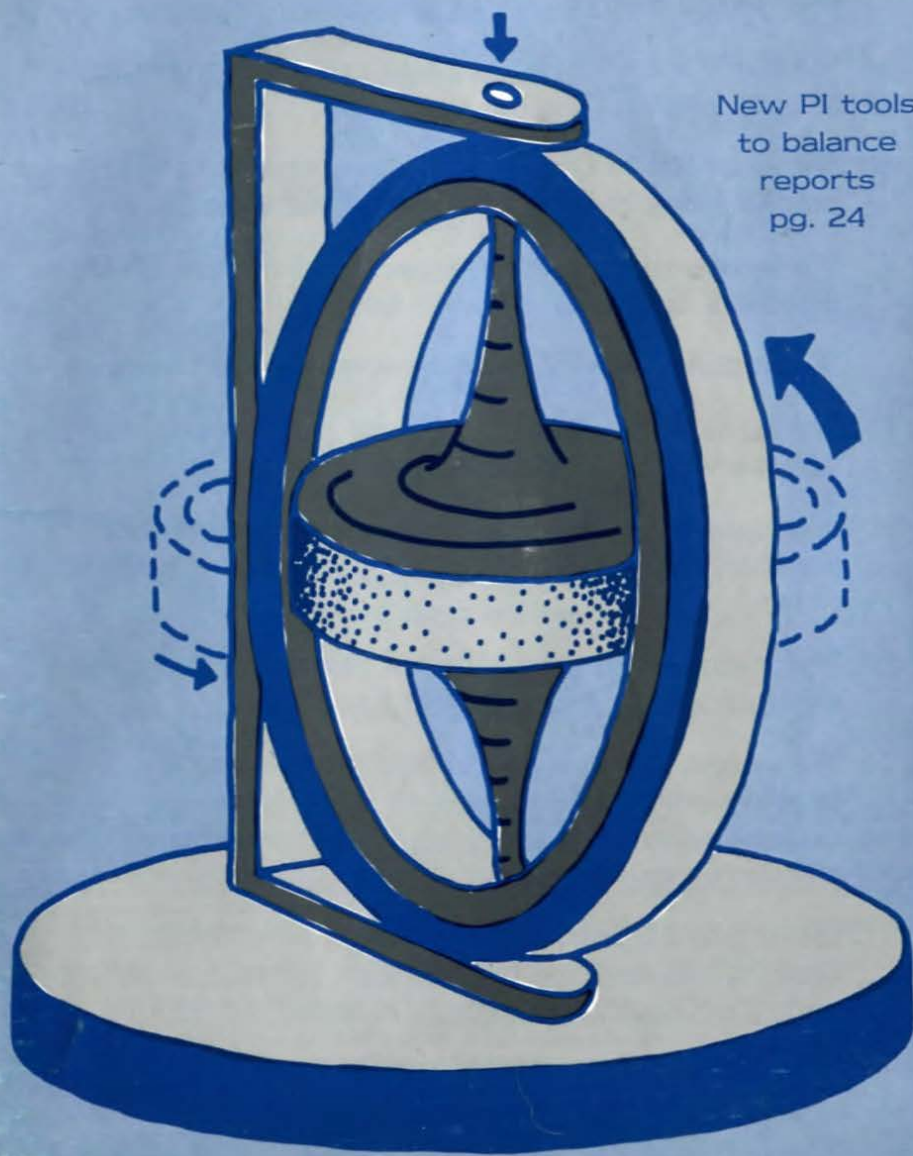


THE N.A.Way[®]

M A G A Z I N E

January 1991

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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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Whose hands?

Thanks to whomever coined the phrase, "keep coming back no matter what," I've been a member of our program since 1982. I've had the opportunity to come back twice.

The most difficult areas for me to really surrender were my resistance to a higher power—called God in my case, and to ask you directly for what I might need. Well, at the twentieth World Convention of N.A. I was able to get through this difficulty that I have been having for eight years. I would like to share this with you.

As a kid I always believed in God and I remember loving Him when I was very young. As I got older, this love began to diminish and eventually it terminated. How could the nuns hit me so hard just for talking and then tell me God loves me? How could my father curse at my mother and throw her to the ground? Where was God? How could I, as an innocent kid, end up a heroin addict in New York City? Finally, how could my daughter (I have four), be born paralyzed from her waist down, forever? After this I knew there was no God. Not anywhere!

I lived for six years knowing that there was no God and, wow, did I use this to use. When I arrived in 1982, I started the steps. Step One—period. For the next seven years all I really did was Step One. I suppose this is why I relapsed twice. Anyhow, one year ago I decided I would find a higher power. It was time! I heard someone in a meeting say that his higher power was every addict in the room. I thought "Yeah—me too." So now I was able to have a higher power—all of you. A few months ago I heard a member say that while in bed one night she felt her Higher Power put his arms around her and comfort came over her. She actually felt God touch her. Wow! Imagine that. After hearing that I knew my Higher Power was you all and I felt comfort. But when I pray to God through you I can't physically feel it.

Here's where it changes.

September 1, 1990 was my thirtieth birthday, and due to my pending divorce and being miles apart from my four kids and ex-wife, they forgot me. For the first time in my adult life, my family didn't sing happy birthday to me. I even called them from the convention so they might sing to me. They were too busy sleeping and getting ready to go out to the store. Well, I felt pain like I never felt before in my life. Since I experience my feelings now—not hiding them, I did what didn't come naturally in the old days. Since I was at the World Convention, I decided to take me and all my pain to a meeting. Any meeting was O.K. I just needed to be with you and not alone with my pain. I ended up in the workshop called "More Will Be Revealed."

Would you believe the speaker talked about the pain involved in his past divorces and how we can share our pain here in our program. When he finished open sharing was announced. After one speaker I stood up to the mike at the back of the room.

As I began to openly share my pain and loneliness I felt a pair of hands on my shoulders. I was paralyzed. I couldn't turn to see who it was. I just couldn't. All I know is that it felt good. I felt comfort for the first time in so long. As the tears started rolling down my face someone started singing "Happy Birthday," and it was quickly followed by two-hundred voices. After the singing, thirty people were in line to hug me. I truly

loved every hug that I received. I was hugged so much it began to hurt, but it was a good hurt. On that day I hit a real emotional bottom, which forced me to ask for help instead of asking for a drug. I took a chance, and guess who showed up for me? Two-hundred or so wonderful addicts and members of our fellowship, which is my home—my family.

I also think one other showed up that day: my Higher Power (God). He put his hands on my shoulders. Whoever belonged to those hands, I thank you and wanted to let you know that God has truly come to me—through you. I "physically" felt him for the first time in my life.

Gary G., Utah



Recovering in Sweden

I am a recovering addict in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous in Stockholm, Sweden.

I have had six weeks of vacation from work during my first year in recovery. Most people outside the fellowship would think I was crazy. Five of these weeks were spent in a treat-

ment center for drug addiction and the last one I just spent doing my first Fourth and Fifth Step with my sponsor.

While writing my inventory I felt almost nothing when my "deep dark secrets" surfaced. I had to share them in my Fifth Step and was worried that it would become just "simply a reading of Step Four" with my sponsor. Since "worrying is a lack of faith" I decided to trust the God of my understanding and go on. When I sat down in front of my sponsor I knew everything would be just fine. As I started to share the things that I felt most ashamed of having done I had to pause because I felt all tied-up. In that pause (I do talk a lot) he just said one sentence and I experienced the feelings. I started crying and I was crying over me.

I was there when it happened. I did those things to me, not only to the people I had hurt. I had hurt myself the most. I felt as if that one sentence had pulled out a plate of steel separating my head from my guts. I walked out of my sponsor's house on light feet. I felt so good. I felt like I had thrown a rucksack off my back.

The following day I went to the convention in Uppsala, just north of Stockholm, that our ASC and the group in Uppsala had arranged for the weekend. What a thrill. One hundred and three people registered and the countdown showed our total clean time to be one hundred and twenty-three years, eleven months and seven days. The fellowship in Sweden is only four years old and today there are over twenty meetings in

the eastern area alone. During the convention I received several spiritual gifts. Two of them were special to me. For the first time I accepted to be someone's sponsor. Secondly a woman I vaguely recognized walked up to me. With a spark in her eyes she said: "You were the first one who talked to me at my first N.A. meeting six months ago." It turned out she now had sixty days clean. I could feel that her program worked. I felt elated over the gifts and more, I was able to receive them.

I am forever grateful to all the addicts in N.A. from the first group in 1953, over every link in the chain that finally reached me, to every newcomer yet to walk into these rooms. I am not ashamed anymore.

