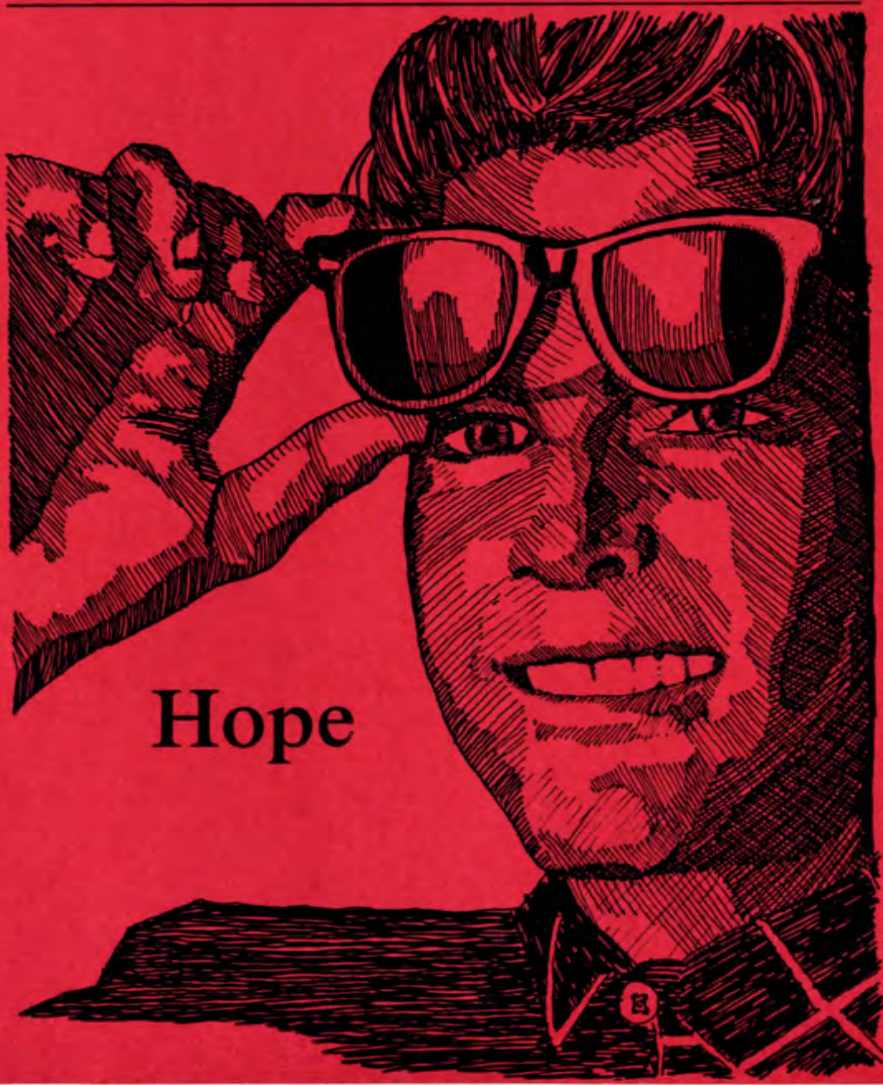

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OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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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 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.
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.
11. 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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Seriously had it Together



I get a laugh at myself when I think of a time in my addiction—It was a hot sunny afternoon in Florida, most people were with their friends and family down at the beach or relaxing in some cool air conditioning. Well, I remember where I was. It being Sunday, the doctors offices were closed so I got this “brainstorm” to go down and check out the dumpsters for works. I can just see the fumes rising from

those hot smelly dumpsters as I slid in over the edge, out of the sight of an nosey neighbors.

Once inside, I remember being stuck by a used syringe, I thought, "Oh goody, here's one," not caring that they were used on sick people. As I dug through the other stuff, lots of waste can papers and occasionally finding bloody bandages and sometimes hunks of stuff. I felt goood! (That's not the funny part).

Well, I never told anyone what I was up to. The reason for not telling anyone was not out of guilt or shame, it was because I thought I was smarter than everyone else and I didn't want anyone in on my "gold mine." Not only was I selfish and insane, I was gloating with sheer pleasure in how intelligent I had become, "If only they could see me now!" (That's the funny part).

Well, today my life is a miracle, eight and one half years clean, totally abstinent, through recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. N.A. really works, and I stay out of dumpsters. Sometimes when involved in service or even in any situation when there is a disagreement and I'm sure I know what is best, I'm able to reflect back on times when I thought I had it together and see how deeply I was in denial. I get a little laugh at myself and smile with a little bit of an open mind, thinking, why not listen to another, it can't hurt, what do I really have to defend (except maybe that damned pride that drove me crazy).

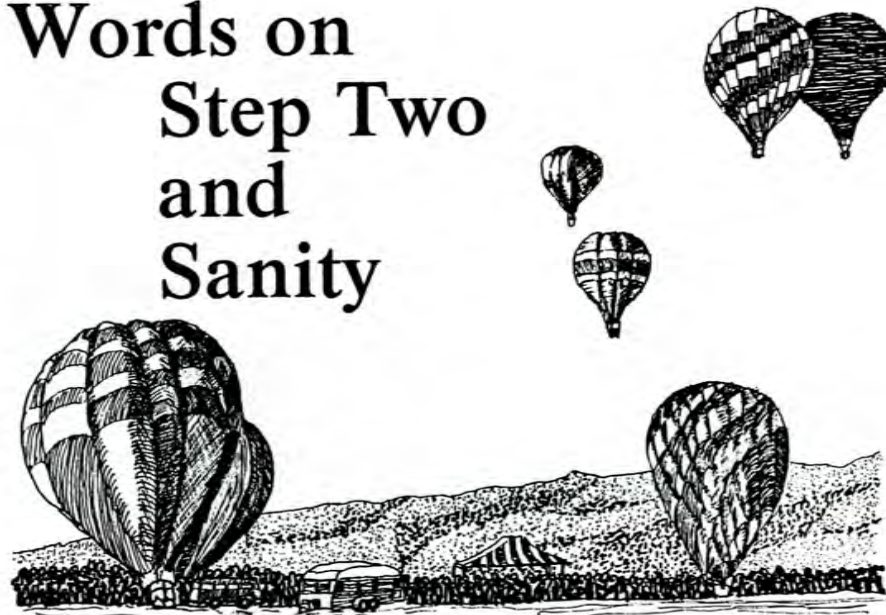
Let's listen to each other with open minds and especially open hearts. Our White Book has a beautiful line that has meant a lot right from the beginning, "The therapeutic value of one addict helping another"—how can we help one another without listening. Sharing and caring is a two-way street, and I believe that the "Love of one addict for another is without parrell" (paraphrased). We do have a choice today, not only to use or not use, but in many many instances we make choices.

