

# THE NA Way<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

May 1994

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OUTSIDE OURSELVES

members share about freedom from self-obsession

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

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# From the editor



I was looking through some back issues last week and ran across the *NA Way* survey results we published in last May's issue of the magazine.

I'm pleased to report that we've been able to respond to many of the suggestions you sent in with your surveys. NA history enthusiasts were treated to the minutes of NA's founding in California, a talk given at our twentieth anniversary celebration, and a reprint of an article from the *Saturday Evening Post* about NA. Articles from outside North America have been on the rise as have articles from incarcerated members and articles about service.

One of the survey questions asked readers to select, from a list of topics, which they thought would be an interesting feature article. The topic receiving the highest percentage was "Diversity of spiritual belief in NA," followed by "Recovering with an emotional or psychological disorder," and, interestingly, "Gender-specific language in our Twelve Steps." Though we have yet to find the time to produce features on the two most "wanted" topics, the introduction of Motion #39 at WSC'93 prompted us to get going on the "gender-specificity" topic.

The Motion #39 forum has received a huge response. In the past few weeks, we've received at least a dozen articles on this topic. We hope this trend continues. The column will run until April 1995, as long as we have material for it.

## Letters to the editor

As promised, we will print your comments on editorial content or art in this column. We'd like to thank those who have written letters to the editor and invite others to write. Please send to:

*The NA Way Magazine*  
Attn: editor  
PO Box 9999  
Van Nuys, CA 91409

## More on January cover art

To the editor,  
Hi, I'm a recovering addict called G. I have been clean and coming to NA for five years. This the first time I have written to *The NA Way*. I have been reading and enjoying my monthly issues for more than three years now.

I've been concerned about the Slugg cartoon and what newcomers who aren't reading between the lines

may project themselves being and feeling like if they stay clean and keep coming back to NA, especially after seeing Slugg on the cover of the January 1994 issue.

I understand and appreciate what Slugg is all about but a newcomer may not. Slugg or no Slugg, I will keep an open mind and keep on reading my *NA Way Magazine*.

GS, Pennsylvania

## NA Way Networkers

The *NA Way* networker program was set up approximately two years ago to help members who wanted to be advocates for the magazine. *NA Way* networkers set up and chair workshops at NA functions, help members in their local NA communities write for the magazine, answer questions about the magazine, and generally support the growth and development of *The NA Way*.

It's easy to be a networker. All you have to do is let us know you're interested and we will provide you with all the support you need to get started. Please drop us a line or call us at the World Service Office.

CS, Associate Editor



## We need articles!

Remember that *The NA Way Magazine* is *your* meeting in print. Like any other meeting of which you're a part, you'll get the most out of this one by participating. Let your voice be part of the message that gets carried during the meeting. Write! We are in need of material right now, so don't wait.

## Who writes these articles?

You do!

The articles you see in this magazine are written by NA members like yourself. You need not consider yourself a skilled writer. You don't have to know all the rules of grammar. We have an editorial team whose job it is to take care of those details. What we need is your unique perspective on the NA program. Without it, we don't have a message to carry.

## What should I write about?

Write about any topic related to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. Share with our readers the same way you would share with other addicts at any other NA meeting. Is there a topic you've enjoyed hearing or sharing about lately? Are you working a particular step, and having some eye-opening experiences? Has there been a turning point in your recovery? Tell us about it. We'd love to hear from you.



## Choosing gratitude

It has become something of a slogan in NA to say, "a grateful addict is a clean addict." This is no coincidence. I have noticed that expressions become slogans only when they're true. The truth is that gratitude is an indispensable spiritual tool when it comes to maintaining an addict's recovery.

It is my perception that gratitude's opposite is self-pity, the single most destructive emotion an addict can feel. I honestly believe these two emotions occupy the same space in my heart. They cannot, however, both live there at the same time. When this place in my heart is filled with gratitude, there is no room for self-pity. When it contains self-pity, there is no room for gratitude. Although I am occasionally overwhelmed by one or the other emotion, my attitude is my choice the vast majority of the time. If I look for excuses to wallow in self-pity, I will find them. If I look for reasons to be grateful, I can find those also.

There was a time in my recovery when I was working as a letter carrier for the Post Office and I was

given a difficult assignment. I was given an unfamiliar route, which was both tedious and time-consuming. To make matters worse, I was assigned the route two hours later than usual, ensuring that I would have a long day.

Staring at the mail and the slot case I was to put it in, I became filled with resentment and self-pity. As usual, these attitudes were written all over my face. My co-workers expressed sympathy at my plight. As I grudgingly plodded through my task, my mind began to wander elsewhere. I thought back to the times I had been held in the bull pens deep beneath the Manhattan criminal courts building. I recalled the overcrowding; the heat and humidity; the cheese sandwiches on moldy bread; and the lukewarm, milkless, sugarless tea we were given. I remembered the guards, barely sane themselves, and the overall filth that seemed to cover everything, so thick in the air you could taste it. Underlying all this was the dehumanizing absence of freedom.

Suddenly, the mail case in front of me didn't look so bad. My job was an opportunity to earn and save money. I got to work outside for a good part of the day, free to look at the sky and breathe fresh air, free to buy a soda or a candy bar when I wanted one. Voilà! I had an attitude of gratitude. I began to do a little dance as I cased the mail with renewed vigor.

My co-workers were pleasantly perplexed at my change in attitude; alas, I could not reveal the source of the uplifting, lest I break my anonymity. Yet the answer was so simple:

I had chosen gratitude over self-pity, and living life without the use of drugs had become a great deal easier.

This particular experience has long since passed, yet the prerogative to choose gratitude rather than self-pity remains with me. I really don't

choose to be grateful because I am some noble character who is better than the next guy; I choose to be grateful because it makes being a recovering addict easier.

Keep coming back. NA needs you.  
PH, New Jersey





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## Planting the seeds

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Here's a little bit of experience you might find interesting. When I arrived at the program in 1985, it was through the H&I committee's efforts. I was told that I didn't have to live the way I had been living anymore. All I had to do was change my whole life and give away what had been given to me.

It wasn't long before I got caught up in the "save the world" syndrome. I began my crusade to save the unsavable and persuade the unwilling. During this phase of recovery, my ego drove me to get involved in service to the fellowship and sponsorship. Not having worked the steps at that point, all I knew was that this program worked.

One sponsee of mine shared some distress about leaving the country and the group behind. Together, we worked through his fear and came to the solution that it takes only two addicts to hold a meeting. I gave this member some literature and a meeting format and he went on his way. The following month I received a package from the place this sponsee had visited. In it was a very nice

thank-you from the NA members in that country—NA members because of that little bit of literature, a meeting format, and my sponsee's willingness.

At last year's World Service Conference, which I attended as a trusted servant, the representative from the Philippines was explaining how the fellowship started in his country. I didn't give it a second thought until he mentioned the starter kit and format. Then it clicked—could it be?

It turned out that not only could it be—it was. The meeting was started to help one suffering addict, but had grown into an NA community large enough to be a part of the WSC.

This experience caused me to feel a strange excitement. My ego wanted to jump up and down and say "Lookie, lookie. I did good." But that's not what I learned in this fellowship. All that really transpired was that my Higher Power, in its infinite wisdom, had acted through me and touched another in this fellowship. It just goes to show that we never know what the results of our actions will be.

I am grateful for this fellowship. Thanks to those who came before me.

*ML, California*

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## Efforts to serve

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Early in my recovery, it was suggested that I make some sort of contribution. At first my efforts were helpful but, soon after, I began to offer more craziness than anything else. With recovery, however, I gradually got out of the way and became able to serve in a consistent and positive manner. To a great extent it is through my efforts to be of service that I have grown and changed—and built my recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

My first experiences with service were simple ones. I arrived early and helped set up meetings. I stayed late and helped clean up. I emptied ashtrays. Today I know that these are important offerings, and I find it interesting that the newly arrived are the ones usually completing these tasks.

