



Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www overeaters.org

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

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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At first it was hard to be honest enough

I always thought I was a humble person. Doing things for other people is one of my favorite things. It makes me feel good. When I came to OA, and after many years of trial and error, I found I had to surrender my food and my life to my Higher Power, God. I came to realize I had some ulterior motives for my good acts. I wanted nothing more than I wanted other people to accept me and like me. I feared rejection more than anything in my life. Fear of rejection drove me to severe anxiety and depression.

I would agree to accept other people's requests without hesitation. If something was required of me by someone, even if I couldn't fit it into my daily plans, I would still agree to it. I became overwhelmed with worry and anxiety about how I could do it all. Many times at the last minute I would have to make up excuses for why I couldn't do something I said I would do. Not only would I lie, but I would say I forgot when I really didn't. This really hurt me and the other person. I was not dependable. I finally got to the point where compulsive overeating no longer made me feel better than the opinion of other people about me. I was at my highest weight, 216 pounds, with several relapses behind me. I had panic attacks, anxiety and depression. I was filled with guilt. I felt I was a failure in life, in my OA program, an embarrassment to my family (and myself) and especially a failure to my Higher Power, whom I even doubted at times.

When I came face to face with my problems I had to surrender to my Higher Power. I had to accept that I was not in control (even though I was convinced I was). I had to acknowledge I really was insane but there was a power greater than myself who could and would help me if I only let Him. This brings me to step 4 and 5 which I found relieved me of my guilt. I felt I could now depend on love and acceptance from my Higher Power no matter what. I felt hope at last!

In order to maintain a good relationship with my Higher Power, myself and other people I have to continue to take personal inventory and promptly admit when I am wrong. Abstinence from compulsive eating helps me stay free of my anxiety, depression and guilt.

At first it was hard to be honest enough to let go of my pride, admit a mistake and apologize. I now know it's an essential part of my recovery. It was only when I became abstinent that I had enough willingness to continue to take a personal inventory and admit my wrongs. I believe my abstinence and my serenity go hand in hand.

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.

I was just thinking about our telephone tool and how it has evolved as a tool since it was first established. When I came to Overeaters Anonymous, it was simply a way of reaching out for help or to help. It was a way to get out of isolation. Those things are still true, but with the advent of technology, it has become so much more. It has become a way to use 2 or more tools simultaneously. Here are some examples.

Phone meetings (telephone and meetings): there are phone meetings available any time of day or night. People living in remote areas with very few, if any, meetings can still attend meetings via their telephone. These are also a great resource for people working during times that face to face meetings are typically held. They are quite easy to use. Each meeting has its own phone number as well as an access code. You dial the phone number and when asked, enter the access code followed by the # sign. Some meetings have been previously recorded so that you can listen to them at a time that is convenient for you. With those meetings not recorded, attendees have the ability to pitch just like in face to face meetings. For information on phone meetings, go to oa.org and click on ‘Find a Meeting’ and then ‘phone meetings.’

Podcasts (phone & meeting): podcasts, as provided by Overeaters Anonymous, are previously recorded and focused on a specific topic – generally with about 3 speakers addressing that topic or a portion of that topic. They can be downloaded directly to your computer, or to your phone where you can listen to them any time or anywhere. People sharing on podcasts are in recovery and have strong messages. I found that I needed to have a podcast app, which I found by browsing in my phone’s app store. It was pretty easy to do. You can access podcasts on oa.org and click on ‘podcasts’ on the bottom of the home page.

Online meetings (telephone & meetings - when accessed on your phone): I have not attended online meetings, but like phone meetings, they are held throughout the day and are a great resource for those living in remote areas or working during the time that face to face meeting are typically held. To find online meetings at oa.org, click on find a meeting, and then online meetings. You are asked to select your time zone and can then add other search criteria such as day of the week, time of day, language, open or closed, special topic, and special focus.

Email Loops (telephone, writing, & meetings): Email loops have been around for awhile, but are relatively new to being recognized by OA as a whole. Again, I have not participated in one. The easiest way to find these that I know of is to go to oa.org and type in ‘email loops’ in the search.

Text groups (telephone, writing & meetings): I actually only know one such group, one that was started by a sponsee of mine. They started with a small group of members, and have added more since. Basically one person starts a group text and then each day one person is assigned to write something in the text.

