



# Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

## Step 6: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

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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## I am finally ME

I joined OA in April of 2014 and last week I celebrated one year of back-to-back abstinence. This year has definitely fit the bill of "beyond my wildest dreams". I have lost 92 pounds and am nearing my goal weight. Someone asked me the other day if I feel like a whole new woman. I reflected on that and concluded that, no, I am not a whole new woman: I am finally "me". I feel as though the person inside of me who was once stifled by my addiction is now emerging and flourishing.

A huge part of my recovery happened to me while taking Step 6. I was able to identify my character defect that was still holding me back: procrastination. Even though I was in recovery, procrastination was keeping my life unmanageable. I could not bring myself to do everyday tasks in a timely fashion. Opening mail, paying bills, and keeping up my house seemed insurmountable to me. 6 months before I took Step 6 I had to switch bank accounts, and I still had not completed the job of switching over my automatic withdrawals for my bills, which meant that many of my bills were not being paid. There were shingles sliding off of my roof that I had not gotten fixed, which meant that I had a leaky whole in my roof. Piles and piles of mail littered by house, which meant that I not only had a mess, but I had important documents being lost and tasks being ignored.

Step 6 guided me through the process of finding a solution to my procrastination just as I had found a solution to my food addiction through Steps 1, 2 and 3. First, I asked for willingness and my Higher Power provided it. Then, I realized how badly procrastination was hurting my life. Next, I became humble enough to recognize that this character defect stemmed from defiance. I sought out my Higher Power's will, and saw that His will was not for me to waste all of my time and shirk my responsibilities. Finally, I focused on progress and "patient improvement", rather than perfection.

Now, just a few short months later, I am reaping so many rewards from surrendering to my character defect of procrastination. I am finally an adult. I can finally handle my responsibilities. I don't feel overwhelmed by them, and I don't act like a victim of them. I am so grateful for this program. I am so grateful for all of the amazing gifts in my life. My life that was once filled with daily feelings of deep regret is now filled with deep gratitude and joy. I never even knew that life could be this good.

I continue to work my program with excitement about my future. What else does my Higher Power have in store for me? Will I soon be able to address my other character defects? How much will I become capable of achieving? What miracles will come next? For me, the only way to find out is to keep my abstinence, work my program, and stay grateful to my Higher Power.

Lauren R.

# My Life's Work

In reflecting on Step Six - "Were entirely ready to have God remove all of our defects" I remember my early days of recovery, when the miracle of the food craving having been removed was new. As I worked my way through the 12 Steps, Step 6 gave me pause as I started to worry about \*all\* of my character defects being removed. While it sounded pleasant, I wondered what would be left of me? As I explained the process to a non-program friend, she commented that I would soon be perfect! The pressure of that started to overwhelm me. Luckily for me, wise fellows, ahead of me on this great path recommended I read from the literature. I found

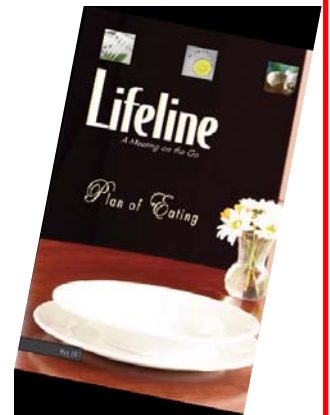
wise words like these: "This does not mean that we expect all our character defects to be lifted out of us as the drive to drink was." These were helpful words in gaining some perspective on removal of character defects. My compulsion to overeat was, by the blessings of my Higher Power, removed the moment I surrendered to program. Character defects are not removed in the same way, and we should not expect them to be.

As my years grow in recovery, I now view character defects as my life's work. My HP and I have many more years to identify, pray for the willingness, and—perhaps—see the character defects diminished and—occasionally—disappear altogether.

– "Not perfect yet" in Minneapolis

**Lifeline magazine** is our meeting on the go. But it is more than that. It is a wonderful way to give service and to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering compulsive eater or to the health-care provider or counselor who serves compulsive eaters.

This is an opportunity to see some sample issues of *Lifeline* and to subscribe to this wonderful little magazine. Consider a subscription for yourself or a friend. Carry the message by reaching out with a subscription for a newcomer, a sponsee, a member in relapse or someone who can't afford to buy it. Or give service by donating a subscription to a health-care facility, doctor's office, library or human resources department. Support *Lifeline*, your recovery and that of others by subscribing today.



## Lifeline Subscription Form

(Please Print)  NEW  RENEWAL

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### Here is my *Lifeline* order

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3 years	\$63	\$81	\$108

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**EXACT AMOUNT  
IN US FUNDS ONLY**  
*Lifeline* is mailed in a plain unmarked envelope. Please allow four to six weeks for delivery.

04/15

## 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](mailto: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-uir@hotmail.com](mailto:juliec-uir@hotmail.com) or (612) 558-3687.