We in recovery chose to live and to live life to the fullest.

Signed: Seriously—I still wonder—"How sick am I?"

H.T.
Florida

Words on Step Two and Sanity



Being restored to sanity means for me, intuitively knowing things which used to amaze and confound me. Sanity means knowing which step relates to what part of my life. It means knowing what to do about a certain situation. That, to me, is God restoring me to sanity. I've had no problem accepting God into my life. My God has shown Himself working for me in many wondrous ways. I have learned that God will provide for me. He has truly amazed me. I am so grateful to Him. Sanity is being grateful, when in the past, I was always wanting those things I didn't have.

Sanity is learning to accept me, and my life, when in the past I ran from me and from knowledge of me.

Sanity is learning that love doesn't mean sexual involvement with someone.

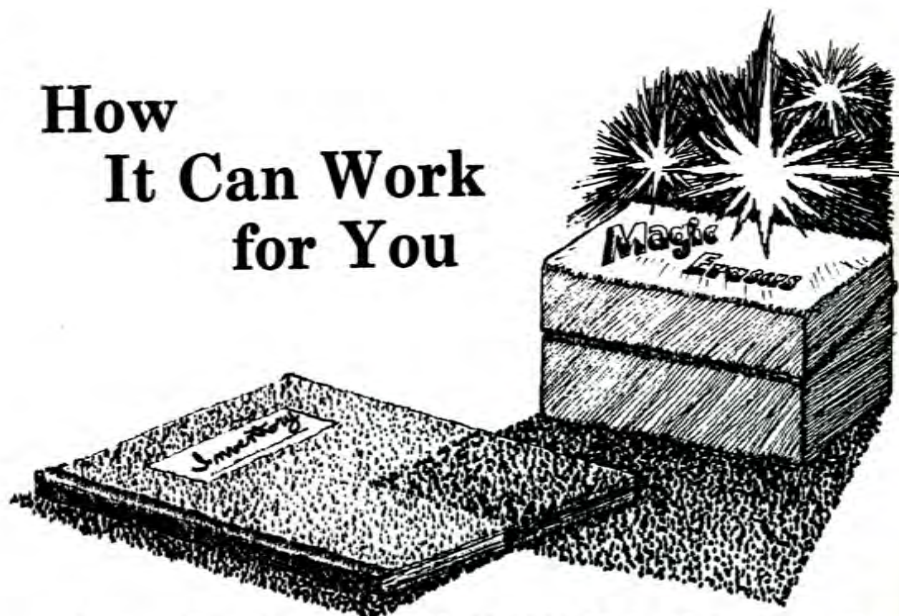
Sanity means giving someone else some comforting words, even when I myself am hurting.

Sanity is enjoying life, "good and bad," because it's all "good and bad," a part of growing.

Sanity is learning to look for the lesson in every adversity. Sanity is being in today.

T.V.
Ontario, Canada

How It Can Work for You



I came into the Fellowship in 1982 in Pueblo, Colorado, an addict who had hit bottom. I was definitely ready for this program. Actually, I didn't really believe that at the time, but I do know it to be true today. It has been through this Fellowship and the help of my Higher Power that I have been able to maintain continuous clean time, along with the most healthy emotional stability I have ever known. By the time this article is published, I will have attained four years of clean time.

The people I met early in recovery made a lot of difference in my staying with the Fellowship. They would tell me things like, "Keep coming back," and "Let us love you until you can love yourself." I came to believe that they really did care what happened to me more than I cared about myself at the time. I was glad, because I just knew that I had worn out my welcome everywhere else.

Since the day that I made the decision to try to live clean, I knew that I would have to deal with my rabid state of mind before any of the love that was being offered to me unconditionally could ever have any meaning in my life. I would relate to people and do real well until my opponent, Anger, would show up again. In an instant, all that I had enjoyed and wanted was gone.

I felt the need to get honest with myself. I could be honest with my Higher Power and my sponsors, but the thing which has helped me to stay clean with the grace of my

Higher Power is getting honest with myself. It is the exact opposite of what I used to be as a practicing addict. The step that I was most fearful of doing, the Fourth Step, is the one which helps me to see myself as I am today and to shed the shell of the past.

The first thing that I told my sponsors that I wished I could find was a magic eraser so that I would not have to deal with the past again. There was certainly a lot to want to forget. However, my first sponsor handed me a pen and a piece of paper instead and told me to get into the healthy habit of writing inventories; that way the problem could be sorted out and viewed clearly in order to find a solution.

The Fourth Step has given me such a sense of release and of courage that today I am not afraid to go into a very sincere writing of an inventory, because if I don't write it, then it is invisible and so easy to avoid. I practiced first with mini-inventories, as was suggested to me. Every time I do one, whether it is mini or oversized, I know that there are greater rewards ahead for this addict.

All the things stemming from my childhood are no longer threats, they are blessings, because I have processed them through the Twelve Steps. I have grown from many painful experiences. I know who and what I am today. I am even learning of my own potential, and I use the program to develop each aspect of my life. I have learned that there is a solution if you really try to find one.

For many years, I wanted to belong and then to be able to serve my fellow man. Today I do just that and it feels good. All that I am today is a recovering person. I can not take all the credit for it. I owe my life to my Higher Power. I shall eternally love and respect my sponsors, and words will never be able to express my gratitude for the spiritual principles of the program, so freely offered to me.

When I came into the program I wanted to die and was given a chance at life instead. It is only by the grace of a Higher Power and the Fellowship that I enjoy living and developing along spiritual lines.

A.C.
New Mexico

Time to stop Running



I am twenty-seven years old, and for many years I thought I was different when it came to drugs. Even though I had used drugs for years, I did not think of myself as part of the "drug scene."

I wanted to be cool and well liked by my friends so at the age of thirteen I began sniffing glue and running away from home so that I could engage in glue-sniffing parties all night long. During those periods when I was doing glue, it appeared that I had many friends and that I was cool with them. A few years passed and I added alcohol to my list of habits although glue was to be my "friend" for many years.

At the age of fifteen I was sent away to a boys' home for eighteen months. Although this was supposed to have a reforming effect on me, the entire time that I was at the home all I could think of was leaving and getting high.

At seventeen I quit high school. I worked for a few weeks, and every paycheck went towards purchases of pot and alcohol. I entered my first drug program when I was seventeen, but I was still not convinced that I was an addict. I quit that program real fast.

At that time, speed was my friend. When I shot speed, I felt free. Little did I know that, in reality, I was becoming a prisoner of the drugs, that I was being run by them. When I was twenty-one I got locked up for two years in state prison. I kept running. But then in 1983 at the age of twenty-five I attended my first N.A. meeting, and it was then that I finally realized that I, too, was an addict.

