

To receive the OAsis by MAIL,  
contact: [oasis@njioa.org](mailto:oasis@njioa.org)  
To receive the OAsis by E-MAIL,  
contact: [secretary@njioa.org](mailto:secretary@njioa.org)

# OAsis

Spring/Summer 2025

OA Infoline:  
(201) 528-3398  
[www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org)

The quarterly newsletter of NJIOA — Northern Jersey Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous

## The Doctor's Opinion

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Full event details and all event flyers are posted here: [www.NJIOA.ORG](http://www.NJIOA.ORG)

#### MAY 2025

**May Workshop: Chronic Illness and Recovery**  
Sunday May 18, 2:00pm-4:00pm EST

#### JUNE 2025

**NJIOA Intergroup Mtg** Thurs. June 12, 7:30pm Zoom link on website.  
**June Workshop: Male Perspectives In Recovery**  
Sunday June 22, 2:00pm-4:00pm EST

#### JULY 2025

**NJIOA Intergroup Mtg** Thurs. July 10, 7:30pm Zoom link on website.  
**July Workshop: Program is Portable: You Can travel Abstinently**  
Date TBD

#### AUGUST 2025

**NJIOA Intergroup Mtg** Thurs. Aug 14, 7:30pm . Zoom link on website.  
**August Workshop: All Jersey Sponsorship Day**  
Date TBD

#### SEPTEMBER 2025

**NJIOA Intergroup Mtg** Thurs. Sept 11, 7:30pm. Zoom link on website.  
**September Workshop: 12 Traditions Workshop**  
Date TBD

In my 48 years in Overeaters Anonymous I've always heard that all addictions are diseases of both body and mind. I knew about "stinking thinking" and how thoughts of certain and really more and more food could lead me into excess eating. But, additionally I read what Doctor Silkworth said in the "Doctor's Opinion" in the AA Big Book, "that the body of the alcoholic is quite abnormal as his mind." And further, his theory that alcoholics have an allergy to alcohol and the phenomenon of craving beyond their control occurs when they take the first drink. That's when I understood what was true for an alcoholic must be true for me, a food addict, as well. The solution then would be never to take the first bite of any sugar and flour products that would set off those cravings beyond my control and spiral me

into a binge. And that's why I love Doctor Silkworth for so many reasons but particularly when he said, "I do not hold with those who believe that alcoholism is entirely a problem of mental control." Case closed. Thank you, Doctor Silkworth!



— Wendy L.

## The Doctor's Opinion

When it comes to OA, I live in a twilight world. I often feel like an imposter in the group because I cannot relate to the extreme desperation that some of my fellows express. I'm overweight but not morbidly so. I've never been 400 pounds or even half of that. And yet, my brain sends me signals about food that are different from those that other people get. One meal seldom satisfies me. I pick from other plates. I eat two when others barely handle one. All this leaves me with that familiar high school feeling of not fitting in. So when a friend and fellow asked me to write something for Oasis, it made me wonder: What can the Doctor's Opinion mean to someone who came walking — not crawling — into OA? This sentence from the Doctor's Opinion stands out: "(Types of overeaters) have one symptom in common: They cannot start (eating) without developing the phenomenon of craving." Yes! Once that first taste hits my brain, everything changes. Food moves to the center of my day. Dread hits me because I know the meal will end. Craving for more happens even as the food is sitting in front of me. Food fills my thoughts and my conversions. I have even convinced myself that the best place for me to write is at diners. Truly, when it comes to food I am, as the Doctor's Opinion says, "a distinct entity." So, Dr. Silkworth asks, "What is the solution?" For me the solution lies in what the doctor calls, "The unselfishness of

"Men and women drink because they like the effect"

Big Book, The Doctor's Opinion, p. xxviii

these (people) as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive, and their community spirit." Fellows want one thing: to share — to share a solution. Daily contact with them can fill me. So can the love and care of a sponsor, or an act of service. When I am hanging on to program by the slimmest of tethers, my disease rubs its hands in glee. It knows it can whisper lies that my addict ears are only too willing to hear. But when I turn my thoughts to usefulness instead of food, life gets better for me and for those around me.

—Mike T.

### CARRY THE MESSAGE

Bill W. & Dr Bob remind us in the Big Book that the only way to stay clean is to work with others. Perhaps someone you know could benefit from our program. Consider inviting them to a meeting. Maybe send them a newcomer packet. Share our website address so they can find out more information and get in touch. We have Zoom meetings, in-person meetings, beginner meetings, newcomer meetings and meetings to support members coming back from relapse. Everyone is welcome.

## Thoughts on The Doctor's Opinion

Many years ago I read Dr. Deepak Chopra's book, "Overcoming Addiction." In this book Dr. Chopra stated that addicts are spiritual seekers. I agree with Dr. Chopra. In 2004 I began my recovery from food addiction as a member of OA. I became closer to God through this 12 Step program. OA members taught me to ask God for protection from compulsive eating through prayer. Every morning I asked God for his protection and it was granted. Today I rely on God for love, guidance, support, companionship

and protection. I ask and rely on God for protection because my mind can misdirect me. My sponsor calls this chatter the lower power. My thoughts may encourage me to eat off my plan. This is not an option, due to the fact that cravings begin after the first bite of non-abstinent food. In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, Dr. Silkworth calls cravings after the first drink the phenomenon of craving. This phenomenon also occurs with food addiction. Dr. Silkworth found through his work with Alcoholics that their minds are abnormal as well as their bodies. This abnormal state of

"The body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind."

