



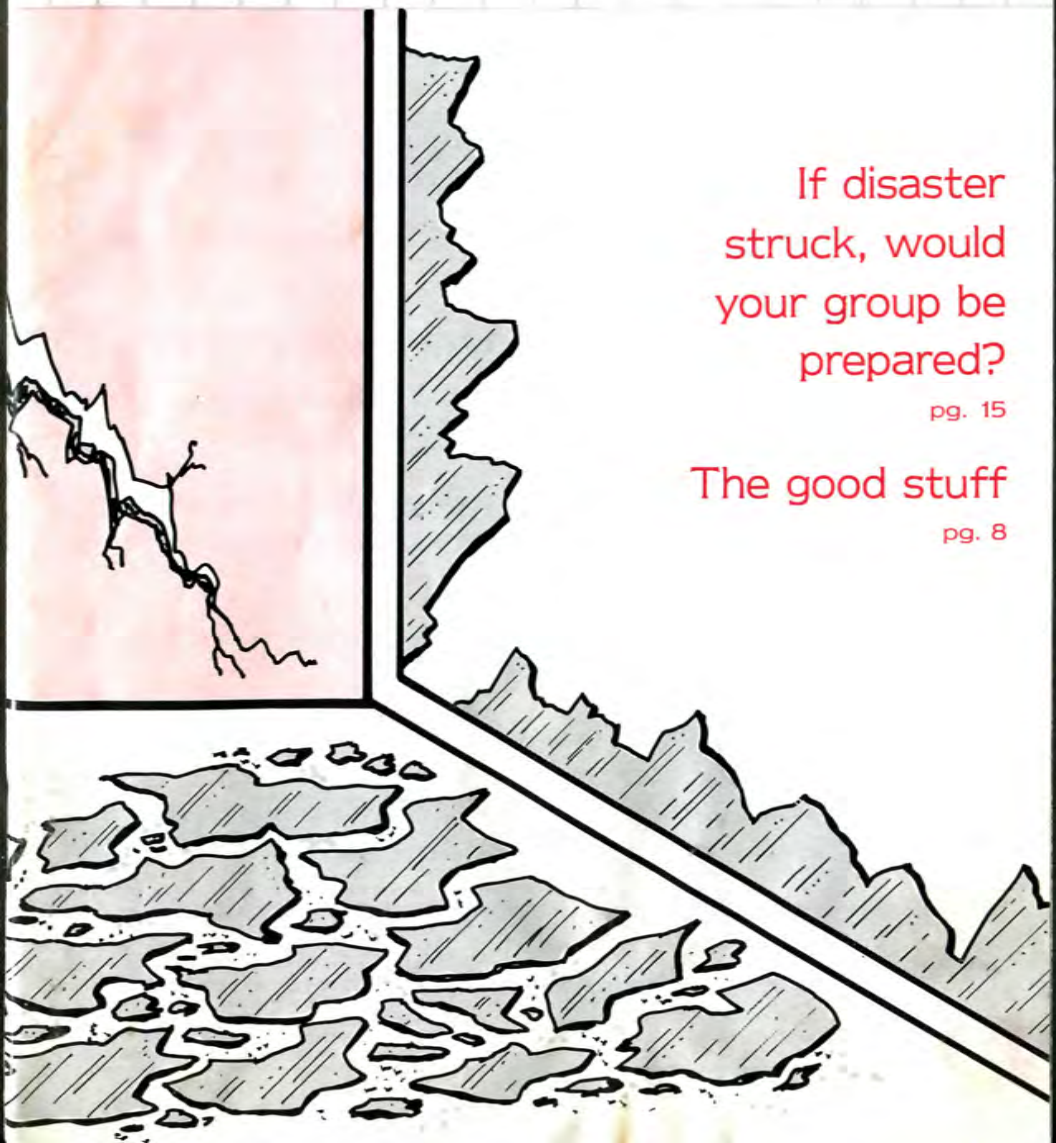
THE N.A. Way[®]

M A G A Z I N E

January 1990

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If disaster
struck, would
your group be
prepared?

pg. 15

The good stuff

pg. 8

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 **N.A. Way**®
M A G A Z I N E

Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409
(818) 780-3951

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The N.A. Way Magazine welcomes the participation of its readers. You are invited to share with the entire N.A. Fellowship in our monthly international journal. Send us your experience in recovery, your views on N.A. matters, and feature items. All manuscripts submitted become the property of World Service Office, Inc.

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Requiem

Late Sunday night, I lit incense to offer as a blessing for your journey. I went outside and prayed to the moon and stars to guide you on your way.



My boyfriend, John,* and I were getting ready for an overnight campout when the long distance telephone call came. His 32-year-old brother, who had six months clean, had been found dead. Alone, in his car, on the west side of town near the stockyards, he had died of a heroin overdose.

We know that a day earlier he had dropped in on his older brother's birthday party. He even brought a gift. Everyone commented on how well Bill looked, and how good it was to see him taking part in life again. He had a sales job—something he excelled at and enjoyed—an apartment and a sponsor. Almost two months earlier, he had been able to make amends to a dying uncle. He had been making an apparent effort to work the steps.

What happened? Did he forget who and what he was? Was he lonely? Was he scared? Did he call anyone? We don't know, and we probably never will.

We spent the remainder of the day just talking, and getting ready for John to fly home. We discussed every imaginable aspect of Bill's fatal decision. We shared thoughts on this disease of addiction. What did we conclude after all these conversations?

The most obvious comment was that "recovery is not a dress rehearsal." Even though all of us see people go back and forth in recovery, there is no guarantee that anyone will

* "John" is not his real name, nor later in the article is "Bill."

make it alive through "just one more time."

Why don't some of us make the transition from active addiction into recovery? That is a question that has puzzled and frightened me for years, and Bill's death raised it again. What unspeakable fear did Bill think he couldn't share? Why couldn't he reach out? Why had he lost hope? Why couldn't he have hung on for just five more minutes?

For the first few years of my recovery, I stupidly thought that my superior spiritual program assured me of safety. I say stupidly because today, I truly understand that even fifty years of clean time can't protect me from my disease. Oh, sure, I can smugly point the finger at someone else's flawed recovery; it doesn't take much to do that. Thankfully, I've learned how little I truly know about this thing called recovery. It really is not quite as simple as going to meetings and reading the literature and all those other things we are told to do. Certainly, they all play an important role in teaching us discipline, trust and a thousand little ways of hope. But there is something more.

Anyone with any amount of clean time knows that not using is the easiest thing we can do in recovery. Living, isn't that our problem? The Basic Text says, "reality became so painful that oblivion was preferable. We tried to keep other people from knowing about our pain. We isolated ourselves, and lived in prisons that we built with loneliness."

There are still days when those nameless dreads sneak up on me. How have I dealt with those fears?



Oh, I would dearly like to tell you that I merely prayed or wrote on some step. The plain truth lies in the helping hands that reached out to me when I asked for help. Help, for whatever trouble I had, no matter how small or trivial. Sometimes it was even good to have another recovering addict poke gentle fun at my magnified dilemmas.

So, what is the point in sharing Bill's death with you? Here's my answer: "The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel." My best and strongest advice to anyone in a bad spot is to reach out until you touch the hands of those waiting to help you to safety. I can't say for certain that Bill didn't do that, but I suspect not.

Many times, a hug and an empathetic listener eased my concerns. No, it is not the whole answer. But without the love and compassion shown to me by other addicts, I might not have stayed.

M.V., California

My spiritual awakening

I've been in recovery now for almost nineteen months and could never understand the term "spiritual awakening." I have been waiting for the lightning bolt or flash in the sky since my first day clean. But that's not how it works, at least not for this recovering addict; it has been much simpler and subtler than that.

