

THE
N.A. Way
MAGAZINE[®]

December 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[®] MAGAZINE

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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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Present tense?

My goodness, Christmas time again. This past year has seen so much change in our beautiful old world, that it seems years and years ago since the last Christmas.

I hated the holidays when I was in active addiction. Come early December I would kind of close my eyes and not open them again until sometime in January. I disliked the fact that I could not buy gifts for people or plan to spend time with different loved ones all through the month of December. The reason, of course, that I couldn't do these very normal things was that I was powerless over drugs and my life was unmanageable. I didn't know this at that time. I thought that everything in the world conspired to keep me from having a good time at Christmas. Everything but me, that is.

What I disliked even more than not being able to buy lots of gifts, was seeing other people in the Christmas spirit. People all bundled up on the avenues, shopping, spreading good cheer and looking healthy, used to

drive me crazy. I couldn't understand why everybody wasn't miserable like me. You see, believe it or not, I had myself convinced that "miserable" was the correct way to be. It kind of amazes me now to think that I could be under so much self deception, and exercise so much projection, as to think that my feeling miserable was appropriate and all of you feeling good was foolish!

It's way different now, and no mistake. I righteously feel good, better than I ever have, but not as good as I'm gonna. And it's all about the change within. The steps, the traditions, the Higher Power in my life, my sponsor, the meetings, my friends, these are the things that make me feel good today. It's no longer about the substance racing around my bloodstream making me crazy and keeping me in self imposed slavery.

What I am thinking about today is a lot of our brothers and sisters (particularly in early recovery) who are feeling inadequate this holiday season. A word of cheer: it is not important how many gifts you can afford to buy or how much they cost. I know you want to show your joy and love for others by your generosity but it is you who are the greatest gift. You being clean and having our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in your life is the greatest gift you could possibly give to your loved ones because they probably remember only too well what it was like before. So give of yourself and give freely, help a newcomer with less time than yourself this holiday season, and see how it is that giving is really receiving.

Love from an old dopefiend

Freedom within

Today I went to attend a prison spiritual service, and in my hand was my latest maintenance package from my sponsor. I opened the envelope and drew out my new copies of the *NA Way*. A good place to be, with my God, reading the *NA Way*.

Here in a Florida state prison, where I've been a close custody "guest" for the past two years, God and my sponsor are my two basics of recovery. You might wonder about my reference to being a "guest," and say "don't you mean inmate?" No, not at all, as an addict I've come to realize, from both sides of the coin, using and clean, how relative reality is. After all, a nightmare is only a nightmare until you wake-up. Once awake, life is what I allow myself to make of it today. Today I choose a new way.

There are days of loneliness and frustration when I don't know if I can take one more day within these grey walls. But when I look back, I recall how very dangerous I had been, not only to myself, but society as well. I must admit I'm where I need to be. Thank-you, God, for bringing me humbly to my knees.

Humility is difficult in prison, where meekness and kindness are taken for weakness. I guess a little street still lingers. I can't stand to be

thought of as a punk. But through humility I'm learning to grow and, with that growth, developing a sense of self. I'm building a person I understand and respect so that, day-by-day, other's opinions of me become less and less important.

What is important is the people, few as they may be, who see the pain and struggle of my efforts to break free and who respect me for who I am trying to become.

I work hard to realize the greater freedom, one far beyond the release from prison. In drug addiction I made my own prison, with walls much more confining than anything man-made. I need not stay so imprisoned any longer, because release is as easy as saying, "Just for today I choose freedom, I choose NA."

J.P., Florida



Urgent concern

I enjoy our magazine. I have been clean for over four years and consider the views, stories and opinions expressed in the *NA Way* to be a vital part of my recovery. There are many ways to recover, and views are as varied as the addicts who express them.

What I read in "Dealing with depression," by *Anonymous* in July, 1991, scared me. I am a recovering addict and a registered nurse, and I feel that certain ideas need to be clarified:

1. No person (addict or not) should ever stop taking prescribed medicine without first consulting with their physician. Not weaning some medications can result in seizures, brain damage, or even death.

2. *Anonymous* failed to mention the chemical imbalance present in manic depression. Every person has lithium present in their bodies. Lithium is a salt which helps control the water and chemical balances in the brain. Manic-depressives are often lacking lithium. This deficiency causes mood swings that are characterized by low depressions and then euphoria, or highs, known as mania.

3. When manic-depressives are in the grip of their mania or depression it is very difficult to fathom the steps or how to apply them to their lives.



The steps are great and have helped many addicts, including myself. But to believe that NA and its steps can solve all problems is closed-minded. The Twelve Steps are miraculous tools to aid us on our journey, not remedies to medical disorders.

4. Most addicts I know of wouldn't consider telling a diabetic not to take their insulin. Diabetes is a lack of insulin. Most addicts I know wouldn't consider telling an epileptic to stop taking their seizure medication. They need their medication to prevent seizures. Who would tell a heart patient not to take his or her heart medications? So why would we tell manic-depressives to stop taking lithium or other prescribed medications? *Each individual needs to evaluate whether taking lithium is a crutch delaying recovery or a tool permitting it.* There are different levels of depression, and a trained professional can help determine the need for prescribed medication.

5. Active addiction sometimes mimics psychiatric disorders. Some of us were prescribed medicinal remedies for our fundamentally spiritual disease. I realize that some addicts have had bad experiences with psychiatrists while they were using. But after addicts get clean they may still have problems requiring medical attention.

6. Our Basic Text suggests we take our legal problems to lawyers and our medical problems to physicians. In our zeal to stay clean and recover we need to be careful not to alienate any addict and to not practice medicine without a license.

C.S., Pennsylvania

The gift I have received

Almost a year and a half ago I was sitting in a meeting and our GSR gave a report about where the 1991 NA World Convention was going to be held—Australia!!!

I was amazed to think how large the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous had grown, to hold such an event clear across to Australia. Though I had no intentions of going, I did know a few people who were, and I was so excited for them. I knew "The Gift" truly would be just that.

I had attended world conventions in the past and understood what a moving emotional experiences they can be. Little did I know how this convention, so far away, which I wouldn't even be attending,

would also give me emotions of gratitude and joy.

About a year ago I was fortunate to become a special worker with the World Convention Corporation, NA. Part of my job was to help people with their visitor-visa applications, registrations and needed information about the world convention in Australia.

While helping people with their

visitor-visas, and talking with Australian Consulates from all over, I become relatively close with many of them, main-

ly through telephone conversations. One of my experiences was with a couple who were getting married and going to the convention on their honeymoon.

Unfortunately, one of them was

couple had sent me flowers with a special note of thanks. Tears came to my eyes.