K.G., Sweden



Taking my own advice

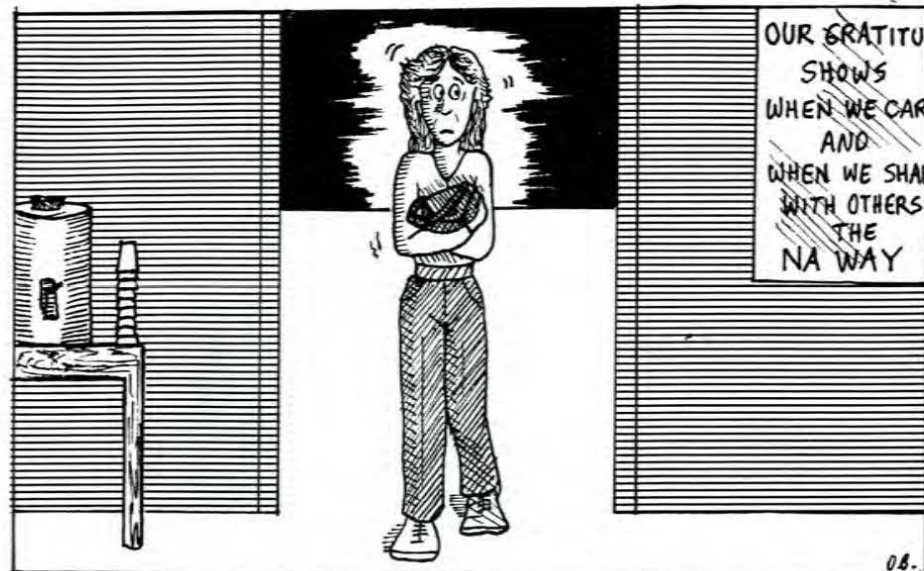
Here it is the eve of my tenth birthday. For me, a bright new decade is dawning. So why am I depressed? After ten years of recovery, shouldn't I be full of enthusiasm and hope? My ego is pleased that now it can count my recovery in double digits, but is this all there is?

I know I am not "recovered" yet. Sometimes, like now, I wonder if I'm even still recovering. It is possible to stand still or go backwards. That's what it feels like I've done—gone

backwards. My father used to call me "Wrong Way Corrigan." Maybe I'm buying into "parent tapes" again. Perhaps, unknown to me, I am getting stuck in self-pity again. (Same as addiction—I'm always the last to know.) What would I tell a sponsee if she felt like this? "Write a gratitude list," that's what I'd say.

I remember the first time a sponsee suggested I "take my own medicine." We had been talking on the phone at a time when I was feeling down. She not only had the gall to suggest that I write a gratitude list, she phrased it in exactly the words I had used with her a week before! I couldn't help but recognize myself speaking through her, so I took my suggestion. And you know what? It worked!

Okay. Here, now, today, what am I grateful for? The word NOTHING resounds in my head. Knowing that this is not true I tell myself, "first things first," and immediately I feel grateful for the slogans, those little gems of wisdom that we can use even when



our channels are clogged with negativity. Good beginning; what else am I grateful for? I am grateful to be nine years three hundred and sixty-four and a half days clean. That thought stops me cold.

Ten years ago today, November 9, 1980, I was loaded. I was at a party. I knew, absolutely knew, that I was an addict, that I had to quit, and that I was afraid to try. What I didn't know was that the decision had already been taken out of my hands. When I woke up the next morning, hungover and sick, it occurred to me that the only way to stop using was just not to pick up the next drug. Simple, but not easy. And so, for the first time in many years, I didn't roll my morning joint. I didn't go to a meeting, either. It was uncomfortable, practically unbearable, and I managed this solitary, white-knuckle abstinence—from all drugs—for exactly two weeks. Then, overcome with anger, fear, frustration, guilt, all the myriad pains of with-

drawal real and fancied, I forced myself to go to the Narcotics Anonymous meeting. I knew where it was. I had been twice before—once in April and once in September, but only to please my sister. This time I was most definitely there for myself. I felt terrible and cried through most of the meeting.

I am grateful I don't feel like that anymore. I am glad that the mental/spiritual/emotional anguish of early recovery has been replaced with love, faith, acceptance and forgiveness. Of course, I'm not always that serene, like today for instance. But today I feel I have achieved my childhood ambition—to be happy. It's true. While other kids were wishing on stars and birthday candles for new dolls and bicycles, I was asking for happiness. And I never told anyone, so my wish would come true.

I am grateful that I'm not still a child; I don't just mean physically either. I am grateful that finally I am

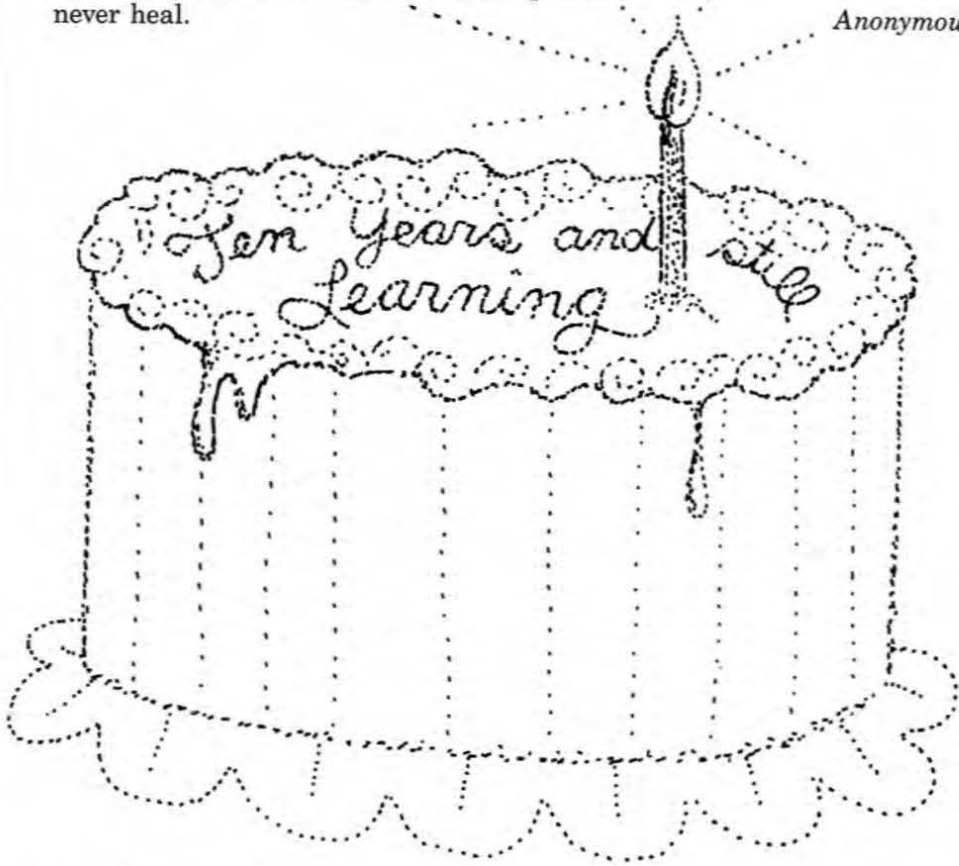
growing up. I now know that I cannot always have my own way, that I am not the center of the universe, that I'm not bad, nor weak, nor morally defective. Paradoxically, with this maturity has come the ability to laugh and play and have fun. I used to think that's what getting loaded was all about, but today I realize the drugs were doing it, not me. Subtly, powerfully, they created a buffer between me and my own feelings—happy and sad—so that all I ever felt was stoned. It didn't matter if I was laughing or crying, I couldn't really feel it. I was a robot going through the motions of living. Inside I remained untouched and that meant I could never heal.

Today, I am grateful that I can feel. Even the bad times are better than being numb. And I am teachable. Instead of recycling the same old pain, I learn from my mistakes—at least some of them. I am grateful for that.

Well, I guess things aren't as bleak as I thought. I'm not the spiritual giant I wanted to be at ten years clean. I'm neither rich nor famous, but I like my life. I have friends all over the world. People trust me. I have served at all levels of N.A. service.

And best of all, I am me. In fact, I was the best me I could be today...and if you're best isn't good enough, you've offered it to the wrong person.

Anonymous



Relapse doesn't have to mean defeat

I came to my first Narcotics Anonymous meeting exactly ten years ago today. Since that time I have started my clean time over four times. I relapsed each time because I would set myself up by not talking about day-to-day problems. This would eventually cause enough stress and pain that I would either get injured or sick. Instead of doing what was suggested by other addicts, like letting someone else know I was taking a mood altering drug, I would get secretive and think I could control it. I realize today that I never fully surrendered and took a First Step. You would think after the second or third time I would figure out what I was doing wasn't working, but no, I would raise my hand in a meeting and be harder on myself than anyone else could ever be.

