



Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

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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Saturday May 9 & 23

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For this, I am truly grateful

“If we are fooling ourselves, a competent adviser can see this quickly. And, as he skillfully guides us away from our fantasies, we are surprised to find that we have few of the usual urges to defend ourselves against unpleasant truths. In no other way can fear, pride, and ignorance be so readily melted.” – As Bill Sees It, p.248

I went into my first Fifth Step ready and raring to go. As a straight-A student and overachiever, I was looking forward to impressing my sponsor with how “thorough and fearless” I had been in preparing my Fourth Step worksheets. As I read through them with her, certain I had dug up every possible relevant tidbit, my sponsor threw me for a loop when she identified the one thing I had not: Entitlement. In fact, a sense of entitlement had been the underlying character defect at play in nearly every one of my resentments throughout my life. And I had completely missed it. My denial, self-deception and arrogance cracked wide open.

It was excruciating at first, but it led me to have a profound and powerful dream that pointed out unequivocally the deep and pervasive self-hatred I had carried since early childhood and had completely buried under my disease. I learned that if I wanted to recover, if I wanted to learn to love myself and to heal, I had to love all of myself, even those parts which were twisted and deformed and, so I had believed in my state of fear, irredeemable.

For the first time in my life, I was able to release the self-hatred and forgive myself for being human, trying to grow up in a confusing world, and ill-equipped to handle life on life’s terms because I have the disease of compulsive overeating (and another addiction for which I am also in recovery). I cannot begin to express the lightness of being with which I was gifted through that process. Not necessarily all at once. Over time, I have done multiple Fifth Steps and I recognize that there are always more layers to peel away. Old patterns which persist without my realizing it. We are never done with our Stepwork. But that overwhelming (and unacknowledged) self-hatred which dogged my every step has not returned. By God’s grace I am free to live life on life’s terms one day at a time with the love and support of my sponsor, my fellows and my self. For this, I am deeply grateful.

--Rebekah M.

EVERYTHING is different, most especially ME

STEP 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Every year I have a "theme" because I have found that New Year's resolutions only last a few days. My theme for the year generally shows up sometime in February or early March. It is something I work on for the year. Examples include: "we are not in a hurry," "show up," "travel light," and "be direct."

But it all started in 2011. As a family counselor in a treatment program, I found myself wagging my finger at family members saying: "You should join a 12-step group; they are awesome!" Did I belong to one? No. And one day I saw the hypocrisy of that as I looked in the mirror and was ashamed of my body and my inability to control my weight. The theme for 2011? "I don't teach anything that I don't practice." I joined OA (HOW) on June 4, 2011 and have been abstinent since then. I have lost 90 pounds and kept it off for 3 years. I am down 8 clothing sizes.

My weight loss is nothing short of a miracle. As you know, however, it is not the best part of OA; "we come for the vanity and stay for the sanity." My life is entirely different today than it was four years ago. EVERYTHING is different, most especially me. I now have a clear mind, a soft heart, and a strong body.

Working the 12-steps has been the best "therapy" I have ever done... and, as a therapist, I am transparent with my clients both that I am in recovery and that my belief is that the steps are a great way of life. Much of the

change in my life stems from my fifth step. It was important for me to acknowledge everything to my Higher Power and my sponsor, yet I think it was most necessary for me to hear it.

Although I approached the fifth step with fear and trepidation, shame and guilt, I found it to be one of the most uplifting and eye-opening experiences of my life. My ego became right-sized; I realized that I am no more special and no more wretched than my fellows. My shame was lifted when my sponsor did not recoil from me. And, my belief and behavior patterns were revealed to me in such a way that left me feeling compassion for my journey and hope for my future.

