

NoVAations

Northern Virginia (NoVA) Intergroup (IG) of Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

NOVA

Next IG Meeting: October 19,
10 am - 12 pm. Hope Lutheran
Church, 4604 Ravensworth Rd.,
Annandale, VA.

November *NoVAations* Theme:
"An Attitude of Gratitude."
Submit by October 8 to
ceciliarwas@gmail.com.

REGION 7

Awareness, Acceptance, &
Action." 12th Annual PAIG OA
Retreat: Sep 27 to 29. Malvern
Retreat House, Malvern, PA.
Call: Betsy S. (609) 577-1767.

"It all begins with Steps 1,2,3-
Central VA IG Fall Retreat." Sep
27 to 29. Massanetta Springs
Conference Center, 712
Massanetta Springs Rd.,
Harrisonburg, VA. Contact:
Jeannette M. at 804-714-6469.

Catch a Wave of Recovery- 2019
Region 7 Convention." Nov 1 to
3. Holiday Inn Oceanfront, 6600
Coastal Hwy, Ocean City, MD.
Email: registrar@oaregion7.org.

From the Chair

Dear Fellow OAs,

Thanks to all of you who have attended events, and contributed ideas to help OA grow and thrive in Northern Virginia. We will be considering your input, having discussions in Intergroup, and reaching out in the months ahead. So stay tuned!

Since this issue of *NoVAations* is on our favorite passages from the Big Book, I have tried to choose a couple of favorites. But there are so many!! I will mention one, from my favorite story, called "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" in the 3rd edition of the Big Book. The author writes, "It was as if I had, rather than a Midas touch which turned everything to gold, a magnifying mind that magnified whatever it focused on."¹

That is just so true. And I love the phrase, "my magnifying mind." Learning to focus on what is good, and to allow me to relax and feel good, has been an important part of my recovery. I really do have a choice about where I focus and put my energy, and it makes a difference. Do I focus on what I can't eat, or what I can? Do I focus only on problems, or try to find and appreciate the good? Do I focus on others' mistakes, or thank them for something? If you also have a magnifying mind, join the club!

Rachel B., NoVA IG Chair

1. *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism*. 3rd Ed. (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1976), 450.

From the Editor

Dear Friends in Recovery,

Drop-in to the Reston Meeting at St. Ann's Episcopal Church on 1700 Wainwright Drive some Saturday at 10:30 am to further explore the Big Book with this month's *NoVAations* sponsors. Much thanks to the Reston meeting!

Cecilia W., Editor, ceciliarwas@gmail.com

Surviving the Certain Low Spots and Trials With Abstinence

It's nearly impossible to pick one favorite passage from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous¹ since the entire book was divinely inspired. Different passages have different meanings depending on where I am on this spiritual, abstinent journey. However, one passage that always brings meaning and growth to me is in "Bill's Story." Bill states that "faith without works was dead." (Bill's Story, 14). This statement is mentioned several times throughout the book. Bill continues to explain "that if an alcoholic (compulsive eater) fails to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead." (Bill's Story, 14 -15).

The work part for me means that faith in God is not enough; I must continue to work and rework the Steps, thus removing my blocks to my Higher Power. I need to continue to surrender and let go of everything (all my attachments, dependencies, resentments, and fears) so that I can improve my conscious contact with God. I get to practice prayer and meditation daily and bring God into my daily life.

Self-sacrifice for others is being of service, whether it is sponsoring, leading a meeting, speaking, participating at the different levels of the service structure – being of maximum usefulness to God and others. Not only do both these practices keep me abstinent and feeling at peace, but doing them day by day, year by year, decade after decade, helps me get through those certain low spots and trials. The longer I have been abstinent; life happens – family members, pets and friends pass away; money problems present themselves, there have been sick children, family issues, bad bosses, annoying colleagues, marital and relationship misunderstandings – the list goes on ad infinitum. But working and reworking the Steps and by being of service gets me through without having to break my abstinence. By reworking the Steps, I continue to see my selfish, ego-centered behaviors, and little by little change my perceptions while letting God change me.

As the passage continues, if I don't do these things, I would surely drink (compulsively eat), and I know for me to break my abstinence, I would surely die. I came in at a low bottom with several suicide attempts besides killing myself with pounds of sugar consumption and purging many times each day. I don't want to go there ever again, and today I enjoy living. If I continue to rework these Steps and help others, I have that spiritual reprieve from my addictions, and there is more of God running my life and less of me. Working the Steps and being of service are definitely a design for living!

Anonymous

¹ *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism*. 4th Ed. (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2001).

THE OA PRECEPTS - MONTH 10

Step 10 and Its Principle

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. (Perseverance)

Tradition 10 and Its Principle

Overeaters Anonymous has no opinions on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. (Neutrality)

Concept 10 and Its Principle

Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided. (Clarity)

Where & When Contact Needed for the Falls Church Step Meeting

It has come to the attention of the IG that the Sunday morning Step meeting at the Unity Club in Falls Church, VA (Mtg #32441) has had no attendees for a few weeks, and the Where and When contact is no longer valid. If you regularly attend the meeting, please provide us with a contact person by emailing chair@oanova.org. The IG will remove this meeting from the W/W if no word is received by its October 19 meeting.

