



Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Having a problem with food, weight or purging? Call our 24/7 hotline at 612-377-1600 and one of our volunteers will return your call.

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How I Had Harmed Myself...

I have been in OA two different times on two different types of journeys in my life. I have completed two 4th Steps and they have been quite different. In my first 4th Step, many years ago, I spent much time and effort trying to look at all of the others I had harmed in my lifetime and asked my Higher Power on several occasions to help me to remember a lifetime of acting on my character defects to bring unhappiness and harm to the people around me.

I spent a lot of tears and anguish on writing my inventory but when I had finished it I felt it was complete and that my Higher power had really enlightened me as to how my character defects had worked in my life and how much I wanted to get rid of them and no longer live as I used to. I was ready to make amends to all those I had harmed and felt that my 4th Step was then complete.

On my second 4th Step, I added one person to my list, and that was myself. I felt that I also needed to take a good look at how I had harmed myself with my character defects and how I needed to make amends to myself and treat myself better if I was truly to recover and be free of the compulsion to overeat.

I sought help from a counselor in doing this, as I really had no idea how to treat myself better and to love myself as my Higher Power loves me. As I have continued in the program I have learned to be better to myself and to speak more gently and act more lovingly to myself when I make a mistake or do something that I used to castigate myself for, just as I continue to work on my character defects when dealing with others. I do this as a direct result of completing my 4th Step inventory and including myself, which made me aware of my character defects and how they affect not only my dealings with other people, but me, too.

Without adding myself to my second 4th step inventory, I never would have been able to take my second 5th Step and admit to someone else how badly I had treated myself. It never would have occurred to me to do that without the enlightenment I had received from attending my OA meetings and trying to work the program to the best of my ability.

I thank my Higher Power that my second 4th step inventory included me. It has changed my life.

If I had not really tried totally to make a fearless moral inventory of my whole life, I probably would have continued to only look outward to the others I had harmed and not ever thought about how I had harmed myself.

Thank you, Higher Power, for leading me through a very thorough and fearless moral inventory the second time around that included myself, too. It has truly changed my life.

Anonymous

OA WSO Has A New Website!

The site has been updated and redesigned to be much more user friendly. Go Check it out! www.oa.org



Are we jealous of this website? Only a little...

Because Unity Intergroup Is Looking For Volunteers To Help Redo Its Own Website!

If you are interested in serving on a committee to explore a Unity Intergroup website rebuild, please contact Madeleine C.

mado@sent.com

612-385-0010

TSW Corner

Welcome to the TSW Corner, a place where you can come to find Twelfth Step Within ideas – ideas on how to carry the message to the still suffering compulsive overeater already in our rooms. Twelfth Step Within ... because ‘Together We Can Do What We Could Never Do Alone!’ For more information about ‘Twelfth Step Within’ go to: www.oa.org/membersgroups/twelfthstepwithin/

If you have ideas to share in this ‘Corner’, send them to Annette at aryan52@comcast.net.

Today, I would like to share a few hopeful thoughts to all who are struggling with the food and especially to those who just can't seem to stay abstinent. 1) Recovery rocks! 2) It is possible (even if it doesn't seem like it right now.) 3) No matter how long it takes, it is totally worth the wait!

I speak to you from experience. Recovery eluded me for 17 years – after entering these rooms! No matter, how hard I tried, or what I did, I just could not stay abstinent. I tried very hard too. I attended meetings, did service beyond the group level (during abstinent periods), had a sponsor, worked the steps, used the tools, etc. But I just couldn't let go of the food completely. It eventually occurred to me that I couldn't make myself be willing to do what I needed to do, so I gave that job to my HP and simply did the footwork while waiting. And finally, one magical day, there it was - the gift of willingness and abstinence! 1 ½ years later I am still abstinent and living in recovery. The bonus of this long wait is that I am so clear that I never want to go back to that food-obsessed way of living again.

But I told you that recovery rocks, so let's talk about that. Because of recovery, I can walk through difficult life situations, not only abstinently, but also with my self-esteem intact and with no amends to make afterwards. I have gone through a completely amicable divorce, the passing of my father and brother 2 ½ months apart (along with the grief that follows), and dealt calmly with some family drama.

Plus, recovery brings so many unanticipated gifts! The approval I chased after all my life simply showed up as I began taking estimable action. Through service beyond the group level, I am discovering abilities I never believed I had. I think the best gifts though, are those times where my experience has touched someone else, such as hearing that someone went to their first OA meeting because of a talk I did at a public information event! There is so much more than that, but please believe me when I say, recovery is possible, it is worth the wait and it totally rocks!

Where Do I Even Begin?

Being a new comer to OA the idea of step 4 was, in a word, daunting.

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

When I first read the title of the 4th step I honestly stopped reading my 12 and 12 of OA and took time to reflect what this step was asking of me. I had participated in the quick step program within a couple weeks of committing to OA. The first session the group goes through the first 5 steps and picks up again for the next session on step 6.