My new clean date is October 15, 1990, and this time I am doing something different. It was pointed out to

me that my way was not working and maybe I should try someone else's way. I am in a "relapse prevention" program for a month and I am so grateful for the support of the friends I have made in the last ten years. Also, to my Higher Power for giving me the willingness to take the First Step and surrender to this disease of addiction.

The most important things for me to do today are to share openly and honestly with my sponsor and the fellowship, and put my trust in God and remember I have a choice. I must remember not to "play God" and think I know what is best for me.

Today I can begin to break the cycle of relapse by following the spiritual principals of honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. The shame is not in relapsing, it is in relapsing and not coming back. Narcotics Anonymous is my family and I have other addicts in my life that love me no matter what. Thank you family, for not allowing me to buy into defeat and to "keep coming back."

P.E., California



Never alone

When I first came to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, I heard people tell their stories and talk about what they'd done or lost before they got here. Many had stolen, hooked or sold themselves on their way here. I remember leaving my first meeting wondering if I belonged, if I needed to go out and sink further because I still had my stuff. I'd only lost myself along the way.

In the days I've had in recovery I've watched others go from being unemployable to success in business; from owning the clothes on their backs to vast wardrobes; from isolation to busy, full lives. Again my own experience differs—professionally I was at the top of my field. My clothes, jewelry, and car were the best money could buy. I was a leader in my community, active in politics, charity and religious affairs. In my recovery, I've lost my health, my job, my ability to work. I still own my fancy car but can no longer drive, and on some days I can no longer think.

With all of this I could look to the

differences and feel apart, feel alone and isolated, but actually quite the contrary is true. Through the power of Narcotics Anonymous, the miracle of recovery as found in the principles of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, I've been given more than I've lost. I've found a Higher Power whom I can trust, a sense of self not riddled with guilt and shame, a pathway of spiritual growth and progress I can follow (mapped out simply enough that I don't confuse myself) and a community, a fellowship, of like-minded people who are driven by two needs—the need to stay clean, and to serve others.

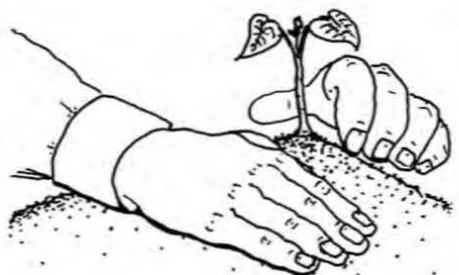
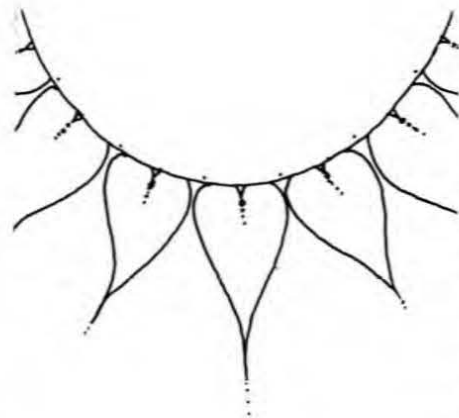
In this community I have discovered the joy of giving and receiving unconditional love, an experience I had previously shared only with my cats. I have felt free to be wrong, to let go of my judgements against others and to be set free of their judgements. I walk daily with my Higher Power and all of you on a path of learning and filled with gifts.

I live in state of grace, granted daily, so that in love I may experience all the joy of the universe that eluded me when my eyes were set on achievements that were measurable by worldly standards. And I can see so clearly the magnitude of the difference between my own puny efforts and the greatness of our efforts, when we walk with our Higher Power.

I'm grateful that I stayed around long enough that I could see that our pasts, our baggage, might look different, but that in recovery I never have to walk alone.

Susan W., CO





Identifying with Dorchester inmates

Dear fellow addicts,

Hi! my name is _____ and I'm a recovering addict. I live in Portland, Oregon, and your letter (*From inside addicts*, Dorchester Penitentiary, New Brunswick, September 1990) in the *N.A. Way* really hit home with me. I too, have been in the program since 1988 and have a story I would like to share with you.

Five years ago I lived in Seattle and my disease was at its worst. I literally used to live and lived to use and was in active insanity—I could tell you many horror stories about this phase of my life, but I'm not sure that would serve much purpose. I will say that I was arrested many times and let go, because I was pregnant and too sick with my disease—in such bad shape they were afraid to keep me—afraid of liability if something happened during withdrawal.

A month after my daughter was born (by an absolute miracle she was born healthy, in spite of the awful way I took care of us) I was again arrested and this time kept for thirty days, being let out two days before Christmas with the understanding that I was to check in with the courts and probation.

During this month I was sent to a minimum security jail with an emphasis on drug dependency. Part of the program was a film and two meetings daily. This was my introduction to Narcotics Anonymous. I sat through all of this without ever saying a word—I don't know if that was denial or fear or what—but that's what I did. I collected their literature and still have it today. The seed was planted.

Upon release the very first thing I did was use, because it had been taken from me and I felt I deserved it. Within the week I packed up and left Seattle, doing a "geographical"—leaving the legalities and disease behind, or so I thought.

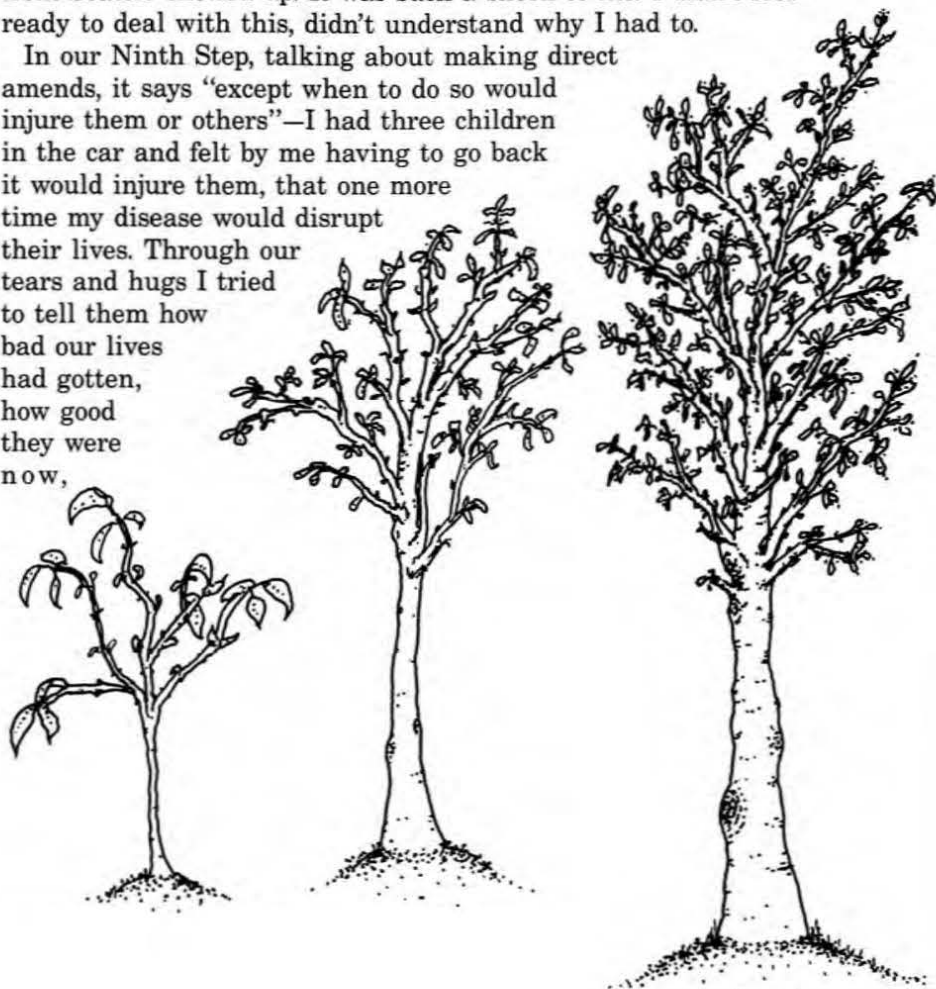
It took three years, another geographical, being hit by a car and un-

able to walk for a year and a half, changing my drug of choice to alcohol, and then six weeks of relapse with narcotics before it dawned on me that I needed help and something had to change. I was desperate and had nowhere else to turn when I picked up the phone and called Narcotics Anonymous, seeking my first meeting.

That was twenty-six months ago and I haven't had to medicate myself or use mind altering substances, one day at a time, since then.

Three weeks ago, however, I did have to face that legal wreckage of my past. Washington and Oregon are separated by a body of water, and I crossed that bridge to give someone a ride home. When I was getting ready to come back over it I got stopped by the Vancouver, Washington, police and the warrants from Seattle showed up. It was such a shock to me. I didn't feel ready to deal with this, didn't understand why I had to.