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxvi

the mind and body creates the perfect storm. The American Medical Association states that alcoholism and eating disorders are diseases of the mind and body. Yes, I perceive myself and other members of OA as seekers of God. We are seekers of a spiritual life. Many of us seek a useful life aligned with a higher power. The solution is a spiritual one. It is important for me to keep my memory green so my mind does not forget what I need to do to remain abstinent. I do this by working my OA program. I stay close to God through each day and through each night so I am able to thank God for another abstinent 24 hours. Thank you God.

—Nicole A.

This is the quote I most identified with, in The Doctor's Opinion: "Doctor, I cannot go on like this! I have everything to live for! I MUST STOP BUT I CANNOT! YOU MUST HELP ME." The plea reminded me of a low-point in 1996 when I told my therapist that I was fantasizing about death- a recourse that, at the time, seemed the only way I could end my long and painful struggle with food addiction. Thank God my therapist responded as she did— suggesting that I follow the advice earlier recommended by Dr. Silkwood — to rely on a power greater than myself to restore me to sanity. I did: in 1996 I walked into my first OA meeting.

—Jeff A.



"The action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy; that the the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs on the average temperate drinker."

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxvi





## The Doctor's Opinion

**T**he Doctor's Opinion is one of my favorite chapters in the Big Book. It's where I read an accurate description of my problem, and where I first encounter the solution. To be honest, I always thought my problem was food. I always thought if I could just stop eating, if I could just lose the weight, everything would be fine — everything wrong in my life would start to be right. I dreamed I become a more successful person. I would be better at my job, I would be a kinder wife, a gentler parent, a more productive employee. I would have more friends, get along with my co-workers, even become a family favorite, instead of the odd one out. But The Doctors opinion chapter tells me my problem isn't food. Stopping eating won't solve my problem. It tells me my problem is that I have a physical allergy, which produces two experiences in my body over which I am completely powerless: 1) a physical craving completely beyond my control to prevent or stop; and 2) a peculiar mental twist in which my thoughts obsess about food to such an overwhelming degree that even if, by some miracle, I manage to pause or stop overeating for a moment, I am compulsively lured, by my OWN thoughts, back to the food and back into overeating. I cannot stop overeating once I start because of the physical craving. And I cannot resist going back to the food once I stop, because of the mental obsession. Once I studied this chapter and understood exactly what my problem was, I could finally apply the correct solution: the spiritual solution. The Doctor's Opinion tells me that the ONLY solution for my particular problem is to have a full and meaningful spiritual awakening — and I will achieve this spiritual experience as the result of working the 12 Steps of OA. All this incredible information is contained, right there, in one powerful little chapter.

*"Other methods had failed completely."*

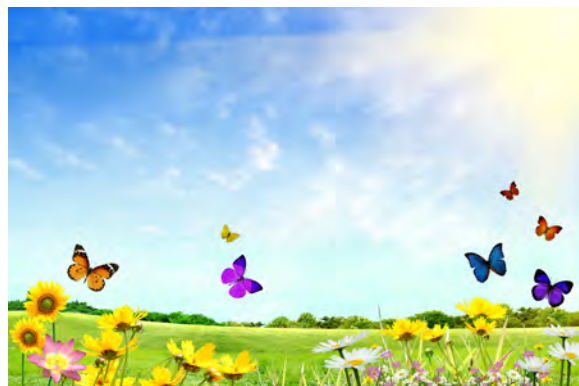
Big Book,  
The Doctor's  
Opinion, p. xxv

—Alison L.

## The Doctor's Opinion

**"T**he absence of profit motive, and their community spirit" expresses well one of the things that is so healing about OA for me. Over the years, I have spent thousands of dollars on therapists, doctors, gyms, and personal trainers to "solve" my weight problem. While they have helped to various degrees and many of them were kind and well-meaning, none of them had the motive of just wanting to help me. In OA, I find that unconditional love and support that I have sought for so long. I don't have to pay a dime for it. I just have to show up, listen, and give back. I still can't believe that all of this is so freely given.

—Ethan B.



*"Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices. The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight. In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives."*

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxvi

## The Doctor's Opinion

**I**magine going to your doctor, telling her you can't stop eating, and instead of getting a lecture about self-control, she leans in and says, "You're not weak—you're allergic — to sugar, white flour and wheat." You say, "Wait, what? An allergy? Like peanuts or cats?" "Yes." That was Dr. Silkworth's big idea. Except instead of sneezing, the compulsive overeater's body throws a party when it gets sugar, white flour or wheat and forgets to stop. And our brain is no help either. It's the friend who convinces us every single time that "this time will be different, you can take just one bite." The doctor called this a "mental obsession." Basically, your brain becomes a smooth-talking bad influence. Silkworth was one of the first medical professionals to say: "Hey, maybe this isn't about being a bad person or a lack of willpower—it's about being a sick person who needs help." This was a total game changer. He gave us all permission to stop beating ourselves up and start healing instead. Dr.

