



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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The Exact Nature of My Wrongs...

When I came into OA, I was very good at beating myself up for my wrongs, my shortcomings, the things I had done and the things I had failed to do.

I had created a very unloving and very unforgiving image of myself. And it was an image that was very hard to change because I kept failing at fixing the things that I thought were wrong with me.

And then one day, I met with a program friend to talk about one specific character defect: procrastination. I honestly thought we were going to talk about how well I was working Steps 6 & 7. We didn't. My friend took me back to Step 5.

I kept focusing on procrastination. In fact, I was obsessed with procrastination. I had done So. Much. Work. on procrastination. I had read time management books, planning books, and books specifically on procrastination. Nothing fixed the problem.

And then my friend asked me: "What is the exact nature of your wrong?"

She asked me what my beliefs were behind my procrastination and challenged me on those beliefs.

Turns out I didn't think I was smart enough or worthy enough to achieve what I was trying to achieve. The procrastination was just a symptom. It was not the exact nature of my wrong.

I realized recognizing the exact nature of my wrongs is sooo important. For one thing, when I saw that I just didn't believe in myself, it became clearer to me that I needed a power greater than myself to remove those defects. Which meant I was much closer to being ready to take step 6.

I could also forgive myself and stop beating myself up. The wrongs that I was so ashamed of and that I had been using to beat myself up horribly actually turned out to be much more understandable.

I've used the same process with my compulsive eating. One piece of the exact nature of my wrong with my compulsive eating is that I often don't think I'm worthy of my own care. Others are worthy of my care, but not me.

I need a power greater than myself to remove that belief and I'm so grateful to be in a program that makes that a very real possibility. Until then, I can stop beating myself up and let God.

Anonymous

TSW Corner

Welcome to the TSW Corner – a forum to share inspiration, hope and ideas for all of us in OA, whether recovering, struggling, or both. Here you will find stories of hope, inspirational thoughts, and ideas for helping you work your own program and on carrying the message to others. We invite you to contribute your own Twelfth Step Within ... because ‘Together We Can Do What We Could Never Do Alone!’ For more information about ‘Twelfth Step Within’ go to: <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/resources/twelfth-step-within/>

We welcome your story, thoughts and ideas. If you have something to share in this ‘Corner’, send

“Recovery began for most of us when we got out of isolation and into an OA group. Here we discovered we were never meant to live alone.” — The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, p. 109

Isolation had been a huge issue for so many of us who have since, by the Grace of God, found our way to Overeaters Anonymous. Once we are in this program, we become members of a fellowship in which we are always welcome, and within which we never need to feel isolated again.

This essential fact may dawn upon us with some difficulty at times or under circumstances that tend to make us forget that we are not alone anymore.

We may find ourselves, at a point, feeling isolated again, apart from everyone else, and struggling with ourselves and with our compulsive eating disorder. If we find ourselves in this state, and if we then realize that we are feeling ashamed about it somehow, then we need to remember that we are "all in this together", like a close, fully functional and loving family, with strong ties of fellowship, in anonymity. We are here to serve each other; and in that service, each of us and all of us benefit. This is not an ‘us-and-them’, ‘winners and losers’, ‘haves-and-have-nots’ kind of association that we are all part of now, thanks to the wisdom of our founders and by the Grace of our Higher Power.

So we can in fact be of service, even in our struggles, by reaching out.

The thing that I personally come back to over and over again in my reflections about my experience in OA, is that the very key to my recovery has been my willingness...finally, after so many years...to accept help, to admit that I am powerless over food, and to join hands with others so that ..."together we can do what we could never do alone" ---from Roseanne's Prayer.

What is then the value in being ashamed any longer?

Each and every one of us needs help....thus we are not alone in our struggling either. So, as and when I find that I am struggling, I need to reach out, without shame, without a sense of unworthiness, and without the thought that I am 'burdening' someone else, and therein find the strength and the renewed hope that will help lift me to experience the recovery and the new life that is truly available through this blessed fellowship.

For readers who are currently struggling, we welcome your feedback about what you might like to see in the TSW corner. We also welcome the stories from fellows who have struggled, and have then found the grace to overcome their setbacks and achieve success and fulfillment in recovery.

Freedom from the Pain of Denial.

I have given several fifth steps. I have heard many fifth steps as well. It can be a painful process. However, admitting to God ourselves and to someone we trust the exact nature of our wrongs frees me from the pain of denial.

No longer am I sugarcoating the harms this disease has caused me and the ones I love. Facing the truth about myself and the illness has taken me past the pain of regret.

It has helped me see that I don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past and get stuck in the shame. I can see how it is my illness that set up the behaviors that harmed me and countless others. I can also see how my behavior caused others to retaliate which lead to resentments.

By making a balanced inventory which included my character assets I was able to stay out of the pity party and learn to accept both sides of my human condition. I didn't have to do it perfect' but I found out I wasn't the only one who made painful mistakes. I embraced myself with an honest evaluation and could move on to forgiven myself and others.

I couldn't afford to delay this step if I was to remain abstinent. I needed to let go of the past. This was a step in the right direction.