Favorite Passages in the Big Book

There are four editions of the Big Book. The first 164 pages are unchanged from the book's first printing in 1939. If you can't find the passages cited in your Big Book, try the provided chapter/story name as an aid. You may have an earlier or different edition.

OA RESOURCES

NoVAtions - NoVA's NEWSLETTER

Pick up a paper copy of *NoVAtions* at a NoVA OA Meeting or sign up at oanova.org, for an electronic version and remember to confirm your address when you receive the first email.

LIFELINE

Subscribe to either the print *Lifeline* or e-*Lifeline*: <https://oa.org/members/lifeline-magazine/subscribe/>

WRITE YOUR WAY TO RECOVERY!

Consider sharing your experience, strength, and hope through *NoVAtions*, while using up to three OA Tools: writing, service, and literature. Submit articles, event announcements, original poetry, art, and suggestions, *signed or anonymous* to ceciliarwas@gmail.com or NoVA IG, PO Box 1992, Annandale, VA 22003. Refer to the events calendar in OANova.org for future monthly themes. Your editor is here to help you polish your work, as needed.

Cryptogram

VWO XHUU TOLCUV RCCM TWRC WP
OT FT VWO MLOKZC MJC LWFK WP
JFQQV KCTMHYV.

And here is your hint:

P = F

Men's Corner

Men of OA- You're not alone.

Are you the only man in your meeting?

Do you have trouble freely sharing in meetings of most women? OAMen.org.

My Experience With the Big Book

Although I can't speak to what my favorite passage is in the Big Book, I can talk about the evolution in my attitude towards it. I went from someone resistant to it, due to what I now recognize as fear— to someone who regularly participates in meetings focused on the Big Book. I find tremendous value in the readings and listening to others share about what we read.

I'm not sure when this evolution began. There were several steps along the way. My sponsor told me to read the chapter entitled "Acceptance Was the Answer," as I struggled with commitment. In doing so, I saw myself in what I was reading and began to practice the suggestions given. Another step was going to the Tuesday morning Acceptance meeting. There, I saw others, who I'd known for years, change as they began to practice a recovery program based on the Big Book. Then, I began attending two Big Book meetings a week— the Saturday morning Reston meeting and the Sunday afternoon meeting at Hope Lutheran. I also started occasionally dialing into "A Vision for You" phone meetings, including the Saturday meeting which focuses on relationships, and hearing so much of value.

Today, I no longer fear change because I have seen its benefits. I am grateful to say that with the loving guidance of my Higher Power, my wise and supportive sponsor who gives me a nudge when I need it, a network of support both through my fellow OA'ers and friends and family outside the program, I am changing and growing as I "trudge the road of happy destiny."¹

Ruth M. Saturday morning Reston Big Book meeting

1. *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism*. 4th Ed. (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc, 2001), 164. .

Big Book Favorites

I vividly recall when I first really felt a feeling. I wouldn't have known the word for the feeling if I'd not read the word on page 87 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous¹. When I realized I was agitated, I no longer felt powerless, no longer felt like my mind was "wrong"; how refreshing simply to realize I was agitated and could choose to do something other than suppressing or ignoring the feeling. Rarely do I not discover a "new" phrase that wasn't in the book the last time I read it! Here are some of my favorite passages and the questions they answer for me. Cheers and all the best.

Why should I even try? "There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance – that principle is contempt prior to investigation." (Appendix II: Spiritual Experience, 567).

OA NOVA AND 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 - 2019

Chair: Rachel B.
Vice Chair: Juliet C.
Interim Treasurer: John K.
Secretary: Kate I.



Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in *NoVAtions* are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect OA as a whole.

What’s the idea? “(a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives. (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism. (c) That God could and would IF [he] were sought”. (How It Works, 60).

What’s the point? “The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.” (How It Works, 60).

How do I start? “As we go through the day, we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action.” (Into Action, 87).

What do I keep doing when I stumble? “And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation – some fact of my life – unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment.” (Acceptance Was The Answer, 417).

Why go to OA and not stay home and read all the books? “Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.” (A Vision for You, 164).

Alice T.

1. *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism*. 4th Ed. (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc, 2001).

Service Opportunities for NoVA Intergroup:

Webmaster: If you are comfortable with computers (or, even better, have a background working with websites and are familiar with HTML), please consider providing this special service to OA. Average time commitment is about 4 hours per month and duties include loading the NoVations to the website for electronic distribution; updating the local meeting information; and posting calendar and special event announcements. This is a vital service needed to keep the lines of communication open for current and future OA members. Thanks to Carrie W. for her service this year.

NoVations Editor: Share your creative talent and voice with the NoVA community and support the recovery of fellow OA members. As NoVations editor, you will select the monthly newsletter themes and plan and communicate timing for submissions. You will solicit and choose newsletter content, work with writers on submissions, input content into the template, interface with the IG Chair and Board for review, send the newsletter to the printer and webmaster for publication, and coordinate delivery to the IG meeting. Cecilia W. began in in June 2017 and will transition by year-end.

For questions or interest in the webmaster role, email Kate, IG Secretary at secretary@oanova.org, for the editor role, email Rachel, IG Chair, at chair@oanova.org.

Cryptogram: You will surely meet some of us as you trudge the road of Happy Destiny.