I will never forget that meeting for as I heard the other men talking, I thought, "Hey, that's me they're talking about!" Over the past few years I have gotten phone numbers from several of the N.A. men who visit us from the community each week and have made some lasting friendships among these men.

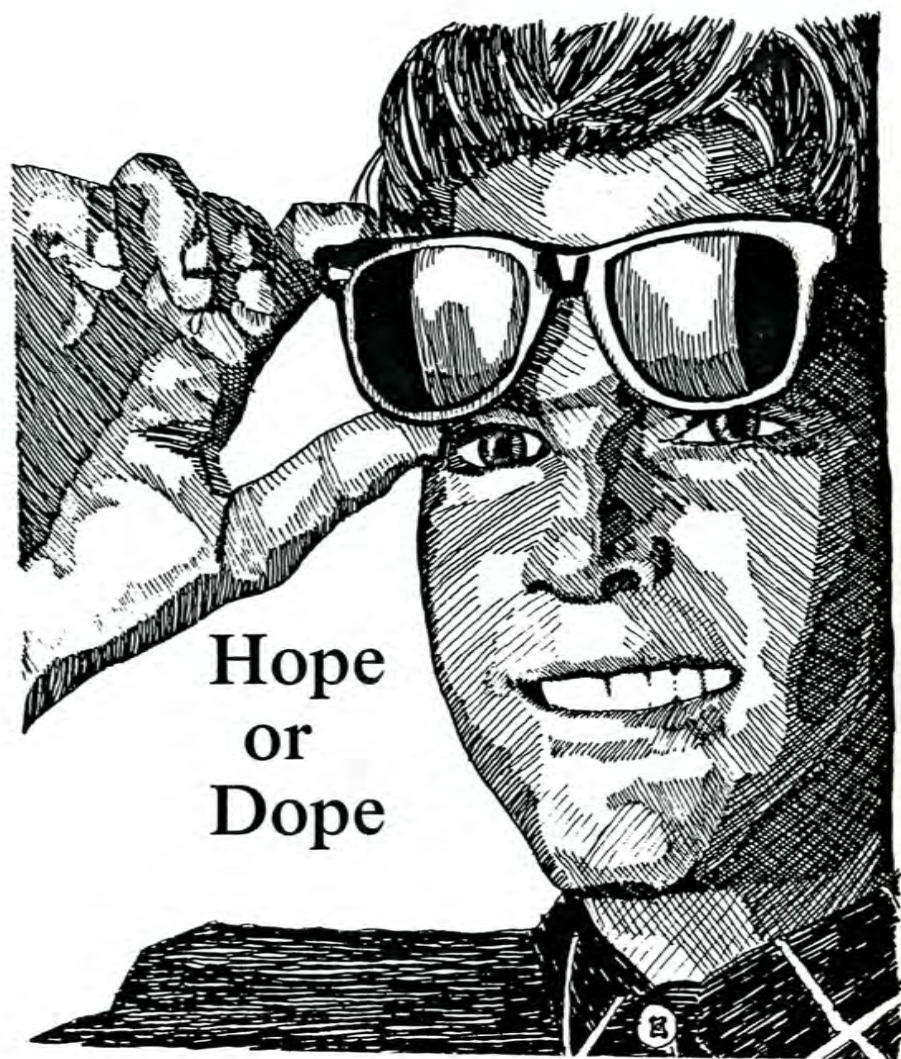
Since joining N.A. I have begun to realize that I can finally stop running. I have a Higher Power, God, and I ask Him to help me and He does. I know that when I get out of prison I have friends who will help me. All that I must do is ask and stay drug-free one day at a time.

For once I am getting my life together and doing things that should have been done a long time ago. For example, I am now working towards earning my high school diploma. Best of all, I can truthfully say that I have peace of mind. I am very grateful to the people of Narcotics Anonymous for having given me a new life. I know that If I don't pick up that first drug I will have a chance.

I can't wait to get out of jail so I can go to my first N.A. meeting on the street. For the present I will continue to attend weekly meetings. I do this for myself, not for anyone else.

I don't have to lie anymore and I don't have to run. Thank you N.A. and all the people who care so much for me.

J.R.
Pennsylvania



Hope or Dope

After two years of clean time, it is time for me to share my experience. I am very grateful to be alive today and to be part of this wonderful family which is N.A. On top of saving my life, you have given a new direction, a new meaning to my life.

I am a walking miracle today. Two years ago I had completely lost control over my drug addiction. My disease had caused me to do some crazy and insane things. So when at six months I had the sincere desire to get high and kill myself, I had to get on my knees and beg for help. I had

no other choice but to ask Him to relieve me from the obsession to get high, if I were to do something worthwhile with my life.

But since that moment my life has changed. I am grateful to be able to share these few lines with you because just for today I am clean. After I started getting involved in service work, to help other addicts recover and help them find a new way of life, my personal life changed. Since I have entered the program I have met new and sincere friends, I have changed my old way of thinking and doing things and today I am enjoying a simpler, easier way of life.

I found that it was very important to take the necessary time to make a complete inventory of myself. I asked my loving God as I understand Him to forgive me from all my past wrongdoings, and to remove all these defects of character. But I also thanked Him for all the positive experiences that I received from them.

I humbly asked Him to remove all my shortcomings and to give me the courage and the ability to make amends to the people I had harmed, except where I would injure them or others.

I live my program just for today because it permits me to live a well-balanced life. Using the Twelve Steps on a daily basis is our key to happiness and serenity. Today I am free, free of using, free to enjoy life as I want to, free to keep life simple and not worry about yesterday nor tomorrow, but to enjoy today as if it was my last day. I live my life as a normal person, but I find that putting the steps in our daily lives permits us to have a better way of life than the people who are supposed to be normal. For me that's worth staying clean.

I wish to thank you all, and especially my loving God, for this free gift, this new way of life. I must not forget to ask Him to give me strength every morning and thank Him every night for another clean and serene twenty-four hours.

Wishing you all a clean, happy, serene and exciting new way of life.

R.P.S.
Ontario, Canada

If I Didn't Have any Character Defects, I Wouldn't be Human



I started receiving the *N.A. Way* in the Fall of 1982 and have wanted to write an article ever since that time. Well, four years later I have finally accomplished it. This example of procrastination ties into my choice of subject, which is acceptance of my character defects.

From about a year after I started using, I was trying to quit. I knew that this would make my life more manageable. Having an addict's thinking, however, I carried this to the extreme and believed that all my character defects and fears, and even the pain that all humans experience would disappear with my abstinence. Needless to say, I was in for a big surprise after coming off my N.A. honeymoon and finding that most of them were still with me, and feeling like I had gained a few more in the process. I have since learned that I didn't gain any defects, I just became more aware of existing ones.