Tradition 5: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

The big book has the long form of tradition five. Each Overeaters Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the over eater who still suffers. It is better to do one thing well than many badly. We can't afford to get sidetracked by doing other activities. Our groups fellowship is at stake.

The one thing that uniquely qualifies us to help others is our finding a solution to the problem of overeating. We can be of service to our recovery and that of the still suffering overeater.

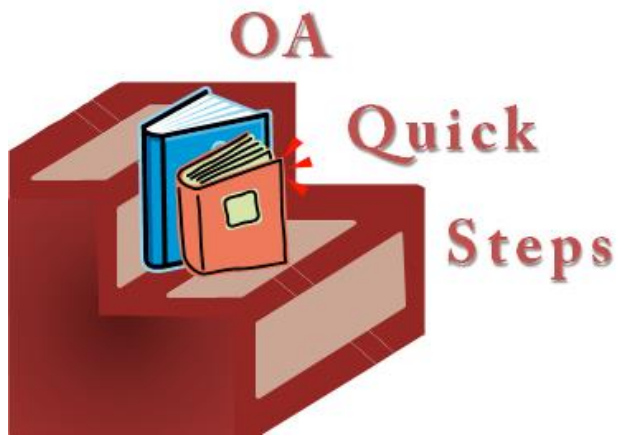
In our own meeting, because newcomers are the lifeblood of the groups continued existence, we hold a newcomers group at the meeting. We also do many other things to carry the message:

- We describe our overeating as well as the solution a program based on the twelve steps.
- We explain that ours is a spiritual solution to a problem that can destroy us if untreated.
- We lay out the tools like not eating sugar if listed in the first 4 ingredients, or 2 grams of sugar or more on the nutrition label.
- We describe a plan of action that talks about what our definition of abstinence is: The behavior of stopping compulsive overeating while working toward or maintaining a healthy body weight.
- We follow a meal plan as written by a nutritionist or in the pamphlet O.A. Dignity of Choice.

We don't do it perfect, the point is we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. We lay out the spiritual tools so that we can have the strength to stay abstinent.

If we were running a recovery house or Alano type of building we would easily limit the time we spend in group working the program of recovery. If we became a club, we might create membership by creating rules which would exclude the very people we are trying to help.

The message I employ is Kiss. Keep it Simple Stupid. Our priority has to be one thing: service to the still suffering over eater. Our own recovery depends on this.



**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**

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!

Location

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

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 5: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

Excellent advice from the AA Big Book tells us “... better do one thing supremely well than many badly. This is the central theme of this Tradition. Around it our Society gathers in unity. The very life of our Fellowship requires the preservation of this principle.” (Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 150).

It further states “There is another reason for this singleness of purpose. It is the great paradox of A.A. that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away.” (ibid. page 151)

OA has done well to accept this Tradition in the spirit of AA, as it applies to our disease of compulsive eating. In our OA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions it states: “Overeaters Anonymous is unique in offering a spiritual program which has brought recovery to thousands who have lost hope. . . .

OA will always offer recovery to those suffering from our disease as long as we remember that this is our primary purpose.” (page 145) Our OA program works just like the AA program in that: “Experience

has shown we cannot keep the precious gifts of our own recovery unless we give recovery away by sharing OA’s message” (ibid)

As long as my focus is on our primary purpose I can move away from making the program “all about me.” When I get out of my own way, my Higher Power can move in and do for me things I cannot do for myself. It seems paradoxical that the more we give away the more we can receive. I’ve learned to help my own program growth by greeting and talking to the newcomer, giving service within the program and at outreach events, and even by talking to someone who is not in OA about our program when the proper opening arises.

As the OA 12 and 12 says: “Those of us who live this program don’t simply carry the message; we are the message. Each day that we live well, we are well, and we embody the joy of recovery which attracts others who want what we’ve found in OA.” (ibid. page 106) Continue to carry the message! .

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.

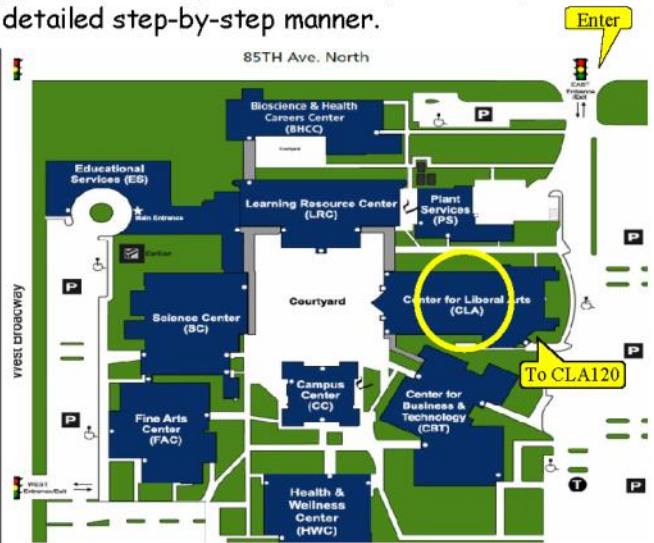
Friday May 13th Event 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

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 June *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Six: "Became entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character" and will be sponsored by the Anoka Monday Night 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 21st 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:

May 14, 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...

May 14	Unity Intergroup meeting
May 13-15	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.