Eventually, I found my way into area service committee meetings. I began to see how issues of policy were often decided after lengthy and acrimonious debate. These meetings revealed a variety of service positions of which I had been unaware, and that I could not realistically expect to

hold at the time. Soon, however, I was a group service representative and attending area meetings as a trusted servant of that group.

That was the first in a series of formal service positions that I held over the first seven years of my recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. At different times I was the secretary, treasurer, and GSR of various groups. I was the area chairperson, treasurer, and area service representative. Lastly, I was the newsletter subcommittee chairperson of the RSC.

In my efforts to serve, I was certainly part of the solution in NA, but I was also part of the problem for a long time. I was too rigid as a trusted servant, upset with anyone who disrupted the even flow of the meeting. I was sure I knew the answer, whatever the question, and pushed it on others at service committee meetings.

For years, chairing a meeting meant slamming my own agenda through, no matter what. My newsletter writings were filled with anger and controversy. I had difficulty truly representing my group or area; most of the time I represented only myself.

Gradually, I grew tired of the controversies. I no longer relished the battle over the endless issues we manage to create for ourselves. I stopped pushing my views and came to see that I was frequently wrong—and that others were frequently right. I was able to see others going through the same process that I had, starting out ranting and raving, then mellowing and stepping back out of the fight. It takes many of us years, but eventu-



ally most of us who remain in formal service positions seem to arrive there.

I recently attended some area service committee meetings for the first time in three years as my home group's GSR. I saw some of the behaviors I have listed above. There were those who spoke passionately about dances and money and other service bodies. The chairperson had difficulty remaining neutral. Someone suggested rewriting a group's motion so that it would better reflect the intent.

I discovered that I could still get angry when Robert's Rules are used to shut me up. I offered my experience a few times but nobody seemed terribly interested in it. I knew exactly how they felt, having done the same thing many times myself.

I was also able to see that members of our fellowship are continuing to make terrific efforts to serve. Many of us are still committed to helping Narcotics Anonymous survive and, perhaps more importantly, NA is surviving in spite of many of those efforts. We are still learning how to live this new way of life as we strive to be of service, and we will certainly make mistakes.

Attending our area meeting once a month as the GSR from my home group and contributing a bit of non-

controversial material for some NA publications are my only efforts to serve the fellowship today. As the GSR I make a sincere effort to carry the conscience of my home group. As a writer I try to communicate my experience recovering in Narcotics Anonymous.

I continue to serve, but my efforts are gentler and more forgiving today. When a member disrupted a meeting not long ago, I was patient. When the area chairperson got upset with me

recently, I sat down quietly and let another administrative committee member suggest a time-out. These were very different responses from those I would have had just a few years ago. I used to be especially concerned with being right or being in control. Today I

am more concerned with being of service, and I try to reflect that in my efforts to serve.

*Anonymous*



## *Chairing a meeting meant slamming my own agenda through*

## *It's not for your ego*

Not too long ago, I was sitting at my home group's meeting sharing about the difficulties I was having with the step I was working. A woman I knew whispered in my ear, "Would you be my sponsor?" She had a few more months clean time than myself, but we had common chronic health problems in recovery, and I thought I could really show her what was shown to me: "How it Works," starting with Step One.

Well, it started out fine. We worked Step One, then started on Step Two. Then she stopped calling me. When she wanted my attention, she would address me during the meeting. Our sponsor/sponsee relationship deteriorated. When I would talk to my sponsor she would say, "Sponsorship is not for your ego." How, as a sponsor, was I helping her? Was she getting to meetings? Was she working her steps? Was she calling other women? My ego kept saying, "Stick with it, you can be her friend."

So, we pushed on to Step Three. By then, our relationship had really fallen apart. She was not going to meetings. All her old behaviors were

back. Too proud to ask for help, again, I called my sponsor. She said, "Let her go." She reminded me that there are a lot of awesome women in NA, that my sponsee wasn't hearing what I was saying. She said that if someone wanted recovery, the women in NA would help.

I asked my sponsor, "What about just being her friend?" As I said before, I felt we had a lot in common with our chronic health problems. I felt I could really understand and be supportive. My sponsor simply said, "Sponsorship is not for your ego." She suggested that I be her friend, not her sponsor, that I trust the program of NA. After much searching and struggling (my sponsee was now going to doctors unnecessarily), I let her go. I removed myself as her sponsor and went to work at being friends. Well, that month my ex-sponsee got busy: She asked a woman who had ten years to be her sponsor. Then she used her sponsor. Now when I go to meetings I hear her share her struggles with the step work.

The NA program really does work! I often hear other addicts sharing about sponsorship. I would love to share what I have found in NA, but sometimes the messenger, not the NA message, is what comes across. So now when I am asked, I just share my experience: Sponsorship is not for my ego.

*JM, Washington*



# Getting full

Being, relatively speaking, a baby in recovery, I was really apprehensive about submitting a story to *NA Way*. I kept thinking, "It's not a good enough story and they probably wouldn't publish it anyway." However, my peers in the program encouraged me for two reasons: One, they thought my idea was a really good concept. Two, they said that if nothing else, the process of writing would be great therapy. So here goes:

I'm thirty-seven-years old. For as long as I can remember, I have felt empty. I constantly would seek recognition and acceptance to fill the void that existed within me. I'd always been an achiever and a people-pleasing crybaby. Today I can admit these things. Not long ago, I could have justified my entire life. There was always a reason, besides me, why things were the way they were; I was always a victim of circumstances.

Anyway, I was convinced this black hole inside me could be filled if I could only find the right "stuff." At first, it was by being a straight "A" student. That didn't work. Then I got married and devoted my life to a person. I thought this would make me whole for sure. It didn't. Next

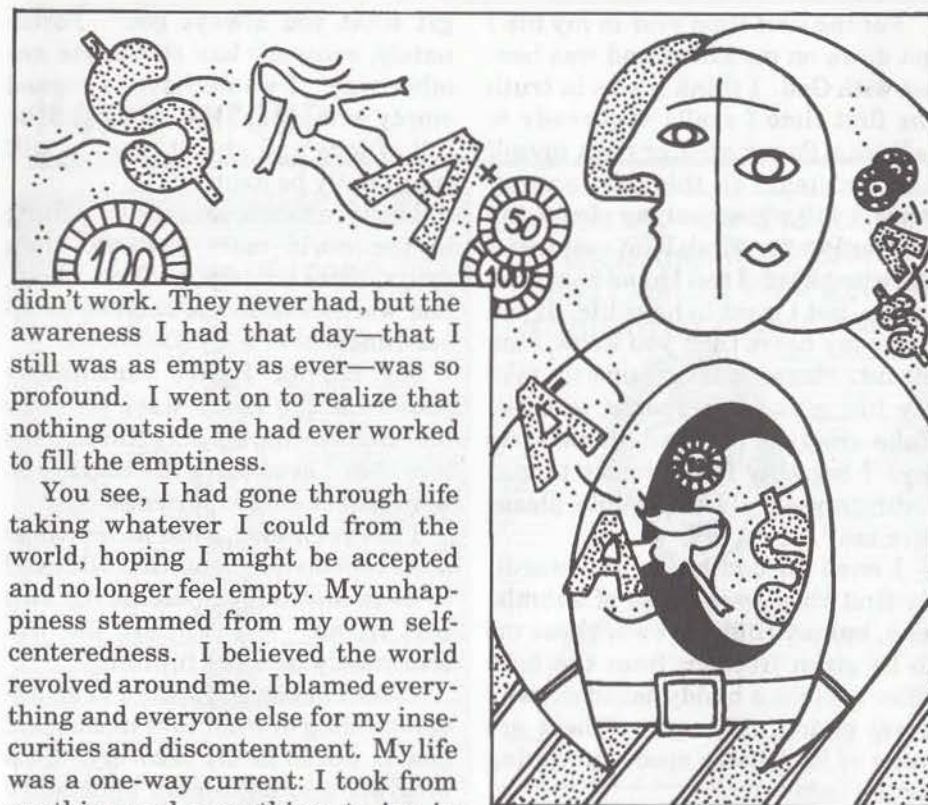
was a career. Here I could really blossom! I became the best salesman in our region and for a few years was even under the illusion that I was okay.

