



Oasis

WINTER 2020

www.njioa.org
OAanswerman@aol.com

Infoline:
973.746.8787

IMPORTANT MESSAGE:

Due to the CoronaVirus, all facilities are still closed for our face-to-face meetings. Please try to stay connected with other types of meeting formats.

Please cut and paste this link into a web browser:

<https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=2>

Fear of Relapse Has Taught Me to Put My Program First

It's a good thing that relapse doesn't disqualify anyone from recovery in OA because if it did, I'd have long ago lost the best thing that ever happened to me. I have had several relapses over the past fifteen years in Program, and each one has been a turning point in my commitment to the Program. The first time I achieved abstinence it seemed pretty easy. Sixteen years ago, I first walked into these rooms, grossly obese and miserable most of the time. I found a sponsor, did what she said, achieved some physical recovery, but didn't work the Steps. That set me up for eventual failure: by a year and a half later, I had drifted away from attending meetings and calling my sponsor, and I had a classic slip, celebrating at a dinner away on a trip with my in-laws. That first careless experience of abstinence was not so easily regained. For five years, I went in and out of Program, always vowing that this time was the time. I went to one meeting a week and only that one particular meeting; I dreaded people's judgments there, not realizing that I was welcome as I was, just as I now welcome any overeater regardless of her condition. My weight grew and grew. My back hurt all the time, I was irritable and angry, and I had no energy; I had to nap after work every afternoon. Finally, I decided to have a breast reduction, thinking that it would jumpstart some kind of physical restoration. The surgeon told me no insurance company would pay for the operation because at 211 lbs. I was now too obese to qualify. "Take the summer, go lose 20 lbs., and come back," he advised. I remember sitting in my car outside his office crying. I had never weighed so much or felt so hopeless. I called a nutritionist who told me that I would never lose weight unless my then-husband joined me in the same journey of diet and exercise. Well, that got my temper up. I thought of my fellows in OA and knew they would never tell me my transformation depended on anyone else, no matter how close that person was to me. This time when I rejoined OA, I did things differently: I tried different meetings. I went to more meetings per week, I got a food sponsor. I achieved 5 years of abstinence. I lost 40 lbs. and my life improved. I had more energy, more friends, and better relationships with my family. But I still felt I was "too busy" to do the Steps. I only had a food sponsor and I checked in intermittently with her. Looking back, in many ways it was a "white knuckle" abstinence. During those five years I still had problems at work, problems at home, alienated many people, and generally behaved in ways that I'm still making amends for. I was rigid, controlling, and probably not much fun to be around. Then four years ago, my beloved father got cancer, an aggressive type that took him within six months. At that point I was also in the middle of a divorce. Again, I stopped going to meetings and drifted away from my sponsor. I was able to stay reasonably abstinent all the way through my father's terminal illness and caring for him in hospice. I made it through the funeral and the *shiva* (Jewish period of mourning in which people come visit, pray for the soul of the dear departed one and generally bring over all the foods I couldn't eat). It was about a week after we had returned to ordinary life that I found myself in the kitchen at my job, bingeing on a food I had never even been interested in. I remember opening the large tin and eating the first bite; the next thing I remember, the tin was half empty and I was sick to my stomach. To say I was afraid is an understatement. Because I had gone through five years of relapse trying to regain my abstinence, I knew what a hell was waiting for me and I had no idea how long it would last or how much weight I would gain this time.

