

## News and Note Worthy

### Intergroup Meetings Now Have Speakers!

Did you know that the Intergroup has a recovery speaker at the beginning of every meeting?  
Please join us for some recovery and stay for a bit to see what Intergroup is all about. Everyone is welcome!  
Saturday, September 11  
12:30–2:30 pm on [Zoom](#)  
ID 810 4426 4132 / PW 12345

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### Fourth Annual Men's OA Retreat! Spring 2022

April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 1st  
More info on page 2

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### Tuesday OA/How meeting will be back face to face!

Starting September 7th  
9:30 to 11:30 am  
Bethel Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
4120-17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
See page 7 for more info or  
call Dawn S. at 612-310-1703

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### A New Quick Steps Workshop

Saturday, September 18 &  
Saturday, October 2  
9:00am to 12:30pm  
More info on page 6

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**Tradition 9:** *OA as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. Spiritual principle is structure.*

Tradition 9 is tough for many of us – both perfectionists and free spirits. Best we remember that the primary purpose of OA is carrying the message of recovery based on the spiritual principles. There are no set rules for length of time or agenda for our meetings. Each group decides these things by using a group conscious process. Discussion occurs and the fellows decide what is best for the meeting, bearing in mind that our OA recovery message should not be muddled by outside issues or literature. To assist OA in things beyond our individual meetings, we have intergroups and service boards. These organize events, develop websites, prepare newsletters and literature while operating under bylaws that the organization has agreed upon. Remembering always that our Higher Power is our ultimate authority.

Each group can check in and see how well they are following the spiritual principles of Tradition 9 by answering the following questions: Does our group support those who do service or are we critical of them and suspicious of their motives? Are we mature enough to take personal responsibility for the well-being of OA and for our own recovery? Or do we expect “them” to take care of things for us? Do we try to understand and support OA’s service structure? Do we do our part in helping OA’s service bodies and world services to carry the message? Do we use patience and humility in performing each OA job we take? Are we aware of all those to whom we are responsible when serving in any OA job? Has our group made it a point to discuss the Twelve Traditions and how they apply to us? Are we afraid to speak up when we see Traditions being ignored in our OA group or service bodies? When doing OA service, can we trust the results to our Higher Power even when things don’t go the way we think they should? Do we practice rotation of service in our groups and service bodies? Do we discuss how rotation of service relates to personal humility and the OA Principle of anonymity? Taking the time to ask these questions can make our recovery stronger, service more spiritually based and help us grow our fellowship.

Carolyn S

\*\*\*\*\***Fourth Annual OA Men's Retreat**\*\*\*\*\*

Mark your calendar!  
Spring 2022 - April 29th - May 1st  
Christine Center in Willard, WI

This is our fourth annual OA Men's Retreat focusing on recovery for men. In the past, the retreat was a combination of fellowship, speakers, and free time with bonfires, hiking, meditation, and personal time. In addition to the beautiful scenery and wildlife on the property, there are trails, a library, and a bookstore. The Center also has guided meditation and a wood burning sauna at our disposal.

Additional information will be forthcoming.  
Please visit the website <https://christinecenter.org/> for the location and information about the accommodations. Details and how to sign up will be coming mid-October.

If you have questions at this time, you may contact  
Sasha K 763-443-0393 or John G 612-570-2181.

Please feel free to email this to other OA men that may be interested.

## The Train

Emotions can be like a train coming down the tracks. At first you barely hear the sound of the train. It may be just a far-away whistle. You might even feel the vibration of the train. As it gets closer, the sound of the whistle gets louder and then you definitely feel the vibration. That vibration is starting to send you the message that the train is getting nearer. Then you can actually see the train, and as it goes by, the sound is deafening and the vibration rocks you to your core. As it passes, the sound and vibration start to fade. That uneasy feeling becomes more tolerable. Then it is gone, and your body feels peaceful again.

This is the same thing that can happen to us when experiencing our emotions. If we just hang in there, the discomfort will ease. Sometimes it might take crying, screaming, pounding a pillow, a call to a professional or support fellow, prayer, meditation, or music, **but it will pass**. It won't ever pass if we eat over this discomfort, trying to numb ourselves with food. Most often we will feel shame, self-hatred, and disgust. We just can't believe that we did it again. So it is our choice. Hang in there, feel it, and let it pass... or not.

Anonymous

## **“Hi Teri! How are you?”**

I did NOT care to tell others how I was. Because I hadn't checked in with myself, I did not know how I was. I felt ambushed by the question and then irritated that anybody would ask such a personal question and interrupt my more important thoughts.