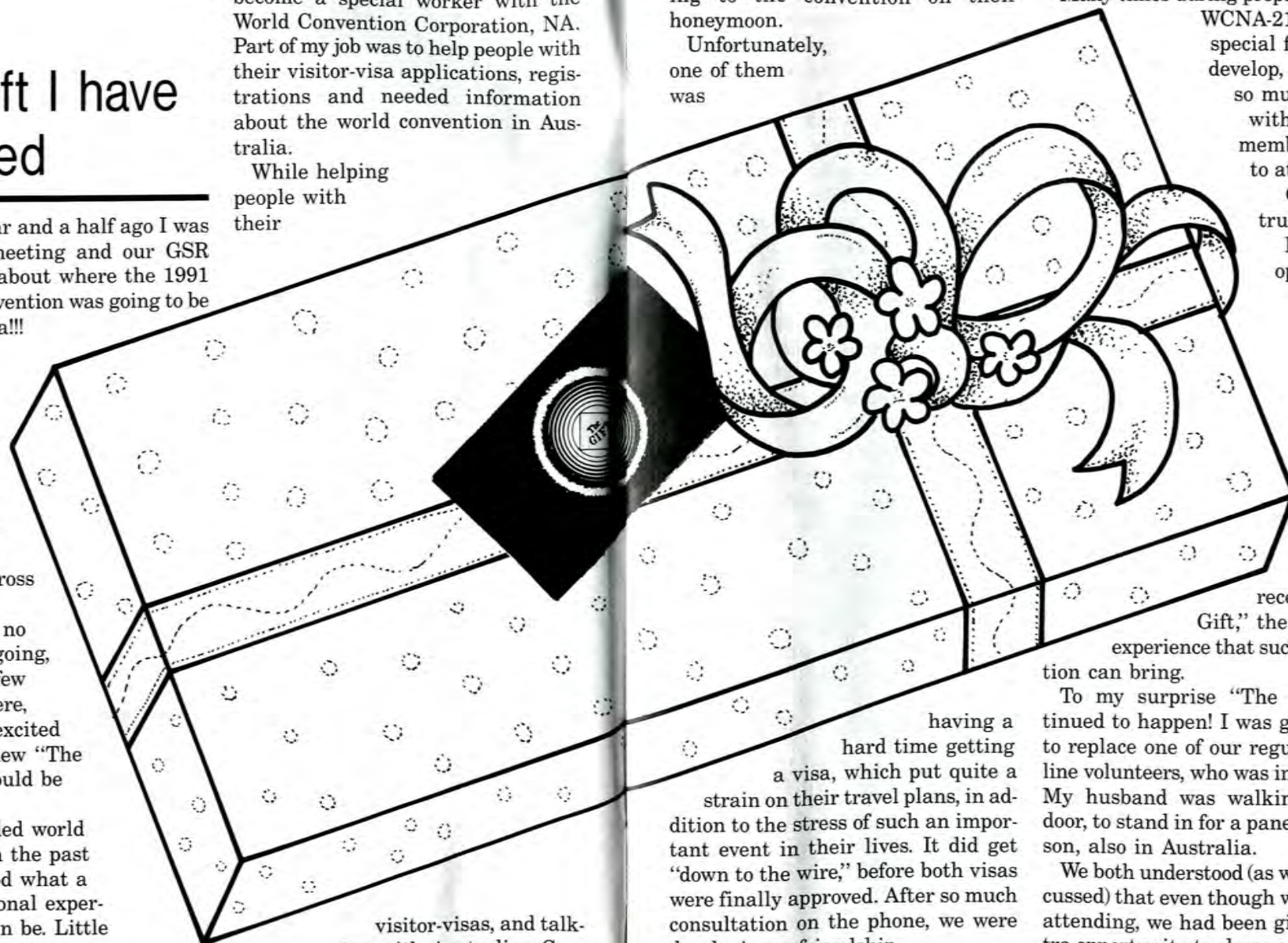
Many times during preparations for WCNA-21 did these special friendships develop, because of so much contact with those NA members trying to attend "The Gift." I am truly grateful I had that opportunity. I felt that I had

already received "The Gift," the emotional experience that such a convention can bring.

To my surprise "The Gift" continued to happen! I was going home to replace one of our regular phone-line volunteers, who was in Australia. My husband was walking out the door, to stand in for a panel chairperson, also in Australia.

We both understood (as we later discussed) that even though we were not attending, we had been given an extra opportunity to share on the home front!

Angie G., So. California



Powerlessness

I've been on the road to recovery for five and a half years now and I thought that I knew what powerlessness is all about. When I got to NA it was after twenty-five years of using and a suicide attempt. I realized, while in a locked ward, that I was powerless over my addiction and that to regain any power in my life I would have to turn my will and my life over to the care of a power greater than myself. In the years since that original encounter with powerlessness I've had numerous other instances where my Higher Power has taught me a lesson on just how little control I have. I've tried to take these lessons to heart, to make them part of my life and, by living them, be an example to others. Recently I've had another one of these lessons. A good friend of mine in recovery died and I'm totally powerless.

I'd known that he was HIV infected for years as I am also. We shared a lot of trials in early recovery and helped each other stay clean. We both felt that using was not an option for us. We knew that substances couldn't possibly help us anymore, but meet-

ings and steps could. He moved from our city to a place a thousand miles away, where he felt his kids could grow up without the fear of being shot on the street; to where stretches of green lawn and swaying palm trees replaced dirty asphalt and burnt out buildings.

Not long ago his wife called me and told me that he was very sick and that the doctors only gave him six weeks to live. As soon as I could I got on a plane to go see him. My wife understood that money we had saved for one thing I now needed for something else. She's been on her own path of recovery and she knew I had to go. We try to live by the spiritual principles. We know we can't keep what we have, whether it's serenity, recovery or money, without giving it away freely.

When I saw my friend he looked terrible. He had been in bed for weeks. He was down to skin and bones and his mind was half gone. We talked a lot, about recovery, staying clean, his fears, his hopes. I was there, I think, to help prepare him to die, and it was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I could not have done it without working my program. NA is a spiritual program and for me it's been a bridge back to life, that life includes death, too.

When I was active I scorned death, laughed at death and tempted death. Now that I'm clean, I don't fear death. NA and my Higher Power have given me everything I had ever hoped for in life—a sense of self, of self-esteem, of self-worth, and I truly believe that if I died tomorrow I would die a happy man. This feeling of acceptance of death gives me the strength to go on,

on a daily basis, with my life. But here I was with someone I loved who was on the verge of death, helping him to let go. He kept refusing pain medication that made him feel woozy, because he didn't like that feeling, but a few weeks ago he went beyond that. He was comatose, but in pain, and his wife asked me for advice. I could only share what I felt, that if it were me I'd want to spare her the pain of watching me suffer. I told him that I loved him and always would; I reminded him that his Higher Power was with him and always would be, and that his wife and kids had their own Higher Powers that would be with them. I reminded him of the stuff we heard years before when we came to recovery that you take an action and let go of the result; I reminded him that he had been the best husband, best father and best friend

he could have been and that was all that was necessary.

He died this morning and he died clean, with dignity. If he would have lived he would have celebrated six years in another month. He was a power of example to me and many addicts who knew him. He served NA many times to the best of his ability. I'm going to miss his voice, his hugs, his smile and his laughing eyes, but I also know that as long as I'm here to remember him he's not really gone. So I'll do the only things that I know for sure; that's putting one foot in front of the other get myself to a meeting and share about this. Call my network for support and allow myself to feel the pain, cause it's only pain, and thank God I'm clean today, not miserable.

G.F., New York



Growing up

I am 27 years old and I have been clean for 13 years. Growing up, I led a sheltered life in a suburban, middle class family. I come from what I consider a "generic" family: mom, dad, sister, two cats and a dog. From the outside things looked normal. I think the truth is my mom and dad behave compulsively, addictively, with food and television. I always felt left out as a result. Adding to my insecurity, I think, my sister was born on my fourth birthday. I resented her because that was supposed to be *my* day, and she came along and "stole the limelight" from me. I resented her for a long time.

I believed in God as a child, but the way it was taught in school didn't make sense to me. I didn't like that I had to dress up on Sunday and look good to everyone for God to love me. I also believed that my parents were hypocrites, because the things they told us in church and at school were never applied in our home.