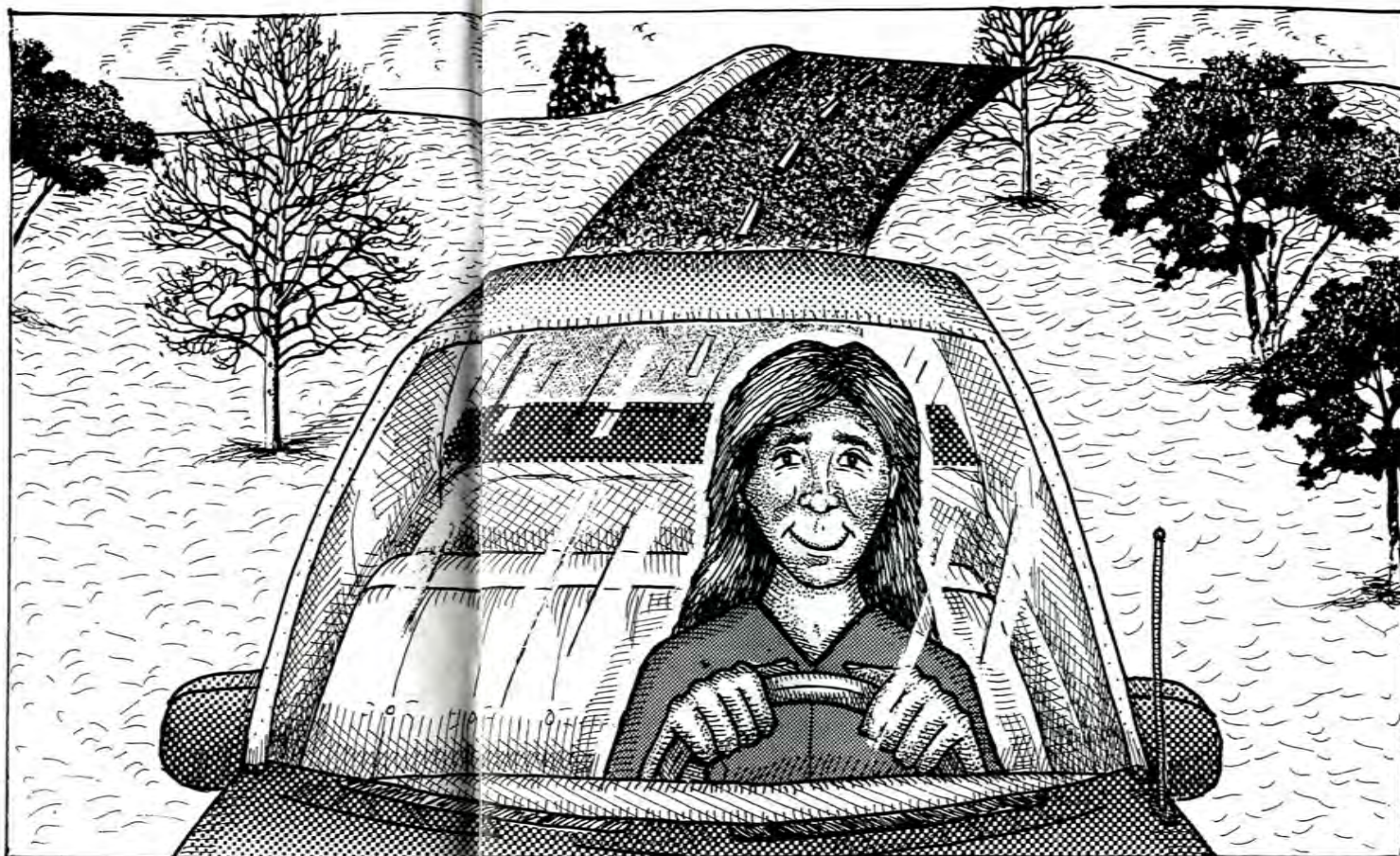
During my first year in the fellowship, all I did was what I was told. I didn't "pick up," and I went to meetings every day, sometimes twice and three times a day. I did not really comprehend the strength and love of my higher power.

Entering my second year, I replaced my drugs with fear, anger, confusion, guilt, and of course my old favorite, projection—always projecting the worst. In the last month or so, I've been clean but I've not been feeling too well. My sponsor advised me to pray on it and to ask God to remove the fear. I've prayed for guidance, self-acceptance, and—most of all—serenity.

I've also been praying for faith, something that waivers in me from time to time. In the beginning, I believe I prayed only for tangible things,

things I could see or touch. I understand today that the only true gifts from my higher power are the things I can feel inside.

For the last two weeks, I've been diligently praying and working my program, especially my Second and Third Steps. I was in my car this morning driving to a meeting when I realized that I had this incredible calm about me. It took me some time to get it through my head that God was truly working in my life, even if it's just this day only.



Today, I have no fear, no anger, and I feel wonderful. The situations in my life that bothered me yesterday are still there and are still very real; but I am okay, just for today. This is, I believe, a spiritual awakening of sorts. I will get on my knees tonight and simply say, "Thank you." I've enjoyed many changes in my life in the short time I've been around, but there is no feeling as great as serenity.

I have learned to live life on life's terms. There is nothing that I need to "pick up" over, and nothing I can't get through and even grow from with the

help of my higher power, the program, and its members. I will always keep coming back, and I will pray that I always remain teachable.

I truly believe in my heart what it says in our Little White Book: "Just for today, I will be unafraid, my thoughts will be on my new associations, people who are not using and who have found a new way of life. So long as I follow that way, I have nothing to fear."

S.M., New Jersey

I was different, and so was she

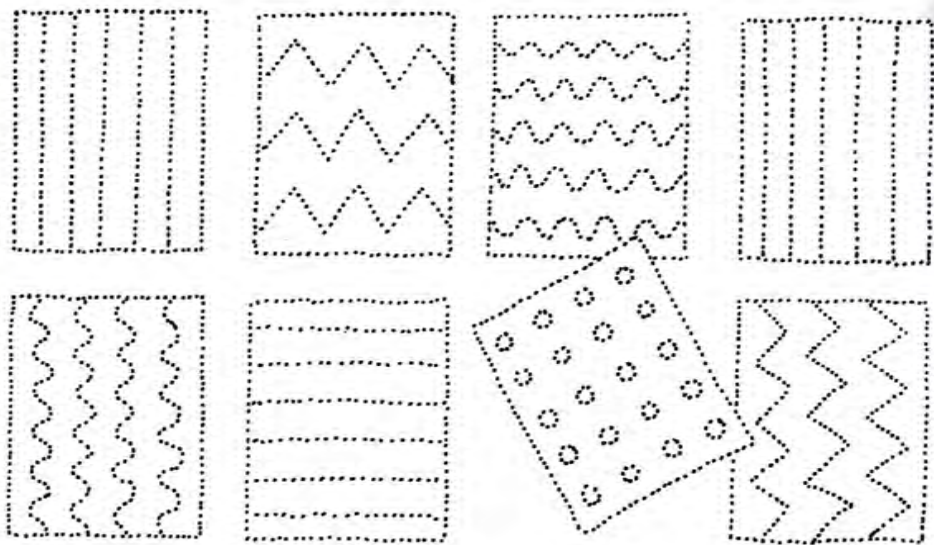
I came into N.A. the same way most of us did. I was physically, mentally, and spiritually bankrupt. I had experienced jails, institutions, and near-death. I entered N.A. and found a new way of life without the use of drugs. I got an N.A. sponsor and a home group, and began writing on the steps of this program. I made many new friends, and got involved in service. I began helping newcomers whenever

I could, and began to feel some self-worth. I attended meetings regularly, and for the first time in my life felt like I was a part of something.

I struggled, as many of us do, and things in all areas of my life began to get better. It was suggested that I stay out of relationships for my first year. I actually managed to do so for fifteen months.

Around this time, I began changing some things on the outside. I moved to a new apartment, bought a car, changed hair styles, got a nice tan, went on a diet, and lost some weight. I kept telling myself that I was doing all of these things for me. But I was really looking for acceptance for my outside appearance, not for who I am. That fed my already inflated ego.

I found myself surrounded by some of the newer women in the fellowship; they thought I was cool. (It's referred to in our text as *fatal* cool.) But the women with good recovery could see me coming from a mile away. I could not run my B.S. on them.



A newcomer moved into town, and I began taking a special interest in her. She had no way to meetings, and no sponsor. I took her to meetings, got her to join my home group, and involved her in the committee I'm on. My motives were in the right spot, or so I thought. I knew I should be steering her toward the women. But, you see, I was different, and so was she.

We were in bed together in no time. Within a few days, the pain and the feelings of guilt, remorse, self-loathing, and regret set in. What was worse, she was feeling the same things, but was less prepared to deal with them.

I got with my sponsor. He directed me to stay away from her. I did some writing assignments and began to get back on track. The pain was still great, but I didn't use. I began to see the wrong in my actions and, once again, surrendered to another aspect of this disease.

As the pain subsided and things smoothed out a little, I began to feel okay. At meetings, I shared how I must surrender my old behaviors. The problem was, I hadn't surrendered anything. I was puffing hot air.

Then I got involved with another newcomer. This one was going to be different, too. Wrong again! I was making the same mistake, expecting different results.

The pain was greater this time; I couldn't decide whether to use, or to kill myself. Fortunately, I belong to a fellowship of unconditional love. My sponsor, although upset, stuck it out with me. My support group loved me when I wasn't able to love myself. I began to really see the damage I'd been

doing, and the fact that I had no business in these women's lives.

I am grateful that my H.P. and these other individuals' H.P.s saw fit for all of us to still be clean today. Today I believe I am no different than anyone else.

'My motives were in the right spot, or so I thought. I knew I should be steering her toward the women.'

What you people tell me is true. When I act on my self-centered will, I must be prepared to pay the price. I am sick of paying prices. Today, I believe that the way to show my love and concern to newcomers of the opposite sex is to share my experience, strength, and hope with them, and nothing else.

I still make mistakes today, and I pay the price. Hopefully, they will be new mistakes and not the same old ones. I am grateful to be a part of a fellowship that allows me to make mistakes and be human. I am also grateful that I have people around me who love me enough to call me on my crap when I am self-destructing and when I hurt others.

Just for today, I will give the newcomers a chance to find recovery.

