



# Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

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

**Step 8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**

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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## ***NO ONE ABOVE, NO ONE BELOW***

I think back on how many times, prior to entering the rooms of OA, I was swooned by a celebrity or pulled in by a good deal when it came to a new weight-loss program. Those myriad of glitzy quick fixes that were promoted by experts seemed like bargains if my life could finally be fixed by losing the weight. Each trainer, doctor, hypnotist, and exercise guru, I handed over my personal responsibility, trust, self-esteem, and strength. I realize now that the commercialization of weight loss and self-help programs is inherently susceptible to exaggeration and glamorization. For lack of a better expression, "been there, done that" so many times that it is hard to count.

And then I think about what brought me, and has kept me coming back, to OA. It was when I read an excerpt from a book that I would later realize was written by a fellow OA-er. The content of what I read touched me deep in my soul; it felt as if someone had been inside my head as they wrote about their struggles with addiction, food, and perpetual search for an external solution. The author was not identified by name and now I realize that the person's identity was not what was important. Under the excerpt were just the letters "O.A." with the state where the member attended meetings. It was the caring power from her sharing of a common struggle and her experiences that spoke to me and that resulted in me seeking out my first OA meeting two and a half years ago.

The Eighth Tradition of Overeaters Anonymous tells us that Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but that our service centers may employ special workers. I am grateful for the feelings of safety and comfort that come from the sharing among OA fellows rather than any one person taking the role of veteran, expert, or professional OA-er. Echoing the idea of "no one above, no one below", as equals, we share unconditionally and with no ulterior motives related to personal success, financial gain, or recruitment. We are all addicts and as such, whether we are 3 years into recovery or 30 years into recovery, we are all susceptible to relapse. In the same regard, we all can benefit from the sharing of experience, strength, and hope from our fellows.

The Eighth Tradition ensures that OA has no hierarchical degree of expertise or perfection; there are no credentials or licensing that separate OA'ers. The purpose of our meetings are to share and if we individually need professional therapy or counseling, we seek this outside of the rooms as part of our personal paths to recovery. When I sit in the circle in my home group, I look forward to each "share" and when moved, I share as well. Whether the share is from a newcomer or a person long into recovery, each is a loving and courageous gift. This is non-professional service to each other and as has been often said of service, it is mutually beneficial and life changing as much for the receiver as for the giver.

Jane L.

## 12th Step Within Brainstorming Session August 8 from 11:00-12:00 AM

Cargill Room at Sumner Library, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd, Minneapolis, MN.

We will have a brainstorming session before the monthly Unity Intergroup meeting. We are looking for ideas and discussion on how to help people already in the OA program who are still suffering. There is no service obligation beyond attending the brainstorming session and contributing ideas.

The Twelfth-Step-Within Committee was created to reach out to those struggling within our rooms and to address the relapse and recovery of our members. The committee's purpose is to strengthen OA by sharing information and ideas that generate recovery within the Fellowship.

UNITY INTERGROUP Paul B 651-216-5159, p\_berglund@msn.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 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

# Harms

It was easy to think that my overeating didn't hurt anyone. After all, I was the one who was getting fat--my eating wasn't making anyone else fat. I was the one who didn't go to the beach, other people could still go if they wanted to. I was the one who didn't attend social gatherings where there were people who hadn't seen me in a while--I didn't want them to see that I had gained weight. Other people could still go. I wasn't telling them to not go. This disease affected ME. Not anyone else. Right?

Through working this program I came to realize that is addict thinking. The truth is addiction affects everyone in the addict's circle. My food addictions affected my kids, my husband, my extended family, my coworkers. Everyone in my circle.

My food obsession meant that I ate my kids' Halloween candy after they went to bed. I would fluff up the stash to try to make it look like nothing was missing. I was stealing from my kids. I ate more than my fair share of every dessert we had, ignoring protests. I was selfish. I stayed up late at night just to eat alone. My husband went to bed alone. I was self centered.

The food fog I was living in, the obsession with food that kept me thinking about food and about my weight all the time meant that I was not truly present for my relationships. Sometimes I pretended to listen. But really I was thinking about food. Or obsessing about my body image.

I tired easily. My back hurt. My knees hurt. I didn't want to be in any photos. I felt like killing anyone who ate the last chocolate chip cookie. I spent money on clothes that were too small, thinking they would motivate me to lose weight. I spent money to replenish my entire wardrobe as I gained weight and had to discard perfectly good clothing that no longer fit.

Although I tried hard to be happy, I was filled with anger and shame.

Yet, addiction made me believe I was not harming anyone but myself. Recovery through working the steps and being abstinent tells me the truth. My addiction hurt everyone in my circle. By being abstinent, I make living amends. I no longer afflict the pain of addiction on others. I am present for my relationships. Food is no longer the most important thing.