I stood at a crossroads; drastic measures were required. I said "God, I don't know if you're out there, but I need your help and I'm willing to take any measures to get it." I was finally willing to get a sponsor, do the Steps, and commit to the Program for real. I was afraid—but I was more afraid of what awaited me if I didn't do it. It was the best decision I ever made. Now with the help of my Higher Power, my sponsor and this program, I will celebrate four years of abstinence in January 2021. Today I have a Step sponsor and I am a Step sponsor to three people. I'm more than halfway through Step 9 myself. I have a concept of a Higher Power that I rely on, and every day when I wake up, I say the Third Step prayer. I go to three or four meetings a week and I take service positions in my regular meetings. I do 10th step inventories almost every evening. I have real friends in Program and outside of it. I maintain a healthy weight for my height, having given away 70 to 75 lbs since my all-time high in the plastic surgeon's office. Program is not something hanging on the fringes of my life; I am not someone hanging on the fringes of Program. It is deeply intertwined in the fabric of my life, which has improved in every measurable way. I get along better with everyone in my life. I have a job I enjoy, a boyfriend I love, and a peaceful home. And none of it would have come true without relapse and the fear of never climbing out of it. I don't judge myself for having had my relapses when I did. They were hard times and I didn't realize I had the tools to carry me through them without faltering. But I have remained abstinent throughout many personal crises, including the recent coronavirus lockdown, and today I believe I could stay abstinent even through a death in family. Because most of all, my fear of relapse has taught me that when the going gets tough, my Program is even more important to me. Do I do it perfectly? No. But it remains the goal that centers me and keeps me from relapse. And for that I am deeply thankful.

- Ariel Z. Montclair

KAYAKING TRIP – August 31 was a beautiful morning, and for many of the 21 masked attendees it was the first time being in the physical presence of our fellows in many months. After being paired with a kayak and launching, we gathered up in a nearby cove to have a LIVE MEETING on the water! We all took turns sharing something for which we were grateful. I felt rocketing into the Fourth Dimension as we concluding with the Serenity Prayer. There was plenty of time after the meeting to explore the beautiful nature of Monksville reservoir and feel the Sunlight of the Spirit. Hope to see you there next year! -ToniAnn, Montclair



R-E-L-A-P-S-E

R - retreating into myself...yet again. I'm stuck in my head and can't get out of my own way. Food is all I can think of. The more, the better. I don't care that it's killing me. Physically I continue to disfigure my body, Emotionally I am insane, and spiritually I am void.

E- eating things I've never eaten before. Like a caged animal I wanted to consume everything in my path. It was food and it was going to be all mine. My friends and my family cringed as they watched me fall back into my old ways.

L- living in a constant state of remorse. It didn't matter all the meetings I had gone to in the past or the slogans I used to live by. The phone calls and the fellowship that were once my lifeline ... it all took a backseat to bags and boxes. I was angry, I was scared and I was very bitter.

A- always hoping and praying that this will be the last time. Every morning having new resolve. Best of intentions only to be smothered by succumbing to my addiction. I couldn't fight it.

P- pretending that I was going to be ok. Just one more... then I'm fine. Then I'll get right back "on". I'll be just fine.

S- sneaking behind everyone's back. Stuffing myself with fistfuls of food when they turned their backs. Hiding. Here we go again... my entire life is centered around food and I can't get out from under it.

E- everything is falling apart. I am sliding down a steep mountain, trying to dig my fingernails in. But to no avail. I am drowning....

- Pam, River Edge

Kayaking for serenity – Held from Fall Oasis 2020

Fun, fellowship, friendship. Who knew what we were capable of. In the midst of my disease the last thing I wanted was to be part of a group activity. The only thing that I wanted was to be alone with my food. When I was invited to join a group of OAs on a kayaking trip I immediately balked. I didn't think I was willing or capable to make myself that vulnerable to participate in a new, physical activity with strangers. Through OA I have learned that my disease wants me lonely, alone and uncomfortable. I have been given a gift of life with a program. OA gave me that willingness and confidence and strength to overcome my fear and trepidation and try something new. I'm so glad that I did. It was a wonderful and life changing time. Lesli M., Hackensack

