



NoVAtions

November 2022



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS INTERGROUP

Step Eleven: A Daily Practice

My first Step sponsor told me I could begin to practice Step Eleven early in my OA program. I did not need to wait until I had worked the preceding ten Steps.

Prayer for me, until then, had just been asking God for things I thought I needed; basically “God, please give me ____.” But my sponsor had me stick with the basics each morning. I prayed the Serenity Prayer and prayed the prayers for Steps One, Two, and Three—preferably on my knees. Sometimes it was just “I can’t, God can, and I think I’ll let God!” The Third Step Prayer also became crucial. “God, I offer myself to Thee . . . May I do Thy will always!” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed., p. 63). My sponsor had me focus on one idea every week

from *For Today* or *Voices of Recovery* and discuss the changes in my relationships to God and others.

Prayer is when we talk to God. Meditation is when we listen to God. I became curious about how I could add meditation to my program, and I found answers right after the famous Ninth Step promises (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed. pp. 83–84). Many twelve steppers read these promises (and the suggestions through p. 88) daily, since our daily reprieve is based on maintaining our fit spiritual condition.

I attended a session of guided meditation in which we learned to sit quietly and use the Tool of writing. After pouring our hearts out to God, talking to him as we would our best friend, we were asked to listen silently. As ideas came into our minds, we jotted them down quickly. We sat still for about five minutes, which can seem like an eternity to beginners in meditation. At the end of the session, we went around the circle, and people shared the messages that perhaps God had sent. A key suggestion was that some thoughts may arise from our own self-will, so it is best to share our writings with a sponsor or another person who can be objective to help us decide whether to act on any guidance we receive.

Soon I fell in love with my morning time spent with my Higher Power. It became a time I longed for on the days I missed it. It gave me incredible peace and serenity as I dealt with death, loss, illness, and pain. It has not been my willpower or self-discipline that enabled me to go from 300 pounds (136 kg) to 140 pounds (64 kg) and stabilize at this weight. My healing has been a miracle from my Higher Power. He has spoken to me through my many wonderful sponsors and through OA-approved literature. The prayers my wonderful OA family said for me have made a tremendous difference in my life.

Thank you, God, and thank you, OA, for saving my life. I will be eternally grateful.

— Mary A., Austin, Texas
(*Lifeline*, November 17, 2016)



Step Eleven

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step Eleven Spiritual Principle

Spiritual Awareness

Tradition Eleven

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.

Tradition Eleven Spiritual Principle

Anonymity

Choosing to Surrender

Surrender continues to be a hard lesson for me to learn. I am a Type A, take charge person who, thanks to being single and childless, got to the age of 50 without having to ever really give in to anyone or anything in my personal life. Compromise was the best I could do, and I usually only agreed to that when it became clear I wasn't going to win. I went where I wanted when I wanted, bought what I wanted, watched what I wanted on TV and, of course, ate what I wanted (everything) when I wanted (all the time).

I've been in the program for about eight years, and the longest I've been abstinent is a little over two years. The reason why has been my reluctance to completely surrender my food to a power greater than myself. I have deliberately not called fellows because I didn't want them to talk me out of eating what I wanted. I have lied to sponsors because I didn't want them to (a) be disappointed in me; (b) "fire" me as a sponsee; or (c) make me start the Steps over. I've justified my actions by telling myself that my relapses rarely last longer than a few days. Surely that means I can control this thing and next time things will go better! Next time I will make smarter choices and won't fall in the same food trap. I was always surprised when this turned out not to be the case.

My inability to sustain a peaceful abstinence using my will and intellect has finally made it very clear to me that my choices don't work! When it comes to my alcoholic foods and, even more, to how I manage stress and unhappiness in my life, I realize that, for me, I really only have two choices. I can continue in my present path and eventually my disease will take over and I will die, first spiritually and emotionally and then physically. Or I can make the decision to turn my will and my life over to a power greater than myself *and act on that decision* one

day, one minute, one choice at a time.

As I write this, I have 49 days of honest abstinence and things feel different. Why? Because I've made these simple (not easy) choices, one at a time and over and over for 49 days, for which I'm incredibly grateful:

- ◆ Chose to keep coming to meetings, even when I was disgusted / annoyed / resentful.
- ◆ Chose to do service, no matter how small, even when I was disgusted / annoyed / resentful.
- ◆ Chose to keep in touch with my sponsor(s) and eventually was completely honest with them (none of them, by the way, fired me or expressed disappointment, although we have returned to working the Steps when needed!).
- ◆ Chose to listen to OA fellows' suggestions on things to read, podcasts to listen to, actions to take.
- ◆ Chose to expand my understanding of my Higher Power by reading, meditation, and being open to possibilities. Memorized the [Set Aside Prayer!](#)
- ◆ Chose to work with others and share my experience, strength, and hope as I could, including things I was learning through connection with my HP (Step 11) and others in the program who chose to do their Step 12 by calling me.
- ◆ Eventually chose to turn my food over to my sponsor each day and inform her of any change to the plan, no matter how small.
- ◆ Chose to ask for HP's guidance on foods that, while they don't immediately plunge me into relapse, trigger food thoughts and disturb my peace.