In junior high I met a girl who was popular and we became best friends. I was able to share her identity. I didn't feel I had one myself. At first we started stealing little things and money for cigarettes. It soon became money for pot. As things progressed, I was soon getting high before school,

during school and after school, going home to eat dinner, and then going out to get drunk.

I began getting my sister high. She was nine at the time. I did it for attention: "This is my sister, watch what she can do..." I also knew that since she was doing it too, she couldn't tell on me. I had no concern for her health or safety. I just wanted things to be okay for me.

My parents finally had enough and just before I turned 14 they put me in a treatment center. While I was there, though I did work Steps 1-5, I did and said the things they wanted me to only out of fear. My parents had told me that if I didn't complete the program and stay clean, they were going to send me to a place that I had to stay for 9 months to a year. I didn't really know what recovery was about.

When I got out I still didn't feel "a part of." Going to school and trying to stay clean was very difficult. I didn't fit in with any of the crowds anymore. I finally quit high school and went to work. I liked work a lot more. I was able to do something that made me feel good. I began to feel a part of the real world.

Though I had been to a few AA meetings without participating, it wasn't til I had about three years clean that I went to an NA meeting.

You people were still very different from me. We came from very different backgrounds, you were older than me, and you had done much different things than I had. But I related to the feelings. I started participating and doing some of the things suggested. I tried to work the steps. I made some friends and started to be of service in little ways.

At five years clean the relationship I was in ended. Without this person, I once again lost my source of good feelings for myself. I decided that suicide was the only answer. That night it was my will to die. The only thing that prevented me from taking action, was that I didn't want my roommate to come home and find me. I believe today that God will do for me what I cannot do for myself.

After getting through the immediate crisis, I realized that I had all the answers that I needed in Narcotics Anonymous. I knew that there had to be more to life than wanting to die on a daily basis. There was so much that this program had to offer if I chose to take it. I chose to by being a part of things and participating in my own recovery. I did all of the things that were suggested, not just the things that I liked. I finally got a sponsor and started doing more work with the steps.

My life today is surrounded with NA and members of this fellowship. I have a sponsor that I trust and I still call her every day. I am experiencing the freedom that comes from working the steps.

Today, I am very grateful I got here as young as I did. I have grown up in NA, literally. This is where I belong. If you are a young person and you feel that you don't qualify because you have not been dragged around enough, listen to similarities, not the differences. We don't all have to hit the same bottom to be a part of Narcotics Anonymous.

It doesn't matter how much you have used, or where you came from. If you want to stay clean, Narcotics Anonymous will work for you.

Anonymous



I climbed the highest mountain

My story is like that of any other addict. I started using to fit in and escape my feelings of not belonging and worthlessness. The walls I created were constructed of anger, rage, and a carefully nurtured ability to completely shut off all emotions and feelings. The progression of my addiction took me to the jails, institutions, and on three occasions, so I'm told, death. None of these things "scared" me and I chose to survive in my bottom for a long time. Finally, in utter desperation, I came to the realization that I couldn't live like that any longer. I didn't really want to die, but I didn't want to "live" as I was living any more. After borrowing money from the only person left who would loan it to me, I checked into a motel efficiency room, placed wet towels all along the windows and doors, and turned on all the gas burners. I settled down to "enjoy" my last high knowing that suffering in my miserable existence was finally over.

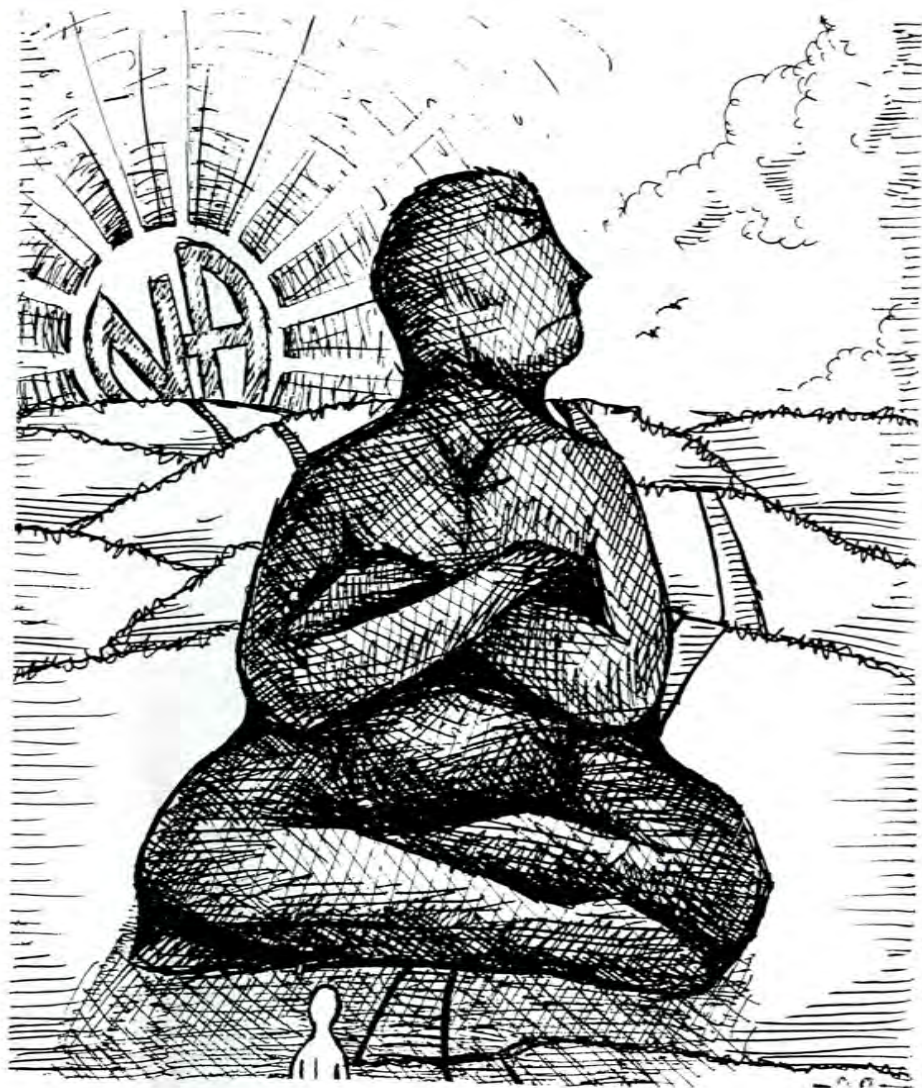
In the morning I was shaken to by one very angry motel owner. I had the worst headache of my life and severe

feelings of failure. I had even failed at ending my life, and really felt horrible about my self. My family, who had disowned me with love, a couple of years earlier, sent someone to help me if that's what I wanted. I found myself in a treatment center for the sixth time in five years. I was scared and desperate, and somehow I knew that this time it was going to be different.

I was in New York and it was 1982. The other fellowship was the only help readily available to me. Those people loved me, and I grabbed on to the steps for dear life. But I never really felt like I belonged there. I spent the next three years learning about serenity and became an expert in the use of a rocking chair.

One thing I couldn't do, though, was identify with those people. Once again I felt like I didn't fit in. I was too scared to use, so I just didn't use and made vain attempts at working the steps. Since I couldn't identify, I wouldn't allow myself to trust those people.