Here's some of what I learned: 1) I let others make my important decisions for me. I abdicated my responsibility so that I couldn't be blamed for my mistakes. Inadvertently, I also gave away my power. 2) I am a drama junkie. I create chaos and then arrive as the hero, managing the disorder and controlling the outcome. 3) I am a rule breaker. Rules are awfully useful for you; I get to pick and choose the ones I like. 4) I am stubborn. Period. 5) I am competitive. Left alone, I can even compete with myself... working faster, getting better scores, etc. Now that I am aware of these patterns, I can choose healthier behaviors with the help of my Higher Power.

I am so grateful to all who have shown me the way and for those who follow and allow me to share my experience. Isn't it true? "I am not the woman I want to be, nor am I the woman I ought to be. But, thank God, I am not the woman I used to be."

~~ Jane R.

Our fears fall from us!

In preparing to do Step 5, I read page 75 in the Big Book: "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past." As I read this, I began to sweat. There were a lot of "dark crannies" in the past. The worst darkness, which I had kept secret for so long, was an affair that I had. Shame was my middle name. Depression and shame were all consuming and my constant companions.

I made an appointment with my sponsor to do Step 5. I spoke for maybe an hour as lots of old stuff came tumbling out. We prayed. I came home and read the Big Book as she had told me to. The Big Book said, "We can be alone at perfect peace and ease." I was NOT at peace. I had kept out the darkest part of my story. On page 75, the Big Book asked me: "...have we omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last." Yes, I omitted something, and I was still in bondage.

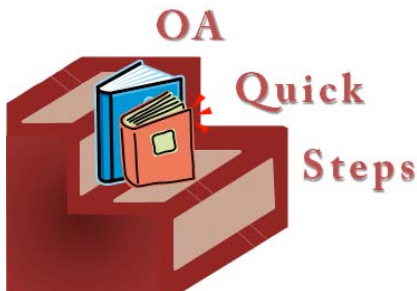
The next day, I met with my sponsor to tell her what I had "forgotten" to tell her. I preface this

encounter by saying I knew about anonymity but had not been in program long enough to trust it. My sponsor went to my church and knew a lot of the same people. I was scared. I knew I would at least get a moralizing lecture. Stronger than my fear, though, was the desire to walk through the "arch, a free man at last".

I told her about the affair. She said nothing but came over to me and held me a very long time while I cried away the shame. That was the beginning of my healing. In my eyes, my sponsor was "God with skin on" and was exactly what I needed. I knew I was walking through that "arch...a free woman at last."

Again, I read the Big Book when I got home and read: "Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience." YES! Thank you, God. Thank you, O.A.

~~Anonymous



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!

OA Quick Steps Workshop Two-Session Format Workshop

Saturday from 9:00am-12:00pm, May 9 & 23, 2015

Pilgrim Lutheran

3901 First Ave S, Minneapolis

To register, contact Julie C. at 612-558-3687 or oaquicksteps@gmail.com. Registration mandatory. Numbers are limited. 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!

For people who are new to OA or just need help getting through the Steps

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.

LEAP OF FAITH

I grew up going it alone. The person I most trusted was me. I worked hard and later in puberty began to eat hard. I think in part, because I was bound and determined to keep my pressing problems to myself. I continued to work hard at my eating career for 26 years, all the way up to December 2001 when I was finally blessed with abstinence.

So when it came time for a Fifth Step where I was to bare my soul to another I needed to take another leap of faith. I had already begun this journey of trust by admitting powerlessness, coming to believe, turning Life over and taking an inventory. But this exposing myself, warts and all....ugh!

But..."If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking" BB page 72

And I really wanted to overcome compulsive overeating. If I didn't, I feared I would wake up

one day an elderly person still bingeing and purging. That was a sad picture.

An old timer once told me that if a sponsee slips they have them revisit the Fourth Step because they probably have hung onto something that needs to be shared. My sponsor told me that our program is not a program of perfection but one of honesty. I need to be honest, or I may go back to my destructive coping methods.

I experienced a tremendous relief when letting go of my ego enough to admit my faults and come clean in a Fifth Step, be it a daily spot check or a more formal event. What a payoff if I continue to do so.

