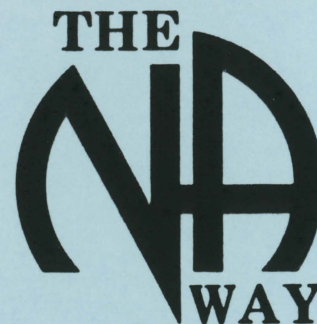


**My Gratitude Speaks
When I Care
And When I Share
With Others
The N.A. Way.**



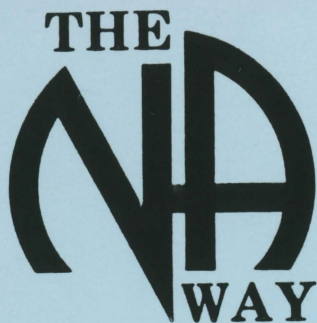
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Learning to Trust





THE INTERNATIONAL
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OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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What is Narcotics Anonymous?

N.A. is a worldwide Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. It doesn't matter which drugs you used, or what you have done in the past. We are concerned only with how we can help addicts recover. It costs nothing to be a member of N.A.—there are no dues or fees. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that *they work*. For more information about the N.A. groups nearest you, write us at the address below.

All members of Narcotics Anonymous are invited to participate in this "meeting in print." Send all input, along with a signed copyright release form, to: The N.A. Way; World Service Office, Inc.; P.O. Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409

The Sixth Step

An Action Step

THE TWELVE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. *We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.*
2. *We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*
3. *We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.*
4. *We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*
5. *We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*
6. *We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*
7. *We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*
8. *We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*
9. *We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
10. *We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*
11. *We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*
12. *Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

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“We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character”

My first exposure to the Twelve Steps came at a time in my life when I was very dishonest, confused, depressed, fearful, and obsessed with drugs. Trying to apply the steps in my life required a great amount of effort. I put forth the effort only because I did not want to die.

I learned that I get out of the steps as much as I put into them. The First Step applied only to drugs and the immediate situation of coming off drugs the first time I used it. The Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Steps all basically applied specifically to drug related issues and problems for me the first time through also. My first attempt to practice the

Sixth Step brought about powerful results. I worked at becoming entirely ready to have the obsession to use removed, along with the extremely destructive dope fiend behavior and thinking. I began to find that when I did the Sixth Step, alternatives would arise--solutions to the problem areas. I then had to choose to use these new alternatives as I moved on to Step Seven.

Instead of being like some kind of surgery or exorcism, the Sixth Step led me to something new which would serve to replace the negative with a positive. I had to take action to use these new awarenesses and behaviors.

By the time I reached the Twelfth Step, and began feeling I'd really worked hard at each step, I started getting complacent. I thought, "Now I can coast."

This attitude led me into trouble. Old feelings began to return, like isolation. I became critical and judgmental, out of touch with myself, and negative toward N.A. I became manipulative and secretive.

I had to learn the hard way that the steps never end. I learned that at all times I have two choices: I can practice the steps and move ahead, or I can not practice the steps and move backwards. That's it. The only thing I don't know is how fast I'll move. In either case, I may move very slowly for a while, and I may move very fast. Moving backwards eventually means I'm using drugs. Fortunately, I have been able to learn that part of my lesson by observation. I began to practice the steps again and move forward before I used.

The personal suffering and damage I did during my backslide led me to check out one part of the Twelfth Step I had overlooked. It said at the end that we "practiced the principles in all our affairs." That little word, "all" had escaped me. Realizing that indeed, my addiction does affect all areas of my life, I found myself face to face with Step One again. Thus began the process that has continued until today, and hopefully will go on tomorrow. That process is that over and over I find additional areas in which I must practice these principles. The joy of it is that with practice, it has become more natural to do, and new benefits never stop coming to me.

It seems that Step Six is a turning point for me, because when I become entirely ready to have all these defects of character removed, tools for change emerge. The changes in

me and in my life that happen when I use these tools in Step Seven are some of the sweetest miracles in recovery.

Through the years there has developed a long list of areas I have tried to apply Step Six to, and of course, there have been numerous defects I have had to apply it to more than once. As always, the return I get out of it is proportionate to what I put into it.

The idea I had initially upon entering N.A., that the steps were there to get me over the tough early part of abstaining from drugs, has been thrown out. The steps are now my guide to living. Not only do they, along with meetings and support from others, keep me clean, they give the means to solve problems and to grow spiritually.

As I try to practice these principles in all my affairs, I keep getting new challenges and opportunities for growth. Sometimes I find, as I encounter these challenges and face myself, I have some character defects my pride wants me not to see. I believe I must shed the light of the steps on these, no matter what. Sometimes it is pain and destruction that drives to Step Six, to open myself, to release my fears, to take the risk of growth.

I have moments when the necessity of growth is fuel for self-pity. I say, "Why do I always have to work on myself?" Usually I feel this when I haven't been consistently practicing Step Six. On the other hand, this painful awareness of my defects, brings a sense of gratitude because I have a choice today, if I want to recover.

At the moment I'm dealing with the Sixth Step as it applies to a resentment I've held onto for many years. This resentment has poisoned my serenity, and I've known that ever since I found out through a Fourth and Fifth Step several years ago. Yet, I have maintained the resentment with the thought in mind that, "I can't let this person off the hook." I felt this person had harmed me, and I've been maintaining this resentment from a vengeful point of view, wanting to make the other party feel guilty.

Today, as I practice Step Six, what is becoming clear is that if I am entirely ready to have this defect of character removed, I must do more than just passively sit back and say, "Okay, God, remove it!" I must take action. You see, the resentment is mine alone. It's my problem. For starters, I must accept that. I've always wanted to blame it on someone.

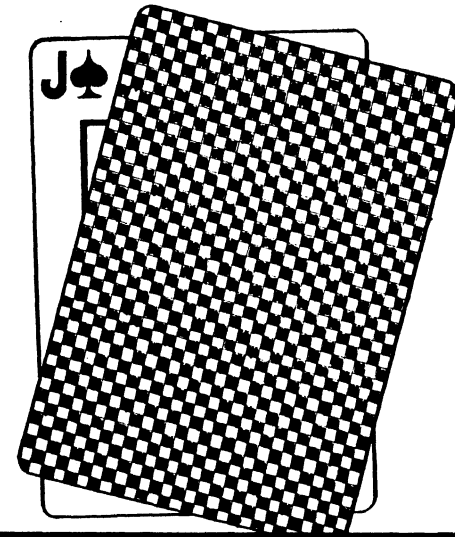
I've finally had to ask myself, "How long do I want to suffer?" I've hit bottom on this.

Accepting that my resentment belongs to me only, it becomes clear that I must act to forgive this person. The forgiving must be done completely on my own, without any conditions. In this case, forgiveness means an attitude and behavior change, not something I say. I must not behave in little ways that are meant to hurt. That is how I have practiced my resentment. Just a non-verbal way of relating. I am focusing on my behavior and on me instead of being critical or judgmental towards this person I've resented for so long. I have begun to be able to appreciate and love this individual, who I care about very much, and to see the qualities of our relationship and the good points of the person concerned. I'm finding that past pain is diminishing. I'm learning one of the most valuable lessons of my life, thanks to Step Six. This lesson actually applies to every relationship I have.