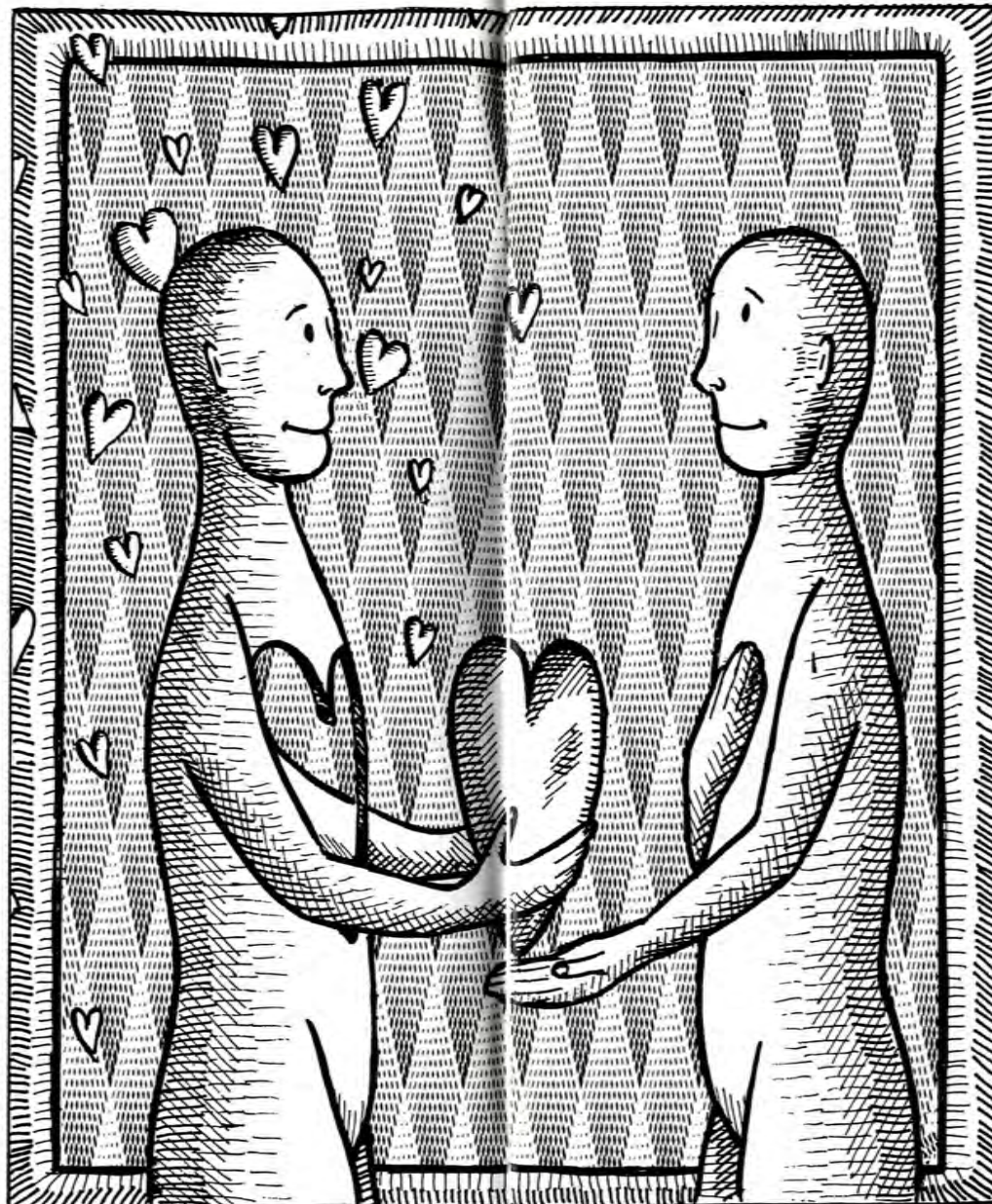
T.D., Pennsylvania

The good stuff

Since early in my recovery, I have been hearing how we need to "give it away to keep it." But, until recently, I didn't really understand what that meant. You see, I'm a self-centered, lustful, obsessive, gluttonous, envious, lazy kind of guy. I'm an "I-me-my" person. Then, five days ago, a former "using" buddy decided that he couldn't take the misery of active addiction anymore. He got in touch with me through my family. He wanted help, so I turned him on to Narcotics Anonymous. I got him to a meeting, and asked a bunch of my friends in the program to reach out to him.

Well, he's got five days clean. And as a result of sharing my recovery with him, I've been given some of the best "stuff" that this program has to offer. For the first time ever, I've got some genuine peace of mind.

What I discovered by simply introducing my friend to the Narcotics Anonymous program is that there is some awesome power in love. It's not so much that great things happen to me when people shower me with love, although I do get something good out of that. But I get something very, very good out of loving other people. What



a concept! All I have to do is love another addict in N.A., and my life becomes a whole lot more comfortable.

Even more profound to me is the way this "unconditional love" idea

can be applied to all my relations. In just five short days, I've learned that, by looking for people to love everywhere I go, I leave most of my fears behind and take a sense of peace

along with me. I don't mean to imply that in one short week I've become some kind of guru living in nirvana. But I do think I've gained a sort of spiritual awakening.

I haven't worked all the steps yet, and I'm not going to jump ahead to Step Twelve. But I am going to start practicing some of this "good stuff" in all of my affairs. I'm going to see what happens when I take this kind of love into my business, personal relationships, and everyday life. I have faith that the results will continue to amaze me.

I hope with all my heart that my old friend stays clean and catches on to this program. In any case, I'm forever grateful for his showing me the path to the "good stuff."

Anonymous

POSTSCRIPT: I wrote this short narrative almost three weeks ago; today, my friend has 22 days clean. Right now, he's in the midst of the "emotional roller-coaster" of early recovery—high on life one minute, paranoid the next, and depressed the next. I've tried to be there as much as possible without managing and controlling his program.

He recently got a sponsor, who happens to be one of my friends, and he's set up a plan to attend at least one meeting a day for ninety days. He volunteered for a coffee commitment at one of my favorite meetings, and he makes a pretty good cup of "mud." The whole experience has been one non-stop pleasure for me. So far, so good.

Warped

If you are like me, there was a point when you wondered if this program really works. Maybe you are asking this question now. Well, I am here to tell you what this program does to people.

I am in prison right now. I will be released in just a few months, and I am starting to get scared about it. It has been a couple of years since I was out there, and things change.

This program will mess with your mind. Here are just a few of the things that it has done to trick me:

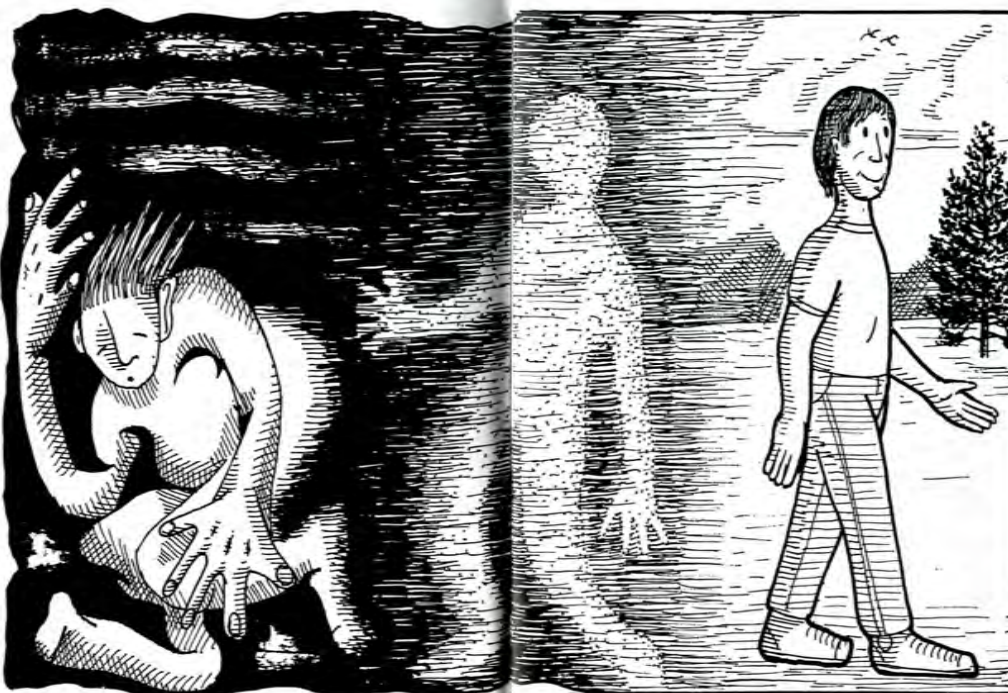
When I first came into this program, I had just been arrested and was awaiting sentencing. My whole world had crumbled at my feet. I wanted to commit suicide, but I was too messed up on the junk to do it. I came in intending to get just clean enough to be able to put myself out of my misery. This program so "warped" my mind that, before too long, I was thinking that it might be better to do a stretch in the pen than to kill myself.

I was holding many grudges. I hated my mother for her sexual abuse, my stepfather for the physical abuse, my ex-fiancee for cheating on me, and my friends for deserting me. This program has "warped" me into thinking

that, in many of these cases, it was *my* fault. In many others where I was not at fault, I should just forgive.

About a year after I was locked up, my apartment in town was burglarized. The real kicker was that it was a so-called friend from the program who did it. Well, after being in for a year, and having done a little time as a juvenile a few years back, I have a few connections, and a few markers to call in. So, what did I do? Once again, this damned program told me to forgive. "Why?" I asked, "should I forgive him?" Well, once again the program gave me a "warped" answer; because he is an addict, just like me! Besides, who am I to judge him?

As far as I'm concerned, if I want to have my brain warped, this N.A. thing is the way to go. I now realize



that no matter what choice I make, I really only have two:

- 1) Warp my mind with drugs and lead a very unhappy (and probably incarcerated) life; or
- 2) Warp my mind with this program and lead a happy life.

Since my mind will be warped either way I go, I may as well take the easy way, and stay out of the joint.

If you are looking for a cheap way to get high, help someone. If you want to live a happy life, get to a meeting. And please, don't forget those of us who are locked up. We have few meetings to attend; we need to hear that there are others out there who are like us, and we need to know that you care.

T.G., Wisconsin

We need stories!

Remember, this section of *The N.A. Way* is your meeting in print. Like any other meeting you're a part of, you'll get the most out of this one by participating.