Silkworth's core message? The compulsive overeater is powerless — not weak-willed. Willpower alone doesn't work. A spiritual solution is necessary to break the cycle.

—Amy S.

*"An entire psychic change."*

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxx

## PAST EVENTS

### The Winter Retreat

**O**n March 1, 2025, we hosted our 30<sup>th</sup> Annual NJIOA Winter Retreat on Zoom. The theme of the event was "Feelin' Groovy" and that's exactly how it made us all feel! The day was a huge success with over 161 members registered, and with 28 states and 3 countries represented! There were 17 different workshops and two fabulous Keynote speakers. We had amazing, inspiring guest speakers on so many exciting subjects. There are now about 12 podcasts up & ready to listen to on the NJIOA.org website. If you weren't able to attend, please listen to them — they are all so very special. And If you were able to attend, the podcasts are a great way to enjoy listening to your favorite speakers again.



## The Doctor's Opinion

I've always found it interesting that Dr. Silkworth noted one of his patients, who he originally considered hopeless, was able to find a way to recover after only his \_third treatment

by means of helping others, which his patient then realized helped himself too. This is why the program is a "we" program and not an "I" program because we need each other to recover. I truly believe that it's both the body (that is a physical allergy) and mind (that is a mental obsession) that is abnormal and have found this to be the case with me. This allergy The Doctor's Opinion speaks about is a real thing because whatever I put in my mouth clearly affects my mind which then influences my moods and behaviors. When I've been compulsively overeating, there is a brain fog that occurs where no amount of reasoning will work for me; thus, why it's stated in the story that "a man's brain be cleared before he is approached, as he has then a better chance of understanding and accepting what we have to offer." This story of The Doctor's Opinion mentions the importance of moral psychology. When I was compulsively overeating, although I had a sense of right and wrong, I didn't seem to care much about whether my behavior was right or wrong. My moral psychology was

"The only relief we have to suggest is entire abstinence."

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxx

clouded by the brain fog from overeating. I know that I need a Power greater than myself to put things in proper perspective in order to recover and be able to make moral judgments of right and wrong. As the story points out, having a Higher Power is the only way that I was able to "re-create" my life to one where I could learn to survive without excess or trigger foods in order to recover. I believe only another compulsive overeater, suffering from this disease, can understand what I go through and the strong hold it has over me. This is why the Doctor's Opinion says the cravings "never occur in the average temperate drinker." When it comes to my trigger foods, as the Doctor's Opinion says, there is no safe amount that I can consume without it having an adverse effect on me. I agree with The Doctor's Opinion that says I ate because I liked the effect. It always temporarily numbed me from feeling things I did not want to feel or face up to; however, the effects that came afterwards were even stronger and I did not like that at all! On the other hand, the power that comes when I do NOT give in to my cravings and do NOT consume my trigger foods is a great feeling! I don't forget that never ending merry go round, of repeating the same food consumption followed by

the same behaviors over and over and over again. And that power I'm referring to is not of my own but as the story says: "more than human power," which produces that "psychic change." That psychic change is a shift in my thinking which in turn creates a shift in my feelings and behaviors which I call spiritual awakenings which, for me, leads to having more emotional control, making better decisions and feeling a sense of real purpose in my life. I kept eating and compulsively overeating again and again because of my cravings which, as The Doctor's Opinion states: was "beyond their mental control." This has made me realize that I cannot begin eating my trigger foods without having the result of more and more cravings for it. As The Doctor's Opinion states "the only relief we have to suggest is entire abstinence," which I have found to be true when it comes to the foods that I'm allergic to because no amount will ever satisfy either me or my cravings and then that vicious cycle starts all over again. Interestingly enough, I've found over time that the more I stay completely away from my trigger foods that I'm allergic to, then the less I even desire or crave them. The Doctor's Opinion talks about someone who



"Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol. The sensation is so elusive that while they admit it is injurious, they cannot after a time, differentiate the true from the false. To them, their alcoholic life seems the only normal one. They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks — drinks which they see others taking with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do, and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again."

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxvii

There was one point in my life that I was so depressed that I can honestly say that I was not eating to live (nutritionally) but living to eat. I was suffering from depression and food, which became my drug of choice, seemed the only thing to comfort me, so I thought. Another patient who was brought in to be seen by Dr. Silkworth thought his treatment was a waste of time and wanted to be assured that "he would have the 'will power' to resist the impulse to drink." The problem I see with this man's request is that he thought that HE would need to have the willpower, when in fact what I've come to learn from 20 ½ years in this program, is that the willpower is provided to me from my Higher Power, and not of my own undertaking. Thus, why only having a greater power than me, who is capable of restoring me to a sane way of life, produces the result where food does not control me and I no longer have to live to eat. What it comes down to for me is what I call spiritual maturity and that has only occurred for me because of working this program to the best of my ability one day at a time for the last 20 ½ years. I work this program as if my life depends on it, because without doing so, I would have no life.

"They were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control."

