



Expressions of Unity

The newsletter of Unity Intergroup

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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My Favorite Form of Service

One of my favorite forms of service is doing Step 12 work - staffing a booth at an outreach event, being a newcomer greeter, talking with people that are struggling with food. Whatever the malady might be around compulsive behavior with food, dieting or exercise I want to share my experience, strength and hope. Planting the seed, letting others know there is hope and recovery for them when they are ready.

Not only do I get to be in an outreach situation but I get to hang out with other OAer's. What a gift it is to spend time with someone you know you can trust immediately; to share stories of recovery and have an immediate hug the next time you meet at a retreat, convention or another possible outreach event.

Giving this kind of service is a very positive and loving experience. The commitment is minimal and the rewards are great. I encourage you to step up the next time an opportunity arises. Experience this feeling for yourself. You are worth it.

Anonymous

The Part Of Anonymity That Says We Are All Equals

When I walked in the door of OA I was painfully shy. I had a hard time with the part of anonymity that says we are all equals. I saw myself as less than.

I struggled with this and I prayed about it but nothing changed until one day I was confronted in love about some old anger I was holding on to against someone. I forgave her and when I did, I realized that I had been putting myself as more important than her; that my stuff was more forgivable and not as bad as hers.

By forgiving her and admitting that God loves her as much as He loves me I put her as an equal. This experience allowed me to find my equality with others in OA.

Cece

My Spiritual Awakening Has Grown Gradually As I Worked the 12 Steps

I was an over-weight child and have struggled with my weight since 4th grade. I've tried twenty other ways to lose weight, but could never keep it off until I found OA. I came to OA only to lose weight and received so much more. Physically, I'm maintaining a 65 pound weight loss and have over 8 years of abstinence. I am closer to God than I have ever been in my life. Emotionally, I'm more grounded and things just don't bother me like they used to.

My spiritual awakening has grown gradually as I worked the 12-Steps with my sponsor. I have a new awareness of God that I didn't have before OA. When I came through the doors of OA, I was religious, but I'm more spiritual now. That religious side of me was punitive, self-righteous, and judgmental towards others and how I thought they should live their lives. I had a punitive God who was ready to zap me if I did wrong.

Now I have a deep relationship with God and believe he loves me very much and wants what's best for me. His love for me doesn't have to be earned. It's just there for me always. I am learning the difference between my will and his will for me and am learning to tap into his Power throughout the day as a first resort; not a last resort.

As my God became more loving and caring, I became more loving and caring towards others in my life. Many thanks to my Higher Power and OA for all the gifts of the program I have received! May peace and joy of the program be with us all, one day at a time.

Anonymous

Tradition 12: Anonymity Is The Spiritual Foundation

I gotta be honest. I don't like everyone I meet in OA.

For a long time, I would waste a lot of time taking other people's inventory. And I used to think that I needed to avoid any meeting at which there were people I didn't really care for. In fact, I kept wondering, how can this program still work with these people with all these other problems in it?

Well, this tradition is why it does. Today I know I'm not here to inventory anybody but myself. And I don't need to worry about what they think of me either—a wise woman once told me that what other people think of me is none of my business. I don't come to OA to people please. And it's not anybody else's job to make me happy in a meeting either.

What I get out of my meeting doesn't depend on how much I like the other participants. It depends on my willingness to be humble and teachable.

And the fact is, sometimes what I need to hear comes out of the mouth of the very person I like the least. That's my Higher Power's way of helping me keep principles above personalities. And the more I can do that, the healthier I am.

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.

The Twelfth Step Within Committee once again sponsored an event at our MN State Convention last weekend. Those of us in attendance were treated to presentations in mime and song introducing 6 situations that might challenge us as compulsive eaters. As each situation was presented, a list of tips for dealing with that specific challenge was read. Those tips (and a few others) are the focus of this month’s TSW Corner.

Friends & Family

What do say When a well-meaning friend or family member keeps offering you food

- Thank you, I really appreciate that. I love food, but I love what my program has done for me even more.
- Thank you, but I do not eat that, and that it would make things easier for me if you didn't keep asking.
- I appreciate the offer, but I feel so much better when I eat this way.

What to tell our children:

- (For younger kids) It helps me control my eating so I don't eat too much, I don't eat too little, I eat just right.
- I have no ‘off switch’ (or stop button) with certain foods. I do the things I do because it helps me.

Other

- When with family, I consciously focus on gratitude and show love and appreciation for those I am with rather than focusing on the food.
- If someone in your family may need this program, remember, we carry the message by attraction and not promotion.

Holidays & Celebrations

- Plan ahead - find out about the menu and if necessary, bring your own food or eat before the event.
- Be of service by bringing a dish you can share and others can enjoy or planning non-food related activities such as lawn games in the summer and board games or crafts in the winter.
- I bring my cell phone so that I can call my sponsor or OA buddy if I need to talk or feel overwhelmed.
- Have an exit strategy in case it gets too hard.
- I keep enough safe food in the car, in case there aren't any abstinent options.