Soon gambling and prostitution became my pastimes. I attributed this behavior to the fact that I needed excitement, but I can see now that I was once again trying in desperation to fill the vacancy that was consuming me. All during this time I had experimented with drugs and pretty much concluded that marijuana and I were to be friends until death do us part.

Then one day I was introduced to crack (rock cocaine). Holy Gemini! I'd found it! This, or so I thought, "filled" me. I instantly became a full-blown addict. Of course, it was my compulsive disease just using the drug as a means to express itself. Now I know! As the saying goes, "Even a blind man has 20-20 hindsight."

During my drug use, I lost my house, my wife, eleven (yes, eleven) cars, and God only knows how many jobs. That void deep inside continued to expand but, as long as I was under the influence, I felt full. I fell in and out of recovery—always for the wrong reasons—but there simply seemed to be no relief. There didn't seem to be anything in the world that was capable of making me feel complete and filling that emptiness.

One day, while doing a stretch of time in jail, I used. It was then, while still under the influence, that I had my awakening. I realized, for the first time in my life, that the drugs



didn't work. They never had, but the awareness I had that day—that I still was as empty as ever—was so profound. I went on to realize that nothing outside me had ever worked to fill the emptiness.

You see, I had gone through life taking whatever I could from the world, hoping I might be accepted and no longer feel empty. My unhappiness stemmed from my own self-centeredness. I believed the world revolved around me. I blamed everything and everyone else for my insecurities and discontentment. My life was a one-way current: I took from anything and everything, trying in vain to fill the emptiness inside. I came to the realization that nothing in the world *would* fill me because nothing in the world *could* fill me. I was on the losing side in a battle that couldn't possibly be won. But, again, it was the awareness of this that was so awesome. It all became so clear. It wasn't the world that was to blame for my destruction, it was my own expectation that worldly things would make me okay. I came to understand that it's not the way things are that screw me up, but the way I think they should be.

Anyway, all of this and much more raced through my mind in an instant. I was overwhelmed!

It was then that I had my spiritual awakening. I became aware of all this dynamic information and it suddenly dawned on me that I still had nothing with which to fill the hole of darkness inside me. Then I remembered something a wiser man than I once said: "Fear is the second most influential force governing man and his behavior. The only power on this earth greater than fear is love!"

I was open-minded enough to admit the fact that I was scared. Scared of the lifestyle. Scared of the drugs. Scared I might not find that "something" to fill me. You can probably guess what happened next.



For the first time ever in my life I got down on my knees and was honest with God. I think it was in truth the first time I really was ready to believe a Power greater than myself even existed. To this day, and always, I will remember my plea to my Higher Power: "God, I am a sinner of the worst kind. I feel I have no reason to live, but I want to have life. If you know my heart then you know I am afraid. Please, if it is your will, take my life, give me a reason to exist. Take away my fear and let me taste joy. I beg only for a chance to quit hating myself. If I am lovable, please love me."

I cried for two hours afterwards. At first they were tears of submission, but my Higher Power chose me to be given freedom from the fear. After a while, a buddy asked me why I was crying. My reply, "These are tears of joy," holds special meaning for me today.

God had done for me what I could not do for myself. He had loved me to the brim and beyond. I was, for the first time in my life, not merely full but overflowing!

Since then, I have given away my love, but the awesome part is that I am more full now than ever! The more I give, the more I have. It doesn't make sense. It is in conflict with the conditioning I allowed myself to receive from the world. I will forever be grateful to God for opening my eyes to the truth. I know I will give love and compassion to my fellows until the day I die.

There's a saying, "If you always do what you always did, you'll always

get what you always got." Fortunately, recovery has shown me another way. I would have remained empty without it. If I continue to be full of love and give it away, I will continually be kept full.

I believe that love is the only thing in the world more powerful than drugs, more contagious than a cold, and warmer than the coldest, darkest dungeon.

My Higher Power continually shows me the many ways he loves me. Believe me, it's only through his love that I even have the courage to write about this experience.

I am reminded, both at meetings and in my meditations, that all I need to do is continue to become my own best friend. If I do that, life will continually be more fulfilling.

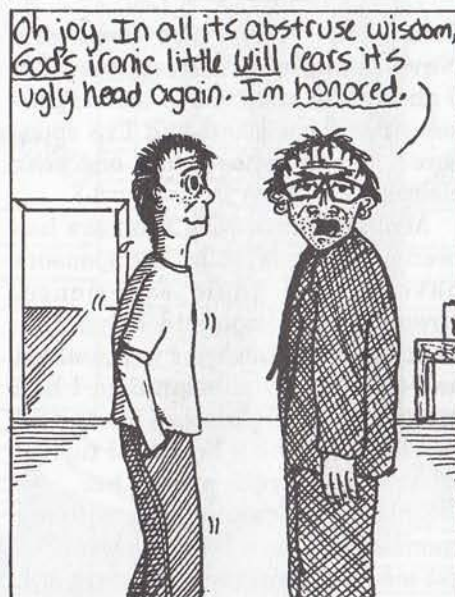
I feel I'm blessed with a deep understanding of what love means and how it works in my recovery. This program and fellowship underscore what I've been fortunate enough to learn: we can only keep what we have by giving it away.

I'm much too young in recovery to be a sponsor but I know I'll cherish the day when God sees fit to have another human being in need come to me for courage, strength, and hope. I can hardly wait! Until then, I'll continue to be diligent in my program, open to suggestions, and, above all, I'll give a lot of love.

I may just be a baby in recovery, but then, did you ever see a baby that you just couldn't help but love? Go ahead, love me. God said it's okay.

HR, California

## Home Group





# Newsletters



## Please don't put me on a pedestal!

### • a series on sponsorship

From *HOW Now*, the Southern Nevada regional newsletter: I'm J and I'm an addict. I've had a sponsor since I got clean and I've sponsored women since I had one year clean.

My experience with sponsors has been varied. Most of my sponsors have shared their experience, strength, and hope and helped me back on the path when I've stumbled and fallen. In the beginning, I had my sponsor on a pedestal. If she said "Breathe," I took a breath. I turned my will and my life over to her.

This kind of relationship with my sponsor may have been necessary to get me started in my early recovery,

but then I wanted her to be responsible for my life and my recovery.

Thank God there were others in my life, and I found a sponsor who taught me to live by the steps. You know, the kind who stops you and says, "What was your part in this? Are you trusting God? What character defect are you acting on?" She helped me learn that I have a loving God and showed me the path to recovery through the steps. She let me know that she was a human being. Our ability to disagree (or to just be wrong!) and still care for one another helped me to start loving and accepting myself.

I believe my role as a sponsor is to share my experience, strength, and hope, and to direct you to the steps so you can find your own path. I walk that path with you as another recovering addict.

When you put me on a pedestal, you expect me to be God-like and perfect—wow, my ego likes that! I'm "above" and "better than." That puts me in a position where I think I have to share profound things and I can't show my humanness.