Today I do check in with myself. On waking, I write my gratitudes. I feel grateful, on the positive side of the bed. Later I say the Serenity Prayer, promoting my willingness to do things differently. I end the day with a 10th Step, kind of a wrap-up on the day's events.

I do have strategies to help me handle my emotions. Food is not the go-to to calm me, to energize me, to distract me from living more fully. I am more invested in recognizing my emotions now. Feelings are signals when something is getting in my way, grabbing my attention. So I investigate: What am I feeling? When did it start? Was there a trigger? When will it end? Feelings do end.

My feelings have sometimes come in a flood, sometimes in waves, sometimes in a short burst of spray. Whatever - I can notice them, process them, and then dismiss them, thanking them for their usefulness in that moment. What I don't have to do is stay mired in feelings, drowning in self-pity and resentment. My feelings can be dismissed.

I can dismiss those feelings by:

- Speaking to a fellow who will listen without judgment. This allows some feelings to evaporate without further ado.
- Writing down what I am feeling. Words captured on paper lose some of their hostility and pain, become more neutral, objective. I am not the feeling. I am merely having the feeling. The feeling I am holding is ... I can let it go.
- Breathing. I don't have to react or withdraw or lash out. I can use a grand pause. Count to 10. Breathe again. Pray with words and thoughts of a greater goodness. Then act.
- Keeping up with rest, sleep, exercise and stay present in the world of nature. Stay out of my head. In the short term, hold an ice cube, pet my cat. Get in touch with something real.
- Knowing that it is ok to have uncomfortable feelings, that I can trust myself to get through them.
- Enjoying creating something new or being a new self. Rearrange the furniture. Find new feelings and practice them. Exuberance? Calm? Compassion? Kindness?

Feelings arise from some threat to my safety, real or in my head. My thoughts can instigate feelings. Sudden feelings can trigger old thoughts. I can freeze and get lost in a loop of resentments and grudges and anxiety. Down the rabbit hole. So keeping my abstinence is crucial. I am stronger, ready to tackle the monsters of fear and self-pity. Practicing abstinence 24/7 is my conditioning program. I have the mental clarity to recognize that I don't have to be derailed by emotional highs and lows. Emotions have power, but so do my thoughts. I can get back on track. I do care about my feelings, whatever they are. They are mine without apology. I want to experience joy. And grief is welcome too when it reflects my deep love and the sadness of loss.

So, how am I doing? Better.

Teri L

# R

## Regarding

# R

## elapse ...

Welcome to 'Regarding **R**elapse' – a monthly column on the topic of relapse. We will be sharing tools, thoughts on relapse, personal stories on recovery from relapse – and more! This month we will read things that have helped others recover from relapse as we introduce *What people are saying about...*

We asked some of our speakers, "What thing or things contributed to your relapse?" Below are the responses we received.

- The thing that contributed to my relapse was my ego, thinking I knew what was best for me. I just hadn't fully surrendered. (Joni)
- I stopped making time for prayer, meditation, and listening to my favorite recovered speakers. I also fell into a diet mentality that made food a central focus. (Christina)
- Thinking...it started in my head. I told myself I didn't need to do this anymore. I lost my weight and now I can do this on my own. I told my sponsor I didn't need to call her anymore and I literally gave my abstinence away. It did not take long for me to disconnect from the program and God. My disease gave me a full refund plus more in a very short time. The insanity and weight returned plus more, and I was back again in the disease. My disease is progressive and life taking. THINK before giving it away. (Barbara M)
- Being codependent in a romantic relationship and not wanting to displease him by eating foods that I wanted to eat and knew that he would not like. I think that was the beginning of the fall from grace. Because I started changing my food, I started changing the chemical make up in my brain. Therefore, I was not thinking clearly, and I was very vulnerable to eating trigger foods and then ultimately, it was just a matter of time before I went back out into the food. (Meg)
- My 13-year relapse began when I thought I didn't need OA anymore. After all, I looked good, having lost 40 pounds and thought I could now eat "normally". Eating "normally", as defined by me, meant whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted. It wasn't long before my weight started to rise as I soothed my emotions and fed my "not enough" dragon. I dragged myself back to OA 100 pounds overweight, unhealthy and spiritually bankrupt. I found I needed concrete guidelines and a support group doing what I needed to do. Not my way anymore, because my way led me down a very dark unhappy path. I needed – *together we can*. (Carolyn S)