Who writes stories?

You do!

The stories you see in this magazine are written by N.A. members—like you! You don't need to be a "great writer." All you need is your personal experience in recovery, and the willingness to share it. Without it, we don't have a message to carry. In every sense, that's *The N.A. Way*.

What do I write?

Share as you would at any other meeting. Is there a topic you've enjoyed hearing or sharing about at a recent meeting? Are you on a particular step, and having some eye-opening experiences? Has there been a recent turning point in your personal recovery? Share it with your fellow N.A. Way readers. We'd love to hear from you! Write us at:

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Freedom in prison

I am serving a ten-year sentence for possession of cocaine. I am twenty three years old, and I never thought that I would get caught—but I did.

I started using drugs when I was about thirteen years old. I played in a band at the time, and all of the other band members were a lot older than I was. They all got high, and I thought I had to be like them. I started using pot and downers.



I didn't mess with any other drugs for a while, until my eighteenth birthday. Some friends of mine threw me a party at a country club where our band was playing. That's when I tried cocaine for the first time. And, wouldn't you know it, I fell in love with it.

Shortly after that, I had another chance to try some more cocaine. I thought to myself, "With this drug, I have finally found the answer to all of my problems." It made me feel the equal of everyone else. I thought I was a real big shot because I did it all the time and because I always had a lot of girls around. I thought there was no stopping me at anything I wanted to do.

But, one day, my money ran out. A friend asked me if I would like to make some money selling cocaine for him, and I jumped at the chance.

That went on for about two years. I made a lot of money, and had enough left over to supply my habit.

I didn't really know I had a problem with it until I had gotten so bad on the stuff that I locked myself in my apartment and tore the phone out of the wall so nobody would call. I boarded my door up from the inside to keep anyone from coming in. I stayed there for five days straight. I didn't eat, sleep, or do anything but my drugs.

My brother had been trying to reach me for days. He finally got worried because he couldn't get in touch with me by phone, and I hadn't been showing up at work. He came by my apartment to check on me. He couldn't get me to come to the door, so he kicked it in and found me lying in the floor, a needle in my arm and my eyes rolled back in my head. I had O.D.ed big time.

He rushed me to the hospital at once. I stayed in a coma for ten days. The doctor said that I would have died if my brother hadn't found me when he did.

After six months in a hospital, I was back in my right mind. I was attending N.A. meetings every night, but I wasn't paying them much mind. The only thing I could think about was using again. Even after overdosing, I thought I was okay and that I didn't have a drug problem. I just thought I had gotten a little carried away.

Well, finally I went home to live with my parents. I did pretty good for a while. One night, one of my old band members called me up and asked if I would play drums at a party. I said yes.

That night, I rode my motorcycle to

the party. Everything went fine until one of the band members offered me a hit off a joint they were smoking. At first, I said "no thanks," but I didn't feel right, so I started smoking right along with them. One thing led to another. I started using cocaine, and I got really messed up—and I do mean *messed up*.

'Everything went fine until one of the band members offered me a hit off a joint they were smoking.'

I finally left the party around midnight. I headed to my old dope man's house to score some cocaine, but I didn't make it. I lost control of my bike at about eighty miles per hour. I ran into a wooden fence, and tore my body apart. I broke almost every bone in my body. I stayed in a body cast for five months, and I stayed in a wheel chair for thirteen more. I had broken my neck and hips, and I couldn't walk at all.

After more than a year of pure hell, I knew that I had a real serious problem, one that I had to do something about or die. I started back to N.A. I didn't really like it at first, because I didn't think I belonged. Then I heard a couple of people's stories that sounded just like mine.

I stayed clean for sixteen months after my wreck. Then I began to think I would be okay again, and that a joint or two wouldn't hurt me none. So I quit going to N.A., and I started using pot and drinking a little. Then I

started selling cocaine to make some money on the side. That lasted for about three months. The last straw came when my best friend got killed in a car wreck, drunk and drugged up. When it happened, I really went off the deep end. Before I knew it, I was busted.

Here I am, doing a ten-year sentence. I hate to say this, but I thank my higher power for letting me come to prison, because if I hadn't I would probably be dead now. We have a real good N.A. group here, and I really enjoy it. I know who my real friends are, and I can feel the love and support that my N.A. brothers have for me.

Tonight, I went to a meeting to get my one-year chip. I really feel great about it. I have been working the steps with my sponsor; I just finished Step Five. I feel like a new person. N.A. has shown me a new way of life, and how to deal with my addiction one day at a time. Even though I am in prison physically, my mind and soul are free from the prison that they were in, called drugs.

I plan to stay in the N.A. program for the rest of my life. I have found a new family here that really loves me and cares about me. What they say is true: *It works if you work it.*

D.T., Alabama



When disaster strikes

Hurricane Hugo slammed into the South Carolina coast late last September, and plowed its way two hundred miles inland to Charlotte, North Carolina, wreaking havoc as it went. A couple of weeks later, as the third game of baseball's world series was scheduled to begin, a powerful earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay area, collapsing freeways and bridges and toppling dozens of buildings. Because of massive public media coverage, most Americans have a sense of how these natural disasters affected communities in the Carolinas and California generally. But how were Narcotics Anonymous members, groups, and services in those areas affected? How long did it take for them to bounce back? And how are they preparing for the next hurricane or earthquake? These are the questions we'll be looking at in this article.

Why? "I mean, those things happened months ago, and far away," you say. "What do they have to do with me, and my group, and my region?" Tornadoes, storms, and earthquakes can happen anywhere, anytime—even our World Service Office could be affected. And when natural disasters impair the N.A. community's ability to carry the recovery message, then it becomes our responsibility to find out how we can prepare ourselves for them.

N.A. meetings put out of commission

"My home group is the second oldest in South Carolina," Patti, from Charleston, told us. "We celebrated our seventh anniversary in November. In the past, when a minor hurricane was going to hit, we'd make arrange-

If a hurricane, earthquake, or tornado hit, how would your N.A. community be affected, and how would it respond?

'What does it matter? We're all going to die anyway.'

ments to keep in touch by phone until it passed. But Hugo went through our region like a dose of salts, and we were pretty much washed off the face of the earth. All the lines of communication were down. For about a day and a half, the only radio station we could pick up was out of Jacksonville, Florida. The devastation was so substantial that it took us a while to regroup."

Recovering addicts on the South Carolina coast had a rough time getting to meetings, for a variety of reasons. In Charleston, 84% of the buildings had roof damage, putting many N.A. meetings on the street. When alternate sites *were* found, there was no way of informing others about it—phone lines were down, and most radio and TV stations had been knocked out of commission.

Once a member was able to find out where a meeting was being held, there was a strong chance he wouldn't be able to make it there—with the loss of power, electric gasoline pumps were out of commission, and fuel was in short supply. If he could find fuel for his car, he might not find the roads open. "This part of the country," Patti told us, "is very proud of its urban forests. Hugo tore those forests down, and the roads were impassable for a long time."

Martial law imposed

To make matters even more complicated, martial law was imposed on the South Carolina coast for about two weeks after the hurricane strike. Jeri, an N.A. member from the coastal stretch between Charleston and Myrtle Beach, told us, "Different sections of the coast were blocked off by the National Guard. To go from Pawley's Island into Myrtle Beach, you had to show something that proved you were either a resident or had business there, so we couldn't get to meetings in other towns. It was odd. I mean, who ever thinks of living under military rule in the United States?"

Besides the travel restrictions, a sundown to sunup curfew was imposed; both, authorities said, were designed to inhibit looting. What it meant for N.A. members, however, was that they could only attend daytime meetings, and only in their own communities. "We couldn't have any of our regular meetings—they were all in the evening, except two noon meetings," Jeri told us. "So we started having meetings at noon every day at the church where those two were normally held, until the curfew was lifted."

Northern California N.A. communities were not affected to anywhere near the extent that coastal Carolina members were. Aside from structures in the Marina district of San Francisco, most buildings survived the October 17th quake quite well. Loss of electricity gave N.A. meetings their greatest inconvenience, though some were forced to relocate temporarily until the buildings they met in could be checked for hidden damage. Sources we spoke with in San Francisco and in Santa Cruz, California, knew of no groups which had permanently lost their meeting facilities.

Trauma—the *real* hidden damage

For all the damage wreaked by Hurricane Hugo in the Carolinas, and all the television pictures we saw of crumbled buildings in San Francisco, the greatest impact on the N.A. communities in those two areas appears to have been the trauma felt in the disasters' aftermath.

"What does it matter? We're all going to die anyway." That's how Charli described the way many Northern California members were feeling after the quake. "But as soon as the phones were back in service, people were plugging in to people, talking about it, trying to find out if there was anything they could do to help. We were telling quake stories in meetings for weeks, and dealing with the way we were feeling. We were there for

World Service Office emergency plans

Bob Stone, WSO Executive Director: The office does have a disaster contingency plan. We're prepared to temporarily move the shipping and receiving function—our most critical operation—to Sacramento, a city 400 miles from Van Nuys, in north central California. No natural disaster has ever affected both ends of the state at the same time, so we feel Sacramento is a prudent choice.

We keep photo-negatives of all our pamphlets and other recovery literature in fireproof cabinets at the WSO. All we'd need to do would be to take the negatives, after recovering them, and start printing in Sacramento. We maintain a Basic Text supply at the factory in Indiana, so that we can have those shipped to Sacramento if the need arises.

