

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup April 2011

www.overeaters.org

Carrying the Message

Now you can read the Society Pages online every month at www.overeaters.org.

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

It Works, If You Work It

Step 4 calls for us to make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. A searching inventory is a thorough uncovering of aspects of our life in order to get to know ourselves better. Fear is an unpleasant, often strong, emotion caused by anticipation of danger; so fearless says to me "move forward, don't worry about the emotions."

Moral inventory implies to me right or wrong in a religious sense. However, the Alcoholics Anonymous "Big Book" calls the inventory a "fact-finding and fact-facing process." (page 64). Yes --- when I can get away from trying to assess blame or "beat myself up" I can get a clearer picture of those things that make my life unmanageable.

There are a number of tools for us to use to do this inventory. Among the tools I looked at were the OA Twelve Step Workbook, OA Fourth-Step Inventory Guide, and some checklist sheets that have been developed by various OA groups. I finally made progress when I decided to stop looking for the perfect tool and "just do it, move forward, and get something written down." Mostly I used the

information about the 4th step which I found in the AA "Big Book" on pages 64 through 71.

Step 4 is an action step. Thinking about inventory doesn't do much; only when I take pen to paper and started writing do I make progress. It wasn't so scary when I made the list of both my shortcomings AND strengths --- I wasn't all that bad after all--- probably it is just that I am human, and have made some mistakes, and sometimes take things in the wrong direction. As it says in the OA 12&12 (page 45) "When we face the guilt that truthfully tells us, 'You made a mistake,' we're freed of the guilt that falsely tells us, 'You are a mistake.'" (underlining added)

Moving forward was the best thing I did for my program at that time. I was able to write my inventory and admit to God, to myself, and to my sponsor the nature of my wrongs. Once freed from this baggage I made great progress through the rest of the steps; gave up 50 pounds; lost my critical spirit; gained emotional maturity and peace; and have a greatly enhanced relationship with my Higher Power.

The OA program is tested and true --- it works if you work it.

~Anonymous



Unlocking the Power of Step Four

I was stuck on Step Four for over a year. It just seemed too big. Plus, I beat myself up every day over my defects of character. Was a moral inventory really necessary? How do you begin?

My sponsor told me to begin by writing down the names of all the people, institutions, and principles that I had resentments against. I made a pretty healthy list, but still wondered if this was really necessary. I have never believed in holding grudges. Sure some people have wronged me over the years, but I really didn't think I held grudges. Of course, I did admit I protected myself against those people and situations so I wouldn't get hurt again in the future. I'm not stupid after all. Besides what do resentments have to do with my moral inventory? I don't like to dwell on

things of the past. Move on was my motto. I had already lost a bunch of weight in the program, but my head still felt fat and I still had more weight to lose. I was afraid if I didn't get through the Fourth Step (and then through the rest), I'd gain all my weight back and have to start all over again. I had heard of that happening to too many people and didn't want it to happen to me. Because of the testament of other people in OA, I made finishing this step a priority.

This step is very important in unlocking the secrets to who you are and why you eat. I found that after completing this step, I had contributed to a lot of my own resentments and misery. This step has given me the tools I need to break this cycle!

If you're having problems plowing through this step, I suggest working with your sponsor to break the step down into smaller sections. Assign a deadline to each part of the step and ask your sponsor to keep you accountable for making the deadlines.

I discovered in writing down my resentments, I had contributed to a lot of my own anger and misery. I had a lot of self-seeking characteristics and fear that made me react in strange ways, including pushing people away and eating out of control. Now that I see this truth, with God's help, I have the tools I need to break this cycle! If I can learn to turn my fears and resentments over to the care of God, I won't need to eat over them ever again. I am happy to say that much progress has been made towards this and has improved my life in so many ways.

I will always have this disease. I must never forget that. In many ways I am like the alcoholic. One drink, one bite of a trigger food, and I will be hooked again. But I have OA and God (my higher power) to help me through the rest of my life. I've been abstinent for three years now, one day at a time.

~Julie C, Bloomington

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves”

The word fearless scared me, I didn't want to dig deep into my past and uncover bad stuff. I knew that my higher power wanted me to do just that so with a lot of prayer I started the process. God showed me his grace and brought out things that I hadn't thought of about for many years. The next thing I did was decide where exactly they fit on the chart, whether it was a fear, resentment, sex conduct or people I had harmed. As I went along I prayed that I wouldn't forget anything so that I wouldn't leave any stone unturned. Step four has been a very renewing and uplifting process for me and has helped me grow in my journey of recovery. I am so thankful that God gave me the courage to be fearless and to take the first step in righting the wrongs I have committed.