Thank GOD for recovery!

~ Susan

## Meeting Corner

Unity IG needs a Chair for the Treatment Center Outreach Committee. This committee works to carry the message of OA recovery to local treatment centers (for food/eating as well as other types of treatment). There is a 90 day abstinence requirement for committee chairs. Contact Melissa A at 651-307-2510 or Peg M at 612-280-6119.

### New Meetings:

Woodbury Monday 6:30pm at R.H. Stafford Library

### Closed meetings:

Minneapolis Thursday 5:30pm at Mpls Urban League North

Bloomington Thursday 6:30pm at Cedar Valley Church



# Willingness Comes in God's Time

Making a list of all persons I had harmed was simple. The Big Book told me that I already made the list when I completed the 4th step.

The second part of this step "became willing to make amends to them all" was a bit more daunting. Looking at the list, I realized that there were people who I had no desire to speak with again, let alone make an apology or an amends. Thankfully these rooms are filled with recovered addicts who have more experience than me. I was encouraged to divide my list into three parts. Willing Now. Willing Later. Willing Never. This process helped me realize that my Higher Power had already brought me willingness, at least in the case of those people in the first column.

Working with a sponsor, I listed the harms I had made to each person. Listing them specifically helped me gain clarity around my part in each situation and begin to consider how I might make those amends. I have even done this work on those people in the third column. Since I never know when willingness will come, I want to be ready.

Willingness comes from my Higher Power when I create conscious contact. I don't need to push for willingness. I don't have to work for willingness. I only need to stay abstinent, maintain a fit spiritual condition, and trust that willingness will come in God's time.

Melissa A.

## Save the Date

### SUPER SATURDAY

October 3, 2015

Crowne Plaza Airport—Mall of America

3 Appletree Square

Bloomington, MN 55425

952-854-9000

More info coming soon

### OA State Convention

November 6-7-8, 2015

Sheraton West Hotel

12201 Ridgedale Drive

Minnetonka, MN 55305

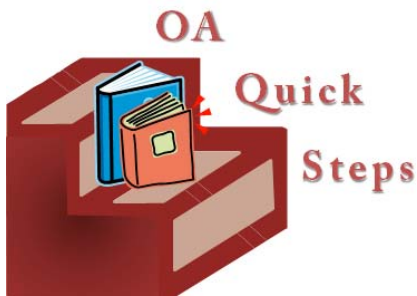
952-593-0000

More info coming soon

## *Having feelings and showing emotions*

I have been in OA for 4 months and what a ride it has been. I am a recovering drug and alcohol addict for 7 years but have never done any step work or had a sponsor. A 12-step friend told me about OA quick steps and suggested I use it to do the steps. So the only reason I stepped into an OA meeting was to find a temporary sponsor to hear my 5<sup>th</sup> step. Sounds just like an addict, right? Using OA just to get through the steps for another program. I completed the quick step workshop and did step 5 with a sponsor. Even though that is all I had told myself I was going to do, for some reason I continued to attend OA meetings. The real eye opening moment for me

was when I could not hold back tears during the beginning of the "How it works" reading at an OA meeting. The idea of those "unfortunates" "incapable of being honest" who's "chances are less than average", terrified me. The astonishing part about this was that I was not only having feelings but also showing emotion. At that point, I knew this is where I needed to be to heal. It has not been easy. At one meeting I even told my sponsor, "On my way here I was hoping to get into a car accident so I wouldn't have to come. She replied, "The meetings are that bad, huh?" I just chuckled. But I keep coming back.



### **OA Quick Steps Workshop**

#### **Two-Session Format Workshop**

**Wednesday from 6:00pm-9:00pm, August 12 & 26, 2015**

**Pilgrim Lutheran**

**3901 First Ave S, Minneapolis**

To register, contact Julie C. at 612-558-3687 or [oaquicksteps@gmail.com](mailto: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***

**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!**

**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.**

## Expressions of Unity

The September *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Nine "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others." and will be sponsored by the Friday 10am Woodbury 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 August 15, 2015 to [ExpressionsofUnity@gmail.com](mailto:ExpressionsofUnity@gmail.com).



**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>

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



## 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 Mark Your Calendar...

August 8	12:30-2:30	Unity Intergroup
August 15	1-2:15	OA Newcomers Meeting
Aug 12 & 26	6-9pm	OA Quicksteps
Oct 3		Super Saturday
Nov 6-7-8		MN OA State

### Region 4 and WSO events... Visit [oaregion4.org](http://oaregion4.org) or [oa.org](http://oa.org) for details

September 18	Iowa 2015 Convention
September 25-26	Winnipeg Fall Conference



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.