This is one example of Step Six as a key link in my ongoing process of recovery. I could not have possibly reached it without the five steps before it. I'm very happy and grateful to have found N.A. Thanks to the N.A. Way for this chance to share.

W.L.
North Dakota

There Are No Losers



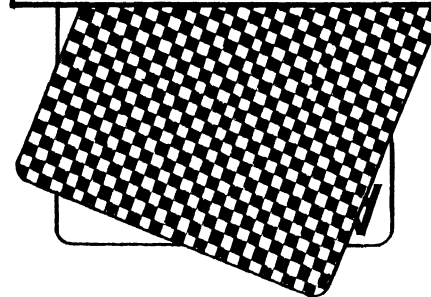
I have a pet peeve; it's the phrase "stick with the winners." When I came to the program I was told, "If you want what I have, do what I do." So I began to look for the people who had the kind of recovery that I wanted.

You may be thinking, "What's the difference between a winner and someone who has what I want?" This is the way I see it—*everyone* in this program is a winner. Anyway, if I deem only a certain group of people "winners," then what does that make everyone else in the Fellowship? Losers? No way! There are no losers in N.A.

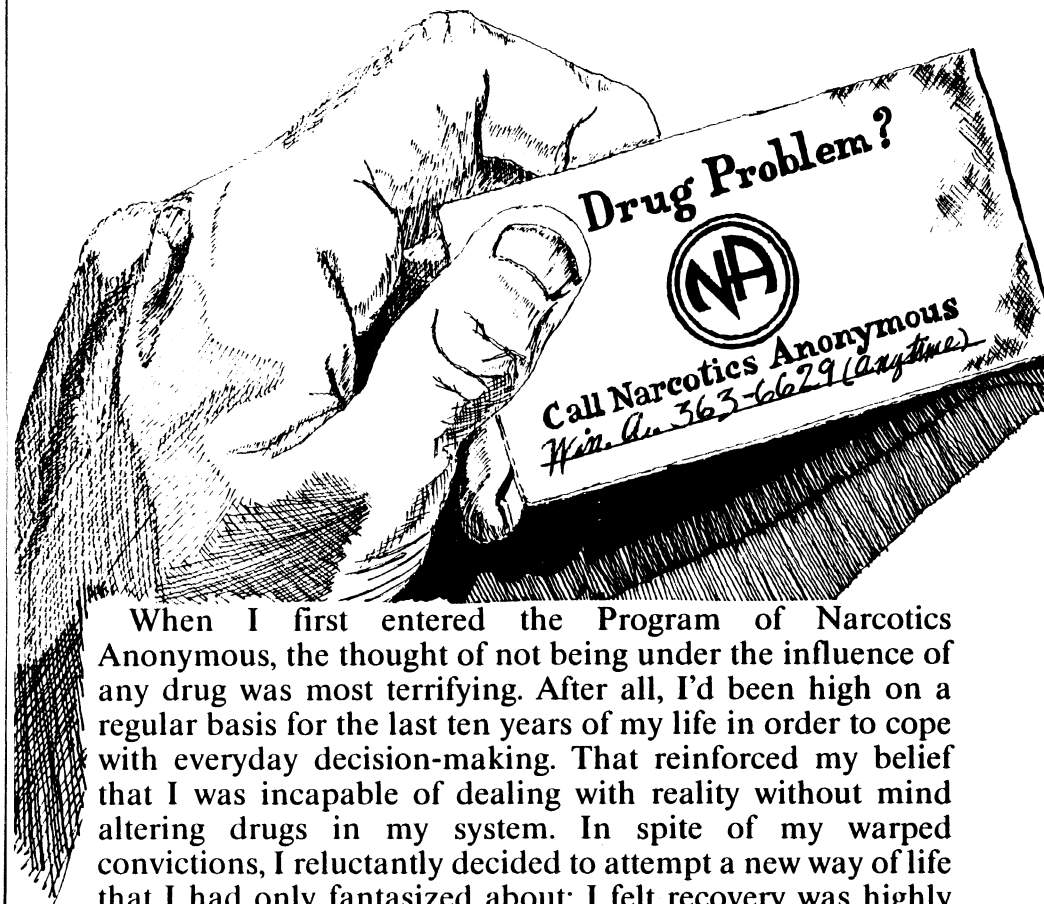
However, there are people who don't have the kind of recovery I want. This does not, in any way, make these people losers. They, too, are winners. We are a Fellowship of living miracles, and miracles cannot be losers.

Today when I share with newcomers, I suggest that they look around the Fellowship and find the people who have the kind of recovery they want for themselves. And if you want what I have, do what I do.

Anonymous
Ohio



Guided to a Life Second to None



When I first entered the Program of Narcotics Anonymous, the thought of not being under the influence of any drug was most terrifying. After all, I'd been high on a regular basis for the last ten years of my life in order to cope with everyday decision-making. That reinforced my belief that I was incapable of dealing with reality without mind altering drugs in my system. In spite of my warped convictions, I reluctantly decided to attempt a new way of life that I had only fantasized about; I felt recovery was highly improbable because of numerous failures I experienced in the past.

During my thirty-day treatment program, I had been conditioned by the drug counselors (all recovering addicts) that the only road leading to recovery was through the Program of N.A. Being somewhat skeptical, I half-heartedly got in my car and proceeded to an N.A., meeting not knowing what was about to occur.

As I approached the door of the meeting, feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and fear surfaced causing my disease to say, "retreat—return to the misery to which you're