After doing a geographic to LA in 1985, I made my way to an NA meeting in the downtown district. I knew the neighborhood from my using days, but with a little clean time behind me, it looked full of despair. I'll never forget that meeting. It was full of anger, and "dope fiending" was the order of the day. At first my attitude was that if I was going to act like that, I'd rather go back out and use. Instead, I chose to stay at that meeting, and after putting my personality aside and listening, I heard the feelings that only an addict can relate to. I knew I was where I belonged. I had found my place to fit in. I was home.



I remained an "addict and alcoholic" for the next five and one-half years. I found it very difficult to break away from the other fellowship. I struggled with the principals of NA and really didn't get the "we" concept. However, I fell in love with the Twelfth Step of NA. "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps," as "a" result, not as

"the" result. This version allowed me to receive more gifts of life by working the steps, and that's what I was looking for.

Gifts of the heart, and gifts of the spirit. I spent a great deal of time struggling with the "we" concept. I couldn't seem to get it through my head that "we" was what it took to grow. Didn't "I" have to work the

steps? Didn't "I" have to go to meetings? Didn't I have to do service work? Today I see that my self-centeredness prevented me from being a part of the "we". After another addict pointed out to me that he couldn't see how I was staying clean when I stayed alone as I did, I took a long, hard look at me. I first had to become selfless before I could become a part of the "we." This is something I must do each day. I can only be a part of "we" by working the steps on a daily basis, and staying close to the God of my understanding.

I finally made the break from being an "addict and alcoholic" after hearing another addict share at a convention about the freedom he found when he quit being an "and." Once again I got a gift of the spirit from the simple principal of sharing our experience, strength, and hope. Today I am a recovering addict that is full of gratitude for the fellowship of NA, and the relationship I have with the God of my understanding. I still struggle with day-to-day living, but only when I stray from the spiritual principals of this program, and lose daily contact with my God. Today I know that as long as I stay close to other recovering addicts, work the steps to the best of my ability, and maintain my relationship with God, my day will be fulfilling. I don't believe there is a wrong way to work the steps, but I believe there are simpler ways than I sometimes work them. That's not important. The important thing is that I attempt to work them any way I can.

I'll be celebrating nine years of recovery in two weeks. The gifts that I've received this past year are im-

measurable. This has been a year of feelings for me. My God placed a woman in my life who helped me to finally discover the "real" me. I learned how to love and be intimate this past year. I've learned how to cry both tears of pain and tears of joy. I reached a level of gratitude I never dreamed existed. No small achievement for an addict like me. It has been a most difficult year of growth for me. There were many days when the thought of using entered my mind. My fear of walking through the pain was paralyzing and I wanted to quit. My hand reached for the phone, or my car drove to a meeting. I let other addicts carry me when I was too exhausted from the struggles to go on. God truly did for me when I could not do for myself. The price of this new freedom has been high, but the gifts that have come with it are priceless. Would I trade them? Not for anything of this world. I hold these gifts inside my heart and no one can ever take them from me.

I owe a debt to NA, and the recovering addicts in this fellowship. The way to repay this debt is to give freely that which has been given to me. An inexpensive price to pay when compared to the freedom I've received. When the road gets long and hard, I need to only remember this: don't use and go to a meeting. Let other addicts help me when I can't do it alone. I can't do it alone and I no longer have to try to. I am grateful to NA and I love you all. Unconditionally. You have helped me climb the highest mountain in the world. Me.

J.F., South Carolina

Home Group

A Slugg dream



The broad perspective

The mailboxes of NA's trusted servants are probably starting to bulge about now, and not just with holiday greetings! Most projects directed by the 1991 WSC are coming to fruition, so various reports, renditions of documents, and efforts impacting the 1992 world conference are being heralded via weighty terms and tomes.

In the November 1991 *Conference Report* Barbara J., WSC chairperson, confirms the choice of Dallas, Texas, as the site of April 25 through May 2, 1992, annual meeting. In a preliminary draft of the 1992 agenda the chairperson suggests a format similar to last year's, but it includes a plan for one day of simultaneous panel presentations. Regional issues submitted in time to be included in the January *Conference Report* will be presented for discussion in two different panel-encounters. One will be devoted to those issues that are related to motions published in the actual *Conference Agenda Report* (due out January 25) and the other to issues which are not represented in the formal agenda document.

The WSC chairperson's November report also includes what looks like

a fairly strong suggestion that, during the panel on the CAR, makers of motions intended to amend or substitute for published motions, avail themselves of the opportunity for discourse. Quoting from her report: "It is hoped that consensus can be achieved prior to the business sessions."

All motions intended for publication in the *Conference Agenda Report* must be received by the WSC Administrative Committee WSO coordinator by December 23, 1991. Deadline for receipt of "issues" to be presented in the January *Conference Report* is December 16, 1991.

The 1992 conference will commence on Saturday, April 25, with the adoption of procedures and the seating of new regions. From 2 to 6 pm Saturday, and all day Sunday, a forum on international concerns will be conducted. Funding for travel and accommodations of 11 non-North American representatives of NA regions, who might not otherwise be financially able to participate, has been approved by the Interim Committee.

Reports and panel presentations are slated for Monday and Tuesday, with the first real "business session" scheduled at 8 am Wednesday. Thursday morning there'll be another session specifically focussed on international matters. Budget sessions, individual committee meetings and nominations and elections (formal elections process is set for 7 pm Thursday) will occur throughout the week, with "new business" closing out the conference Saturday.

The admin committee report includes the urging that the conference

re-think its "conventional wisdom" about trusted servants standing for nomination to only one post. The text suggests that if an individual is willing and qualified for different tasks, he or she might stand for more than one, and depend on the participants to decide where they'd be most useful and appropriate.

Coming at you

Among other mailouts now going to conference participants (and available to all interested requestors) are *The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust* document; an approval form of *Just For Today* (an NA book of daily meditations); and the approval form of *Twelve Concepts For NA Service*.

The property trust document details elements of the fiduciary relationship between the fellowship, its conference, and the WSO; citing the myriad of motions and laws defining that trust in a relatively easy-to-read text. The document is, in current format, 32 pages long, and is a more technical elaboration of the reaffirmation of the trust relationship resolved by the 1991 WSC. It includes descriptions of the properties; and duties, responsibilities and benefits for parties to the trust. The document is produced by the WSB Internal Affairs Committee and is at least partly intended to answer inquiries of individuals or elements of the service structure concerning the prohibitions of production, distribution and sale of NA property by unauthorized individuals or associations.

The Twelve Concepts For NA Service, produced by the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service, are part of

the results of an effort begun with the 1983 passage of a motion that the WSC Policy Committee "... rewrite the service structure." A succession of committee activity (the creation of the Select committee to undertake the task, its evolution into the current ad hoc group, and the development of the book, *The Guide To Service*) has grappled with this effort.

According to the cover letter included with the approval form (available from the WSO for \$1.65 each or \$22 for bundles of 25, items #1162 and #1163, respectively): "The concepts have been designed to provide our fellowship with a foundation of common principle that can guide us in carrying out an effective, unified program of service."

By the end of December the conference participants may receive the approval form of our daily meditation book, titled, *Just For Today*. It is made up of 365 entries that have been rigorously examined by tiers of review teams for several years, and finally organized by a steadfast production plan mandated during the 1991 WSC. A WSCLC meeting November 22 will put the finishing touches on the rendition and, hopefully, signal its physical production.

Price increase

During the October 25 meeting of the WSO Board of Directors a motion was approved to propose, during the January 1992 BOD meeting, a motion to implement a 10 percent increase on all items in the WSO inventory, effective February 1, 1992.

