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*Creative Action
= Freedom*





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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*THE INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL OF THE FELLOWSHIP
OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS*

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From the Editor



First off, let me remind you of an offer we made in last month's magazine. Since the price of the magazine is going up to \$15 next month, we are offering all our current subscribers the option to renew at the old price. You may do that by cutting the mailing label off the envelope that this magazine came in and sending it to us along with your check or money order for \$12.

As this is being written, the World Convention in New Orleans has just come to a close. The convention was a great success, a real blast of recovery to everyone there.

Addicts from at least sixteen countries and throughout the United States held meetings, discussions, dances, a banquet, a Mardi Gras ball and parade, and a riverboat cruise. The convention theme was "Live Your Dreams."

Of those registered for this convention, the combined total clean time was more than 8000 years. That comes to over three million days.

A theme that could be heard at just about every meeting and workshop, from the main speaker meetings to the smaller marathon meetings held throughout the weekend, was "Work the Steps!" And it was evident from the flavor of the Convention that we're doing just that. The spirit of love and unity was overwhelming in the convention, and spilled out of the hotel, down Bourbon Street, into the French Quar-

ter, everywhere members with convention badges could be found.

As we were packing up the computers after it was all over, I asked a bell hop who was helping, "So what's the word among the hotel staff? Were we an unruly bunch?" "No," he said, "not at all. The only difference I saw from any other convention was how friendly everyone was. All the hugging and friendship in the lobbies and halls was great!"

At a local meeting after the convention was over, someone from New Orleans shared that he had about sixteen months clean, but had never been to N.A. He had gotten out of a treatment center some time ago and wasn't introduced to the Fellowship. He was down on Bourbon Street this weekend, thinking about getting loaded again, and he kept getting bits and pieces of N.A. conversations.

"I heard the words 'Narcotics Anonymous' and 'dope fiend,'" he said, "and I knew something was going on I should be involved in." After asking some questions, he ended up at the convention, and was still hanging tight to members of the local Fellowship when the rest of us left.

It was a wonderful convention. Thanks from all of us to the New Orleans Host Committee members who worked so hard to make it possible for the rest of us.

R.H., Editor

Experience, Strength & Hope



This section of the magazine is an international monthly Narcotics Anonymous meeting in print. All members of N.A. are invited to participate. Share your "experience, strength and hope" on any topic related to your recovery from addiction through the N.A. program. Please include a signed copyright release form (inside the back cover), and send it to:

**The N.A. Way; World Service Office, Inc.
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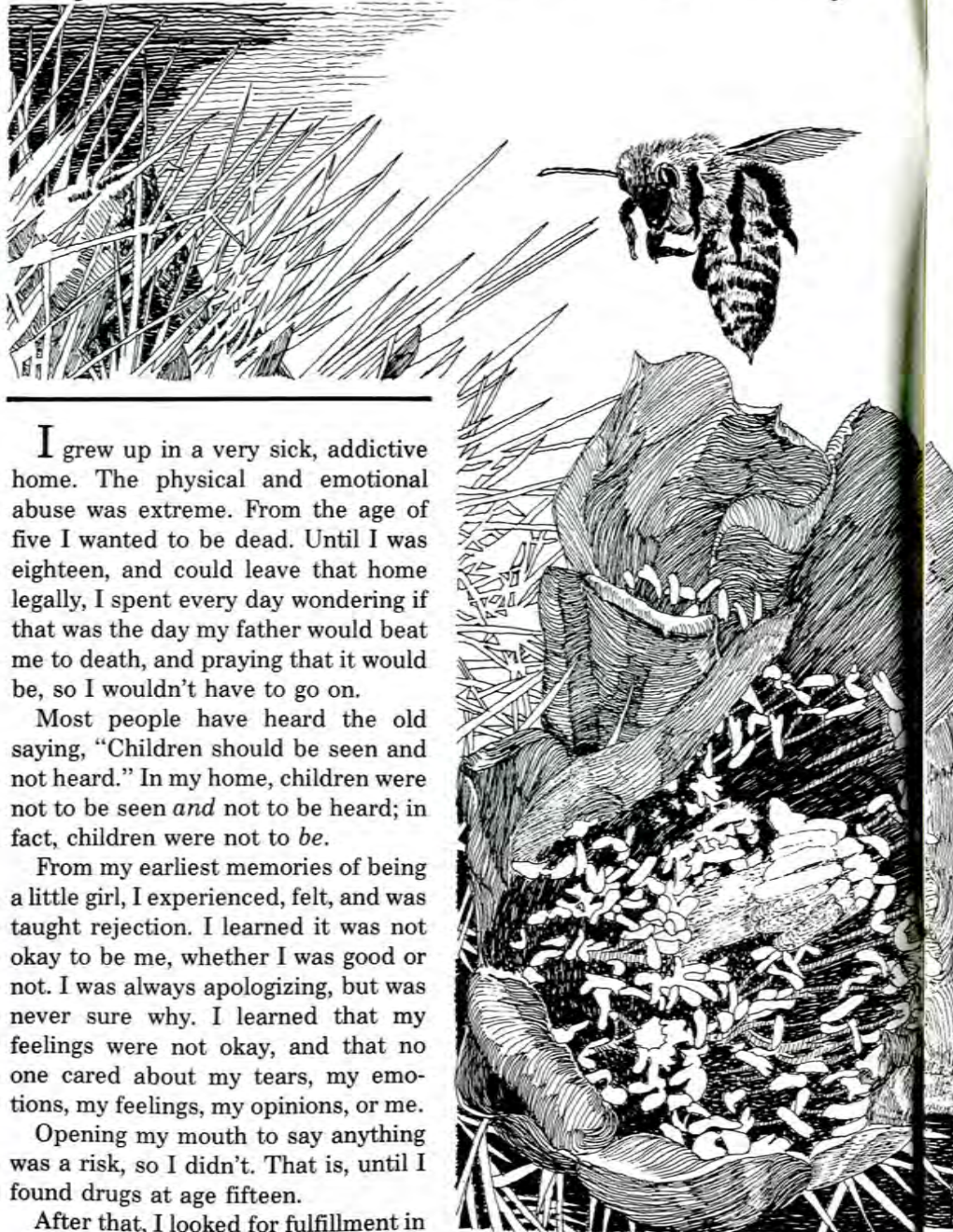
What is Narcotics Anonymous?

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 above.

Rejection, Risks and Recovery



I grew up in a very sick, addictive home. The physical and emotional abuse was extreme. From the age of five I wanted to be dead. Until I was eighteen, and could leave that home legally, I spent every day wondering if that was the day my father would beat me to death, and praying that it would be, so I wouldn't have to go on.

Most people have heard the old saying, "Children should be seen and not heard." In my home, children were not to be seen *and* not to be heard; in fact, children were not to *be*.

From my earliest memories of being a little girl, I experienced, felt, and was taught rejection. I learned it was not okay to be me, whether I was good or not. I was always apologizing, but was never sure why. I learned that my feelings were not okay, and that no one cared about my tears, my emotions, my feelings, my opinions, or me.

Opening my mouth to say anything was a risk, so I didn't. That is, until I found drugs at age fifteen.

After that, I looked for fulfillment in

everything and everyone. I was totally shut down and empty, and no matter how many drugs I took, or in what combination, I was still a "non-person" trying to fit into the world of "real people."

Drugs helped me for a long time to live, then they helped me die.

Only a divine intervention from the loving God of my understanding got me to this program. From the blackness of insanity and the bowels of hell, my God reached for me, held me in his loving arms and let me know he loved me exactly for who I am. Then he deposited me in a Fellowship of people he knew would do the same.

I was loved and accepted and helped along as I worked the Steps to the very best of my ability. At five months clean, I did my Fifth Step. As I went on and worked Steps Six and Seven, I felt the desire to live instead of die for the first time in over twenty-seven years! (As an added bonus, the compulsion to use left me then, too!)

After working the rest of the Steps and "having had a spiritual awakening" as Step Twelve says, I began to realize that there was a lot of work to do on me. I was still incapable of taking risks, revealing myself intimately to another person and totally afraid of rejection.

In the one and a half years since my Fifth Step, I've made much progress in getting to know the person I call "me." It's not been without setbacks, a lot of depression and getting the club out to beat myself up some more. But the growth I've experienced and the rewards from the soul-searching have been well worth it.

Even harder than getting to know me has been trying to let other people

know me. This has not been without pain or rejection, either. I have found that even in recovery there are still people who judge me and condemn me for everything from what I look like to what I share about, who I hang around with, etc. And although I'm far from well, and these judgments still bring pain and feelings of inadequacy, I'm not devastated by others' judgments now. I do not need other peoples' approval to validate me as a person.

