



November 2021

# Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

## News and Noteworthy

### Upcoming Unity Intergroup Elections!

Unity Intergroup has elections coming up in January for 2022. Please join us for our monthly speaker and then find out about the many Unity Intergroup service positions that are available. Everyone is welcome! Saturday, November 13 12:30–2:30 pm on [Zoom](#) ID 810 4426 4132 / PW 12345

**The Unity Intergroup Bylaws have been amended. Please review the changes online. There will be vote on the changes on Saturday, December 11 at the Intergroup meeting.**

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

### Relapse Recovery Meeting

Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm CT  
Zoom ID: 871 0023 6034  
Passcode: 93D9ie or  
Call 312-626-6799, Same ID,  
Passcode: 546650  
Contact Annette for info:  
[aprlovesoa@gmail.com](mailto:aprlovesoa@gmail.com)

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

April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 1st  
More info on page 7

## Step 11

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

“The spiritual principle is spiritual awareness.”

When I was in active addiction, I didn't believe in God because I couldn't see him. I considered myself an agnostic. I attended meetings where I would hear passages cited from the AA Big Book that implied my recovery is dependent upon my spiritual wellbeing and/or relationship with a Power greater than myself. I then had a spiritual experience while in treatment which led to my spiritual quest for a Higher Power.

I read some books on prayer and meditation. I thought meditation was reserved for gurus and monks. I didn't know that I could meditate but I can! Meditation helps center and relax me. When I am quiet, I can better hear my Higher Power's still, small voice.

One thing that stands out for me in this Step is “praying only for knowledge of His will for me.” In the AA Big Book (p. 87), it states we “are careful to make no request for ourselves only.” This can be a challenge for this compulsive overeater who tends to be selfish.

I have come to believe that my Higher Power's will for me is abstinence. I think as long as I am abstinent and working the Steps one day at a time, I am in my Higher Power's will. My Higher Power wants me to be happy, joyous, and free. With abstinence, the Tools and Steps of the program, this can be accomplished!

My prayer is for the still suffering compulsive overeater to find recovery, with subsequent freedom from bondage with food.

Sue R.

## Tradition 11

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.”

There is a lot to unpack in this Tradition, so I decided to focus on anonymity. When I first came to OA, I was told that working the program required honesty and humility. I knew I wasn't honest, but I was certain that I was humble. After all, I had low self-esteem, didn't I. The truth was I didn't know what humility meant. Eventually I grasped the idea while working the tools and Steps of the program. But when I chose to do service for our Intergroup, Region 4 and World Service, I learned a whole new set of lessons.

*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* says the spiritual principle of Tradition Eleven is “the spirit of anonymity.” And the Tradition of anonymity is sacrifice. This sounds a bit dramatic, but it's true. In my addiction, I spent my life using a measuring stick to qualify my worth. Was I too fat, too dumb, too smart, better than him or her because I was a martyr or was I simply a failure? This is insanity. Once I found some sobriety, had I felt I was the queen of World Service or a celebrity or did my best to be the go-to-gal of all wisdom, I couldn't be of service to anyone. It's the same measuring stick and the same insanity. There are no queens or kings or celebrities in this program. Just people.

After twelve years of back-to-back abstinence, I relapsed. I never thought I would because I love this program. But I gained enough resentment and fear to leap into the nightmare that is my disease. If I had been touted as a celebrity or guru of OA, I would have disappointed a lot of people and many more would have thought OA was just another diet program. I need this Tradition to remind me that it's my fellowship and my Higher Power that saves me from myself.

We use this Tradition to reach out to the still suffering addicts and people who relapse. We do this by letting them know we are here and always will be here. We answer questions and tell them of our own experience if they ask. Most of all we treat them with respect and compassion. There is no room for judgement or shame in this program. We all have clay feet.

As *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous* says, “We carry the message best when we share frankly what OA is and what our own experience has been. In respecting the Eleventh Tradition, we respect the right of others to choose OA for themselves.”