We have the capacity to start quickly, virtually from scratch, in another location. I believe WSO is well prepared to face an emergency, be it fire, flood, or earthquake.

'N.A. just sort of fell apart. We were really ill-prepared.'

each other." Still, we were told that many members stayed away from meetings in the days following the quake, fighting alone against the fear and depression resulting from the disaster.

N.A. members in communities along the South Carolina coast suffered the same kinds of trauma as those experienced in Northern California. Speaking with Patti six weeks after Hugo had struck, she told us, "My home group was eighty, ninety strong, but now we're lucky if we have twenty or thirty people at meetings."

"Physically, I came through okay," Jeri related. "But emotionally—that's another story. There was the whole issue of not feeling safe anywhere. Where can you go where there's not going to be a hurricane, where there's no possibility of a tornado, a flood, an earthquake, lightning strikes—where can you go to get away from that? No place. I had to work through that. Once I did—once I accepted that there's no absolute safety anywhere—then it was okay. That was one more thing I had no control of, so it was one more thing I could stop *worrying* about.

"It was very difficult for all of us to have gone through that," Jeri concluded, "and then wake up one morning and life goes on: grocery stores are open, people are back to work, and all that. All of us still felt really displaced. It took us a while to get back into the swing of normal living. And I don't think the changes are over yet."

The impact on N.A. services

N.A. services in the Bay Area were lucky—the earthquake left relatively little damage. Storage shelves at the San Francisco Area Service Office had been reinforced with special bolts only days before the quake, making cleanup needs minimal. The worst damage was to the N.A. phoneline. Besides telephone lines being cut, electrical outages took the

area's computerized answering system down, necessitating lengthy reprogramming before it could be brought back into service.

In South Carolina, the damage was more extensive and longer lasting. Telephone service was out for weeks, leaving newcomers and others unable to find meeting information. This may have played a part in substantially reducing meeting attendance.

Hospitals and institutions panels were affected, too. "The city jail in Charleston lost its roof," Patti told us. "Prisoners were in lock-down both during and after the hurricane, but our area H&I chairperson was able to get in there, contact people, and let them know we'd come as soon as we could. Treatment center people had been evacuated to the center of the state, and didn't return for a couple of weeks. It was eight to ten days before any of our H&I panels were back up."

With telephone lines down and travel restricted, we were told that literature supplies ran low; members could not order any, and couldn't get to it even if they could order it. "N.A. just sort of fell apart," Jeri said. "We were really ill-prepared."

Disaster preparedness

"I hope the San Andreas fault is working the Tenth Step," Charli told us from San Francisco, "or we'll have a *really* big one when it decides to do its Fourth!" N.A. members in Northern California are used to earthquakes. Even though the October quake was somewhat larger than usual, it was not a Great Quake, and no one we spoke with knew of any preparations for such an event.

Coastal Carolinians are used to hurricanes, too, but not of the magnitude of Hugo. Within days, members of the Carolina Regional Service Committee had passed the basket to help with clean-up expenses. But with the disarray of coastal N.A. communities, it was clear that something more would need to be done.

Be prepared

Steve R., WSC P.I. chair: Everyone experiences stress during an emergency; for addicts, that stress can prove fatal. We need to develop ways of insuring that, when we need each other most, we'll be able to find one another.

It can start with you and your fellow home group members. If you make a point of knowing how to contact one another now, you'll all have an easier time contacting each other in time of need.

Designate a place where members of your N.A. community will gather in case of emergency. Even if the building is gone, let it be known that *this address* is where you'll come in order to plan your next step together.

Find out what kinds of meeting facilities will be available to community groups like N.A. in case of emergency. Civil preparedness agencies in most cities will be able to inform you of plans for emergency services. The time for your N.A. community to prepare for a disaster is *before* it happens, not after.

'Everyone needs to know who's responsible for what when something like this happens.'

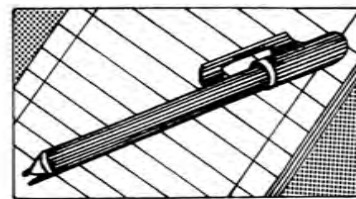
At the next regional meeting, an ad hoc committee on disaster preparedness was created. The idea, we were told, was that, should another such disaster occur—and there were no guarantees one couldn't—the region didn't intend to be caught unprepared.

"Everyone needs to know who's responsible for what when something like this happens," Patti, the chair of the ad hoc committee, told us. "We're going to have lists of the addresses of radio stations, and lists of people with motorcycles who can travel rough roads, so that when new meeting places are set up, special public service announcements can be carried to the stations and put on the air. The regional public information subcommittee will be developing sample emergency statements—all that local people will need to do is fill in the blanks. We're even thinking about listing out special topics for discussion at N.A. meetings—trust, faith, unity—so people can deal with the emotional effects we know such disasters bring with them.

"The regional service office will be used as an organizing base if something happens," Patti continued. "We had mail service—even though we didn't have any other way of communicating with the outside world—two days after Hugo. Next time, if we need to, we can get literature sent in by express service. And we're having the money set aside at our RSO to stock emergency literature supplies for just that purpose.

"The idea," Patti concluded, "is to be prepared. N.A. meetings can take place *anywhere* in the aftermath of a disaster. But people need to know ahead of time where they'll be held in case of emergency. Each area, each group, is going to have to go over their preparedness plans once a year, and agree on who's doing what—just in case. We did the best we could with what we had after Hugo. We're still standing. There's nothing we can do to stop this from happening again—but if we're prepared, maybe we can bounce back a little more quickly."

Viewpoint



N.A. members, A.A. sponsors

Just for today, I will have faith in someone in N.A. who believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery.

Over the last five years, I have done a great deal of traveling in the United States, Canada, and Europe. During that time I've been to many Narcotics Anonymous meetings and have met many N.A. members. It's been a marvelous experience to know so many recovering addicts, and to share their triumphs and their struggles with them, even on a temporary basis.

I've learned a great deal about the problems that recovering addicts have to contend with throughout the world, and about how addicts try to solve them. By problems, I mean not only the day-to-day problems that we all face, but also the challenges that N.A. members confront in trying to estab-

lish our program of recovery in places where there was no N.A. before.

One situation in particular that I have encountered again and again is the question of how N.A. members find sponsors in areas where none are immediately available. What do people do when they live in a part of the world where there aren't any other recovering addicts with the appropriate amount of clean time able to sponsor them? In some places, this is such a serious issue that occasionally N.A. members have resorted to seeking sponsors in the A.A. Fellowship.

I agree that there is a problem here, but I don't think the problem is about a supposed lack of N.A. sponsors. I think the real problem lies in how to communicate the significance of N.A. sponsorship to N.A. members. I am sympathetic with the problems that addicts in new areas face. I also understand how crucial it is that we all have sponsors. But I still strongly believe that N.A. members going to A.A. to find sponsors is not a real solution to this issue. It creates more problems than it solves.

I don't believe finding an N.A. sponsor is an insurmountable problem for anyone. If someone has faith in the N.A. program of recovery, there is always a way to find an N.A. sponsor. For instance, many of our members derive great satisfaction from long

distance sponsorship—either by phone or by correspondence. Other members grow spiritually to the point where they realize that they can learn about recovery from people who have less clean time than they do, and they ask newer members to be their sponsors. Others maintain their faith that an N.A. solution will emerge to an N.A. problem, and their patience is eventually rewarded.

'To me, having an A.A. sponsor in N.A. implies a confusion about the integrity of the N.A. program.'

The problem of A.A. sponsorship of N.A. members is an extremely serious one to me. There is the potential for deep division on this matter. Some N.A. members believe that there is nothing wrong in being sponsored by people outside N.A. Many others feel that such a course of action threatens the progress of our fellowship and its principles. We can all agree, I think, that there are many complex issues involved in the question of A.A. sponsorship of N.A. members.

Personally, I can't help but feeling that when N.A. members acquire A.A. sponsors, they are expressing reservations about the N.A. program. They are saying, in effect, that there is no one in the N.A. program who is a competent sponsor for the working of the N.A. steps.

To me, having an A.A. sponsor in

N.A. implies a confusion about the integrity of the N.A. program. Some people apparently believe that N.A. and A.A. are the same, and that having an A.A. sponsor makes no difference. Others have claimed in conversation with me that A.A. is "more established" than N.A., and that they urge N.A. members to go to A.A. for "real" spiritual guidance.

I am astonished that anyone truly believes that people outside the N.A. program can sponsor N.A. members. Perhaps the problem is only one of terminology. For instance, while I derive much assistance in my personal program of recovery from many people outside the N.A. program, I do not refer to them as my "sponsors," particularly within the N.A. context. How would N.A. members react if I began to call my local minister or a therapist my "sponsor?" Yet such people can be of invaluable help to many of us in our lives outside N.A.

Why, then, do some insist that members of Alcoholics Anonymous be regarded as different from other non-N.A. members and accorded a special status among us? I believe the answer to that question is that A.A. members should *not* be treated differently. A.A. members are people whom a few of our own members relate to on an individual basis outside the N.A. program, but who are separate from us. I don't believe that these A.A. people—however helpful and well-meaning they might be on a one-to-one basis—can be considered sponsors in the N.A. program of recovery.

