



December 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, January 8 at 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. Go to overeaters.org.

Save These Dates for the 2022 Buffalo Retreat!

Friday, April 8 to Sunday, April 10. At Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, MN. More info on page 6.

Fourth Annual Men's OA Retreat is Coming Spring 2022!

April 29th – May 1st. More info on page 6.

Step 12: “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

“Spiritual Principle – Service”

“Having had a spiritual awakening”

I'd never consider myself a candidate to be the proverbial poster child for the OA program - if there could ever be one. But I have had some spiritual awakenings. Some have come as I've come out of relapse, and some have come as I've gotten a new insight that helped me to make sense of myself or the world. I treasure these awakenings, and I'm grateful that there's not a lifetime limit of only one.

“as the result of these Steps”

I truly believe a spiritual awakening is THE result of working the Steps. I must work the Steps if I want the hope of having a spiritual awakening. I also know that the timing is in my Higher Power's hands. This means that a spiritual awakening doesn't necessarily show up when I think it should. I just can't give up.

“we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters”

When I've gotten to Step 12, I've tried to carry the message because I've felt the joy of recovery and I've wanted to share that joy with others, especially those who are still struggling. I want to share the message that there is a solution.

“and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

I really appreciate the review of the principles that started at the bottom of page 84 of the second edition of our Twelve by Twelve. These principles seem so simple and obvious, but they can be so impactful when applied to “all our affairs”.

Anonymous

“As A Child”

Each evening I randomly pick passages from either *Voices of Recovery* or *For Today* to do my daily prayer, meditation and writing for my sponsor. A few weeks ago, I wrote on October 9 passage from *Voices of Recovery*.

The passage states, “*How does a full-grown human learn to express exuberance? Perhaps it is not possible to retrieve what was once lost, but this program of recovery comes close. The more I practice being “as a child,” especially when I take Steps Three and Eleven, the more my spirit is seized with an untamed joy demanding expression.*” - *For Today* page 356.

Child-like joy? Freedom to live with exuberance? I have always laughed a lot, but what I learned in OA was to stop faking it. I heard in a meeting that, “It is important to have my inside match my outside.” That was a pipe dream before OA. I laughed. I smiled. I joined in the fun. My inside was dying a slow death from my compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors. My inside was self-isolating even in a crowd. People were to be kept at arms-length so they wouldn’t learn who the real me was. I was sure if they did, they would not want me around. I was full of self-loathing, and I had a severe judge living in my head, who darkened my heart and soul, and kept my disease active.

Now with OA, I have dug out of the wreckage of my past. I have made space for my Higher Power’s light to shine in. With that light my soul has learned true joy. My spirit has taken flight and I have a child-like exuberance that only my Higher Power could have given to me. She wants me to be happy, joyous, and free, One Day at a Time. With this program I can truly be that. No more faking! My soul and my spirit have been lifted-up by the light of my Higher Power and by my daily connection to Her, my abstinence, and the fellowship of this program.

I am grateful every day for a program that has not only helped to find the real me but has given me the tools that I use every day to maintain myself. I like the “me” I have become through this program. I finally realized on a cellular level that “G-d doesn’t make junk”. I know, I know. I have heard it in these rooms for 40 years. It didn’t sink in. I’m not junk! I am worthy of love from my Higher Power, from others, and most importantly from myself! Abstinence is the gift my Higher Power gives me every day because I give myself to Her every day to serve in any way that She needs me.

Susan F- previously Eagan, MN -now in Boynton Beach, FL

20 Tips for Getting Through the Holidays Abstainently

Summary of member suggestions from the OA Workshop
October 29, 1997 in Port Chester, New York

1. Focus on the true meaning of the holiday or event rather than the food orgy that sometimes accompanies it.
2. Don't set yourself up to feel badly because of unrealistic expectations of what the holiday will bring. Sometimes we're with family, sometimes we're with friends, sometimes we're alone. Face the reality of the situation beforehand. For example, if a family occasion almost always turns unpleasant, plan not to be part of the unpleasantness. If you're going to be alone, face that you may face sadness. Plan to deal with it without excess food.
3. Build up your recovery bank account before and during the holidays by attending lots of meetings. Work extra hard on your 12 Steps and using all the tools, especially service. Keep in constant contact with your sponsor. The disease doesn't take holidays. Neither should our recovery.
4. Keep your OA phone numbers with you at all times and use them!
5. Know the limits of your recovery. When in doubt, avoid persons, places and things that have triggered overeating in the past. The party is not worth it. Choose to attend if you feel it may be a major problem. Remember that abstinence, one day at a time, has to be the highest priority in your life. Without it, all other things suffer.
6. From the perspective of food, treat the holiday like any other day. Our disease never takes a holiday.
7. Plan something special for yourself when other people are eating sugary desserts that you choose not to include in your food plan. Special teas, hot water with lemon, fruit, anything that's a little bit special for you.
8. Whether a holiday gathering or ordinary party, choose to focus on the people rather than the food. Pick out people and engage them in "real" conversation. If they don't want to play, go to the next one. People like to talk about themselves. Ask them about themselves, their life, their work – and really listen.
9. Try to really connect with people at the holiday table. Make food a secondary thing.
10. Set an extra place beside you (in your mind or for real) at the table for your Higher Power.
11. Remember Step 2 – It says that with the help of our Higher Power, we can be restored to sane eating behaviors. Call on your Higher Power. Your Higher Power can keep you sane, one day at a time, one meal at a time.
12. During the holidays, get out of yourself by giving service, any service, whether it's to program, to needy individuals, or to the community. Do something that may be a little hard for you, but that you know you will feel good about later. Give yourself something to respect yourself for.