When I first realized I was relapsing, I was bothered. I was bothered by things like needing to let go of my "status" as a sponsor, and by a surge of phone calls from well-meaning fellows, and having to deal with the emotions and labels that I was inflicting on myself like "failure" and "guilt" and "fraud" and "normal". All I wanted was food. Why did I have to be so BOTHERED just because I wanted food! I've since come to realize the critical role of love in my relapse. Simply, I did not yet love MYSELF enough to be "bothered" by the possibility of gaining 80 pounds, or living with severe joint pain again, or struggling for a good night's sleep, or cutting off the connections to people who cared about me. I didn't love myself enough to work for the connection to my Higher Power. A Power that brought me the peace of mind and serenity that I sought for so many years, and that I thoroughly embraced as a daily gratitude. Today I've been blessed with abstinence once again. My recovery is my own, and not everyone will need relapse to grow through what the 12 Steps reveals to them. With the awareness that this program has brought into my life, relapse taught me a few things. I gained a much greater respect for my condition as a disease. I got to feel and BELIEVE that I am not a failure because I picked up the food. I learned that "sitting down" is an amazing way to find the meaning of humble. I learned, and could not ignore, how my body is affected when I allow my taste buds to have a party. I learned that isolating is shutting the door on love. And most importantly, I learned I will ALWAYS be worthy of LOVE.

- Charleen, New Milford

Upcoming Events – See NJIOA.org for Zoom info & Flyers

"Acceptance is the Answer: A New Year's Day Workshop" – Fri., 1/1/21

Zoom meeting - 2pm–4pm

"Zoom Around the World Contest" - Virtually attend meetings in every region in the world and enter a raffle to win prizes. Deadline is 1/2/21.

NJIOA Intergroup Mtg Thurs. 1/14/21 7:30pm – Zoom

26th Annual Winter Retreat - Star Lake Lodge Virtual Retreat –Sat 1/23-Sun 1/24
Zoom Meeting. Register by 1/15/21.

NJIOA Intergroup Mtg Thurs. 2/11/21 7:30pm – Zoom

Unity Day – Sun 2/28 – 12:30-2:30- Zoom meeting – 5 Intergroups involved. More info to follow.

Inspiration Day-Sun 3/21 – 3 to 4 out of state speakers. Zoom info TBD

World Service Business Conference – 4/21-4/24/21- Albuquerque, NM

World Service Convention – 8/26-8/28/21 - Orlando, FL

[Check www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org) for other events & flyers, as well as ZOOM meeting info

The Power of Surrender Workshop-September 13, 2020

On Sunday, September 13th from 2:00-4:30PM our New Jersey Intergroup sponsored a workshop entitled, "The Power of Surrender". Participants had the privilege of hearing two inspirational, out of the area speakers. Each speaker shared for 30 minutes followed by 15 minutes of Q&A. The first speaker addressed surrendering food and the second speaker addressed surrendering thoughts, feelings, willpower and defects to a Higher Power. Following the Q&A, participants had the opportunity to write action plans about something they wanted to surrender. It could be food, fear, resentments, control etc. They considered how surrendering these would impact their lives. Next, they created action plans using the OA tools and the 12 Steps and decided on one action they were ready to take immediately. After discussing their action plans in small breakout rooms, participants came together to share what they were taking away from the workshop. The 100 participants were grateful for this meaningful experience.

Fran, West Orange

"What Recovery Means To Me"

Recovery means working the program to the best of my ability each day and being in balance, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. It means being stable and in touch with myself, God, others and nature and being as open-minded, willing, honest, loving, compassionate and positive, yet realistic. It means I have my wits about me and use logic and reasoning and think things over. It means pausing before I put something in my mouth or something comes out of it. It means speaking my mind without offending or insulting others. It means staying within a 5-10 pound weight range, taking my medications and supplements and keeping my body as healthy as I can. It means being helpful and useful to others and being considerate and polite when called for. It means taking care of my digestive system and eating a balance of healthy and unhealthy foods. It means I move around as much as possible. It means I'm open to change, while maintaining my identity and integrity. It means taking time for meetings and praying and meditating and listening to that inner voice and connecting to God -sometimes through other people. It means not taking my emotions or bad day out on others. It means not swearing too much or making dirty or lewd comments, innuendos or references. It means being able to laugh at myself and others and laugh with others. Finally, recovery means never being perfect and giving back and sharing what is on my mind and heart and never stop learning or growing or using my imagination or ever giving up. It means treating myself and everyone as equals and respecting property, rules and laws and beliefs. That is what recovery means to me and I could probably write more, but I won't today.