Big Book, "The Doctor's Opinion," p. xxx



—Deborah



# WAYS WE GIVE SERVICE

## NJIOA INTERGROUP

**THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE BOARD OF THE NJIOA INTERGROUP** meets virtually, once a month, at 7:30pm, on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings — and we love first-timers! The Board meets to discuss various NJIOA topics, Board business and finances are reviewed, and of course all our amazing workshops, retreats and events are planned at these meetings. To attend the next Board meeting and see what's going in, find the link on our website [www.njioa.org](http://www.njioa.org) on the "Thursday Meetings" page or copy it below. If anyone would like to get a topic for discussion onto the agenda for the next Board meeting, please email our current Intergroup Chair, Jeff A., at [chair@njioa.org](mailto:chair@njioa.org)

## Start An In-Person Meeting

**We need new in-person meetings!** We love the broad reach of our Zoom meetings, and we also know how valuable in-person meetings can be — especially for the newcomer. If you'd like to help get an in-person meeting started, or take an existing Zoom meeting back to an in-person format, contact our Intergroup Vice Chair and find out how to get started. **Vice Chair, Susan S. (201) 960-1995 text please. Email Susan at: [susan@papersusan.com](mailto:susan@papersusan.com).**

## OUR TRUSTED SERVANTS

<b>JEFF A</b> Intergroup Chair	<a href="mailto:chair@njioa.org">chair@njioa.org</a> 201-341-6287
<b>SUSAN S</b> Intergroup Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:susan@paperSusan.com">susan@paperSusan.com</a> 201-960-1995
<b>GAIL S</b> Corresponding Secretary	<a href="mailto:secretary@njioa.org">secretary@njioa.org</a> 201-446-4519
<b>LORAIN B</b> Recording Secretary	973-714-3832
<b>ILENE W</b> Intergroup Treasurer	<a href="mailto:treasury@njioa.org">treasury@njioa.org</a> 908-803-4846
<b>JUDY L</b> Events Chair	<a href="mailto:events@njioa.org">events@njioa.org</a> 201-615-4955
<b>MARY ANN C</b> OASis Editor	<a href="mailto:oasis@njioa.org">oasis@njioa.org</a> 973-568-2761
<b>STEVE S</b> Website Chair	<a href="mailto:website@njioa.org">website@njioa.org</a> 973-885-1129
<b>OPEN</b> InReach, 12th Step Within	<a href="mailto:12stepwithin@njioa.org">12stepwithin@njioa.org</a>
<b>TERRY P</b> Public Information	<a href="mailto:publicinfo@njioa.org">publicinfo@njioa.org</a> 862-812-4467
<b>MARK H</b> Telephone Hot Line	<a href="mailto:info@njioa.org">info@njioa.org</a> 201-320-3025
<b>TONI ANN A</b> Parliamentarian	973-945-0233
<b>JENNIE D</b> Zoom Committee Coordinator	<a href="mailto:zoom@njioa.org">zoom@njioa.org</a>
<b>POLLY H B</b> SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR	908-658-3390 TEXTS ONLY PLEASE

## Public Information Committee

NJIOA has numerous public information events throughout the year & we need help! If it interests you, please connect with our Public Information Committee, learn about the different forms of media we use, volunteer to post flyers at your supermarket or doctor offices, sign up for local health fairs in your town, and find out ways in which you YOU can help us carry the message! Email our Intergroup Public Information officer, at [publicinfo@njioa.org](mailto:publicinfo@njioa.org).

## Recovery HELP LINE

Are you struggling and need to speak to someone? Do you live in a remote location and need contact? Please call our friendly volunteers below, and they will remind you that you are not alone.

**PLEASE try all these people until someone answers your call:**

NAME	PHONE	AVAIL TIMES (ET)
ANDREA P	973-985-8169	4PM-6PM weekdays
ANDREA P	973-985-8169	8AM-6PM weekends
JANET B	201-248-8001	Until 9PM
MARCY E	973-694-1274	ANYTIME
SUSAN L	973-704-6345	4PM-6PM weekdays
SUSAN S	201-960-1995	11AM-7PM
TERRY P	862-812-4467	9AM-11PM
TONIANN A	973-945-0233	Before 11PM



## OUR 7th TRADITION

Your steady donations help our meetings, our Intergroup, our Region, and OA World Service. Choose what works for you.

**Donate to the basket at live meetings, or in one of these ways:**

**Donate By Mail: To NJIOA**  
551 Valley Rd, PMB 206  
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

**Venmo or Zelle:**  
Search for @NJIOA—Pay  
**Paypal:**  
Go to [www.NJIOA.org/donate](http://www.NJIOA.org/donate)



**Donate on our Website:**

**[www.NJIOA.org/donate](http://www.NJIOA.org/donate)**

## Service for the OASIS

**We love your contributions!** Writers and proofreaders wanted! Give service by submitting an article to the OASis Newsletter, or proofreading the next next issue. Photo-copying and post office mailing help needed too! The theme for the Fall 2025 issue is: "There Is A Solution." Deadline for submissions is September 15. Please upload your articles electronically to the website here: [www.NJIOA.org/submit-to-oasis](http://www.NJIOA.org/submit-to-oasis). Proofreaders needed Sept 15-30 to read the early drafts. Photo-copying and mailing helpers needed approx Sept 25-Oct 5. If you'd like to help, please email the OASis Editors, here: [OASIS@NJIOA.org](mailto:OASIS@NJIOA.org). Thank you!