I am so grateful that today I realize I have no choice-but to turn over my food, my will, and my life to a power greater than myself!

—Kate I.

Treasurer's Observations for September 2022

In September, NoVA OA received \$972.98 in contributions from six individuals and two groups. Expenses were the usual MailChimp, Zoom, Aledor [our web managing company], totaling \$183.50. It looks like the overpayment to Aledor was fixed in October. The email from that vendor in July never made it to my computer; technology! A little too much anonymity (principle of Tradition 11 about public relations). I'll disburse much of our income to those who served by attending the Region 7 Business Conference, and to the OA WSO.

I'd love to write something pithy about humility

Oh Dear Reader, what new can I say?
The Treasurer, thank God, reports all okay.
And when humility suffers
We've the 12 steps as buffers
So we show up to serve every day.

(principle of the 11th Concept of Service). I believe that's best left to *real* poets. But Wait! I just looked at the spreadsheet I've sent each month as my report: The month headings all are 2021 rather than 2022! Seriously, nearly *anyone* can be Treasurer.

I will end by asking once again that if you've read this far, please make sure your favorite OA meeting which is served by this Intergroup is represented at Intergroup. Doesn't matter where you live anymore. If I see your face on Zoom, I would be delighted to see it on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. Eastern time.

—Alice T, I.G. Treasurer

November is Nomination Month!

Our Intergroup (IG) Board is seeking nominations for all four positions: Chair, Vice-chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. To read the job description for each service position, click [HERE](#). See page 10, "Board Officers."

Those serving the above positions must have a minimum of six (6) months continuous abstinence. To submit a nomination, go [HERE](#) and fill in your name and email address. In the message box, state the position you are seeking to fill and briefly describe your interests and qualifications. Applications must be received by Friday Midnight, November 18 to be considered for nomination at the monthly IG meeting the following day. Elections will take place at the monthly IG meeting on Saturday, December 17, 10 a.m. to Noon.

For questions, contact any current Board member [HERE](#). Scroll down to "Board Contacts."



To announce any OA meeting changes to our Northern Virginia Intergroup area, go to OANOVA.org and click on "Contacts." Or click [HERE](#).

You are invited to the...
OA Arlington Sunrise Meetings' Annual

OA Thanksgiving Marathon of Zoom Meetings

To Join via Zoom
Meeting ID: 863 8620
0340
Passcode: 12x12x12

To Join via Phone
(Washington, DC)
Phone # 301-715-8592
Meeting ID: 863 8620
0340
Passcode: 72200494

Hosts & Tech Support Needed!

To volunteer as a Host or as Tech Support, please use this link below for Sign Up Genius
<https://tinyurl.com/Thanksgiving-Marathon>

[CLICK HERE TO
SEE FULL FLYER
With Live Links](#)



Swimming

THE SEAS OF RECOVERY!

NOVEMBER 4-6

OCEAN CITY, MD

**CONVENTION
REGISTRATION LINK**

www.oaregion7.org

REGISTRATION COST

Early Bird Registration until 9/30/22 - \$45
Regular Registration until 10/31/22 - \$55
On-site Registration (11/4-6/22) - \$65
Meals (Lunch & Dinner on Saturday) - \$85

GENERAL INQUIRIES

Maria G: mtg7176@gmail.com
Rob L: rob.lepre@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

4-6, Fri 6 PM to Sun Noon

In-person **REGION 7 CONVENTION**

Ocean City, Md

“Swimming the Seas of Recovery”

13 Sun 3 to 4:30 PM

VIRTUAL REGION 2ND SUN WORKSHOP

“Step 11: Prayer & Meditation”

19 Sat 10 AM to Noon

Zoom **INTERGROUP MEETING**

24 Thu 8 AM to 8 PM

THANKSGIVING MARATHON

Sponsored by the Arlington Sunrise Mtgs

NEW In-person Meeting!!

Computer-free, phone-free, camera-free;

only people & recovery!

LITERATURE & SHARING

Westwood Baptist Church, Springfield, Room 108

Thursdays 7-8 p.m.

MORE INFORMATION

NoVAtions

To all who have contributed in the creation of this issue: **Thank you for your service!**

And thank you to all readers!

—Marie L, Editor

NoVAtions is published on the 1st of each month.

Submission deadline is midnight on the 20th of the preceding month.

Share your experience, strength, and hope through written word & artwork to: NoVAtions@oanova.org.

