Like it was when NA was new and young and life or death intense:
You matter to us so we will tell you the truth as we know it with
nothing held back.

"... so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die..."

We publish your input -- the opinions presented are not
necessarily those of the New/Old NA Way
or Anonymi Foundation
GET INVOLVED!

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Please send your articles, event information, comics or other input to nahelporg@gmail.com

The New/Old NA WAY Magazine

Volume 48

March 2022

This magazine was written in open participation by members of the Groups of the Anonimy Foundation and members of the Groups who participate in the Fellowship Service Conference and the European Fellowship Service Conference.
Upcoming Events

17TH ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.
Date: June 24th thru June 26th, 2022
Hamburg, PA

3RD ANNUAL NORTH EASTERN COAST TRADITIONALIST GATHERING
Date: July 16th, 2022
Pennsville, NJ

7TH ANNUAL EUROPEAN FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.
Date: September 15th thru September 18th, 2022
Hunsel, The Netherlands

Your event here? Send information to nahelp.org@gmail.com

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The New/Old NA Way

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When I Care
And When I Share
With Others

The NA Way

15th - 18th September 2022
Service Conference
European Fellowship
Always be Joyful.

Always be joyful. Keep on praying. No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is what God wants for us yet too often we carry our personalities not spiritual principles with us into the rooms of the fellowship of N.A. I’ve seen meetings completely break up and newcomers completely go away and back out into active addiction because of personalities but as we truly learn spiritual principles such as surrender, acceptance, and honesty confront us we must learn to be joyful, thankful no matter what happens—our natural response is, “That’s impossible!” We tend to feel inadequate and unable to please God. How can we rejoice in tragedy, pray when we are otherwise occupied, or be thankful in times of adversity? “Do not stifle the Spirit of recovery.”

The purpose of our existence is not simply to be “good” people. God has laid hold of and redeemed us for the purpose of forming us into new people that have found freedom with each step as we walk through the experiences of this life with him. We are to become a dwelling place for the Spirit of recovery that is showing newcomers spiritual principles of unity. Our challenge is learning to let God do the impossible through us! He is using everything in our lives to teach us that apart from him we can do nothing but through the Spirit of unity we can do all things, even rejoice always, pray for one another, and give thanks in everything.

God, help us to understand that you are truly causing all things to work together for our good this very day. Let us be the example of spiritual principles as we work each step. we cannot do this on our own. But in the power of recovery,

In This Moment: we will live with principles and leave our personalities behind as we walk the N.A. way of life with the help of God and spiritual principles of the 12 steps and 12 traditions as our guiding light.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: North Carolina, USA

Total Abstinence & Our Primary Purpose

What is our primary purpose? To carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Although this sounds very simplistic, many times we hear addicts misinterpret this belief.

Very often do we hear people tell others to go to treatment, take medications for their symptoms of addiction, or their Groups are affiliated with the local probation offices.

Our message is very simple. We get a sponsor and work the steps. We carry this message to the addicts who still suffer; we tell them we do these things such as having a sponsor and allowing that sponsor to guide us through the steps,
learning how to apply the principles found in our Steps and Traditions, reading, writing, praying, meditating, and going to meetings. We don’t tell them to find a doctor or go to treatment.

There are many things that are happening outside of Narcotics Anonymous and many of those things find their way to creep into our atmosphere of recovery, this starts the effect of the atmosphere starts to diminish.

Recently, I heard of an addict starting a treatment facility over here in New Jersey. I met this addict in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. The treatment facility has been one of the first to take a different approach on things, rather than use psychotropic drugs and drug replacements such as methadone or suboxone, they’re using medical marijuana.

Every addict in there is toking up. Although this remains an outside issue, it can be a potential inside issue. When these facilities start to take these addicts to meetings, or house them in a “halfway house” and mandate them to go to Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

Our philosophy is very simple, Total Abstinence from all mind altering & mood changing substances and chemicals. The use of marijuana or drugs used to treat the disease of addiction would not be considered to be clean or being completely abstinent.

Now that we have heard of potential inside issues that remain currently outside issues, let’s take a look at what has become an inside issue. Recently the local jails have been one of the main facilities that have been an inside issue. Narcotics Anonymous.