I no longer have to apologize for being me. I can still take the risks of letting people know how I feel and who I am, because the bottom line is that my loving God does not reject me. One of the greatest miracles he's given me as a result of working my tail off on my program is that today I *don't reject me!* And of course I have so many special loving friends that let me know on a daily basis that I am important in their lives and that they love me. These friends are physical manifestations of the loving God that I understand and my life is so richly blessed because of them.

I'm still scared of rejection and taking risks, but these fears don't run my life today and I'm taking steps to overcome them. I'm glad it's progress we look for and not perfection; using progress as the measuring stick of my recovery, I can hardly believe how far I've come in the short time I've been here.

With God's help, and the love and companionship in my life, in the middle of June I will celebrate two years clean, and that's a miracle! Thank you God, N.A. and my wonderful friends in the Fellowship for a new life and a new me!

R.M., Oklahoma

Believe me when I tell you that N.A. saved my life. Just when all was dark, and I thought I was really cooked I found N.A. and the miracle of recovery from the disease of addiction. But this article is about something more than that.

Has anybody else ever heard about this "it's a family illness" business? I know I heard that said all the time, and when I did, it conjured up images of old alcoholics and their enabling wives, the kids all doing time in their roles as "family mascot," "the scapegoat," etc.

In fact, sometimes after meetings during coffee shop discussions, the topic of our sick families came up. I know I would take my family's inventory with astonishing ease and move on to the next topic. I wanted to write this article as an affirmation of the fact that yes, *addiction kills families* as well as individuals. But more than that, just as individuals can recover, so too can families.

It all sort of snuck up on me. I have older and younger brothers and a younger sister. Ten years ago, I could paint a picture familiar to many of you, about how all four of us were traveling down the pathway of active drug addiction. The level of insanity was incredible. To say that we had no healthy family structure is an enormous understatement. All six of us were trapped in a vicious and insane world.

Well, my older brother got clean and I followed him a few years later. Then my sister and younger brother got clean, mom and dad were divorced, and Mom got help. In and of itself, this is a miracle for which I could not possibly express my gratitude in words alone. But there is more

What's Greater than Recovery



to this story than just telling how happy I am that my brothers, my sister and I all have more than three years clean.

As we progress in our personal recoveries, so too has our ability to love each other and communicate grown. A family gathering, which for me used to be a terribly painful thing, something to be avoided if at all

possible, has now become something that I love, something I look forward to.

Today, my family, like me, has a beautiful and alive personal recovery. Today I feel like I have "backing." I never ever, ever, could have believed that there was a chance to have what I have today. The word family used to

mean an ugly black space in my life that I sort of ignored or covered up.

Like it says in the Twelfth Step though, I have learned that the spiritual principles that I am supposed to

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be applying in my life, apply to *all my affairs*. When I took an honest inventory, I found that I had sort of put my family in a different category.

I am hoping with all my heart that someone out there who is reading this can reach the faith and hope that their family *can* recover from the horrors of addiction just as much as an individual can. Today I know that the strength of my experiences, as part of a growing family, will help me to see what a healthy family is like, and better yet, what I have to do to be a contributing member.

I hear a lot of talk about being a responsible, productive member of society. For me, that began by becoming a responsible, productive member of a family!

R.L., North Dakota

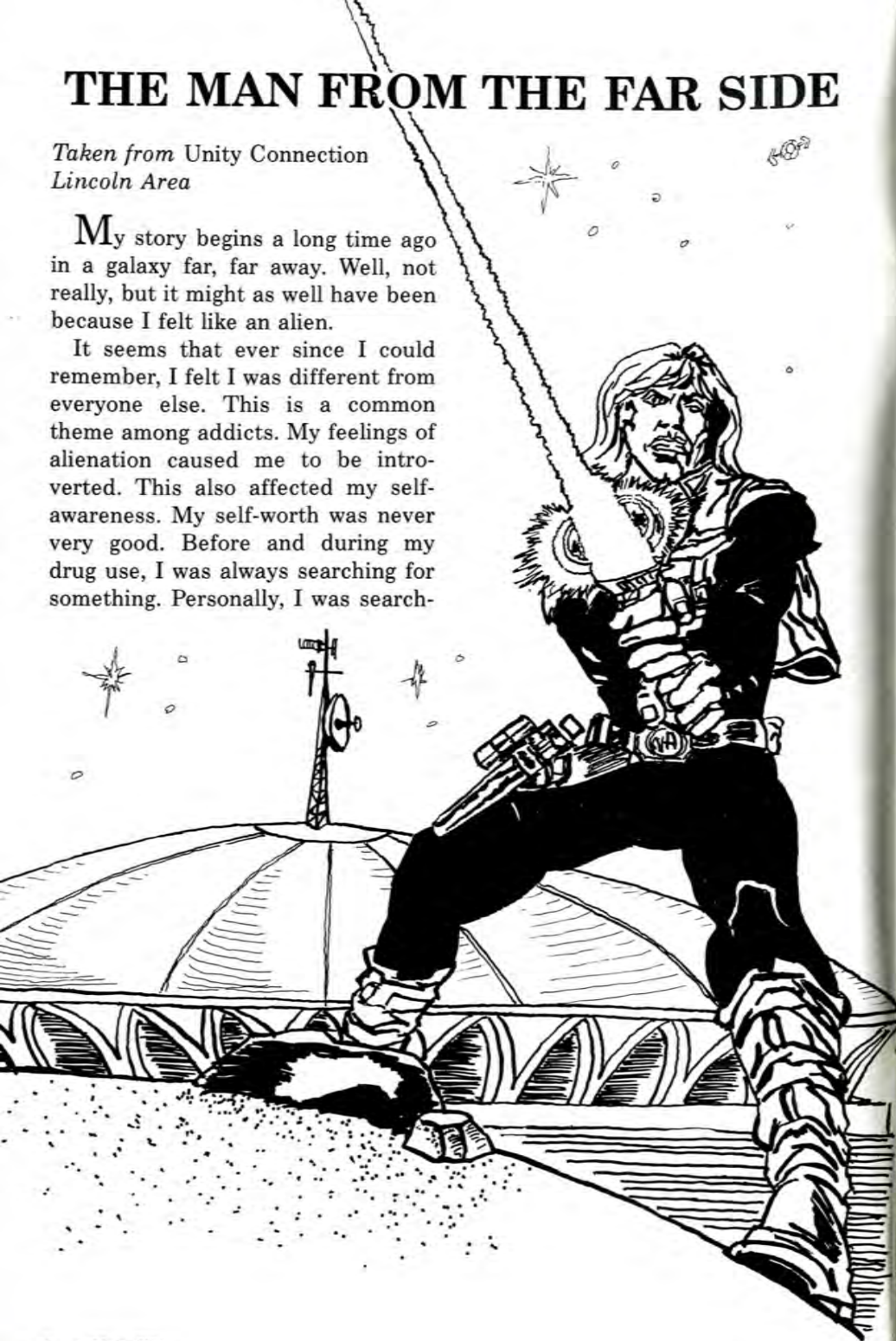
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THE MAN FROM THE FAR SIDE

Taken from Unity Connection
Lincoln Area

My story begins a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. Well, not really, but it might as well have been because I felt like an alien.

It seems that ever since I could remember, I felt I was different from everyone else. This is a common theme among addicts. My feelings of alienation caused me to be introverted. This also affected my self-awareness. My self-worth was never very good. Before and during my drug use, I was always searching for something. Personally, I was search-



ing for a place to fit in, and with my drug use I was looking for the perfect high.

My drug use started when I was thirteen. My use was sporadic for years until I was eighteen. From eighteen on, I was a daily user. Drugs were a way of fitting in. I used drugs to feel different, although it did not make my self-worth any better.

When I was going to school in New Orleans, Mardi Gras was my favorite time. I would paint my face, use drugs and roam the streets. With my face painted, I was more daring and had more confidence. This confidence came from the fact that I could hide behind drugs, paint or anything handy so that I could feel different.

From age eighteen to twenty-two, I flunked out of three universities. I could never seem to find out what I wanted to do. I took numerous "geographical cures," but I always brought my problem with me. My problem is my addiction. I finally got an "invitation" to a treatment facility.

The invite came from a probation officer I had met after my second DWI. By the time I was invited, I was willing to do something. Almost from the start, I felt the people there were like me.

During my treatment, I was introduced to N.A. I finally found self acceptance. I looked at myself and stopped hating what I saw. I started accepting and finally even liking myself. These things and my acceptance of my addiction as disease laid the foundation of my recovery.