I was very idealistic as a child and carried that into my active addiction and into my recovery. I heard at meetings "fear is lack of faith," "anger is a reaction to not wanting to face reality," and other similar sayings. I then took these to my idealistic extreme and felt that if I didn't live up to these or other principles of the program 100% I was a failure and maybe even a "bad" person. I then added these failings to my long list of character defects. This is how I started my recovery—as my own worst enemy. Even today this defect is still causing me problems. The students in the chiropractic college I have just started attending aren't living up to my

idealistic expectations. I must learn to accept them or to change my expectations.

Since coming around, I have learned that many of my feelings that I once thought were character defects, like fear and anger, are really human characteristics that everyone in this program and on the face of this earth experiences in varying degrees. The difference is that addicts tend to be much more extreme in their feelings and their reactions to those feelings. One of the things I have concentrated on in my program has been to get these feelings in balance, and express them appropriately.

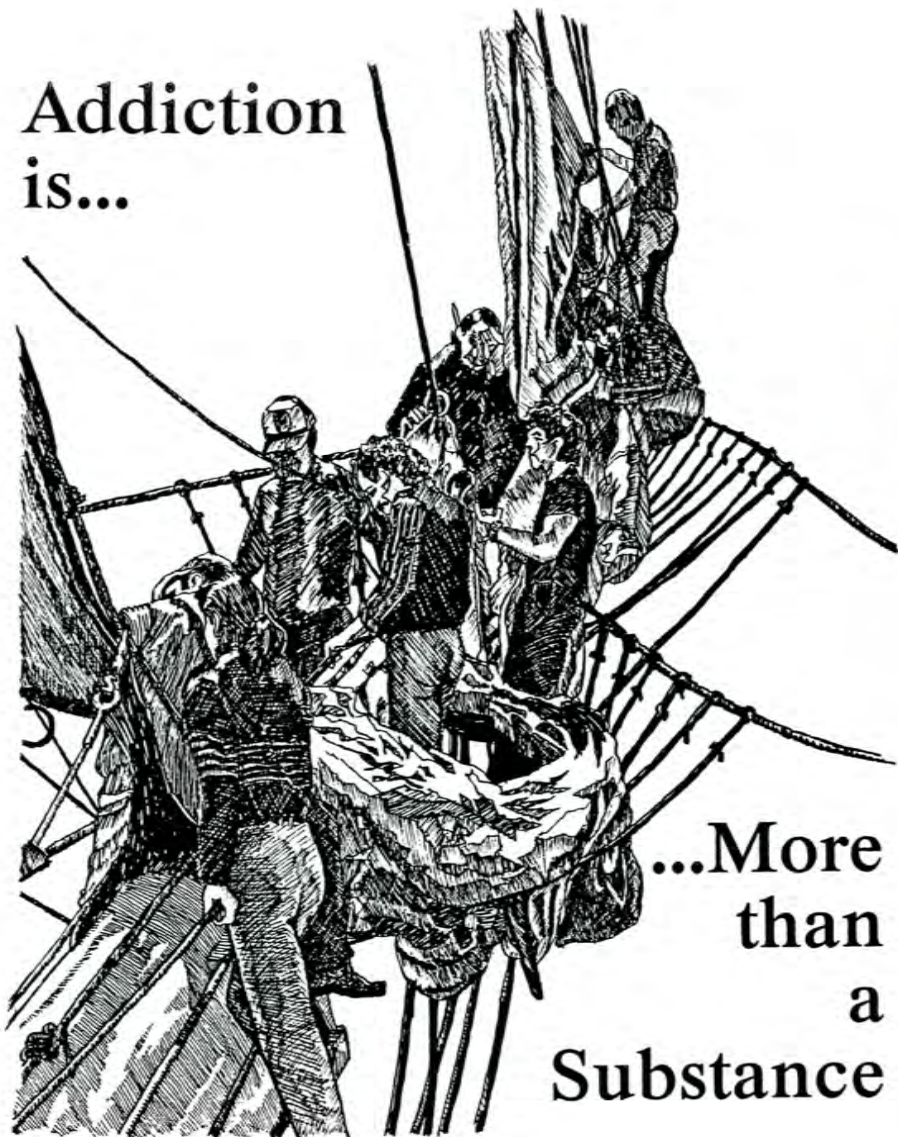
When working the Seventh Step, I also try to accept that my time and my way of removing of defects is not always going to be the same as my Higher Power's plans. Also, that if He removed them all at once, I probably wouldn't appreciate it, since I don't appreciate things that come easily to me. This could lead to relapse or inability to carry the message. Struggling through the steps is how I grow and mature in this program. I have been told that there is absolutely no growth without pain, and I really believe that today.

N.A. has shown me that I am a human being. I wasn't dropped off on the earth from another planet like I used to think. It has shown through the Fourth and Fifth Steps and a loving and caring Fellowship that I am not the monster and "bad" person that I had always thought. It has also shown me that I don't have to become a perfect person for myself or other people to like and accept me. This is true even though I am a procrastinator.

So through acceptance of my character defects today, I can move ahead without them paralyzing my actions. In other words, I can continue to recover in spite of them and enjoy being an earthling. I can use this new feeling of humanness to get closer to other people. I can take others whom I had put on pedestals down to Earth and get closer to them as human beings. Best of all, today I can even sometimes laugh at my defects, fears, and inflated ego. These are gifts, miracles given to me by God and His Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

S.S.
Illinois

Addiction is...



...More
than
a
Substance

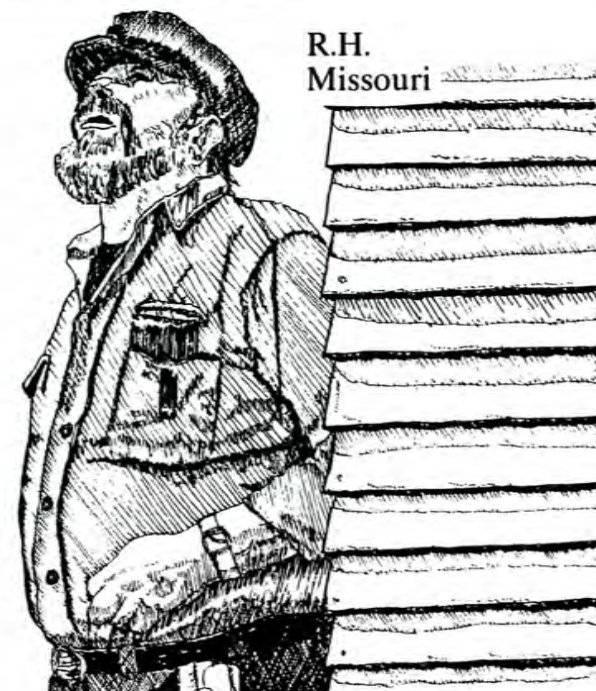
I just received the July issue of the *N.A. Way* and felt compelled to write. After having been clean for about four and a half years, I have reached a new belief in the First Step. Until now I had read it to say "powerless over drugs."