Now that we have heard of
in attendance at that meeting would be a witness to the alibi and would have to be in court; regardless of if the chairperson wrote a fake name or the Group's name, there would be consequences everyone would have to face.

Another example and happens more often than the first example are; when addicts actually get honest that they may have relapsed. Maybe their Parole Officer, Probation Officer, or Drug Court Judge has not found out, maybe they didn't drug test them and by the time they do the drugs are out of their system. Another person under the control of the courts may hear this and go tell on them or “rat them out”, for a lesser sentence.

The addict who got honest would go back to jail and we would then be less attractive to the addict who still suffers.

Mandating and force are not a part of carrying the message to the addict who still suffers, in fact they’re complete opposites of each other.

We should not allow outside agencies and government offices tell us what we can and can’t do. We would then be wavering our primary purpose.

*Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Nebraska, USA*
addicted from: unknown usa

written: by an anonymous addict

in my experience it's a form of denial to start telling myself I should be able to do these things, or hang with these people, and be okay while doing it. I'm not being able to let go of certain things that stand in the way of moving forward. It assures me that I can go anywhere and do anything, with complete assurance that we can handle whatever we need to do out of something that keeps us from growing and finding the change I need within. And I believe that with this change taking place during my recovery, I can live a normal life.
tor when I was doing the H&I work. She also translated IP7, and the Basic Text (the latter by treating it as a job, working 8 hours a day over a summer). She has a printed copy of the Basic Text in Lithuanian—it was also on a computer disk, but when she left the job that had the computer, she didn’t have enough money to buy the disk, and so they erased it!! Next stop was Riga in Latvia. This visit was brief and with less interaction, although the fellowship seemed to be doing OK there. I visited the Riga edition of Day top. There was one resident who showed me around the place, I talked for a little with some other people there and left some more copies of the Russian literature. They started a weekly NA meeting a month ago, somewhere else in the city, which gets addicts both from Daytop and elsewhere. I didn’t hear of any NA activity in Estonia. (Daiva said that she heard a doctor in Estonia say that Estonians didn’t have a drug problem—it was a Russian problem, and the only problems in Estonia were due to Russians living there. Hmmmm. Estonia certainly didn’t seem immune to the problems of Western countries—I got hassled by skinheads there, for example.) I almost made contact with NA hi Helsinki—I made a quick trip over there to see a doctor about an eye infection (another story) but the clinic gave me the wrong address for the meeting, and I couldn’t find it. My last NA stop was in St. Petersburg, Russia. I met Lena S. at Pushkinskaya, the subway stops nearest the meeting (as in Pushkin the author—I got a kick out of going to subway stops named after Pushkin and Dostoevsky!), to go to an NA meeting the first night. There were three NA meetings a week at that time, but it will go down to two a week shortly because they are having trouble with the rent (at least I think that was the reason). There were about 8 addicts at the meeting—pretty much like a regular US meeting, except for being hi Russian (Lena quietly translated for me.) They had one of the new Russian translations, of the “how to run a meeting” guide but had not received the other two. Also, they have a very poor-quality photocopy of New A Awakening-5- August-September 1.994 £. From previous page a translation of the Basic Text. The next night we were maybe going to go to a hospital to do an H&I presentation, but it turned out the hospital was being emptied of addicts due to a diphtheria epidemic, and so we went to an AA meeting instead (maybe half the people at that meeting also go to NA). Lena said that NA got a big boost in St. Petersburg a couple of years ago when somebody in an AA meeting asked all the addicts to raise their hands; then the meeting voted to kick them out. (Addicts talked about drugs and other weird stuff, they smoked too many cigarettes, they wanted and like the Grey Book states: all is possible. Even a “normal” live if you want it.

I found a New Normal in Narcotics Anonymous that is so much more than just a way to stay clean. A spiritual path filled with friends, support, freedom, creativity, new experiences, and joy. If I surrender to it and open up to it. I can let go of my own normal, my old way of dealing with reality and find a new way to live.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict
From: The Netherlands

Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Recovery

“Whether the vase falls on the anvil, or the anvil falls on the vase -- Either way, it’s going to go badly for the vase.”

This is a nice way of saying that fine things are fragile, whether they are on bottom or top. In a very similar way, spirituality -- and recovery -- are fragile, and can be quite easily cracked or smashed by unexpected blows.