- Marcy, Wayne

Firelight Meeting 2020-October 17, 2020

The magic of friendship and support filled the evening at this year's Firelight Meeting. Although we could not gather in person, we gathered virtually and enjoyed a wonderful, spiritual evening together. Thank you to all that participated. Keep writing those wishes, desires, fears because next year's Firelight Meeting will be here before you know it – Oct 16th, 2021 (tentative).-Grace, Franklin Lks

O.A. INFORMATION TO KEEP HANDY!

OUR NEW WEBSITE- EASY TO USE - CHECK IT OUT!!

www.njioa.org

DID YOU KNOW THAT OUR **NEW** WEBSITE INCLUDES:

*Speakers to listen to from the Boston World Service Convention, the "Vision for You" Convention in Newark & the Belleville speaker series.

*Public Information flyers ready to download & put up in grocery stores, libraries, your house of worship or the ladies/mens room. Just put the name and location of your local meeting at the bottom & add our phone number for other meetings: 973-746-8787

*ALL event flyers including the current & past OAsis available for download and **printing extra copies for your meeting.**

Information for the Men's phone meeting.

Frequently asked questions.

An OA video to show friends what it's like to be a Compulsive Overeater.

Visit the site, YOU WON'T BE SORRY...We rock!!!! Cause Service is slimming.

	Your Trusted Servants	
Susan S - Chair	papersusan@aol.com	201-960-1995
Judy L.- Vice Chair	gratefuljudy@yahoo.com	201-615-4955
Paul O - IG Secy.	opanikao@aol.com	973-800-4760
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Recovery from Relapse Mentor Program TWELFTH STEP WITHIN

Are you aware that we have a Recovery from Relapse mentor program available? We can provide you with someone who is familiar with relapse. They are willing to share their experience, strength, and hope.

Contact Terry P. – 862-812-4467 terrypolatchek@hotmail.com or Marcy S. – 973-832-9155 steinmarcy@yahoo.com if you need a mentor, or if you want to work on the local Intergroup committee.

The Twelfth Step Within Committee was created to reach out to those in the fellowship who still suffer and to address the relapse and recovery of our members. The Committee's purpose is to strengthen Overeaters Anonymous by sharing information and ideas that generate recovery within the fellowship.

CARRY THE MESSAGE!!

Might you know someone who could use our program-Remember Bill & Dr Bob said the only way to stay clean is to work with OTHERS! NJIOA has numerous public information events throughout the year & we need YOU!

Please join our Public Information committee for more information about the different forms of media we use, and how YOU can help us carry the message!

Come and join us at the monthly NJIOA Intergroup Meeting OR Email cwestra@yahoo.com and let us know about local health or street fairs in your town, or find out how you can help. **NJIOA Intergroup is held 7:30pm on the second Thursday of every month on Zoom. Please check NJIOA.org for Zoom info.**

If you would like an item on the agenda, please email Susan at papersusan@aol.com at least two weeks before the next Intergroup meeting.

Donation Information

Please note that in order for Intergroup to continue with the upcoming events, health fairs, seminars, workshops---We need your contributions. Donations can be made through Venmo or Zelle by using NJIOAPAY@gmail.com. OR

Please send your entire meeting donation to:

NJIOA PO Box 827 Fairlawn, NJ 07410

Donations can be made individually as well as through your meeting group.

We will divide between Intergroup, WSO, Region 7 & mail your donation to the appropriate service body. Please include your meeting day, time, location & if known your WSO number.

**Any amount is appreciated

**Remember we are self-supporting

"In keeping with Tradition Ten, Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on bariatric (weight-loss) surgery. In the spirit of Tradition Ten, Overeaters Anonymous welcomes **anyone with a desire to stop eating compulsively**, including those who have had the surgery or are contemplating it."