Continued on pg 33

STRUCTURED STEPWORK

Note—Featuring “*Structured Stepwork*” is something of a first for *The NA Way Magazine*. Although we regularly publish individual material, up to now it has been in the other parts of the magazine, or in the form of interviews.

The present offering is one addict’s design or “blue-print” for guiding progress through the steps. The writer, in agreement with one editorial motive for this exposure, expressed the hope that it’s publication might encourage others to communicate their perspectives.

Though this portrayal is necessarily individualized, the specifics are grounded in the book, *Narcotics Anonymous*. Some choices, such as assumptions about the needs of addicts at particular stages of clean time; some references of principles to be emphasized at particular junctures; and some choices to capitalize words or phrases, are decidedly personal, and are reflected in respect of individual experience, strength and hope.

Instances of personal approach which we questioned are such things as the use of “affirmations,” (B-3 and L-10, below); the suggestion that behavior can, or ought, to be modified by changing mental focus (F-2); and whether *MERCY* might not be a better guide-word than *JUSTICE* in Step Eight (O-2). After several interviews with the writer, with agreed-upon minor revisions, it was decided to print the piece pretty much as it was written. Jots, tittles and principle-juxtapositions will likely always remain matters of personal application.

Writer’s Introduction

How did you learn the Steps? A few years ago, when I was asked to give a workshop on sponsorship, my sponsor suggested I inventory what worked for me. Osmosis never worked for me. Rationalization tended to distort much of what I heard and read. Things had changed when I got a sponsor who believed in teaching the steps. This is what worked for me: the perspective from shared experience combined with the realizations from writing. With those I sponsor, my experience and understanding is passed on. Striving always to grasp the principles beyond the feelings.

As fundamental as stepwork is to our recovery, it seems many of us rarely exchange ideas on what we teach or how best to teach it. Maybe we’re unsure or afraid of ridicule. Possibly we’re over-sensitive and need to openly dialog more about how we work this NA program. For me, it is important to not be judgmental. I can only pass on what works for this addict, and must refrain from judging others’ experience.

This is my offering to what I hope will become an ongoing dialog. There will always be different ways to teach our principles. What worked for me is similar to some and not the same as others. It is my hope we can share our experience and perspective in teaching the steps, and all gain from each other in the process.

The reason this is in outline form is that it’s intended for quick reference. This isn’t the step material itself (for now that’s in our Basic Text). This is just a list of what I talk about to those I sponsor. Since this is a working guide, there are also appointments between the actual steps. I needed this kind of reinforcement, and those I sponsor seem to follow a similar pattern. Consistently in NA we speak of working the steps, and then going back through them again and again, over and over, until we (hopefully) exemplify the essence of all twelve in our daily living. This has often been referred to as “peeling away the layers the onion.” I’ve found it best to bring a person through Steps One, Two and Three quickly. These survival tools need to quickly become effective in our daily living. With those that have previous step experience, we still start on Step One, though we also talk about how they teach those they sponsor.

Formal or structured stepwork involves appointments and writing assignments. Make appointments to go over each step. Read each page of approved NA Step material and share perception and experience. Discuss the principles involved, their meaning and application. Assign writing for each step. At the next appointment, go over writing and discuss how this step is going to be “lived.” Each of the sections below would be a separate appointment. Follow this pattern through the Steps.

We
admitted

that we were
powerless

over our
addiction

that our lives
had become
unmanageable

Structured Stepwork

A. **Step 1**— Early on. “Am I An Addict” pamphlet, if needed.

- (1) Read together out loud the 1st Step.
- (2) Describe “admittance” as self HONESTY, contrast to denial.
- (3) Discuss disease concept and “drug” vs “addiction.”
- (4) Relate “powerlessness” to disease progression and “not yet’s.”
- (5) “In ridding ourselves of all reservations, we surrender.”
- (6) Write on four phrases of 1st Step.

B. Go over (together) written discussion of Step 1 phrases.

- (1) Review Basic Text, Chapter 5—“What can I do.”
- (2) Reading assignment: finish reading Basic Text, *all of it*.
- (3) Put on bathroom mirror— “I am a good person and I’m worth it.”

C. **Step 2**— Second—to—fourth month.

- (1) Read together aloud 2nd Step material.
- (2) Discuss “Good Orderly Direction” and idea of a personal God.
- (3) Explain difference between *defining* HP and *describing* HP.
- (4) Describe how religion has dogma, ceremony, sacred symbols, vestments, and designated dispensers. Spirituality does not.
- (5) Discuss “acceptance” as a result of Honesty and HOPE.

- (6) Relate HOPE to sharing, Group, Fellowship, and a loving HP.
- (7) Relate sanity to perspective and discuss “restoration.”
- (8) Write on 3 restorations and 3 insanities.

D. Go over 2nd Step writing.

- (1) Review Basic Text, Chapter 8—“We Do Recover” (See box on next page)
- (2) Discuss H.A.L.T.S.
- (3) Reading assignment: pamphlet “Self Acceptance.”

E. **Step 3**— Third—to—fifth month.

- (1) Read together, aloud, 3rd Step material.
- (2) FAITH implies belief, state as action or result of action.
- (3) Relate program meaning of SURRENDER and unconditional love.
- (4) Discuss “responsible and productive member of society.”
- (5) One line prayer: “God, I pray for your will in my life.”
- (6) Writing assignment: biographical time line. Include column or info on school/work, relationships, events/actions and drug use. Breakout each year. Do not judge, just itemize.
- (7) Reading assignment: pamphlet, “Another Look.”
- (8) Encourage Group level service.

F. Steps 1,2,3 “worksheet”— Go over biography writing. Note patterns and insanities. Discuss learning to incorporate Steps 1,2, and 3 in daily living; applying principles to life situations.

- (1) Assign “worksheet” sentence completion:
 - (a) “I am powerless over...”
 - (b) “My life has become unmanageable because...”
 - (c) “I’ve come to believe that...”
 - (d) “I had decided to...”
- (2) Word as a feeling of oneself rather than an imposed action. (Modifying how you describe events in your life will eventually modify the way you perceive them.)
- (3) Learn to recognize the internal point of powerlessness. Relate to mental, physical, spiritual disease. Accept the idea of restoration to sanity through HP’s will.

Chapter Eight

We do Recover

When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends—jails, institutions or death—or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today are more fortunate. For the first time in man's entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual—not religious—program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.

G. Gratitude List—At 3rd Step frustration point.

- (1) Usually assigned over phone, get together to discuss.
- (2) Discuss relapse prevention and priorities.
- (3) Revisit *Decision* in terms of commitment: both to recovery and to Fellowship.
- (4) Living according to spiritual principles does not always feel good. Integrity and "morality" rarely warm and fuzzy.
- (5) Relate "control issues" to emotional attachment w/outcome.
- (6) "Personal program" guidance: Recovery actions in daily life.
- (7) Reading assignment: pamphlet, "Triangle of Self Obsession."
- (8) Write on what daily actions are suggested in the NA program.

H. Living the Program—When Step 4 is asked about, assign 21 days of daily inventory using this pamphlet. Discuss the results, looking for the obvious. Some will have no problem and be ready to go on, others will be emotional wrecks. Those not ready to go on revisit Steps 1, 2, and 3.