My real recovery started a year and a half after I cleaned up. This is when I started attending N.A. meetings on

a regular basis. Before this, I was drifting between fellowships. I was staying clean, but I was not working an active program. I didn't have a sponsor, and did not have a home group.

"My lack of trust and commitment caused me to be on the fringes. My growth had gone as far as it could. I had to get into action if I wanted any real recovery."

My lack of trust and commitment caused me to be on the fringes. My growth had gone as far as it could. I had to get into action if I wanted any real recovery.

I started going to the same meeting every week. I began to participate in service work, which at first was emptying ashtrays. I got a sponsor that I was not afraid to call. I could not help but grow. I had always envied the "oldtimers" and the serenity they seemed to have. Then, people started to look at me this way—obviously still insane. My distrust started to melt away.

Now, I go to three times as many meetings as when I started, and it shows. The Basic Text says complacency will kill recovery. I know this is true firsthand. I want to thank all of the people in the Fellowship. Without you, there would be no Fellowship and I would have to die.

T.R., Nebraska

Tradition Ten

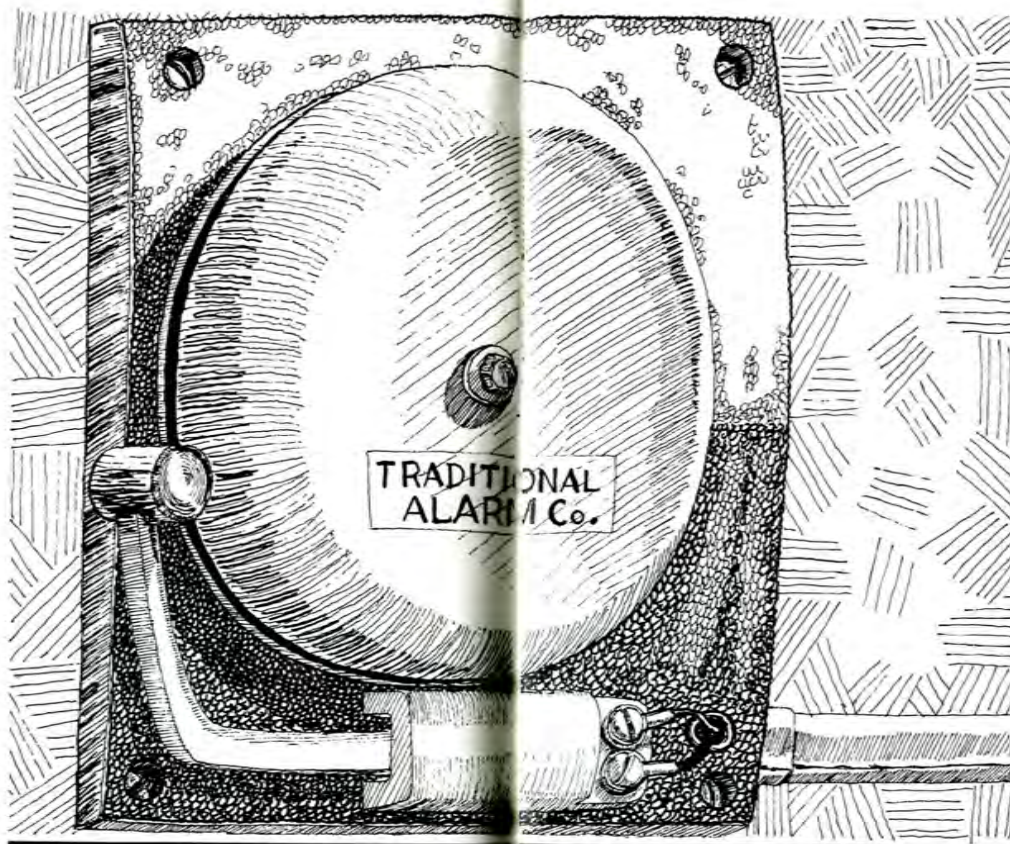
Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Not long ago I attended a speaker meeting at which the main speaker talked about our Twelve Traditions. He made the point that anytime someone compromises the principles of our Traditions, it threatens the recovery of us all. It was an excellent meeting, and as often happens, I thought more about the topic the next few days.

So, since I've been doing some thinking about Tradition Ten, I've decided to write the *N.A. Way* to share a few thoughts.

In my beginning period in N.A., I didn't consider the Traditions much. After my first N.A. convention, however, I became involved in group level service for the first time, and I was very excited about my participation in the Fellowship as a trusted servant. I still feel today that active involvement in service, as long as I first develop and maintain a good foundation in the Twelve Steps, makes my recovery stronger and the quality of my life better.

Somewhere during that process I found myself looking at this wonderful, large group of people in N.A. and thinking, "If a group like this got behind something, we could change the world!" I felt very strong emotions about all kinds of issues going on in the world, and I started taking up



these issues with my N.A. friends. I wanted everybody to listen to me, and to focus on what I thought was important.

The issues ranged from world peace and local elections to various things taking place within N.A. I was running amok. Thank goodness for my sake that my friends in the Fellowship tolerated my obnoxious behavior.

Fortunately, I was able to hear constructive confrontation after a while, and to see that no matter what the issue, my emotionally charged harangues were always a turn-off for others, did more harm than good, and had no place in N.A.

I was also very lucky, after experiencing much personal discomfort, to

see that it was necessary for me back off from service and to assume a much lower profile and to start looking with renewed vigilance at the Twelve Steps, and to get on with my personal recovery.

After a couple years of doing only quiet forms of service like making coffee at the meetings, and learning to shut my mouth and listen, I was asked to again get involved on a service committee. I said yes.

Eventually I was privileged to be able to participate in a wide variety of types of service, and to gain more understanding of the meaning of the Twelve Traditions. I learned that the Traditions are important in my own

personal recovery as well as in the life of the Fellowship.

I found that my initial view of the Traditions was a very legalistic, technical one. Without even being fully aware of it, I had used the words of the Traditions to try to get around the

"At one time I had a mystical concept of the Traditions, as if they were Sacred Laws."

spirit of the Traditions. I learned that setting aside my personal agenda, my ego, and my strong feelings about issues other than recovery made possible much finer results in service.

I have gained the confidence and understanding to take part freely, outside the fellowship, in many issues that have nothing to do with N.A. I have become very involved and have expressed myself in the proper place on many matters I care about.

For example, I have served as a state delegate several times in a political party, and participated in many community activities. I know now, however, that neither I, nor I and any group of my friends in N.A. have any business dragging N.A. into outside issue. I found this out through coming to an understanding of Tradition Ten.

Tradition Ten protects us from harming N.A.'s reputation by keeping us out of public controversies. Now of course, in my self-willed mind, I can find at least a few outside issues where the "right" or "correct" position seems so obvious that N.A. certainly should take a stand! But what if

an addict is alienated by that point of view? What if an addict is looking for recovery and instead finds discussion of some other issue going on at a meeting?

Tradition Ten protects us from the inevitable divisions within N.A. that would be caused by involvement in any outside issue. Tradition Ten protects us from losing the focus of our primary purpose and confusing the point of why our Fellowship exists. The Tenth Tradition also protects us from creating enemies in the public at large by taking stands or making statements that would pit us against some of the people involved with that particular issue.

In various P.I. activities and experiences within the Fellowship, I have run into several outside issues that frequently confront us. Some of these I will mention specifically.

Often N.A. members find themselves in a position of being asked for opinions about particular treatment programs, professional agencies, counselors, particular treatment techniques, styles or practices used by professionals who deal with addicts.

Sometimes we are asked how we think the law should treat addicts, how drug laws should be enforced, what the laws on drugs should be, how long terms of incarceration or parole should be, etc. Sometimes we are in the position where comments we make might be seen as endorsing a particular program or method for dealing with the family or friend of an addict.

Occasionally someone with a certain political philosophy or agenda will look for some support from N.A.

Often questions related to religion

or morality, drug-related illnesses, preferred lifestyles, or definitions of what is socially "right" and "wrong" are encountered. As a Fellowship, Tradition Ten tells us, we have no opinion on these outside issues.

Anytime we place our emphasis in N.A. on debate and position-taking around any outside issue, the newcomer, and personal recovery from addiction, take a back seat. The addict seeking recovery is the whole focus of N.A. The Tenth Tradition keeps use from abandoning our primary purpose. It ensures that any addict seeking recovery in N.A. will have a program to come to.