December's Theme: “Abstinent Celebrations”

EDITORIAL POLICY:

This is your newsletter! We encourage your contributions, comments and experience in the OA way of life. We reserve the right to edit, and it is understood that other OA groups, without permission, may reprint all copy.

You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website: OANoVA.org.

Our mailing address is:
OA NOVA, P.O. Box 1992,
Annandale, VA 22003.

Personal stories express the experience, strength, & hope of the individual member, and not OA as a whole.

World Service News

LIFELINE IS BACK! We are now sharing stories of recovery through OA's Twelve Steps at lifeline.oa.org. You can help *Lifeline* grow by sending in your story, whether it is written, recorded as an audio file, shot on video, or is an image of your own making. Send us your recovery-focused story via digital media, and we will put it in the queue for eventual publication. Read the new **Contributor Guidelines** for suggestions and use our **submission form**, found at oa.org/lifeline, to send us your submission. Thank you for your service!

READ THE FOURTH QUARTER ISSUE of *A Step Ahead*, now available online! Check it out to learn more about these important topics:

- ♦ Our new *Twelve and Twelve* audiobook
- ♦ In-depth WSBC 2023 updates
- ♦ A message from our treasurer
- ♦ The new Event Calendar on oa.org
- ♦ Literature and document updates from the WSO
- ♦ The new *Lifeline* blog at lifeline.oa.org
- ♦ Ask-It Basket and more!

Read it online or download the PDF today!

Go to **A STEP AHEAD**.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE to “**FIND A MEETING**” on OA.org. Click **here to add, edit, or change a service body**; Then follow the prompts.

The FAM (Find a Meeting) database includes approximately 6,400 meetings and 340 service bodies, and 100 percent of the data is sent in by OA members, usually those serving as secretaries.

An average of 40,000 OA members search FAM every month, which accounts for 60 percent of all user activity on oa.org.

UPCOMING DATES:

November 18–20: International Day Experiencing Abstinence: IDEA encourages OA members worldwide to begin or reaffirm their abstinence from compulsive overeating.


December 12: Twelfth Step Within Day: A day for OA service bodies, meetings, and individual members to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors.

—World Service Office



For All You Numbers Lovers!

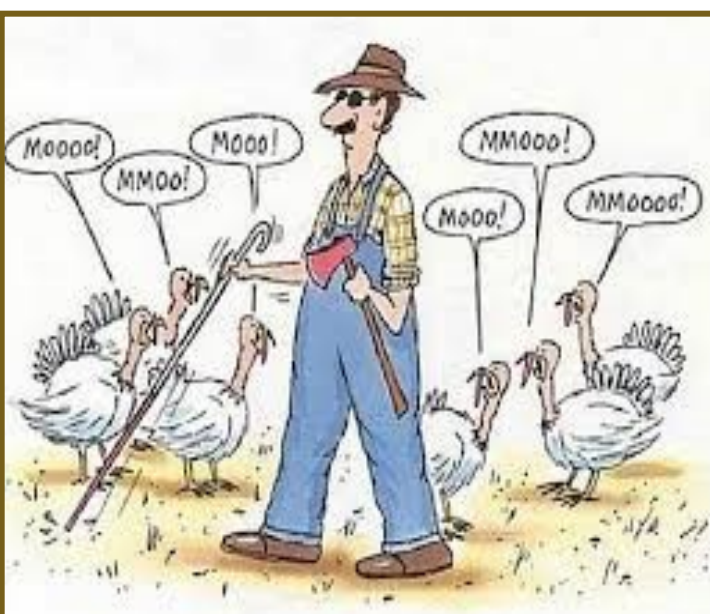
1. Fill in the missing numbers.
2. The missing numbers are integers between 0 and 5.
3. The numbers in each row add up to the totals in the far right column.
4. The numbers in each column add up to the totals in the last row along the bottom.
5. The diagonal lines also add up the total at the top of the far right column.



				14	
				16	
			5	19	
				13	
	0			16	
				10	
21	8	18	11	16	14



So a woman texts her husband on a cold winter's morning: "Windows frozen, won't open."
 Husband texts back: "Gently pour some lukewarm water over it."
 Wife texts back five minutes later: "Computer is really screwed up now."



A man went to the doctor with a leaf of lettuce sticking out of his ear. The doctor examined him and said, "I'm sorry to tell you but this is just the tip of the iceberg."





Eleventh Step Prayer

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace—
that where there is hatred, I may bring love—
that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness—
that where there is discord, I may bring harmony—
that where there is error, I may bring truth—
that where there is doubt, I may bring faith—
that where there is despair, I may bring hope—
that where there are shadows, I may bring light—
that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted—
to understand, than to be understood—
to love, than to be loved.

For it is by self forgetting that one finds.
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.
It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.

Amen.