- These are the things that contributed to my relapses.
  1. God was not a priority in my life.
  2. I changed my food plan without talking to my sponsor about it. I began sponsoring myself! VERY DANGEROUS!
  3. I didn't work the Steps with my OA sponsor. I didn't think I had to because I worked the Steps in another program and that work would carry over into my OA recovery and program, WRONG!
  4. I quit going to OA meetings on a consistent basis.
  5. I justified and rationalized foods I was eating that caused me to have cravings and obsession and wouldn't be honest about it.
  6. I was incredibly dishonest about feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that I was having about the food, people, places, and things in my life. I didn't talk to with my sponsor or anyone about them.These were the main things that lead to relapses I had in my life and kept me in relapse and in and out of OA for 17 years. (Jan H)
- I lacked the willingness to do what I needed to do. I had to become willing to let go of eating certain foods and eating behaviors. While I did quite a few things for my recovery, I didn't do them consistently. Abstinence was not the most important thing in my life. I was not 'all in.' (Annette)

**AnonymoUs**

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***Recovery from Relapse*** meeting information:

Thursdays 6pm Central – Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87100236034?pwd=d3ZsYThSTDViYm1JWlk0RWWhLWE9Kdz09>

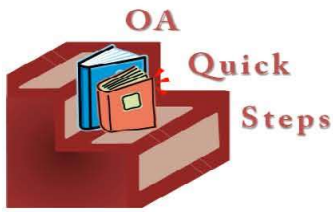
Meeting ID: 871 0023 6034 Passcode: 93D9ie

Or call 312-626-6799 Same ID Passcode: 546650

For more info contact Annette 763-447-5688

email [aprlovesoa@gmail.com](mailto:aprlovesoa@gmail.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 18, 2021  
and Saturday, October 2, 2021  
Time: 9:00 am to 12:30 pm (CDT)**

**Location**

**These sessions will be on Zoom.**

**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 and work**

To register, contact  
[unityquicksteps@gmail.com](mailto:unityquicksteps@gmail.com).

Registration is required as **class size is limited**. The zoom link will be sent to registrants

You will need to have a sponsor or someone who can listen to your 5th Step.

There are no fees for this workshop, but we encourage a 7th Tradition donation to Unity Intergroup.

Time commitment is two Saturday sessions, plus homework. We expect participants to attend both sessions. ***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.**

## Strong Routines

I was recently asked the question, "What strategies do you use to handle uncomfortable feelings and stay in recovery?" First, acknowledging that I still need comfort has been an eye opener. Before recovery, avoidance of feeling was my only mode of operation and of course that was accomplished by turning to food. In a couple of weeks, I will celebrate 16 years of abstinence while maintaining a large weight loss. During these last few years, I have gone through the death of both parents and a heart wrenching walk with a child in addiction. These have been some of the most painful events in my life, and yet I sit here feeling great joy. How can this be? Good question. I have kept my eye on Step One, believing with all my heart that I am powerless over food and knowing that first bite will not fix anything. I have learned that solitary walks, sharing my pain out loud with another human and daily journaling have helped me let these feelings pass through my heart with little to no damage. In fact, there is a strength that seems to emerge after great pain. Strange phenomenon but true for me. The most powerful strategy to combat these uncomfortable feelings has been continued daily contact with my Higher Power. I've found these strong routines help not only IF weakness happens, but WHEN it happens. I truly visualize walking arm and arm with my fellows and developing a great sense of gratitude.

Billie Jo

## Tuesday OA/HOW

**The Tuesday OA/HOW meeting will be going back to in-person, face to face meeting, starting September 7<sup>th</sup>. The church's COVID policy is vaccinated people do not have to wear masks unless there are unvaccinated children around, then everyone needs to wear a mask. Unvaccinated people as asked to wear a mask.**

**Tuesday OA/How Meeting  
9:30-11:30am  
Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church  
4120- 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407**

**Please contact Dawn S. at 612-310-1703 if there are any questions**

**THE NINTH TRADITION OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS:** “OA, as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.” The spiritual Principles connected to Step Nine is STRUCTURE.

Now, for those of us who appreciate organization, smooth running of presentations, no errors being made, the first part of Tradition Nine “OA, as such, ought not be organized” is scary. We find comfort in organization and rules of order being followed. It makes sense. So why did the founders of AA and those of OA adopt this style of operation? Well, perhaps it is because we also have the other traditions as guidelines. In particular, the two that most relate to Tradition Nine are: TRADITION TWO: “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” TRADITION FIVE: “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.”