# NJIOA MEETING LIST

## VIRTUAL & PHONE MEETINGS

updated May 2025

NAME	DAY	TIME	ZOOM ID	PASSWORD	JOIN URL	DIAL IN	ACCESS CODE	CONTACT
There is A Solution (BB)	Sunday	9:00am-10:15am	683 977 1680	Call for Password	https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6839771680	(309) 205-3325	683 977 1680#	
Big Book (West Orange)	Sunday	9:30am-10:30am	883 1105 7263	933234	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88311057263		Jeff (201) 341-6287 or Rachel (973) 713-3714	
Big Book (Paramus)	Sunday	10:30am - 12:00 pm	854 3989 8968	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85439898968	(646) 558-8656	426650#	Judy (201) 615-4955
Voices of Recovery/For Today (H)	Sunday	3:00pm - 4:00pm	Hybrid	Call in Only	Call in only	(425) 436-6382	337800#	Joan: (201) 396-0112
Lifeline (Bloomfield)	Monday	10:00am - 11:00am	817 2373 3870	Call for Password	https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81723733870	646-558-8656	Call for code	Deborah (201) 532-7093
Big Book	Monday	6:00pm - 6:30pm	Call in only	Call in Only	Call in only	605-468-8860	541987#	Susan L. (201) 981-0861
Big Book (Morristown)	Monday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	898 5355 8590	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89853558590	(979) 205-6099	Call for code	Gamin, (862) 520-9985
HOW (Paramus)	Monday	7:30pm-9:00pm	897 5926 8585	Recovery12	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89759268585	646-558-8656	278463#	
Livingston (S/BB)	Monday	7:30pm - 8:30pm	82784319886	294560	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82784319886	(929) 205-6099	294560#	Gerl F (973) 714-8415
Steps/Trajectories (Upp Montclair)	Tuesday	7:00am - 8:00am	85202041873	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85202041873	(929) 205-6099	Call for code	Beni (973) 202-5579 Alice (201) 563-6190
Step Study Mtg (Seacaucus)	Tuesday	10:30am - 11:30am	950 2870 0732	701490	https://zoom.us/j/95028700732	(929) 205-6099	701490#	Roz (973) 464-9767
Steps (Saddle Brook)	Tuesday	7:15pm - 8:15pm	957 959 232	Call for Password	https://zoom.us/j/957959232	(646) 558-8656	957 959 232#	Angela (201) 321-2010 Shari (201) 218-5801
Steps (Wayne)	Tuesday	7:30pm - 8:30pm	819 9247 1448	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81992471448	(646) 558-8656	819 924 71448#	Christine (973) 668-8768
The Bridge to Recovery	Tuesday	8:00pm - 9:00pm	832 0966 1639	bridge	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83209661639			www.BRIDGE.ORG
HOW (River Edge)	Wednesday	10:00am - 11:30am	842 8183 7706	Recovery12	https://zoom.us/j/84281837706	(646) 558-8656	842 8183 7706#	Myrna (201) 794-1976 Roz (973) 464-9767
Big Book	Wednesday	6:00pm - 6:30pm	Call in only	Call in Only	Call in only	605-468-8860	541987#	Susan L. (201) 981-0861
Big Book	Wednesday	7:00pm - 7:50pm	864 6205 6665	Recovery12	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86462056665	646-558-8656	476251#	Mary Ann (973) 568-2761
Mens' Meeting NNI	Wednesday	8:00pm - 9:00pm	875 8350 3570	880292	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87583503570?pwd=R3pUZIscX8UaWUwJm9McG9PRUc4dz09			Contacts: Tim W. (201) 519-6896 Email wedmen.oannj@gmail.com or Tim O. (201) 560-3566
HOW	Wednesday	8:05pm - 9:00pm	864 6205 6665	Recovery12	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86462056665	646-558-8656	476251	Judy L. (201) 615-4955
Step/Tradition	Thursday	7:00am-8:00am	852 0204 1873	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85202041873	929-205-6099	Call for code	Beni F. (973) 202-5579 Alice H. (201) 563-6190
Step (Midland Park)	Thursday	10:30am - 11:30am	777 1417 6453	Call for Password	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77714176453	(646) 558-8656	777 1417 6453#	Susan L. (201) 981-0861
Step (Chatham)	Thursday	7:00pm - 8:00pm		Call for Password	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/82223200839			Contacts: Jeff 201-341-6287 or Wendy 201-841-7681
Intergroup Business Meeting	Thursday	7:30pm - 9:00pm	872 6497 2165		https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87264972165			Meets on 2nd Thurs of each month
Relapse Into Recovery	Thursday	7:30pm - 8:30pm	811 5313 7746	Recovery12	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81153137746	(312) 626-6799	046 890 7883#	Terry P. (862) 812-4467
The Bridge To Recovery	Thursday	8:00pm - 9:00pm	832 0966 1639	bridge	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83209661639			www.BRIDGE.ORG
BB Women's Meeting (Passaic)	Friday	9:30am - 10:30am	827 6899 9983	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82768999983	(646) 558-8656	Call for code	Roz (973) 464-9767 Eteh (201) 881-9581
Discussion /For Today (Nutley)	Friday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	841 7697 4426	243745	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84176974426	929-205-6099	841 7697 4426#	Kellie (973) 713-6793 Rob (201) 401-7995
HOW (Hackensack)	Friday	7:30pm - 9:00pm	827 7143 2421	Text for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82771432421	(646) 558-8656	827 7143 2421#	Fran (201) 220-1440
12 Steps (Montclair)	Saturday	9:30am - 10:30am	257 331 1394	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2573311394			Karen C. (973) 704-8047
New Providence Meeting (Hybrid)	Saturday	11:00am - 12:00pm	858 6653 0057	Call for Password	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85866530057	(646) 558-8656	Call for code	Marc (908) 578-9598; Linda (908) 672-3530; Patrice - berkhtssatoa@gmail.com.
OA Meeting - Format Varies	Saturday	8:30pm - 9:30pm	838 0333 0451	61877	https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83803330451	(646) 558-8656	838 0333 0451#	Susan L. (201) 981-0861 Agnes (201) 359-4259