13. Plan! Plan! Plan! Be proactive toward the holidays and the meals. Don't just lay back and hope for the best. Rehearse in your mind over and over exactly what you will do, particularly what, and when you will eat. Pray just before sitting down to the meal.
14. Just before sitting down to eat, or just before being served, go to a private room somewhere in the house or restaurant, call your sponsor, and commit what you are about to eat, as well as what you will choose not to eat. It makes no difference whether you get your sponsor or an answering machine. It's your commitment.
15. If you're visiting others for a holiday dinner, it's up to you to know what is being served and whether it is something that you choose to eat. Call the host. Plan accordingly. People understand others' food limitations. Even people without our disease have foods they don't eat for one reason or another. Volunteer to bring something that's good for you. The host thinks you're gracious and you're taking of yourself.
16. Remember that you are responsible for what you eat. It's easy when sitting with family to slip into old childish roles where you feel you must eat whatever you're given. It's not true. It's up to us to set whatever parameters or boundaries we need to set with our families.
17. Gratitude! Gratitude! Gratitude! During the holiday season, there is nothing as good for staying abstinent as focusing on the many things we have, rather than thinking about what we don't have. Do a gratitude list frequently.
18. How about writing a little a care or note to each person who will be at the holiday table telling them why you're grateful to know them? Leave it at their dinner place. The focus will quickly get to the real meaning of the holiday rather than on the food.
19. For many of us, the most dangerous period for our abstinence is after we have successfully gone through a difficult occasion. The insanity of our disease subconsciously or consciously tells us to reward ourselves with food because we did so well yesterday. Or we suffer some kind of letdown about the occasion. It didn't meet our expectations. Some of us feel an emptiness after holidays that in the past we have tried to fill with food. For these reasons, plan to go to meetings the next day after the holiday.
20. A holiday is not a crisis. Holidays come every year. They are simply calendar times set aside to honor certain things. We deal with the holidays just like we deal with the rest of the days in the year. You can do it. Relax and work your program the way you know how.

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 will talk about...

Twelfth Step Within Day

For those of us who have been in relapse, are struggling with relapse, or struggling in some other physical, emotional, or spiritual way, **this is our day!** Twelfth Step within has as its sole focus, reaching out, member-to-member to share the message of recovery, thereby helping our struggling fellows and, as a result, ourselves.

Twelfth Step Within Day is day set aside on December 12th of each year in which we remember and reach out to those members we know are having difficulty with abstinence or in dealing with life.

There are any number of ways that we can put our Twelfth Step to work. Here are some examples:

- Call/text/email members of your meeting who you haven't seen in a while. Invite them back to the meeting.
- Call/text/email members that you know are having difficulty remaining abstinent or are dealing with an overwhelming life issue.
- Attend a Unity Intergroup meeting (currently on Zoom) and share what's happening with your group. Invite a friend to attend with you.
- Share your experience, strength, and hope at one of our monthly Unity Intergroup meetings (the 2nd Saturday of each month, 12:30 – 2:30.)
- Welcome or call/text/email returning members, newcomers, or visitors to your meeting.
- Join the newly-forming Outreach Committee – it's a great experience, helps you grow, and is a wonderful way to carry the message of recovery. This is just a sampling of opportunities to reach out and help each other. 'Together, we get better.'

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

******* 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.

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

Save the Date for the 2022 Buffalo Retreat!

From the Newcomer to Recovered

Friday, April 8 to Sunday, April 10

At Christ the King Retreat Center
Buffalo, MN

Speakers, small groups, service opportunities, fellowship, and fun!
Look for more information and a link to register soon at
<http://overeaters.org/upcoming-oa-events/>

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, December 11 and January 8 at 12:30 and find out more. Don't forget we have a speaker at every Intergroup meeting. Hope to see you!!

Lori K. Unity Intergroup Chair