Similarly, consider the great magician, Harry Houdini. He was an adept of physical training and could brace his stomach muscles to withstand strong punches. He demonstrated this feat, on October 22, 1926, in Montreal at the Princess Theater. He was relaxing after a show on a couch backstage, when some utter moron, a young athlete from McGill University, decided to test him without giving him a chance to tense his muscles. The fool punched him hard and unexpectedly, rupturing his appendix; he died in Detroit on October 31, 1926, Halloween, of peritonitis.

Having escaped from every known confinement, Houdini was trapped and done in by aggressive stupidity. His greatness was destroyed by a momentary lapse of vigilance. (As a native Montrealer, it grieves and embarrasses me to relate the tale.)

We often point out that no addict, however long clean, becomes...
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about translating questions for the other person and then translating their reply, even when she knew the answer herself and could have left the other person in the dark. There is a small group in Vilnius, plus the group in Kaunas. (I didn’t go to Kaunas, and don’t have info on that group, but Daiva says it’s still going.)

I also met another of the members, Sniezana R. She doesn’t speak English, but I was told her Russian is excellent. We had 800 copies printed up! One thing that gives me confidence in the translation is how good Daiva was as a translator.

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immune to the possibility of relapse; we have but a daily reprieve. We are sometimes shocked at how quickly the disease arises when provoked by anger, fear, or need. It is easier to stay clean than to get clean, so it is easier to stay serene than to become serene; to be wise than to become wise.

Similarly, innocence and trust, once lost, are not regained easily or automatically. This is especially worth considering by those in service. Over the years, I’ve seen leaders of organizations, even in recovery, who have been so good at it, so careful with their words and actions, that they thought their followers would never notice. But when their sponsors and others they love have been caught in the same lies, it’s easy to lose confidence in the group.

And yes, all this is really true for me — of NA, of life, of our work. It’s true.

Drug Can Help

WE CAN HELP

DURING PROBLEMS

Drug problems are real, and don’t have to be.

And just one more thought before we close: the group in Kaunas. (I didn’t go there.)

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And yes, all this is really true for me — of NA, of life, of our work. It’s true.
name-calling and character-assassination, political intrigue, and hard-ball -- all these are so much a part of the addictive nature, that we easily may slip into these acts like a foot into a well-worn shoe. We usually don’t even see it happening. The ones who do see it are often the ones we think are “enemies.” So “obviously” they must have biased and wicked motives for offering us correction. If you’re in service long enough, you’ll see it all, including the display of addicts in full-circle denial, calling their vicious schemes “spiritual,” and calling the efforts of others to talk them out of it “sick.” Never underestimate the “lower power” of the disease of addiction.

Even many years into recovery, even having done everything in service, even having worked AND taught the Steps and Traditions, we recovering addicts are still not immune to the clutches. Addicts can slip in and out of the disease seamlessly, ten times in five minutes; Sibyl has nothing on us.

Though working a rigorous, vigorous, vigilant program helps to forearm us against the disease’s influence, none of us attain perfect immunity. The only way out of this is to place principles before personalities, lest we destroy ourselves in aiming to destroy others.

Occasionally others try to draw me into litanies of complaint about others and their wrongdoings. A few times I’ve gotten sucked in, to my great remorse; anger and misery is already a great punishment; what’s more important is what we have done to each other. All of us, on the journey to recovery, need to be honest with each other.

My trip to the Baltics and Russia

This article reprinted from the December 1993 Cambridge NA New Attitudes. Portions in bold relate to translations and were conspicuously absent in a version printed by The NA Way, April 1994. The NA Way is an official organ of the World Service Office, Inc.