In our Ninth Step, talking about making direct amends, it says "except when to do so would injure them or others"—I had three children in the car and felt by me having to go back it would injure them, that one more time my disease would disrupt their lives. Through our tears and hugs I tried to tell them how bad our lives had gotten, how good they were now,





and how I must go back to clear this up so that I would be free of it and we could go forward, continue with our lives.

I had to pray for faith and pray for the willingness to surrender and carry out my Higher Power's will, often.

Through a lot of long distance phone calls and a lot of prayer and reaching out I made it through. I consider this a gift, that I could once again see the value of our program, the importance of a sponsor and an N.A. group—I got something from the people in this fellowship I had never received anywhere else and it was wonderful! They were really there for me and reminded me of just how much I have to be grateful for today.

I'd like to share about my ex-

perience in seeking the fellowship through those twelve days.

The first thing I did was ask the person who came to take my children (my nephew) to see that people in my N.A. phone-book were telephoned. I have two small N.A. phone-books and had one in my purse and one by my telephone at home. I wasn't sure if I would be allowed to have the one in my purse, but knew it was important that people who knew me be aware of what was happening. At that moment I didn't know if I would be gone for a long period of time or not.

I was allowed to have the phone book but not the other literature in my purse, the pamphlets and news-lines. I asked for a Basic Text and was told to wait until a library day. After

getting placed in a dorm I asked the guard again for a Basic Text, again being told no, but a woman in this dorm had one she let me use and it was comforting to have the familiar book with its words I needed. I returned it to her at four a.m., when I was told to roll up for the chain to Seattle.

Upon getting to Seattle I sent kites requesting a book and asked repeatedly about meetings. It took five days to get a Basic Text and eleven days to get to a meeting. I want to say that in all my time in N.A. I had not been so long without a meeting and certainly had not been without the literature. I turned to H.P. and the telephone. I tried to call the hot-line, but it was always recorded messages so a collect call was impossible to make.

The meeting I finally made it to was A.A., and I am grateful it was there, however I had never needed, before this time, to go outside of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous because I have always found what I needed here.

Also, since I came into recovery, I had not been so face to face with my disease. I worked hard at meditation one afternoon because I felt I was at a snapping point with all the constant disease talk, the plans and talk of the high these women were going to have when they got out, the crimes they'd done for their disease, and the highs and high times they'd had finding their way into that jail.

I don't know what your experience with seeking the fellowship has been—only that getting outside support has been infrequent—I think it's

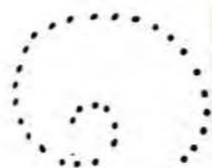
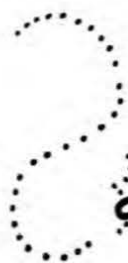
real important that you shared your needs with the fellowship—we need to know that and be aware of what's going on—or what isn't.

I'll pray for you all up there in Canada and hope that in your area you'll receive the support we all so desperately need. I hope that someone will write back—I would love to correspond. Is it okay to send literature? I get newlines from four areas and would be glad to make copies and mail them up to you. For me it's always so good to receive word from the fellowship by mail and it's good for me to share this, too.

**'I had to pray
for faith
and pray for
willingness...'**

Our fellowship needs to be available to all of us. Upon re-reading this letter I see that I did a lot of talking about me and a twelve day experience—I hope that doesn't seem insensitive to the longer term struggles you all have had to endure, it's only that that's all I've got—I'm very open to hearing what you've got to say.

Sandra N., OR



Holiday vigil

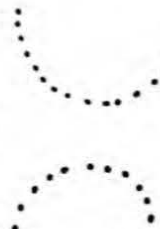
I got clean the twenty-sixth of November, 1986; and, through the grace of God, I hope to celebrate four years in a couple of weeks. Time goes so fast when you get clean!

I remember when I first moved out here to Arizona I had been clean about two weeks and was living with my parents, and I was pretty insane. I had just relapsed after seven months of staying clean in isolation. Being isolated for that period of time without seeing anyone but my family, I was starting to go crazy. I learned from people in Narcotics Anonymous that the most important thing to do when I got out of a treatment center was to go to meetings. But I didn't do it. I hadn't been to a meeting in almost six months.

I came out to Arizona with my parents to visit my sister. God, I was in

such fear! I was afraid to go out of the house. I was afraid to go to the store. I was afraid to go anywhere—let alone, to a meeting where I didn't know anyone! But deep down, I knew that what I had to do was take the initiative and get myself to a meeting. By this time I was finally ready and willing to do whatever it took! So, I called the help-line.

I remember the first meeting I went to. I was so scared that I was shaking, and I couldn't look anyone in the face. I sat down in the circle around a campfire and someone reached out and welcomed me. Boy, was I scared! After the meeting, I ran. I just didn't feel a part of and I was too scared to talk to anyone. But, the next day I came back, and I continued to come back, because I had nowhere else to go.



I started to feel a little bit more comfortable as the days went by. I started talking to more and more people. This was right around Christmas time and there were a lot of N.A. activities going on. They had marathon meetings going on. Someone suggested that I go and hang out with the people in the program. As uncomfortable as this was, I believe it was real important for me to go to N.A. activities during this time of the year. The holidays had always been really painful and depressing for me. But by surrounding myself with other addicts at meetings and events, I was able to stay clean through this time of the year.

I remember celebrating one year clean on Thanksgiving Day, in that same circle around the fire. And I remember the gratitude that I felt

inside—I started to cry while I was sharing. After the meeting, my sponsor invited me to Thanksgiving dinner at his house.

And now here it is—almost Thanksgiving, again. As time has gone by, I look forward to spending the holiday season with my family and good friends. I have so many things to be thankful for today, especially thankful for those first people who reached out to me. That is why the newcomer is the most important person in our fellowship. We have all been in their shoes. So remember to reach out to all of our members during the holiday season.

Thank you all for reaching out to me.

Don F., AZ

Sponsorship

My first sponsor was a wonderful woman who had many years of clean time. Since I still viewed women as a threat in my early recovery, I was attracted to her maturity and wisdom, but mainly I knew that she didn't pose any competition for me. When I got to N.A., I felt that many of the things I had done in my using were so terrible that I wasn't able to talk to anyone about them. She had done many of the things I had done, and that planted in me the first seeds of trust. When she moved away, God put someone very special in my life, my second sponsor.

She was the girlfriend of my best male friend in N.A. I learned a valuable lesson from her: I learned to risk. She risked telling me how she was feeling, and I, in turn, was able to learn more about her than might have happened in years of acquaintance if she hadn't risked being honest with me.

When I moved to a new state to attend college, I changed sponsors three times before I found a relationship with a sponsor that worked. I met a woman at a meeting who was also a student, and I asked her to sponsor me.

While I was going through a sepa-

ration from my relapsed husband, I was particularly angry. My sponsor would listen patiently to my harangues for several minutes before gently steering me back to looking at me, and my feelings.

One day I called her, furious, taking my husband's inventory. She helped me to focus less on my husband's actions and more on my own feelings.

Mired in financial and emotional difficulties, she later fired all her "sponslings." Her priority became her own recovery. I had no resentment toward her, and in fact, the lessons I learned from her I will carry with me throughout my recovery.

Today I have a sponsor who is teaching me the valuable lesson of self-acceptance. When I am feeling particularly lacking, she helps me understand that what I'm going through isn't a good/bad issue, it's a learning experience.

I recently moved again, and no doubt the long-distance phone bills will eventually demand that I find a sponsor locally. I'm not worried, though, for I know that when I am ready, God will put someone in my life to teach me the lessons I need to know for this phase of my recovery.

I've had the privilege of sponsoring many wonderful women in this program, and from them, too, I have learned valuable lessons. They, more than anything, have helped me through the rocky times in my recovery. Just as my sponsors did with me, I have learned to risk being vulnerable with them, and in turn, we both grow. I can't think of anything more rewarding.

Anonymous

The broad perspective

Conference resolution

Boards and committees of the fellowship seem resolved to kick off the new year with evidence of a commitment to a 1991 WSC agenda process that lends itself more to discussion than intricate parliamentary interaction.

A *World Fellowship Report* is in production that will, hopefully, complement the change. Both the *Conference Agenda Report* and the *Fellowship Report* are scheduled to be enroute to the fellowship by the end of the third week of January.

The 1991 *Conference Agenda Report* will be familiar in design, including regional motions, but the *Fellowship Report* will also include "issues" that have been submitted for WSC panel presentations and discussions. Taken

as preparatory information for the fellowship's representatives, the two documents will set the stage for a revamped schedule of business during WSC 1991.

Plans now are for the "old business" sessions, compartmentalized according to board or committee concerned, to be dedicated to the disposition of motions introduced or carried over by WSC 1990. "New business," i.e., motions hitting the floor of the conference for the first time, will be presented during a period, or periods, set aside for that specific purpose.

