

# NOVATION!

## NOVA Outreach Intergroup DECEMBER 2002

### Editor's Note

This newsletter focuses on the holidays and the tradition of anonymity. We also have a special article on anonymity in cyberspace by NOVA's webmaster, with a request for your input.

Please send articles to [kristinkristk@aol.com](mailto:kristinkristk@aol.com) or

Kristin Kemp  
6145 Leesburg Pike #503  
Falls Church VA 22041

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### Christmas Day Marathon--A Healthy Tradition

Arlington Sunrise Meeting will hold its annual marathon on 25 December at St. Charles Catholic Church in Arlington. A step meeting will begin each hour, beginning right after the regular 7am meeting. The church is located at the intersection of Fairfax Drive and 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Clarendon. Enter by the side door facing Fairfax Drive.

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### Been There, Done That--Suggestions for Abstinent Holidays

One Christmas or New Year's Night when I had binged all day, I woke up in that awful cold sweat that means

you're about to throw up. I was in the middle of a painful relapse and had grazed all day from the trays of sweets and junk food littering my mother-in-law's house. Hanging over the toilet at 3 am, it occurred to me that I never wanted to celebrate this way again. Thank God, I never have.

Holidays are becoming times to stop and reflect on the richness of my life today. Just like that old cliché, I am finding more happiness in wanting what I have than having what I want. Though ads urge me to buy, buy, buy and eat, eat, eat, painful experience has taught me that excess food destroys my peace of mind.

Here are some suggestions on maintaining abstinence during the holidays that OA's shared on the Internet:

1. Focus on the meaning of the holiday or event rather than the food orgy.
2. The higher our expectations, the lower our serenity. If a family occasion almost always turns unpleasant, make alternative plans. If you're going to be alone, face that you may face sadness. Plan to deal with it without excess food.
3. Build up your recovery bank account before and during the holidays by attending lots of meetings, working extra hard on the Steps, and using all the tools.
4. Keep in constant contact with sponsors and OA buddies. The disease doesn't take holidays nor should



recovery.

- 5. Know the limits of your recovery. Avoid people, places, and things that have consistently triggered overeating. A party is not worth losing abstinence over.
- 6. At holiday gatherings, focus on the people rather than the food. People like to talk about themselves. Pick out someone who looks uncomfortable. Ask them about themselves and really listen.

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### **Anonymity & Privacy on the Web OANOVA Webmaster**

The eleventh tradition states that we maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television, and other public means of communication. In today's world, that has come to include the Internet. Our intercrop has been trying to decide whether to include contact names and numbers on our own website to give folks a way to inquire about a specific meeting besides the hotline. The concerns here in fact go beyond personal anonymity and involve basic privacy issues.

It is not difficult for us to stay within the bounds of the traditions themselves, as no last names would be used. On its website, World Service Office now lists the first name, phone number, and email addresses of meeting contacts are listed when the meeting database is queried and a specific meeting is selected. The broader concern is the ability for people to learn

a member's full name and address through several reverse lookup search engines on the Internet. As a result, folks could end up on mailing or call lists for solicitors, especially weight loss schemes. The WSO website does not list all the data for every meeting on a single screen; to see contact info for a meeting, users have to go one level deeper and only one meeting's data is visible at a time. Nevertheless, there is still a risk members need to be aware of.

Because of these possibilities, NOVA IG does not list contact names and phone numbers on our web page. We asked WSO to list the contact name and number for all meetings in our area as OA NOVA IG with the hotline number. This change has not occurred for many of the meetings and the results have been both positive and negative.

- 1. With the group registration form accessible on the WSO site, anyone can request a change including the addition of contact information.
- 2. New meeting information in the WSO website database can take a month or more to post. There have been several complaints that someone has arrived for a meeting long after it had been cancelled or moved. Outdated contact info for existing meetings has created other problems.
- 3. On the plus side, having up-to-date contact names and numbers has helped suffering food addicts who have called for directions just hours

before a meeting. The downside is the lag time between submission of a change and posting on the website.

The meeting information on the Northern Virginia website is updated as soon as changes are received and includes directions to all meetings. In all fairness, WSO has to keep track of nearly 1000 times the number of meetings we do and on an international level. Accepting that we are powerless over the speed with which changes are posted to the WSO site, we have seriously considered adding a first name and phone number to our own meeting information.