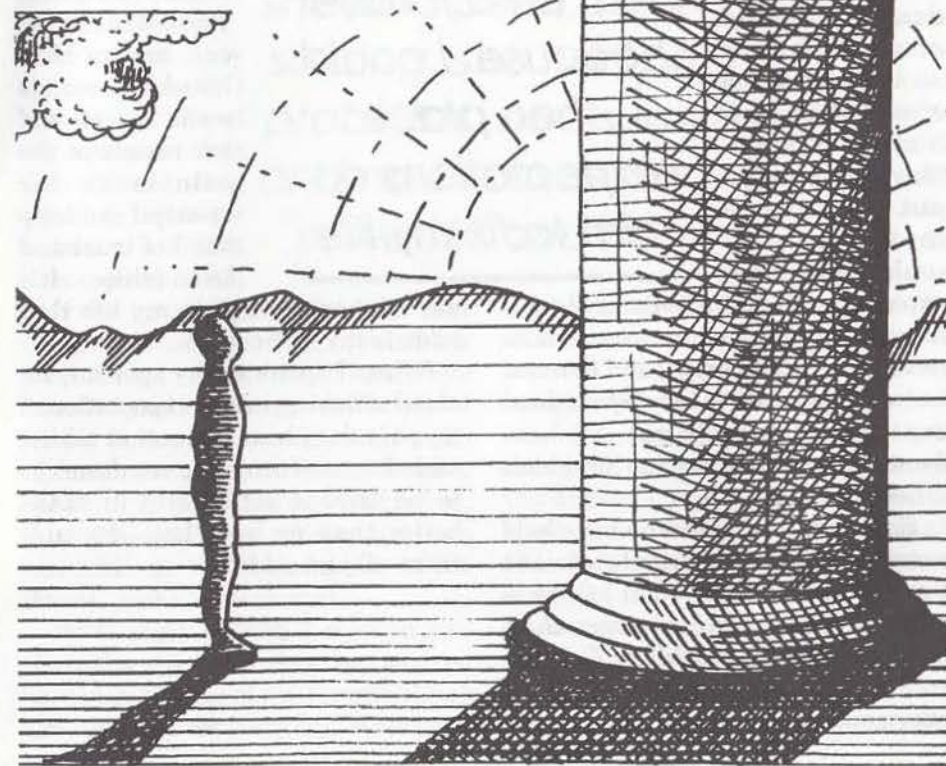
What is this humanness? I make mistakes, I can still act out, I hurt, I love, I laugh. I am still a liar, a cheat, and a thief, but with the steps I'm learning to be honest and to get at peace with God.

I need to remember to practice spiritual principles such as anonymity, open-mindedness, and unity. Anonymity means we are all recovering addicts. This puts us on an equal basis. Open-mindedness helps me listen to other points of view. Unity reminds me that we are in this together for our betterment, which then helps NA as a whole.

Don't put me on a pedestal! I'm only human; I'll fall off. I'm just another recovering addict sharing experience, strength, and hope—nothing more, nothing less.

Thanks for this opportunity to share. I'm grateful to be clean.

J





I guess I'm fortunate that when I moved to this area I didn't know much about my sponsor. I didn't know of his positions in service, or how many people in how many regions knew his name, or at how many conventions he'd spoken. I didn't know and I didn't care. I just knew him as the man I'd asked to be my sponsor and the addict I would trust to guide me through the steps.

In my first year of recovery in Pennsylvania, I only thought about myself. My relationships were very one-sided. I had the attitude that something in my life was broken and

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*I needed to put him on a throne because I could then place expectations on him to fix my life*

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it was everyone else's responsibility to fix it! I used my sponsor as a dump site and had no regard for him as a human being or an addict. I put him on a pedestal. Maybe I needed to put him on a throne because I could then place

expectations on him to fix my life, to answer every one of my questions, to never be in a bad mood, and to never be too busy to talk to me. When these expectations weren't met, I'd have someone to blame for my problems other than myself.

Sometimes addicts who have held service positions or have a lot of clean time get treated with what I think is disrespect. People sometimes show indifference to these addicts' feelings, treating them as a personal NA libraries from which information can

be called up, or as area service consultants, whose sole purpose for drawing breath is to provide discourses on current issues.

Sponsors are not libraries or area service consultants; they're human beings first and addicts second. They need the same things all other addicts need: unconditional love, attention, and respect.

Most sponsors don't want to have all that power, anyway. They don't want the responsibility of making good or bad decisions for their sponsees. That kind of thing isn't their job. Their job is to provide us

with choices. I've seen my sponsor go through one of the roughest years of his recovery, and to have him let down his walls to me and tell me about the pain in his life created a deep bond of trust and friendship. It's

one of those things in my life that adds to my self-esteem.

When I speak to my sponsor, instead of having heavy expectations I try to look at him as another addict and a human being. No one deserves to be treated differently in NA—better than or less than—because we're all just addicts.

M

I'm S and I'm an addict. I'm also a human being and a child of God. Please do not ask me for advice. I will share my experience and, if I have no experience in what you are asking about, I will help you identify the consequences of your behavior and love you through the process or point you in the direction of someone who can help.

I have the potential to feel and do what any other addict can feel and do: get angry, relapse, get into denial, become obsessed or compulsive or self-centered.

What I have learned from making the mistake of taking hostages is that being a friend is what sponsorship is all about.

I asked my sponsor once if I should tell one of my sponsees that she should find another sponsor because we had become so close

over the years. She told me the best thing I could do would be to become a good friend. Since that time, I've found myself sharing with a lot of people in my life the spiritual principles that I've found in the Twelve Steps. I can share experience, strength, and hope with more than just addicts; it's become a way of life for me, and it's awesome!

With every person I meet, I can share the wonderful love that started here in NA. One of my favorite lines I've heard in recovery is, "When you

know that you don't know, then you know." I keep that close to my heart so my ego can stay humble and close to a loving God.

Sponsorship is an honor and I'm pleased that God allows this connection to happen in my life. As I've been told, and as I share with others, "Hang in there—the journey continues, a day at a time." Thank you for letting me share.

S

I am an addict, and my name is J. My sponsor is not a God, he is a person. From this sponsee's point of

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*I thought because she had been clean so long, she had no problems, no issues, and no life except to serve NA and me*

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view, my sponsor is someone who guides me through the Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. It doesn't necessarily mean that he has to live the steps. Since a sponsor is only human, he can only live these steps to the best of

his ability, which may not be the same as someone else's ability. I've learned through my experience of being a sponsee to do what my sponsor says, not necessarily what he's doing. My sponsor doesn't have all the answers, and he doesn't tell me what to do. He guides me through the steps so that I can find my own answers.

As a sponsor myself, I know I don't have all the answers, and that they can only be found in working the steps. I am not perfect. I am only



human, and I am an addict. For a sponsee to put expectations on me would only lead to his resentment. In the spirit of our First Tradition, the only thing that we have in common is that we are all addicts. We should never want to put someone on a pedestal, or be put on a pedestal, because this may prevent us from just being addicts in recovery. I allow my sponsor to be a human being and I hope that my sponsees allow me to be the same. It's okay to make mistakes and grow in the program. It's my opinion that, if you don't have the best sponsor in the world, then you need to find another one.

J

**M**y name is J and I'm an addict. Or is it, "I'm an addict and my name is J?" For me, it is more important that I identify as an addict first, but I'm also a human being. As such, I have shortcomings and defects of character. I continue to be selfish and self-centered. I have a spiritual malady—the disease of addiction. These defects never disappear; however, the manifestations of these defects don't rear their ugly heads in my life as often as they have in the

past. Why is that so? The steps! Who taught me this? My sponsor.

Did I think she walked on water! Anything she said was gospel. She has been my guide on this journey since I entered Narcotics Anonymous. She is my confidante. Did I put her on a pedestal? You bet I did. Did it disappoint me when she fell off and bumped her head? You'd better believe it. When I first got clean and began working the steps, I believed her job was to be available to me whenever I called, had an issue, had a crisis, or was at a meeting. I believed that everything I told her was not only important, but exciting and interesting. I thought that because she had been clean so long, she had no problems, no issues, and no life except to serve NA and me. Well, I'm sure you see right through this selfishness and self-centeredness, but in the beginning I could not.

All of us remember the day we realized our sponsor was human. It was the day we didn't get what we wanted from him or her. They were either busy, doing something with their family perhaps, or walking into a meeting crying because they were hurting. And there we stand, holding our proverbial you-know-what's in

our hands, going, "But, but, but...I need you! I have something going on!" To this day I can't tell you what that something is. We are then faced with the realization that our sponsor is human. Oh, my God—not that!

My relationship with my sponsor began to change from that point. I read the pamphlet on sponsorship again, and what I read began to make sense.