"The dammed up emotions of years break out of their confinement and miraculously vanish as soon as they are exposed. As the pain subsides, a healing tranquility takes its place." AA 12 & 12 page 62

Yes, I'll have more of that please!

Laura E

I was not
ALONE
anymore!

After twenty years of relapse I finally got back to OA (by a power greater than me) and it was the beginning of a whole new way of living. With the level of support and accountability that I saw in that room I FELT a visceral palpable change IN me. I had a deep and quiet sense of peace that I had never felt before. I had a deep and quiet knowing that not only would I do this, and not

only could I do this, but in that moment, with these people, I had just begun.

I was not alone anymore. I got a sponsor and did the work. Each day that I keep doing the work of staying connected to others I keep finding out more about myself and feeling that peace. Through actions like calling fellows, sponsor and sponsees, reading and writing, sharing and praying, going to meetings, and being of service, I can stay abstinent and thus become, step by step, comfortable in my own skin and with life.

All this because I'm not going it alone.

Before step 5, the Big Book says we gain spiritual knowledge but in step 5 "we begin to have a spiritual experience!" It's the sharing, the learning how to not go it alone, that is the difference between relapse and recovery.

Find the level of support and accountability that keeps you doing the work.

Thank you Higher Power for showing us how.

Reunión en Español

¿Usted o alguien que conoces tiene un problema de comer compulsivamente?
Le invitamos a una Reunión de Comedores Compulsivos Anónimos en español

Los jueves a las 6:30pm en Cedar Valley Church
8600 Bloomington Ave, Bloomington

Para obtener mas información, póngase en contacto con
Megan K en 612-470-7762 (612-470-SPOA) o oa.espanol@gmail.com

12th Step Opportunities

Perhaps it is fortunate for us, and for the millions of compulsive overeaters who still suffer, that most of us who've worked this program will be unable to keep the recovery we have unless we share our experience, strength, and hope with others. *(page 101 of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous)*

You can now find our 12th Step Opportunities on our website at <http://overeaters.org/12StepOpps.html>. Please consider volunteering! There are no abstinence requirements to volunteer.

Training is provided. Contact Julie C. if interested at juliec-ug@hotmail.com or (612) 558-3687.

The Gluten-Free Food Allergy Fest - Mpls Convention Center
Sat & Sun, May 16 & 17 (10am-4pm)

Juneteenth - Minneapolis
Saturday, June 20

Pride Festival - Loring Park, Minneapolis
Sat & Sun, June 27 & 28

Urban League Family Day - Minneapolis
Saturday, Aug 29

Diabetes Expo - Mpls Convention Center
Saturday, 10/10/2015

Healthy Life Expo - Mpls Convention Center
Sat & Sun, Oct 17 & 18 (10am-5pm)

Do you control your food or does it control you?

Just can't do one more diet?

There IS a solution!

Overeaters Anonymous can help. No dues or fees.

612-377-1600
www.overeaters.org

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS.
UNITY INTERGROUP

Expressions of Unity

The June *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Six “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character” and will be sponsored by the St Paul Friday Night OA HOW format 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 May 16, 2015 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.



**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>

Intergroup Board



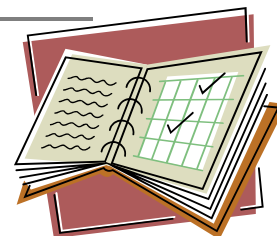
Chair—Peg M	612-280-6119	Pegm.unityIG@gmail.com
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Treasurer—Bob S	763-229-6196	bonasachs@q.com
Secretary—Jill	651-739-0212	jshortreed@centurylink.net

Mark Your Calendar...

May 9 & 23	OA Quicksteps Workshop
May 9	Unity Intergroup Meeting
May 16	Welcome to OA - Newcomers Meeting

Region 4, Visit oaregion4.org for details

May 16	8th Annual Day of OA Sponsorship
July 11	Jumpstart into Recovery-all day Big Book Retreat
September 18	Iowa 2015 Convention



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.