I have been in service from the very beginning and have experienced many great moments. Recently I was confronted about my self-righteous attitude and behavior. I was busy telling everyone what to do and doing very little for my own recovery. Someone said, "Why don't you let someone else do that." I immediately got defensive and told them to

mind their own business. However, even as I said it I knew that my Higher Power had spoken again. I began to realize what a pain I had become. I began to share about feelings of regret. I began to talk to people about my ego. The "I" became "WE" again.

Through taking another Fourth Step, I realized that I was truly powerless over my disease, a disease which had told me that only "I" could perform some of the service work that was being done. It was hard to let go of my disease and say, "Okay, someone else can plan this function." I still wanted to control, but knew that I was powerless to control any longer, and to my amazement, the newer people and oldtimers alike are getting things done without me.

N.A. has always been on time for me. I'm truly a child of God and He protects me by putting me in touch with people who love me. Today my service work continues, but with a better purpose. I no longer want to control and make myself look good. I truly want to serve and carry a good message. Now, being powerless over my addiction means not having to fight for control of my life any longer. I thank God and N.A. for a life worth living—Twelve Steps for MY recovery. Twelve Traditions for OUR recovery.



R.H.
Missouri

Adventure The N.A. Way



By the Grace of God and the Twelve Steps of N.A., this past August I had the opportunity to take off work for six weeks, and do some traveling. Before I left, I had been going through the steps once again with my sponsor. As it happened, I was approaching my Eleventh Step. Being the dramatic addict that I am, I thought, "This is perfect," for from the very beginning of my clean time, my first sponsor, who died in 1978 with eighteen years clean, had emphasized that we should always follow our hearts, and that carrying the message was our only real purpose on the planet. So I looked at this upcoming journey as an Eleventh and Twelfth Step adventure.

I left Hawaii in mid-August. My first destination was London, England for the World Convention of N.A. Before leaving I had my usual fantasies of what this trip would be. Of course, it was going to be one of total bliss, with me feeling at one with the universe—and there was a lot of that—but just because I've been clean for fifteen years does not mean my addiction doesn't jump in every chance it gets; being clean means I feel all feelings. As usual, whenever I

react to life only from my head, I find my addiction looking me in the face. So it was when I arrived Thursday morning of the opening day.

Since this was, of course, a spiritual adventure, I made no arrangements for a room; so I arrived knowing no one, having no room, feeling tired. In spite of me, God does provide where he guides. Two women put me up, but it was too late because, you see, my addiction had already taken over, and I was feeling inadequate. I felt I was imposing, and felt alone and isolated. So I wandered around, getting crazier by the minute.

The opening meeting was at 3:00 p.m. After the scheduled speakers spoke, they had open podium for anyone, and people started lining up to share. That little voice inside said, "Get up there and let everyone know what you're feeling." Instead, I got up and went to use the restroom. At this point, if anyone would have approached me and asked if I was all right, I would have burst into tears!

I took the Third Step in the restroom. I asked God for help. I knew I was getting more involved with self, and there

had to be a change. I walked back in the conference room and sat in the line for people who wanted to speak. I was shaking so bad, and just kept telling myself that I was cold, because I was from Hawaii. Then it was my turn. I opened my mouth, and God took over.

All the feelings came out, and a calmness went through me. I felt a part of the convention, because I shared my innermost self with others. So many other addicts came up to me after the meeting to thank me, because they were feeling all the same feelings—we are not unique. I met and got close to so many people that weekend. What a change—from Thursday morning, being so caught up in my disease of isolation, to Sunday, the last day where I couldn't even walk through the lobby without getting stopped by some other addict who wanted to share one-on-one! To me, this is the miracle of our Fellowship.

The experience was so beautiful at the convention. Addicts from all over the world, speaking different languages, yet the same inner feelings, all on the same search for a God of their understanding.

Another addict from Hawaii met me at the convention on Saturday. With him, and a woman we met during the convention, we rented a car and headed north. We visited different mystical spots on the way, like Stone Henge and Glastonbury, going to N.A. where we could find it.

Our destination was in Northern Scotland, a spiritual community we knew of there. We spent seven days living and working there. Once again meeting people from all over the world seeking a spiritual way of life, and an understanding of God. The beautiful thing for me is that today, I totally accept my role in life as that of a clean member of N.A. The feeling of knowing my spiritual path enables me to experience other paths, and learn and grow from them, but always coming back to my primary purpose.

After Scotland the three of us split up. The woman stayed there a while, my friend returned to Hawaii, and I went on to Israel. I had some concern about going to Israel, but felt in my heart that I was to go.

After a fourteen-hour train ride from Northern Scotland, I arrived at the London airport to check in at the airline. The adventure continues. I have a beard with sort of long hair in the back. Although I feel I look very sporty-natural

compared to my early clean days, the airline didn't share my opinion! I was interrogated and searched very thoroughly for two hours. Actually, after that initial experience, being in Israel, with all the soldiers on the streets with machine guns, was rather lightweight. I visited all the spots I consider sacred in the Holyland, and took my Third and Eleventh Steps at them all. Hey, my belief is that I can use all the help I can get!

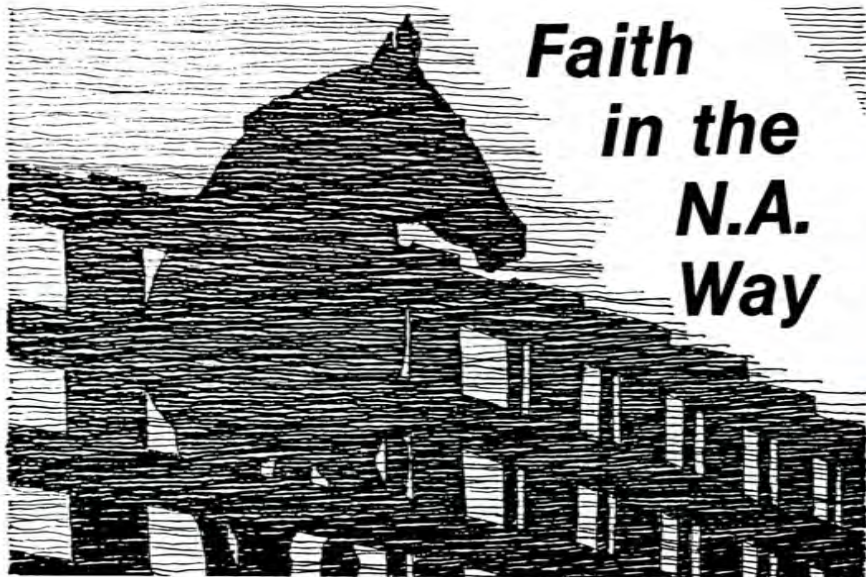
Narcotics Anonymous in Israel was fantastic! It's been going for two years, and they have four meetings in Tel Aviv. The meetings are held in a bomb shelter; that was a strange feeling walking down into it. Yet, as I entered the room and saw a long table with addicts sitting around it with their coffee cups, the Twelve Steps and Traditions posters on the wall in Hebrew, I felt I was at home. Listening to the meeting in Hebrew, and then having it translated into English, I once again had that feeling of oneness come over me as the heart language was spoken again; people sharing their experience on the path to God.

