



March 2022

Expressions of Unity

The Newsletter of Unity Intergroup

www.overeaters.org

News and Noteworthy

The Unity Intergroup's Bylaws have been amended.

Please review the changes to the bylaws online at overeaters.org.

There will be a vote on these changes during the Intergroup meeting Saturday, March 12 from 12:30–2:30pm on [Zoom](#) ID 810 4426 4132 PW 12345

Registration is open for the 2022 Buffalo Retreat!

The retreat is Friday, April 8 through Sunday, April 10 at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, MN.

More info on page 8.

Relapse Recovery Meeting

Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm CT

Zoom ID: 871 0023 6034

Passcode: 93D9ie or

Call 312-626-6799, Same ID, Passcode: 546650

See page 7 for more info or contact Annette:

aplovesoa@gmail.com

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

In the past, I always associated this Step with compulsive overeating, but I never really thought about turning any other areas of my life over to a Higher Power. In “The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous”, the chapter on Step 3 talks about how in Step 1 we are convinced that we can’t manage our eating or other problems in our life. Then in Step 2 we accepted that we need a power greater than ourselves to relieve us of our food obsession and restore us to sanity in all areas of life. After doing Step 1 and Step 2, we come to Step 3 where we need to make the decision to follow spiritual guidance in making every decision. In the first three Steps there is mention of turning all our **life decisions** to the care of God, not just our compulsive overeating!

Recently at a meeting I attended, I heard someone talk about a brother that had recovered from an addiction, say that he had turned his will and life completely over to his Higher Power. He said that he even relies on his Higher Power to go to the bathroom. At first, I thought this was ridiculous! How could he turn such a natural function over to his Higher Power? I thought about it for a while and then started to think there might be something to what he said. He is telling us that he has turned his entire life over to his God, even the most natural of body functions. This is exactly what our text is telling us.

I feel I need to revisit Step 3 and reevaluate how I am turning my life over to my Higher Power. I can’t say I have completely turned my will and life over to my God in the past. I have started to look at what is going on in my life when I have trouble with my abstinence, and I am finding that the food isn’t the problem. It’s all the little annoyances in my life that keeps the chatter in my head going nonstop. I am realizing that to recover from my disease, I will have to turn my whole life over to my Higher Power. I need to take care of the chatter in my head and that means getting rid of my annoyances. I haven’t had success getting this done because I think I can control these situations.

But I am learning that I can't, and I need help. I need to turn all areas of my life over to my Higher Power, and by doing that, I know I will see and feel the chatter and annoyances fade away. I will experience more calm and more recovery.

Anonymous

Fears

As I am writing this, I have two years of continuous abstinence. My abstinence is no sugar or white flour, and I eat a weighed food plan. I have a daily reprieve from compulsive overeating one day at a time.

I am grateful for this program. I continue to learn more about myself. I still struggle with fears - False Evidence Appearing Real. The fear of not being enough continues to sit heavily on my heart and mind. I continue to turn it over to my God, sponsor, and other fellows. Yet it keeps coming.

In "For Today" January 24, it tells us that, "I should not compare my insides to someone else's outsides." And "God does not make junk." Each time I tell myself that I am not enough, I am a burden, or I am not worthy, I am being selfish. I am digging into my fear and allowing that false evidence to get bigger. The fear is then winning.

God loves me in my totality! I surrender this fear and tell myself that I am wonderfully made and beloved in God's eyes.

Jill R. from Louisville

Winning at the Game of Life

I came into Overeaters Anonymous in fall of 2019. In the game of life, I was not winning. I was stressed out, anxious, and at the heaviest weight I'd ever been in my life. But worse than that, my key relationships were all on the rocks. My marriage was strained, and my relationship with my son was deteriorating. I had tried everything to control my weight, diet clubs, carnivore diet, commercial weight loss diets, and not eating after seven o'clock. I even figured my experience from another twelve-step program should carryover and help me with my addiction to food. Much to my frustration, none of these things worked at all. When I walked into my home group in Anoka I was in rough shape, I like to say that I stopped in on my way to the hospital for the heart attack I was bound to have - the way things were going. Luckily, the Anoka OA Freedom from Bondage group, which became my home group, gave me the tools and guidance necessary to start recovering from compulsive overeating. I am coming up on two years of abstinence and I am incredibly grateful.

Being part of Overeaters Anonymous I have received many of the promises addressed in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. And people have asked me how is this possible and how did you do it? I did not do it perfectly and it took me about six months of attending meetings regularly to achieve abstinence. For me one of the most important things is about being connected. What does this mean to be connected?

- I can show up at meetings but am I really working the program?
- I can go to meetings and be present, however this is not enough for me.
- I need to be part of the meeting and contribute,
- I need to have a sponsor who helps me do things I don't always want to do like get a food plan and work All 12 steps promptly.
- I need to be vulnerable and share what really is going on with me (remember I was not winning when I came in the doors).
- I need to reach out to my fellows and realize that in sharing myself with them, I am not only helping them, but I am doing one of the most important things that I can do to help me maintain my abstinence and my recovery.