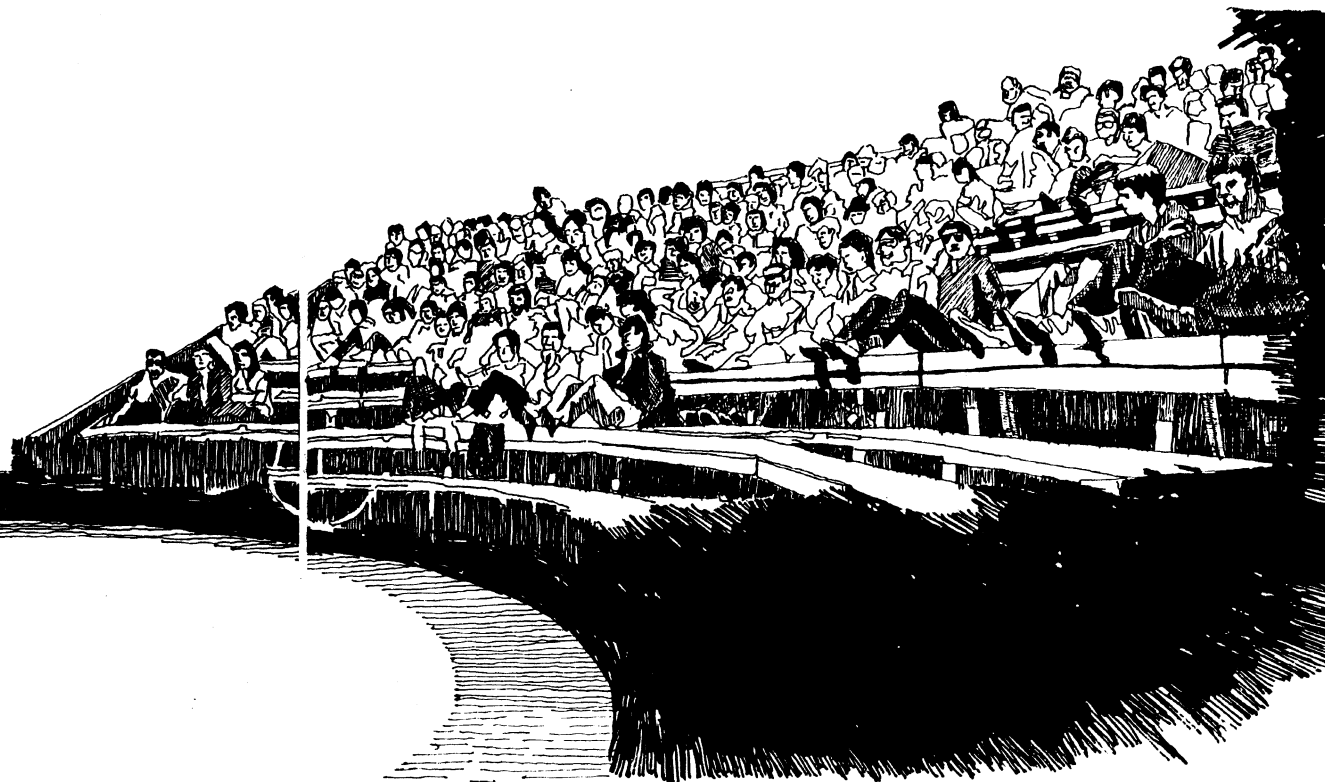
accustomed. Being clean is too painful and boring." I firmly believe that my Higher Power suddenly intervened and guided me into that N.A. meeting. After being greeted by two smiling people, I sat myself in the last row wondering if I had made the right decision. Gazing around the room, I witnessed strangers smiling, laughing, and hugging each other. Although this type of behavior had been alien to me throughout my active years, it was very appealing. Was there anyone who would possibly be in this room that I knew and could reach out to for help?

After five minutes had elapsed, (which seemed like hours), a former dope dealer of mine appeared through the doors. We immediately caught each other's eyes, and he walked over to me and extended his hand. R-E-L-I-E-F! He had stated that he was the chairperson for that meeting and stressed to me that I was in the right place. Realizing that I had the look of utter despair on my face due to my addiction, he gave me his telephone number and said to call him at any time if I had made a decision to seek recovery. The fact that I knew him from the past, and could see how he "used to live and lived to use," confirmed to me on that night that hope lay ahead for another sick and suffering addict-me!

Was this a coincidence, or had my Higher Power put this particular person in my life on that day to have me come to the realization that a life without drugs is feasible? I do not believe in coincidences! From the first N.A. meeting up until this present day, I have remained totally clean, and through the Twelve Steps of recovery and my Higher Power, I am working at becoming serene. That person who was my former dope dealer is now my sponsor. I was promised a "life second to none" if I remained clean one day at a time. That promise is now being fulfilled. Through the continuing guidance of the N.A. Program, the Twelve Steps of recovery and my Higher Power it is clearly evident to this recovering addict that without proper guidance and direction, recovery would not be possible. A life that was once a fantasy, which had eluded me due to my disease, was now most gratifying and worthwhile.

R.P.
Massachusetts

Our Primary Purpose



To often I forget what our “primary purpose” is, exactly. Tradition Five states that “Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.” Our Basic Text asks, “What is our message?” and goes on to answer, “That an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom.” What is my primary purpose as an individual member of N.A.?

My primary purpose is to stay clean and to try to carry the message and let God do the rest. Man, I have a purpose today. I have a direction today. I admire the enthusiasm that some of our members convey. I feel sometimes though, that that enthusiasm turns into or borders on something else. Maybe the desire to control another’s life, or a group, or a committee, or “Working someone else’s program.” Becoming a director or manipulator, instead of a servant or guide.

I think we oughta love ourselves, along with loving others, and not just plug our egos into others and try to make them, into ourselves.

Remembering my primary purpose helps keep me serene, or peaceful on the inside. It also helps me to look beyond the

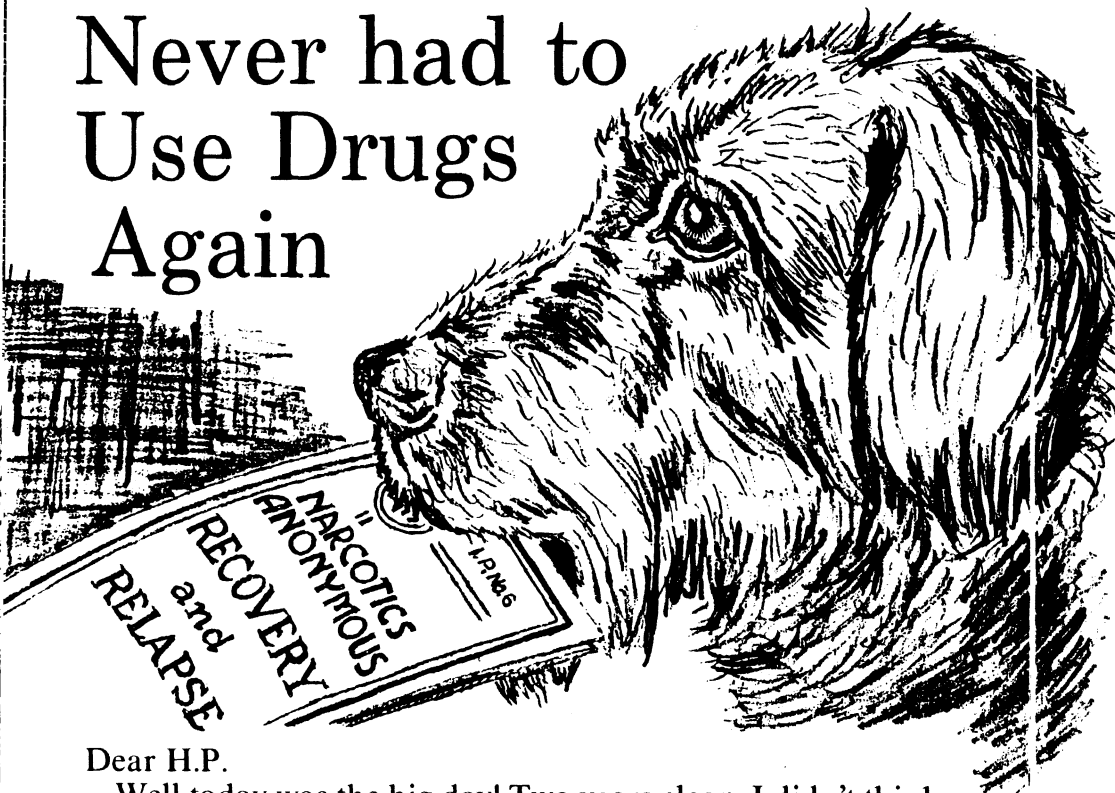
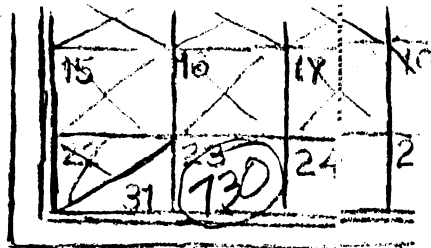
appearance of another, or how they’re living their life. Man, don’t I love your potential, I love *you* for who you are and where you are in recovery.