My trip to the Baltics and Russia was wonderful, intense, emotional, sometimes upsetting, and full of growth. Before leaving the USA, I wrote to Daiva G. in Vilnius, and Sergey K. in Riga - these are both contacts that I got from WSO - and got letters back from them both. My first NA stop was in Cambridge, England to see my old sponsor there, and to hit a more-or-less familiar meeting before going into new territory. Next stop was in Vilnius, Lithuania, to see Daiva and any other NA members there. I spent many hours talking with Daiva about all sorts of things, program-related and otherwise, it was really a pretty intense interaction. I also ended up doing two H&I presentations, with Daiva translating, first at the Daytop treatment center, which recently opened in Vilnius, and then where Daiva works, in a detox ward for addicts in a hospital. (A few days ago, I was talking at a treatment center here, in Seattle on the monthly panel that I lead, and it was really nice to say that the month before I had been doing the same thing in Lithuania!) Daiva was a great translator - I could be looking at the person with whom I was talking, seeing and hearing the expressions and emotions - and language didn’t feel like a big barrier. She was also really good

Up sponsoring each other. We show each other how the program works, how to apply principles.

I never really liked the labels of sponsor & sponsee; although I have a sponsor today and he is showing me how to apply principles in my life.

This addict is my friend, no different than my former sponsor is my friend.

We are equals. As I treat them equally, I love my friends and they show me how to live.

I am grateful that God provided me that time to sit down with my friend and share with him about this weight I had been carrying. I am grateful that he still believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery.

I am learning that we can get much more out of relationships when we are honest. When we care and when we share with others. Not through a text but sitting down face to face and with a loving hug. Being there for our fellow addicts and being in their lives.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: South New Jersey, USA

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name-calling and character-assassination, political intrigue, and hard-ball -- all these are so much a part of the addictive nature, that we easily may slip into these acts like a foot into a well-worn shoe. We usually don’t even see it happening. The ones who do see it are often the ones we think are “enemies.” So “obviously” they must have biased and wicked motives for offering us correction. If you’re in service long enough, you’ll see it all, including the display of addicts in full-circle denial, calling their vicious schemes “spiritual,” and calling the efforts of others to talk them out of it “sick.” Never underestimate the “lower power” of the disease of addiction.

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Though working a rigorous, vigorous, vigilant program helps to forearm us against the disease’s influence, none of us attain perfect immunity. The delicate structure, the still small voice, the inner poise and the humble grace -- all can be smashed like a vase on an anvil against the insistence of the disease: “I am right; they are wrong. And I can justify any bad behavior for the sake of truth and justice!”

There is a way out of this, of course. (No, it’s not “Never get into service!” <g> That’s like saying “Don’t get involved in life.”) It’s called “Working the Steps.” Especially admitting our wrongs and making amends. Whenever we see ourselves getting bent out of shape, losing our serenity and reviling others for their folly, we need to know and remember that such loss of balance can’t be God’s will. When we find ourselves hating others or telling stories about them; when we are ready to say or do things that damage or poison others’ reputations, plot against them or falsely accuse them of plots; when we feel like all our problems are due to someone else, and if they’d only disappear we’d be free of our problems -- we need to know and remember the principle of anonymity, and the urgent need to place principles before personalities, lest we destroy ourselves in aiming to destroy others.

Occasionally others try to draw me into litanies of complaint about others and their wrongdoings. A few times I’ve gotten sucked in, to my great remorse; but rather than join in a chorus of “Isn’t it awful,” I usually point out that there has been enough addiction to go around. I know what others have done or been accused of doing; having to live with their anger and misery is already a great punishment; what’s more important is what we have done to each other. All of us, on
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Drugs, and his mother had asked me to "baby sit". She provided the food and the bed for me as I hung out with her addict son for the next few weeks.

I eventually landed in a place that I called home for the next few months. The addict that had helped me get out of Ohio was going to sponsor me for the next few years. This addict taught me about Public Information. He elected me to be Public Information chair for the Unity Area in Maysville KY where I served the area for a few months.

I finally felt a part of something. I found a Home Group that studied the Grey Book. I started working in a small restaurant where I found my passion for cooking. Each day I would go to work, and when I got done, I would make sure all the literature racks around town were well-stocked and clean. Every Friday night, I would make my rounds to the court houses and jail to hand out literature. My sponsor and I stayed in touch, and I took a trip to Pittsburgh PA to look around while this stranger took me to see the city. From the jail to the court houses, I was on my rounds.

Eventually I had made my way home back to NJ. I found a man that was traveling for work in Pittsburgh PA. I took a ride with this stranger to Pittsburgh then I hopped on a bus to NJ. My sponsor and I stayed in touch, and I started working in a small restaurant again.