Saturday June 20th	<b>Juneteeth</b> Minneapolis
Sat/Sun June 27 & 28	<b>Pride Festival</b> Minneapolis, Loring Park
Saturday August 29	<b>Urban League Family Day</b> Minneapolis
Saturday October 10	<b>Diabetes Expo</b> Minneapolis Convention Center
Sat/Sun Oct 17 & 18 10am-5pm	<b>Healthy Life Expo</b> Minneapolis Convention Center

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](http://www.overeaters.org)

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**  
UNITY INTERGROUP

# REMOVING ONE STONE AT A TIME

After all the action on Steps 4 and 5, I hit the ground running at Step 6. How do I get rid of these despicable defects? A closer look at Step 6 – “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character” – pulled me up short. I don’t remove my defects, God does. “The harder we try to rid ourselves of our defects, the more they control us.” (OA 12 & 12, p. 55). Step 6 teaches me that all I have to do (all I can do) is to be ready, to soften, to open, to let go. Step 6 doesn’t say “do.” Step 6 says “be,” and specifically to:

Be ready . . .

Ready to let go.

Ready to open my mind

Ready to open my heart

Ready “for any transformation our Higher Power wants to bring about in us.” (OA 12 & 12, p. 58)

“This is the exact point at which we abandon limited objectives and move toward God’s will for us.” (AA 12 & 12, p. 69). And change doesn’t happen instantaneously. God determines when and how. It’s like carrying the weight of a sack of stones, weighing me down. God removes one stone at a time, as I am willing to let it go, enabling me to move more closely toward God’s will for me.

Here is the story of how God has been working in my life to remove my defect of fear-based control which I practiced by writing out every public statement I made. In OA meetings, I wrote out and read the words of my pitches. I did the same in my job as a lawyer – writing out my courtroom arguments and witness examinations. To the objective eye, this is an insane manifestation of the self-delusion that I would be in control. Writing the script for myself left no room for engagement with others or my Higher Power.

As I worked the program, I began to see how this self-obsessed control impinged on my ability to do God’s will, to be of service. I learned at meetings to speak from an open mind and open heart. Through faith and action, I placed my faith in God to help me find the words that were meant to be said. I learned to turn it over, to get myself out of the way and to let God’s guidance and inspiration in. At every meeting, week after week, I practiced this new way of being – dropping my scripts. Another stone removed. In daily living, I began to see the limitations of writing scripts for my court arguments. It took considerably longer for me to let go of that crutch. It was helped by a workshop on how to be more effective – the speaker could have been my Higher Power’s voice: “Burn your notes. Jump off the cliff into the water.” I began to drop more scripts, letting God remove more stones.

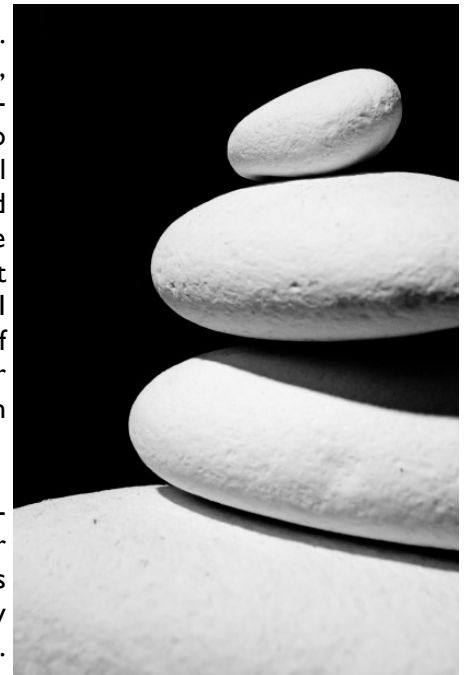
Then after 7 years of abstinence, a Big Test: a jury trial – the ultimate challenge to my fear-based instinct of trying to control the process and outcome. By then, I knew I had to rely on my Higher Power, but how? Daily seeking guidance: My Higher Power guided me every step, teaching me that the greatest antidote for fear is faith and action. Action can be a little step like to ask. I “asked” by holding two mock jury trials, testing arguments, learning, preparing.

As the trial was coming to its conclusion, there came my (Large Marge In Charge’s) worst nightmare – now in real life. My colleague who had planned to prepare and deliver the closing argument at the end of trial panicked and told me that I would have to do it. With no time to write a script, I had no choice but to rely fully on God – faith that God’s guidance all along had prepared me for this and faith that God would help me find the words I needed to say. I did my best. I looked into the faces of the jurors – just as I look into the faces of my fellows at meetings. I stood in the truth that my Higher Power had helped me to find. I delivered that closing argument for over an hour – with all praise to my Higher Power. Another script dropped. Another stone lifted from me.

And there is more. After the trial ended, my Higher Power guided me . . . again . . . to ask – I asked the trial judge if she would meet with me to give me feedback. I went without a script. I learned how I can be of better service. Another stone removed from me.

