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# JANUARY 2019-

“COMMITTING/RECOMMITTING TO RECOVERY ”

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## NoVAtions, Northern Virginia Intergroup (IG) of Overeaters Anonymous

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### CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

#### NOVA

**Next IG Meeting-** Jan 19, 10 AM – 12 PM. Hope Lutheran Church, Annandale, VA.

**February NoVAtions-** Due: Jan 8. Topic: “Abstinence Stories”

#### REGION 7

**Step Ashore . . . Journey to Recovery.** **When:** April 12 from 5 pm to April 14 at 12 pm.

**Where:** Holiday Inn Oceanside, 2101 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA.

**Email-**[retreat@oatidewater.org](mailto:retreat@oatidewater.org)

**Catch a Wave of Recovery**

**When:** November 1-3, 2019

**Where:** Holiday Inn Oceanfront, 6600 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, MD

**Contact:** Terri

[vice\\_chair@oaregion7.org](mailto:vice_chair@oaregion7.org)  
or [Amyconventionchair@oaregion7.org](mailto:Amyconventionchair@oaregion7.org)

#### PHONE MEETINGS

**New Year's Day Marathon:**

**Date:** Jan. 1; **Time:** 8 am to midnight EST; **Phone:** 712-432-5200, ID#4285115#. Topic:

“Progress, not Perfection”-  
“Awareness is the First Step”

**For More Telephone Meetings**

Look for the time, language, topic, & focus that meet your need at <https://oa.org>

#### FROM THE EDITOR

Happy New Year! In a recent OA meeting, one long-term member shared that she made the decision when she joined OA years ago, that no matter what, she would keep coming back. That was more than thirty years ago. From that share, I recalled reading in the AA literature that those who continue to recommit to recovery are the most likely to stay sober.

For me, 2018 was a year of committing and recommitting to recovery. Despite difficulties and lapses, I continued to work the program and kept coming back. I am grateful and content to be part of this loving and tolerant fellowship that gives me hope. Through the twists, turns, and unexpected events that life brings me, I remain committed to my recovery. I am happy to celebrate another year in this program that offers me a saner way of living.

Wishing you a year of recovery!

Cecilia W (Editor)

#### FROM THE INTERGROUP

As part of each morning's meditation, I have to recommit to my recovery, working Steps 1, 2, and 3. I do this by reciting, out loud, the material in the front of my Region 7 journal (originally provided by the North Jersey OA Intergroup):

**Who am I and What am I Doing?** *I am a food addict and I want to recover. To that end my job today is to trust God, clean house and help others. I am powerless over food and my life was unmanageable until I came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity. Today I humbly turn my will, my thinking and my actions (my whole life) over to the care and protection of my higher power.*

I follow this with the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> Step Prayers. All of which may sound a bit intense, but believe it or not takes less than two

minutes. This is followed with reading, writing, and five minutes of silent meditation (which more often than not may turn into a mental listing of what's going on today – I'm not really very good at that yet). Why do I do this? Not because I am "so good," but because as an addict I am extremely forgetful; I need to be reminded every morning how powerless I am, that I need help to recover. My higher power will give me the strength to do it, but I have to take the action of asking for help and I have to commit to doing my part by using the tools and working the steps. I must commit not only to my own recovery, but to being open and generous in support of my fellow OAs' recovery as well.

Part of my commitment this past year has been service to Intergroup, and I have been privileged to serve with many wonderful people who worked to keep OA strong. As we begin the new year, thanks to all those who served in 2018, including Peggy B. (*interim Chair*), Maria G. (*Chair*), Rachel B. (*interim Vice Chair*), Rhodessa B. (*Treasurer*), and John K. (*interim Secretary*). As I'm writing this, IG is getting ready to elect the Board for 2019. I am grateful to all the new Board members who will join me in recommitting to our recovery in OA.

Kate I., 2018 IG Secretary

## CRYPTOGRAM

OYJXEYOC = T PKQYIKZY XQ RXOB. IATI'N RAC RY'OY LKEYS T  
PKQYIKZY IX FX KI.

And here is your hint:

I = T

## MY RECOVERY JOURNEY

Until I fully understood my problem as a Compulsive Overeater and embraced the solution found in the Alcoholics Anonymous 'Big Book' I struggled with my binge foods. For years both before and after I joined OA, I tried all sorts of unsuccessful methods to try and control them. I tried swearing off, portion control, self-help books, therapy, acupuncture, diets, and diet pills. I avoided places and events, I tried keeping foods out of sight, even locking them up. I put OA pamphlets and notes with slogans on my fridge, in the pantry, inside the food boxes and bags. I threw foods away (only to rebuy them or take them out of the trash). I tried substituting "healthy" versions of what I really wanted, I chewed gum constantly to try to avoid eating. I exercised obsessively and used other methods to purge to negate what I ate. I made others responsible for my eating. I asked my husband to grocery-shop and hid my binge foods. I expected my sponsors to keep me from eating.

## THE OA PRECEPTS

### STEP 1 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

We admitted we were powerless over food - that our lives had become unmanageable. (Honesty)

### TRADITION 1 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity. (Unity)

### CONCEPT 1 AND ITS PRINCIPLE

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. (Unity)

## STEP 1 PRAYER

Today, I ask for help with my food addiction. Denial has kept me from seeing how powerless I am & how my life is unmanageable. I need to learn & remember that I have an incurable illness & that abstinence is the only way to deal with it.





