
NOVEMBER 2018-

“BEING THANKFUL – GIFTS OF RECOVERY”



NoVAations, Northern Virginia Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

FROM THE EDITOR

This is my final article as co-editor of NoVAations! What am I grateful for? I'm grateful that I had the opportunity to serve. I'm grateful that Cecilia was such a great co-editor and brought her gifts to serve OA. I'm grateful that I've made enough progress in my program so that, when my HP said "IG Secretary," I said, "Okay."

I'm grateful that I have a sponsee and, as it turns out, doing so really *has* strengthened my recovery. I'm grateful to be going to the Region 7 Convention with many great friends from the area. I'm grateful that, each morning, I turn my will and my life over to my HP and that, for today, I am abstinent.

Kate I. (Co-Editor)

FROM THE CHAIR

Sylvester McNutt wrote, "Increase your happiness by practicing the art of gratitude. Don't use your time obsessing about what you want, instead, focus on who you have become and what you have."

An attitude of gratitude means making it a habit to express thankfulness and appreciation in all parts of my life, on a regular basis, for both the big and small things. I am so grateful for the wonderful fellowship in OA. You are why I am still here. You let me know that I am not alone. You told me to keep coming back, and for that I will be forever grateful.

Most days I do a daily gratitude list which includes these five things: my HP, my abstinence, my sponsor, my sponsees, and the OA program. I also add additional blessings depending on the day. Being thankful for the little and big things in my life helps me look at the world differently. I know that every day isn't perfect, but focusing on what I am grateful for tends to wash away feelings of anger and negativity.

With Thanksgiving approaching, many of us reflect on people and circumstances in our lives that make us grateful. Examining our feelings of gratitude is certainly a great thing to do. And expressing it to the people in our lives that we are grateful for, not

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

NOVA

NoVAations Deadline: Nov 6
Next Intergroup Meeting
November 17, 10 AM – 12 PM
Hope Lutheran Church,
Annandale, VA

IDEA (International Day Experiencing Abstinence) Day:
Nov 17, 2 – 4 PM, Westover Baptist Church, Arlington, VA

Thanksgiving Phone Marathon, "Have an Attitude of Gratitude":
Nov 22, 8 am to midnight EST
Phone: 712-432-5200,
ID#4285155#

REGION 7

Region 7 Convention: Recovery – It's a Shore Thing!
Nov 2 – 4; Holiday Inn
Oceanfront, 6600 Coastal Hwy,
Ocean City, MD; Call Terri 410-450-9100 or Mike 732-939-2472

OTHER EVENTS

Daily Telephone Meeting
Phone Number: 712-432-5200,
Participant Code- 4285115#
6:45 am; (Voices of Recovery & For Today)
9:00 pm (100 pounder)

Middle of the Night Struggles?
The Parking Lot, a recovery hotline, is available from 1 to 6:30 AM. This is a multi-addiction 12-step meeting. 712-432-3900, Code 6508933#

just on Thanksgiving but always, really helps to cultivate that attitude of gratitude.

Maria G. (Chair)

REFLECTING GRATITUDE . . .

I came into Overeaters Anonymous more than 19 years ago weighing 250 pounds. I thought I was one of God's biggest mistakes. I hated myself. I hated my body. I recall looking in the mirror and wishing I could just take a knife and cut off all the fat rolls.

I got a sponsor at my first OA meeting. I began doing everything she told me to do. I read what she told me to read. I wrote what she told me to write. I found a plan of eating and began following it.

That last part was not easy. I spent a lot of time white-knuckling it. But for the first time in my life, I began losing weight. It was wonderful! I could shop in "normal" stores and buy clothes just because I liked them. At first, the delight of my shrinking body kept me excited; however, I've been at a normal body weight for over 18 years now, and the excitement has worn off.

I will never have the body of a supermodel. The reality is I am 60 years old. I have lost over 100 pounds and have given birth to and nursed six children. Sometimes when I look in the mirror now, instead of feeling gratitude, I see the side effects of aging, gravity, and extra skin.

Recently, I got out of the shower and was looking critically at myself in the mirror. I was feeling disgusted with my body and was well on the way to hating myself when my husband walked in. He looked at me, smiled, and said, "You sure are beautiful." It was so diametrically opposed to how I was thinking and feeling right then that it was a shock. The only person who is critical of my body is me.

I have found that gratitude is key. When I focus on what I don't have or what I don't like, I find more of what I don't have and don't like. When I focus on the good, on what I have been blessed with and what I like, I find more good and more to be grateful for.