So, I had to do step 4 before the next session which was in a week. No pressure! But, that was exactly what I needed to keep up the momentum I had just started to begin. I am a great procrastinator and looking back I am so grateful that I participated in the program and took the time to commit to completing my step 4.

I reflected on what I was told by other OA members that many have completed this step multiple times. As they learned more about and are honest with themselves they continued to inventory over the course of years. I thought that was an amazing concept.

So, I picked back up the 12 and 12 and immediately was hit with the question, where do I even begin? To really internalize this step I needed to turn around that mirror I direct towards everyone else in my life, easy pointing out their faults and instead turn it on myself. You know what, I did not like what I saw. The 12 and 12 defines over 100 different questions to help complete your inventories.

The more I read through the step 4 questions the more names were added to my list and the more I realized the more inventories of my own I needed to take. The 12 and 12 writes that one of the most loving things we can do for ourselves is honestly look at the past. This is the beginning of emotional healing.

What I learned going through this step is that I am not perfect, I am broken and I have major character defects. But, today I can own them. I can call them out for what they are and choose to not continue destructive behaviors. I choose to take this very personal inventory, shed many tears and now I can start to forgive myself.

This step allowed me to be totally honest with myself in a way I never had been before. Yes, my inventories were long and the names were many. But, through the process I finally found a way to surrender who I am and live for God instead.

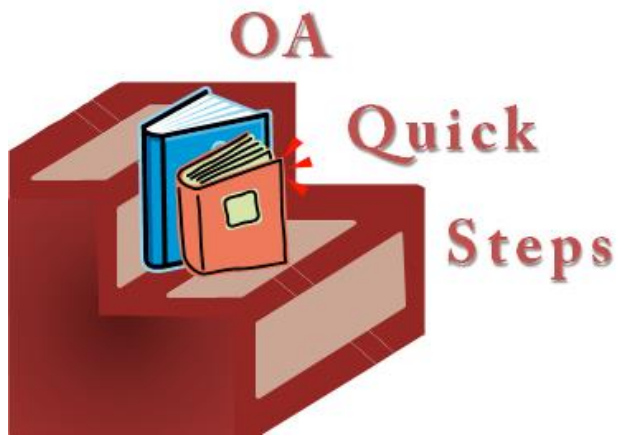
Jessica L.



MORNING PRAYER

God, today is a new day for me and with you it can be a day of abstinence. With you, I can handle anything. I ask for your protection today from anyone or anything that may interfere with my abstinence. I am asking now for your protection in case sometime during the day my desire to compulsively eat becomes stronger than my desire to abstain. I know I am powerless over food and my life can become unmanageable again. I do believe that you will relieve my compulsion and restore me to sanity. Please help me to know your will for me today and give me the willingness to carry it out. I turn my will and life over to you. Please guide me through another day of abstinence.

God, I need you.



**Are you new to OA or
just need help getting
through the Steps?**

OA Quick Steps Workshop

**Wednesdays from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
May 11 & 25, 2016**

Location

**Pilgrim Lutheran Church
3901 First Ave S
Minneapolis, MN**

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 through the 12 Steps in just two weeks!

To register, contact Gene O. at 952-835-0789 or oaquicksteps@gmail.com. Registration is required as class size is limited. You will need to have a sponsor who can help you through the 4th and 5th Steps. There are no fees for this workshop, but we will be collecting a 7th Tradition donation. Time commitment is two, three-hour sessions, plus homework. **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.

Did you know?

The Meeting Formats have been updated and are now posted on oa.org for free download.

At the February BOT meeting, a motion to include the Responsibility Pledge on the meeting formats was adopted. The Pledge now appears at the end of all the formats, except the Suggested Lifeline Meeting Format.

Also at the February BOT meeting, the revised Suggested Recovery-from-Relapse Meeting Format was approved. The revised Suggested Recovery-from-Relapse Meeting Format, with the Responsibility Pledge, is also now posted on oa.org.

Here are the links to the meeting formats on oa.org.

<https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/secretary-materials/>

<https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/group-support/>

<https://oa.org/documents/>



Tradition 4: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.

My meeting group is great! They do things the right way, it would be good if every group did their meetings the way we do. Does that mean they are all doing their meetings wrong? Of course not. As tradition 4 states: each group is autonomous as long as they do not do anything that will injure other OA groups or OA as a whole.

Variations in meeting styles, formats, and emphasis is a strength of the OA program. Each meeting develops its own “personality.” I like to watch sports on television; my wife likes to watch love stories. Just as we have different tastes, OA members have differing things that appeal to them and help them grow in their OA program. I’ve seen a number of people leave our meeting group and join another because the style and emphasis (personality) of the other group was more in tuned to what they needed. Although I miss them at my meeting I am very happy to see them thrive in the new setting and delight in seeing their

progress when we meet at Unity Intergroup sponsored events.

Autonomy also means that OA groups can have no affiliations other than with OA. This is another strength of the program, because it would be confusing if the meeting “wandered all over with conversations about all kinds of things.” Often it is challenging enough to work the OA program without other distractions.