My sponsor then did the most incredible thing for me; she told me to raise my hand as a potential sponsor. I did that, and the world began to change for me. These women who asked me to sponsor them would call me and say things like, "What should I do?" "I hate him, should I leave?" and "So-and-so said this mean thing to me, should I tell him/her to go #@\*\$%?"

I have been taught by my sponsor that I don't have answers for anyone. That means anyone. If I have your answers, then I must take responsibility for the results in your life, whether good or bad. That would mean that I play God. I played God for years in my life and it got me nowhere. My understanding of Step Three is that all I do is take action; the results are in God's hands. Each

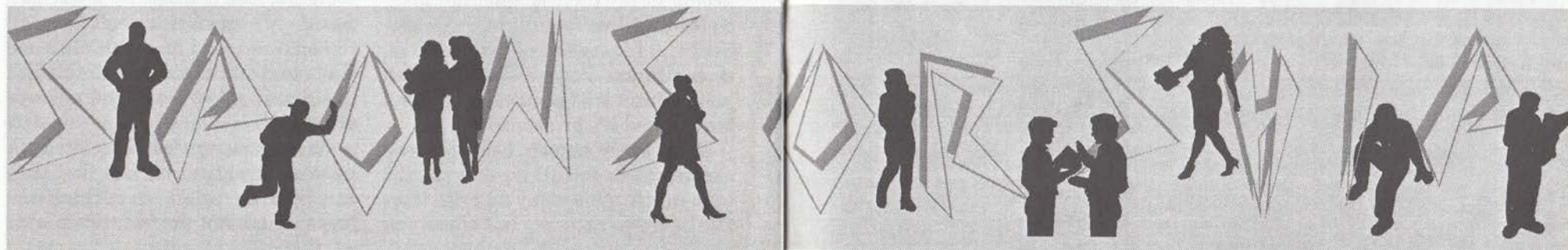
one of us has our individual lessons to learn, and it is not my job or my sponsor's job to teach those lessons.

Although it is a hard lesson to learn, finding out that your sponsor is human is a gift. I love it when the women I sponsor begin to sponsor other women and make that inevitable telephone call to me, saying something like, "How do you do it? I don't know what to say." The truth is, there is very little to say. My responsibility is to guide you through the steps so that you will see for yourself what you need to see. We all find out eventually. That is, those of us who choose to work the program.

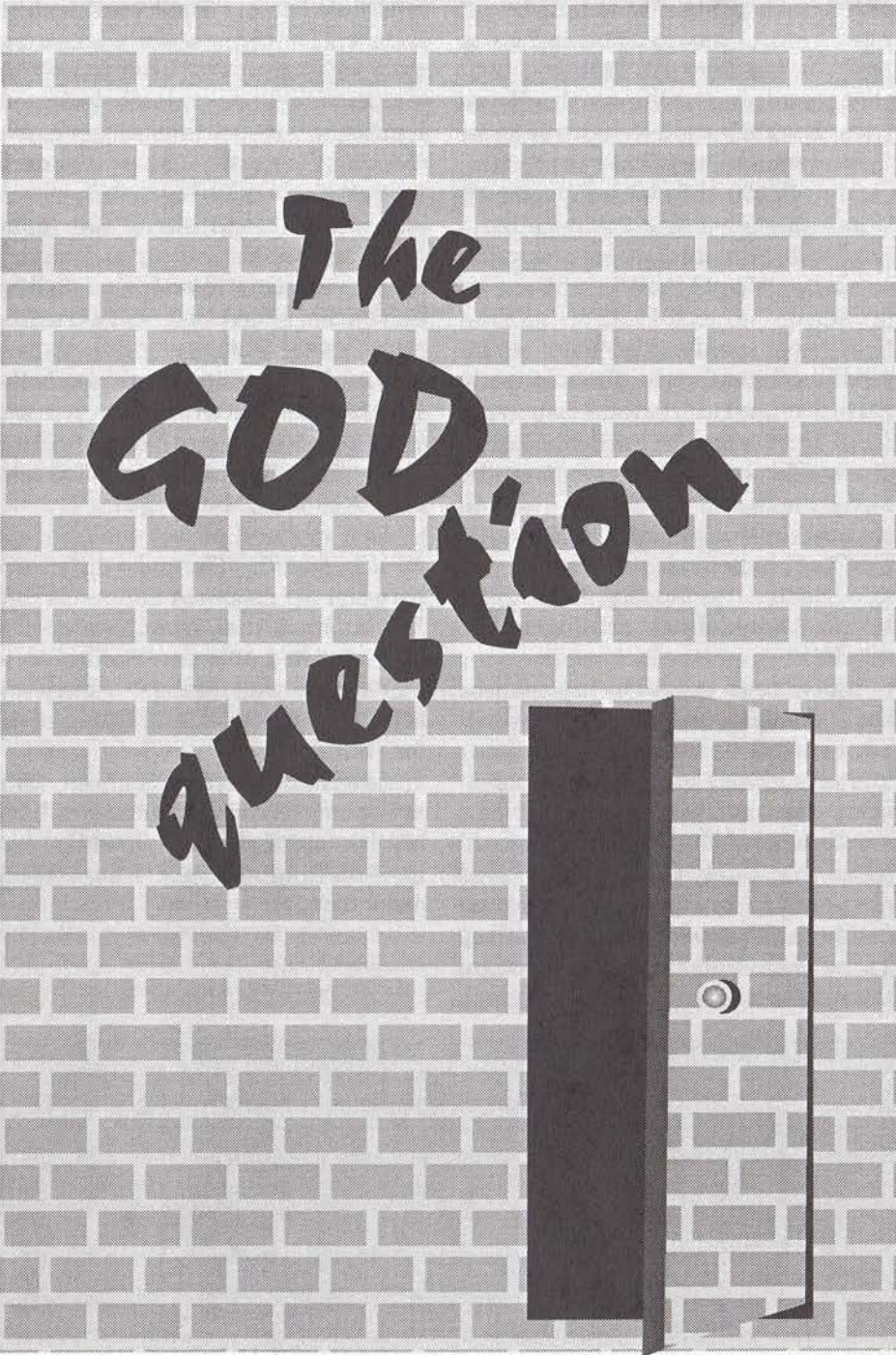
As a sponsor, please don't put me on a pedestal. The only difference between my sponsees and me is that I've applied the principles over a longer period of time. I continue to suffer from this disease. I have not attained sainthood, and I thank God for that!

As a final note, I can only say that my sponsor has allowed me to have my own opinions, my own ideas, and my own final analysis. I hope yours does, too.

J







# The GOD question

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## A fellowship forum on Motion #39

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### What is Motion #39?

What has come to be known as "Motion #39" is, in actuality, an entire set of complex issues surrounding the wording in our steps and traditions where God is referred to as "He" or "Him."

Motion #39 itself was presented by the Australia Region and discussed at the 1993 World Service Conference. It stated:

"To make the following changes to our steps and traditions: Step Three: We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a God of our understanding. Step Seven: We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings. Step Eleven: We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with a God of our understanding, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out. Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

As you can see, what has been suggested in Motion #39 is that where God is referred to as "He," we instead just say, "God."

After some discussion by a conference working group, it was decided that the issues expressed in Motion #39 are bigger than the language used; therefore the fellowship should discuss them in depth for a period of time. Conference participants decided to send both the motion and the working group's recommendations out to the fellowship, hoping to encourage the fellowship to talk about this motion and the issues surrounding it.

The working group recommended that the fellowship consider the following questions when talking about Motion #39:

1. Does the language of the steps and traditions truly reflect the principles of the program?
2. If not, what language does the fellowship feel would better reflect those principles?

*The NA Way Magazine* wants to know how you feel about this issue. The staff and trusted servants responsible for this magazine have pledged to keep access to this column as open as possible. We will publish your thoughts and feelings on the specific wording in Motion #39, other suggestions for changing the steps and traditions, or opinions that the steps and traditions should not be changed at all. Please share with other *NA Way* readers your views on this very important matter.