*OUR COMPULSION MAGNIFIES OUR **NEGATIVE** FEELINGS, THEN WANTS TO DRIVE US TO SELF DESTRUCTION.*

DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS THERE ARE MANY CLOSURES TO THE MEETINGS LISTED BELOW.

Most meetings are on Zoom - Check NJIOA.org. Phone lists for use within fellowship only.

SUNDAY

Belleville 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM BB O HA
Clara Maass Medical Center,
One Clara Maass Drive, Education Greifinger Hall
Mary 973 838 9521
Hoboken 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM BB/S O HA
Hoboken University Medical Center
(Assumption Hall) 308 Willow Ave
Paul 201 656 2042
Morris Plains 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM D HA
St Paul's Episcopal Church, 29 Hillview Avenue
Joan 973 428 2957
Paramus 10:30 AM - 12 Noon BB HA (B)
Beginners Meeting available following BB Meeting
Dorothy B. Kraft Center, 15 Essex Road
(off of Century Rd - 1 block west of Rt 17)
Jill B. - 201-704-0444
West Orange 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM BB/NN HA
Summit Ridge Nursing & Rehab Center, 20 Summit St, (off
Mt. Pleasant Ave, drive around to the back of the building,
then facing the building, enter the door on the far left.)
Susan 201 207 6652 Patrick 201-323-4041

MONDAY

Bloomfield 10AM - 11 AM O L HA
Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center
240 Belleville Avenue
Deborah 973 680 4490
Livingston 7:30-8:30 PM S/BB
Trinity Covenant Church
343 E. Cedar Street
Karen - 973 650 2833
Midland Park 9:30 - 10:30 AM BB
Midland Park Methodist Church, 269 Godwin Ave.
Side Door, Downstairs Room on Right - Child Friendly
Roz P 973-464 9767
Paramus 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM HOW HA
Dorothy B Kraft Center, 15 Essex Rd.
(off of Century Rd - 1 block west of Rt 17)
Audrey 201 819 5575 Fran 201 220 1440
Secaucus 12PM-1PM S
First Reform Church
51 Centre Ave
Ellen-201-725-0535
BIG BOOK phone meeting - 6pm-6:30pm
Call 605-468-8860 Access number -541987#

TUESDAY

Bloomfield 7:00-8:15 PM Newcomer
Watchung Presbyterian Church
375 Watchung Avenue, Bloomfield, NJ (just off Garden State
Parkway Exit 151)
Enter from the parking lot in the back The meeting is held
downstairs
ToniAnn A. 973 945 0233
Saddle Brook 7:15 PM - 8:15 PM S HA
Kessler Institute for Rehab, 300 Market Street
First Floor Conference Room
Ursula 201 527 5203 Shari 201 218 5801
Upper Montclair 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM S/T
The Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair, 53 Norwood
Road
Beni 973 202 5579
Wayne 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM S - HA
Our Lady of Consolation Parish,
1799 Hamburg Tpk
In Ministry Center, follow road behind the church
Marcy 973 694 1274 Christine 973-668-8768

WEDNESDAY

Hillsdale - 7:30-8:30 PM BB
United Methodist Church
349 Hillsdale Ave Parlor Maria - 201 666 0684
River Edge 10:45 AM - 11:45 AM HOW HA
Temple Avodat Shalom, 385 Howland Avenue,
Child friendly
Myrna 201 794 1976 Roz 973 464 9767
Saddle Brook 7:00 PM - 7:55 PM BB/YPF
Kessler Institute for Rehab, 300 Market Street,
First Floor Conference Room
Theresa 201 663 2979 Tania 917-363-5280
Saddle Brook 8:05 PM - 9:00 PM HOW
Kessler Institute for Rehab, 300 Market Street,
First Floor Conference Room
Brenda 732 325 7133 Claire - 201-274-4924
Saddle Brook 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM MENS MTG
Kessler Institute for Rehab, 300 Market Street,
Small conference room on left before Multi-purpose
room
Tim W 201-519-6898
BIG BOOK phone meeting - 6pm-6:30pm
Call 605-468-8860 Access number - 541987#