The traditions are tried and true guidance for the success of OA and we do well to follow their wisdom.

Anonymous



Unity Intergroup presents:

11th Annual "Find Abstinence Through the Big Book" Workshop

May 13th, 14th, & 15th, 2016

North Hennepin Community College, Room CLA 120

7411 85th Avenue North, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

Free Parking, ADA Compliant Building (nhcc.edu)

Workshop Cost \$21 or \$26 (at the door) or \$16 webcast

Books/Materials/Supplies available for sale

Big Book Study Hours:

Friday May 13th registration starting at 6:00 p.m.

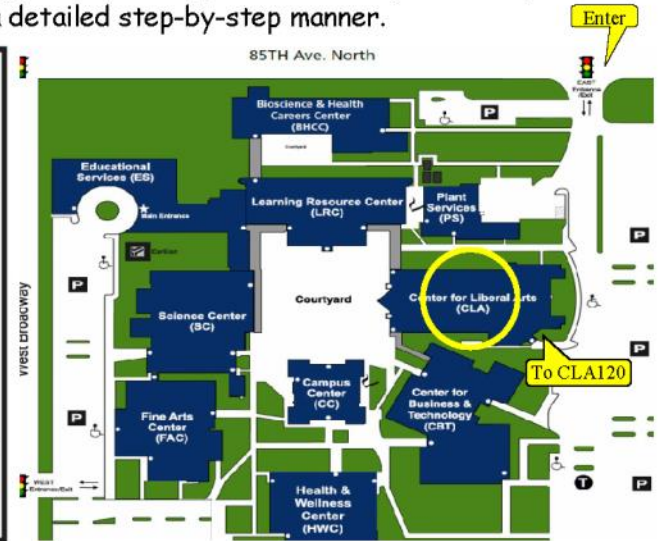
Friday May 13th Event 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Saturday May 14th registration starting 8:30 a.m.

Saturday May 14th Event 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sunday May 15th 9 a.m. - 12:00 noon + inventory

- ❖ Our Canadian host, an OA member, will lead this transforming **step by step** study revealing how the message in the Big Book applies and works as well for compulsive overeaters as it does for alcoholics.
- ❖ **"This study of the Big Book was life changing for me. I finally found abstinence after two years with the help of this workshop!" ~Anonymous**
- ❖ Our speaker also goes into detail on actively working all the 12 steps. The 4th-step inventory material available from oabigbook.info will also be covered in a detailed step-by-step manner.



- * Info - Chris just42day.24@gmail.com
- * Mail-in registrations confirmed via email only
- * Meeting will be **broadcast** live via the Internet offering a rich audio & video listening experience
- * Back again in 2016! Sunday afternoon (1:00 - ~5:00 p.m.) onsite hands-on inventory workshop. Included in registration fee
- * Scholarships offered for onsite attendees only
- * Microwave available (no fridge)

- * Historically and graphically rich presentation
 - * Please see our FAQ for more details - overeaters.org
 - * NOT Hennepin Technical College
 - * **New super comfortable roomy amplified lecture hall!**
- Register online at overeaters.org or
Send form & check payable to Unity Intergroup:
Kari E, 1376 Langford Trail, New Prague, MN 56071
karihogen@hotmail.com
\$21 discounted registration deadline is May 9th

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Please contact me for service opportunities

Onsite \$21.00 Quantity Webcast \$16.00 Quantity Total Amount Enclosed _____

Expressions of Unity

The May *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Five: "Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs" and will be sponsored by the Wayzata OA In Action meeting. Although one meeting or group generally sponsors each newsletter, we welcome articles from anyone. Please indicate if it is okay to print your name with your article and email your contributions by April 18th to ExpressionsofUnity@gmail.com.

All articles written are the opinion of the writer and not of OA as a whole or of the *Expressions of Unity* newsletter.

Come and join the newly elected Unity Intergroup in action.

All members of OA are welcome at Intergroup meetings.

Next meeting:

April 9, 2016 12:30-2:30

Sumner Library

611 Van White Memorial Blvd.

Minneapolis, MN 55411

Intergroup Board



Chair—Mary T	612-940-7654	marytunityig@gmail.com
Vice Chair—Dawn S	612-310-1703	dawnspielman@mac.com
Treasurer—Suzanne J	952-220-5358	SuzanneJ.unityig@gmail.com
Secretary—Jill S	651-739-0212	jshortreed@centurylink.net

**Conference Dial-in
Number: (712) 432-0360**



UIG Meeting Participant
Access Code: 468702#

Details of the telephone
system and keypad options;

[http://www overeaters.org/
conferencing.html](http://www overeaters.org/conferencing.html)

Mark Your Calendar...

April 9	Unity Intergroup meeting
May 1-3	Big Book Study
May 11 & 25	OA Quick Steps



Web submissions are due the **first** Saturday of each month.

Unity Intergroup meets the **second** Saturday of each month at Sumner Library.

Newcomer Meeting is the **third** Saturday of each month at Sumner Library. All are welcome.

Newsletter articles are due the **third** Saturday of each month.