While I would never suggest that people give up relationships and associations they find helpful in recov-

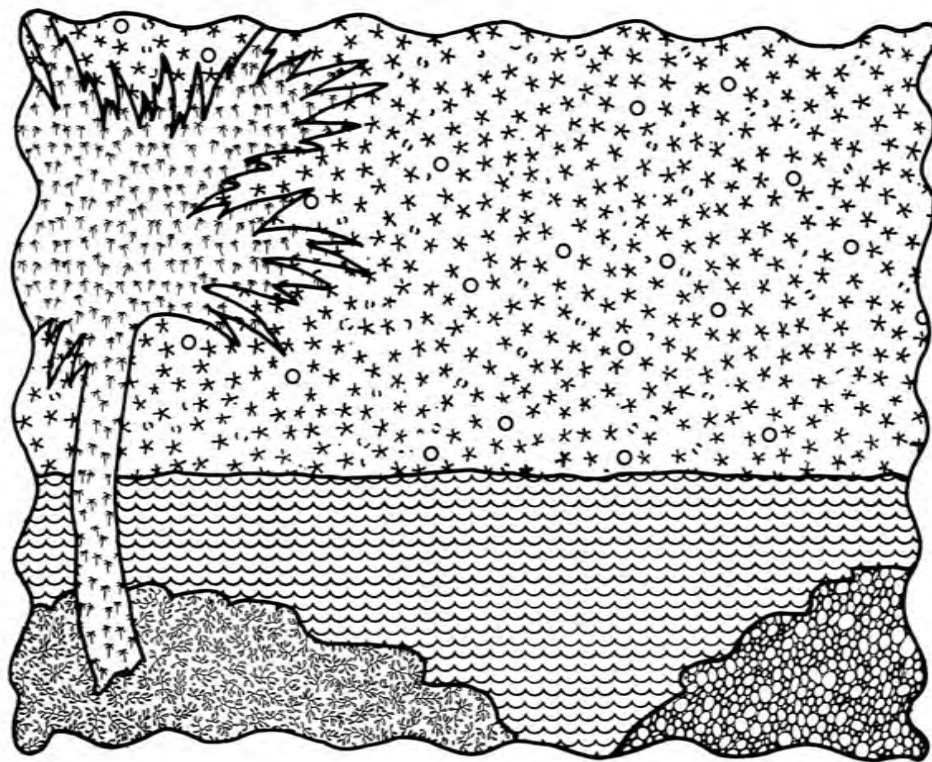
ery, I think there is an obligation we all have toward understanding what an N.A. sponsor is. I want to be very clear on this matter—people with A.A. sponsors don't *have* sponsors, as far as I am concerned.

The essence of N.A. sponsorship is found in the N.A. steps and traditions. N.A. sponsors are guides to spiritual growth in the N.A. program. As the Basic Text tells us, "Today, we seek solutions, not problems. We try what we have learned on an experimental basis. We keep what we need and leave the rest. We find that by working the steps, communicating with our Higher Power, talking to our sponsors, and sharing with newcomers, we are able to grow spiritually." My recovery has been enriched by a sponsor who

not only understands the steps as a general set of principles, but who has accepted N.A. steps as something that work in his own life.

I have a sponsor who has surrendered to his own disease of addiction, who carries the message of N.A. recovery to the addict who still suffers because of his belief in the N.A. Twelfth Step, and who is committed to N.A. unity because his personal recovery depends on it. My sponsor's belief in the N.A. program has strengthened my own belief, and has immeasurably enhanced my own recovery. And I doubt someone who is not a member of N.A. could have done that for me.

J.F., Pennsylvania



From the editor



Subscription drive starts

Yes, it's that time of year again! At about the same time as this issue of *The N.A. Way Magazine* is being mailed, more than five hundred subscription packets will be going out to area service committee contacts in the U.S. and Canada. Those paks include seventy-five group sign-up sheets each, and twenty-five "scripts" for group service representatives to read while they're passing the sign-up sheets around.

When last year's drive began, we had about 6,000 subscribers. By the end of the drive, almost 12,000 members had received copies of *The N.A. Way* for the first time, and our subscription base had grown by more than 20%. Today, more than 8,400 copies are mailed each month. Last year's drive was quite a success in giving more N.A. members than ever a chance to subscribe—let's hope this year's is even more successful!

In a fellowship that grows as rapidly as ours, the chances are good that many of today's N.A. members weren't around for last year's subscription drive, and may not know the magazine exists. When the subscription pak comes to your ASC, make sure the sign-up sheets are distributed to the GSRs so that even more recovering addicts have a chance to share in our fellowship's international journal.

Conference approved? No. Conference sanctioned? Yes!

One question keeps cropping up whenever we try to expose more N.A. members to their fellowship's magazine: "Is *The N.A. Way* conference approved?" We received this letter recently, asking that question again:

"At a meeting recently, I was reading something to the group from your magazine when a fellow recovering addict announced that *The N.A. Way* wasn't approved literature. I enjoy reading this magazine, and I want to share this enjoyment with others, but I don't like breaking traditions. Is *The N.A. Way* conference approved or not?"

With the annual group subscription drive starting up, this seems like the right time to answer that question again—and the answer is, no, the magazine is *not* conference approved literature, but yes, *The N.A. Way* is a conference sanctioned publication.

In 1982, N.A.'s World Service Conference established the magazine for the purpose of supporting recovery, unity, and service the N.A. way. The magazine plays a *different* role in the written presentation of the N.A. message than conference approved literature does, but it *does* play a role that's wholeheartedly endorsed by the fellowship.

The N.A. Way Magazine is the international journal of Narcotics Anony-

mous. Though only conference approved literature is to be read aloud during N.A. meetings, it's perfectly alright to display *The N.A. Way* on the tables right alongside conference approved literature, and to make announcements about *The N.A. Way* in meetings.

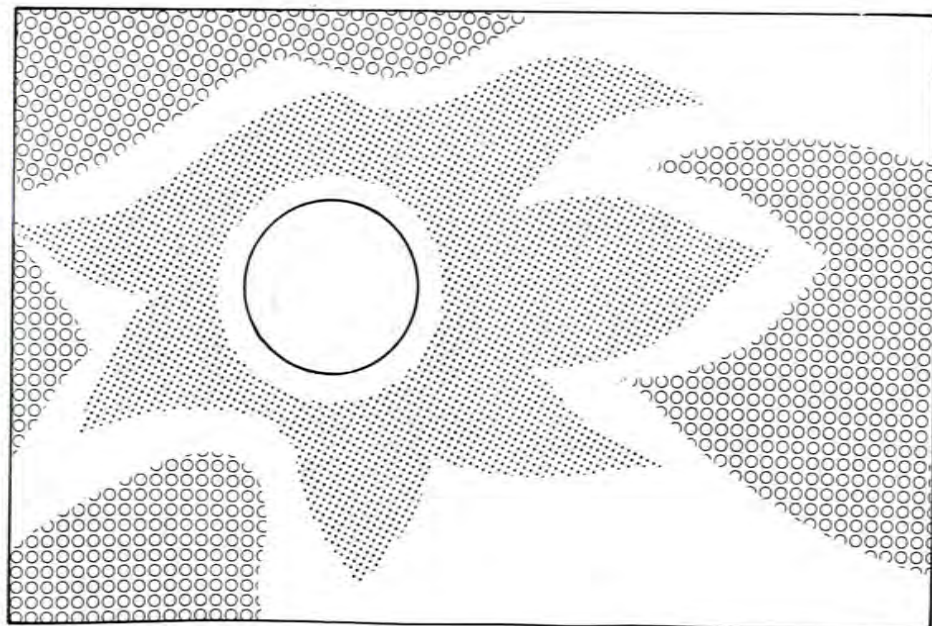
Share your views in the "Viewpoint" section

In last month's issue, we ran our annual year-end topical index. The great majority of topics addressed last year in the magazine were recovery-oriented: gratitude, honesty, sponsorship, the steps and traditions, and sponsorship. But a sizable portion of them addressed subjects related to the growth of N.A.: children at meetings, gender-specific language, group conscience, prayers used at meetings, women in recovery, and the like.

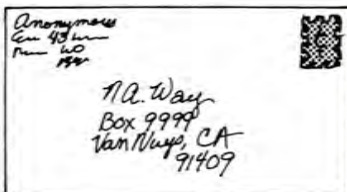
While we always want to see more recovery-oriented articles in the magazine than anything else, the "Viewpoint" section does play an important role. Nowhere else does there exist a forum in which N.A. members from all around the fellowship can share with one another their ideas and concerns about how Narcotics Anonymous is growing.

As our fellowship steps into the Nineties, we face great change and even greater challenges. What are the questions facing your N.A. community? And what do you think about the questions facing N.A. as a whole? Jot down your thoughts, and share them with your fellow members in the fellowship's international journal, *The N.A. Way Magazine*. What you think is important.

B.S., Acting Editor



From our readers



Willing to change

I've always seen drugs as a part of my life. I came from a dysfunctional family and a neighborhood where drugs were always around. Alcohol was the first drug I ever picked up, but that was okay because it was accepted by my family as well as the neighborhood. But I remember when my parents found out I smoked pot, my father punished me severely. He forced me to smoke a whole bag of pot by myself—that only made me a gluton for that kind of “punishment”!

As my disease progressed, I mixed so many different drugs, I guess you could have considered me a chemist and my body a test tube. I used to take a drug to counteract another drug, and still another drug to counteract that one.



I established a reputation as a slimy, untrustworthy criminal who would inflict pain on anyone guilty of getting in my way. If you were innocent, that didn't make much difference either. The insanity of my situation was that I never in my wildest dreams considered myself an addict. Then, one day, I found myself in overwhelming pain.