At one time I had a mystical concept of the Traditions, as if they were Sacred Laws. I thought that if one of the Traditions were "violated," something big must happen to correct it, like maybe an alarm would sound, and a big flashing light would go off and some kind of enforcement squad would move in to fix the error.

With some experience, the sense of mystery has been replaced by a feeling of great respect and trust. I've learned that all the Traditions actually do get compromised in varying degrees more often than I like to admit, and that I have been the guilty party at times.

I've come to understand that when the Traditions are transgressed, no alarm or lights go off. It just hurts N.A. It's that simple. Observing and practicing the Traditions leads to health and growth for N.A. Breaking any of the Traditions hurts N.A.

Thanks for the opportunity to share!

With gratitude,

Anonymous, N.D.



When I first came to N.A. I was tired of running and hiding from myself. I felt like there were two choices: to kill myself, or try to get help. At my first meeting I asked, "How is this sitting around talking going to help me?" It took the help of N.A. plus my higher power to help me through the first two months. Then at the start of the third month a old using buddy called and said he had some drugs that he wanted me to sell for him. The insanity started all over again. I lost conscious contact with my higher power and put myself right back into the depths of hell that I came from.

I didn't want to go to meetings. But with the help of another member I was talked into going. When I went to meetings the guilt was a heavy load to carry. With the help of the member I had confided in I was able to stay clean through this time. It only took a week to destroy two months of happiness.

When Monday came after that

week, I knew that the old using buddy was going to call at 2:00 p.m. so I prayed for God to help me. The guy called and I answered the phone. He

"I learned that no amount of drugs or money is worth destroying how you feel inside. Happiness within oneself is worth more than the money you have in your pocket."

asked me if I wanted any more dope. Without hesitation I said no. I learned a lot from that week. I learned that no amount of drugs or money is worth destroying how you feel inside. Happiness within oneself is worth more than the money you have in your pocket.

I learned that I need to do more than just go to meetings. I need to change my life and my friends. I need to work the Steps with other addicts not just read them. I learned that I'm powerless over my addiction—and a lot of other things too—and my life is unmanageable.

I learned that it's quality not quantity of clean time that really matters. I'd like to thank N.A. and my home group for not making judgments, because we are not here to be the judge and jury, but to help each other in our recovery. I have God and my recovery to thank for the miracles in my life.

D.E., Iowa

I'm one of those addicts who, for as long as I can remember, was always seeking some kind of spiritual contact. I went to a parochial school from grade school on into junior high and high school.

At the same time that I began to seek "enlightenment" through LSD, I began a period of spiritual searching that took me from drugs to psychic phenomena, and even into a very strict fundamentalist religion. Though I did stop using for a time during my religious experience, I soon gave the religion up because I felt it was too strict and narrow-minded.

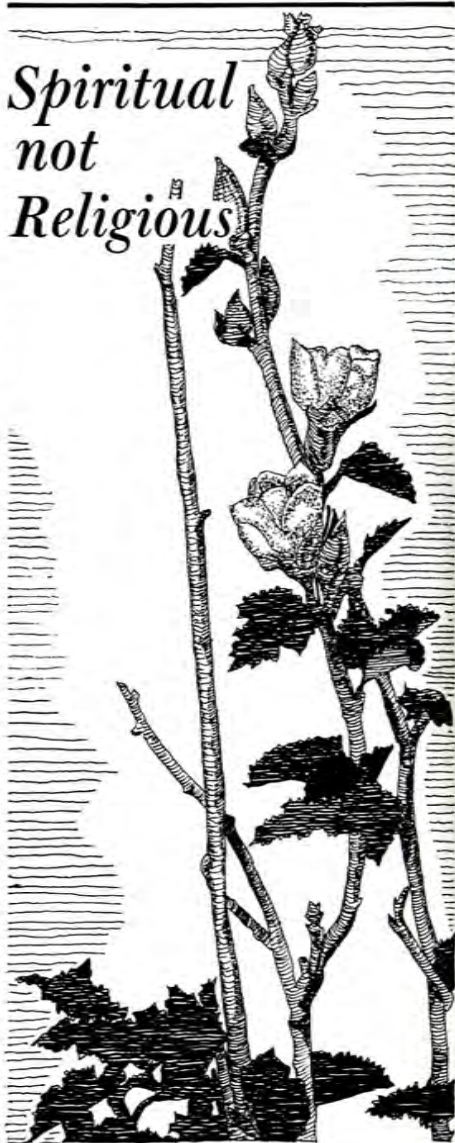
Not too long after that, I started shooting heroin, and again I thought that dope would lead me into the kingdom. I figured this time around I'd sneak in the back way, the easier softer way. That's what I supposed I was doing by studying white witchcraft, healing herbs and crystals, and again the psychic phenomena trip.

Through all of it I was using drugs from grass and booze to dope and then on to cocaine and freebase. My pattern of addiction kept pace with the merry-go-round of the spiritual search I was on.

Toward the end of my active addiction, people in the spiritual paths I was attempting to follow pointed out to me that I could never claim any spiritual accomplishment while using mind or mood-altering substances. I'd flirted with that idea before, but it had never been put to me so bluntly. They said that I could go nowhere but down, spiritually and every other way, as long as I kept using. I realize now that was a revelation to me, a spiritual awakening, if you will.

I'd been introduced to N.A. once before, but I thought it would be the

Spiritual not Religious



last place I'd find spiritual healing or enlightenment of any kind. And when I finally did surrender, it wasn't because I thought it would be the last stop on my spiritual quest. By that time I'd practically forgotten about my search for truth. I was a desperate strung-out addict looking for help. I was physically, materially, and emo-

tionally, as well as spiritually, bankrupt.

When I walked through those doors of N.A., I started feeling real love and concern for the first time in my life. I also noticed there was a lot of sharing about a God of our own understanding and a Higher Power. It was even written on the walls, right there in the Steps.

I don't know how I missed it the first time around, I guess I was pretty foggy then. But there it was, and it frightened me a little. I felt that my last ten years out there I'd been actively and consciously spitting in God's eye. I didn't think He really wanted to see or hear from me. I felt ashamed.

You people told me it was all right. You told me that if God didn't still love me, He wouldn't have led me into these rooms. I started to ease up a bit and ask about this God.

What really surprised me was that no one gave me any hard-line rigid answers or dictums. You didn't say things like, "We must pray three times a day facing east" or "Our God has only one name and He will not respond to any other."

You did say things like, "Well I had a hard time praying in the beginning. Now I just talk to my Higher Power as if I'm talking to another addict I really trust," Or "I tell my Higher Power, to the best of my ability, what's really going on inside and ask for His guidance. Then I listen for the still small voice from inside and I try to do His will rather than my own. Oh, sometimes I take my will back, and it always causes me grief, but my God is always ready to forgive me and set me straight again. I need only ask, and

accept His forgiveness humbly."

After I was around a few months I started praying. I started by "acting as if," because I didn't know what my Higher Power was. I just knew that I needed to get one.

You see, that was a part of my downfall in the past. I was seeking God's face. I had to know whose God was the right one, and what did He look like, and which group did He favor most. I thought I needed all this information to get close to Him.

Today I realize I don't need any of those answers. It gave me the greatest relief when I read in our Basic Text, "We can use this power before we begin to understand it." Today the only conditions I have for my Higher Power are again those from the Basic Text: that He is loving and cares for me, and that He is a power greater than me and my addiction.

For that matter I only call God "He" for simplicity, realizing that my God has no gender.

Today I enjoy conscious contact with my Higher Power when my will is in accordance with His. And even so, I don't begin to understand what or who God is, just that the essence of my God is love. And the more I learn to give the more I can be open to receive. All else is mystery, which is just fine with me.

That gives me something to strive for, although I know I'll never have all the answers until I leave this world, and maybe not then either. What's most important to me is that I've learned that I have a choice, and today I choose life. I can enjoy living and growing today by the grace of God through Narcotics Anonymous.

M.C., New York

You Don't Understand

teen days. What a miracle, Thank you God! This is my eighth attempt at this new life. This time I decided to let go of old friends and slippery places, to get a sponsor, and mainly to work the Steps. My times before I went to a lot of meetings, but that's all I did. I

yes, with three days left in jail on a thirty day sentence I stuck drugs up my you know what. It's true I was smoking joints up until an hour before meetings and going into bars just about every night after meetings, but I couldn't relate to Step Two.

fire to the bed (by the Grace of God he lived). How could you understand me unless you had found your mom with other men, or had been kicked out of the armed services? And, heaviest of all, you couldn't understand me unless you were falsely accused of child molesting. So you see, there's no way you could understand me.