I. Step 4— When ready:

- (1) Read together aloud 4th Step material.
- (2) While fear is lack of Faith, COURAGE is overcoming fear. Relate COURAGE to doing-the-next-right-thing: Simplicity.
- (3) Suggest outline format. Within one week decide on format.

- (4) Discuss how Steps 1, 2, & 3 make it possible to work Step 4.
- (5) After this Step session, make 6-week appointment for 5th Step.
- (6) Not an autobiography. Focus on "warehouse inventory" of self.
- (7) Do not judge what you write, just put it down.
- (8) Write it down along the way...don't carry it around.

J. Go over and discuss 5th Step one week before 5th Step appointment.

- (1) Read together aloud 5th step material.
- (2) INTEGRITY is the living of principles to best of ability.
- (3) Most of the inventory will likely get written during this last week.
- (4) Going over the 5th step reassures sponsees and lets them breathe a little as the appointment draws near.

K. Step 5— On the Appointment day.

- (1) Set aside 5-plus hours, with no plans afterwards.
- (2) Begin with prayer asking Higher Power to join two of you.
- (3) Verify that guidance given will be followed.
- (4) Take notes, point-out some patterns along the way.
- (5) The actions in our lives speak louder than our explanations.
- (6) In the patterns woven through our inventory we find our "real" value system.
- (7) Recap and give perspective. Suggestions/guidance as needed.
- (8) After 5th Step, send home to read Chapter 10 of Basic Text. (see box on next page)
- (9) Rule of thumb: One should have given an inventory before agreeing to help take inventory. Having completed 5th Step, may now become a Sponsor.

L. Step 6— Within a month of 5th Step.

- (1) Read together aloud 6th Step material.
- (2) List character defects and how they manifest in daily living.
- (3) Prioritize character defects.
- (4) Relate each character defect to a behavior pattern.
- (5) Character defects are symptoms of our self-centered fear.
- (6) Separate symptoms from underlying behavior motives.
- (7) Focus on WILLINGNESS to be without closely guarded tools.

Chapter Ten More Will Be Revealed

As our recovery progressed, we became increasingly aware of ourselves and the world around us. Our needs and wants, our assets and liabilities were revealed to us. We came to realize that we had no power to change the outside world, we could only change ourselves. The Program of Narcotics Anonymous provides an opportunity for us to ease the pain of living through spiritual principles.

- (8) Point out the indifference & intolerance rebellion breeds.
- (9) Reading assignment: Basic Text, Chapter Nine, "Just For Today."
- (10) Put on mirror—"You're fired, God's in charge today."
- (11) Write a journal for 90 days...list each day's character defects.

M. Step 7— Shortly after 6th Step.

- (1) Read together aloud 7th Step material.
- (2) Discuss list of character defects. Focus on HUMILITY and further acceptance of self as real changes take place.
- (3) Discuss how to let Higher Power make the changes.
- (4) Consider Step 7 as a daily reprieve.
- (5) Develop a personal 7th Step prayer including this line: "God, I pray for you to remove my character defects."
- (6) Pray this prayer daily for at least 30 days.
- (7) Write a paragraph to a page on each character defect.
 - (a) How they affect your life.
 - (b) What's behind them (underlying behavior motive).
 - (c) What principle in conflict with.
 - (d) Corrective action/behavior.

N. 7th Step follow-through- Six months after 7th Step appointment.

- (1) What's changed?
- (2) Discuss journal entries and character defect-writings.
- (3) How have Spiritual Principles been incorporated into life.

- (4) How "program successful" does sponsee feel.
- (5) If I know I have a defect-I'm obligated to work on it.
- (6) I can work on my behavior; God works on character defects.
- (7) Growth guidance, encourage involvement in NA Service.
- (8) Reading assignment: A Tradition-a-Day, for 3 12-day cycles.

O. Step 8— Basic Text says: "By the time we reach this Step, we have become ready to understand, rather than to be understood." My suggestion: Sponsee needs experience as a Sponsor.

- (1) Read together aloud 8th Step material.
- (2) JUSTICE requires honesty, fairness, and forgiveness; not self-justification nor judgmentalism.
- (3) Writing assignment: List of Amends to make. For each, list the event, harm, defects, and alternative behaviors.
- (4) They prioritize their amends list.

P. Amends List discussion — When list of amends is made.

- (1) Go over list with sponsee. Discuss their priority-choices and the motivation for each amend.
- (2) Put "God" and "self" at top of list.
- (3) Delete "non-amends."
- (4) Identify potentially harmful amends.
- (5) Discuss specific reforms, improvements and restrictions.
- (6) On particularly hard amends, have Sponsee write a page further describing the wrong and why the amend seems hard.

Q. Step 9— Shortly after discussing Amends List.

- (1) Read together aloud 9th Step material.
- (2) Discuss being emotionally attached to results as opposed to living according to spiritual principles.
- (3) Do not project outcome of amends.
- (4) Review and give guidance on "Hard" amends.
- (5) "As we realize our need to be forgiven, we tend to be more forgiving"—even of others' resentment and intolerance.
- (6) We do amends for our own recovery, not any other reason.
- (7) Note SELF DISCIPLINE required to let go of ego and follow through.
- (8) Map-out a plan and sequence for amends-making.

- (9) Timing, courage and prudence.
- (10) Set a point during the list to review program and progress.

R. Step 10— After the most obvious amends are completed.

- (1) Read together aloud 10th Step material.
- (2) Discuss and evaluate "personal program."
- (3) PERSEVERANCE brings results and overcomes complacency.
- (4) Beware of guilt, fear, self-centeredness and resentment.
- (5) Know your true motives—emotional honesty.
- (6) Cultivate attitude of self-restraint.
- (7) Review each day before sleeping.
- (8) If not doing, assign daily reader.
- (9) Assign daily journal for period of six months.

S. Step 11— Six months after Step 10, with daily journal in hand.

- (1) Read together aloud 11th Step material.
- (2) Read journal together. Identify patterns: good and bad.
- (3) Discuss how our defects are the barriers between us and H.P.
- (4) Rhythm of inventory results in serenity and peace of mind.
- (5) Sponsee describes understanding of their Higher Power.
- (6) Discuss speaking and listening (Prayer and meditation).
- (7) AWARENESS OF SELF AND OF H.P. lead to Conscious Contact.
- (8) Add Third line to prayer: "God, I pray for the knowledge of your will."
- (9) Assign meditation practice (suggest stilling the mind).

T. Step 12— Six months after Step 11.

- (1) Read together aloud 12th Step material.
- (2) Look at Change as Spiritual Awakening.
- (3) GRATITUDE without action is meaningless.
- (4) SERVICE is the action fulfilling GRATITUDE.
- (5) Define goals and motives and evaluate in terms of Selfless Service.
- (6) Review Service involvements/commitments.
- (7) Discuss and evaluate "personal Program."
- (8) Strive to be an example of Program and Fellowship.

- (9) Identify principles and insanities that still need work.
- (10) Assign Step 1, 2, and 3 worksheets for each.
- (11) Sponsee now ready to start Step 1 again.

One last item: Prayer. There are three Steps which refer to direct communication with the God of our understanding. These are the Third, Seventh, and the Eleventh. With each of these Steps I learned a line to what has become my three-line prayer. This worked for me because the wording is not especially subject to misinterpretation and these lines do not identify with any organized religion. I repeat these lines in my head continuously through the day. Together, these lines are:

God, I pray for your will in my life.

God, I pray for you to remove my character defects.

God, I pray for the knowledge of your will.