Jane S.

# Join us 4 fun and games

## Region 4 presents...

### I.D.E.A. DAY 'Fun Upbeat Night'

Saturday, November 20, 2021  
7:00 – 8:30 PM Central Time

### Meet us on Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87171086252?pwd=OEplJYjZPQ2NQOVdJamhGQmF4djUzZ09>  
Meeting ID: 871 7108 6252  
Passcode: 486799



# Fellowship Get your party on! Freedom from humdrum

fppt.com

## Celebrating Community: Region 4 I.D.E.A. Day/Fun Night: "Fun, Fellowship & Freedom from Humdrum!" Get Your Party On!

### Q. What's 'more fun' than a fun night?

A fun night with your Region 4 community.

### Q. What is Region 4?

Region 4 is a collection of intergroups from the Midwest area that group together to support one another. The Region 4 Assembly is made up of representatives from these intergroups whose sole purpose is to support all of our intergroups.

### Q. Why do you say Region 4 Community?

We want everyone in Region 4 to feel as though they are a part of a wonderful community doing wonderful things for Overeaters Anonymous and for the members of the Region. Remember – 'together we get better.'

### Q. What's going to happen at this fun night?

We are going to play games – Fun Trivia and Bingo, and of course, we will laugh. Better still, there will be PRIZES! They will be silly prizes, but who doesn't love to win a prize? I know I do!

### Q. Who will be at this event?

Region 4 friends, old and new, and those we have yet to meet. Attending an event like this is a great opportunity to meet new people from other states and provinces thus, expanding our recovery circles. Please be sure to spread the word to all your OA buddies – the more, the merrier!

### Q. What does it cost and how do I register?

This event is **FREE**, and there is no need to register. Simply click on this [LINK](#). The meeting number is 871 7108 6252, and the passcode is 486799.

### Q. When is this event?

Our fun night is on I.D.E.A. Day – November 20<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 8:30 pm.

### Q. Will you be there?

I know I will – will YOU?

## Grateful for the Gems

I am so grateful to have attended the recent Overeaters Anonymous virtual workshop “Improving Relationships with the Twelve Traditions”. I was familiar with expanding the ideas described in the Traditions beyond the OA meeting itself—to use them in all relationships. So, I was expecting reinforcement of that idea and I am grateful that the webinar went well beyond this.

In addition to sharing about some core ideas of the Traditions themselves, the presenters talked about the spiritual principles in each Tradition, and then linked that spiritual principle to the corresponding Step principle. This was followed by journaling questions and helpful sharing. For example, there was a discussion of the importance in Step 4 (Spiritual Principle: Courage) and Tradition 4 (Spiritual Principle: Autonomy) of having the **courage** to embrace our character assets as well as our defects, so that we can learn to use our **autonomy** without harming others. Participants were referred to further discussion of character assets in the OA 12 & 12, 2nd edit, page 36.

As usual in OA sharing, there were little one-liner gems:

- "Diarrhea of the pen prevents constipation of the brain."
- "I abstain from **recreational** sugar."
- "Steps 6 & 7 are the fulcrum of the program on a linear basis to keep my program in balance."
- "I remember a speaker getting tongue-twisted and instead of stating that we are trusted servants, said 'we are twisted serpents'".
- "The purpose of service is to bring up every character defect I own."
- "If you are engaged in a 12-Step program, you are working on a PhD in spirituality." (By a clergy person).
- "When you put yourself on an OA pedestal, remember what pigeons do to figures on pedestals."
- "I need to be humble because I may be to another person that difficult personality that s/he can't stand."
- "**H.O.P.E.** = **H**ang **O**n; **P**ain **E**nds or **H**onesty/**H**umility, **O**pen-mindedness, **P**atience/**P**rayer/**P**erseverance, **E**nthusiasm/ **E**xperience."

Of course, as with any 12 Step speakers, including my thoughts in this article, the sharing was their own experience. We are free to “take what we liked and leave the rest”. I “took” an awful lot from that workshop.