Today, thank God, I'm not "different." Maybe you and I have somewhat different stories, but the pain you feel is the pain I feel. The peace you feel is the peace I feel. I know I have a long way to go in finding out about me, but the fear is not so great today, at least not right now. I get on my knees at least three times a day. I have hope today.

I'm amazed at where I'm at today, after coming from absolutely nothing to a life with a job, a car, a license, a roof over me, new glasses, food in the ice box, and on and on.

The most important thing in my life today is God. By his Grace I have these material things. He allows me to be of service, I'm a group secretary and G.S.R., and now area literature person. Sometimes my ego talks to me, my loneliness talks to me, my fear, my depression, the disease, the "committee"—whatever you choose to call it—my addiction talks to me. The thing is, today, when the pain comes I stay in there. God carries me through it, and by golly it's true, it passes.

Today I am so grateful. The miracle is happening in spite of myself. Well I guess I'll close this meeting in the unusual manner. I will now join my hands together and close this meeting with a prayer.

I love you and God loves you.

Anonymous, California

N.A. Way • 15

Here I sit at a meeting of N.A. all by my lonesome. I'm doing it for a fellow member who has come over here to this little town for the last eight or nine months carrying the message, very seldom getting a taker. It's really neat seeing someone doing this, week after week, and mostly being here by himself.

A treatment center asked us to have an open meeting here. I know this town has a need for it; years ago I partied here, even went to jail a few times from here. They had to haul me to the larger city to jail—they don't even have one here.

I was thinking on my way into town tonight, what a difference coming in to this town, trying to carry a message of recovery and a new and beautiful way of life instead of coming into town a mess.

I am coming up on a year in seven-

looked for an easier softer way, and when I hit pain, I ran.

I didn't really think the Second Step applied to me. After all, I was at my job for eleven years at that time. Sure I was five months behind rent on my tiny shack, eating eggs a lot, and going without lunch, having an affair with a married person, whom I was paying in drugs for eight years; and

Today I know that the Second Step applies to me. You see, I've always thought I was different—you don't understand. You can't understand me unless you were raised in a very violent home, and put your dad in the hospital for three months after choking him until it appeared he was dead, then making sure by beating him over the head with a rolling pin and setting

The Burning Bush



One night in the last days of my using, I was on my knees, asking and crying to anyone or anything, to please help me. By the next day I had forgotten all about it. But someone hadn't, and in ten days I was at my first N.A. meeting.

I didn't show up early or stay late. I didn't talk or listen. I also didn't stop using. But someone had not forgotten. Seven days later, I was in another N.A. meeting. I showed up early (sheer luck) and I heard the opening readings. I heard other addicts talk about

recovery. A small spark of hope flared to life in this hopeless addict.

The people there gently fanned that spark with their honest joy at my being there. So I kept making meet-

"A small spark of hope flared to life in this hopeless addict. The people there gently fanned that spark with their honest joy at my being there."

ings (for the fans) and got hugs, handshakes and applause at thirty, sixty, ninety days etc. I heard, "Get a sponsor and work the Steps," so I did.

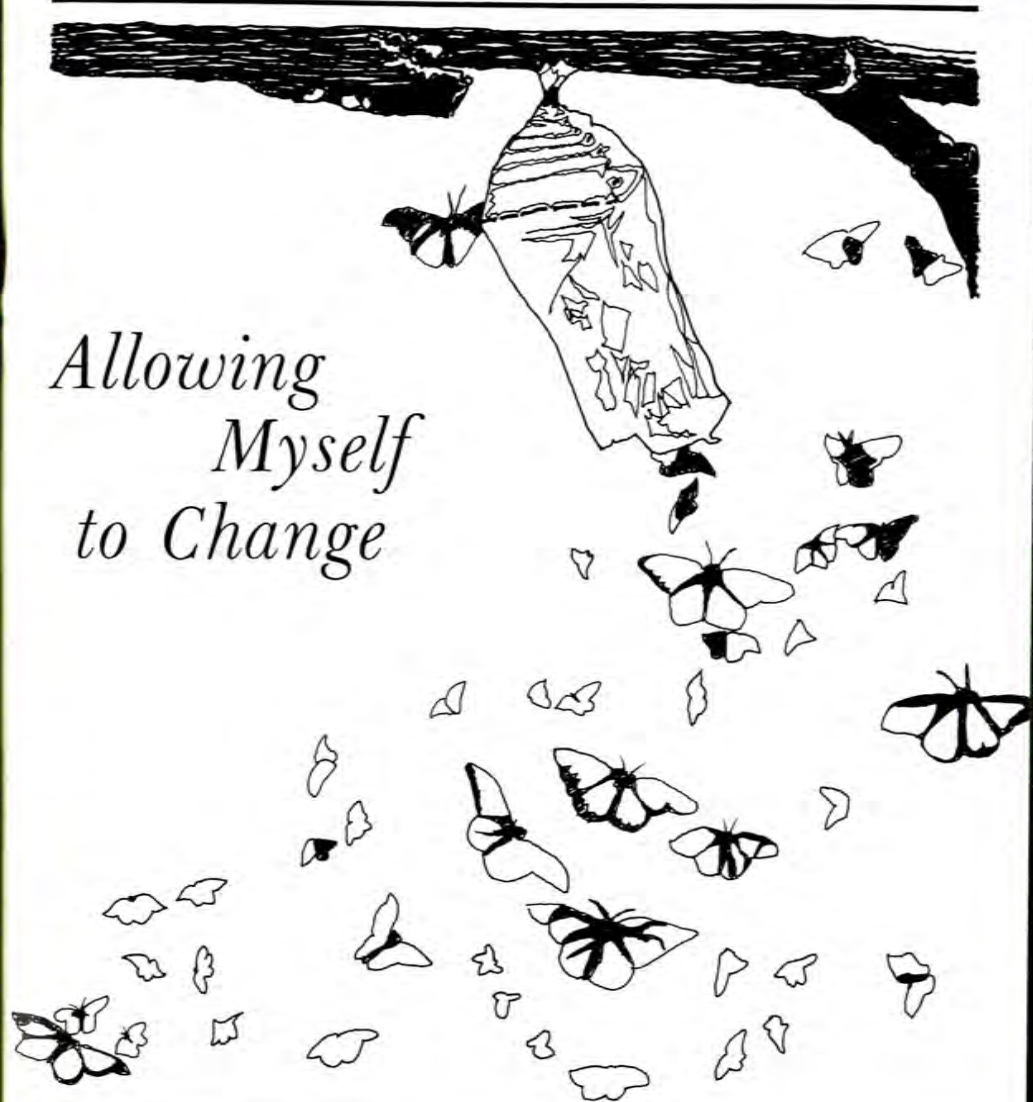
After two years and countless meetings (I love the fans), I heard for maybe the two hundredth time "I didn't see a burning bush, but..." and it struck me (some of us are very slow) that someone had not forgotten me—someone who answered my prayers, and revealed themselves in ways I could understand: through the love of recovering addicts.

To tell the truth, if I had seen a "burning bush" in my using days (or early recovery) I'd have probably put it out in an unmentionable way.

Now each night as I get ready for bed I see a "burning bush" looking back at me in the mirror: a clean addict. Some miracles you don't see, you live. Next time in a meeting I hear someone say "I haven't seen a burning bush" I'll sit back and smile, because in spiritual reality, not spiritual theory, I'll be listening to a burning bush.

T.R., Alaska

Allowing Myself to Change



My story is a lot like so many others I've had the pleasure of listening to. I thought I was born to be different. I felt like an outsider in everything. I was never happy with myself. I changed scenery, friends, lovers, homes, schools, families, jobs, states, moods, attitudes and lifestyles so often I never allowed myself to get comfortable. When jails and institutions started to

look good, I started getting scared. There had to be a better life. I just didn't know how to change.

By the time I found N.A., I had reached a bottom that was overwhelming. I was close to losing a job of two years that I liked and was good at. My family wouldn't speak to me. All my friends were gone. Even my dealers shut me off. Every time I got loaded I

panicked and ruined any possible high I could attain. Suicide was a constant thought. But somewhere inside me was a little bit of hope that sooner or later my God would take me out of the hell I lived in.

Still, I didn't attend an N.A. meeting for five months after I first heard about it. When I did show up, I was three days away from my last fix, in withdrawal, and physically falling apart. I hurt inside so bad I'd curl up in a ball in my bed and cry to sleep.

An old friend who was in a treatment center, and who had recently attended an N.A. meeting for the first time, called and wanted a ride. Ordinarily I would have said no, but for some reason this time I said yes. After that one hour meeting I felt better. Not great, but better. At that meeting, people gave me their phone numbers and asked for mine. I still to this day bless the person who called me back several times. I don't remember much about my first thirty days, but I didn't use.

