



Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

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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Tradition 8: Thank God OA is Nonprofessional!

Tradition 8 states “Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.”

I am pretty sure were it not for this tradition I would not have listened to anything that was said in an OA meeting.

I was raised in an abusive environment, and I had a deep distrust of anyone in authority.

Either I resented the power you had over me, or I allowed your expertise to reinforce the flawed image of myself that I was inferior and broken.

When I walked into an OA meeting, no one was in charge. No one was an expert. Everyone was just sharing their own little piece of experience, strength and hope.

The spiritual insight informing this tradition meant that I had no need to put up the defenses I might typically put up if I felt like you were an authority on my disease.

That meant I was willing to listen, and thus teachable.

This tradition also meant something else: since OA was nonprofessional—i.e. none of us were experts on this disease—that also meant that I didn’t have to take on the burden of fixing anyone else.

The experience of a fellowship in which no one is in charge, no one is an authority, felt very strange at first. But I’ve found this tradition to be a key part of allowing a power greater than myself to be in charge of my affairs because I’m no longer trying to either control or keep others from controlling me.

This has done wonders to heal that sense of inferiority and my fear of authority figures. Which is a good thing.

Furthermore, sometimes I actually do need my own “special workers.” I do need assistance from those who know more about a topic than I do.

Without this tradition, and the healing effect it has had on me, I would never be able to trust the advice of my nutritionist. And yet, that advice has made a huge difference in my health.

And for that reason, I thank God OA is nonprofessional!

~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 them to Annette at uig.tswcorner@gmail.com.

One thing I try to remember, whenever I am struggling.... to whatever degree I am struggling.....

.....Talk to someone!

Even if you are painfully shy, find someone who seems approachable enough and talk to him or her on the phone, or in person at a meeting. Without any wish to put ourselves down here, we can nonetheless reflect on these words from the Alcoholics Anonymous book, *Came to Believe* (page 83, from the entry ‘Faith in People’)

With my contemporaries, I was always painfully shy, and even then I interpreted this handicap correctly as a symptom of egotism...a fear that others would not agree with my own high valuation of myself.

Unlike the writer of the above, I in my own case did not 'even then' correctly identify this symptom...instead I found a way to think of myself as even more special...a special victim of shyness... However, at some point I found the awareness to begin to see the limits of this kind of thinking; the limits that lead to a dead end of hopeless loneliness and pessimism.

One of the cornerstones of the strength of OA is the tool of anonymity, which here is deeply valued and practiced conscientiously. This means that if you are having difficulties, you can talk to a fellow member and know that you are safe, that you are in communication with someone who is there to help you through your struggles, to the best of their capacity, and that what you discuss together is held in confidence as a sacred trust.

When we do communicate together in order to help each other, I believe we then have access to the beneficial wisdom of the program, generated and maintained by the efforts and sincerity of the whole membership in OA. This great strength is one of the reasons you can feel hope that you can realize true success in the program, because you are no longer alone in your efforts; we are all working together.

When you attend a meeting, feel that solidarity; and find the courage to change what you can change by communicating with your fellows in the program about your struggle....and your success!

Willingness and Lists

I am a list maker and I'm great at it.

I have different lists for different things. And I love the satisfaction of crossing off things I have accomplished. However there were always those undone things I would continue to allow to go to the bottom of my lists and sometimes onto the next list because the first one had nothing left I "wanted" or was "willing" to do. (Similar to my 8th step).

The 8th step says, "Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

Years ago my sponsor had encouraged me to put the people from my 4th step that I had harmed and put them into 3 columns. The people I was "willing to make amends to", "maybe willing to make amends," and "not willing". It was tough work deciding but the harder work came in step 9. However to me, willingness is the KEY to my recovery. I was told in one of my very first meetings that if I had faith the size of a mustard seed, I could do anything. I was given a pin and enclosed was a mustard seed. They knew the courage it took to come to a meeting and they saw the willingness I had and in turn they gave me hope.

I have had an enormous amount of willingness over the last 15 years that I never knew I had, all because others have walked the path before me.

However, I found myself stuck in this place over the last 3 weeks. I went on my vacation with my family. I had a list of recovery things and a few other things I wanted to do in this beautiful and relaxing place by a lake. However having unstructured time as wonderful as it can be, is also one of my BIGGEST life hurdles. It's a love/ hate relationship. I love not "having" to do anything if I don't feel like it, but I am a routine person and I hate how much my disease knows me and very subtly rears its ugly head. That can throw me off course on its own. My head told me I wanted to, by my heart wasn't into it. So I didn't do them. And then life happened. I had an accident where I fell and broke a rib and got a severe concussion with vertigo.

Having more unstructured time, the inability to do things, having to rely on others, the more and more isolation sets in. This disease is relentless even when we are hurt.

On this list was to write an article for the newsletter because our group is sponsoring it this month, and to call my sponsor when she returned from vacation. Well guess what? The disease began to take over. I did the "non recovery" things on my list, but I was losing more and more of myself to the disease.

I got to the point where I finally remembered to seek my higher power who I choose to call God. God gave me the willingness to be willing to surrender. I have prayed that many times in the past, and although I temporarily forgot it, it has saved me once again.