In previous conferences, especially WSC 1990, the introduction of new business unfamiliar to participants, appeared to slow down the disposition of the agenda.

The final plan for the schedule of WSC 1991 will be provided in the both the C.A.R. and the January *Fellowship Report*, but tentative plans are to begin the conference on Saturday, April 20, with a forum on international issues. Formerly, the conference was begun late Sunday, so this amounts to adding almost two days to the WSC. This WSC commencement forum will be hosted by the BOT.

At this time plans are to begin each board or committee's "compartment" of the annual conference agenda sessions with a forum for the discussion of issues that have been voiced by regions or their representatives during the past year. Such issues or concerns already articulated will be included in the January *Fellowship Report*, so that representatives and their areas and groups might have the opportunity for some dialogue

before those concerns are presented as "new business." New motions, likely to be heard during the latter part of the conference, will then have had the scrutiny of a broader part of the fellowship before they are introduced for action or commitment.

A spokesperson for the admin committee said "The early fellowship report will identify panel presentations and describe subject topics for discussion. It will list all the issues received from the regions.

"We're trying to let participants get a true sense of what is going to happen. It is a sort of pre-conference summary, a supplement.

"Admin is proposing a different direction for the conference, to get away from motions and to begin the process of discussions as the way changes are made. This is a transition year."

Another participant in agenda format planning said "The idea is to provide a method for introducing issues of importance without there having to be motions, amendments, etc., just to be heard."

On balance, ballast, and the bottom line

The broad perspective is a vehicle of the *N.A. Way* designed to regularly carry out the dictates of the 2nd paragraph of the magazine guidelines in the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*.

That paragraph begins: "A section shall be added to the *N.A. Way* which would report newsworthy happenings around the fellowship" and goes on to include "...local events in various

areas that may be of interest to the fellowship as a whole."

One of those local events in various areas that may be of interest to the fellowship as a whole is probably getting a little tiresome to many members, but is newsworthy.

On Monday, October 29th, the World Service Conference Administrative Committee, the World Service Board of Trustees, and the Board of Directors of the World Service Office voted unanimously (none abstained) to support the filing of a federal copyright infringement suit to restrain the further illegal production or distribution of bootleg *N.A.* literature.

On Friday, November 30, 1990, the suit was filed.

The letter informing the fellowship of the suit on behalf of our written message is news. The legal and spiritual wheels are turning.

The cover of this month's *N.A. Way*, (though the text alludes to a P.I. committee effort to balance misinformation) was originally designed to graphically represent the return of balance to our pages. The picture is a gyroscope, a device that uses complimentary forces to achieve equilibrium.

The sections of the magazine are back in balance, after the venting displayed with last month's Viewpoint focus. This month we have a little healthy irritation in the back, some news and humor in the middle, and the return of 16 pages dedicated to basic recovery in the Meeting In Print.

Without sensationalism, unmerited fanfare, or apology, the last two para-

graphs of our boards' and committees' most recent statement is reprinted here, in support of one fellowship, recovering from one disease:

"The courts can help *N.A.* enforce its rights to its own literature. But, while current copyright infringers are being brought to trial, one by one, others are being persuaded to begin new bootleg publishing operations. The courts alone will not be able to halt unauthorized alteration and printing of your Basic Text. In this matter, only *N.A.* unity can preserve our common welfare.

"Should Narcotics Anonymous remain one fellowship, with one written message? Or should we become many fellowships, with many messages? The officers of the World Service Conference, the trustees, the directors of the WSO, the courts—none of them can preserve the integrity of *N.A.*'s written message if *N.A.* itself does not want its integrity preserved. Please give this matter your thoughtful, prayerful consideration. Talk about it with your sponsor, your friends, your group, your area and regional committees. In the final measure, you will decide the fate of Narcotics Anonymous."

Canadian tax

Effective this month a seven percent "Goods and Services Tax" goes into effect in Canada. It will take a few weeks to get all our *N.A. Way Magazine* subscription forms and cards revised, but the fact is seven cents per dollar needs to be tacked on to the rate for subscriptions from that country, starting now.

There will be a one-week grace period during which we will go ahead and start annual subscriptions and absorb the buck-and-seven-cents loss, but after that we'll send you a note reminding you of the change and asking whether you'd like to consider it an 11-month subscription or remit the difference.

On typos and artists

Those of you who search for meaningful symbols on album covers, or make it a point to find the little rabbit on the front of men's magazines, are probably still wondering if the extra "r" in *The Broad Perspective* title last month was a hidden message, perhaps understood only by addicts from New York. The broad perspective is one of the last things produced for each monthly issue and so is more vulnerable to last minute error. We simply inserted a working computer-file where a final should have been. Everything else in the column, good and bad, was as intended. Chastisement and razzing continue to pour in. To avoid repeating such mistakes an extra proofing, by an extra set of eyes, is now a standard procedure.

The magazine production is also now being pleasantly embellished by the work of two additional graphic artists. One is an old friend of the magazine from years gone by who has agreed to render a piece every month or so. The article *Coming Together*, page 16, December Issue, was well portrayed by that San Diego addict's pen.

Completely new to the pages of the

N.A. Way, but not new to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous, the artist who produced the *Never Alone* graphic, page 11 of this issue; and the planting and nurturing graphics for *Identifying with Dorchester Inmates*, pages 12-13 is hereby welcomed and already appreciated.

Our two mainstay artists, who have been contributing during the past couple of years, will probably be with us as long as they are willing. The additional artwork is simply an attempt to get more variety in each issue.

Home group

Speaking of artwork, the return of *Slugg* and the *Home Group* series as a regular feature has generated more elated response from the fellowship than anything since the Fourth Edition was replaced.

With the last month's issue, on page 11, and this month's effort, page 23, some of you newcomers are getting your first peek at the insight of the character *Denilah*.

Denilah has been a member of *Home Group* for some time, but while our main channel to *Home Group*, *Slugg*, was lost to (we hope!) his last relapse, we were cut off from news of his associates. Here's a "welcome back" for *Denilah*, and thanks for her experiential January sharing. *Slugg* will be back next month. Now, what could be happening to him in *February*? Hmmmm?

Help wanted, 2nd cry

By now your area secretary should be in possession of the rather large

package of multiple subscription forms that we have sent to begin the 1991 "Group Drive."

If you don't hear anything about it during the next month or so, please give us a call, collect, at (818) 780-3951 and we'll make sure the forms are available to you.

Another major magazine need is for review panel members. Right now we have seven, with just one in the pool. Things will get tight as review panel members drop out. The process is to get yourself nominated on the floor of the WSC. You don't have to be present to be nominated for this position. Mail-in nominations may be sent to the magazine and will be passed on to the conference chairperson. The conference chair makes the nominees' names known to the WSC participants, who then determine the review panel pool's composition. Once accepted into the pool the likelihood of being asked to serve is great. At WSC 1990 only 11 names were submitted and all but one of those accepting nomination have been asked to participate in reviewing manuscripts. That one will probably be tagged soon. If you have an interest, don't be shy. Let it be known to your trusted servants.

A knowledge of where to put the commas, etc., is valuable, but the main thing is a willingness to go over the material and express whether you like it, approve of its use, and how it makes you feel. A working knowledge, and respect for, the steps and traditions of Narcotics Anonymous is the main ingredient.

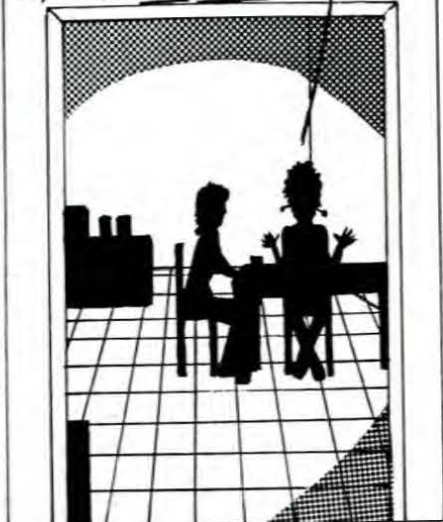
Home Group

Denilah's experience

I'VE BEEN, LIKE, GETTING SO CLOSE TO MY GOD, SERENA...



YOU KNOW... IT'S LIKE, I WAS CUTTING KIWIFOR MY RICE CAKE, AND-I JUST KNEW THAT GREEN IS, LIKE, A GOD COLOR...



AND LIKE, WHEN I ATE THE SEEDS* IT WAS LIKE, I THOUGHT, THESE ARE THE SEEDS OF RECOVERY- AND I WAS EATING THEM- AND LIKE-I CRIED EVEN...



WELL, DENILAH... THAT IS A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON THE SECOND STEP...