Living my primary purpose allows me to be me and you to be you. It keeps my life simple, uncomplicated by the need to control, helping me to mind my own business. It helps me deal with life on its own terms, by my not becoming obsessed with what I have or don’t have. It helps me to avoid giving advice, helping me only to share my own hope, strength and experience. All I am is a vehicle or a channel to help someone else help themselves, guiding them to develop a relationship with a God of their own understanding, through the Twelve Steps, just as I am guided.

Of course, at times I think society, including members of N.A., would be better off if they all were like me. That’s when I ask God to grant me the serenity to remember who I am, just another recovering addict and a member of society, with a message to try to carry.

C.B.
South Carolina

I Didn't Know That I Never had to Use Drugs Again



Dear H.P.

Well today was the big day! Two years clean. I didn't think it was possible. But thanks to you and the fellowship of N.A. I made it. Thank you for the telephone call from one of my brothers in the program this morning, wishing me a happy birthday. It was special coming from him, since he fired me from being his sponsor when I was in my "emotional turmoil" last winter (or the E.T.'s as I like to call them). I'm glad the Basic Text covers that in the "Recovery and Relapse" Chapter.

Thank you also for the sister who called me at work and even sang "Happy Birthday" to me. My "dancing feet" got the best of me and that always makes me feel glad. Thank you for the meeting tonight and all the love and acceptance I received.

You know, H.P., I thank you for Daisy D., my "recovery dog." She has unconditional love, something I'd like to learn. She's also pretty smart for an animal. She puts her whole body, mind and spirit into everything she does. Even though she has a crippled leg, it doesn't seem to affect her attitude one bit.

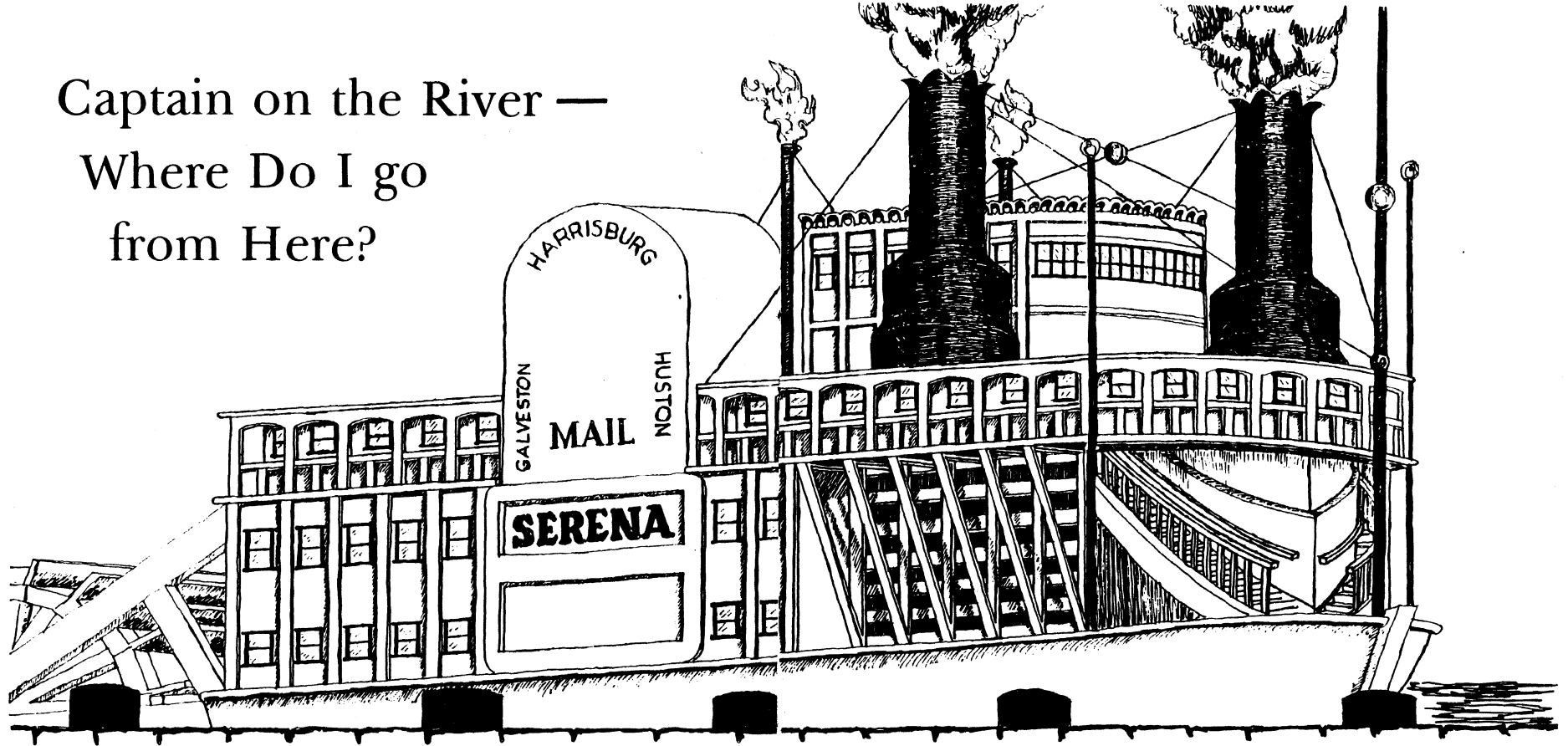
It's amazing what you can accomplish when you don't know what you can do. When I was using, I didn't know that it was possible to have fun clean. I didn't know I could actually have some of the feelings and emotions I have had the last two years. I didn't know I could actually feel the compassion and love I feel so often at N.A. meetings. I just didn't know, H.P., I didn't know how immature I was until I got clean. I didn't know how sick I was till I got clean and started working the program. I didn't know how much I would change and grow by living clean and working the program. I didn't know my biggest sorrow (my addiction) would turn into my greatest joy (living clean). I didn't know, though I have since come to believe, that you make all things possible.

