



December 2022

# Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

## News and Noteworthy

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The December Intergroup meeting will be held on Saturday, December 10 from 12:30 – 2:30pm via

**Zoom**

ID 810 4426 4132 /

PW 12345#

Phone: 312-626-6799 12345#

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### Minneapolis In-Person OA/HOW meeting

Tuesday mornings 9:30 am -11:30 am

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church 4120 17th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407

Contact: Dawn S 612-310-17032-hour OA/HOW meeting

Enter through the parking lot sliding door

Masks optional

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### Circle Pines In-Person OA/HOW meeting

Saturday mornings 8:00 am-10:00 am

Our Savior Lutheran Church 9185 Lexington Avenue North Circle Pines, MN. 55014 Contact: Dave M 612-636-0287

2-hour OA HOW meeting Enter church through back door. Meeting is straight ahead.

**MASKS REQUIRED BY THE CHURCH**

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## 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.

As I was thinking about the spiritual principle for Step 12 – Service, I recalled a personal experience with service that illustrate some of the benefits. I was in the middle of a divorce and one day when I was feeling down, I suddenly remembered that there was a Saturday meeting coming up soon. I made the snap decision to go. Someone at the meeting pitched on the tool of Service and made it sound so good that I thought, *I want me some of that*. This was the impetus for me to volunteer to be the treasurer for the Minnesota State Convention. Part of my motivation for volunteering was to have something other than the divorce to think about.

The following year, I again agreed to act as treasurer of the convention. But I was told that this year we will be using PayPal to receive payments. I thought this was cool until I was told that it was my job to set it up. My question was - me??? I was not born in the computer age and could not see how I could possibly take on such a task. But I was told that I could do it. All I had to do was ask questions. I surprised myself by succeeding.

The benefit I experienced was having something to focus on other than the divorce. Serving as treasurer was great for my self-esteem too because I was taking *estimable action*. Setting up PayPal was especially good for my self-esteem because I had crossed the boundary into things that were not comfortable. I had to be able to ask questions, try things, and think. That was a super boost to my self-esteem.

I've heard it said that to have self-esteem, I need to take *estimable action*. Doing service is an estimable action – especially when it is outside my comfort zone. But the most important benefit of service is that it supports my recovery so well. If I am doing service, I am not thinking about food.

Annette P-R

## Practice These Principles in all Our Affairs

I've always said that I learn life's lessons the hard way. But this week, the Step 12 admonition to "practice these principles in all our affairs" helped me grasp one lesson more easily.

It seems that my higher power wants me practice **humility**, to accept that I am neither above nor below other people, that sometimes even those who love me get irritated with me. HP also wants me to be **honest**.

I came to these conclusions after one of my adult daughters, while we were sitting with a group of her peers, shared something hurtful that my other adult daughter had said about me. Tears stung my eyes, and I left the room to pull myself together. I took some deep breaths and decided to shift my focus away from her comment until I would have a chance to speak with her privately. I decided to be willing to hear what might have prompted the original comment and what made her share it.

Within the hour, when she and I were alone, she apologized before I had a chance to initiate a conversation with her. I accepted her apology, shared how it had made me feel, and asked her to not pass along secondhand comments in the future. We had a brief, open, honest, healing conversation, and we went on to have a great day together.

Later, when I was alone, I called the daughter who had made the hurtful comment about me to her sister. We talked about the extreme stress she has been under for several months – and how she recognizes that she reacts by saying mean things about and to the people she loves the most. We talked about the little ways in which I can dodge those bullets. We had a brief, open, honest, healing conversation, agreed that we both have work to do, and went on to have a great conversation about other topics.

Before working this 12-Step program, I likely would have cried longer and harder. I likely would have clung to the hurt, poking at that wound for days. I'm pretty sure I would have fretted about what else my daughters say behind my back and might have wolfed down massive amounts of sweets for comfort. I thank this program for helping me be humble and honest, and I thank my Higher Power for giving me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

- Jeanine N.



**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, January 7, 2023  
and Saturday, January 21, 2023  
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 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**

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.**

## Step 12

I am grateful for my spiritual growth as the result of the 12 Steps of OA. In the many years since I've been a member of this organization, I have learned to exercise my spiritual muscles by listening to others, by praying to my Higher Power, and by practicing humility and openness. It is also essential to accept my disease without judgment, and to be grateful for the fact that there is a solution to my addiction to many foods (some of which are non-foods disguised as food).