Eventually we started to grow distant. I ended up getting in a relationship, having children, and life just started becoming more complex. An addict was regularly attending our meetings, and I had seen him at some of our meetings. He had been traveling from PA to NJ every few weeks. He was still working for work at the jail, and I was happy to see that I was still able to go to the meetings.

I asked him to sponsor me one day, as I had seemed to grow apart from my former sponsor. The problem was my former sponsor didn't know about this. He was one of the only addicts that had helped me get to where I was, and I didn't want to offend him. I needed his help, and I asked him to sponsor me. He was happy to see that I was still engaged with the program.

I just wanted to show him how much I appreciated him because I love this addict very much. I didn't want to offend him, and I didn't want to offend my sponsor. I needed his help, and I approached him slowly. He was happy to see that I was still engaged with the program.

I finally this weekend was able to sit down with this addict. I approached him slowly as I wasn't sure how I was going to say it if I didn't want to offend him. I needed his help, and I approached him slowly.

I came out and said it. Gave him a hug and he told me he was just happy to see that I was still engaged with the program. Many addicts he had sponsored...
I was told I could not print literature by this addict, that I couldn’t even print a meeting list.

I was told that total abstinence only meant street drugs and I shouldn’t share about my experience with coming off of all drugs. He told me that Suboxone was a useful tool for an addict’s detox. He told me that signing verification papers was a service we provided. He told me that all NA meetings should be open meetings and that conventions were great places to go, hang out, and carry the message.

I had just finished being the co-programming chair for the Ohio Regional Traditions Retreat where I met my new friends.

I was told by the local areas that I had caused disunity there by asking those “Baby Blue” addicts to come out.

Many people were trying to back me into a corner and just be submissive to the NAWS inc ways.

I attended the conference and on the way home I texted my sponsor at that time. I didn’t like the idea of texting and I believe I even asked another addict to send the text to him. I was “dumping” him. I told the three addicts in that car on the way home, someone here is going to sponsor me.

When I got home the whole area turned their backs on me. Many people didn’t want to talk to me before the meetings, after the meetings, and they would talk over me during the meetings. I knew if I stayed, I was going to eventually die.

Our plan was to start a meeting in Lebanon Ohio (at the library) on Wednesday nights. It was going to be a closed meeting that didn’t verify attendance documents and we were going to study the Grey Book for two hours long.

When I got home from the conference, I found out that the man that I had asked me to sponsor when I first got there was trying to take the girl, I was seeing at the time out on a date. He had asked her every time I had left our apartment to go do service work.

She eventually went back to using that weekend and we parted ways. I was living in a hotel when I picked up the phone and called one of the addicts from that trip to Hamburg.

I told him change of plans I can’t survive out here, but Maysville Kentucky seems like a nice place to get my spirit back together.

I stayed in the hotel for about a week and called this addict multiple times a day, sometimes for hours.

From my first thought when I entered that hotel I wanted to jump in front of a truck, I felt defeated, but this addict made sure that I was going to have a second chance.

I went to Maysville and went to every meeting there. They were all Baby Blue and Grey Book meetings. My first job that God provided me was to help this newcomer detox and we did this in his home. The boy was coming off of a lot of

I remember when would pray like I had somewhere to be

All that I had was insanity.

Eventually the time came,

where I just wanted to shout out in pain.

I had no clue.

I didn’t know what to do.

I took some time.

and made up this rhyme.

To remind me to invite God in so I can breathe again.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Nebraska

Recovery Is a Process

Recovery Is a Process the cornerstone of our recovery, we must always remember that we are much like that blade of grass we too can only grow as much as we can in a 24-hour period of time. We can enhance that by using our sponsor in living in with the principles of Narcotics Anonymous. The NA way of life will show us how to live and within each of our principles, lays a spiritual truth that will guide us on our journey. With hope and freedom, we get to live this journey today not just exist. Yes, we will fall short, we will have to face life on life’s terms.

Remember we cannot resolve our difficulties with the same thinking that produced them, what I cannot do alone we can do together. NA is a We program trust in sponsorship it works. We must lay down those old tools that we learn from our using days, and those old ideas and attitudes must go, we must pick up our principles and that attitude of gratitude while practicing the NA way of life in all our affairs.

