



# Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

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

**Step 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.**

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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## TWELVE-STEPPING ANGELS

My gratitude for recovery and for a transformed relationship with my Higher Power gives me abundant motivation to share the message of OA and the joy of our twelve step way of living. I've found, however, that in my enthusiasm it's easy to scare people away!

I've found a few ways to carry the message that have been successful for me. One is that I am very open about my OA membership when asked about my often obvious choices at mealtime: "This is what we do in Overeaters Anonymous, and it's been working great for me for years. It's totally worth it to me..." I leave it up to the others to decide whether they want to ask for more information. Some do, and that's my opening to tell them the highlights of our program and invite them to a meeting. I also mention OA each time my physician or nutritionist or dentist compliments me on maintaining my health over all these years, and offer to take calls if they ever have the occasion to refer someone to OA. Another way I carry the message is to occasionally call members who don't seem to be present in our meetings lately, and "catch up" with what's going on in our lives. Knowing we care is a powerful invitation to come back. A third way I reach out is by calling newcomers between meetings. Remember those first weeks in OA, and how much support we needed to stay abstinent and connected to our fellows as we began that intimidating hike through the twelve steps? I do! I was in tears many times, and it's your support that carried me through. And finally, I carry the message by sponsoring other members of our fellowship. As a sponsor, I try to empathize and encourage others by pointing out the little miracles embedded in the stories they tell me of their adventures in working this program. I ask questions and give suggestions that nudge my sponsees in the direction of awareness, action and gratitude for the (healthy) fruits of our labor in OA, and growing appreciation of the amazing path we walk through life's ups and downs when we work the steps.

I'll never forget the day, about 10 days into the program, that I cried my way through one glitch (and slip) after another until I finally called someone and asked for help. That person shared enough strength to get me to a meeting. Another savior came by as I struggled in the parking lot, feeling shame and thinking about leaving. She gave me a hug and walked me through the door. And I've never looked back, thanks to my twelfth-stepping angels! ~Anonymous

## Practice These Principles...

I recently had a conversation with a friend and when I mentioned Step 12 she asked me which one that was. With a full and grateful heart I said, "having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters.....and then there was a pause, as I tried to recall the last portion of the 12th step. The pause was probably not noticeable to my friend but it was actually bothersome to me. How can I forget the last phrase, "and to practice these principles in all our affairs"? Once it came to me, I then wondered why I couldn't remember that part, how many hundreds of times had I heard it?

I believe it's because that part of the 12th step is where I need to do more work. I know that I have had a spiritual awakening, and I continue to develop that relationship with my higher power. I know I do a good job of carrying this message to compulsive overeaters, but I do recognize some areas of my life that I could practice these principles more often and more willingly. To me this is more proof that I am still a compulsive overeater and I still have work to do on my character defects and spiritual growth.

~Anonymous

## Changing Struggles

This November 14th marked the 4 year anniversary of my committing to a food plan and to following the OA program. I had gone to meetings starting in October but not surrendered to a Higher Power until November 14.

When I was "in the food" my life was a constant struggle. I lived in the past, obsessing about other people or things I had done. I was full of shame, disgust, self-loathing, and self-pity. I also lived in the future, constantly rehearsing conversations, planning how to change people, imagining how happy I would be if only I was thin or people lived the way I thought they should. All that time, I justified my eating, isolating and mood swings by telling myself it was because of how other people treated me or lived their lives.

By the grace of God, my struggles have changed. Today, my "struggles" are gentle ones: I work each day to stay aware of my thoughts, feelings, and food; I face the day connected to my Higher Power; I apologize as soon as I'm aware I've acted against my principles.

As the AA Big Book promises, today I know a new freedom and a new happiness. I do not regret the past or wish to shut the door on it. I comprehend the word serenity and I know peace.\*

Pat P.

\* See pg. 83-84 Fourth Edition of the AA Big Book for the full list of the ninth step promises.

## Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of working these steps....

There was no bolt of lightning after I worked the steps. However, in small things I had a changed attitude. I didn't plan it, but there it was.

Some said "what we practice, we become." For me, I became generous in small subtle things. I recently asked someone to do a small favor for me. The person said "what's in it for me?" In the past I would have thought the same thing when asked to do something. I would have done it no matter what, but was often resentful. I don't feel that way any more, thanks to the 12 steps. I'm happy to do a favor here and there. What's "in it for me" is a life of happy usefulness.

In step 11 I learned about prayer and meditation. The meditation opened my mind and

my heart to the grace and strength in my Higher Power. It calmed my spirit enough so I could become more teachable.

My friends commented on my change of heart. A few wanted to know how it was achieved. So when they asked I was able to do 12 step work.

It can be challenging to me to do 12 step work and still keep my own anonymity. One thing I do, is to carry copies of Lifeline when I travel. I have purposely left a copy of two in hotel rooms. I don't know if anyone has been helped by this but I hope so.

Speaking at meetings is a form of 12 step work. I have been helped a lot by what someone has said.

~ Anonymous



### . **Unity Golden Valley Anniversary**

Unity Golden Valley Saturday 10 A.M. meeting is celebrating it's 30th anniversary January 30, 2016. Please considering joining us in celebration of the longevity of this meeting.



Unity Christ Church  
4000 Golden Valley Road  
Golden Valley, MN

### . **Unity Day - Mark Your Calendar**

Feb 27, 2016 9a - 3p

**Unity Day...a Chance to Strengthen Your Recovery  
Owatonna, MN**

Are you one of us OAers who live life one day at a time but also keep an eye on upcoming events to strengthen your recovery?

*Unity Day*, celebrated internationally, is a day in our OA year to celebrate and give thanks for the strength of OA fellowship. It is always held on the last Saturday in February. In 2016, Owatonna MN's OA group will host Unity Day and provide a number of speakers on February 27, 2016 from 9 to 3. Mark your calendars and watch for more.