## IN PERSON MEETINGS

NAME	DAY	TIME	TOWN	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Into Action (BB) (HA)	Sunday	9:00am - 10:15am	Montclair NJ	Mountainside Medical Ctr, 1 Bay Avenue, Montclair. Cafeteria Private Dining Rm. Park across street	
Women's Meeting (BB) (W)	Sunday	9:00am - 10:15am	Hackettstown NJ	Hackettstown Medical Center, 651 Willow Grove Street, Hackettstown, NJ. Cafeteria conference room.	
Voices of Recovery/For Today (H)	Sunday	3:00pm - 4:00pm	Morris Plains	Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church, 75 Ridgedale Avenue, Hanover, NJ	Joan: (201) 396-0112
Steps & literature (Hoboken)	Sunday	5:45pm - 6:45 pm	Hoboken NJ	Hoboken University Medical Center - Shah Hall/Assumption Hall, 308 Willow Avenue, Hoboken, NJ	Joe K. (201) 282-736
Body Image / Speaker	Sunday	6:00pm - 7:00pm	Montclair NJ	The Salvation Army, 13 Trinity Place, Montclair, NJ. Coffee booth room	Jonathon (973) 897-4541
Newcomer (Chester)	Tuesday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Chester NJ	The Community Presbyterian Church, 220 Main Street, Chester, NJ	Karen (908) 239-0994
Step/Tradition/Speaker 2nd Tues	Tuesday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Montclair NJ	St. James Episcopal Church, 581 Valley Road, Montclair, NJ	Dvora (862) 571-0555
Big Book / Open Share	Wednesday	7:00pm - 8:15pm	Saddle Brook NJ	Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, 300 Market Street, Saddle Brook, NJ. Multi-purpose room	Grace (201) 294-7445
Step 11 (new meeting)	Wednesday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Mountainside NJ	Mountainside Medical Ctr, 1 Bay Avenue, Montclair. Cafeteria Private Dining Rm. Park across street	Ariel Z (973) 809-9317
Gratitude & Check-in Meeting	Thursday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Montclair NJ	St James Episcopal Church, 581 Valley Rd, Montclair. Enter thru parking lot on Bellvue.	Steven L. (973) 856-2070
Newcomer Thursdays	Thursday	7:30pm - 8:30pm	Hackettstown NJ	Drakestown Methodist Church, 6 Church Road, Hackettstown, NJ	Donna (201) 396-3796
Saturday Serenity Group (12&12)	Saturday	9:30am - 10:45am	Montclair NJ	Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair, 53 Norwood Ave. Enter thru rear door near circular drive.	Rena (347) 673-3204
OA Steps /Tradition Study Sparta	Saturday	10:00am - 11:00am	Sparta NJ	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, 246 Woodport Road, Sparta, NJ	Page (973) 997-2077
Big Book Ridgewood	Saturday	10:15am - 11:15am	Ridgewood NJ	Unitarian Church, 113 Cottage Pl, Ridgewood, NJ. Admin. Bldg. to left of Church	Susan L. (201) 981-0861
Newcomer (Cedar Knolls)	Saturday	10:30am - 11:30am	Hanover NJ	Notre Dame of Mt Carmel, 75 Ridgedale Av, Hanover, NJ. Room 203.	Barry — Text 212-495-9117
Saturday Morning Paramus	Saturday	10:30am - 12:00pm	Paramus NJ	Enter thru single door 50 feet to the right of the main entrance on Ridgedale Ave.	
New Providence Meeting (H)	Saturday	11:00am - 12:00pm	New Providence NJ	Dorothy B Kraft Center, 15 Essex Road, Paramus, NJ	
OA 12 Steps (Montclair)	Saturday	9:30am - 10:45am	Upper Montclair NJ	St Andrew's Episcopal Church, 419 South St, New Providence, NJ. Parking in rear. Enter thru RED door.	Karen C. (973) 704-8047



## BONUS PAGES

Created and typeset for OAsis readers,  
by a member of the NJIOA fellowship.