Kathy M.

## Upcoming Unity Intergroup Elections January 2022

We need you and you need us. Together we can reach out our hands to help those still suffering inside and outside the rooms of OA. Unity Intergroup can't do it without you.

How can you help? One way is to become a representative to the Intergroup from your meeting. Every OA meeting can have two representatives participate in Unity Intergroup. You can be one of them. You can be the voice of your meeting, you can vote on important issues, and you can provide information back to your meeting about the many projects that the Intergroup is doing.

Other fun opportunities for individuals and groups include creating a workshop, helping with Quick Steps, hosting retreats, and planning the MN State convention. Our newsletter is also looking for individuals and groups to write articles for upcoming months. There are plenty of service opportunities and it's lots of fun working together to help others.

For those who are already a part of Intergroup, there are openings for Region 4 representatives and World Service delegates. Unity Intergroup has about 60 meetings listed as members, so we can have one delegate for every 10 meetings. We could have up to 6 delegates attend World Service, but currently we have only two. For anyone interested in becoming part of the Unity Intergroup Board both the chair and co-chair positions will be open. One year of abstinence, attendance at three Intergroup meetings and an interest in making a difference make you eligible for these positions.

Please join us at our next Unity Intergroup meeting on Saturday, November 13 at 12:30pm and find out more. Don't forget we also have a speaker at every Intergroup meeting. Hope to see you in November!

Happy Fall ...Lori K Unity Intergroup Chair

### A Few Quotes for your bathroom mirror.

Faith is doing things you don't believe in and getting results you can't deny.

"It's simple: trust God, keep the fork down, and follow my food plan..."

Working the program is an act of love and you are welcome to it as you are...here and now

Food plan, steps, tools, service rinse repeat

You are not the worst, you are not the best, you are never alone unless you choose to be.

When you have faults do not fear to abandon them.

*Confucius*

## Learning About the Traditions

I'm a long-time member of Overeaters Anonymous, and I guess like some of you reading this, I've had my ups and downs. I've had long-term abstinence, relapses, and even dropped out of OA for a period of time. But I always came back, thank God. When I'm actively engaged with the 12 Steps and working on them, things go much better for me, and I have more energy to be of service and to be true to myself.

While I have accepted that I need the 12 Steps to be in recovery, I have never cared much for the 12 Traditions. Of course, I knew they were part of Overeaters Anonymous, but I wasn't interested in the behind-the-scenes workings of an organization. Were the Traditions really so important that people would actually sign up to talk about one of them for 15 minutes at a meeting? I didn't think so.

The fact is, I never really took the time to understand the Traditions. As far as I was concerned, they were just about the mechanics of the group, and that was it. I found the Traditions tedious and even skipped some meetings when I knew the subject would be any one of them.

That all changed on October 16 and 17 when I attended the workshop, "Relationships and the 12 Traditions". I was not initially interested. It was 6 hours over a period of two days. I was skeptical, but at the same time, I was curious. The word "relationships" appealed to me, so I took a chance.

In the workshop, I learned that the Traditions are much more than about OA as an organization. They are about our relationships inside **and** outside of OA rooms. They are about how we conduct ourselves with our families, our careers, and our social circles. For example, Tradition 1 – "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity." The spiritual principal of this Tradition is unity, which is about seeing beyond myself as an individual. It is about respecting other people's opinions and differences, and actively listening to people whether they are going through a rough time, or just need to someone to listen to them. It's about harmony within a group, both in OA and in our lives outside of OA. There are times when we may disagree with others, and that's okay. What gets us into trouble is a know-it-all attitude or an argumentative tone which fosters divisiveness and is counterproductive. This is not only true for OA, as an organization, but is so important in our daily interactions with family, friends, and other group situations. Unity is about our "common welfare," which means it's not about me or you, but about all of us for the sake of the group.