## An understanding of the "He" in the steps

I am a grateful addict called Christina and grateful addicts don't use. I want to first say how grateful I am for people at the world service level; they are doing things that I am unable or unwilling (whichever one prefers) to do today.

As you can probably tell, I am a baby in recovery. In just under a month of this writing I will be celebrating my second year clean. This is one of the reasons I've never tried to do what I'm doing now. I felt I was too new to have anything to say. I've just read something, however, that let me know it was time to grow up and, no matter what happens, let people know how I feel.

I guess the only way to go into this thing is to first say that I am grateful to Jimmy K, the people who worked with him, and you, *The NA Way*, for making me aware that someone thought enough about me to provide a place for me to recover. I don't believe I have to change anything in this program; all I have to do is follow it as prescribed. This gives rise to the question of changing the "He" or "God" references in our steps and traditions.

I come from a big region, the Greater New York Region. We have many personalities here, and I mean *many*. Some are "in" recovery and some are "recovering." The point I am trying to make is, with so many people trying to recover a day at a time in one place with 1700 meetings to choose from, we are bound to run across people who refer to their

Higher Power as "Jesus Christ," "Allah," or any number of other names. You guys told me there was no right or wrong in NA. You told me to find a Higher Power of my own understanding and the only requirement was that this Power be loving and caring. That statement implied that this Higher Power could be a chair, the group, or anything else I choose. Is a "Power greater than myself" not God? If you can agree that a Power greater than yourself is God, and that we have a right to choose this Power, then it stands to reason that we can choose the word "He" for ourselves or not. The point is that it's our choice.

Another great gift that Jimmy K gave to me is the right to work my own personal program of recovery, and I do that by working the Twelve Steps at my own pace. The traditions have only come into my life recently. I am now an active member of my area H&I committee and I do service at the group level as well.

Someone said something at WCNA-23 that I believe I will never forget, only because it made so much sense to me, and that was, "No one can tell you how to work your personal recovery; no one has to! We read 'How it Works' at every meeting!" You know something, that not only makes a lot of sense, it is also the truth.

I say all this to point out that if people have problems with the way we word our steps, then perhaps they are not taking the "medication" as prescribed. Perhaps they are not seeking the guidance of a sponsor, or

they are not asking questions of people in the meetings they attend, or perhaps they are simply not ready to be recovering addicts. This thing called NA has worked for a lot of people before me, even agnostics. Even for the short time I've been in NA, I have watched them recover. So I know the principles of our program are not broken. Why fix them? Recovery is about changing ourselves, not about changing the program. We adapt our lives to the program, not vice-versa.

Allow people to object to the "He," allow people to say, "Jesus Christ," "Allah," "Goddess," or anything else they choose as long as they are the recovering addicts that we need and love. We talk a lot about acceptance in this program, huh? Then we have to accept the fact this program worked the way it is long before we got here, and will continue to work without us. My Higher Power is neither male nor female, yet it works through males and females, and I found this by taking the medication as prescribed.

I would even go so far as to point out that the word "our" means the majority feels this way, so I have to feel or think that way also to be included in that. "Yours" is none of my business. What is my business is knowing that the God of my understanding—understanding I got from reading the steps the way they are written—works. To say "ours" would take away or contradict the concept of a Power of my understanding. I'm a baby and I don't know much, but I do know I am not with it.

If people are bored, please get bored

with something else. These principles have worked for millions!

We should not forget that these principles were given to us by another fellowship. We only made one change: our program includes all mood- or mind-altering drugs, which makes us addicts and our disease addiction. We didn't change the "He" because it worked before and it works now. With that single exception, the program worked the way it was written. I learn well, people, because I know I'll die if I don't.

What would be good is to include "What Can I Do?" in our new *Introductory Guide to NA*. This way people will know what to do if they have a problem with words such as "He."

CS, New York

## About Motion #39

My first reaction to the proposed changes in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions was to say, "It'll never happen."

The first thing I thought about was the small print that follows any printing of the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. The key word that jumps out at me from that small print is "permission." I am not a student of copyright law, but I am sure that at some point our trusted servants must seek permission from another fellowship in order to proceed with Motion #39.

I would be very surprised if that other fellowship granted permission to NA to revise the steps and traditions. Think about it. By granting NA permission, that other fellowship could open the door for a major con-



trovery within its own membership, and I am sure they are not about to fix something that is not broken.

That's how I see it!

*RW, California*

## Peace

My name is John; I am an addict! I emphasize PEACE because Proper Education Always Corrects Errors. My clean date is 26 February 1990.

When I came into this program, I was told that I should learn to listen and listen to learn. So I did. This is what I learned and will serve as my rebuttal to the people in Australia and their supporters on Motion #39. Just for today, through NA, I have a better perspective on my life.

I was taught to share my experience, strength, and hope. My experience is my strength and I hope some still-suffering addict benefits from this. In listening I learned that just like GOD means Good Orderly Direction, EGO means Easing God Out. I was taught that recovery is a learning process and that the Basic Text is to be studied because we will be put to the test. The test is dealing with life on life's terms. For over half a century this program has worked for those who keep it simple, attend meetings regularly, and make an effort to work the steps. Our meetings are open to anyone.

Now let's get busy. We bear witness to God as we understand Him, Her, He, She, or It as individuals when we come into a meeting and say the Serenity Prayer, "God grant me" and as a group when we leave and say the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father." I

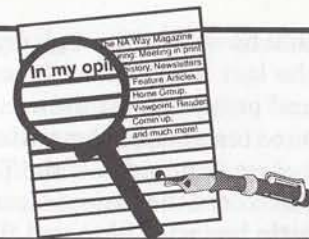
hope you understand.

In the essay on Step Eleven in the Basic Text, it says, "Outside of Narcotics Anonymous, there are any number of different groups practicing meditation. Nearly all of these groups are connected with a particular religion or philosophy. An endorsement of any one of these methods would be a violation of our traditions and a restriction on the individual's right to have a God of his understanding." Now it is clear to me that this fellowship was given to us by a Higher Power and "fellowship" means "chosen by God," so if you don't choose God it won't do you any good anyway. The choosing people are the chosen people. The people who would Ease God Out definitely do not have Good Orderly Direction. Many are called, but few are chosen.

You must be in recovery in order to be restored to sanity. It is at the point of our surrender that we became sane enough to make a decision to trust God. I suggest that the negative committee get a better perspective on their lives through NA instead of trying to Ease God Out. Change yourselves and the world will change. There is but one ultimate authority. It doesn't matter what you call the Higher Power as long as you use it. Many are called, but few are chosen. God bless the chosen few.

*JB, Pennsylvania*

# Viewpoint



## We are all one

Narcotics Anonymous is a program of spiritual principles.

To me, this fact is all-inclusive. It means that the sum total of our principles is spiritually derived. I have come to believe over time that this spiritual reality transcends our entire message communicated in our literature.

In "What is the NA program?" we read that this is a fellowship in which membership is guaranteed to all—regardless of race, creed, color, sexual identity, age, religion, or lack of religion. This statement is commonplace in law and in equal opportunity employment statements. However, our statement regarding equal opportunity is a spiritual statement, not a matter of law or social recognition.

Recently, at our area service committee meeting, two motions were presented regarding the possible splitting of our area. Much of the ensuing discussion revolved around the issue of racism. The discussion was emotional, as we all have feelings regarding this issue.

Many of us enter NA with racial baggage and we are asked to leave it at the door for this is considered an outside issue by virtue of our Tenth Tradition. On the surface, this expression of our traditions seems to be sufficient, yet it is not. The issue surfaces anyhow.

Why is this? I believe that this occurs because we attempt to deal with a spiritual problem with a "physical" or "legal" response, if you will. We forget that we are dealing with spiritual principles that require spiritual solutions; that is, solutions based in the God of our understanding.