Today, I remember the pain. It keeps my willingness to change at the forefront of my recovery. I've already done and continue to do a Second Step. My old reputation has been forgotten. My awareness continues to increase. It keeps getting better, so I think I'll keep coming back.

L.G., New Jersey

Grateful

Hi! I am sitting in my room, having my N.A. meeting alone, but I do know that I have my Higher Power with me. I thought it would be a good idea to share with you all through *The N.A. Way*.

I am grateful to this N.A. program, as it has saved my life. I've been clean for the last three and a half years. I came to the fellowship after trying each and every way I could think of to stay clean. Nothing worked for long.

In this program of recovery, there have been ups and downs. As I see it, it's a very simple program, but I am

the one who is complicated. I still tend to rebel against reality and myself. These are the times I try to read the N.A. literature and share with my sponsor. And it feels good to know I am not alone. Thank you.

V.P.D., United Arab Emirates

Progress, not perfection

There was an article in the July N.A. Way from a guy in prison in Georgia. He was doing life for murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Could you please print this so he can read it?

When I read your letter, I was filled with emotions; but stronger than all of them was gratitude.

So often we look to others for acceptance. We want others to like us. Some will, some won't, and that's okay. The most important acceptance we find along our path of recovery is self-acceptance. Though many of our paths have been crooked, we have all walked the same path—different shoes, but the same path.

Our steps are in order for a reason. Only when we complete one are we ready to go on to the next. There will be times when we find we need to back up a few, and that's okay, too, as long as we continue to try. Willingness is all that matters!

My first week clean, I worked eleven steps. I left out Step Two; I was sane, or so I thought. As our Basic Text tells us, more will be revealed, and it was! I realized I had to slow down. I hadn't become addicted in one day, nor would I recover in one week.

That first week, I worked the Ninth Step to the best of my insanity! Can you imagine having to make amends for making amends?! Man, did I ever

screw things up. I had no concept of what “except when to do so would injure them or others” meant. I didn't even really acknowledge that part for months to come. Nor did I realize that I am one of “them or others.”

Only in God's time has it been revealed that I matter, and that I only need to put forth the footwork and leave the results to him. Today, I realize there are such things as “living amends.” As recovering addicts, we are miracles.

Notice Step Eight says “became willing.” The fact that we can make that list and become willing is vital to our recovery, when done to the best of our ability. Much reading and much writing on the steps helps.

I hope something in this can help you. Sharing your story really helped me. See, my brother was also a recovering addict. He was set up to be killed, and was shot four times with a twelve gauge shotgun. He continued to fight for recovery, but exactly six months from the day he was shot, he got killed in a car wreck.

Upon going to court to face my sister-in-law and the man who shot my brother, I did not see two bad people. We are not bad people trying to get good; we are sick people trying to get better. Through working the steps and through the love I have found in this fellowship, I pray those two people may find a path that leads to recovery.

It's a program of progress, not perfection. May we choose to continue to progress along the path of recovery. I can honestly say, I love you.

R.H., Texas

Youth and recovery

Four years ago today, in a cramped room filled with addicts and smoke, I picked up my second white chip. I was in a hospital mental ward, and my other choices were the state mental ward, prison, or death. Deep down beneath all the disease, there was a part of me begging for help. Those people in Narcotics Anonymous attracted me beyond description. In meetings, they talked openly and honestly, and I could identify.

This honest sharing woke me up. There was nothing about me that surprised anyone; we were all alike. I have nothing today that wasn't given to me by the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. No one else on this planet could have done anything for me. Even my drugs had quit working; no one drug or combination of drugs helped at all. When the chips were down, Narcotics Anonymous was there with everything I needed.

I was seventeen years old when I picked up that chip. There were times when I felt real out of place, but with my sponsor (who was twenty three) I kept coming back. Thank you for caring about me when I didn't even care about myself. Thank you for being my true friends. Thank you for teaching me how to live. Thank you for realizing that jails, institutions, and death were *my* only alternatives, too. Thank you for knowing that I am just like you.

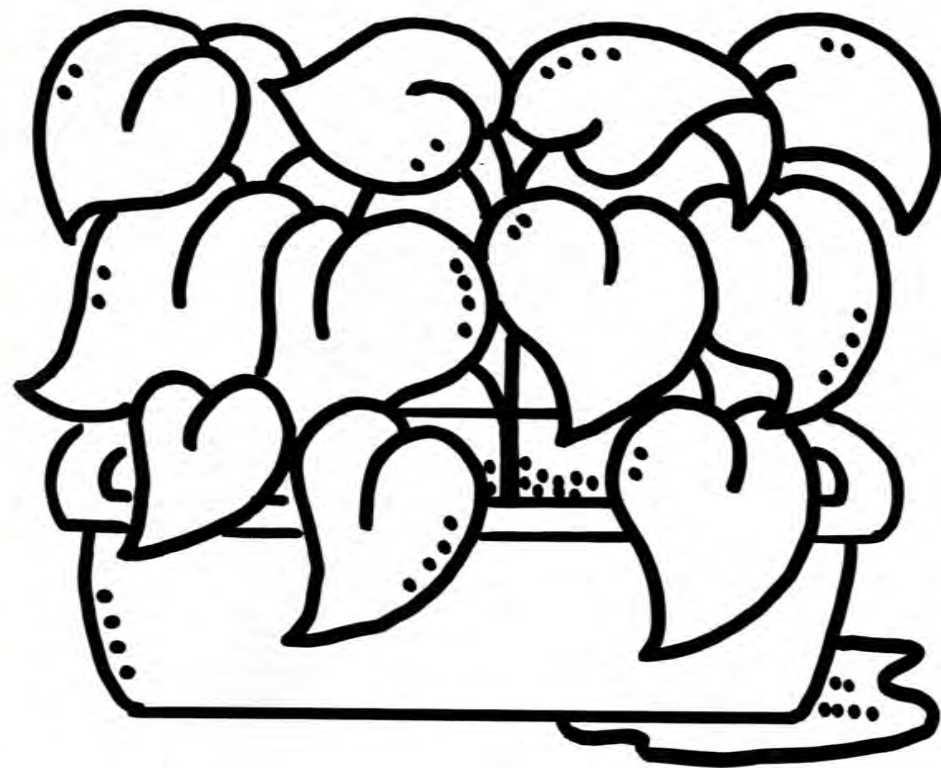
I'm working closely with my sponsor on the steps today, and even sponsoring others. Life is meaningful today, and I have a thousand reasons to live. The last six months, there have been many times when I've felt

joy and pain at the same time, and I cry a lot for no one definite reason. Maybe it's all starting to come out and I'm beginning to really be human. Maybe something is dying and something is being reborn. Just for today...

Two weeks ago, my God saw fit for me to be in Orlando, Florida, at our 19th World Convention (God does work in ways that are beyond me). The spirit in the meetings was, I'm convinced, the "ultimate spirit." I felt sadness for my friends and others who were dead or hadn't found the program yet, and I felt joy for those of us who were there. May we have to rent a bigger place every year!

If you are a youth in recovery, don't let me hear no excuses. You wouldn't be here if you weren't an addict. You are just like us, and we love you. You are welcome here. Keep comin' back; it works, if you work it!

Anonymous, Georgia



Powerlessness

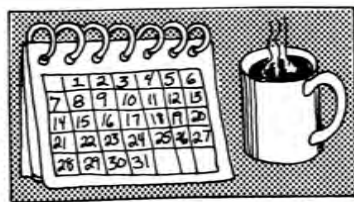
Implementing the Twelve Steps into my life on a daily basis is essential to my recovery. Yet I still find myself with people I don't like, at places I don't want to be, and doing things I'm not comfortable with. After taking an inventory of myself, I'm never happy about these situations.

One day I became sick and tired of feeling insane and confused, and I told myself I was entirely ready to have the god of my understanding remove these defects. I attempted to turn it over to his care, knowing he could restore me to sanity; but, somehow, I was still placing my personality before principles.

Finally, in my frustration, I told myself that my life is unmanageable—I proclaimed my powerlessness. I got honest with people, open-minded to what they said, and willing to do the necessary footwork. I learned that I needed to step back, or even take the *steps* back, literally, to Step One.

I found that once I reaffirmed my powerlessness, I allowed a power greater than myself to help me. Today, I know that the god of my understanding works through other people, and that I must keep Step One first on a daily basis, and get it right—or stumble up the remaining steps.

L.G., New Jersey



Comin' up

LET US KNOW!

We'll be happy to announce your upcoming events. Just let us know at least three months in advance. Include dates, event name and location, N.A. office or phoneline number, and a post office box. (Sorry, but we can't print personal phone numbers or addresses.)

The **N.A. Way**
MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409.
(818) 780-3951.