# The Doctor's Opinion

“Convincing testimony.”

### THE DOCTOR'S OPINION *An explanation of addictive illness*

*This is a “we” program*

*W*E OF Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the reader will be interested in the medical estimate of the plan of recovery described in this book. Convincing testimony must surely come from medical men who have had experience with the sufferings of our members and have witnessed our return to health. A well-known doctor, chief physician at a nationally prominent hospital specializing in alcoholic and drug addiction, gave Alcoholics Anonymous this letter:

A set of  
step-by-step  
instructions  
to solve my  
problem.

Because  
I am  
sick.

“The  
plan of  
recovery.”

Competent,  
but hopeless.

To Whom It May Concern:

I have specialized in the treatment of alcoholism for many years.

In late 1934 I attended a patient who, though he had been a competent businessman of good earning capacity, was an alcoholic of a type I had come to regard as hopeless.

*Bill W relapsed. He was incapable of staying sober on his own.*

In the course of his third treatment he acquired certain ideas concerning a possible means of recovery. As part of his rehabilitation he commenced to present his conceptions to other alcoholics, impressing upon them that they must do likewise with still others. This has become the basis of a rapidly growing fellowship of these men and their families. This man and over one hundred others appear to have recovered.

I personally know scores of cases who were of the type with whom other methods had failed completely.

These facts appear to be of extreme medical importance; because of the extraordinary possibilities of rapid

*Dr Silkworth\* a medical doctor (educated at Princeton, trained in neurology), an intelligent man of science – is referring in this letter to a spiritual remedy as one of “extreme medical importance.”*

“Other  
methods  
had failed  
completely.”

“of extreme medical  
importance.”

Dr William Silkworth (1873 - 1951) was an American physician and specialist in the treatment of alcoholism. He graduated from Princeton University in 1896, as a pre-med student with a specialty in neuropsychiatry. In the 1930s, he went on to become director of the prominent Towns Hospital for Drug and Alcohol Addiction in New York City, during which time Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, was admitted on four occasions for alcoholism. Dr. Silkworth had a profound influence on Bill Wilson and encouraged him to realize that alcoholism was more than just an issue of moral weakness. He introduced Bill Wilson to the idea that alcoholism had a pathological, disease-like basis.  
- wikipedia.com

#### THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

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growth inherent in this group they may mark a new epoch in the annals of alcoholism. These men may well have a remedy for thousands of such situations.

You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.

Very truly yours,  
William D. Silkworth, M.D.

The physician who, at our request, gave us this letter, has been kind enough to enlarge upon his views in another statement which follows. In this statement he confirms what we who have suffered alcoholic torture must believe that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind. It did not satisfy us to be told that we could not control our drinking just because we were maladjusted to life, that we were in full flight from reality, or were outright mental defectives. These things were true to some extent, in fact, to a considerable extent with some of us. But we are sure that our bodies were sickened as well. In our belief, any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete.

The doctor's theory that we have an allergy to alcohol interests us. As laymen, our opinion as to its soundness may, of course, mean little. But as ex-problem drinkers, we can say that his explanation makes good sense. It explains many things for which we cannot otherwise account.

Though we work out our solution on the spiritual as well as an altruistic plane, we favor hospitalization for the alcoholic who is very jittery or befogged. More often than not, it is imperative that a man's brain be cleared before he is approached, as he has then a bet-

“You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.”

“The body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind.”

“We have an allergy.”

“Our solution.”



“This book seems to be of paramount importance to those afflicted with alcoholic addiction.”

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

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ter chance of understanding and accepting what we have to offer.

The doctor writes:

The subject presented in this book seems to me to be of paramount importance to those afflicted with alcoholic addiction.

I say this after many years' experience as Medical Director of one of the oldest hospitals in the country treating alcoholic and drug addiction.

There was, therefore, a sense of real satisfaction when I was asked to contribute a few words on a subject which is covered in such masterly detail in these pages.

We doctors have realized for a long time that some form of moral psychology was of urgent importance to alcoholics but its application presented difficulties beyond our conception. What with our ultra-modern standards, our scientific approach to everything, we are perhaps not well equipped to apply the powers of good that lie outside our synthetic knowledge.

Many years ago one of the leading contributors to this book came under our care in this hospital and while here he acquired some ideas which he put into practical application at once.

Later, he requested the privilege of being allowed to tell his story to other patients here and with some misgiving, we consented. The cases we have followed through have been most interesting; in fact, many of them are amazing. The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive, and their community spirit, is indeed inspiring to one who has labored long and wearily in this alcoholic field. They believe in themselves, and still more in the Power which pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of death.

Of course an alcoholic ought to be freed from his physical

“Pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of hell.”

“Some form of moral psychology was of urgent importance to alcoholics.”

Bill Wilson's spiritual experience occurred in this hospital

Bill Wilson carried the message of hope and recovery to other patients.

“The phenomenon of craving.”