You know, I still don't know a lot of things, and I pray I never think I know it all. I ain't never met any human being who knows all. So I figure on following you H.P., I know you know all things. And I know if I work the steps, go to meetings and do what my sponsor and Basic Text suggest I never have to use drugs again. But should I forget that-cause I am very human as you well know-please help me know that I am always welcomed back to N.A. Don't let pride and ego keep me out there using, lest I become the total fool all over again.

Well H.P. once again, 730 times, I thank you for helping me stay clean. Actually I know I've thanked you far many more times than that, but 730 days clean just blows my socks off! One sweet day at a time of course. I do pray for "recovery without end." Oh yea, could you also touch my brothers and sisters who are "out there" again and let them know that we are waiting with open arms for them to come back to meetings. Good night H.P., and thanks again. I know you hear and care.

B.W.
Alaska

Captain on the River — Where Do I go from Here?



Dear H.P.,

You are really becoming very special in my life. I believe today I'll call you "Captain" and I'll be the "cabin boy." As we cruise down this river called "recovery" I'll let you steer and I'll just do as I'm instructed. Of course sometimes I have a hard time following instructions. Even though I love you, love you so sincerely, sometimes the voice of misbehavior can get the best of me.

Thank you for the N.A. Basic Text. I really like the part about "We are powerless over our addiction." Actually it reads, "We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable." The longer I keep going down this river called "recovery," the more I realize that I have more than just a drug addiction. I appreciate it, Captain, how you bring people and situations into my life to teach me things. Like in my last letter when I thanked you for teaching me to cry. I'm also glad you like N.A. so much. I don't think I could handle this

"cabin boy" job if I was still using drugs. I might mess things up now days, but it ain't nothing like when I was using. Course I guess you know that!

I appreciate the guys you put in my life to sponsor and the GSR job. And then today you blew my socks off with the new job starting in September. You sure I can handle it, Captain? (I'm really glad You're the Captain!)

I see a new day is about to begin, Captain. I'll hit the men's meeting when we come to it. I'm gonna be as pleasant as possible to all the people you put in my life today. And, Captain, I won't worry about the job in September. I'll just live in today and trust in you that you know what you're doing. That's probably why you're Captain, and I'm not. Help me be the best cabin boy I can be today. And to greet all those I meet with a smile, and share with others, the N.A. way.

W.W.
Alaska

Learning to Trust God Daily



Before coming to Narcotics Anonymous I was a non-believer in a power greater than me. I relied totally on me, and the results were disastrous. Today, from working and living the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, I have developed a belief in God as I understand Him.

I am the type of person who needs to see proof before I am able to give credit. This attitude is changing as I put my faith in God. I remember the first few meetings I attended. I saw proof that people could live and enjoy life without using

drugs. I wanted what you had. I kept coming back. I learned how to follow suggestions early in my recovery. The one suggestion that helped me tremendously was that I find a sponsor.

When the time came to do more than just not use and attend meetings, I turned to my sponsor. Through his experience, strength and hope that comes from working the steps, he helped me start to get involved with the steps. From my admission of my powerlessness over my addiction and my admission of a unmanageable life, the key to recovery began. All the spirituality of the program was at my fingertips. After some knowledge and practice of Step One, it was time for me to continue my recovery.

When I began to ask a Power greater than me to restore me to sanity, this was the beginning of my contact with God. I began to believe there was a Higher Power before I understood it. As my belief grew I was ready to start a working relationship with this Power. The only way I could start this relationship was through a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of Him. This is when I found a God of my understanding. From that point on I began to grow, and I still grow spiritually today through this decision.

God has helped me do what I could not do for myself—to live clean and free. Every morning and throughout the day and night I cannot make this decision to have God manage my life often enough. As I began to let God manage my will

and life on a daily basis, He has provided me a lot of benefits. I have been able to write without fear, and to search for who I am. He helps me admit my exact wrongs, become entirely ready for Him, and to humbly ask Him to remove my shortcomings. He helps me make a list of people I have harmed and make direct amends to these people without causing anyone more harm. He provides me with a daily personal inventory and helps me admit when I am wrong.

Learning to pray and meditate was not easy at first. I did not know how or what to do. I asked my sponsor, and he suggested that I start with the prayers we say at every meeting. So, I began to pray the Serenity Prayer and Lord's Prayer. Again, I had to learn how to use them daily. As a result, these prayers became useful tools to help me understand that I am never alone. As my belief in these prayers grew, it opened the door to help me improve my conscious contact with God as I understand Him.

I don't know if I have had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps. I know if I continue, I will have one. I know that turning to God through these steps has been much more rewarding than I could ever dream. I have also been able to work with others without expecting anything in return.

By no means do I have all the answers to spirituality or to life. There are days when I rely on God and feel nothing. There have been days where God was my only defense against returning to active addiction. There are days when I let God manage me where I felt Him. The point is I try to leave the channel open, and leave the results to Him on a daily basis.

I am deeply grateful to Narcotics Anonymous to have provided and given me the opportunity to find freedom from the chains of my disease. This is a program of action not procrastination. This program works if I work it. God as I understand Him is love, hope, forgiveness and good. I hope everyone in N.A. finds a God they can understand to help them.

Through learning to trust God today He has filled the loneliness that nothing ever could fill before. Learning to trust my God equals daily HELP, and daily HELP equals Healing Everyday Living Problems. Thank you Narcotics Anonymous for being here.

Anonymous
Georgia

Back to the Future



I live in an area which has had a recent outbreak of a deadly disease. The most insidious aspect of this disease is the fact that its victims deny its existence and nurture its symptoms like a drowning person grasps at anything to keep afloat. The sickness can be called "curedism," and it is contagious. The seeds of this deadly peril can lie dormant in an area for years and then suddenly become active. But there are early warning signs. Be advised that this disease has so far only been recorded among recovering addicts. Early symptoms include mood swings, failing to fulfill service commitments, missing meetings, closed-mindedness, unwillingness, dishonesty, deceit, self-centeredness, frustration, lack of serenity, "uniqueness," and judgmentalism.

It has also been noted that the victims may swear by a particular religion at the onset of the disease and often jump from one religion to another, or to philosophy, psychology, sex, work, etc. The disease is thought to be fatal, but can be reversed by the love of the Fellowship and regular application of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

If anyone discovers a remedy for this malady which can be applied externally, please share this information. I could use it. Till then I'll just pray for victims and ensure my own health through preventive medicine—Twelve Steps daily as needed!!