Of course there are other awesome uses for the phone as well, such as texting a sponsor or sponsee (phone & sponsorship) or holding committee meetings via phone (phone & service). Recently one of the members of my meeting who had surgery, attended our meeting via phone for just that week. She was quite grateful to be able to be a part of her home meeting during that time. When the meeting ended, we passed the phone around so she could talk to some of the members of the group just as the rest of us were doing. Unity IG’s TSW committee holds its meetings via conference call, making attendance easier. Once when I was speaking to a sponsee from Wisconsin and she was trying to decide whether to

(cont.) cancel her meeting that night due to the bad weather, I suddenly recalled our committee phone meetings and encouraged her to get a conference call number and hold her meeting by phone. She did just that and they had a well attended OA meeting that very night simply by contacting the other members and letting them know.

This list is by no means comprehensive, and I suspect that more and more things will spring up. We are very lucky to have so many options available to us due to technology.

Address and deal with issues right away

I hadn't read Step Ten in a while. Even though I had done a tenth step inventory daily for many years. As I sat down and re-read it, I was struck by words such as, "continued," "perseverance," "persistent," and "daily habit."

These are all pretty strong words. They require work and effort on our part. They are not easy, but in the end we typically get results that are worth the work. Before OA I held onto resentments for years and years. I had a hard time saying I was sorry. I had an opinion on anything and everything and always shared it, no matter what. I thought I knew what was best for the world and everyone around me.

When I worked the Steps and got to Step Ten, I began writing a daily inventory and sharing it with my sponsor. This helped me address and deal with issues right away, instead of hanging on to them forever. It also helped me see patterns in my thinking and behavior as well, that I needed to work on.

Additionally, it helped me keep my big mouth closed, when I wanted to say whatever was on my mind. Step Ten helped me practice restraint of tongue and pen as it talks about in the Big Book. As a result of Step Ten I had improved relationships and my life was happier and better.

It's not easy working Step Ten, and I don't do it perfectly by any means. But I can honestly say, my relationships and life have greatly improved as the result of this Step; and the "continued," "persistent," and "daily" effort is definitely worth it.

Anonymous

I don't feel deprived

I'd been attending OA for a couple of years and not really working the steps. I ended up doing an intense step study that finally kick started me into the program. I've now learned what a food plan is and how to follow it. If I stick to the plan and rely on my higher power everything just falls into place.

I use the personal inventory a lot with my food. Such as, am I trying to give myself permission to eat something I know is not on my plan and if it's not admit I was wrong. If I do however have a slip I try not to beat myself up so much. I forgive myself and get right back on program.

People ask me a lot if I feel deprived and I let them know that I don't. I feel so much better not eating the sugar and having the compulsion that I don't feel deprived at all. I feel it is a blessing and a miracle not having that compulsive feeling. I have more energy. I no longer sit inside isolating going to my comfort of food and television. I have a plan to even go skydiving with a friend when I hit a certain goal.

When I was heavier I could never do things like that due to being too heavy. I also went shopping recently and I realized I didn't need to go to the plus size section. I came home and told my husband I was able to get into a size I don't ever remember being able to wear (maybe when I was 12). As you might be able to tell I've been overweight my entire life.

I am so thankful for OA and the steps. It has changed my life. This program works if you work it and your worth it.

Anonymous

Tradition 10: No opinion on outside issues

In the program, I've learned that the steps apply to my personal life and growth, and the traditions can be applied to my relationships within a group, like my family.

I am an emotional eater, and in my codependency, it is my relationships with others that trigger my compulsion to overeat. I tend to focus on others and what they need rather than taking care of my abstinence and serenity. I focus on what a family member needs, sometimes to the extent of trying to do their emotional work for them. I think I know what they need, and I try to control, rather than letting them have their own learning from their own experience.

Recently in an OA meeting another member was describing a situation with her family member, and she said she had an idea of what that person should do, but "I'm not on that committee." What a wonderful reminder to me to stay out of others' business, because I have no opinion on outside issues. My job, my focus is meant to be on using the tools and resources of our amazing program to stay abstinent with the help of my HP. Everything I need is in the steps and traditions if I am open to hear the message.

Margie

When I think of Tradition 10

When I think of tradition 10 "Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy", I think of concentrating on one thing, recovery from compulsive eating. When I go to an OA meeting this is what I find, recovery from compulsive eating.

If we are aware of our world and its many daily distractions we can be quieted and relieved when we attend our OA meeting and hear about one issue, how to recover from compulsive eating. We hear people talk about tools related to aiding our recovery. We may hear about or see a pamphlet that we think may help us with a particular aspect of our recovery. When our fellow OA members share about their recovery we hear about their struggles and subsequent triumph over abnormal eating behaviors.