Travel

Plan Ahead:

- Find out if there will be a microwave or fridge where you are staying, which you can do if staying at a hotel, at no cost if you let them know that you need it for a medical purpose (such as a food plan.)
- When staying with Non-program people, discuss food arrangements in advance. Offer to help with cooking or shopping.
- Bring Purell to clean veggies if water sources may be scarce.

Dealing with Airport Security

- I have a letter from my dietician that I present if I have an issue with my food going through airport security. It basically states (on official letterhead) that I am on a medically prescribed food plan and need to eat my food according to prescription, and to please allow me to carry my food through security. I have even been able to carry my milk through.
- I know someone who prepares all her meals in advance, freezes them and then checks them in a bag. Upon arrival, with previously obtained approval, she stores her meals in the hotel fridge/freezer.
- Carry on what you need on the flight and check the rest
- When traveling internationally, research food regulations for the country you are flying to. Be honest with the Customs agents, and plan extra time to get through Customs.

Work

Handling food in front of a client or in a business meeting:

- Enjoy visiting with coworkers; I've found that most people don't pay any attention, and those that do, probably have a problem with food, and you can use it as an opportunity to educate and be an example of recovery.
- I talk to my sponsor in advance about a plan and/or backup plan.
- If possible, make the reservation yourself. If not, find out where you will be meeting and call ahead to check the food.
- If need be, bring your own food, being sure that that the restaurant is okay with it (use food allergies as your reason).
- Eat beforehand and have coffee or tea and focus on the meeting.

Managing treat day at the office:

- Take care of yourself and do what you need to do, including not participating or leaving early when it gets to be overwhelming.
- Bring something you can eat and enjoy.

Dealing with feelings

Missing out on your favorite foods:

- If you are feeling isolated from other people because you no longer share the same food rituals, realize that being with them is not actually about the food and that you can't be fully present when in the food.
- Train yourself to think of the benefits of recovery relative to what you are losing.
- Make abstinent versions of your favorite foods.

What to do when the craving hits:

- Do something you enjoy that doesn't involve food to shift your focus even for a few minutes.
- I remind myself that the craving isn't really for food, and try to discover what I really need.
- Call someone and talk about it, read literature, go to a meeting, do service (it gets us out of ourselves and makes us feel a part of the group), or use another one of our other tools.

Challenges of being an overeater in a normal world

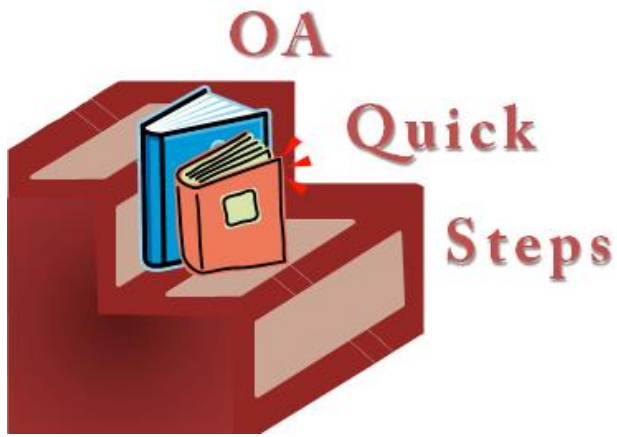
- Give those that don't understand time; they may be grieving over what they lost (such as food buddy). Allow them time to relate to you on a different level.
- Talk with your sponsor and find a workable plan.
- Answer honestly and directly. When I get weird about something, people get weird.
- When asked if you never eat a binge food, reply; no because that's my alcohol.
- Not everyone wants to hear my entire eating history with food and how much weight I've lost. Save it for hook up calls.
- Be open to opportunities to carry the message; you never know if you are talking to a compulsive eater or someone who knows one. People are watching.

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!



**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

February 11 and 25, 2017

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

**Nativity of Mary Church
9900 Lyndale Avenue South
Bloomington, 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.

Expressions of Unity

The January *Expressions of Unity* will focus on Step One: “Admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable” and will be sponsored by the Edina Saturday 10:30 am OA Big Book Study 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 19th 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 Unity Intergroup in action.

All members of OA are welcome at Intergroup meetings.

December 12, 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

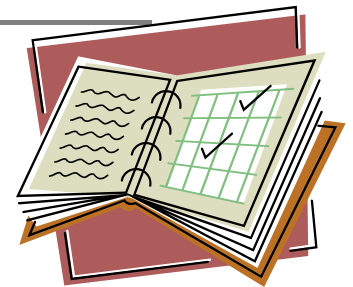


UIG Meeting Participant
Access Code: 468702#

Details of the telephone system and keypad options;
<http://www overeaters.org/conferencing.html>

Mark Your Calendar...

December 12	OA Convention
February 11 & 25	OA Quick Steps—Bloomington



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.