I was very honored to be a speaker at the next meeting. I found it difficult, in a sense, to speak, then stop every few sentences and have it translated. It felt more like a lecture. I'm not sure if anyone really got what I experienced, but to me, it was such a moving moment for me to share with brothers and sisters halfway around the world.

I was so impressed with the N.A. members there. Their commitment to staying clean was so wonderful. On their own, they have translated a good portion of the Basic Text. Part of me wanted to stay there, it felt so good. If it be God's will, I will return there, or maybe somewhere else in the world, for I know from personal experience that N.A. is everywhere, and even if it's not, we take it with us.

These Twelve Steps work. what we have is a gift, and it is working all over the world. May you always know that God is loving us now.

T.C.
Hawaii



Faith in the N.A. Way

Four and a half years ago, in England, I stumbled into a treatment center to be treated for drug addiction. I had spent the best part of ten years progressing in my illness to the point where I became physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually lost. In the last years, my life had been governed by the need to use, and by finding the ways and means to get more.

My life was not a pretty one, and those around me suffered. In my deep fear, remorse, shame, guilt and isolation, and the self-loathing that stemmed from a total inability to prevent my obsession with drugs and the compulsion to take them, I became a being that lashed out at the world around me. Some of those most deeply affected were my family and my wife and child.

There came a time when I was left alone, face to face with myself and the knowledge that I would soon die. By this time, I had also been so beaten that I saw no alternative but death, and openly entertained the thought of it. I had, what in religious terms would be called an extreme *l'angoisse metaphysique*—a radical dread. It was not a fear of God for me, but a total landslide of personality, self, the void, emotions and a collapse of the body. It was in this state that I entered into a six week drug treatment program.

I was physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually ministered to in that time, mainly by other addicted people

who had been recovering from their addiction for some time. It was for me, an early act of cognition, to understand from what they told me about themselves, that they were like myself, having done the things I had done and having had the feelings I had had.

It was a strange thing in those early weeks to feel the onset of something I had never experienced before in my life: *Faith*. I had had faith previously that when I took a substance it would have a given effect, but I had never experienced the warming inner glow of peace. The knowledge that for myself, the war was over, the feeling of serenity. As the weeks progressed to months, and months to years, I have sought to affirm and experience this faith more deeply. And where, initially, I had thought it to be a by-product of drug withdrawal, it has succeeded in becoming the informing principle of my life. What is more, I witness daily the positive awakening of this faith in others who are just new to the process of recovery.

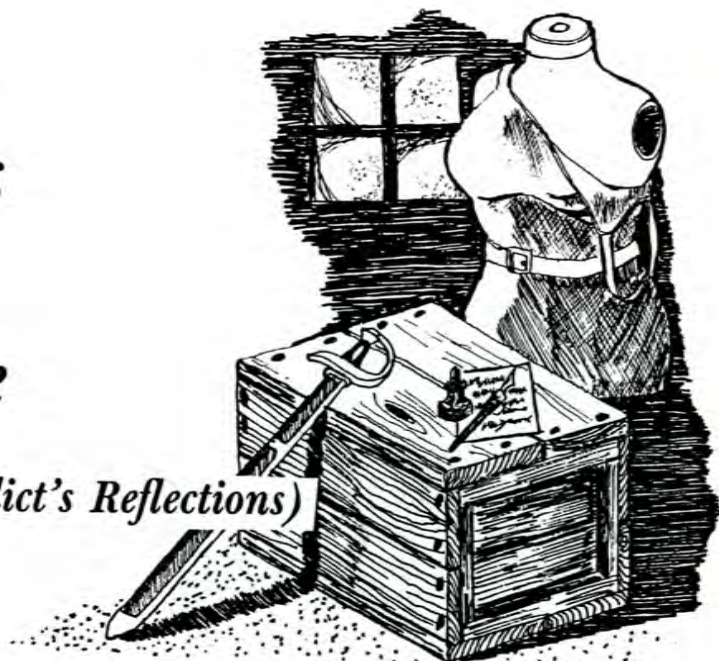
Due to the ongoing nature of my recovery, and the accelerated emotional growth that is a natural correlative of abstinence from drugs after many years of addiction, I began to seek ways in which these growing pains could be alleviated or transcended. In many ways, it is first necessary to be transformed in faith into new beings, and then afterwards act according to the spirit, which for me is the strengthening source. God is present in the depths of our being and we become conscious of our true selves, and then in our entering into that deep center we pass through it and go out of ourselves to God. This, I may add, is also more or less what the world's major religions and spiritual disciplines constitute—practices *designed to liberate the spirit*. I found that it became necessary to take action—creative action—in engaging reality and myself, and being transformed by it.

Our Steps and Traditions are a spiritual discipline, containing within them the means to the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual recovery from addiction, which, when practiced, have kept addicted people clean for decades.

M.P.
Washington, D.C.

The Steps in Prose

(One Addict's Reflections)



1. First there is honesty, humility and knowing I don't know what's good for me.
2. Then comes a possibility that there is someone who knows more than me, maybe another reality that's different than the one I see, or just a little hope which causes the search to begin.
3. I found the answer I can live with and accept it for the truth and let go of my fears, angers, frustrations, wants and desires and know that it will be all right. And act as if it will be all right.
4. With pen in hand, mightier than the sword, I cut away the lies I have built my life on, the ones my parents gave me, the ones I have been saving for a rainy day, the ones that no longer work but I keep them in the attic because I can't bear to part with them, they've been in the family for generations. Who knows with a little spring cleaning we may even find some really pretty things that have been covered with mildew and now they can show their real value and worth.
5. Let's open all our musty crates and expose them to the light of day, then we can see what's good for us and what we want to throw away. When we show our fears to someone else like a spooky old dress in the back of the

attic, it crumbles from the exposure. The old and dingy is clean and clear. With the love and guidance we begin to see freedom and a job well done.