ALASKA: Mar. 2-4, 1990; 6th Alaska Regional Convention; send speaker tapes; ARC-6, P.O. Box 84946, Fairbanks, AK 99708

ARIZONA: May 25-27, 1990; 4th Arizona Regional Convention; Ramada Renaissance Hotel, 200 N. Centennial Way, Mesa; rsvn.s (602) 898-8300; ARC-4, P.O. Box 44374, Phoenix, AZ 85064

AUSTRALIA: Jan. 26-29, 1990; Victoria Area Convention; phoneline 61-3-417-6472; Victoria CAC, GPO Box 2470-V, Melbourne 3001, Victoria, Australia

CALIFORNIA: Feb. 3, 1990; 5th Annual Napa-Solano Unity Day; Town & Country Fairgrounds, 3rd St., Napa; phonelines (707) 253-0243, Napa, and (707) 428-4120, Fairfield; Napa-Solano ASC, P.O. Box 5086, Napa, CA 94581

2) Mar. 29-Apr. 1, 1990; 12th Northern California Regional Convention; Fairmount Hotel, San Jose

3) Nov. 2-4, 1990; 11th So. Cal. Regional Convention; Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles

CONNECTICUT: Jan. 5-7, 1990; 5th Connecticut Regional Convention; Treadway Hartford Hotel, Rte. 72 (Exit 21 off I-91), Cromwell CT 06416; rsvn.s (203) 635-2000; CRC-5, P.O. Box 2193, Middletown, CT 06457

FLORIDA: Mar. 16-18, 1990; 1st Florida Spring Service Break; Holiday Inn, 999 N. Atlantic Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale FL 33304; rsvn.s (305) 563-5961; FSSB-1, P.O. Box 601412, N. Miami Beach, FL 33160

2) Jun. 28-Jul. 1, 1990; 9th Florida Regional Convention; Hyatt Regency Miami, City Center at Riverwalk, 400 SE 2nd Ave., Miami FL 33131, (305) 358-1234; RSO (305) 563-4262; FRC-9, Florida RSO, 1110 NE 34th Ct., Oakland Park, FL 33433

GEORGIA: Jan. 19-22, 1990; 2nd Central Savannah River Area Convention; Raddisson Inn, 3038 Washington Rd., Augusta GA 30903; rsvn.s (800) 333-3333; CSRAC-2, P.O. Box 2484, Augusta, GA 30903

2) Feb. 22-25, 1990; 9th Georgia Regional Convention; Ironworks Convention Center, Columbus; accommodations at Columbus Hilton, (800) HIL-TONS, and Sheraton Inn, (404) 327-6868; GRC Inc., P.O. Box 971, Pine Lake, GA 30072

HAWAII: Feb. 16-18, 1990; 6th Oahu Gathering of the Fellowship; Camp Erdman, North Shore, Oahu; Hawaii RSO (808) 941-8638, Windward phoneline 941-HELP; Fellowship Weekend, P.O. Box 27909, Honolulu, HI 96827

2) Jun. 8-11, 1990; 4th Big Island Gathering; Mauna Kea State Park; phoneline (808) 969-6644; Big Island Gathering, P.O. Box 5415, Kailua Kona, HI 96745

ILLINOIS: Dec. 31, 1989; New Year's Eve Extravaganza; South Shore Country Club, 7000 South Shore Drive, Chicago IL 60649; RSO (312) 848-2211; Chicago RSO, P.O. Box 199327, Chicago, IL 60619-9327

IOWA: Jun. 29—Jul. 1, 1990; 4th Iowa Regional Convention; Holiday Motor Lodge, Clear Lake

KENTUCKY: Feb. 2-4, 1990; 5th Kentuckiana Regional Traditions Workshop; Executive Inn, 1 Executive Blvd., Owensboro KY 42301; rsvn.s (800) 626-1936; Traditions Workshop, 2626 Parrish Av., St. 228, Owensboro, KY 42301

2) Apr. 13-15, 1990; 4th Kentuckiana Regional Convention; Executive Inn, 1 Executive Blvd., Paducah KY 42001

MARYLAND: Mar. 23-25, 1990; 4th Chesapeake & Potomac Regional Convention; Ocean City Convention Center; accommodations CPRC Hotel Request, P.O. Box 4062, Salisbury MD 21801, tel. (800) 654-5440; CPRC-4, P.O. Box 771, Ellicott City, MD 21043

MICHIGAN: Jul. 5-8, 1990; 6th Michigan Regional Convention; Valley Plaza Inn, Midland; RV park avlbl.; rsvn.s (800) 825-2700; RSO (313) 544-2010; send speaker tapes w/clean dates; MRC-6, P.O. Box 597, Bay City, MI 48707

MINNESOTA: Jun. 8-10, 1990; 7th Upper Midwest Regional Convention; College of St. Scholastica, Duluth; phoneline (701) 234-9330; send speaker tapes; UMRC-7, P.O. Box 5393, Fargo, ND 58105

MISSOURI: Jun. 15-17, 1990; 5th Show Me Regional Convention; Holiday Inn Executive Center, 2200 I-70 Dr., Columbia; rsvn.s (800) HOLIDAY; phoneline (314) 635-0271; SMRC-5, P.O. Box 373, Columbia, MO 65205-0373

NEVADA: Jan. 19-20, 1990; 6th High Sierra Blast; Diamond Peak-Ski Incline, North Lake Tahoe, Incline Village; rsvn.s (702) 831-3645; phoneline (916) 546-1116; North Tahoe ASC, P.O. Box 7691, Tahoe City, CA 95730

2) Feb. 9-11, 1990; 4th Southern Nevada Convention; Hacienda Hotel, Las Vegas; rsvn.s (800) 634-6942; SNCC, P.O. Box 4771, Las Vegas, NV 89127-0771

NORTH CAROLINA: Jan. 12-14, 1990; 5th "Spiritually High" Convention; Great Smokies Hilton, 1 Hilton Inn Dr., Asheville NC 28806; rsvn.s (800) 445-8667; phoneline (704) 298-9562; Convention, P.O. Box 2066, Asheville, NC 28802

OHIO: May 25-27, 1990; 8th Ohio State Convention; Seagate Center, Toledo; send speaker tapes; Ohio Convention, P.O. Box 1046, Toledo, OH 43697

OKLAHOMA: Mar. 30-Apr. 1, 1990; 4th Oklahoma Regional Convention; Holiday Hotel, Shawnee; rsvn.s (405) 275-4404; RSO (405) 239-2768; OKRC-4, P.O. Box 5485, Norman, OK 73070

ONTARIO: May 18-20, 1990; 3rd Ontario Regional Convention; ORC-3, University of Toronto New College, Box 7079 Depot A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X7

PENNSYLVANIA: Feb. 16-18, 1990; 6th Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference; Embers Convention Center, Carlisle; rsvn.s (717) 243-1717; MARLC-6, P.O. Box 15303, Harrisburg, PA 17105

2) Mar. 23-25, 1990; 8th Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention; Adams Mark Hotel, City Line & Monument Rd., Phila. PA 19131; rsvn.s (800) 231-5858; GPRC-8, P.O. Box 42628, Phila., PA 19101-2628

SOUTH CAROLINA: Feb. 2-4, 1990; Upper South Carolina Area Anniversary Convention; Ramada Hotel, Church St., Greenville; rsvn.s (800) 228-2828; phoneline (803) 282-0109; Anniversary, P.O. Box 4407, Greenville, SC 29606

2) Feb. 16-18, 1990; 2nd "Just for Today" Convention; Hyatt Regency Resort Hotel, P.O. Box 6167, Hilton Head SC 29938; rsvn.s (803) 785-1234; phoneline (803) 681-9595; Just for Today Committee, P.O. Box 22155, Hilton Head, SC 29925

TEXAS: Mar. 23-25, 1990; 5th Lone Star Regional Convention; Hotel Galvez, Galveston; rsvn.s (800) 392-4285; Lone Star RSO, 10727 Plano Rd., Ste. 200, Dallas, TX 75230

UNITED KINGDOM: Apr. 20-22, 1990; 1st London Regional Convention; for venue information call UKSO (1) 352-8356; send speaker tapes by 1/15/90; LRC-1, P.O. Box 417, London SW10 0RN, England

VIRGINIA: Jan. 5-7, 1990; 8th Virginia Convention; Radisson Hotel, 601 Main St., Lynchburg VA 24506; rsvn.s (804) 528-2500; Convention Committee, P.O. Box 11843, Lynchburg, VA 24506

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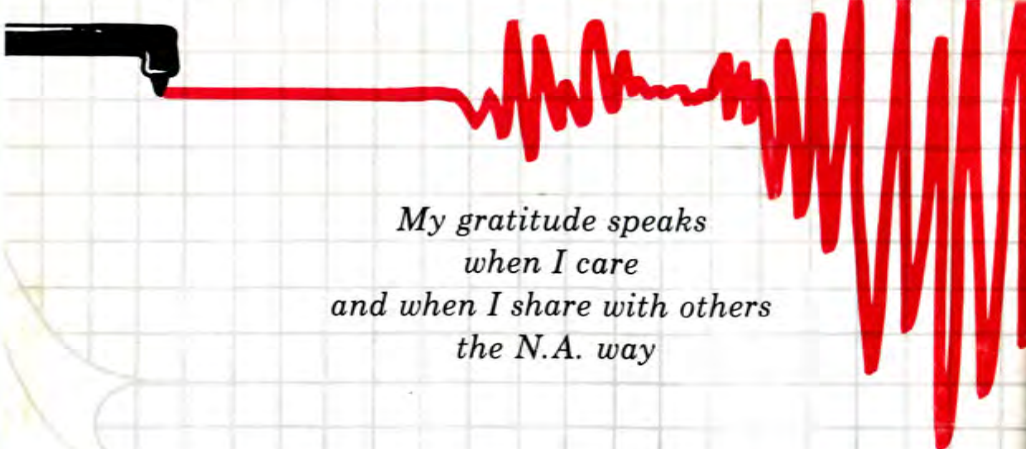
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3TEA

The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving 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.
6. 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.
11. 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.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Twelve Traditions reprinted for adaptation by permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.



*My gratitude speaks
when I care
and when I share with others
the N.A. way*



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 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 belong to N.A.—there are no fees or dues. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using drugs. 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 N.A., see your local phone directory, or write us at the address inside.