What is the spiritual basis of equality, racial harmony, and unity in our fellowship? What does it mean to be a member of the NA family? What responsibility do I have to God and to my brothers and sisters in the fellowship? How is my personal recovery dependent on our unity as a fellowship—linked together under God's heaven? These are the questions



that have gone through my mind over the last few days as I contemplated and prayed about the occurrences at our area service committee meeting.

I was reminded of the TV commercial where the little girl confronts the little boy with "Are you the opposite sex, or am I?" We chuckle. But facing racial distrust with a desire to heal, we might well paraphrase her question and ask, "Are you the opposite race, or am I?" There is no scientific answer to this question. The question raises a deeper one: From whose viewpoint are we looking at our fellow NA members? God, as I understand Him, saw everything he made and said it was very good.

What did God see? He sees his own perfect spiritual ideas, all governed by Him and held by Him in unchanging harmony and love. God only loves! Love from God—in mind, spirit, and principle—could not and does not cause or include elements of hate, conflict, or injustice. And we, as human beings, the expression of God's love, should strive to reflect His all-inclusive love and compassion. The basis of spiritual harmony is this acceptance of the true nature of God and man.

Any belief that life, substance, and intelligence belong to us and not to God is an illusion. Conflict between races and everything leading up to it are an unreal and unspiritual invention of the human mind. This invention stems primarily from our ignorance of God. People of all races in our fellowship who have come to know the God of their own understanding seem to agree on God's nature as loving and giving. They reject greed,

hatred, arrogance, and the like. Those of us who can feel God's love can afford to be charitable, just, generous, unselfish, and giving to all of our brothers and sisters. Our spirit and the nature of God become the substance of our identity.

In accepting these truths, we have to understand and acknowledge the all-inclusiveness of God's grace. A failure to do this can lead us to feeling less than or more than another addict and perpetuate racial strife. In our true being, we are all God's children—there are no exceptions—and the realization of this is the key to finding the solution to racial problems.

The reality and individuality of each of us is good and is God-made. Our spiritual principles, understood through our personal relationship with God, displaces the tendency to attribute any final significance to ethnic origin of any kind. God does not look at our outward appearance, but rather He looks into our hearts. No one is excluded from God's love. The brotherhood of man and of us in NA is already an established spiritual fact. Our reluctance to recognize and accept this fact does not change the fact.

Racial discord and prejudice among members of our fellowship can find resolution only by yielding to a higher concept. New laws or enlightened diplomacy by themselves cannot free us from racial hatred, or from the self-destructive nature of the addict who has not found God's grace in all things. This is where a spiritual initiative against racism and prejudice, as with any character defect, is

necessary. This new outlook can only be found through God. We can start by seeing ourselves as spiritually derived, each one of us. How can we justify or tolerate prejudice toward another, whose individuality God molded just as carefully and just as lovingly as our own individuality? Would not this also be self-rejecting as well?

Continuing in this vein, we realize that it's not the color of one's skin nor any other trait that gives credence to prejudice. These are only conveniences to which hatred or fear can attach themselves. The source of prejudice is the unthinking acceptance of man as something other than the loving creation of God. The path to a spiritual uplifting in this regard is based in a spiritually reorganized view of our fellow members as the

offspring of God—our very brother and sisters.

This practical, brotherly love, which sees beyond the physical being to one's spiritual origin, demands constant attentiveness. It is an expression of love and requires stepping beyond our natural boundaries, as acts of true love always require. It asks us to understand rather than be understood. It allows our individuality and diversity in culture and origin to strengthen us in unity, compassion, and brotherhood.

It cannot be learned in a day, but the wonderful fact is that each of us can begin today. The pain may be great, but the rewards will be even greater. We can be sure, too, that God is with us in this effort, assuring its success.

*MP, Pennsylvania*





# From our readers



## Anonymous in Iowa

I just finished reading "Still Tripping After All These Years" in the July 1993 issue and believe I experienced a spiritual awakening. This awakening is about anonymity and I'd like to share it with you. I, too, am an addict from Iowa. I, too, travel around to share with my brothers and sisters in recovery.

I've met members whom I found out later were WSB members, WSC subcommittee members, and people whose stories appear in our Basic Text.

But, as I sit here tonight, back home in Iowa, I wonder who RU, the author of "Still Tripping..." is. Is it Rick, Rebba, Rob, Randy, Randi, Rod, Ron, Roger, Ronna, Renda, or none of the above?

You see I was probably at that regional service meeting that RU attended and had those "warm fuzzy" awakenings. I was probably at that dance in Cedar Rapids where we shared our recovery and, no doubt about it, I experienced the Wild Game Feed in Algona, Iowa. I don't know if I had "warm fuzzies" from these experiences or if RU and I hugged, but at these recovery events, our shared recovery is proof that NA works.

We all know that anonymity is the state of bearing no name. RU and I

share recovery, but we do it anonymously. As we carried the message that NA works to all these events, we did so without even knowing each other as messengers.

*PJ, Iowa*

## Sponsorship

Being the good addict that I am, I didn't choose a sponsor early in my recovery. I thought I could do it on my own. This only lasted about thirty days. It was then that I chose a sponsor who had something I wanted. I asked for his help and he gave it. I had no way to meetings so he took me until I could get there on my own. My sponsor introduced me to the steps of NA. It was with his guidance and a swift kick in the butt that I got to know a little about myself. Some of this knowledge I could have done without!

My sponsor also introduced me to my sponsorship family. It has been in this family that I have gotten to know my brothers and to trust others. I have bonded with them and let them know who I am. My brothers are ones I can call on in time of need or in joy.

I now have sponsees of my own. I give to them what was so freely given to me.

*SW, Virginia*

# Comin'up

Calendar						
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**ARIZONA:** May 27-29, 1994; 8th Arizona Regional Convention; Tucson; info (602) 290-6710; ARCCNA-8, PO Box 35055, Phoenix, AZ 85069

2) July 15-17, 1994; 3rd California/Arizona/Nevada Area Convention; Laughlin; info (602) 754-4260; CANAC-3, PO Box 1085, Bullhead City, AZ 86442

**ARKANSAS:** June 17-19, 1994; 10th Beaver Round-Up Campout; Yellville; info (501) 925-1123; BRC-10, PO Box 23, Lowell, AR 72745  
2) July 1-3, 1994; 6th Central Arkansas Area Convention; Little Rock; info (501) 666-1485; CAACNA-6, PO Box 250516, Little Rock, AR 72205

**AUSTRALIA:** Sep. 30 - Oct. 2, 1994; Sydney Combined Area Convention; info 61-2-552-4354 or 61-2-365-3652; SCACNA, 72 Darghan St, Glebe NSW, AUSTRALIA, 2037

**CALIFORNIA:** June 10-12, 1994; San Diego/Imperial Regional Convention; San Diego; info (619) 272-7005; rsvns. (619) 239-4500; SDICRSO-CC, 2260 El Cajon Blvd #184, San Diego, CA 92104

2) June 10-12, 1994; California Mid-State Regional Convention; Visalia; info (209) 625-5057; CMRCNA, PO Box 2561, Visalia, CA 93279

3) June 11, 1994; Westside Area Birthday Meeting & Dance; Culver City; info (310) 452-3204

4) June 12, 1994; Westside Area Bluesfest; Culver City; info (310) 202-9017; Bluesfest line (310) 306-7108

**CANADA - ALBERTA:** June 3-5, 1994; 9th Edmonton Area Convention; info (403) 421-4429; EANA-9, Convention Committee, Room 200-9930-106 St, Edmonton, AB,

2) June 17-19, 1994; 3rd Alsask Northern Lights Area Campout; Fort McMurray; info (403) 743-8144; Campout, PO Box 5183, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, T9H 4V9

**CANADA - BRITISH COLUMBIA:** May 27-29, 1994; 14th Spring Clean Gambier Island Campout; info (604) 322-5967 or (604) 732-1689; VASC, PO Box 1695 Stn. A, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6C 2P7