I was somewhat confused by Tradition 11: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication." Well, thanks to the workshop, I understand this Tradition now. OA is the best kept secret, and I would normally want to tell everyone about it, but I can't attach my name to something that is not mine. I am just a part of it. By identifying myself, I could be perceived to be a spokesperson for OA, which is contrary to several of the other Traditions. In my personal relationships, it works a lot better to invite a friend or a family member to learn about a new idea or a difference of

opinion if they see the success I have achieved, rather than if I try to "sell" them on the idea. Thus, "attraction" rather than "promotion." Anonymity, which is the spiritual principle of this Tradition, helps to keep me from gossiping, or proselytizing.

Tradition 3: "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively." This is about acceptance of others, and inclusion. It doesn't require a certain weight to be in or stay in OA. It doesn't require a certain aptitude or success. It only requires a DESIRE to stop eating compulsively. If it weren't for this Tradition, I probably would not have remained a member of OA for 40 years. But the freedom to know that this was not a contest or a competitive program has given me the freedom of being myself, knowing that I can proceed at my own rate. This is such a wonderful concept, to accept people for where they are, and not where we want them to be. In marriage, it is often simply the desire to keep the relationship which dictates whether it will be successful or not. We may want to ask ourselves if we have expectations or preconceived ideas or conditions for our relationships, and does that get in the way of accepting the other person as they are? I have to work on this in my personal relationships. This Tradition applies to many situations not only in OA, but in our relationships outside of OA too.

I'm starting to appreciate the Traditions a lot more, now that I've been to the workshop and realized that in the same way that the 12 Step are a good blueprint for personal recovery inside and outside of OA, the 12 Traditions a good guide to getting along with others. A good guide to being inclusive and taking care to consider the other members of the group, even when their way of doing things may differ from mine. The message of love and service, which is at the heart of OA, is precious and it includes the Steps and Traditions equally, as it should. I'm grateful that this workshop was available, and that God led me to put aside my assumptions and be willing to learn.

Gloria F.

**\*\*\*\*\* 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.

## Regarding

### Relapse ...

Welcome to 'Regarding Relapse' – 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 offer you a personal story.

#### **A Personal Story**

My relapse(s) came in the form of on-again-off-again abstinence. The periods of time in which I was abstinent varied from 6 months to 5 minutes. After trying OA two other times, I returned for the third and final time. I was at or near my goal weight after about a year in counseling. But the obsession suddenly returned, and I knew I needed to return to OA. At that time, I made the decision to keep coming back until I found recovery. It was a surprisingly long period of time before that happened.

I immediately started regaining my weight and eventually reached my high weight of just over 200 pounds for the second time. But during that time, I was reaching for recovery. I had sponsors. I worked the Steps, and I did service above the group level (during my abstinent periods.) About five years before I had what I called my miracle, I had reached the point where I wasn't enjoying the food anymore. I kept eating, hoping that I would find the one thing that would satisfy me, end the binge, and end compulsive eating. Somehow I knew that day would never come, yet I still kept trying.

About a year later, I ramped up my program after attending the MN State Convention. This included getting off of all binge foods and working all the tools. However, I gradually took back these binge foods one decision at a time. The only thing I didn't take back was desserts and French fries. I have been free of those things for almost 21 years – thank you HP!

My willingness to change, to let go and let God came very gradually precipitated by a job loss and a couple of other things that occurred - all within a week of each other. I eventually realized that I wasn't willing to do what I needed to do (if I even knew what that was). Then I realized there was no way I could make myself be willing, so I finally gave that job to God and did things while I was waiting. Sure enough, about 3 months later I woke up one morning, knew what I needed to do, and was willing to do it.

This miracle gift continues to bless me. In many ways, I am not the person I used to be. I lived in a state of drama, and now I don't. My weight is just where it should be and has been for many years. I have grown significantly – primarily by doing service beyond the group level. That service has brought me many new friends, many new experiences, and so much joy. Most importantly I am able to accept life on life's terms- no longer fighting things I cannot change. I am at peace with myself and with life. Keep coming back!

AnonymoUS

**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)