Review of the materials about Tradition 9 in the OA 12 & 12 (second edition p. 145) lends some understanding about this Tradition. It states, “What this Tradition encourages us to do is remain as free as possible from the bureaucracy that tends to form around organizations. In such instances, the organization and administration take on a life of its own and it obscures the real purpose of the group.” As a person who has been alive for 67 years, I have been a member of multiple groups, including work groups. I have seen up close when a group gets bogged down with organization and administration. Yes, indeed, I have seen groups started with lofty and worthwhile goals become more focused on the how things get done “properly” rather than focus on the what had been the intent of the formation of the group. It seems clear our founders also had experience in these types of groups. They understood that as OA groups we are to focus on one thing: carrying our message of recovery based on spiritual principles. We may have less than flawless meetings, but our meetings should not lose sight of our primary goal and as a group we must trust the process of a Higher Power who is expressed in a group conscience. Seems as though this is sound reasoning.

Dorie R.



## **A Message from the Unity Chair - Football and OA**

Hi Everyone,

I'm Lori K your Unity Intergroup Chair. I want to thank each and every one of you for all you do for your groups and for Unity Intergroup. We are all in this together, and we could not do any of this without you. Just like a football team working on carrying that football to the goal line to make a touchdown and score, that's what Team OA Unity Intergroup is doing to carry the message. This past Saturday we had a Sponsorship Workshop and a big thanks to all that did service and those who attended both in-person and virtually. On October 16 and 17 from 9am-noon there will be a workshop on the Traditions and our relationships, with some very helpful ways to apply the Traditions to our everyday lives. This workshop will be by ZOOM only. In June we had a great Big Book Study by ZOOM with Lawrie C and those recordings are on the Unity website, along with the Prayer and Mediation Workshop. And don't forget our upcoming Quick Steps Workshops coming again on September 18 and October 2 by ZOOM.

I want to thank all those who have done so much to carry the message to those who still suffer. That's what Unity Intergroup is all about. We have so many great Unity Intergroup representatives from your individual OA groups who are sharing ideas and doing service to make these many events happen. Please check with your group if you have a Unity Intergroup representative. We want all the OA groups in Unity to have a say in what's happening in the Intergroup. If you don't have a Unity Intergroup representative, how about bringing it up to your group and ask if anyone is willing to do this service? We meet once a month on the second Saturday of the month from 12:30 to 2:30pm. And we even have a featured speaker every month at the beginning of the meeting. Perhaps a group could alternate between members to attend the Intergroup meeting. We want all groups to have representation. And even if you are not a Unity representative, anyone can come to our Intergroup meetings. All are welcome!

Just to put a plug out there for service positions, we have Unity Intergroup elections coming up in January. Requirements include attending at least 3 Intergroup meetings to get a feel for what Intergroup is about as well as one year of abstinence. I will have to say that I never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would be doing any type of service at the Intergroup level other than being a group representative. However, last January when the elections were happening, I sat back and waited for others to step up. I had attended about 4 to 5 Intergroup meetings at that point. There was an urgent need for someone to take over as chair, and thanks to ZOOM I was able to help out. I live in the middle of Wisconsin, and it was not an option with my work schedule to drive 3 hours one way to an Intergroup meeting. But thankfully ZOOM made it possible.

Being Unity Chair has helped me to grow in my program by giving back what was given so generously to me. I will say that I have a great team to work with, since

technology is not my cup of tea, but other members of the Board have helped me. I could not have done it without them. Thanks Team OA Unity Intergroup!

My role isn't as hard as it sounds. Basically, we have a Board meeting one week before the Intergroup meeting for agenda items. I lead the Intergroup meeting and I review the upcoming newsletter, upcoming financial reports, and meeting minutes. I send them to be placed on Constant Contact, so everyone can see what's happening at Unity. I also make sure that our World Service delegates and Region 4 representatives are signed up for the business events and reimbursed for their expenses, along with other business details. When I can, I try to ZOOM into the Region Community Conversations held every third Sunday of the month at 5pm. If I can't, I ask another person from Unity Intergroup to go, so Unity has representation at the regional level. I never imagined that I could do all of this, but I do with help from all of you, my fellow teammates.

So please consider what ways you could be of service beyond your own personal group and come join us at Unity Intergroup. Whether that means as a board member, as a Unity representative or serving on a committee by putting a workshop or event together. We would love to bring back the Minnesota State Convention either virtually this year or maybe as a hybrid of in-person and virtual in 2022. Any group or person is welcome to pick up that service ball and help carry the message of recovery. You have so much to offer, and we would love to welcome you. We can work together to score a touchdown, reaching out to those still suffering compulsive overeaters. I used to be one of them and thanks to others I'm now on Team OA. Come join our Team, and let's help others be winners too. Go OA!!! Go Unity!!!

Yours in loving service,

Lori K- Unity Intergroup Chair