**CANADA - NOVA SCOTIA:** Aug. 5-7, 1994; 5th Nova Scotia Area Convention; Truro; info (902) 443-2428; NSACNA, PO Box 65, Halifax Central, N.S. Canada, B3J 2L4

**CANADA - QUEBEC:** July 1-3, 1994; 4th Canadian Convention; St-Hyacinthe; info (514) 755-2777; CCNA-4, CP 47518, Plateau Mont-Royal, Montreal, Quebec, H2H 2S8

**CONNECTICUT:** May 21, 1994; 11th Annual Pig Roast "Pigs in Space"; Quassy Amusement Park; info (203) 344 8296; Pigs in Space, 69 Grand Street, Middletown, CT 06457

2) June 3-5, 1994; 8th Greater Waterbury Area Family Campout; E. Canaan; info (203) 542-6025; GWANA-8, PO Box 1075, Woodbury, CT 06798-0603

**FLORIDA:** May 27-30, 1994; 4th Gold Coast Area Convention; Pompano Beach; info (305) 832-9518; GCCNA-4, PO Box 23325, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307

2) June 30 - July 4, 1994; 13th Florida Regional Convention; Jacksonville; info (407) 897-2003

3) Oct. 6-9, 1994; 2nd South Florida Regional Convention; Fort Myers; info (813) 575-7751 or (305) 445-4606; SFRCNA-2, PO Box 70155, Ft Lauderdale, FL 33307

**GEORGIA:** July 22-24, 1994; 12th Piedmont Area Anniversary; Macon; hotel (912) 474-0871

**GERMANY:** May 20-22, 1994; 11th Germanspeaking Convention; Convention, PO Box 11 10 10, 64225 Darmstadt, Germany

**HAWAII:** May 27-30, 1994; 8th Annual Big Island Gathering; info (808) 322-1607

**IDAHO:** May 20-22, 1994; 5th Southern Idaho Regional Convention; Idaho Falls; info; Convention Committee, PO Box 3704, Idaho Falls, ID 83403-3704

**ILLINOIS:** May 27-30, 1994; 8th Kickapoo River Run Primary Purpose Area Campout; rsvns. (217) 351-1678; helpline (217) 373-2063

**INDIANA:** May 27-30, 1994; North Central Indiana Area Convention; info; Milford Convention, PO Box 1052, Elkhart, IN 46515



**IOWA:** July 1-3, 1994; 11th Iowa Regional Convention; Des Moines; info (515) 244-2277; hotel (800) 532-1466; IRCNA-11, PO Box 764, Des Moines, IA 50303

**KANSAS:** Aug. 12-14, 1994; 6th Just For Today Campout; Thunderbird Marina; rsvns. (913) 238-5696; info (913) 762-5108

**LOUISIANA:** May 27-29, 1994; 12th Annual Louisiana Regional Convention; Alexandria; rsvns. (318) 442-9000, (800) 523-9724; LRCNA-12, Program Committee, PO Box 762, Montgomery, LA 71454

**MAINE:** Sep. 9-11, 1994; 11th South Maine Area Convention; Alfred; rsvns. (207) 633-2081; info (207) 882-6114; SMASC-11, Conv. Committee, PO Box 5309, Portland, ME 04101

**MARYLAND:** Sep. 1-4, 1994; WCNA-24; info; WCNA-24, c/o WSO Inc., PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409

**MASSACHUSETTS:** May 6-8, 1994; 7th Martha's Vineyard Area Celebration of Recovery; info (508) 627-6049 or (508) 693-7155; MVACCNA-7, PO Box 2754, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

**MINNESOTA:** May 27-30, 1994; 11th Upper Midwest Regional Convention; Detroit Lakes; phonenumber (701) 234-9330; info; UMRCA-11, PO Box 174, Fargo, ND 58107-0174

**MONTANA:** June 24-26, 1994; 6th Montana Gathering; Missoula; info (800) 984-6668; Gathering, PO Box 1260, Lolo, MT 59584

**NETHERLANDS:** July 22-24, 1994; 11th European Convention and Conference; Amsterdam; info; 31 20 665 9810; ECCNA-11, Postbus 11976, 1001 GZ Amsterdam, Netherlands

**NEW HAMPSHIRE:** June 24-26, 1994; 4th Granite State Area Fellowship in Field Campout; Bethlehem; helpline (603) 432-0166; info; Campout 4, PO Box 4354, Manchester, NH 03108

**NEW JERSEY:** June 10-12, 1994; 9th New Jersey Convention; Cherry Hill; info (908) 442-4679; Convention Committee, PO Box 272, Summerville, NJ 08876

2) Aug. 19-21, 1994; 4th Northern New Jersey Regional Convention; Parsippany; info (201) 676-4481; NNJRCC-4, PO Box 5064, S Hackensack, NJ 07606

**NEW YORK:** May 20-22, 1994; 9th Greater New York Convention; info (718) 398-0012; rsvns. (800) 431-3850

**NORTH CAROLINA:** May 20-22, 1994; 4th Twin City Area Convention; Winston-Salem; rsvns. (800) 325-3535; info (910) 759-2315; Twin City Area Convention, PO Box 12475, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2475

2) July 22-24, 1994; 1st Durham Convention; Durham; rsvns. (919) 683-OMNI; info (919) 682-3777

3) Aug. 19-21, 1994; 4th Carolina Regional H&I Awareness Weekend; Charlotte; info (910) 273-4204; rsvns. (704) 392-1200

**OHIO:** May 27-29, 1994; 12th Annual Ohio Convention; The Ohio convention is in Kentucky, five minutes from downtown Cincinnati; info (513) 820-2947; OCNA-12, PO Box 0541, Cincinnati, OH 42501-0541

**OKLAHOMA:** June 17-19, 1994; 13th Clean & Crazy Campout; Lake Tenkiller; info (405) 521-8531; Clean & Crazy Campout, 500 East Steinson #20, Norman, OK 73072

**OREGON:** May 6-8, 1994; Mid-Willamette Valley Area Convention; rsvns. (503) 370-7888; ASC, PO Box 13232, Salem, OR 97309

**SCOTLAND:** May 20-22, 1994; 3rd Scotland Convention; Edinburgh; SCNA-3, PO Box 235, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH6 8JW

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** May 27-29, 1994; Greenwood/Anderson/Pickens Area Convention; Clemson; info (803) 225-9674; rsvns. (803) 654-4450; GAPANA, PO Box 6031, Anderson, SC 29623

**TENNESSEE:** May 20-22, 1994; 6th Multiregional Bar-B-Que and Campout; Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, North of Memphis; rsvns. (901) 452-1091

**UTAH:** June 3-5, 1994; Alpha Group Celebration of Recovery Convention; Vernal; info (801) 722-3934; Celebration of Recovery, 493 500 E 87-11, Rossveld, UT 84066

**WASHINGTON:** July 1-3, 1994; 10th Western States Unity Convention; Seatac; rsvns. (800) 228-9290; WSUC-10, 17650 140TH Ave SE, Box B6-373, Renton, WA 9805

**WEST VIRGINIA:** May 6-8, 1994; 11th West Virginia Convention; Ripley; info; (800) 766-4442; rsvns. (304) 372-7860; Mountaineer RSC, PO Box 2381, Morgantown, WV 26502-2381

2) July 29-31, 1994; 8th Almost Heaven Area Convention; Shepherdstown; info (304) 725-6812; AHACNA-8, PO Box 3329, Martinsburg, WV 25401

**WYOMING:** May 21, 1994; 4th New Freedom Group Sheridan Unity Day; info (307) 672-2914; New Freedom, PO Box 6207, Sheridan, WY 82801

2) Sep. 23-25, 1994; Unity Convention; info (307) 789-7746; info; Unity Convention, 855 Sundance Ave, Evanston, WY 82930

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## 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.

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**My Gratitude Speaks  
When I Care  
and When I Share with Others  
The NA Way**



## **What is Narcotics Anonymous?**

NA is a nonprofit 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.



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