As you can see, this is an issue that can touch us all. The intergroup does not want to make such a move without soliciting your input. If you have comments or questions, please send them to [webmaster@oanova.org](mailto:webmaster@oanova.org) by 1/16/2003 so they can be compiled before the next Intergroup meeting. Or feel free to join us at the Intergroup meeting on the third Saturday of each month at Immanuel UMC. (Directions on the back cover.)

We will post the result of our discussions in the February issue of Novation. At the very least, we will ensure that the note for each meeting in the WSO database includes a link to the OA NOVA website so users can get the latest information and directions even if we do not add the contact names and numbers.

**Please talk this over at your meetings and join us at intergroup to help us in this important decision.**

--Bret

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### **Message from OA NOVA Special Events Coordinator**

I would like to share with you highlights of the OANOVA Gratitude event of Oct 5<sup>th</sup>. Keynote Speaker Chris C. shared her Gratitude for the Grace of the God of Her Understanding for her recovery. Dan spoke of the approach to his OA program that he gratefully credits for his sustained recovery today. We had 3 minute pitches of Gratitude and a musical tribute by Bret. There was laughter as some OA members acted out a skit of OA's having dinner out at a restaurant. Another perk was wonderful door prizes awarded during the evening.

Many thanks to those who helped to make the event a success. In addition to those above, I wish to thank our gracious hostess and MC Nicole; the OA thespians, Kelly, Jaclyn, Bret, Ruth and Faye as their fearless director; registration table helpers Imelda, Kristin, and Lynn; Kate, who designed the Gratitude List and table, and Kristin as editor and publisher of these noble words. Refreshments were done by Joan and friends. Thanks also to those who came to set up and man the lights.

Special thanks to NOVA Intergroup for sponsoring this event and the Falls Church for letting us use their beautiful facility. To all who attended this event in the midst of our trials and tribulations during October, we say thank you, thank you, and thank

you. This was a night to behold.

--Barbara J

**Watch for the next special event--  
Candlelight Promises Meeting at Dunn  
Loring UMC on 18 January! (Snow  
Date TBD.)**

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**Whoops!**

November's issue called the IG Board a  
"governing" body, a violation of our  
Traditions. Apologies to all.

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**Program Zingers**

If you do what you've always done, you'll  
get what you always got.

Resentment is the Number One  
offender.

Share it or wear it!

No need for panic; God's in charge!



**Helpful Phone Numbers**

**NOVA IG BOARD**

Chair	Karen S.	7/536-5269
1 <sup>st</sup> VC	Toby G.	7/528-9563
2 <sup>nd</sup> VC	(acting) Bret S.	7/887-4237
Secty	Dick D.	7/578-1999

Treas	Joan H.	7/527-6592
Hotline	Jessica B.	7/660-8731
Webmaster	Bret S.	7/369-0523
Novation	Kristin K	7/578-3485
Where & When Editor	Kate	7/671-0380
WSO Delegates	Toby G.	7/528-9563
Reg VII Reps	Toby G.	7/528-9563
	Dick D.	7/578-1999
	Fay M.	7/549-4481
	Paul B	7/765-1465

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**Would You Like to Be a Newcomer Contact?**

Our list was getting old and tired. If you'd like  
to do this service, send me your name and  
number!

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**Intergroup Needs Your Support**

NOVA IG meets the third Saturday of each  
month at 10 am in the basement of Immanuel  
Methodist Church in Annandale. The church is  
located on Heritage Drive in Annandale about  
one-half mile off Route 236 inside the Beltway.  
Find out more by showing up and serving on a  
committee or becoming an IG rep.

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**Support OA 60/30/10**

After meeting group expenses, it is suggested  
that a prudent reserve be set aside and the  
remainder sent 60% to your local IG, 30% to  
WSO, and 10% to Region VII.

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**Handy URLs for OA Computer Nerds**

- NOVA IG website [www.oanova.org](http://www.oanova.org)
- DC/MD website [www.oa-dcmetro.org](http://www.oa-dcmetro.org)
- OA/WSO website [www.overeatersanonymous.org](http://www.overeatersanonymous.org)