



January 2021

# Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

## NEWS & NOTEWORTHY

### INTERGROUP MEETING

Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021  
12:30–2:30 pm on [Zoom](#)  
ID 810 4426 4132 / PW 12345

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### BODY IMAGE WORKSHOP

Saturday, Jan. 23  
8:30 am–2:30 pm on Zoom  
[Register online](#)

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### RECOVERY FROM RELAPSE MEETING

Begins Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021  
6:00 pm  
Contact Annette for info:  
[aprlovesoa@gmail.com](mailto:aprlovesoa@gmail.com)

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### QUICK STEPS FOR MEN

Saturdays, Feb. 6 & 20, 2021  
9:00 am–12:30 pm on Zoom  
Contact Bob S. to register:  
[bonasachs@gmail.com](mailto:bonasachs@gmail.com)

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### OUR MAILING ADDRESS

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



## This Month's Topic:

How "The Promises" are coming true for you  
(Big Book pp. 83–84)

February theme: What do you love about recovery?

*Short, long, anonymous or not, we love your articles!*

*Please send yours to:*

[ExpressionsofUnity2020@gmail.com](mailto:ExpressionsofUnity2020@gmail.com)

## ATTENTION ALL MEETINGS!

Soon we'll sunset our PDF meeting list and move to a two-page Google doc—a mobile-friendly format that can accommodate both in-person and virtual meeting information.

If you haven't already done so, please add your group to the Google doc on [Find a Meeting](#) so newcomers can find you!

[Page 1: Virtual/Phone Meetings](#)

[Page 2: In-Person Meetings](#)

## UNITY INTERGROUP ELECTIONS ON 1/09/21

Intergroup depends upon OA member participation! If you haven't done service for Intergroup recently or ever, come to the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting and consider serving as a board member, newsletter editor, hotline responder, plus others! Your recovery will thank you☺

(see sidebar for Zoom link)

## UNITY INTERGROUP BOARD

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## **TIME + HEALING + RECOVERY = THE PROMISES**

The promises of losing interest in selfish things and gaining interest in our fellows, having self-seeking slip away, and noticing my whole attitude and outlook upon life changing are coming true for me. As I practice looking within at my body sensations, emotions, thoughts and inner guidance with affectionate caring attention, I grow peaceful, accepting and joyful. I am curious about what's alive in others and can appreciate this with HP's help, free of fear of losing conscious contact.

Listening within is a good choice at all times, both when I feel uneasy and when I'm eager to contribute to a project. I can reality-check these emotions and notions with higher power and others in OA on program calls. Today when listening to a recorded talk, I realized that throughout the past 20 years, I've often worked at least two jobs at a time. No wonder I needed to prioritize R&R and time with HP. I see how emotional and spiritual recovery takes time and nurturing.



The promise that fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us is also coming true for me as I receive inspiration with prayer, meditation, honest self inquiry and open sharing with HP and others.

Increasing conscious contact with HP is relieving me of excessive non-life-serving thinking, worry and overactivity. As I accept and care for my true needs, I work Step 9 to transform past negative thinking and attitudes into acts of kindness and love. It's getting easier and easier to let go of worrying about others, and instead notice what's going on for me and take action around what I can do to grow physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Prior to OA recovery using the HOW format, I wanted to resign from my job with tens of thousands of dollars of unpaid student loans and no clear plan to repay my debt. With HP's help, the OA program of recovery, and a sufficient amount of outside support, I'm now celebrating 18 years of work with the same employer.

My student loans are repaid, my husband and I have paid off more than half of our mortgage, and it's easier to make reasonable purchases for our home and health without angst. More importantly, when I feel afraid, I can ask, "What would HP like me to learn from this?" I can see where unconscious negative thinking or a desire for peace and safety needs to be addressed.

Knowing that insecurity, fear and self-pity build tension and grudges reminds me of the importance of step work for emotional and mental health. Time and healing work in recovery are changing me, and I'm grateful for this. I pray it serves HP and others.

~ Anonymous

## PROOF OF HIGHER POWER

Recently I have been struck by so many fortunate things that seem to have appeared out of nowhere—like pieces of a puzzle finding their place.