Chapter Nine
Just for Today—Living the Program

Tell yourself:

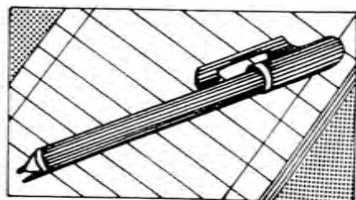
JUST FOR TODAY my thoughts will be on my recovery, living and enjoying life without the use of drugs.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have faith in someone in N.A. who believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have a program. I will try to follow it to the best of my ability.

JUST FOR TODAY through N.A. I will try to get a better perspective on my life.

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.



Viewpoint

Responsible concern

This takes me into what I need in my life; the benefit and privilege of being part of a collective conscience other than my own. I believe my views of service and involvement have caused many members of the local fellowship to shun and outcast me. I think they brand me a "radical" or "controversial," which seems to me to enable them to be less empathic to me when I am hurting and reaching out for help.

I have made major changes in eight years clean, and I do work this N.A. program hard most of the time. I believe, through working the steps, particularly six and seven, that God allows us to use our character defects until we are ready to get humble and surrender. I think gossip is a disease-illusion that allows judgement when we aren't able to be responsive enough to care about others as human beings. By judging and outcasting, we can avoid having to think of each other as brothers or sisters, thereby absolving ourselves of developing relationships.

Also, by this process of objectifying and distancing by "labeling" and gossip, we might develop a superior attitude that goes against the unity called for in the First Tradition, as well as our obligation to each other through the Fifth Tradition.

I have learned through continuous-

ly working the steps about "responsible concern." If I care about what someone is doing or going through, I'll approach them in order that we both may learn and grow. If I don't, I'll go to God, and not feed the frenzy of this disease by speaking to someone other than the one I am concerned about.

I think gossip serves to erode our sense of each other's humanness.

Our recoveries depend on N.A. unity and I believe our spiritual anonymity is our most cherished state of being in, and out of, Narcotics Anonymous.

Please, let's care for one another and learn to help each other when we are hurting or in pain and confusion, as well as in serenity, happiness, joyousness and freedom, because recovery is not always comfortable.

L.R., California

Finding NA

I have been clean for four and a half years. But I didn't begin my clean time as a member of Narcotics Anonymous. I started out going to meetings of another fellowship which administers to alcoholics. For the first two years of my recovery I called myself an "alcoholic" because I didn't know any better. Now I realize that

I'm an addict and that I have no place in that other fellowship, which is designed for the pure and simple alcoholic.

It took a special man in my life to relay this message to me. I feel very indebted to him. Even though he no longer acts as my sponsor I will always remember him. Working the steps as he advised me I have come to understand and even love myself. I feel I have found my home in NA and that I finally fit in somewhere. NA is more than enough for my needs and sometimes I get very upset when I hear people try to carry messages of recovery that are mixtures of two fellowships. I wonder why people can't see that NA is plentiful enough to help addicts and that no outside help is necessary.

But then I realize, after listening to God, that there is a reason for all this chaos. God works miracles as he has done with me and it's not my place to understand it. So I continue going to meetings and sometimes getting mad at what I hear, but knowing that NA is growing and getting stronger all the time. And I remember that any addict who wants help can get it from NA, and that the NA message of recovery from addiction is more than enough.

I have been very blessed in recovery. I have a job and I'm engaged to be married to a very nice girl. I know I couldn't have sustained these parts of my life without being offered the principles of the NA way of life.

Thank you, NA

R.C., Virginia

Tobacco in NA

Narcotics Anonymous is, allegedly, a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. That is a categorical statement, lifted nearly verbatim from the chapter "What is Narcotics Anonymous?" which is read in our area at the beginning of our meetings, and has been ever since I can remember. The statement does not say "Narcotics Anonymous is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs except tobacco." It clearly states, "abstinence from *all* drugs."

I believe the tobacco question is one that threatens the health of Narcotics Anonymous members, and the welfare of the group as well. It is well established that tobacco smokers face increased risks of a multitude of health problems. Recently it has become apparent that people who inhale the smoke from others' cigarettes, cigars, etc. also face increased risk of similar health problems. An article in one journal dealing with addiction stated that tobacco-related illness is the number one killer of recovering people.

Aside from the question of the threat to physical health that tobacco use poses, I would like to offer some thoughts concerning how tobacco use

may affect individual recovery and group welfare. I believe my own experience with addiction began with my tobacco habit. Long before I realized I was dependent upon the use of other drugs, I was well aware that I was physically dependent on tobacco. When I made the decision to quit doing drugs and try to find a new way of life without them, for me there was no question that tobacco was one of the drugs I needed to get rid of. My withdrawal cravings every half-hour or so left no doubt that if I was going to be free, this aspect of the slavery had to be dealt with. Contrary to the advice of many, I gave up tobacco use in short order after the rest of my drugs of choice. I have never regretted that decision.

Having maintained my abstinence from tobacco as a part of my NA program, though, has left some problems for me as a member of the fellowship. I take my abstinence from tobacco as an important part of my overall program. Now I have some difficulty taking seriously the recovery of persons whom I see lighting up at a table.

However, we do live in the real world, and tobacco use is prevalent among members of the fellowship. If we were to avoid meetings altogether where tobacco use is tolerated, there would be precious few meetings available from which to choose. While some groups seem to tolerate the use of tobacco, others appear to me to encourage or endorse it. One meeting we have in our area that takes place in a non-smoking facility goes so far as to have a ten minute smoking break between the readings and the discussion parts of the meeting.

To me it seems rather odd for a fellowship that encourages complete abstinence to go as far as this in deference to an addictive behavior!

My own response to what I interpret as that implied endorsement was to vote with my feet. I no longer attend that meeting. Perhaps others have made similar decisions regarding smoking meetings. Perhaps some have even left the fellowship rather than tolerate second-hand smoke.

When tobacco use is brought up at business meetings I've attended, the result frequently seems to be close to open warfare. Willingness to disagree without being disagreeable went out the window.

Yet I believe it is time to open a dialogue on the tobacco question. We already single out another drug, alcohol, for special treatment in our "How It Works" reading. We deliberately clarify the status of alcohol as a drug. Some of us have been confused about the nature of alcohol, and seen it separately from other drugs. I believe even more of us have deceived ourselves concerning tobacco. I say it is time to end the tobacco double standard in NA, and regard nicotine as we do other drugs. Tobacco kills.

W.K., Michigan

Response: June 1991 issue

After many years struggling with manic depressive illness, I, along with my doctors, have made a decision that the only way for me to stay clean is to continue on monitored prescription medication.

I am an addict—of that there is no doubt. For years I took drugs to squelch the feelings—feelings we have all used behind. Sometimes it was because of events, people, places and things in my world. Other times it was because I was hurting for no reason at all—times were good, but something was wrong with me. It wasn't until I was a young adult that I was diagnosed with manic-depressive illness. I started a program of Lithium and a variety of anti-depressants. My illness escalated with my abuse of drugs and the medication didn't have much chance to work. After many years of a trying various anti-depressants, which had little positive effect on me, I went through a series of twenty-seven shock treatments—still no appreciable effect.

Shortly after the horrible experience of shock treatment, I found my way into the fellowship of another twelve-step program. I ceased abusing

the liquid drug. I began to take a medication that proved to be a miracle for me. It is difficult to explain what a change it made for me. For the first time in twenty years I felt there was hope. Life improved.

After only five months, I felt so much better that I stopped taking it, "AMA," (against medical advice). Within three weeks my condition had deteriorated so badly that I went back on it.