Public Information

SETS ITS SIGHTS

A multi-faceted initiative by N.A.'s public information service workers may help dispel the myths that excite, but confuse, our observers, while more clearly marking the path to our door. Here's the plan...



Though *information* affects Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, relatively few addicts have ventured into the intricate area of service concerned with its purposeful distribution. That may be about to change.

Efforts to inform the public about N.A. are often guided by a "better safe than sorry" attitude, as individuals and committees attempt to find the line between attraction and promotion.

Indeed, one of the half-dozen current World P.I. Committee projects is a gathering of data and insight on our Eleventh Tradition, as it pertains to P.I. work. The committee is reported to have asked several members to study related policy questions, and it is possible this spring's world conference might direct increased attention for the matter.

Such events as a November, 1990, feature story in a southern U.S. newspaper, which included a full-face picture of a person attending an "open" N.A. meeting; or the discovery, by a law professional seeking recovery, that his anonymity had been compromised; dramatically point to our need to have and employ P.I. tools that protect as well as inform.

In working toward a solution to this kind of dilemma the Fall Issue of the *P.I. News* (a newsletter specifically dedicated to P.I. work) printed an individual opinion urging that open meeting formats "...always ask if non-addicts are present at the meeting, and in what capacity," and stating "The format for an open

meeting should inform those in attendance that visitors are, or might be, attending the meeting. This gives any addict who is uncomfortable the opportunity to leave and attend a closed meeting."

Although the opinion was printed in a *Viewpoint* column and was preceded with a clear statement that it did not represent the position of the WSC P.I. Committee or Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, it was followed by a request that ideas on the topic be forwarded to the P.I. committee through the WSO.

These happenings appear to be typical of growing concern throughout the fellowship to make better and more beneficial use of information to attract newcomers, as well as dramatizing the need to sharpen our collective wits about how we do it. A commitment to informing the addict who still suffers, without promotion or the compromising of anonymity, has existed among us to some degree since the first phone numbers were exchanged. That commitment is being quietly renewed, and perhaps even bolstered, by the public demand for knowledge about N.A.

Partly in response to that growing demand, a project now being discussed by P.I. people is the production of a broadcast quality film about N.A.

Although it is an idea that presents many obstacles (not the least of which is the unknown but sizable expense) such a standardized communications tool might amount

to a quantum leap in the abilities of local areas and groups to respond to requests for clear and generic information.

A regional P.I. chairperson contacted for this article noted he had been able to respond to only "three requests from correctional facilities and one school during the last three weeks," and added "There's a hundred more that want us to come." Obviously supportive of the film project this P.I. guy noted the difficulty of gathering several addicts together during a workday to participate in a presentation, and how that might be unnecessary if the requesting agency could simply buy and regularly use a comprehensive film.

The film is as yet little more than a gleam in the eyes of the six-member working group, but the WSC P.I. committee apparently has enough hope for the effort to have allowed the team to do some preliminary studies and brainstorming. "At first we were aiming at facilities," said one member, but after a full committee discussion during the October WSC workshop the band was directed to "widen our focus to include anyone interested in N.A."

From another proponent of attempts to use more communications technology in P.I. work came these remarks:

"Perhaps the most significant concern in public information work has been our difficulty in painting an accurate picture of our program to those who write about us. A report-

er cannot be expected to understand our organization, our service structure, or the process of recovery. We have been quoted out of context. Our drug stories have been sensationalized, with little emphasis on the miracle of recovery.

"Perhaps some of these problems have to do with the way we conduct ourselves, but for the most part, they are simply the result of a reporter's failure to grasp our unique structure and way of life.

"Doing the reporting ourselves would shed an altogether different light on what N.A. is all about. We can correct misconceptions about our understanding of God or a Higher Power. We can explain why dependence on a power greater than ourselves doesn't make us weak-willed individuals who are unable to function outside Narcotics Anonymous.

"Films are used in schools, on television, in treatment centers, in employee assistance training, seminars, etc.

"A twenty-minute film about our program could portray the touching moments in our recovery that come from sponsorship, the stupendous changes that take place in our individual lives, and the awesome scope of our international development.

"Although it might be difficult to convey such principles as honesty, open-mindedness and willingness in a visual image, we could dramatize the impact of the program in our lives. An individual's employability, reunion with family, and accep-

tance of responsibilities can easily be expressed on film.

"Images of hilarity as an N.A. speaker relates some comical effects of addiction, the excitement of a clean-time countdown, or the warmth and welcome a newcomer receives, combined with a narrative that carries a positive message of hope, would go a long way toward telling those outside our fellowship what it's like to be a member. The impact we could make can be assured of dramatic results.

"Striving to improve the image of our fellowship in the public's eyes has become a priority. The more respect we gain, the better our chances of attracting new members."

Just how to make that "impact" is already the subject of much input being sent to the working group. A project spokesperson said there would be "no stars" used if the current thinking prevails.

A combination of computer generated graphics, pastoral scenery, and anonymous non-addict actors, with the basic N.A. program being described through a general "voice-over," has the most support among the folks now talking it up.

Other P.I. Projects

Input is still being received, and sought, from a survey the P.I. committee undertook last year to compile experience in operating phonelines. Especially needed, according to a WSO staffer who handles the calls and correspondence, are *detailed* success stories from

phoneline committees that have used 800 numbers or "voicemail." Many committees are voicing concerns that they feel are not adequately addressed in the current *Guide to Phoneline Service*.

Rural Public Information

As a result of a committee decision during the July 1990 WSC workshop a questionnaire has been developed to gather insight that will likely be used for the creation of a "Rural P.I. Kit."

Calculated to aide in P.I. work in "an area that is geographically large yet small in population," the flyer being distributed with the questionnaire inquires whether local P.I. is accomplished by ASC, RSC or group resources; whether deviations from *A Guide to PI* are being utilized and the results; how decisions are made about sharing one phoneline effort between several communities; and to what degree committees or chairpersons interact with their service counterparts.

Newsletter planned

Tentative plans have been made by the WSC P.I. Committee to produce a quarterly newsletter aimed at a professional readership. According to an article printed in the *Fall P.I. News*, "It appears, at long last, this project will be implemented shortly following the World Service Conference in April of 1991."

The article continues "The time is long overdue for the fellowship to

improve its relations with the professional community.

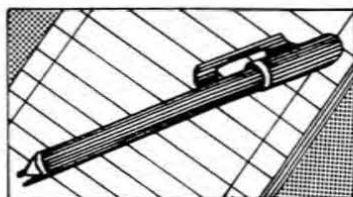
"The newsletter will focus on news about N.A., such as the publication of the French language Basic Text, international N.A. communities, and the growth and history of Narcotics Anonymous. We will inform professionals that N.A. is a dynamic fellowship where many addicts are finding recovery. We hope to improve N.A.'s image and increase referrals to our fellowship. We will be putting forth a positive message that information about our program is important to the professional. We plan to report news about our fellowship in a straightforward and professional manner.

"The newsletter is tentatively titled "N.A. Update," and will be an ongoing commitment, once begun. It will be available for use by area and regional P.I. committees in any of their efforts. Many committees are now attending health fairs, conferences, and community meetings. The newsletter should prove beneficial in those efforts. Any input, ideas, suggestions or constructive criticism are welcomed. Please send your thoughts to the WSC P.I. Committee c/o the WSO P.I. Coordinator."

Multi-Regional learning days

The British Columbia Region will host a Public Information "Learning Days" event February 24-25, 1991. Contact B.C. RSC at P.O. Box 1695-Station A, Vancouver, BC V6C 2P7 for more information.

Viewpoint



Pro-smoker

As a cigarette smoking addict depending on the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous for what's left of my life, I read *N.A. Way* letters and hear talk on the subject of smoking with a wide range of feelings. Everything from cynical humor to honest fear and a desire to be completely abstinent goes through my head and heart when I encounter elements of the debate.

I have no compunction about the fact that nicotine is a deadly drug. Sugar is also a mood and mind-altering addictive substance. I have read several distinguished papers that convince me turkey meat is a sedative. Anyone with the brains to notice nicotine is a drug is probably also alert enough to realize the colors of the walls in our meeting halls affect moods, as well as does the beat and timbre of the music at our dances.

The care-taker mentality that seems rife in our culture, both within and without N.A. meeting halls, has ample fuel for expression for the foreseeable future. After we have dealt with cigarettes and whiskey and wild,

wild lovers as threats to each other's well-being, will we have monitors to discover who's eating ice cream or turkey to cope with life's difficulties?

Of course, I know I am taking this to absurd extremes.

Sometimes, as I stare through the pall enshrouding Los Angeles trying to see the hole in the ozone layer, the "no smoking" signs do seem a bit ludicrous. It's like if we are powerless over the economy, we can at least beat the children.