Singing is a spiritual release for me, as well as a personal gift I get the opportunity to share with others. A creative person by nature, I write poetry, I write letters to God, and I write letters back from God. All of this increases my spiritual health. To me spiritual awareness or an "awakening" is simply looking beyond the obvious, habit-forming messages I give myself or that others give me, and seeing what God has in store for me, which is ultimately much better than what I could ever achieve through self-will. God loves me unconditionally, regardless. But service to God is the least I can do for all that I have received from God.

I am grateful that I can carry this message to other compulsive eaters, and to practice these principles in all my affairs. I work with sponsees and other OA members. I actively listen, without judgment, to what they are saying. A sponsee or other OA member is more likely to accept what I have to offer when I let them know what has worked for me, not when I have expectations that they will do something my way. There are many paths and sometimes detours along the road to recovery. Mine is not the "right" or "only" way. Having a sponsor and being a sponsor have helped me to grow in this program and is the gift that keeps on giving!

Service is the principle associated with Step 12. The ultimate goal of the 12 Steps and Principles is to carry the message forward, and to help others, not only in the program, but in a way that uses the tools that God gave us to serve others. Service gets me out of my addictive mind which often fears the worst or worries about things I have no control over. It keeps me busy with thinking beyond my own little world, to see that compared to many, my problems are quite minor. I am grateful to my Higher Power and to my sponsor, and to Overeaters Anonymous for leading the journey. They give me priceless love and service whenever I reach out. And when I reach out, I can – in turn – be there when others reach out to me.

Gloria F. - Wednesday Crystal OA group

## IF ABSTINENCE SEEMS ELUSIVE - ACT AS IF!

HUH? Act as if WHAT? *Act as if you are already abstinent.* How can you act AS IF you are abstinent if you're not abstinent.

From this viewpoint, one could think that we are only talking about the food that we eat. But abstinence involves more than the food. Abstinence means refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors, and includes the following:

1. Relying on a Higher Power to get, or stay, abstinent
2. Using the Tools of Recovery:
  - a. Having A Plan of Eating
  - b. Having a Sponsor
  - c. Attending Meetings
  - d. Using the Telephone
  - e. Writing
  - f. Using OA Literature
  - g. Having a Daily Action Plan
  - h. Practicing Anonymity
  - i. Doing Service
3. Practicing an attitude of gratitude daily
4. Understanding the foods and behaviors that trigger you to eat compulsively
5. Understanding why abstinence is important to you.

While I have some of the constructs of Abstinence in place, I have been challenged by abstinence of late, and pondered how to get where I want to be. For example, at this point, I believe in a Higher Power, but forget to ask for guidance regarding my abstinence. I have a sponsor, but don't always ask for help. I attend meetings regularly, and do service, but could do more. I forget to practice a daily attitude of gratitude. I understand my food triggers and do not use them, but sometimes I desire them, especially if I am hungry, angry, lonely, or tired.

There are obvious holes in my Program. But if I act as if I am fully abstinent, I realize where I have choices and am making conscious or subconscious decisions not to exercise my choices. Thinking in terms of "acting AS IF I am abstinent," I believe that an abstinent member would consciously and consistently choose the following:

1. Ask my Higher Power daily for guidance
2. Ask my Sponsor for guidance more often, which means being honest
3. Write a gratitude list every day – yes, EVERY day
4. Use OA literature DAILY, before I reach for my phone
5. Be more consistent about my plan of eating
6. Be more consistent about my Daily Action Plan.

While I have SOME constructs of abstinence in place, I believe that if I consistently make the choices above, I will get to where I want to be. If I act as if I am an abstinent person, and do the work of an abstinent person, I will become a fully abstinent person.

Anonymous

## TRY IT.....IT WORKS

“On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

In thinking about our day, we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought, or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.

What used to be the hunch, or the occasional inspiration, gradually becomes a working part of the mind. Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it.

We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why.

If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning devotion, we attend to that also. If not members of religious bodies, we sometimes select and memorize a few set prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.

It works - it really does. We alcoholics are undisciplined. So, we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined.”

An excerpt from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, pages 85-86.