I am learning to be quiet and still, to listen for my Higher Power’s guidance and to follow it with faith and action. I am “learning through each day’s experience the difference between self-will and a simple willingness to cooperate with the guidance of [my] Higher Power.” (OA 12 & 12, p. 104-105). That is what the 6<sup>th</sup> Step is all about for me.

~~~Anonymous





# ANY AMOUNT

Am I entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character? That sounds like a tall order, even for an all-powerful being. I have many defects. I find myself asking more questions than I have answers for. Does God want me perfect? If God loves me as I am, why do I have to work so hard to get better? Is perfect the point? If it's not the point, then what is? Do I have to work hard to get better? Oh! Maybe some of this is God's job! Maybe that's what it means to turn it over! Maybe this is a team effort! Maybe when I work in tandem with God I get closer to God, just like I do when I work on a team project! Huh!

I've noticed in my nearly eight years of (imperfect!) abstinence, that what seems to matter the most is movement: any amount of movement away from isolation, away from the idea that I'm in control, away from turning to food as a solution to all things; any amount of movement toward being able to give and receive fellowship, toward understanding my hunger as a valuable spiritual yearning that can lead me toward my best self. Being entirely ready to have God remove my flaws doesn't mean I'm going to wake up different tomorrow. It means I'm willing to become different--in God's time and in God's way.



### Retreat Information:

Our theme for this retreat is: "Jump Start Into Recovery".

Our speaker will focus on Steps 1-3.

### Accommodations:

- Prairie Woods is a Franciscan spiritually center located at 120 East Boyson Road, Hiawatha, IA
- Accommodations are clean and comfortable with individual room air conditioning. Bedding and towels are provided.
- There are two twin beds per bedroom with four people sharing a bathroom (shower, sink, and toilet facilities).
- There are accommodations for a maximum of 28 overnight guests.
- Each floor has a kitchenette with refrigerator, microwave and sink.
- You may request a roommate preference on the registration form and we will do our best to put you together; however due to space available, we cannot make a guarantee.

### What to Bring:

- Your own pens, journals and Big Book.
- Good walking shoes and comfortable clothing will be useful on trail walks through the woods.
- Bug spray is optional

|                                                                              |              |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Registration Fee                                                             | \$40.00      |  |
| Meal package for Saturday & Sunday                                           | \$25.00      |  |
| Room rate @ Prairie Woods per night. (If Friday night & Sat. night put \$70) | \$35.00      |  |
|                                                                              |              |  |
| <b>Total Amount Enclosed</b>                                                 |              |  |
| <b>Make Check out to: Promises of Eastern Iowa</b>                           |              |  |
| <b>Registration Information</b>                                              |              |  |
| Name:                                                                        |              |  |
| Address:                                                                     |              |  |
| Phone #:                                                                     |              |  |
| E-Mail:                                                                      |              |  |
| Roommate Preference :(If you are requesting a specific person)               |              |  |
| <b>Please mail this registration form to:</b>                                |              |  |
| Colleen Olson                                                                |              |  |
| 460 2 <sup>nd</sup> St                                                       |              |  |
| Fairfax, IA 52228                                                            |              |  |
| <b>Any questions call:</b>                                                   |              |  |
| Jane M.:                                                                     | 319-350-5078 |  |
| Colleen O.:                                                                  | 319-432-9933 |  |
| Please check if you have any of the following special dietary needs:         | Gluten Free  |  |
|                                                                              | Diabetic     |  |
|                                                                              | Vegetarian   |  |

## Expressions of Unity

The July *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Seven “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.” and will be sponsored by the Tuesday Night 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 June 16, 2015 to [ExpressionsofUnity@gmail.com](mailto: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 | <a href="mailto:Pegm.unityIG@gmail.com">Pegm.unityIG@gmail.com</a>         |
| Vice Chair—Mary T | 612-940-7654 | <a href="mailto:marytunityig@gmail.com">marytunityig@gmail.com</a>         |
| Treasurer—Bob S   | 763-229-6196 | <a href="mailto:bonasachs@q.com">bonasachs@q.com</a>                       |
| Secretary—Jill    | 651-739-0212 | <a href="mailto:jshortreed@centurylink.net">jshortreed@centurylink.net</a> |



| Unity Intergroup |            |                      |
|------------------|------------|----------------------|
| June 13          | 12:30-2:30 | Unity Intergroup     |
| June 20          | 1-2:15     | OA Newcomers Meeting |

| Region 4 and WSO events...                                                                               |                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Visit <a href="http://oaregion4.org">oaregion4.org</a> or <a href="http://oa.org">oa.org</a> for details |                                                                                                     |
| June 14 - 2-3p<br>Telephone Workshop                                                                     | “Working All Twelve Steps to Recover: Step Six”; dial 1-424-203-8405 and enter access code 925619#; |
| 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.