We allow ourselves to experience life, as today, we have the tools in which we will need to continue our journey. When faced with our trials we allow ourselves the opportunity to feel what they will bring, we may find ourselves angry or even scared,
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members there seemed to have been around the program for a while. One addict was someone who I was told by a friend that would make a good sponsor. I asked him and he looked me up and down and said sorry he was kind of full.

A woman walked down the stairs after that. I had just seen her tricking on the block earlier that week. He must of known her. She approached him and said she wanted to get clean and asked him to sponsor her. He immediately didn’t hesitate to say yes.

It felt wrong after I saw that. I kept thinking to myself she’s about to get 13th stepped, because his motives just seemed wrong.

I asked another addict and he said he would.

He asked me if I had a SWG and a Sixth Edition Basic Text. He told me to go home read step one and answer the questions out of the book.

The following Wednesday I came up to him with my writings. He said let’s go over it tomorrow on the way to another meeting. We sat in a parking lot and went over step one.

Inside that guide it asked if I had ever harmed another human being. I wrote pages on how I had hurt people physically. The whole time I was sharing this with him the addict he kept saying ‘he’s a bad kid’. I couldn’t get over that. I kept thinking to myself I’ve never even heard of that addiction before.

This went on to the Fourth Step. I had finished my writing, but I had planned on going over it after I had left. I had missed my writing for that week. He asked me if I had a SWG and I said I had.

The next week he did the same thing and he asked me another question and he asked me another addiction and he asked me another question and he asked me another thing.

The Fellowship.

I associated with was destroying me. I was losing friends to recovery. I was losing my spirituality. I was losing my identity. I was losing my self-worth.

About a week before my first FSC I got a call from my sponsor asking me if I had been drinking or using drugs. I said no.

He asked me what I had been doing and I told him I had been working on getting over it. He asked me what I had been doing and I told him I had been working on getting over it.

A couple of months ago two members of our Home Group and a close friend were asked to speak at an event about an hour away from our town. It was given to me to speak.

I am not the type of person that speaks in public. I am not the type of person that is comfortable standing in front of a room and speaking.

But I did it. I went to the event and I spoke.

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The power that was given to me was given to me by the Fellowship. I am grateful for that. I am grateful for that.

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suffering from a chronic illness than someone who has also suffered in the same way? Our greatest form of service will come out of our deepest pain we have been there and understand. Sharing your strengths does not make you feel any closer to someone. But when you share the experiences that have led you to surrender to God and rely on his strength, then you will be connected to others more deeply than you can imagine. As broken person we share with other broken people how God has restored us, sharing your pain helps us and the people around us to grow. Using your pain to serve others is a form of surrender. We cannot waste our pain. We have to let God use it simply meaning that billions of addicts can accomplish unimaginable good in this world for the glory of God when we understand that God wants to use us in his plan. When it comes to suffering, sometimes the way we overcome is to endure simply, humbly, and faithfully. When we have come to the end of the road we need to cry out to God in confusion, pain, and anger, while maintaining the faith to keep calling, to keep weeping, to keep reaching out in hope and trust.

In this Moment: we will walk through the pain that life has, as we grow with the 12 steps and the help of our God

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: North Carolina, USA**

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**Carrying a Load**

Since I have been clean, I have gone through a few sponsors. When I first gotten clean, I had asked a man to sponsor me, and I believe he knew the only reason he could not have done it because his expiration in life was coming close. I met him in June of 2016, and he passed away clean 6 Months later; he had 52 years clean at that time.

He would share stories with me about how Jimmy K told him his two years in prison didn’t count. I told him he had 54 years, but he kept telling me, “No I have 52 years, yes I was abstinent for 54 years, but I didn’t surrender to the program of NA while in prison, it wasn’t until I had gotten out of prison when Jimmy took me to a meeting is when I surrendered.”

In a way he sponsored me for those six months. He taught me what total abstinence means but he never took me through the steps.

I eventually found a new sponsor, and this lasted for a few weeks maybe, I don’t really count it as anything.

I ended up moving to Ohio after my short stay in California, and revisiting home in NJ.

When I got to Ohio, I went to a town called Middletown Oh. I started regularly attending every meeting there was in town. We had six meetings in that town.