Within a few days I got the willingness back to call my sponsor. I knew it would be hard but I knew it was necessary. I did not like what she suggested. I wasn't so sure I was willing to do what was being asked of me, which was to make some "lists" which became my plan of action. By the end of the call, more of my willingness returned and I surrendered to the suggestions made.

I am so grateful for still having that mustard seed of hope. The willingness came and God is guiding me. Because I am now aware of this again, I am responsible with the help of my higher power and this fellowship. The only way I can keep what I have is if I continue to diligently work my program. Every. Single. Day. I do not have the chance at staying in recovery and keeping my abstinence if I am not willing to do the footwork. For today I am willing, which is all I have anyway is today.

Michele M.

Grateful for Step 8

I am in another twelve-step group and OA. Step eight was one of the hardest steps I came across. I did not think that I had much fault in any thing.

I am so grateful that I have found out that I am guilty much of the time and I have learned to accept that I am wrong much of the time.

I also learned that all I have to do in step eight is get ready to put names on a list, even though they might not belong there, such as things from childhood. When I had problems, my sponsor helped me.

I wanted to have other people make amends to me before I would make amends to them.

I am grateful that all I have to do is become ready to make amends. It is truly amazing how this step helped me grow as a person. Whoever put these steps together, in this order, knew me before I knew myself.

Anonymous

I Was Looking for Another Diet

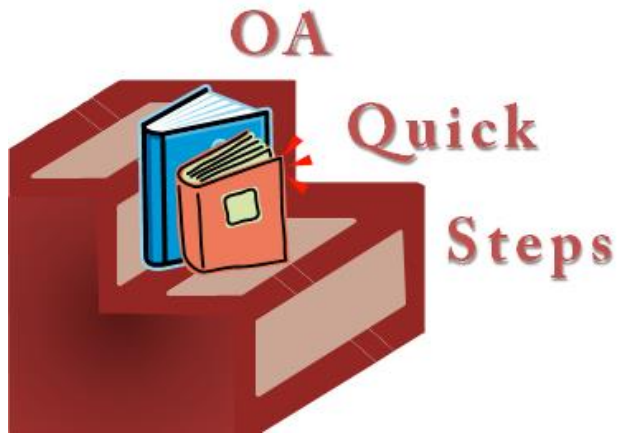
In 2013 I found OA. I was looking for another diet but didn't know it. I then lost 23 lbs and was at my lowest weight. Hmmmm, THEN life and feelings happened. I had not learned to live with either of them so I began to eat. I relapsed and quit going to meetings. I did not learn the steps, still obsessed with food and dieting.

I was away from OA for 9 months although I kept reading Lifeline and the newsletter. Believing in a power greater than myself, something happened (I felt was a sign). I started going to meetings again embarrassed and ashamed for I had gained the weight I lost plus more.

I was accepted back in the rooms by a loving OA family. Today I truly try to learn and use the steps and other tools. I know the feeling of freedom. Freedom from the food obsession. Knowing that feelings are just that. I do not need to eat over them. Let go of the guilt, shame, anger and resentments that weigh me down. Accepting life on lifes terms. Changing how I handle my feelings.....like the rain, it too shall pass.

Thank you OA! You have changed my life.

Anonymous



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

OA Quick Steps Workshop
Saturdays 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
September 10 and 24, 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

Ecumen Lakeshore
4002 London Road
Duluth, MN

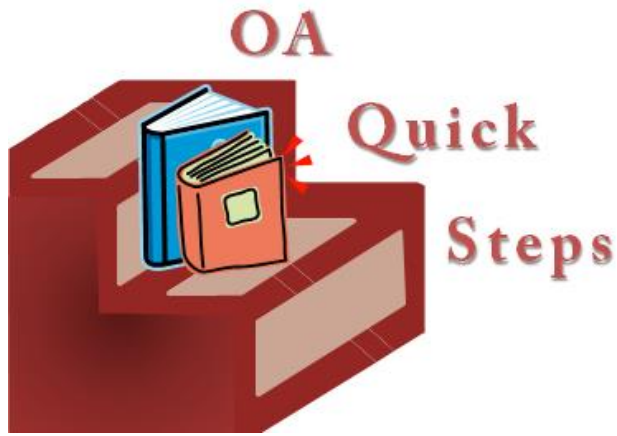
To register, contact Gene O. at 952-835-0789 or oaquicksteps@gmail.com. Registration is required as class size is limited.

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.



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Location

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

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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 Saint Paul Wednesday 7:00 pm 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 20th 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:

August 13, 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**



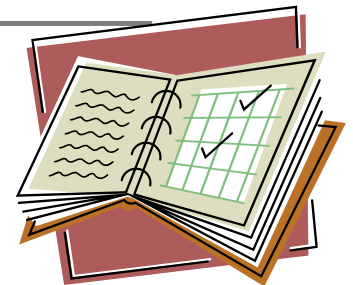
UIG Meeting Participant
Access Code: 468702#

Details of the telephone
system and keypad options;

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

Mark Your Calendar...

August 13	Unity Intergroup meeting
September 10 & 24	OA Quick Steps— Duluth
October 1 & 15	OA Quick Steps—Minneapolis



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.