During this time I have become the primary care manager for a loved one. Early on I got a lead on a social services organization that offered a class for caregivers. I received a tool kit which, if used as prescribed (like my OA program) could help me with what lay ahead. In a small group breakout, I met a participant who was clearly experienced and also the author of a book on caregiving. Today, that guide directs my path.

This is just one in a long string of chance occurrences that helped me get to where I am today:

- Finding the independent living facility where we now live
- Friends we made here on Day 1
- Finding the right legal team to help us
- Getting connected with the right specialists for the person I care for
- Meeting a new friend—someone who also works a 12-Step program—in the community laundry
- Getting a lead for a solution on a random call with a fellow

All this is proof of the presence of my Higher Power working in my life. And none of this is the result of trying hard to make something happen. Thank you, God, for directing me to OA so many years ago.

~ Anonymous

## SHOUT-OUT FOR PHONE CALLS FROM THE 12<sup>TH</sup> STEP WITHIN COMMITTEE

Tradition 1 in *The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* states, “As we opened our hearts to other OA members, we found acceptance, a sense of belonging, and unity with other compulsive overeaters that satisfied us in ways food never could.” Meetings are often the first place we connect with other food addicts but how building a close network of fellows happens outside our weekly meetings, on the phone and (in the future) in person!

For anyone who feels uncomfortable calling “complete strangers,” here are some suggestions to help you get started.

Given that many people screen calls for scammers and robocalls, we encourage you to leave a voicemail and let them know if you’re a newcomer. (Ditto if they actually pick up the phone!) And if you’re concerned about disturbing them, simply ask, “Do you have a few minutes to talk or would another time be better?”

### Tips to overcome resistance:

- Tell yourself over and over: “I am not bothering them, I am not bothering them, I am not bothering them.”
- Remind yourself that we are your people!
- Counter every reason for not calling with “Not true!”
- Believe that others want to receive calls, too.

- No need to have a long conversation; just a couple of minutes is enough to feel connected.
- If they don't call back, it's not personal—they're either busy, they forgot, or they don't check voicemail.
- If you're bored or sad or mad, pick up the phone, and let it distract you from whatever's bugging you.

Conversation starters:

- “My nutritionist gave me a food plan. Do you have some suggestions for someone new to cooking?”
- “I’m spending a lot of time in the kitchen. Do you have any shortcuts you could share?”
- “How do you deal with candy and desserts in the break room?”
- “I have a work trip coming up and I want to stay abstinent. How do you travel abstinely?”
- “Are there some restaurants that work well for abstinent eating?”
- “How do you define your abstinence?”
- “Did your food cravings go away?”
- “What helps you stay abstinent when you have food thoughts?”
- “What do you do to get out of a negative head space?”
- “How do quiet the ‘monkey chatter’?”
- “I could use some support (or feedback) with X.”
- “When I was new, I had so many questions. If that’s true for you, I’d love to help!”

~ 12th Step Within Committee

## REFLECTING ON THE PROMISES

After 4½ years of recovery, I am reflecting on how the promises have come true for me.

**“We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.”** The very first day I began this journey, I surrendered completely. It took me a year from when I first heard about this program to be willing to give this a chance and with me being an all or nothing kind of person, I did not surrender until I knew I would be all in. The very first day that I began working with a sponsor, I started working the steps, I committed my food based on a food plan given to me by my dietitian, and I made my outreach calls.



The wars that went on in my head over anything and everything for as long as I could remember had stopped. I remember very vividly mid-afternoon on that first day of abstinence, standing in my kitchen and realizing I had found my solution. I was no longer alone. This was my first taste of freedom.

**“We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.”** My past, like many others, held some pretty powerful experiences of hurts, traumas and situations that greatly impacted me. I learned not to trust anyone and always felt alone, unworthy and inadequate. The only way I knew to keep myself safe was to remain closed off and to use food as my coping mechanism. I became so self-sufficient in every other area of my life, I didn't know how to let others in.

When I found this program, I was asked to make three calls to others. I found this unappealing, but I did it anyway. Because of the strong adherence we have to anonymity, I very quickly began opening up to others and in doing so, the power of those emotions began to fade. I have always understood that the past is the past and cannot be changed, but there is something inexplicably freeing about being able to share with others, without judgement, knowing what I say will not go anywhere. I now have the courage to live in the present and trust in my HP to lead way.