P.T.
Kentucky

Once Upon A Time

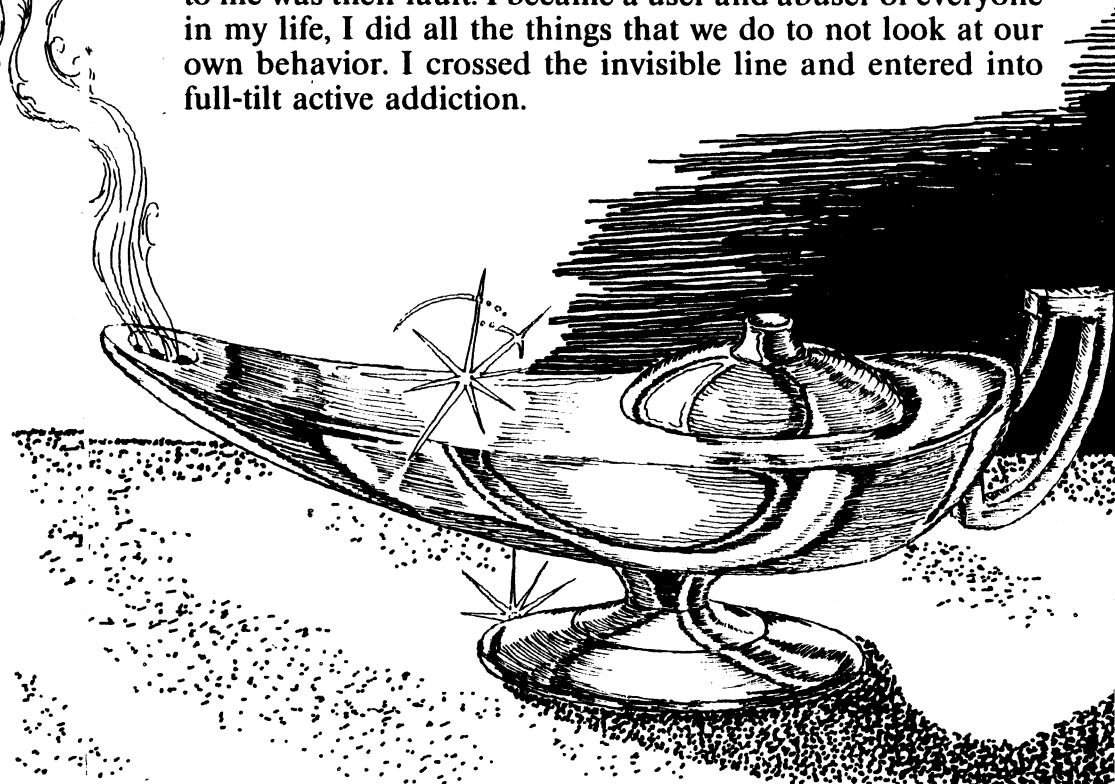
One of my earliest memories as a child is of a birthday party, my eyes closed, ready to blow out the candles on my cake, and wishing, just once, to feel what it was like to be happy.

I grew older and I grew more bitter, more angry, and more lonely. I believed that I was crazy and trusted no one. When the *Time* magazine article about LSD came out in 1965, I believed that there might be an answer. I was thirteen years old when acid became my first drug of choice. It worked. I still felt different, but it was okay-during the Sixties everyone was "different."

By seventeen I was strung out on heroin. I kicked heroin using pot and beer the first time. For the next seven years I chipped away at reds, pot, valium, alcohol, methadone, geographics, etc.

At twenty-six I decided to get "serious" about life. I got my building contractor's license, bought property and got married, figuring that changing the people and things in my life would make me feel better. The deal that I made with my wife was that I would stop shooting drugs if she would stop stripping (she was an "exotic" dancer). I became an ex-junkie (although I was using every drug other than heroin) and terribly self-righteous. This lasted for about five years, until I fell off a three story house I was building and crushed my spine.

I was given demerol, valium, and several other pain-killers. A familiar voice inside my head whispered, "This is what you forgot; this is what life is all about." During the next two years I manipulated, cheated, stole, and lied in order to alienate anyone who could stop me from going back to full-time using. It took two years to turn the "things" in my life into enough cash to go out and become the type of addict that I thought I should be. In the process I convinced my wife that she was crazy, and my friends that what was happening to me was their fault. I became a user and abuser of everyone in my life, I did all the things that we do to not look at our own behavior. I crossed the invisible line and entered into full-tilt active addiction.



It only took three years for me to hit bottom, and I am grateful for the depth of my decline. As a result, today I have no doubts that I am an addict, and that my future, should I resume practicing my disease, is grim. When I surrendered to God I had just overdosed on cocaine (I hated cocaine but I couldn't keep white powders out of my arm). Soon afterward, I went to A.A. to stop drinking. At my second meeting there was an N.A. member who shared his story. Half of the people in the meeting left because he talked about drugs, but I

strongly identified and I asked him afterward if I had to stop shooting heroin to belong. He told me no, that some people in that program continued to use drugs but many believed that recovery was based on total abstinence. He invited me to an N.A. meeting.

That was a little over two years ago. Today I know what it feels like to be happy. Life in recovery is nothing like what I expected it to be. I have had the experience in life of having all of the "things" that I wanted, and was miserable. Today I want what I have. In the past two years I met and married my best friend in recovery, I have been given the opportunity to work at our local recovery facility in many capacities, I'm active in N.A. service, and I have completed my Associate of Arts degree at the local community college (in the Fall I expect to transfer to a four year State University). Today I feel free-not only from active addiction, but free to accept the world as it is. Today I have the freedom to overcome fear, day by day, the N.A. way: learning to care about others instead of dying in my self-obsession; learning simplicity, honesty, and humility, a little at a time.

Today I recognize my responsibility to be available to participate in life and share with others the one promise of our program: that no addict need die of addiction. Today I have an opportunity to change my old belief system (that life is bad and gets progressively worse). Although I still have moments that I choose to act like nothing has changed in my life, by practicing the Twelve Steps I have come to understand that life gets progressively better. Today, I know that if my life is painful, I chose that pain, and I have a choice to change my attitude about it. And it keeps getting better.

M.M.
California



Anger = Fear

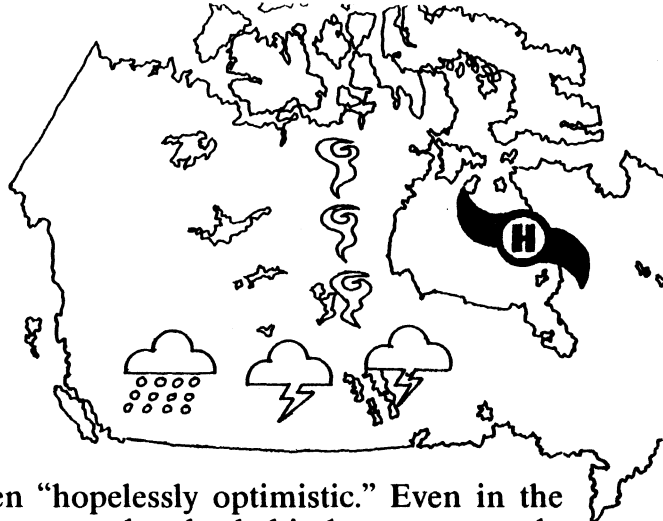
Anger seemed to be given to me from my father. He was and still is an angry man. As long as I can remember I have been the crazy, almost stupidly angry kid. Always willing to risk my health for excitement, I found drugs. I used and abused for the next year and a half. My last days of using involved blackouts, stolen cars and lock-up. I was full of anger. Anger at everybody.