When I do these things, I feel connected to the program, I feel connected to my higher power, I feel as though I am turning my life and will over to the power of God as I understand him. For me, the program is not for those that need the program is not for those that want it the program is for those that work it! This is how I have the promises and plugged in to this lifesaving program. My marriage is much better, my relationship with my son has been mended I have managed to add in some love for myself that I was woefully lacking. Yes, now I feel like I might just be winning. I thank God for bringing me to you people, and I thank you people for bringing me to God (as I understand him).

Max W.

I Needed to Do Something Different

When I came into the OA program, I needed some guidance, structure, and routine. The ones I had weren't working for me anymore. The routines I had were causing me pain in many areas of my life. I started to pick up new routines, new rituals from the meetings, retreats, and workshops that I attended and the OA speakers I listened to online. What I heard was that most overeaters lacked structure and discipline. And that the OA program had given them structure by the disciplines they practiced daily.

I started to pick up and practice these routines daily too - mostly in the mornings. What I heard people saying was that they prayed every morning. They said the third and seventh Step prayers in that order, every morning. They said that this is what kept them abstinent and connected to their Higher Power. So, I started saying those prayers every morning and sometimes at night. It was great! I felt connected to my Higher Power! After reciting the prayers every morning, over and over again, I did add a couple of others too. Like the Serenity prayer and another prayer that I constructed. As I mentioned, after praying I really felt in tune with the world. I felt connected to something bigger than me!

But after a few months I started to feel disconnected when I would pray. I just kept doing it in hopes that I would start to feel like I did at first. I was like, what is the sense... My prayer life had become a religion. My routine was so repetitive that, in a sense, it stopped working. I needed to do something different. So, I stopped saying those prayers in the mornings. Instead, I practiced with other prayers. I also stopped reading the same meditation books in the mornings.

My morning routine began to change. My mind and spirit began to change also. Not by just doing different prayers, but by realizing that old beliefs had been driving my morning "rituals". Changing is not something I like to do, but I've been noticing that I need to on a continual basis. My spirit needs a new awakening, a new beginning to be centered. I can't keep doing the same things and expect different results, even if they are recovery based and helped me some time ago. What I am continually learning is that structure is good certainly with my food plan, work life and home life. And it's ok to change it up a bit.

Anonymous in Anoka

Care, Desire, and Trust = Effective Leadership

“The Twelve Concepts of OA Service help us apply the Steps and Traditions in our service work, which is an important part of the OA program. The Concepts define and guide the practices of the service structures that conduct the business of OA.

Concept Number Three: “The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.” www.oa.org

What I absolutely love about giving my time and energy to this program is working with others. In that we all play by the same rules, and we all want a workable outcome. It may be a bit ticklish at times, and other times downright easy and swift. Overall, it’s about what’s best for the whole.

I love it that there is no need to worry about a hierarchy – no presidents, prime ministers, royal highnesses, or grand poohbahs. No evaluations, no pay raise, no demotions, or financial bonuses.

In school, I studied leadership and found one style that really resonates with me - being a servant leader. This is about working with people, not dictating. It is pushing up my sleeves and digging into the juicy ideas that come about when working with a committee. It also means that when in a leadership role, whether as a rep, delegate, treasurer, or chair, I ‘Work with Others’ as stated in the Big Book. In fact, there is an entire chapter written on this, starting on page 89.

Working in leadership roles within OA service bodies has taught me a lot. I got a chance to try new things, work with a wide variety of people from around the country, and from around the world. In my committee work I got to explore new ways of guiding, motivating, and delegating. I worked to earn trust and respect, which comes by treating others well, following through with what I say I’m going to do, and being fun and engaging. It would serve no good if I were crabby and short with people. This has given me opportunities to practice setting boundaries, speaking up, and working with personalities who challenge my principles. It’s all good.

My big gains? Here are a few,

- I continue to be abstinent (at this time over 17 years),
- I ended up with better jobs,
- I collaborate with cool people.
- When in a leader role, I’m able to make decisions (for self or with a group) based on information and cohesion.

With all of this I’ve earned the right of decision with the group, because trust was earned and present, helping me continue to be an effective leader.

Meg M

Hear Ye, Hear Ye Unity Intergroup Meetings Have Gotten a Face Lift!

While I enjoy intergroup meetings, many members either find them boring or think that it will be boring. That is why it has been decided that Unity Intergroup meetings are going to have a face lift! We are doing this to create meetings that members will (hopefully) enjoy and want to attend. Just as we attract members with our own recovery, we attract others to intergroup meetings by the excitement of others already attending. To achieve this, we are changing the meeting format.

More time will be spent on doing things to carry the message, and less time on business.

We will have three committees that will do their work during the IG meeting:

- *Professional Outreach (carrying the message to health care professionals)
- * Public Information (carrying the message to the general public)
- *Twelfth Step Within (carrying the message to the still suffering overeaters who are already in our rooms.

The events section of our meeting agenda will be moved to the second page allowing us more space for more information. Verbal announcements for these events will be limited to updates and cheerleading.

Let's all make Unity Intergroup meetings the happening place to be. Please come and join the fun on Saturday, March 12th at 12:30 PM. You can find the meeting information on our website: www.overeaters.org under 'Intergroup' and then 'About Unity Intergroup.'