When our group is following tradition 10 we do not hear about all those other distractions that could derail us from our recovery path. There may be an occasional mention by an OA member of some former diet club or eating plan or a particular aspect of a particular religion. We listen with interest but we do not judge nor do we take this as an opinion of OA as a whole. It is one member's story.

Being a member of OA does not exclude me from having relationships with outside concerns or interests. I am free to work for any cause I believe in. When I come to an OA meeting I leave these causes at the door.

It works if you work it and you're worth it. Tradition 10 works for the good of OA.

Joyce A.

New Meeting Starting!!!

A new OA meeting is starting in Faribault on October 5 at 6:00 pm at South Central College, Room B102.

Several Faribault people who were attending the Owatonna meeting (a 30-minute-drive) have pulled together, ordered start-up materials, and are posting the CAL posters in Faribault and Northfield.

We will have convention information available at our first meeting, too!

DEEPENING THE STEPS

2016 MN STATE CONVENTION, NOV. 11, 12, 13

Registration for the 2016 OA Convention is NOW OPEN!

Deepening the Steps...such a great way to live!

This year's dual track allows a "deeper" dive into the Steps to recover from compulsive eating, and shows why working The 12 Steps gives us such a great way to live!

Inspiring Speakers share personal journeys around each of the Steps.

Speaker Panels discuss key topics that challenge and reward us.

Workshops offer insight on OA basics, abstinence, sponsorship, and body image.

Register Today! Convention starts Friday, November 11 at 7pm, and runs through Sunday, November 13 at 12:30pm. Get all the details on abstinent meals, accommodations/amenities and how-to-register at www overeaters.org. If you have a specific question, please email us at OAUnityConvention@gmail.com

Make it a Weekend! The recently renovated www.SheratonMinneapolisWest.com provides a luxurious backdrop for the 2016 Convention.

Make a weekend of it! Special Room Rate of \$99 (+tax) through 10/21/16.

Spread the Fun/Share the Cost! Up to 4 people per room. Slumber party anyone?

Immerse yourself in recovery...you deserve it!

****NEW in 2016** Artist Gallery Showcase!** This year, we want to showcase the abundance of creativity shared by our OA fellows. The Artists' Gallery Showcase on Saturday evening allows both professional and amateur OA artists to display their artwork throughout the weekend for everyone's pleasure. Join us Saturday evening to share the artwork, meet the artists and discuss their stories of creativity and recovery.

To find out how to include your drawing, painting, photography, fiber/metal craft, jewelry and ceramics, please contact Entertainment Committee Chair Tammy G. at (952) 292-2034 or OAUnityConvention@gmail.com.

Are you a vocalist, composer, poet/writer, actor or performance/comedy artist? We want to include your talents throughout convention! To participate, call the OA hotline, 612-377-1600, or email us at OAUnityCovention@gmail.com

****NEW Topics and Old Favorites**** Abstinence when All Hell Breaks Loose; Getting Past White-Knuckle Recovery & Relapse; OA Basics; plus old favorites such as body image, 100 lb-winners, virtual meeting huddles, and a sponsorship panel.

Share Your Wisdom! Tell us how YOU plan your abstinence when travel, family, holidays, children, career (and more!) comes up. **We want to share your tip at convention.** Go to www overeaters.org to complete our brief survey to share with us the tips and tricks that have worked for you!

We Need Volunteers! Convention can't happen without you. There are many opportunities -- find one that works for you. Sign up at www overeaters.org.

Yours in service -- Beth K, Convention Chair

12 Step Promises – Step by Step (*Keep this—it will be used at the Convention!*)

1. We admitted we were powerless over food, that our lives had become unmanageable.

It may seem incredible that these men are to become happy, respected, and useful once more. How can they rise out of such misery, bad repute and hopelessness? The practical answer is that since these things have happened among us, they can happen with you. Should you wish them above all else, and be willing to make use of our experience, we are sure they will come. The age of miracles is still with us. Our own recovery proves that! (BB 153)

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

In the face of collapse and despair, in the face of the total failure of their human resources, they found that a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them. (BB 50)

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. (BB 63)

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on the them as sick people. (BB 70)

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

We can look the world in the eye. Our fears fall from us. (BB 75)

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

No longer do we go through life clinging desperately to the past, resistant to change. From now on, we will strive to keep ourselves entirely ready for any transformations our Higher Power wants to bring about in us. (OA 12&12 58)

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Repeated practice of step seven enables us to form a working partnership with our Higher Power through which we are relieved of the defects which have blocked our effectiveness in the world. (OA 12&12 65-66)