THURSDAY

Chatham 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM S HA
Presbyterian Church Chatham
240 Southern Blvd.
Enter in the back of the church, through the glass doors
and downstairs, 1st room on the left, A-10
Wendy L 973 263 5415
Midland Park 9:30 - 10:30 AM S
Midland Park Methodist Church, 269 Godwin Ave
Side Door, Downstairs Room on Right -
Child Friendly
Joyce 201 280 9000 Shari 201 218 5801
Morristown 10:30am-11:30am Step Writing
Morristown United Methodist Church on the Green - 50
S. Park Place - Madeline - 973-285-7507
Ridgewood 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM S & B 1st Thurs T
Christ Church, Franklin Avenue & Cottage Place
Susan L 201-981-0861 Pat S. - 201 652 6882
Upper Montclair 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM S/T
The Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair, 53
Norwood Road Beni 973 202 5579
BIG BOOK ONLINE MEETING 7:30pm-8:30pm
Download the Zoom app for free
Click join a meeting - Meeting ID-869878263
Available on Desktop, laptop or phone

Face-to-face meetings on hold for now

MEETING KEY

ABC format..... Anorexic, Bulimic & Compulsive Disorder	B..... Beginners
BB..... Big Book	HA..... Handicap Accessible
D..... Discussion	L..... Lifeline
HOW... Specific Format	NN..... No nonsense/Newcomer
N..... Newcomer's	O..... Open
MP..... Meditation & Prayer	S..... 12 Steps
Q..... Qualification (Speaker)	V..... Varies
T..... Tradition	WB..... Welcome Back Meeting 12 th Step Within
W..... Writing	YPF..... Young persons friendl
Women Only	
90 Day....Specific Format	

Telephone & Online Meetings are listed at <https://oa.org/find-a-meeting/?type=2>

FRIDAY

Hackensack 7:30 PM - 9 PM HOW HA
John Theurer Cancer Center, 92 Second Street, Lobby
Conference Room
Audrey 201 819 5575 Fran 201 220-1440
Nutley 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM D
Grace Episcopal Church, 200 Highfield Lane
(House on side of Church)
Denise 973 868 9585 Kelly 973 661 2231
Passaic 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Women Only BB
Basement of private home
371 Brook Ave
Enter via driveway, 2nd door on the right
Dawn 973-865-3051 and Beni 973-202-5579
Wayne 7 PM- 8 PM varies HA
Our Lady of Consolation Ministry Center,
1799 Hamburg Tpk
Follow the driveway down hill past the church
Christine 973 668 8768

SATURDAY

Berkeley Heights 11AM - Noon BB/S
Speaker 2nd Sat of the month
United Methodist Church, 105 Diamond Hill Road
Marc 908-578-9598 Judith 973 600 4341
Little Falls 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM WB
Second Reformed Church, 6 Walnut Street
Dave - 201 665 0448 Agnes 973-942-7167
Paramus 10:30 AM - 12 Noon - BB/S & MP
1st & 2nd Weeks BB - 3rd & 4th S
Dorothy B. Kraft Center, 15 West Essex Road,
Conference Room 1, 2 (off of Century Rd - 1 block west
of Rt 17)
Angela 201 321 2010 Linda 201 845 6372
Celeste 201 838-0236
Ridgewood 10:00am-11:15am BB
Unitarian Society, 113 Cottage Place - Follow path to
building in the back, building is NEXT to 113 Cottage
Place, brown building with rainbow flag, Room H3 (3
doors down to the left of the old meeting)
Cindy 201-394-0186
Upper Montclair 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM S
Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair, 53 Norwood
Avenue, between Park Street and Valley Road, 2nd floor,
park on circular drive side of church, enter at stairs to
right of circular drive
Karen 973-704-8047

ANY CHANGES PLEASE NOTIFY US ASAP—

EMAIL: MARY ANN - maryanncluney@gmail.com or BONNIE – B4OAI8n8@gmail.com

OA meetings are open to all people willing to abstain from compulsive overeating and compulsive food behaviors. .