6. When I came here they said to me using is not a possibility, but that's all I think about you see, then they said it's really easy don't pick up the first one you see. That is how I become entirely ready I don't participate in the things that make me hate, and my H.P. reveals them to me so that I can become ready by not picking up the first one (character defect).
- 6/7. If that's a character defect then what's a shortcoming, ain't' they the same?
7. As I practice honesty, it becomes more clear to me that I am being freed from the thoughts of lying. It used to be a daily part of me to figure out the best lines to use that day, it seems that this kind of thinking is gone away, in fact I lied the other day and I couldn't keep a straight face, I had to tell the truth. What's happening to me, could it be that my shortcoming is being removed by God? (Doing it and thinking about doing it are two different things, like obsession and compulsion.)
8. We made a list—ain't' that simple—and changed our minds about who's fault is whose and whose daddy can beat up whose daddy and what was my part in the problem, ahem, ahem, cough, cough!!
9. I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I'm sorry...I AM NOT SORRY, I was a sorry person when I came here, but not today, and it ain't about "I'm sorry,"...it's about living the amends, and if that means raising my son in a new and healthy way so that I am there for him (like I never was) and that I listen to him (like I never did) and enjoying his presence in my life, I will live the amends!
10. Pay attention to my actions and my reactions and know that I am an addict and I will have to admit I am wrong but not (you guessed it), I'm sorry again! And know that I am getting better, and pay attention to that, and see that another day went by that I didn't have to apologize for my existence and that I did lend a helping hand and that I did care and was cared for...JUST FOR TODAY.
11. How can I seek to improve something I don't have (oops back to Step Three), and maybe that is where I am and

maybe I can spend some time relaxing and trying to get in tune with the peace of mind, and maybe I can just relax for a moment and know that he is with me and that it will be all right. Or just stop to say thanks and listen for the still quiet voices.

12. I know that we are all bright spirits and that there is so much to be done and that we have a message that needs to be carried and that I have a purpose in this world and that I matter and that it will all be done in God's time and with God's love and guidance and that all I can be is an example by practicing these principles in all my affairs.

I thank God for N.A., and I thank N.A. for giving me God.

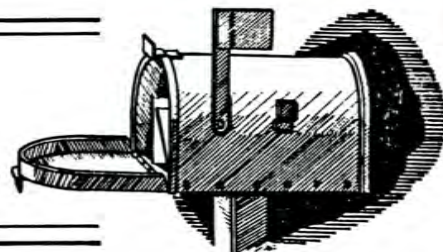
You have changed me from someone who could not stop using like a pig into a responsible productive parent, member of society, boyfriend, member of N.A.

N.A. is Anonymous Love.

Today I am Love Anonymous.

Anonymous

From Our Readers



Editor's Note:

In the December issue of the *N.A. Way* an article appeared called "It Works." The writer shared his experience in using the approval draft of the steps portion of our proposed book on the steps and traditions. We received a number of letters and phone calls suggesting that our timing in printing an article about a matter not yet decided by the Conference was unfortunate. It was certainly not our intent to support one particular stand on a matter before the Conference, but simply to present one member's recovery experience. In the light of the comments we received, we felt that an alternative view should be presented as well. The following letter was chosen, as it was the most comprehensive of those we received.

Dear *N.A. Way*,

I hope you will print this letter in response to your article in the December issue entitled, "It Works." I am very displeased with the *N.A. Way's* choice of this article since the book in question is not approved N.A. literature, and I am in complete disagreement with the author's opinion on it.

The book *It Works: How and Why* is up for a vote at this year's World Service Conference in April. For the Fellowship magazine to print an article in favor of an issue that is up for a vote at the WSC appears to be a manipulation of group conscience. I am sure that was not the intended purpose of printing the article. Still, this does seem to be a misuse of the Fellowship's magazine.

Recently the *N.A. Way* took a poll of concerned N.A. members to determine whether they would be interested in expanding the format of the magazine. The decision was made, with Fellowship input, to expand the magazine by putting in articles and opinions from world level trusted servants with opposing views from responsible spokesper-

sons within the Fellowship. I believe this could be a very healthy move for N.A. as a whole. It would give members an opportunity to hear both sides of an issue and have a truly informed group conscience.

On page one, also of the December issue, the editor informs us that these changes needed to be voted on by group conscience and will put in the Conference Agenda. I would like to applaud the magazine for taking this healthy course of action and having faith in the Fellowship.

Then comes the article on page ten. At the WSC quarterly in Charlotte, NC, members from several states came to voice their disagreements on the book in question. It was decided by the World Lit. chair and the Board of Trustee's chair to allow these members to share their concerns at an open forum. There was a two hour session where members were allowed to express their views. During this workshop members came up to speak, sighting page, line and word items that were inconsistent with the Narcotics Anonymous message of recovery from the disease of addiction. These members came all the way to Carolina for the express purpose of sharing their concerns on the book. After two hours, it was recognized that they had vital input and it needed to be recorded for world literatures use.

Another session was set up where these same members could express their specific criticisms. [Editor's note: At this point K.O. cited several of the criticisms that have come up. To avoid going even further beyond our purpose we have omitted that discussion here and forwarded those comments to the World Lit Committee and the Board of Trustees.]

I would have had no problem with the article, "It Works" being printed with a disclaimer, stating that it is one side of an issue and inviting views from responsible spokespersons, but it did not. To this end, I hope you see fit to print this letter so that the Fellowship can hear both sides of the issue and make up their own minds whether *It Works*, *How and Why* should be approved or not.

Anonymous
K.O.
Virginia

Fellow Addicts,

I still live with a lot of fear today, mostly of other people, even though I'm two years, five months clean now. I suppose that's why it's taken me so long to get around to writing to you.

I finally know that I'm not the only one in the world who ever did the things I thought were so horrible. I found that out my first trembling day in a treatment center, when another nurse who was taking care of me said that she had also stolen drugs from her patients and poked needles in her arms until there were no veins left. I really and truly believed up until this point that I was the only one who had ever done the things I had done. She gave me such comfort. I couldn't understand then when she said it did her so much good to see me this way, I reminded her so much of herself; I understand now, though.

The crisis that precipitated enough pain to get me to treatment was the death of my unborn child. This finally got my attention. No one ever said my using caused this pregnancy to terminate at three months, but it's something I know in my gut. I doubled over at work one day with pain, had emergency surgery—one of many—only to be told I had a normal pregnancy. They told me no drugs, including alcohol. I was perplexed, how did one live without any drugs?