I had already been through a treatment center for drug abuse, and with the charges I had to face now it looked like I was going to another one. I did. Anger. I couldn't seem to shake this anger. I was told I was scared. I told them what to do with their fear. They told me what to do with my anger. I spent nearly six months in that facility. I left with some basic honesty, fear and a little God.

I finally got two days clean after my fifteenth birthday. I've been clean a while now. My anger (fear) is slowly being removed. I thank God from the bottom of my heart for this opportunity to experience life. Thank you N.A.

R.S.
Oregon

Words of Thanks



I have always been "hopelessly optimistic." Even in the pits of despair, with an avalanche behind me, a tornado beside me, a hurricane inside me, and hail stones beating down on the top of my head, I would declare, "Tomorrow everything will be all right." Thank God for that attitude, which I still have, with one or two small adjustments. Today, with God's help, everything will be okay.

For many years I was totally confused and without direction. I had no purpose, no values, no principles. Only situation after situation, seemingly unrelated. It's sometimes hard to realize what the reasons are for our pain, why we suffer so much at the mercy of unrelated situations that don't seem to mean anything. But today, on the other side of the horizon, I know why I suffered.

I suffered to find N.A.; to find the love and fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous; to find the peace of knowing, loving, and trusting my own Higher Power to guide me through; to help someone else, the experience of my pain behind me; to watch myself and the world around me with different eyes; to live each day to the best of my ability, in tune with God; to reach out for help; to ask for and use advice; to have self-respect; to make mistakes and learn from them; to be able to feel someone else's pain, or joy, from being able to feel my own; to be able to make decisions and live by them—or to change my mind and live by that. I am free from the bondage of active addiction today. Free to grow, learn, love, laugh, hope, enjoy and pray. Today I am so grateful to N.A., for you have changed my life.

T.V.
Canada

N.A. News

WSC WORKSHOP IN CHARLOTTE

Just as this month's issue of the magazine is going to print, a World Service Conference quarterly workshop is getting underway in Charlotte, North Carolina. It was decided at both the 1985 and 1986 World Service Conferences that these quarterly meetings would be held in various places around the Fellowship. These conferences have been held in Kansas City, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, and now Charlotte. The January workshop is held at the World Service Office, and serves as a planning session for the annual week-long meeting of the Conference.

At these workshops, all the world service committees meet with the Trustees and WSO staff to coordinate progress on this year's goals set at the annual meeting. Because the workshop is just about to happen at this writing, news from the committees is not in as yet this month. Next month we'll fill you in on some of the highlights.

We will continue to pass along highlights and some more detailed news from the WSC each month. A more in depth report of all WSC activities will be distributed within the service structure in the bi-monthly WSC Fellowship Report. In the past the Fellowship Report was distributed to all world level trusted servants, and two copies were sent to each region. Area committees have now been added to that list. Anyone who wishes to get copies of this service publication can contact your Area Service Committee.

WORLD CONVENTION

As you know, the Sixteenth Annual World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous was held this year in London, England. It was the first time that the World Convention was held outside the United States, so there was a lot of excitement and anticipation all year. The Convention was an historic one, bringing together many countries, languages and cultures.

According to the International Committee report, the countries in attendance were the USA, England, Ireland, Germany, Australia, Italy, France, Spain, Israel, Bahrain,

Canada, Portugal and Panama. That represents eight separate languages spoken. In total there were just over 900 people registered.

An international workshop was held during the convention. "[That was] the most touching occasion for me," the International Committee Vice-Chairperson said in his report about the convention. "It was there that I witnessed a growth in N.A. that could not be calculated in statistics, but rather [by the] maturity and mentality that prevailed." He went on to describe reports given by members in several countries. Here are a few details from each.

Quebec, Canada: Formation of a Regional Service Committee has improved communications and unity. They have been working hard on French translations, and the World Convention afforded them the opportunity to workshop these efforts with the Fellowship in France.

France: Working along with the Canadian Fellowship on French translations, as noted above. Currently two English and Two French meetings in Paris, and one meeting in Niece. Approximate membership of thirty-five.

Italy: There are six meetings in Rome, one in Toulino and one in Milan. They are currently striving to improve communications among the groups, which are geographically separated from one another.

Spain: Have had difficulty getting good Spanish translations, and are working hard to see improvements in that area. In Barcelona there is one meeting and one H&I meeting, along with a 24 hour answering service. There is also a meeting in the South of Spain.

Germany: Can identify with translation problems, and are also working toward solutions. Have had several national service meetings in an effort to coordinate a service structure. They have regular contact with the Fellowship in Austria and Switzerland.

Bahrain (Arabian Gulf): Two regular meetings for their four regular members and growing numbers of newcomers. They are making progress with their translations.

Ireland: Thirty meetings and an active, functioning service structure. They have a central office and are pursuing non-profit status.

Australia: Have made great progress in becoming more clearly unaffiliated with outside organizations. Meetings in

the capital city of every state, including over 80 meetings in Sidney. They have a strong, functioning service structure in spite of great distances between cities. Their message was one of strict adherence to the traditions.

Israel: N.A. is two-and-a-half years old, with about 25 members. Having difficulty getting into prisons to carry the message, but working hard at it and expressed much hope. They too have had problems getting literature and translations.

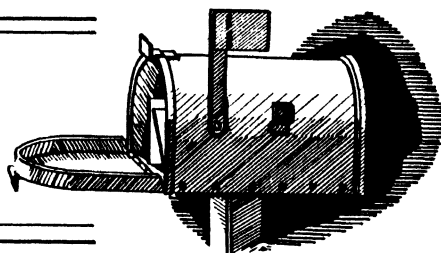
England: N.A. is six years old there, and there are approximately 150 meetings. Very rapid growth recently. Communications are improving within the country and with the Fellowship abroad, and final arrangements are underway to allow the printing of N.A. literature in London.

In both Panama and Portugal N.A. has just recently emerged, and there are two meetings in each country. Service efforts have centered on trying to keep the meetings alive and getting new meetings started.

"Much of the tension and frustration that was voiced at the International Workshop at WCNA-15 in Washington D.C. was gone," the report said. "This may have been partly due to the improved communications during the course of the year, literature more readily available, and more dedicated efforts in translating our literature. But I believe the main reason for this growth is the awareness that nobody is going to fix our problems for us, and if we each do the best we can, all will be well...."

Many times we concentrate our energies on dealing with specific problems, and this meeting reaffirmed my belief that through sharing, understanding, and identifying, we alleviate our major problems—fear and isolation."

From Our Readers



Dear N.A. Way,

I am a grateful recovering addict. I have been clean forty-six months. For a long time I thought I liked myself even when I first got into N.A., but I soon found that really couldn't be, by the way I used and abused drugs so much.