8. Made a list of persons we have harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

If that degree of humility could enable us to find the grace by which such a deadly obsession could be banished, then there must be hope of the same result respecting any other problem we could possibly have. (AA 12&12 76)

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. (BB 83)

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Practicing the program has given us many gifts-gifts which we wouldn't trade for the quick-and-easy solutions to our compulsive eating many of us once sought in every new diet. (OA 12&12 90)

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. (BB 86)

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives. (BB 89)

Overeaters Anonymous Strong Abstinence Checklist (*Also used at Convention!*)

“Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight. Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is the result of living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve-Step program.” – Overeaters Anonymous Definition of Abstinence

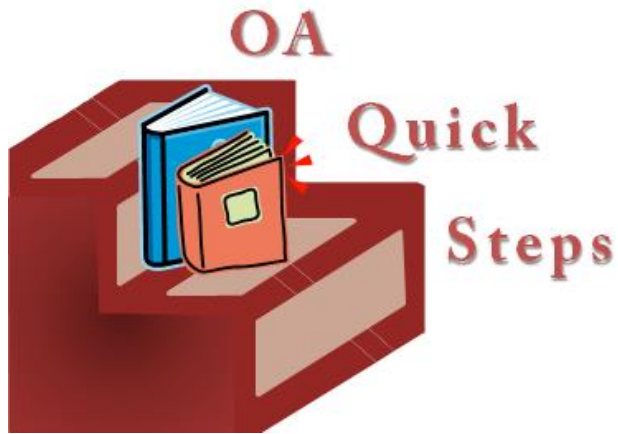
Use this valuable checklist every day to support keeping your abstinence strong and intact.

Checklist

- Have I been abstinent today?
- Did I pray and meditate today?
- Am I maintaining or working toward a healthy body weight?
- Did I rely on my Higher Power to get or stay abstinent today?
- Is what I am currently doing working for me to remain abstinent?
- If I am having problems, have I asked someone else what they are doing?
- Have I made an OA call today?
- Did I have an attitude of gratitude today?
- Did I plan my food today?
- Have I helped someone else today?
- Did I have an action plan in place to stay abstinent today?
- Do I have a sponsor and am I working the Steps with that person?

Writing Exercise

- What is compulsive eating for me?
- What are the foods and food behaviors that trigger me to eat compulsively?
- Am I afraid to get abstinent and, if yes, why?
- Why do I think abstinence is important?
- What do I do to stop eating compulsively?
- What Steps do I take to remain abstinent in all circumstances?
- What is the difference between abstinence and a plan of eating?
- What actions do I take to maintain my abstinence and achieve or maintain a healthy body weight?
- How do I begin my day in order to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors?
- What Tools do I regularly use?
- How does remaining abstinent improve the quality of my life?
- What place does food have in my life today?



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

OA Quick Steps Workshop

Saturdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

October 1 and 15, 2016

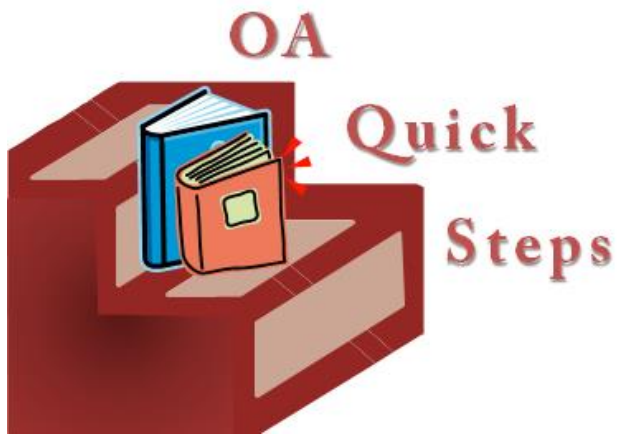
One of the promises in the AA Big Book is that before you're done with Step Nine, the obsession is lifted. Increase your chance of success—join the OA Quick Steps series, get abstinent and work through the 12 Steps in just two weeks!

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.



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just need help getting
through the Steps?**

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November 5 and 19, 2016

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Location

Rocky Creek Estates

627 Rocky Creek Drive NE

Rochester, 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.

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Expressions of Unity

The November *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step Eleven: “Sought through prayer and meditation to continue our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out” and will be sponsored by the Unity Intergroup Board. 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 October 24th 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:

October 8, 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>

Mark Your Calendar...

October 8	Unity Intergroup meeting
October 1 & 15	OA Quick Steps—Minneapolis
November 5 & 19	OA Quick Steps—Rochester
November 11, 12, 13	OA 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.