My decision to quit injecting substances into my veins, inhaling most noxious fumes, or ingesting by other means many other drugs, was a good decision. I find it offensive that many people who paint themselves drug addicts after having been impressed by the abstinence band-wagon attempt to diminish the importance of years out of jail and other trouble by pointing the finger at smoking.

Given a choice I believe I will quit smoking. Haven't we sufficiently proven that choice is the only way? These decisions cannot be made for us by others. We can be beaten, locked up or preached at, but until we are ready, we don't quit. Please, get off our backs.

Having said these things let me now address what is the valid concern of non-smokers, which is "passive smoking." While I believe the statis-

tics about health risks associated with non-smokers in proximity to smokers are likely as useful as statistics have historically proven to be, smokers do not have the right to effectively add to the pollution their neighbors endure. I support non-smoking meetings and attend them. I generally do not leave the room for a smoke break.

But after the meeting, between the pristine hall and the traffic passing the factory next door, don't tell me my recovery is negated by smoking.

Anonymous

Anti-smoker

I am writing to express my concern about an issue I feel is affecting N.A. as a whole.

The issue is cigarette smoking. Constantly it comes up that each meeting is autonomous, and therefore each meeting can hold one group conscious after another and decide for themselves whether or not it will be a smoking meeting. Since World Services does not take a stand one way or the other, smoking must be fine. However, each meeting being autonomous does not give each meeting the right to define "clean" or what drugs they will use at meeting level.

The fact that N.A. as a whole is not taking a stand is passing on a particularly loud message to the members, a very scary message. I find it very frightening that N.A. is so resistant to change and taking a stand on potentially controversial issues. As a

fellowship, we could become totally ineffective.

The thing that frightens me the most with the smoking issue is that it is an addiction issue that has been swept under the rug for far too long. Addiction issues are as N.A. related as they come. The price is too high to continue not dealing with this issue. The federal government, who is not quick about anything, has finally made a stand on this subject. Smoking is now medically, socially, and finally even governmentally acknowledged as an addiction. An addiction that, when used, affects not only the user but those around them, in very detrimental ways.

The arguments I hear for smoking having a place in N.A. are very sad and often have the very same self serving ring as those I used when I was using. I hear things such as, "If they don't like it they can go some place else." To this I respond, if we are sending anyone seeking recovery away from a meeting, it is not a N.A. meeting.

There are those who state, "It is legal, and it won't put me in jail getting it." There are many forms of addiction that are legal and won't put us in jail getting them, such as alcohol, just to name one.

Although these manifestations of our addiction might be more socially acceptable, they are not any less deadly. The Basic Text tells us social acceptability is not the same as recovery.

Telling those who feel as I do to simply go to non-smoking meetings is not an acceptable solution. Most non-smoking meetings are non-smoking

because the meeting halls they meet in do not allow smoking, not because the group made a decision to offer a safe and supportive environment to those seeking abstinence from all drugs.

It is not that everyone who attends N.A. should quit smoking in order to remain a member. It is clear to most of us that no one quits any substance before they are ready. However, we are capable of not using these substances for the hour or so that a meeting lasts.

I think we, the members, better take a hard long look at what we want to be about. We are either "a program of complete abstinence" or we are not. We don't seem to have the luxury of picking and choosing which forms of addiction, or which drugs it is O.K. to use in meetings. Meetings are where we go to get the support needed to attain these goals, regardless of how long it may take us before we are ready. I pray that we all take some personal responsibility to see that the addicts of the future have an N.A. that is about what it says it is about. The N.A. opportunity to never have to use again, and finally, the avoidance of jail, institutions and death due to active addiction. If our trusted servants who serve us are not serving this purpose, who are they serving?

R.H., CO

OK w/cover text

I don't expect or particularly care for this letter to be published in full,

but I wanted to take you up on your request for supporters of the cover text to speak out. I spent three years involved in working on literature subcommittees, so I know and appreciate our policies for conference approval of literature. I understand the N.A. Way is not conference-approved (ed. note; though it is "conference-sanctioned.") and have no problem with that. I also like the cover statement, for reasons given below, and would like to suggest a simple solution for those who are upset that it is somehow impersonating our real literature. Change the title, maybe to simply "Narcotics Anonymous." It is sufficiently different from the approved "What Is N.A." that it need not, and perhaps should not, have the same title.

Currently I am serving as chair of a PI subcommittee, and I see how the N.A. Way can be a valuable tool for introducing people to our fellowship who may know very little about it, thus carrying the message to addicts who still suffer. Throughout the years I have been receiving the magazine, I always take my old issues to leave at a local treatment center or some other place addicts might read it. Those of us who have been here for some time understand how our disease of addiction permeates all areas of our lives, but newcomers can relate to people at meetings only because they abused drugs. We are here because drugs were a major problem in our lives, not because we shopped obsessively or ate compulsively or gambled too much.

Many NA members can't identify with my food addiction. Likewise,

many NA members don't consider nicotine to be a drug. If they did we would hand out a lot fewer chips for clean time! Although some people feel that they have put their problem with drugs behind them, and only have a

generic addiction to deal with today, this program is still here to help people who are addicted to drugs, and the use of that word is entirely appropriate in a publication such as yours.

E.J., GA

From our readers

Anonymous
C. 43
P. 40
P. 40

N.A. Way
Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA
91409

Will you chair the meeting?

That question is usually posed to someone at every meeting. It seems like a simple enough request, and most people are usually happy to comply. Many times I have seen the meeting turned over to the chairperson to have them say "I really don't have a topic and I don't want to call on anyone, so I'll just open the meeting up. . ." I believe that chairing a meeting is like any other service position and should be taken seriously. The chairperson usually sets the tone for the meeting. This is especially important in meetings where there are lots of new people. This is Narcotics Anonymous, where we deal with the disease of addiction, and the process of recovery. These people may be getting a mixed message about identification while in treatment, but when they come to NA I believe they should get a clear message.

The newcomer comes to NA to learn how to stay clean. If they have made it to NA, they already know how to use drugs. The primary purpose of each group is to carry the message of recovery. Let us not forget our primary purpose. Ultimately, I believe

the responsibility lies with the group. Let's stop railroading people into service positions without training them or letting them know what is required. It is the secretary's responsibility to choose a chairperson. Are they choosing people to chair who are able to share a message of recovery? It might help to choose a chairperson a week in advance, if possible. If they choose a new person to chair, are they explaining to them what a chairperson should do? It has been my experience that in meetings where there are many new people, if the chairperson states, "I'm going to call on some people, then at the end of the meeting we will open it up so that new people get a chance to share," the more experienced members can lead a discussion on recovery, not using. This is not to discount the new person, for as we all know, the new person is the most important person in the room and we need to hear their message too. Recovery takes time, and it takes time to get time. The group's responsibility is to provide an atmosphere of recovery.

L.M.C., WA

Why get involved in service?

I haven't been involved in the program for long, but I know that it works because I am clean today after sixteen years of active addiction. That is a miracle in itself. But there is a difference between being clean and recovery. It is more than just not using drugs. It requires work. Spiritual, mental, physical. No one said it would be easy. But for those who desire recovery and are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to attain a better life, the rewards are endless. You get out of it exactly what you put into it. Do nothing, and that is what you will get.

It never occurred to me to not get involved in service. I just looked around me at those who seemed to have good recovery, and learned from them. The people who I look up to in the program are involved in service and they are working the steps. They are doing the footwork. I figured, if it works for them, it will work for me. And it has. I spend less time doing service work than I ever spent looking for drugs, so there is really no reason to say "I don't have the time."

If you want to help, there will be something you can do. You could support a sub-committee. They always need help. You could go to meetings early and help set up chairs, or stay after and help with clean-up. The same things can be done at functions. All that is required is the desire to help and letting someone else know that you are willing.

The emotions I feel after a service meeting or doing something to help another addict are more powerful than any drug. It gives me a sense of

self-worth and importance that I could never achieve with drugs. I am grateful to those who have shown me the way and to NA for providing the opportunity to grow and become a productive member of society.

L.M.C., WA

Dear N.A. Way

Well it's been one year. One year clean from drugs. One year of not having to suffer, a day at a time. One year of happiness and freedom. One year of joy and laughter. One year of crying and feeling. Feeling pain, fear, resentment, anger, jealousy, and so on. One year of over four hundred meetings. One year of giving back that which was so freely given to me: a coffee commitment, Alt. GSR, H&I and working on the registration committee at Freedom Six. As well as going to the First Paris Convention, and the Eleventh East Coast Convention. A whole year of love through this wonderful fellowship of recovering addicts just like me. You all said it doesn't matter, what or how much, I use, or what I've done in the past, how much or how little I have, only what I want to do about my problem and how you can help. Well, you've done more than that for me N.A. You've given me my life, friends, family, hope, and a Higher Power of my understanding who has and will love me no matter what. Just as long as I don't pick up, make my meetings, and tell people who I am and what I'm feeling.

