of actually achieving some of these principles the program offers me. It may seem like a tall order, but I only have to work at it one day at a time.

~ Stacy M.

Editor's note: this lovely article was unintentionally left out of the May issue.

Guided Daily by God

My spirituality is very grounded in my belief in my Higher Power (God). I feel a deep, daily connection to God, which I develop through prayer, spiritual music and finding quiet space in my day to open myself up to Him.

What is my evidence of the fruit of this spirituality in my program? Well, one of the promises of the program says, "We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us." That intuition is from God. It is a quiet, sometimes indescribable, peace of mind that I can sense. An intuition I interpret as quiet guidance. Since I know I am deeply connected to God, I can trust this guidance – with my abstinent food plan, with decisions I make with work and family, with the steps in my program.

This spirituality within my program also reminds me that I am not alone. I always have an opportunity to ask my Higher Power, "What would you have me say? What would you have me see? What would you have me do?" Answers to those questions come through my connection with God, and they guide me daily.

~ Laura H.

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.

As a newcomer to the 12 Steps, I rankled at these three suggestions. What's the value of doing something for someone else if they or someone else don't even acknowledge it? There are so many things I have to do every day to work this program—how can I be expected to add anything else, “just for exercise”?! I thought this 12-Step program was about being honest, and now you are telling me I am not even supposed to let someone know they hurt my feelings???

Time is teaching me the wisdom of these suggestions. The 12 Steps are laying raw the self-centeredness that caused all the negative reaction. “Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 62) I hadn't yet grasped Abraham Lincoln's instruction that happiness is an inside job, so it made no sense to me that other people didn't need to directly participate in my feeling better about myself and my life.

I have listened to this reading at the end of every meeting for over 13 years. I am a slow learner. But I have come to relish that seemingly spontaneous desire to do something for someone else with the intention that they won't find out. I have somehow managed to accept that my feelings are manageable without wearing them on my sleeve. How many days in a row have I managed to follow each of these three suggestions? I can't say, but one of the goals of my program is to stop counting. The only count that really matters is my abstinence for the next 24 hours.

~ Anonymous

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.”

I spent the first 55 years of my life searching for happiness. I was convinced it was out there, but I just couldn't seem to access it. ***If only:***

- I had a good boss instead of all these incompetents,
- I had a partner who understood my deep need to be loved,
- I had a job, even a career, that utilized all my talents and paid me what I was worth,
- I had friends who would notice my deep pain and provide support in times of need,
- I had a mother who would say she was sorry for her inadequacy in providing me the nurturing I needed,
- I could figure out what to eat that would fill the gaping hole inside me.

But nobody and nothing came through in the way I needed. Everywhere I looked there were barriers to my happiness.

My desperate lack of happiness and 160 burdensome pounds finally drove me to the rooms of recovery. But entry into those rooms didn't spell happiness either. Abstinence brought relief but not happiness. The road to happiness required an arduous journey through the 12 Steps. The first eleven steps were quite the introspective journey and though the process required reading the stories of many recovering addicts who had discovered happiness, it was the 12th Step that finally delivered the reason why happiness had eluded me all those years. The 12th Step makes clear that happiness is an inside job. It just doesn't use that language. Rather, it makes clear that happiness is the result of the spiritual awakening that results in our willingness to be of service to others.

My “12 & 12” has a permanent bookmark on p. 99, where the prayer of St. Francis provides the clear path to happiness: “...that where there is hatred, I may bring peace...where there is discord, I may bring harmony...where there is despair, I may bring hope...grant that I may seek to comfort rather than be comforted...understand than be understood, to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds...” Finds what? Happiness.

~ Anonymous

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.

This is the most helpful paragraph to me in this treasured piece of literature. It helps me stay out of the past and the future. If my thoughts turn to the past, I can become full of regret about long-gone character defects and of not being the best mother or wife I could/would/should have been. If I turn to the future, worries can fill my head: *Will I get the virus? Are my kids safe? Will the economy hold up?* Even small worries can fill my head: *When can I get a haircut so I will look good again?*

This kind of thinking brings up fear; it drains my energy; it makes me irritable and whiny and not so pleasant to be around; and it keeps me from doing a good job **today**.

So, when my mind starts leaving this day, I call it back by saying, *I will live in this day ONLY*. I will do the next right thing, whether that thing is to wash the dishes, go to a meeting, take a walk with my husband, or make a call. Each day that I focus on doing a good job in THIS day, I am creating a trail of well-lived days which eventually will be a past to be proud of!

~ Anonymous

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.

Before COVID-19, I had a routine. Wake up, meditate, eat breakfast, talk to my sponsor and sponsees, go to the gym, get dressed, drive to the office. After working all day, I'd come home and make dinner, and in the evening I'd go to my meeting, meet up with a friend, see a show, or chill out at home.

Then the pandemic hit. I lost my job and along with it, the external structure imposed by work and social plans. It was disorienting and uncomfortable. I knew I had to create new routines for myself, but I didn't trust myself to make good decisions.

Then my sponsor suggested I ask God for direction. Crazy, right?! So that's what I did. Sometimes I wrote out my plan for the day, sometimes it was just in my head. But having a plan, a program, helped ground me and live in the present. I'm grateful to be employed again—and grateful I can work from home without constantly questioning how I'm spending my time. When I listen to God, the day goes well.

~ Anonymous