At about five months clean, my home life fell apart. I was left alone again, but this time I made a decision. I turned to God to help direct me to where I should be. Within a few short weeks I had my own apartment, and was better off financially than ever before. I had done a Third Step.

I still had problems in my life. One night during that period I'd been watching a movie that showed a lot of using, and I really freaked out. I wanted to use so bad. I went by two old dealers' houses, but by the grace of God, no one was home. I was two blocks away from my N.A. home group, five minutes from meeting time.

God got me there and helped me to

reach out. It was one of the first meetings I shared myself in. When I walked in it was time for suggestions on a

"They baby-sat me all evening. When I could finally think for myself again, I realized how much help I'd received. People cared about me!"

topic. I spilled my guts. They baby-sat me all evening. When I could finally think for myself again, I realized how much help I'd received. People cared about me! I wasn't alone anymore. I got a sponsor within the week. I attended meetings almost daily.

At nine months I became a trusted servant for my home group. I couldn't believe all these people wanted to put the group's trust in me. I'd never been trusted or trustworthy before. I was really scared.

I did a Fourth and Fifth Step with my sponsor. I was learning through studying the Steps and Traditions that I had to become an honest person. I was trying my best to speak from my heart and admit my wrongs to my new friends.

Around this time my family also came back into my life. I approached them and worked the Ninth Step. I felt that they understood me for the first time in twenty-five years. They still aren't completely forgiving me, but we're closer today than we've ever been.

With help from sponsors and co-sponsors, meetings and literature, I was learning how to live. I could finally allow myself to change.

When I was approaching my year, my God saw fit to put me around several people who had already celebrated their year and more. I saw these people slacking off on going to meetings and becoming generally complacent in their programs. Some people went back out. Some hung on and white-knuckled it. I watched and learned.

During the holiday season, I helped with a twenty-four hour marathon meeting and party, and gained a lot of gratitude for the time I had attained. I learned at the same time, however, that at one year I was only beginning to crawl.

In celebrating my year, I redoubled my efforts to maintain my recovery. I attended more meetings than ever. I supported new groups. I got active on a subcommittee at an area level. I helped start and support three new groups. I kept starter kits on hand with poster sets and literature available for the asking. I watched N.A. in my vicinity grow, and I grew with it.

Today I am celebrating eighteen months of total abstinence from all forms of drugs. That makes me a living miracle. I currently attend five meetings a week. I support three groups regularly. I still share openly at meetings and one on one. I sponsor one person, and co-sponsor at the average three. I have a best friend (my sponsor) who knows me better than I know myself.

As for loneliness, there are over two hundred names and numbers in my N.A. phone book. I've attended three campouts in the last two months. I've

instigated several parties and B.B.Q.'s within our local vicinity. My photo album astounds me. Every picture in it is of an N.A. function, and we're all having fun and staying clean.

I live today. I love today. I can openly hurt today and benefit from it. I have true friends. I have a family again. I live alone, but I'm never lonely. I don't fear getting up in the mornings anymore. The compulsion to use is gone from me at this time. I am finally becoming responsible for my actions, both past and present.

I know in my heart and mind I cannot use drugs successfully or socially in any form. I believe in a Higher Power that I know will restore me to sanity (at His speed). I can make decisions and feel good about them (either good or bad ones). I can face the past, and I can and do forgive myself and others. I don't have any resentments from the past that I'm conscious of today.

I know God takes care of me and points out what I need to know and when I need to remember it. I'm working on mending hurt relationships and financially paying back what I can. All this and the future ahead is what N.A. has given me.

I'm happy with myself today. I feel inside that I'm going to be okay, and that there is a life here in N.A. that's better than anything I could have ever imagined.

For my life, I'm grateful. I'm able to be a human being today. N.A. is H.O.W. I've acquired these things. I am so grateful to everyone in this Fellowship, those I've met, those I have yet to meet, and those I'll never meet. N.A. WORKS!

Anonymous

OPINION



N.A. Way Editorial

The following article was submitted to us by a member of the WSC Joint Administrative Committee. It had initially been written in reference to a local N.A. community, but the writer offered it to us for our editorial section in the hopes that it has broader application within the Fellowship.

The subject is the spiritual, or sometimes not so spiritual, way in which we handle disagreements among ourselves. It may be used as an inventory tool for the area if applicable. If you try that, write us to let us know how it goes. Your responses to this editorial are welcomed.

HEY... CAN WE TALK?

I am writing out of a deep sense of love and concern for our local Narcotics Anonymous community, and more specifically, the area service committee.

I have been an active member of N.A. for several years, and until recently, attended the ASC meetings regularly. While I have often found service meetings to be a place where lively exchanges of ideas occur, and strongly stated differences of opinion are voiced, I have never before observed the hostility, anger, resentment, disunity and disharmony which

seems to be dominating our area service committee meetings lately.

I have asked myself, where does it come from? Why is it happening? What part, if any, have I played in encouraging it? What, if anything, can I do to help resolve the problem and restore the unity necessary to further our primary purpose.

Then it occurred to me that there was very little I could do, but there was a great deal that *We* could do. Yes indeed, this is a *We* program. *We* got into this sad state of affairs, and together, with the help of a loving God, *We* can get out of it. But together *We* will have to make the effort. *We* will have to apply spiritual principles on an individual and group level as well as on an area level.

On an individual level, much of the work will be of a personal nature, i.e. writing our *own* inventory, making direct amends for harm done, improving our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, etc. In short, by beginning to *really* work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, not just mouthing them or waiting for the other guy to make the first move, but really work the steps ourselves. There is, however, additional work which must be done.

We will have to better prepare ourselves for our service commitments and meetings. At the beginning of our service meetings we open with a mo-

ment of silence and follow that with the Serenity Prayer. During that moment of silence do we really reflect on why and for whom we *serve*?

How does one prepare oneself for service. Most importantly, a person must be *staying clean* and *working the Steps*. Further, one should not seek or accept a service commitment which they believe themselves to be either unable or unqualified to fulfill. That's a tough one. We are often just egotistical enough to believe that we can handle anything. We should consult our sponsors. Hopefully, they will provide the guidance necessary.

We should adhere to clean time requirements. They may be only suggested but they are suggested for a reason. The number of GSR's elected to our ASC who did not have the suggested clean time and subsequently relapsed should tell us something. The clean time requirements should be observed.

Another way we can prepare ourselves is by reading, studying and asking questions about our literature, handbooks, service manuals, and our Twelve Traditions. But don't ask just anyone. Seek input from truly experienced individuals. Just because an individual claims to know what they are talking about doesn't mean they do. Ask them in a loving way to qualify their answers or statements. Having several years clean and experience with group and area level service does not necessarily mean that they are knowledgeable about service issues or Tradition questions. Actively seek the truth, and God will point the way. He always does.

Finally, when considering an issue within your group or at a service meet-

ing, listen carefully to the spokespersons. Just because someone is loud and sounds convincing does not mean they are right. Do they speak the language of the soul, or are they angry, hostile, controlling and domineering? Do they threaten, demand, accuse or indict, or are they gentle, loving, caring and sharing? Do they use fear to motivate, or do they speak of faith? Do they express their opinion, or do they share experience, strength and hope? Do they dictate or do they serve? That's right... *SERVE*.

If we are there with insincere motives and hidden agendas, if we are there seeking to control, dominate, retaliate, confuse or manipulate our members, then our motives are not of a spiritual nature, and our actions will, at best, retard rather than promote the atmosphere of recovery necessary for unity.

It is possible to disagree without becoming disagreeable. It is possible to argue strongly on behalf of or in opposition to a particular issue without becoming hostile, back-biting, and disrespectful of others. It simply requires patience and tolerance and an attitude which reflects the acceptance and application of spiritual principles.

To bring about positive changes in our ASC will require work and commitment from everyone in the local Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. First, we, the members of N.A., will have to be willing to give back what was freely given to us. N.A. has literally saved our lives. In many ways it is responsible for all that we have and all that we are. *Selfishness* tells me that I am too busy, or that service work is thankless, or someone else will do it. *Selflessness* means that I am willing to

sacrifice some of my time and resources for others. I give back what was given to me by being of service. My gratitude speaks when I care and share the N.A. way.