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

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“The action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy; that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs on the average temperate drinker.”

craving for liquor, and this often requires a definite hospital procedure, before psychological measures can be of maximum benefit.

We believe, and so suggested a few years ago, that the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy; that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker.

These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all; and once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self-confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve.

Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices. The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight. In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives.

If any feel that as psychiatrists directing a hospital for alcoholics we appear somewhat sentimental, let them stand with us a while on the firing line, see the tragedies, the despairing wives, the little children; let the solving of these problems become a part of their daily work, and even of their sleeping moments, and the most cynical will not wonder that we have accepted and encouraged this movement. We feel, after many years of experience, that we have found nothing which has contributed more to the rehabilitation of these men than the altruistic movement now growing up among them.

Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol. The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious, they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false. To them, their alcoholic life seems the only normal one. They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience

“Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices.”

“The message must have depth and weight.”

“Cannot differentiate the true from the false.”

“Men and women drink because they like the effect”

“Restless, irritable and discontented.”



“The sense of ease and comfort that comes at once.”

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

“They pass through the well-known stages of a spree.”

“An entire psychic change.”

the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks—drinks which they see others taking with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do, and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again. This is repeated over and over, and unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery.

On the other hand—and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand—once a psychic change has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems he despaired of ever solving them, suddenly finds himself easily able to control his desire for alcohol, the only effort necessary being that required to follow a few simple rules.

Men have cried out to me in sincere and despairing appeal: “Doctor, I cannot go on like this! I have everything to live for! I must stop, but I cannot! You must help me!”

Faced with this problem, if a doctor is honest with himself, he must sometimes feel his own inadequacy. Although he gives all that is in him, it often is not enough. One feels that something more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change. Though the aggregate of recoveries resulting from psychiatric effort is considerable, we physicians must admit we have made little impression upon the problem as a whole. Many types do not respond to the ordinary psychological approach.

I do not hold with those who believe that alcoholism is entirely a problem of mental control. I have had many men who had, for example, worked a period of months on some problem or business deal which was to be settled on a certain date, favorably to them. They took a drink a day or so prior to the date, and then the phenomenon of craving at once became paramount to all other interests so that the

“A few simple rules.”

“Something more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change.”

“Then the phenomenon of craving at once became paramount to all other interests.”

“They were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.”

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important appointment was not met. These men were not drinking to escape; they were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.

There are many situations which arise out of the phenomenon of craving which cause men to make the supreme sacrifice rather than continue to fight.

The classification of alcoholics seems most difficult, and in much detail is outside the scope of this book. There are, of course, the psychopaths who are emotionally unstable. We are all familiar with this type. They are always "going on the wagon for keeps." They are over-remorseful and make many resolutions, but never a decision.

There is the type of man who is unwilling to admit that he cannot take a drink. He plans various ways of drinking. He changes his brand or his environment. There is the type who always believes that after being entirely free from alcohol for a period of time he can take a drink without danger. There is the manic-depressive type, who is, per-haps, the least understood by his friends, and about whom a whole chapter could be written.

Then there are types entirely normal in every respect except in the effect alcohol has upon them. They are often able, intelligent, friendly people.

All these, and many others, have one symptom in common: they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving. This phenomenon, as we have suggested, may be the manifestation of an allergy which differentiates these people, and sets them apart as a distinct entity. It has never been, by any treatment with which we are familiar, permanently eradicated. The only relief we have to suggest is entire abstinence.

This immediately precipitates us into a seething caldron of debate. Much has been written pro and con, but among physicians, the general opinion seems to be that most chronic alcoholics are doomed.

“The classification of alcoholics.”

“Entire abstinence.”

“They cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving.”

“The manifestation of an allergy.”

“Most chronic alcoholics are doomed.”



# “What is the solution?”

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

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What is the solution? Perhaps I can best answer this by relating one of my experiences.

About one year prior to this experience a man was brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism. He had but partially recovered from a gastric hemorrhage and seemed to be a case of pathological mental deterioration. He had lost everything worthwhile in life and was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted and believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol, there was found to be no permanent brain injury.

He accepted the plan outlined in this book. One year later he called to see me, and I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew the man by name, and partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance and contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, and so he left me. A long time has passed with no return to alcohol.

When I need a mental uplift, I often think of another case brought in by a physician prominent in New York. The patient had made his own diagnosis, and deciding his situation hopeless, had hidden in a deserted barn determined to die. He was rescued by a searching party, and, in desperate condition, brought to me. Following his physical rehabilitation, he had a talk with me in which he frankly stated he thought the treatment a waste of effort, unless I could assure him, which no one ever had, that in the future he would have the "will power" to resist the impulse to drink.

His alcoholic problem was so complex, and his depression so great, that we felt his only hope would be through what we then called "moral psychology," and we doubted if even that would have any effect.

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However, he did become "sold" on the ideas contained in this book. He has not had a drink for a great many years. I see him now and then and he is as fine a specimen of manhood as one could wish to meet.

I earnestly advise every alcoholic to read this book through, and though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.

William D. Silkworth, M.D.

“He accepted the plan outlined in this book.”

“I earnestly advise every alcoholic to read this book through.”

“And though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.”