It was about three years later that I found myself in N.A. I was going through lots of changes, including changing my clean time. For an assortment of reasons, none of them smart, I stopped taking my medication. I picked up again. On Christmas Eve I nearly died of a heroin overdose. I returned to taking the medication on my doctor's advice. I made a total commitment to staying clean.

This past fall, at the happiest time of my life, I decided to get off medication once again. I was in a wonderful relationship, working my program, attending meetings regularly, working at a satisfying job. My relationship with my children was on the way to improving. I knew I could do it this time! I would get off medication once and for all.

My doctor thought it was stupid and dangerous, given my history, but with his directions I weaned myself off Parnate over a six week period. Initially, my highs were wonderful. High without drugs. I loved it! And then came the crash. By the end of the year it was obvious to those close to me that my attempt to cease this medication was unsuccessful. I went back on the medication. It took nearly four

weeks for it to take effect. I now take the minimum dosage and I am able to function. (Parnate is not a drug of abuse. You take the required dose—taking more can cause stroke.)

My sponsor's hopes are that someday I will be off the medication. I would like that too. I do not enjoy having to remember to take meds every day. It is horribly expensive and just plain inconvenient. It sure doesn't get me high.

Some will say that I am not clean. I am in the program for me. My life is so much better now because I have NA. I have a sponsor who makes me work vigorously on my recovery. Recovery for me is living the principles of the program to the best of my ability, following my doctor's suggestions, listening to and following through on what my sponsor thinks is best for me in working the Twelve Steps, and taking my medication so I can hear the message from people in the fellowship who help me stay clean. I truly believe that it's the only way I stay clean.

J.M., New Mexico

continued from page 17

Metro-services workshops

The Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service has scheduled two workshops, one in New York City and the other in the San Francisco Bay area, for discussion and input on the "Metropolitan Services" section of the *Guide To Service*.

The New York workshop is scheduled for January 11 and the west coast event is set for February 1. Contact the WSO NA Service committee coordinator for particulars.

Translations Committee

A WSC Translation Committee, long a hope and theory, became a reality with its first meeting October 18-20 in Van Nuys. One committee member, asked what was the main benefit of the meeting, responded, "We now have a mechanism to prioritize and establish translations projects."

Though more than half the nine-member committee reside in the US, the committee includes participants who have skills in six languages. NA boards and committees, and WSO departments and staffers, have always supported fledgling translation committees or individual efforts around the world, but with the impaneling of this committee the job will likely become more focussed. Vivian R., Sweden, was elected chairperson.

NA Way Network

Supporters of *The NA Way Magazine* are urged to begin thinking

about nominations, which are in order in Dallas in April, for review panel positions and the editorial board member to be elected by the 1992 conference.

We are now happy to have on the review panel members from Tennessee, Texas, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Washington, Florida and Kansas, and have two in California on stand-by, in addition to the input and direction from our current editorial board.

In order to maintain a full complement of review/editorial people throughout 1992 we'll be needing about that many more. Last year 17 nominees were accepted by the conference and placed in the pool, resulting in nine who remained active, so please start thinking now about who you'd like to nominate. Submit that name to the editor, or to the WSC chairperson, before the conference.

WCNA request

The World Convention Corporation program committee is seeking interested participants for future world conventions.

Such participants include main speakers, workshop speakers, chairpeople and readers. Needs, requirements and qualifications should be discussed by writing or calling, "WCNA," Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Comin'up



LET US KNOW!

We'll be happy to announce your up-coming 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.

AUSTRALIA: Jan. 24-26, 1992; Melbourne Convention; info 011-61-3-506-1229

FLORIDA: Mar. 6-8, 1992; 3rd Annual Florida Spring Service Break Convention; Ramada Inn Beach Resort, 4060 Gault Ocean Dr., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308; Hosted by South Florida Region; rsvn.s (800) 678-9022 or (305) 565-6611; FSSBNA, PO Box 292323, Davie, FL 33329

GEORGIA: Jan. 17-19, 1992; CSRA Peace in Recovery IV; "Living in the Solution"; Sheraton Hotel; info (404) 667-9181; Hotel rsvn.s (404) 855-8100; PO Box 15863, Augusta, GA 30919

HAWAII: Mar. 26-29, 1992; 8th Annual Gathering of the Fellowship on Oahu; Camp Mokuleia, Oahu, HI; info (808) 945-2040; Subcommittee, PO Box 91003, Honolulu, HI 96835

ILLINOIS: Mar. 6-8, 1992; Annual Greater Illinois Regional Conference; Ramada Inn, 7550 East State Street; rsvn.s (815) 398-2200; RRCNA, PO Box 3395, Rockford, IL 61104

MARYLAND: Jan. 17-19, 1992; First Free State Regional Convention; Omni Hotel, 101 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21201; info (301) 752-1100; Convention Committee, PO Box 65008, Baltimore, MD 21209

MASSACHUSETTS: Mar. 6-8, 1992; Cape Cod and Islands Area Tenth Convention; C.C. & I.C.C., PO Box 1478, North Falmouth, MA 02556

NEVADA: Feb. 21-23, 1992; Southern Nevada Convention; Hacienda Resort Hotel and Casino; rsvn.s (800) 634-6713; info (702) 453-3713; S.N.C.C., 4928 East Tropicana, Suite 101, Las Vegas, NV 89121

NEW JERSEY: Dec. 31—Jan. 1, 1992; 5th Annual Bergen County Area Service Convention; "Steppin into 92"; Felician College, 260 South Main Street, New Jersey, 07644; info (201) 768-7383; Convention Committee, 102 Somerset Road, Norwood, NJ 07648

2) Feb. 28—Mar. 1, 1992; 2nd Annual Cape Atlantic Area Convention; "Power of Recovery"; Pleasantville, NJ; Sheraton Hotel, Black Horse Pike; rsvn.s (609) 348-9292; Registrations, PO Box 7386, Atlantic City, NJ 08404

OHIO: Dec. 27-29, 1991; 3rd Central Ohio Area Convention; Radisson Hotel Columbus North; rsvn.s (800) 333-3333; info (614) 297-7472; COACNA III, PO Box 0944, Columbus, OH 43209

OKLAHOMA: Jan. 17-19, 1992; 2nd Norman Winter Convention; Norman Holiday Inn, S. I-35 and West Main; rsvn.s (405) 329-1624; Norman Winter Convention, PO Box 2653, Norman, OK 73080

SOUTH CAROLINA: Jan. 25-27, 1992; 12th Annual USCANA Convention; "Catch the Spirit"; Ramada Hotel, 1001 South Church Street, Greenville, SC 29601; info (803) 294-1242; USCANA, PO Box 4407, Greenville, SC 29608

TENNESSEE: Feb. 28-29, 1992; Volunteer Region Additional Needs Awareness Weekend; Holiday Inn, 2406 North Roan Street, Bristol-Kingsport Highway, Johnson City, TN; info (800) 831-5148

VIRGINIA: Jan. 3-5, 1992; 10th AVCNA; Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, VA; info (804) 588-4154; 10th AVCNA, PO Box 11604, Norfolk, VA 23517

2) Jan. 25, 1992; New River Valley Area Learning Day; Workshops on Unity; US Army Reserve Center, Highway 611, Dublin, VA; , PO Box 566, Radford, VA 24141

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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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.

What is Narcotics Anonymous?

NA 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.

*My gratitude speaks
when I care
and when I share
with others
the NA way*