**“We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.”** I was a master of acting ‘as if’ I was calm and at peace so as to not project how troubled I really was. Truth is, I was rarely happy or content, and I used food as a distraction. I was constantly acting as the caretaker of my spouse and their mental health issues. Disastrous situations would occur and I always put myself aside to pick up the pieces. Even after things calmed down, I was on the lookout for the next disaster.

Food was the only thing that helped me to escape for a moment.

The OAHOW program not only provided structure for me around my food, it gave me the tools and guidance I needed for living. I learned how to take care of myself emotionally, spiritually and physically, to acknowledge my needs and to create healthy boundaries which resulted in many new healthy relationships both in and out of this fellowship. I found the courage to take action and made some very big changes in my life, always with the loving support of my fellows. There is no such thing as a perfect life, but today I can honestly say my life is calm, peaceful and untroubled.



**“No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.”** I had this idea that I would find success, happiness and freedom in my life if only I could get to a normal weight. My life was a chaotic mess and I tried to push away that reality by constantly manipulating my food and changing my behaviors around others.

In coming into the OA-HOW program, I saw I wasn't alone in how I used food and that there was a way out. In connecting

with others and relying on my higher power and tools of this program, the guilt and shame of my past went away and I found spiritual and emotional healing. We really do help each other every step of the way on our journeys of recovery.

**“That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.”** I have always had a good work ethic but didn't feel I was capable or worthy of anything more than where I was. I settled and pushed away any desires for personal growth because I feared failure. Working this program, my entire outlook on life changed and I gained the courage and strength to make drastic changes in my life. With my food in a cup and this new guidance I had for living my life, I began to face my fears and take healthy risks in my personal and professional life. I left my toxic marriage and started taking care of myself and being of service to others. I have exceeded my hope of having a successful career and have found peace and serenity. My HP shows me everyday that my life is not a waste.

**“We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away.”** Fear and traumas of my past kept me closed off from others. I was constantly measuring who I was on the inside with who I saw others to be on the outside, and I always came up short. In working this program, I have felt the chains that bound me to the negative experiences of my past break away. I have found a loving higher power who will guide me along my continued journey of recovery, as long as I surrender my will. If I can help make someone's life

a bit easier, bring a bit of joy, free up their time, allow them to talk things out, I am grateful and honored to be a part of that as others do the same for me.

**“Our whole attitude and outlook on life will change.”** Prior to program, I suffered from depression, was in a dead-end job, and had no friends. My relationships with family members were strained and I was isolated. Most nights I went to bed praying to not wake up the next day. Today I have learned to embrace every moment, knowing that whether it brings joy or fear, I am never alone and always growing. It truly is nothing short of a miracle.



**“Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us.”** Early in my life, I experienced some traumatic events and came to the conclusion that others were not to be trusted. I isolated myself to keep myself safe from further emotional harm, to keep myself safe. The structure of this program has helped me to open up to others and I began to find great connections to others both in and out of OAHOW. I learned that most people have a desire to find trusting healthy relationships and I am grateful to now have some amazing people in my life.

Financial insecurity was definitely something that impacted me, how I lived my life and how I coped with my compulsion around food. Through this program, I began to see and accept my dire circumstances and knew I needed to take action. Today, I am financially secure, carry little debt, have money in savings, and make sane financial decisions.



me the unexpected willingness to surrender and give this program a chance. Today I live each day in the present, connected to others and following this program to keep myself emotionally, spiritually and physically healthy.

~ Anonymous

**“We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.”** In any situation I did not know how to handle, I would shut down emotionally and use food as my go-to coping mechanism. Working this program, I find myself more easily able to make healthy decisions that allow me to be of service to others, to be present and trust that my Higher Power is leading the way through each and every situation I face.

**“We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”** When I first heard about OAHOW, I wasn't even the slightest bit interested. A year later, I was so sick and tired of the ramifications of what this disease was doing to me that I was ready to give it a try. I believe my higher power was already at work in my life, granting