Anonymous Bloomington

Morning Prayer

God, today is a new day for me and with you it can be a day of abstinence. With you, I can handle anything. I ask for your protection today from anyone or anything that may interfere with my abstinence. I am asking now for your protection in case sometime during the day my desire to compulsively eat becomes stronger than my desire to abstain. I know I am powerless over food and my life can become unmanageable again. I do believe that you will relieve my compulsion and restore me to sanity. Please help me to know your will for me today and give me the willingness to carry it out. I turn my will and life over to you. Please guide me through another day of abstinence.

God, I need You.

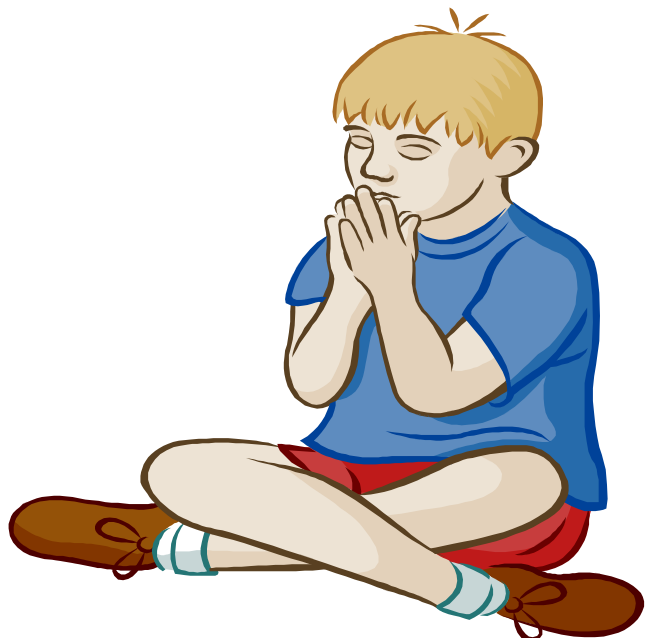
Anonymous Bloomington

Service Opportunity

The Public Information/Outreach Committee is looking for more members. We have some exciting new projects to work on. Watch for an event in January in which each OA member can participate with a small effort which may have far-reaching results!

Have we piqued your curiosity? If so, please join us by coming to the Sumner Library at 11 am before the Intergroup meeting the second Saturday of each month. Or give us a call, Lance at 612-210-2527 or Dianne at 763-561-9766.

We are also in need of a person willing to chair the OA booth at the annual Gay Pride event, June 25 and 26. There are many opportunities for service in our category!



Hear Ye, Hear Ye

Society Pages is going VIRTUAL!

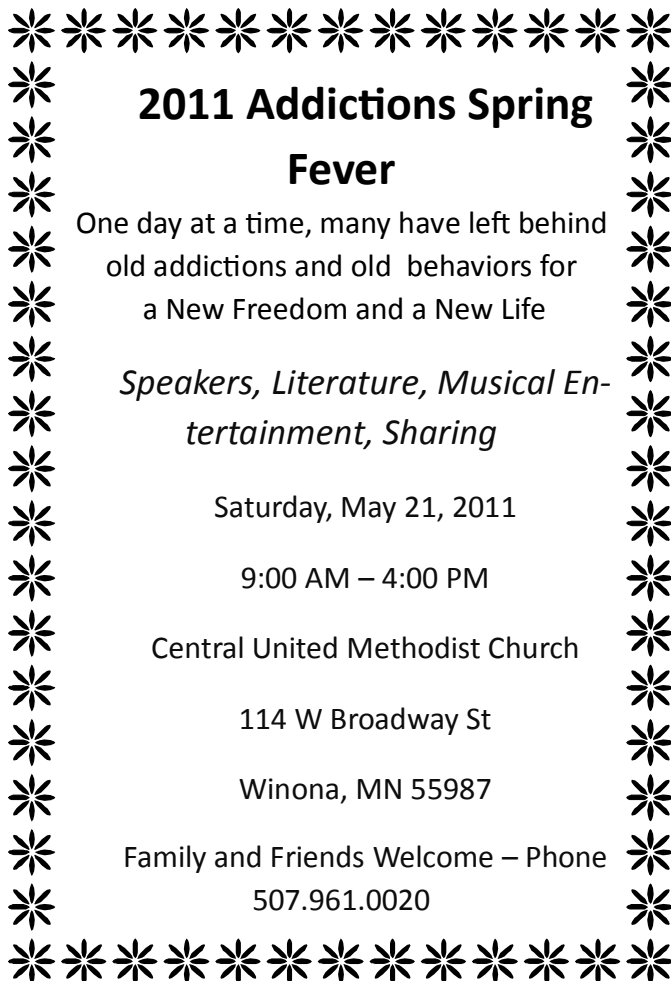
Society Pages will transition to an e-newsletter format beginning with the June 2011 issue. Everyone who signs up for the e-newsletter will receive a copy delivered directly to their email address.