Secondly, if we are to bring about positive change, our principles must be practiced soundly on a group level. Our groups have a responsibility to their members and to N.A. as a whole. They are best able to carry out that responsibility by electing qualified, dedicated, trusted servants. The trusted servant should have both the recovery and the maturity necessary to serve the wishes of the group, and at the same time be mindful of the needs of N.A. as a whole. Angry, hostile members do not make the best trusted servants. As our members grow in their personal recoveries, they gain the ability to be unselfish and loving in their service to the Fellowship. *Quality service comes from quality recovery.*

Some of our groups lack members with sufficient clean time to meet the requirement for the GSR position. If a group cannot find a qualified member to represent them at the ASC should they simply elect a newcomer who may be willing, but unqualified to serve? In my opinion they should not. That is not spiritually sound. The answer lies in trusting that God will express Himself in the ASC, and that His expression will ultimately benefit N.A. as a whole, regardless of whether or not your group has a vote in the room. Selecting a newcomer as your group's GSR jeopardizes that newcomer's recovery. Further, addicts who are new in recovery should be spending most of their time learning to work the Steps and seeking recovery in N.A. meetings, not trying to give away something they do not have.

Our groups have a pivotal role in the maintenance of unity with the area. Groups should encourage their members to attend and support activities, assist new groups and actively support our Seventh Tradition. There is a service job for everyone: hospitals and institutions, activities, and N.A. phonelines, to mention just a few. Members may wish to learn about area, regional or world services, or they may simply desire to serve at their home group. Unity is best served when we all get involved and become part of Narcotics Anonymous.

Lastly, at the area level, our ASC must *want* unity in order to have it. We must be willing to put aside our petty differences, our jealousies, our resentments. We must *work the Steps*.

Our ASC members must be willing to commit themselves to learning service responsibilities. We must be willing to study N.A. materials—to become students of N.A. Service. We must ask questions of experienced, qualified members. To be good trusted servants, we need to do our homework.

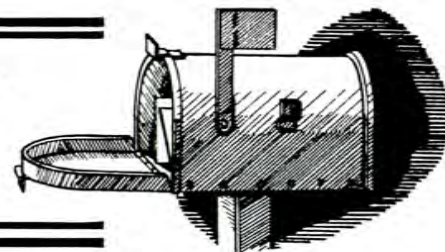
I have to believe that we all love Narcotics Anonymous and are here for the same reason. We must stop hurting one another in the name of N.A. service. We need to apply the spiritual principles of forgiveness, tolerance, faith and trust.

"As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well."

How about it...
Can we talk?

Anonymous

From Our Readers



Letters and reflections from N.A. members worldwide.

FIRST YEAR JUST CLEAN

I went to my first N.A. meeting April 10, 1984. It took me a long time to get there. After fifteen years of using, I was ready. I listened at the first meeting because I didn't know what was going on. I didn't understand much. There was a speaker at this meeting. She was clean about six years, so I had a hard time relating to recovery. I went to another meeting the next day. I saw a guy I had used with. He came up to me and said, "How you doing?"

I said, "Better now. Do you remember me?"

He said, "Of course."

I asked him to be my sponsor a couple of days later. He helped me a lot the first few months with staying clean. I would call him and ask him about the Steps. He would tell me to read the Basic Text, so I did, and then I would fake it. I would lie to my sponsor; I would lie to the people in the meetings.

I was clean about five months. I went to the World Convention in Chicago that year. At the convention, I made a decision that I wanted more out of life than I had, so I asked my sponsor about a Fourth Step. He gave me some good suggestions, so I

started it. It was a war story. I did my Fifth with my sponsor. He *told* me it was a war story.

I said, "Is that all right?"

He said, "Is that the best you can do?"

"Yeah, for now."

"I thank you," he said. "We'll do another one soon."

After that, I thought that I was cured. I started giving leads and speaking and carrying the message. It was all a bunch of B.S. because I wasn't working on living the Steps, I was faking it. I was stealing a lot still! I was gambling a lot still! I was lying a lot still! I came up on my first year anniversary. It was like an award for one year, but I was still full of it.

I finally couldn't take it anymore, so I got honest with my sponsor. He told me that I had to let go of these defects or I was going to use. I really struggled with being a thief, liar, and a cheat the first fourteen months clean. My sponsor said if these things don't change, God will give me the opportunity for these things to change. I didn't know what he meant.

About a week later, I went on strike at work. I couldn't steal from work because I wasn't there. I didn't have the money to gamble or fence stolen mer-

chandise. So all of a sudden, all this acting out came to a stop. And I was in a lot of pain.

I was very confused, so I went to a meeting and got honest. I felt terrible. Someone said, "It's nice to hear you are human." Since then I have been living the program, one day at a time. Only today matters to me. I didn't use over that stuff. Why, I don't know. Today my life is a dream come true. So what I'm saying today is don't fake it 'til you make it, because it might kill you. I have been clean over three years, but very fortunate to have been recovering for two.

D.V., Illinois

NEVER TOO YOUNG TO DIE

I'm a very grateful recovering addict. My story probably doesn't differ much from anyone else's but I feel the need to share some of my experience, strength and hope to encourage others.

I believe I was an addict before I ever picked up drugs, because I never fit in anywhere, though I certainly tried. I'd pretend to be a biker, or a hippie or a flower child. Wherever I was, I changed to be like the people I was with, all the time feeling like I had to prove myself.

I never felt loved or wanted. I tried to make people love me. I would make people write "I love you" down on a piece of paper and keep it in my wallet as "proof." I felt so unloved. I'd do insane things for attention. Once I slit my wrists in school. I didn't want to die, I just wanted to hurt myself bad enough so someone would come visit me in the hospital and pay some attention to me.

It felt like I fought for years for love and affection. After so long, I gave up.

I took the attitude that I don't need anyone. I could do everything on my own and didn't want anyone to be around me. I didn't need you. I acted like nothing bothered me. I could handle everything. No one was going to get the best of me ever again.

Little did I know drugs eased that pain. Pretty soon there weren't enough drugs in the world to ease all the pain and rejection I felt. I had to stay numb twenty-four hours, seven days. I hated myself, I had no self-worth, self-respect or self-esteem. I allowed people to treat me like dirt, because I figured it was better than having no one at all.

I moved out of my dad's home when I was fifteen. I was determined to be "free." I didn't realize I was already in prison. I locked myself in a world of games and lies with fake people and false places. I always talked about all the places I'd go and all the things I'd do, but I always wound up in the same place doing the same thing, getting high. I was all talk.

I moved from place to place, always running, always trying to find happiness.

Using progressed—I stole and lied so much I began to believe my own lies. I was a "professional" when it came to making people feel sorry for me.

When I turned seventeen, I had a \$300-a-day habit. I couldn't smoke enough coke, or anything else for that matter. I got into a car accident and then starting having convulsions.

I've been to three treatment programs and I learned I'd never get help until I helped myself. I changed a lot since then. I used to think I was too young to die, too young to have a problem. HOGWASH.

I surrendered and became willing to do anything it took. I have a great sponsor today, more friends that truly love me than I ever imagined. I work the Steps to the best of my ability. I have happiness in my life. No more clinging to my old image—I've found self-respect, self-worth and (a little more) self-esteem.

I hold my head up high today because I'm worth something. I love myself. I speak at jails and treatment centers. I sponsor two women, and I'm involved in service work. It's so great to truly be free. I have real fun today, dancing and going to conventions.

I'm truly a miracle. I've never been so happy in my life. In four days I'll be nineteen, and in two more months I'll be celebrating my first year. I know I have a life-and-death disease. This is no game. I have a real patient monkey on my back waiting to kill me. But I choose life today.

Please don't ever give up on anyone. I was the one they said would never make it. But because you people loved me when I could not love myself, and you people didn't give up on me when I gave up on myself, I live today.

I could never thank you all enough for your help. I owe Narcotics Anonymous everything. I will be forever in debt to this program. Thank you N.A. for my life.

I am too young to die.

S.F., Delaware

GRATEFUL FOR FELLOWSHIP OF N.A.

I recently went on my first N.A. campout. It was a very beautiful place with about three hundred addicts there. I met some great people. Even though they showed me a lot of love, I still felt out of place, like I didn't be-

long, but God put two guys in my life; if it hadn't been for them I might have used over the guilt trip I was on. I cried and prayed a lot that weekend. They talked to me a lot and told me everything would be okay. They were there when I needed them and I was there for them. God gives me a lot of miracles, but the best one is that I haven't used for 102 days. I'm still a baby, and so grateful that God gave me N.A. as a gift. For me, being an addict is not a curse. That is so wonderful for me today. Thanks for being there.