Annette P-R

R

egarding

R

elapse ...

Welcome to 'Regarding Relapse' – a monthly column on the topic of relapse. We will be sharing tools, thoughts on relapse, personal stories of recovery from relapse – and more! This month we will again discuss a topic...

Strange Mental Blank Spot

Recently I have been reminded, in various ways, of the 'strange mental blank spot' (Big Book P42) which precedes a return to our disease. This is the place where, as I heard at a meeting, I forget how bad it is (being in the disease) and can only remember the few minutes of peace that comes from taking that first bite. Speaking for myself, I have a disease of forgetting. I recall times that, while in the disease, I thought 'I know there is a reason I don't want to do this (pick up), but I cannot tell you what it is.' My mind was simply blank; all I could see was the need to eat.

How does this apply to relapse? What am I forgetting when I pick up? Not only am I forgetting how bad it is to be in the disease, I am also forgetting how good it is to be in recovery. All that I can see is the need to eat. The question is: what can I do about it? The answer is simple: Make daily program work a priority. As I've said, I have a disease of forgetting. The only way to counter that is to work the program consistently and in many ways. How that looks differs from one person to the next.

I have a daily morning program time in which I read, write, and pray. I have sponsee calls every day. I speak to my sponsor once a week. I do a Tenth Step each night and write a list of 10 gratitudes – the last one always being for abstinence and recovery. One of the best ways that I keep who I am (a compulsive overeater) at the forefront of my mind is through service. I do service not only for my groups, but also at other levels as well. When I am doing service of any kind, I recall that I am a compulsive eater.

Recovery came to me as a gift from my Higher Power achieved by working the Steps. My Higher Power inspires my desire to do service. For example, I was made aware that 'going to any lengths' meant more than going to enough lengths. It meant that, in recovery, I had a responsibility to reach out to other struggling members in whatever way I can. The result, inspired by my HP, is the 'Recovery from Relapse' meeting. (See below for information on that meeting.)

Many years ago, I heard it said: I cannot afford to forget. May we always remember that we are compulsive overeaters!

Anonymous

Recovery from Relapse meeting information:

Thursdays 6pm Central – Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87100236034?pwd=d3ZsYThSTDViYm1JWlk0RWWhLWE9Kdz09>

Meeting ID: 871 0023 6034 Passcode: 93D9ie

Or call 312-626-6799 Same ID Passcode: 546650

For more info contact Annette 763-447-5688 email aprlovesoa@gmail.com

2022 OA Buffalo Retreat

“From Newcomer to Recovered”

April 8-10 2022

Location: Christ the King Retreat Center ♦ 621 First Avenue South Buffalo, MN

55313 Costs:

- **Shared rooms:** \$192.00 before March 15 and \$200 after March 15
- **Private rooms*:** \$212.00 before March 15 and \$220 after March 15
- **Program with meals and NO lodging:** \$100.00

**Private room availability is limited. No scholarships for private rooms.*

Includes: Friday: dinner and room, Saturday: three meals and room, Sunday: breakfast.

* \$3 surcharge per meal/per person, gluten free or vegetarian (5 meals is \$15)

Times: Check-In: Friday 5:00, dinner 6:00, program 7:00 ♦ Check-Out: Sunday 10:30 am

To register online: <http://overeaters.org/upcoming-oa-events/>

To mail-in registration:

a. Contact Sandy A at 763.228.3357 or oabuffaloretreat22@gmail.com for mailing address for mail in registrations.

b. Detach and complete mail-in form below. Include a check or money order for the full amount **PAYABLE TO UNITY INTERGROUP**

c. All reservations will be confirmed via email. If you want a confirmation via US mail, you must enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE).

Questions or concerns, please contact Sandy A.

Please note: All registrations must be paid in full. We do not accept partial payments. No credit card payments accepted for mail-in registration. All credit card payments must be online. At the Retreat, we will only accept cash or checks for literature, concessions, or raffle tickets. Refunds will only be issued in the event that the in person retreat is cancelled.

- Mail-In Registration Form

Full Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Nametag: (1st name and first initial of last name):

_____ Home meeting:

Room (circle): Private Shared Roommate request _____ Gender for

roommate assignments (circle): Male Female

* If you register for a shared room without a roommate request, a roommate will be assigned for you. * If you require a handicap room, please contact **Sandy A.** as there are a limited number.

Special Accommodations: (circle) Vision Hearing Mobility Other _____

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR NEEDS (e.g., room close to the elevators, dining hall, or main hall; quiet room for small groups; handicap accessible bathroom)

Service Opportunities: (circle all you are willing to do) Registration/check-in Small Group

Leader Timer for speakers Hear a 5th step Literature Wherever needed **Partial**

Scholarship: Send requests to Sandy A at oabuffaloretreat22@gmail.com

Dietary Restrictions and Special Foods: Refrigerators are available if you want to bring food. The menu will be emailed to all participants. * \$3 surcharge per meal/per person, gluten free or vegetarian

Cancelation Policy: Refunds will only be issued in the event that the in person retreat is cancelled.