The event is free.



### . **Podcast now available**

The October virtual workshop is now posted. Pass it on!

<https://www.oa.org/podcasts/step-ten-october-11-2015/>

# You can't keep it unless you give it away.

**Service.** Step 12 asks us to stay actively involved in recovery work in order to reach the newcomer and to reinforce this community that exists to give all compulsive overeaters, no matter how the disease manifests itself, an open and welcoming space to grow and take risks.

When I first started OA, I put out literature on the table, unlocked the door, greeted, and folded up tables & chairs at the meeting. Later on, I sponsored, I told my story at meetings and shared my experience, strength and hope on calls and over coffee. But I got a little “busy” and in-person meetings became a “sometime” thing, rather than a regular commitment. I thought that was fine...that is, until I heard a speaker at the Buffalo Retreat talk about healthy meetings. Was my meeting healthy? Did I go to meetings for myself? Or did I show up to be there for newcomers – to be an example of recovery and show them the power of living in the solution? Exactly how selfish had my program become?

Those topics and challenges made me look hard at the “hows” and “whys” of program. Program IS

selfish...just ask my spouse about the time away when I started. Program comes first because failure to do so means the risk of falling back into old patterns at best, and full-blown disease at worst.

I can't keep it unless I give it away. That means coming to face to face meetings as often as I possibly can. It means staying later and talking to newcomers. It means deciding to close meetings that have ceased to attract newcomers. And most of all, it means to lead by example. So many of my amends have been living amends: changing how I show up at work, with my family, around commitments and learning to say now. To be real, and risk disappointing others when I know saying “yes” risks the rise of resentments.

When I give it away, to me, it means showing up and living this program in all aspects of my life. OA is a program of attraction; we don't have to convince anyone to come, guilt or shame them into action. But we can live by example and be that person that embodies the 12 steps. That's a program that attracts.

--anonymous



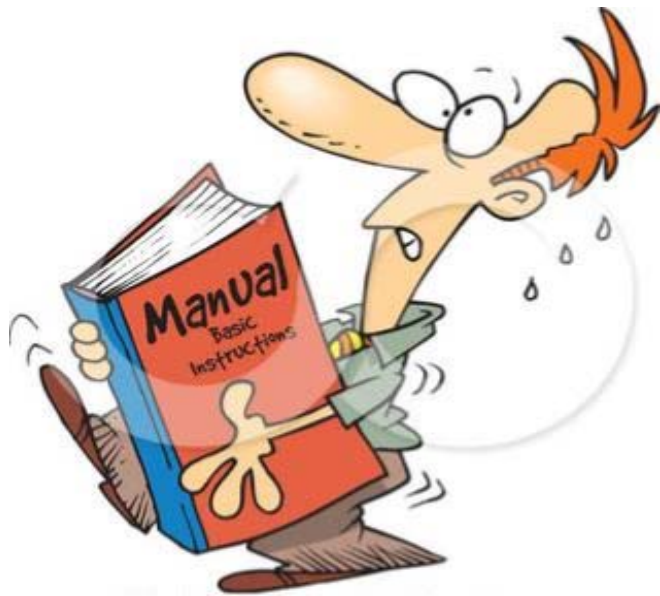
## **OA Quick Steps Workshop Two-Session Format Workshop Saturdays from 9:30am-12:30pm January 16 & 30, 2016 Pilgrim Lutheran 3901 First Ave S, Minneapolis**

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***

**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.**

**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!**



There are many different ways to carry the message and this is one of them:

Today I received a phone message \* "Hi I always think about you when my anniversary rolls around, I'll never forget your phone call asking me if I was ready to put the food down. I joined OA/HOW the next day. Thank you for being part of my recovery. "

I'd carried the message, she took the ACTION.

Anonymous

## TSW Corner

Welcome to the TSW Corner, a place where you can come to find Twelfth Step Within ideas - ideas on how to carry the message to the still

suffering compulsive overeater already in our rooms. Twelfth Step Within ... because 'Together We Can Do What We Could Never Do Alone!' For more information about 'Twelfth Step Within' go to:

[www.aa.org/membersgroups/twelfthstepwithin/](http://www.aa.org/membersgroups/twelfthstepwithin/)

If you have ideas to share in this 'Corner', send them to Annette at [aryan52@comcast.net](mailto:aryan52@comcast.net).

Are you struggling with relapse? Or do you know anyone who is? Check out the new "**Breaking out of Relapse**" video, which is the first of its kind on the [aa.org](http://www.aa.org) website. It offers a variety of ideas, using our 'OA Program', to help deal with this issue that plagues so many of us in OA. One suggestion (not on the video) is that you be prepared with paper and pen so that you can take notes on the numerous suggestions it offers. This video can be used by those of us struggling with relapse or as a tool for sponsors working with their sponsees.

To watch the video, follow the link: <https://www.aa.org/membersgroups/program-inspiration/breaking-out-of-relapse/> or go to [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) and look under 'What's New?' on the home page.

## Expressions of Unity

The January *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step One "We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable" and will be sponsored by the Tuesday 9:30am Minneapolis 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 December 19, 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



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Unity Intergroup Mark Your Calendar...		
December 12 and January 9	12:30-2:30	Unity Intergroup
December 19 and January 16	1-2:15	OA Newcomers Meeting
January 16 and 30	9:30am to 12:30pm	OA Quicksteps
January 30, 2016	10am	Golden Valley Anniversary meeting
February 27, 2016	9a to 3p	Unity Day, Owatonna
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 10-12, 2016	2016 World Service Convention, Boston	
September 1-4, 2016	2016 Region 4 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.