I ended up in prison at the age of twenty-one with a twenty year sentence. I looked for answers to my problems. My problems were always someone else's fault. Not me! I thought using drugs was the answer to having friends and fun. In 1981 I escaped from prison while I was high. Three days later I was back at the prison and facing charges of burglary, as well as escape.

In March I was re-sentenced to another twenty years. In June of 1982 I found N.A., but I still wasn't ready to give up. It took me until October 22, 1982. I got serious about the program and started working the Twelve Steps, applying them to my life. I'm still in prison, but clean. It hasn't all been easy, but I know I like myself, and with a parole date coming up next year, my life has made a complete change, because I found N.A. and worked the Steps. So I owe my life to N.A. and my H.P. today. I live one day at a time.

I have recently received some N.A. Way magazines from another member on the outside. After reading them I wanted to write. I know we can only keep what we have by giving it away. I want to refer to an article in the N.A. Way, April 1986, "Regardless of Age." I would like to express what I feel of the problem of adolescents in N.A. Because I feel, as you say, "Regardless of Age," these young people who say and admit they are addicts and are seeking help in N.A. should be treated no differently than any other addict.

So, fellow addicts, give these adolescents guidance and support, for we as addicts know the hell we went through before finding N.A. Make them feel a part of the family.

Reach out a helping hand. I think older clean addicts should sponsor the young people. For "the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel." Regardless of age, as V.E. said, show them love, treat them the same way you were treated.

D.C.
Georgia

Dear N.A. Way,

My name is Don, and I'm a recovering addict. Before my Higher Power gave me another chance at life, I had been using any and as much of the drugs I could get a hold of through whatever means available. Which sometimes meant doing time in jail.

When I came to the house of hope in North Texas, I was one day away from death. At least that's what I think then and today. I was never involved in a treatment center, halfway house or any twelve step program. I knew what was wrong with me, "everybody else."

Through involvement in recovery (God, N.A., other recovering addicts), today I feel free and clean. I always thought that I would use for the rest of my life having no other way out of myself. But through N.A., I want to be me. I sure love myself and others now. Most importantly, I have a faith in something that can never leave me as long as I practice the principles of the program and that is a friend who never left me, one that I was to blind to see—God.

D.D.
Texas

COMIN' UP

This space has been reserved for coming events anywhere in N.A. If you wish to list an event, send us a flier or note at least two months in advance. Include title, location, dates, contacts.

CALIFORNIA: Oct 24-26; So Calif 8th Annl Conv; Hyatt Regency, Long Beach, CA; CC of NA, Box 60846, Pasadena, CA 91106-6846; Valerie (213) 370-8052; Peggy (818) 505-8505

2) Mar 27-29, 1987; 9th NCCNA; Marriott Hotel, Burlingame, CA; 9th NCCNA, Box 6323, San Mateo, CA 94403;

CANADA: Apr 10-12 1987; 1st Annl Ontario Reg Conf; Windsor NA, Box 175, 2890 Dougall Ave, Windsor, Ontario N9E 1R9; (519) Bob 977-1743; John 255-7318

2) Nov 22; 1st Annl Roundup; Edmonton Area, P.O. Box 1213, Edmonton, Alberta 75J 2M4; Neil (403) 465-5424

CONNECTICUT: Jan 2-4 1987; 2nd Ct.RCNA; Box 124, Clinton, CT 06413; Trumbull Marriott, Trumbull, CT; Brian B. (203) 669-8083

FLORIDA: Nov 13-16; Serenity By The Sea; Colonnades Hotel, Singer Island, WPB, FL; Recovery 5, Box 164, Delray Bch, FL; (305) Ray 734-2601; Joe 499-2354

HAWAII: Jan 9-11, 1987; 3rd Annl Gathering of the Fellowship; P.O. Box 23436, Honolulu, HI, 96813; Claudia (808) 235-0819; Mark 373-9774

INDIANA: Nov 15 at 5:30 pm; 1st Indiana Reg Fundraiser; UAW Hall Local 1166 on US 31 North, Kokomo, IN; Kenny F. (317) 453-2321

IRELAND: Oct 24-26; Dublin, Ireland 2nd Conv; Dublin Sports Hotel; Austin C. 01-934-090

LOUISIANA: Nov 7-9; Second Chance Group 4th Campout; Burns Point State Park, So of Centerville LA; (318) Howard 386-5161; Fred 828-5888

MARYLAND: Feb 27-Mar 1, 1987; 1st Annl Ches/Pot Reg Conv; PO Box 374, Pasadena, MD 21122; (301) Len 787-1273; Mike 437-6055

MICHIGAN: Jul 3-5 1987; Freedom III RCNA of MI; Interested Speakers should submit tapes A.S.A.P. for review to Program Committee, P.O. Box 770, Flint, MI 48501

NEBRASKA: Dec 31; 3rd Annl New Years Eve Party; OACA Bingo Hall, 1/2 block So. of 40th & Dodge, Omaha, NB; Al (402) 345-2012

NEW JERSEY: Every 4th Sat of the Month; Dance; UAW Hall, 1320 Parkway Ave, Trenton, NJ; 9:30 p.m. till 1:30 p.m.

NORTH CAROLINA: Jan 1-4 1987; Asheville's 2nd Area Conv; Mike R., 32 Starmount, Asheville, NC 28806; (704) 252-8812

NORTH DAKOTA: Nov 15-16: Meet your NAbor days; 1st & 3rd St W Dickinson; Mike: 701-225-4392

OKLAHOMA: Nov 21-23; 2nd Annl Fall Retreat; Camp Takatoka on Fort Gibson Lake, Choteau, OK; EASC, c/o CSO, 4611 S. Peoria, Tulsa, OK 74105; Leo 747-4556; Mike 747-6442

PENNSYLVANIA: Oct 31-Nov 2; TSRCNA-IV; TSRSCNA-IV, P.O. Box 110217, Pittsburgh, PA 15232; (412) Ken J. 731-9219; Jeff W. 363-8444;

SOUTH CAROLINA: Nov 7-9; Serenity Festival IV; Myrtle Beach, SC; David Pressley, PO Box 91, Columbia, SC 29202; Stan (803) 781-2841

TENNESSEE: Nov 26-30; 4th Regional Conv.; Radisson Plaza Hotel, Fourth & Union, Nashville, TN; PO Box 121961, Nashville, TN 37212; Charlie (615) 868-3150

TEXAS: Mar 27-29, 1987; LSRCNA II; LSRCNA II Pro Subcom, PO Box 300794, Houston, TX 77230-0794; (713) Gino 697-4045; Mack 870-9048

WASHINGTON: Oct 24-26; 9th Annl Conv.; Everett Pacific Hotel; PNWCNA #9, Box 5393, Everett, WA 98201; (206) Mike S. 672-6848; Russ F. 259-4904

WISCONSIN: Oct 24-26; 3rd Wisconsin Conv; WSNAC III, P.O. Box 3305, Madison, WI 53704; (608) 258-1747 (phoneline)



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OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving
2. God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or N.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
An N.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
6. Every N.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
7. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
8. N.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
9. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
10. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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