C.W., Texas

SPIRITUAL ATHEISM THROUGH THE TWELVE STEPS

Many unexpected things have happened to me since I stopped using drugs in 1974. Perhaps the strangest thing to have occurred in my recovery has been in the area of spiritual growth.

Sometimes I say from the floor of a meeting that as a result of working the Twelve Steps I have had a spiritual awakening. The major change that happened to me because of that spiritual awakening was that I became an atheist. This had nothing to do with self-will, it simply was, and I had to accept it, because it was the truth for me.

Now what can happen after the meeting is that I am told one of two things: a) That I cannot be an atheist because I have had a spiritual awakening, or, b) that I cannot have had a spiritual awakening because I am an atheist.

My dictionary defines atheism as, "disbelief in the existence of a God." That is all it means, nothing else. Any-

thing that I may add to that simple definition will only be my own preconceived opinions and old prejudices.

That same dictionary defines spiritual as "Inner nature of man and having the higher qualities of the mind." Other meanings of the word mention a God, these two meanings do not. Therefore spiritual growth and spiritual awakenings need no connection with any God. For me there is no connection.

I believe there are many in N.A. who are similar to me, but use words "God as I understand Him" to avoid the reactions of those who lack the understanding of spiritual atheism in N.A. I could also do this, but I choose not to, I have to be true to myself. Also I hear at meetings, "You have to get God to stay clean," and I wonder how many addicts leave N.A. to die because of those or similar words.

Spiritual atheism may be difficult to understand for those who have a God of their choice, but it is a fact of N.A. life; and where there cannot be under-

standing, perhaps there can be acceptance.

As long as I remain clean it doesn't matter whether I am an atheistic heathen or a God-loving saint. What does matter is remaining clean, which I do through working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

M.B., Australia

YOU GAVE ME LIFE

You taught me how to feel when I didn't know how. You gave me a place to belong when I didn't have one. You taught me to love because I didn't know how.

You led me to God when I didn't believe and you gave me hope when I was hopeless. You taught me to speak when I could not and you gave me a choice when I didn't have one.

You taught me honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness when I had none and you gave me life where I had none.

Thank you N.A.

Anonymous, West Virginia

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, P.O. Box, dates, contacts.

AUSTRALIA: Oct. 2-4, 1987; 4th Annual NSW Combined Area Convention for NA; The Roundhouse, NSW University, High St. & Anzac Parade, Kensington; Sydney (02) Max 698-4572; Annette 646-4675; Sonya 662-6124; Convention Committee, P.O. Box 902, Darlinghurst 2010, NSW AUSTRALIA

CALIFORNIA: Mar. 4-6, 1988; NCCNA; Oakland Hyatt Regency Hotel & Convention Center, 12th & Broadway, Oakland, CA; Steve (408)446-4445; Steve H., 1591 Elka Ave, San Jose, CA 95129

2) Oct. 3, 1987; 11:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.; Learning Day; Mt. Carmel High School, 9550 Carmel Mountain Rd., San Diego, CA

3) Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 1987; Ninth Annual So. CA Reg. Conv.; Anaheim Hilton Towers, 777 W. Convention Way, Anaheim, CA; Bob (714) 540-0668; Vallerie (213) 370-8052; SCRCNA, PO Box 61146, Pasadena, CA 91106-6846

CANADA: Oct. 9-11, 1987; 3rd Annual Bilingual Quebec Regional Convention; Lyne (514) 676-6168, 443-0804; Johanne 532-5336; Vincent 332-9058; MBCNA, P.O. Box 446, Beloeil, QUE, CAN J3G 6B6

2) Oct. 23-25, 1987; 10th PNWCNA; Interested speakers submit tapes; (604) Wendy 294-9016; Brant 254-9094; PNWCNA, Box 468, 810 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., CAN V5Z 4C9

3) Oct 23-25, 87; 10th Annl Pacific Northwest Convention; Sheraton-Villa Inn, Canada Way and Highway 401, Vancouver, B.C. (book rooms by 10-2); Sheraton: (604) 430-2828; Billeting available call Henry B. (604) 434-8314

COLORADO: Oct 23-25, 1987; CRCNA-I; Antlers Hotel, Colorado Springs; (303) Julie 321-8930; Jeff 755-6813; George 830-7811; Colorado Convention, PO Box 2185, Englewood, CO 80150-2185

FLORIDA: Oct. 9-12, 1987; Keys Recovery Weekend IV, Marriott's Casa Marina; Pat 296-2810; Susan 296-4420; Sonia 296-7087; Keys Recovery Group, PO Box 4664, Key West, FL 33040

IRELAND: Oct. 23-25, 1987; 3rd Irish Regional Convention; The Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin; Irish Convention Comm., P.O. Box 1368, Sheriff St., Dublin 1, IRELAND

KENTUCKY: Oct. 17, 1987; P.I. Awareness Day; Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd., Lexington, KY; (606)252-3484

LOUISIANA: Mar 4-6, 88; LPRCNA VI; Holiday Inn, Covington; Hotel res: Cheryl Hunt, (504) 893-3580, Info: Peter or Mary: (504) 626-7298, John or Kat: 893-9265; LPRCNA VI0, P.O. Box 1693, Covington, LA 70434

2) Mar 4-6, 88; LPRCNA VI; Holiday Inn, Covington; Hotel res: Cheryl Hunt, (504) 893-3580, Info: Peter or Mary: (504) 626-7298, John or Kat: 893-9265; LPRCNA VI0, P.O. Box 1693, Covington, LA 70434

MINNESOTA: Oct. 17, 87; 6th Annual Fargo/Moorhead Area Banquet; St. Mary's Church, McMerty Center, 604 Broadway; for info (218)233-4621

NEBRASKA: Oct. 9-11, 1987; NRCNA IV; Holiday Inn, 72nd Grover, Omaha: 1-800-HOLIDAY; NRCNA IV, P.O. Box 3532, Omaha, NE 68103

NEW YORK: Oct 4, 87; Together in Recovery Breakfast; Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, White Plains, NY; John K. (914) 352-4592; Steve F. 237-9131; Noel A. 946-9596; West Rock ASC, 405 Terrytown Rd., Suite 321, White Plains, NY 10607

OREGON: Oct. 2-4, 1987; OSIRC; Neighborhood Facility Building - Coos Bay, OR; Kathy O. (503) 269-7513; Caryl M. (503) 267-5689; Bay Area NA, PO Box 1511, Coos Bay, OR 97420

PENNSYLVANIA: Oct. 9-11, 1987; TSRSCNA V; Hyatt Hotel, Pittsburgh; (412) Ken 521-1086; Roz 361-6250; Rich 371-3891; TSRSCNA, c/o PO Box 110217, Pittsburg, PA 15232

RHODE ISLAND: Apr 1-3, '88; NERC III; Marriott Hotel, Providence; Info: Steve: (401) 789-2569, Ken: 849-5602; NERC III, P.O. Box 3009, Newport, RI 02840

TENNESSEE: Nov 5-7; Volunteer Regional Convention 5; VRC 5, PO Box 12467, Knoxville, TN 37912-0467

TEXAS: Mar 25-27, 1988; LSRSCNA III; Fort Worth, TX; (817) Vince 924-0939; Don 738-5329; Debbie 599-3475; LSRSCNA III, Prog. Committee, PO Box 5540, Fort Worth, TX 76108

2) Oct. 3, 1987; 7th Anniversary of Step One NA; South Hills Christian Church. 4813 Odessa, Ft. Worth, TX; Carlton C. (817) 624-4221; Richard F. (817) 921-2489

VIRGINIA: Jan. 8-10, 1988; 6th AVCNA; The Hyatt Hotel Richmond; Interstate 64 at Broad St. & Glenside Dr., Richmond, VA; Mel 644-9143; 6th AVCNA, PO Box 13087, Richmond, VA 23225

2) Mar. 4-6, 88; 2nd Annual Chesapeake/Potomac Regional Convention; Stouffer Concourse Hotel, Arlington, (703)979-6800; Lonacia C. (703)437-6433; Dave H. 860-2880; Kevin A. 941-7474; Registration Committee, P.O. Box 6821, Arlington, VA 22206-0821

WEST VIRGINIA: Nov 6-8, 87; True Colors, an Autumn Convention; Jackson's Mill, Weston, WV 26452; Registration: (304) 269-5100, Danny (304) 925-7088, Jim (304) 525-8411

WISCONSIN: Oct. 23-25; WSNAC IV; If interested in speaking or chairing workshops, submit speaker tapes for consideration. (414) Gene, Phil or Steve 231-6219; WSNAC IV, P.O. Box 1688, Oshkosh, WI 59402-1688



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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.
- 11.
- 12.

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