WHY ARE WE MAKING THIS CHANGE? Producing a hard copy of Society Pages for distribution is labor intensive, expensive to copy and expensive to distribute.

HOW DO I SIGN UP? In the next 60 days, a link will be added to the Unity Intergroup Website where OA members can self-register to receive their free monthly copy of the e-newsletter Society Pages. An announcement will be sent to all Unity Intergroup Reps to share with their meeting members and visitors.

UNITY INTERGROUP WEBSITE: <http://www overeaters.org/>

QUESTIONS? Contact: Meg, ph: 763-244-6098 or email: MegUnitychair@gmail.com, or Julie C., ph.:612-558-3687 or email: danejulie@hotmail.com



2011 Addictions Spring Fever

One day at a time, many have left behind old addictions and old behaviors for a New Freedom and a New Life

Speakers, Literature, Musical Entertainment, Sharing

Saturday, May 21, 2011

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Central United Methodist Church

114 W Broadway St

Winona, MN 55987

Family and Friends Welcome – Phone 507.961.0020

Share your Story

Did you know that the unity Intergroup website has space for our stories? Our Intergroup website, www overeaters.org, is looking for members willing to share their stories of experience, strength and hope. Check out our six stories, to enhance your program or to be inspired to add your own. Help us reach our goal of 25. Send your 300-500 word story or questions to Meg at relligem@gmail.com.



Connect to Recovery!

On behalf of the Convention Steering Committee and all of the OA Fellowship, we invite you to plan to come to the MN State OA Convention and experience a weekend that will help you gain, regain or maintain recovery by connecting with your fellows and the energy at the convention.

Now is the time to make plans to attend the 2011

MN State

OA Convention

“There is a Solution”

November 4- 6, 2011

at the Crown Plaza Hotel

Bloomington, MN

Start your plans now by doing these 6 things:

1. Commit to attend the convention.
2. Make a decision and mark it on your calendar in pen.
3. Start putting aside money for registration fees, hotel rooms and meals. The convention is 7 months away.
4. Find a roommate or 2 or 3 to share a hotel room and keep costs down.
5. Talk over transportation and car pooling.
6. Stay abstinent today, so, you will have a great message to bring to the newcomers at the convention.

Interested in Service Opportunities?

- We are looking for a DJ with their own equipment willing to play at the Friday night dance at the convention.
- We need an Outreach Chair for the Convention to publicize the convention within the fellowship.

Call Sue B. 651-707-4836 for further details about these service opportunities.

**“I put my hand in
Yours and
together we can
do what we could
never do alone.”**

-Rosanne, OA founder

**Get Together at the
2011 OA Convention!**

Why Not a Healthy Weight

We have been asked this year to consider a motion at the World Service Business Conference to include in our definition of abstinence the ongoing and eventual goal of “achieving, and/or moving toward of a healthy body weight.”

This particular initiative, which could greatly help OA, will no doubt arouse strong reactions from our members. One would imagine that after years of abusing our bodies, we’d WANT to be at a healthy body weight, yet many OA members respond to this sort of proposal with everything from cautious optimism to outright hysteria.

In talking to people about it, this is what I heard from OA’s who are against this initiative:

“It’s not someone else’s place to tell me what I should weigh or if I’m abstinent or not.”

“This is a function of a diet mentality. Ours is a spiritual problem, and a spiritual solution.”

“The program is about progress, not perfection.”

“There are no “musts” in OA. I’m abstinent if I say that I’m abstinent.”

“I’m taking medication that makes it difficult to lose weight”

“If we pass something like this, the “OA Police” will have a field day”

Why the pushback? Why are so many of us so fearful of truly achieving a goal weight? Perhaps it’s because it creates a visual metric of our progress. We fear being expected to maintain our goal, and the shame we might experience if we picked up again. There’s no real margin for error once we reach our goal and then put weight back on – people notice. Isn’t this really the issue - facing disappointment in the eyes of others?

Aren’t we all scared to death of being perceived as deficient in some way, physically or otherwise? If our weight goes up, barring a medical

explanation, it will become evident that we’re eating more food than is necessary. An overweight, abstinent OA can’t very well be gaining weight and moving towards a healthy weight at the same time, can we?