My solution is working the Steps. Low self-esteem and poor body image are rooted in my character defects (self-pity, *(Continued)*)

OA CRYPTOGRAM

WPNMKQRMJ RG RMMKMPXJ UB HZRMKMPXJ

And here is your hint:

Z = R



THE OA PRECEPTS

STEP 11 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

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 (Spiritual Awareness)

TRADITION 11 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion: we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio films, television, and other public media of communication (Anonymity)

CONCEPT 11 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants (Humility)



NOVATIONS BIZ

Want to save paper and still get all the benefits of reading *NoVA*tions? Register to receive the electronic version of *NoVA*tions in your email. Sign up at oanova.org, and remember to confirm your address when you receive the first email.

NEXT NOVATIONS TOPIC

"Home (or Alone) for the Holidays – Emotional Healing" – Articles due November 6.

SUBMITTING TO NOVATIONS

Have something to say but think you can't write? That's what your editors are here for. Submit your thoughts and we'll work with you to polish your valuable contribution. Feel free to submit an article on the monthly topic or whatever you feel moved to share. *Submissions can be anonymous if desired.* Events announcements, original poetry, and art also welcome! Email submissions or suggestions to novations@oanova.org or, if you prefer, mail it to NoVA IG, P.O. Box 1992, Annandale, VA 22003.

REFLECTING GRATITUDE (CONT'D)

dishonesty, and perfectionism, to name a few), and I am as powerless over them as I am powerless over my compulsive eating. Feeling good about myself is directly proportional to the extent that I allow God to remove these defects. Twenty years ago, I thought that the body I have today was an unreachable achievement. Today, living in the miracle, I can still find things to criticize if I'm not careful.

Most of the time, I can look at myself in the mirror and say, "God did a really good job the day he made you." Today I know the truth, and I know that there really is a solution.

— Vicki W., Utah USA

Lifelines Magazine Online, <http://www.odlifeline.org/>.

WE ARE BLESSED

Unhappy is the man, though he rule the world, who doesn't consider himself supremely blest.

- Seneca

The fact that I am here at all is a blessing. Would I have chosen not to be born? That is the alternative.

The fact that I no longer have to compulsively overeat is a supreme blessing, indeed. Continuing the way I was going, I might not still be around today. That makes each day a gift.

The habit of complaining, of wishing things were different, is nothing more than a way of insuring depression and misery. As I expose this and other destructive habits to the twelve-step program, asking God to remove them, I can allow myself to be happy. I am coming to realize that it is not life that owes me something; it is I who owe something to life.

For today: To accept myself is to enjoy my life, and to feel supremely blessed.

- For Today, June 22

Cryptogram solution: Cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

THE GRATITUDE PATH

It seems to me that the antidote to negative thinking is gratitude. I tend toward negativity, especially when I'm confused or stressed. I find that if I substitute thoughts of gratitude, my thinking goes from being fear-based to being God-based. By thinking myself into a state of gratitude, I am freed of my negativity.

It doesn't matter how childish or mundane my thanks are. I can begin with thoughts such as these: Thank you for the chair. Thank you for the stars. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. Thank you for new challenges. Thank you for guidance. These thoughts help me get out of my negative feelings and concentrate on that for which I am grateful. Then I end up in a spiritually high place, where I'm in a state of gratitude. Rather than taking all my blessings for granted, I feel the presence of a power greater than myself. I don't feel alone, vulnerable, insignificant, or negative. Instead, I feel full of faith, safe, and confident that I'm on the right path.

- Louisiana USA

From *Seeking the Spiritual Path: A Collection From Lifeline*

OA NOVA & INTERGROUP

OA NoVA is a vibrant fellowship with more than 45 weekly OA meetings that span Alexandria, Arlington, Annandale, Ashburn, Bristow, Burke, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Leesburg, Manassas, McLean, Purcellville, Reston, Springfield, Vienna, and Warrenton, Virginia.

The OA NoVA Intergroup (IG) serves and represents the above member groups and carries the message of recovery to those with the problem of eating compulsively, by fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

INTERGROUP POSITION NOMINATIONS

As of publication date, only the Vice Chair position remains open **for the service period ending in December**. If you meet the qualifications (working the twelve steps, traditions, and concepts for a year; at least 6 months of continuous current abstinence; abstinence during tenure; and regular membership of an affiliated group), please consider this area of service. Contact chair@oanova.org if you would like more information or to submit a nomination.

INTERGROUP BOARD

- Chair:** Maria G.
Vice Chair: Open
Treasurer: Rhodessa B.
Secretary: Kate I.

Please also consider serving for 2019 (January – December), as all board positions will be opening for nominations, to be voted on at the December IG Board meeting.