## NOVATIONS BIZ

Want to save paper and still get all the benefits of reading *NoVAtions*? Register to receive the electronic version of *NoVAtions* in your email. Sign up at [oanova.org](http://oanova.org), and remember to confirm your address when you receive the first email.

## NEXT NOVATIONS TOPIC

*"Abstinence Stories"* – Articles due Jan. 8 for February edition.

## SUBMITTING TO NOVATIONS

**Have something to say but think you can't write?** Submit your thoughts and we will work with you to polish your valuable contribution. It is another way to do service. Feel free to submit an article on the monthly topic or whatever you feel moved to share. Refer to the events calendar in [OANova.org](http://OANova.org) for future month topics. *Submissions can be anonymous if desired.* Events announcements, original poetry, and art also welcome! Send submissions or suggestions to [novations@oanova.org](mailto:novations@oanova.org) or, if you prefer, mail it to NoVA IG, P.O. Box 1992, Annandale, VA 22003.

As a member of OA, I tried using the tools and practice many of the slogans – I prayed, I wished, I tried to “think it though,” keep my emotions in check to avoid being Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired.

I attended meetings, called fellows, volunteered service, read OA literature and journaled about my feelings. But time after time, the call of the food was too powerful. None of these methods worked. I couldn't outrun it.

Finally, I was introduced to the Big Book. In “The Doctor's Opinion,” I learned I have a two-fold disease: an allergy of the body and an obsession of the mind. My body and brain do not respond to certain foods the way most people do. My allergy (adverse, abnormal reaction) is an insatiable craving of certain foods whenever I ingest even one bite. My experience confirms this. Once I start, I cannot stop. The only ways I could stop eating my binge foods was if I ran out of them or someone caught me ‘in the act’ (as I was a closet eater).

I had to get entirely honest to admit the foods (and eating behaviors) I always run to for the sense of ease and comfort or desperately run from when trying to abstain, what foods I use as substitutes for what I really want and the foods I constantly try to negotiate. It was obvious that my ‘alcoholic’ foods were sweets, baked goods, and crunchy/chewy foods. But it wasn't enough to merely eliminate bakery items, cereals and candies, and gum. I had to get down to the specific ingredients. I carefully read the labels on everything I ate, examining common ingredients, components, even textures of my binge foods and the foods I felt neutral around. I discovered I was unwittingly ingesting alcoholic food ingredients when I thought abstinent.

In “The Doctor's Opinion,” it clearly states five times I must first put down my substance(s) for the solution outlined in the Big Book to work. Entire abstinence is the only suggestion to alleviate the physical cravings. However, abstinence is just the beginning. If I could solve my ‘food problem’ by merely abstaining from the foods that cause this unexplainable craving, then diets would work.

But, as a compulsive overeater, my problem is centered in my mind: the mental obsession that drives me back to the food even when I am abstinent. To address the crux of my disease, I have to work the Steps. Once I put down the food, I was able to be sober enough to work the Steps. The Steps enable me to get unblocked and access sufficient Power to bring about a spiritual transformation (recovery).

Working the steps abstinently for the first time entirely abstinent was uncomfortable, and it wasn't always convenient, but neither was living in my disease. For this reason, when I conceded to my powerlessness, became willing to believe the Steps outlined in the Big Book may work for me, decided to do them (Steps 1-3), I was encouraged to move swiftly through the rest of the Steps (4-9). These Steps give me a lasting effect – the sense of ease and comfort – that the foods only gave me momentarily (before they exacerbated and multiplied my problems).

As I was wrapping up my amends and started to implement the steps on a daily basis (living in Steps 10,11,12), it was not long before I realized not only had the physical cravings been removed through entire abstinence, the mental obsession was lifted as well. The Promises outlined in the Big Book (p 83-85) were becoming a reality for me, and they continue to be my Truth as long as I stay in fit spiritual condition through practicing Steps 10,11,12 daily.

Something to note: I am not cured of my disease. I will always have a reaction to my binge foods, and my brain will still be wired to convince me otherwise. However, through entire abstinence and working these steps, my disease stays in 'remission.' I have neutrality and freedom from these foods. I live contently without them. The Big Book doesn't promise I can enjoy or moderate my binge foods; instead, it promises me that by abstaining from my alcoholic food substances and working these steps, I won't want to eat these foods.

I have been restored to sanity (the Truth) as the result of following the instructions in the Big Book. This is my experience, and I am confident, if you are honest, open and willing to do what the first 100 AAs and hundreds of thousands of OAs who have followed their path have done, like me, you will no longer need to be frightened by your binge foods. You can experience freedom.

Kerri M, a Grateful Recovered, not Cured, Compulsive Overeater, [HopeinOA@gmail.com](mailto:HopeinOA@gmail.com), 703-283-4868

## MEN'S CORNER

OAMen.org is dedicated to distributing information about men's OA meetings, initially in the Boston area, and beyond. For more information, go to <http://www.oamen.org>

## INTERGROUP BOARD ELECTIONS

The December 15 IG Board elections have not been held as of this printing. Visit <http://www.oanova.org> for an update on election results.

Cryptogram solution: Recovery = a lifetime of work. That's why we're given a lifetime to do it.

## 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 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 BOARD- 2018

<b>Chair:</b>	Maria G.
<b>Vice Chair:</b>	Rachel B.
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Rhodessa B.
<b>Secretary:</b>	Kate I.