To my entire family of N.A. brothers and sisters I say I love you and I thank you. For just taking care of you. Because when you take care of you,

you take care of me. This is a "we" fellowship of no big I's and little U's, although some of us think there are. I do what I have to do for me first. Without me, I can't do anything.

Thank you N.A. I love you more than words can tell. Thank you to the Twelve Traditions. To me they go hand in hand with the steps.

Thank you for my first six steps. Especially number six. Miracles do happen. Thank you to my sponsor. I love you. You have helped me through moments I would have never thought to have gotten through myself. And thank you for your answering machine.

Thanks to my support group. You know who you are. And finally, thanks to you, *N.A. Way Magazine*, for helping me to help addicts all around the world by reading their words and sharing their pain and joy. For seeing I'm not alone. That everywhere, from church to church and house to house, we are everywhere

Henry O., NY

Comic corner

I have read and enjoyed our magazine since Narcotics Anonymous became my home in 1985. Over the years I have felt the urge to contribute, but until now had not followed through. I am uncertain if this type of material is appropriate for or even merits publication. Additionally, the format is copied from a popular late night television show and may violate some laws unbeknownst to me. Regardless of all these considerations, I hope this list at least brings a smile to your faces as it did to those of my

home group members. Keep up the good work, I'll see you at the mailbox.

Top Ten Reasons to Attend N.A. Regularly

- 1) Hear the most bizarre, unbalanced and amazing stories ever told and relate completely.
- 2) The coffee.
- 3) Meet interesting single people with at least two personalities and fall in love.
- 4) Narcotics Anonymous really needs the money.
- 5) The Simpsons is only on television once a week.
- 6) Stay in touch with the latest changes in group formats.
- 7) Basically, it's a jungle out there.
- 8) Get directions to the worst late-night restaurants in the area.
- 9) The coffee.
- 10) Check out the new fashions in men's and women's wear.

F.E.B., PA

Comin' up



ALASKA Mar. 8-10, 1991; 7th Annual Alaska Regional Convention; Clarion Hotel In Anchorage, Alaska; rsvn.s (800) 252-7466; Registration information write to; ARSCC VIII, P.O. Box 211995, Anchorage, AK 99521

CALIFORNIA: Mar. 7-10, 1991; Thirteenth Northern California Convention; Doubletree Hotel, Monterey; rsvn.s (408) 649-4511; NCCNA XII, P.O. Box 1826, Pittsburg, CA 94565

ENGLAND: Apr. 13-14, 1991; LRCNA2; Convention Committee would like to invite members (with a suggested minimum clean time of three years) to submit tapes to Programming Committee; Deadline January 14, 1991; Programming Committee, P.O. Box 417, London, ENGLAND, SW10 0RS

FLORIDA: Mar. 15-17, 1991; Florida Spring Service Break Conference II; Eden Roc Hotel, 4525 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida, 33140; rsvn.s (305) 531-0000 or (800) 327-8337; FSSBNA II, P.O. Box 011288, Miami, FL 33101

GEORGIA: Jan. 18-20, 1991; Peace & Recovery III; The Adventure Continues; Holiday Inn, 2155 Gordon Highway, Augusta, Georgia 30909; information call (404) 733-2073; CSRANA III, P.O. Box 15863, Augusta, GA 30909

2) Feb. 21-24, 1991; Building Foundations in Recovery; Jekyll Island, GA; At the Convention Centers on the Island; Holiday Inn (912) 635-3311 and Jekyll Inn (912) 635-2351; Information call (404) 339-4780 or (404) 953-1217; GRCNA X, P.O. Box 1465, Smyrna, GA 30081

3) May 2-5, 1991; The Tradition Continues; 1991 Fun-In-The-Sun, Panama City Weekend; 1991 PC Weekend, P.O. Box 47848, Doraville, GA 30362

HAWAII: Feb. 22-24, 1991; 7th Annual Oahu Gathering of the Fellowship; Camp Mokuleia, North Shore, Island of Oahu; helpline (808) 734-4357; Oahu Gathering Committee, P.O. Box 89636, Honolulu, HI 9630-9636

KENTUCKY: Jan. 11-13, 1991; First Louisville Area Convention; The Ultimate Solution 12 Step Festival; Hurstbourne Hotel and Conference Center, 9700 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, KY 40299; information (502) 491-4830 or 1-800-289-1009; L.A.C.N.A., P.O. Box 91234, Louisville, KY 40291

2) Mar. 29-31, 1991; Kentuckiana Regional Convention 5; Executive Inn Rivermont, 1 Executive Boulevard, Owensboro, KY 42301; rsvn.s (800) 626-1936; KRCNA 5, 2626 Parrish Ave., suite 211, Owensboro, KY 42301

MASSACHUSETTS: Mar. 1-3, 1991; Fourth New England Regional Convention; Hyannis, Massachusetts; NERCNA 4, P.O. Box 2628, Quincy, MA 02269

MICHIGAN: Jan. 26-27, 1991; UPASCNA First Anniversary Conference in Escanaba; information call (906) 226-2421 or (906) 789-1929

NEBRASKA: Mar. 2, 1991; Return of the Close Encounters of the Clean Kind; UNO Milo Bail Student Center; Activities Committee, P.O. Box 3907, Omaha, NE 68103

OKLAHOMA: Jan. 18-20, 1991; 1st Annual Norman Winter Convention; Holiday Inn, 2600 West Main Street, Norman, OK 73069; Hotel (405) 329-1624; P.O. Box 2653, Norman, OK 73070

2) Mar. 22-24, 1991; 5th Oklahoma Regional Convention; Tulsa Marriott Hotel, Tulsa; rsvn.s (918) 627-5000; OKRCNA 5, P.O. Box 890501, Oklahoma City, OK 73189

OREGON: Jan. 19-20, 1991; "Right Where We're Supposed To Be" Quarterly Regional Service Conference; Newport, Oregon; rsvn.s (503) 222-2244; Together We Can Region, P.O. Box 1866, Newport, OR 97365

PENNSYLVANIA: Feb. 8-10, 1991 Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference; Holiday Inn East, Harrisburg, PA; rsvn.s (717) 939-7841. Info. (717) 233-FREE.

2) Mar. 8-10, 1991; 9th Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention; Valley Forge Sheraton, North Gulf Road and 1st Avenue, Valley Forge, PA. 19406; rsvn.s (215) 265-1500; G.P.R.C.—9, P.O. Box 1298, Bensalem, PA 19020

SOUTH CAROLINA: Jan. 25-27, 1991; US-CANA, 11th Annual Convention; Hyatt Regency Hotel, Greenville, SC; rsvn.s (800) 228-9000, info (803) 282-0109; Convention Information, P.O. Box 2233, Greer, SC 29652

2) Feb. 15-17, 1991; Just For Today III Area Convention; Westin Oceanfront Resort Hotel, Hilton Head Island, SC; info (803) 861-9595; P.O. Box 22155, Hilton Head Island, SC 29925

TEXAS: Mar. 29-31, 1991; The Fairmont Hotel, Dallas Arts District, 1717 North Akard Street, Dallas, TX 75201; rsvn.s (214) 720-2020 or (800) 527-4727; Program Committee, c/o LRSO, 10727 Plano Rd., suite 200, Dallas, TX 75238

VIRGINIA: Jan. 11-13, 1991; 9th AVCNA Convention; Dulles Marriott, Dulles Airport; Information (703) 255-0071; AVCNA, P.O. Box 1566, Vienna, VA 22183

It was announced in the November *Fellowship Report* that the Board of Trustees planned to hold their meeting February 7-10, 1991, in Philadelphia. The annual Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference, including the agenda report review, will be held the same dates in Harrisburg, PA. An invitation was extended, and accepted, for the trustees to move their meeting location to Harrisburg. Accordingly, the business portion of the trustee meeting, which will be open for observation, will be held in Harrisburg on Thursday and Friday, February 7-8. The open forum portion of the meeting will be the entire day on Saturday and on Sunday morning. The location is the Holiday Inn East, 4751 Lindle Rd., Harrisburg, PA. rsvn.s (717) 939-7841.

N.A. Way[®]

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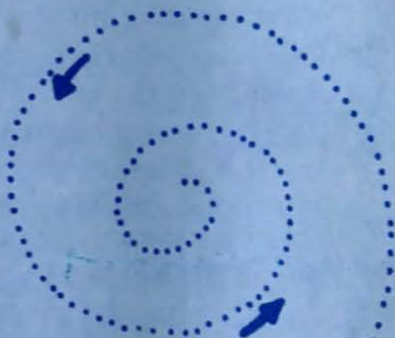
3TEA

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 non-profit 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. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. 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.