I attended a meeting on a Wednesday night where many spoke for about 15 minutes and just kind of froze up. So, when I say that I was relieved to not speak at the next event I’m saying that my will wanted to not experience that fear and feeling of failure all over again. I felt that I was doomed to repeat it.

The event that my fellow Home Group members were speaking at started at 6PM and ended at 9. I left from work and got there at 7:30. When I got there, I was pleased to see that there was a good turnout and also that I hadn’t missed much. They started the speakers late, so I caught half of one share and all of another. The last speaker was a member that I am very close to, and I know that she had a lot of fear going into it. It was her first time speaking at an event like that and I knew that it was something that was way outside of her comfort zone. We have struggled a lot in dealing with other members and groups in our locality because of being a closed meeting, using historical literature and carrying the message of complete and total abstinence from all drugs. It can be very intimidating and risky to put ourselves out there and speak at events like this but when NA asks something of us, we say yes. Not only did she do it, but she also knocked it out of the park.

I was so happy and grateful to be there and to be a part of our Home Group. I could feel the spirit of God in the room and all of the sudden the impossible became possible. It was as if all negative thought left my mind, and I was energized by the experience. I had to work the next morning at 6:30AM and didn’t get to sleep until 2. I didn’t care I felt great.

Before we left the facility that night a friend of ours that I’ve known my whole time in NA came up to me and asked if I would speak at his Home Group in a couple of weeks. I immediately said yes, even though my instinct was to try to get out of doing it. I looked at a copy of my work schedule that I keep in my wallet, and I had the day off, so I had no excuse. Of course, it would work out that I got asked to speak right after I was just thinking how grateful I felt that I wasn’t asked that time. I believe that was God working because if it was up to me, I never would have spoken again.

The next say at work it dawned on me that I looked at my schedule from 2021 and the date that I was asked to speak was actually 2022. I looked at the new 2022 schedule and I was scheduled to work. I figured I could call him on my break and see if I could reschedule but I really didn’t want to do that. I told him yes so, I wanted to do whatever I could to show up. Since it was a new year coming up, I had new personal days that I could use so I decided to just take the day off of work. I remember thinking to myself that not so long ago I would have used that for an excuse to not go. This must be a sign of growth.

I had a couple of weeks until
Our Pain Has a Greater Purpose

Addict From: Nebraska, USA

Written By: Anonymous

When we first come to NA, we have lived for so long on the side of suffering. It is the pain that led us to the 12 steps and to surrender to God our will for us in all our affairs. When we met people in the Fellowship of NA, we got to know that God’s will was being lived out in our lives. We also found our spiritual director. We took the 12 steps and reconnected with God. When we did the work, we found our purpose. With God’s help, we live each day as a new beginning. We keep revisiting the teachings of the 12 steps and the NA program, and we find ourselves growing stronger in our recovery.

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We created our own self-made prison that was impossible for us to escape from on our own will. Time and time again many of us tried. We thought the key could be found in medicine, religion or psychiatry but found there were no answers for us that we could use. So, we sought out others like us that said they had found a way to dig out of the hole of despair we had placed ourselves in. First, we had to get past the idea that the world revolved around us. We had to come to an understanding that we have a disease and that we needed to quit living the way we were if we ever wanted to find any relief. Once we could see our disease exactly for what it is we were ready for Surrender to something greater than ourselves that could restore us to sanity. We started to see it may be possible for us to recover. Many of us got frustrated as it wasn’t happening overnight. We wanted our fix and we wanted it now. That is how the drugs worked for us for a while before the quit working. Some questioned why our lives were not fixed just like that. Eventually after time we began to see this program worked for others that faced the same issues we were dealing with. They did not sugar coat things by telling us everything was going to be better. Instead, they shared honestly how living for ourselves only caused us grief and sorrow. It caused us to hold onto resentments, anger, and self-pity rather than actually living. Letting go and giving our pain to a GP changed all of that. We may not understand how not living for self is what we needed, but we can see it in our lives. The more we try to satisfy ourselves with ego building things such as money, property and prestige the more we hurt. We learn to live for something bigger than ourselves and this consciousness sets us free as we grew to understand that the insanity, we were living in does not have to continue if we took action. Once we became willing and started taking action we started to live. For some of us this may have been the first time we ever felt alive. We could feel pain, joy, excitement, etc. and it was real. We had covered up our feelings with drugs for so long this was a new experience for many of us. We continued, on a road with the rest of the Steps and Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous leading us up a path to a spiritual experience we did not expect when we came to NA. We started to care for our fellow humans like we had not before. We were able to feel empathy for others as we could feel their pain when they hurt. We could also feel their pain when they were joyful. We became a part of rather than apart from like we had been for so many years. As time goes by if we stay on the right path, we begin to see how living for ourselves only caused us grief and sorrow. It caused us to hold onto resentments, anger, and self-pity rather than actually living. Letting go and giving our pain to a GP changed all of that. We may not understand how not living for self is what we needed, but we can see it in our lives. The more we try to satisfy ourselves with ego building things such as money, property and prestige the more we hurt. We learn to live for something bigger than ourselves and this consciousness sets us free.