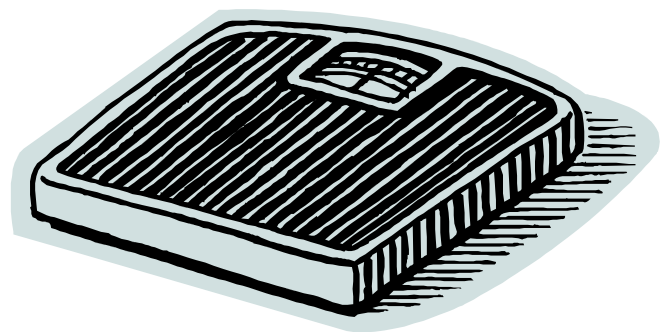
How many OA’s do you know that stopped losing weight (or even put weight back) and continued to claim abstinence, even as they were clearly holding onto 10-25-50-75 extra pounds? If a bank robber stole \$100,000 and then returned \$70,000 of it after realizing the error of his ways, I think we’d all scratch our heads wondering what he was thinking?

OA’s inability to effectively address why so many members marginalize physical recovery is the elephant that has been sitting in OA’s living room for years. Our service bodies at all levels are filled with folks that fit this description. Why?

Is it any wonder that when recently surveyed, OA reported that we only had 54,000 self-admitted members after 50 years? 1000 people per year – in the whole world?

If we strengthen and specify more clearly what our definition of abstinence is, we will be sending a message that our work is not done just because we feel better about ourselves and develop loving relationships in program. Unless we reverse the physical evidence of our addiction, we will forever lack the credibility that we need to do our 12-step work.

Neil R, Baltimore, MD





Did You Know?

Newcomer Meeting Opportunity:

This wonderful 12th step opportunity happens the third Saturday of the month at the Minnetonka Community Center at 1 PM. Meeting groups are being asked to pick a month to sponsor. Three speakers would be requested from your meeting. Requirement for speaking is 90 days abstinence. The Bloomington group is sponsoring May, and the St. Paul 7 PM Monday meeting is sponsoring June. Contact Kate D at mkdallavalle@gmail.com or 262-744-1866 if interested. Also needed is a person to help coordinate the meeting, and one to report to IG.

“Individuals are fully self-supporting only when they do what they can, when they can, giving back some of the help they have been given in OA”

-The Twelve Steps and
Twelve Traditions of OA, p. 166

Save the Date

Frontenac Retreat Sept 16-18th

More information coming soon!



Unity Intergroup Meetings

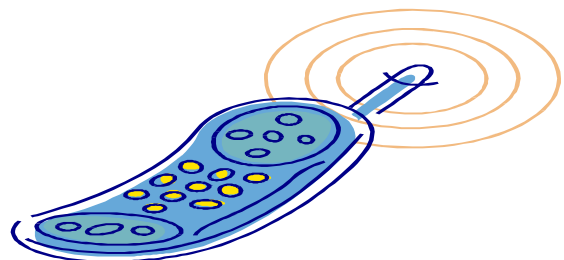
Want to participate in our monthly Intergroup meeting but can't be there in person? We have teleconferencing capabilities! The directions are below.

Conference Dial-in Number: (218)
339-4600

Participant Access Code: 468702#

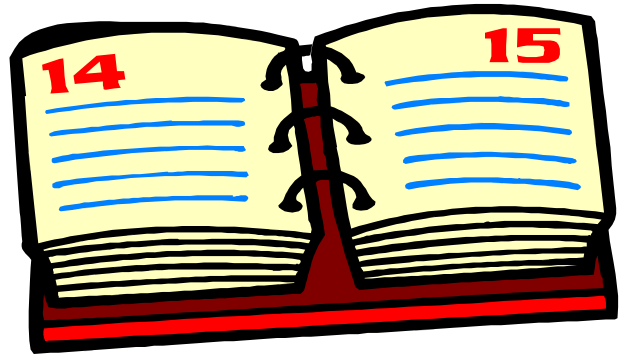
Details of the telephone system and keypad options:

<http://www overeaters.org/>



May Society Pages

The May Society Pages will focus on Step 5, "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." and will be sponsored by the Minneapolis Thursday 7 PM meeting. Although one meeting 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 to Sherry M at smccrank@hotmail.com by Saturday, April 16. Thanks!.



Mark Your Calendar

Friday—Sunday April 1-3	Buffalo Retreat
Saturday April 2	Web Updates Deadline
Saturday April 9	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday April 16	Newcomer Meeting & Society Pages Deadline
Saturday May 7	Web Updates Deadline & Sponsorship Workshop
Fri., Sat., & Sun May 13-15	Big Book Study

More information available at www.overeaters.org

Conference Dial-in Number: (218) 339-4600

Participant Access Code: 468702#

Details of the telephone system and keypad options;

<http://www.overeaters.org/conferencing.html>

Intergroup Board

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