They had given me my drug of choice for several days in the hospital and sent me home with a prescription for ten capsules and said to try and not take them. My guilt was already overwhelming me. Had I really been hurting bad enough to have exploratory surgery? I don't know, even today. My disease will tell me anything to get its drugs. My sick thinking told me that I was doing okay since I didn't empty those ten capsules and shoot them as I usually did. I only ate all ten in one day. Two months later they decided the fetus was "non-viable," in other words, dead.

It has been a very long two years and five months of recovery, but I have so many blessings as a result. I still have a loving husband and family. I have a very healthy bright eight month old son, I have a good job now too, and countless other blessings to be grateful for. Some say in the Fellowship, "no pain, no gain." In the beginning I heard this so much I wanted to shove those words down every person's throat who uttered them. Today I understand, without the

loss of my first child I might not have found this Fellowship, I wouldn't know the joy and gratitude I feel today for a beautiful healthy child. I wouldn't be willing to give of myself to another addict. I am still saddened to think of the loss of my first child, but realize that it is through his death that I live and can be the better parent to his brother today.

I have forgiven myself today through working a diligent Fourth and Fifth step. I could not stop what I was doing for anyone before, and more importantly I didn't know how. This program continues to teach me how to recover through working the steps—how to live without drugs, how to forgive myself, how to love you and me. I know today that I never have to be alone again and that I never was the only one.

I hope this can help any of you who think you were the only ones too.

Not Alone
In Georgia

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.

ALASKA: March 6-8, 1987; 3rd Annual Alaska Regional Convention; Travelers Inn, 820 Noble Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701; (907) Pat H. 452-7342; Larry L. 457-7326

ARIZONA: May 30-31, 1987; Arizonal Regional Convention; Doubletree Inn, Tucson, AZ; Jeff 841-0046; Rosemary 293-3706; Connie 398-9442

AUSTRALIA: Apr 17-20, 1987; 3rd Australasian Convention Easter '87; Glenelg Town Hall, Moseley Square Glenelg; Tony M. 085-366124

CALIFORNIA: Feb 21, 1987; B.C.A.S.C. 2nd Annual "Serenity Day Conference"; United Methodist Church, 1020 Victoria Avenue, Venice, California

2) Mar 27-29, 1987; 9th NCCNA; Marriott Hotel, Burlingame, CA; 9th NCCNA, Box 6323, San Mateo, CA 94403; Todd (415) 347-3296; Joe (408) 296-4833

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 (CANCELED)

FLORIDA: July 2-5, 1987; FRCNA 6; Diplomat Hotel, 3515 South Ocean Dr., Hollywood, FL 33019, (305) 457-8111,

GEORGIA: Feb 19-22 1987; GRCNA VI; Box 678, Riverdale, GA 30274-0678, (800) 228-9898, Frances (404) 589-0697

ILLINOIS: July 24-26, 1987; 3rd Mid-Coast Convention; Holiday Inn, 7550 E State St., Rockford, Ill 61107; (815)398-2200; Greg 963-5811

KENTUCKY: Feb 14-15, 1987; 2nd Kentuckiana Reg Tradition Learning Day; (502) Ro 935-2481; Betsy 267-9410

2)March 7, 1987; KRCNA I Fundraiser; Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Claysmill, Lexington, Kentucky 40503; Brenda (606)271-0647; New Hotline (606)252-3484

3)April 10-12, 1987; KRCNAI; Ramada Inn, 4767 Scottsville Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42101; Deanie (502)843-8209

LOUISIANA: March 6-8, 1987; LPRCNAV; Palace Suite Hotel, 2211 MacArthur Dr., Alexandria, LA; (518)443-2561 2) Sept. 3-7, 1987; World Convention; WCNA 17; Sheraton New Orleans Hotel & Towers, 500 Canal St., New Orleans, LA 70130; (504)525-2500

MARYLAND: Feb 27-Mar 1, 1987; 1st Annl Ches/Pot Reg Conv; Ramada Inn, 173 Jennifer Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401; (301) Len 787-1273; Steve 269-6741; Paul 255-3630

MASSCHUSETTES: Apr 17-19, 1987; 2nd New England Reg Conv; Marriott Hotel, Springfield, MA; NERC II, Box 422, Chicopee, MA 01021; (413) Steve 736-3979; Nancy 593-3809

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

MISSISSIPPI: April 3-5, 1987; MRCNAV; Best Western Trace Inn; (Hwy 6 & Natches Trace) Tupelo, MS; Allen (801)862-7334

MISSOURI: 2nd Annual Show-Me Regional Convention; Ramada Hotel, 2431 N. Glenstone, Springfield, MO; (800)781-0500

NEW JERSEY: May 8-10, 1987; 2nd NJRCNA; P.O.Box 597; Manasquan, NJ 08736; (201) Nancy 223-2909; Karin 483-0310; Interested Speakers submit tapes to Program Comm, Rd 1, Box 222, Pennington-Mt. Rose Rd., Pennington, NJ 08534, Tom (609) 737-8791

NEW MEXICO: July 3-5, 1987; WSUC IV; Box 37558, Albuquerque, NM 87176; Susan (505) 984-2305, Debra (505) 982-8650, Bill (505) 984-1469

OHIO: May 22-24, 1987; Ohio Reg Conv; Holiday Inn Cascade Plaza, Akron, OH 44372; Please submit speaker tapes for consideration to ORCNA V; Box 5837, Akron, OH 44372; (216) Meredith 832-5361; Curt 453-1758; Gary 864-8175

OKLAHOMA: March 27-29, 1987; 1st Annual Oklahoma Regional Convention; Central Plaza Hotel, 112 N. Eastern Ave., OK City, OK 73117; (800) 522-4383, Leo (918) 747-4556

PENNSYLVANIA: Feb 27-Mar 1, 1987; Mid-Atlantic Reg Learning Conference III; George Washington Lodge, Allentown, PA; (215) Bill 398-8438; Bob 432-1037;

2) Mar 6-8, 1987; Central PA Convention NA; Holiday Inn-Center City, Harrisburg, PA; 717/234-0193:

3) Mar 27-29, 1987; 5th GPRCNA; Dunfey Hotel, Philadelphia; GPRCNA, PO Box 42628, Philadelphia PA 19101-2628; (215) Steve S. 925-7766; Marge 534-2887

TEXAS: Mar 27-29, 1987; LSRCNA II; LSRCNA II Pro Subcom, PO Box 300794, Houston, TX 77230-0794; (713) Rick 531-6734; Janie Rae 973-7002

WASHINGTON: Mar 27-29, 1987; Washington, Northern Idaho 2nd Annual Reg Convention; Vance Tyee, Olympia, WA



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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.
7. Every N.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. 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.
11. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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