I left certain things out that needed said to carry a clear message. I was sure that I pissed everyone in the room off with what I said so I was preparing for backlash, but then the unthinkable happened. The chairperson opened the floor for sharing and one by one addicts started sharing about how much they could relate to what I was sharing. They shared about their experiences with taking prescribed drugs and how it didn’t work for them. They said all of these positive and nice things about how grateful they were to be there that night and heard what they needed to hear. I felt the spirit of God enter the room and could feel extreme empathy. I felt hope. How could this be? I thought for sure that this situation would be a disaster based on my past experiences.

After the meeting several addicts came up to me and hugged me and thanked me for sharing, I could see the smiles on their faces and the sincerity in their eyes. Everything went so much better than I ever could have planned. I can’t fully describe the feeling of freedom that I felt on our way home. I felt peace and hope. The impossible felt possible. I felt that there was hope for the fellowship if we can just get out of the way and trust God. We made better bonds with addicts we had known for a while and new bonds with addicts we had just met. We had some come to experience our meeting firsthand last night and it was a great experience. This whole situation shows me how screwed and defective my thinking is. It showed me the insanity of my disease and how it only sees destruction and negativity because it can build on that and overwhelm me until I use to try and escape the pain. We have to put ourselves out there and take that leap of faith and God will show up.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Ohio

“For people who claim membership of a fellowship based on complete abstinence, I’ve never met so many people that get so offended by the mere mention of it.”

Written by an anonymous addict from Ohio
March 2022
Volume 48

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: The Netherlands

FROM SELF CONSCIOUS TO GOD CONSCIENCE

We came into NA totally self-absorbed. We were so full of ourselves there was not room for anything else. This kept us isolated and apart from the rest of society and made it difficult for many of us to learn to become content with ourselves. We could not see the value in the meaningful things such as family and friends.

However, I do believe that in life there is a human race. Many of us constantly thought that others were in the same condition as ourselves. We also thought that life was about winning and losing. This kept us in a constant state of competition and made it difficult for us to have meaningful relationships with others.

So it is important that I continue to find acceptance in my life. This kept us isolated and apart from the rest of society and made it difficult for many of us to learn to become content with ourselves.

We must always keep the NA way of life not the modified version of our self-will, but the version that is basic texts and twelve traditions in all of our affairs and twelve tractions in all of our steps and twelve traditions in all of our times and even in these times of our greatest success that these choices will make a difference and that our continued practice will lead to a better recovery.

We must always look for gratitude like our grateful slogan states not just when we are in pain but in all of our affairs. We must always look for gratitude in our lives and not just when we are in pain.

For this, I know that in the times to come none of this will matter. It will not matter what kind of car I drive. It will not matter what kind of house I live in. It will not matter how much I make. It will not matter what kind of person I am.

We must always look for gratitude in our lives and not just when we are in pain.

The love and beauty that is brought to my life. Perhaps it is the smile on the faces of the people that I meet. Perhaps it is the smile on my face. Perhaps it is the smile on my face.

We Travel a Journey, perhaps Life on Life's Terms

We travel a journey, perhaps life on life's terms will have extreme effects upon us at some point. We must always realize that we must never walk in the darkness of addiction and it is the choices that we make during these most difficult times and even in those times of our greatest success that these choices will make a difference and that our continued practice will lead to a better recovery.

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