

# THE **NA Way** MAGAZINE®

August 1994 US \$1.75, Canada \$2.25





## 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.

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

## THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

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

### volume twelve, number eight

from the editor	2
meeting in print	
Unshakable	4
If not for you	8
Just checking	10
In the grip of recovery	12
Sex, secrets, and staying clean	13
home group newsletters	15
Children in meetings	16
Open for recovery	18
forum	
A fellowship forum on motion #39	19
viewpoint	
Is NA tolerating intolerance?	22
On making a commitment only to NA	23
Stay for the solution	24
Pure hope	25
On freedom of expression	26
from our readers	
A collection of letters and short articles	27
comin'up	
NA calendar of upcoming events	29

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.

The NA Way Magazine presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The opinions expressed are not to be attributed to Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Narcotics Anonymous, The NA Way Magazine, or World Service Office, Inc.

Subscription rates, 1 yr. \$15, 2 yrs. \$28, 3 yrs. \$39, single copies \$1.75. Canada 1 yr. \$20, 2 yrs. \$37, 3 yrs. \$52, single copies \$2.25. Please inquire about bulk rates.

The NA Way Magazine (ISSN 1046-5421) copyright © 1994, World Service Office, Inc. Permission to reprint from this publication is granted to all Narcotics Anonymous service boards and committees, provided they cite the source. All other rights reserved. The NA Way and Narcotics Anonymous are registered trademarks of World Service Office, Inc.

The NA Way Magazine is published monthly by World Service Office, Inc., 16155 Wyandotte Street, Van Nuys, CA 91406. Second class postage paid at Van Nuys, CA and other points. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to The NA Way Magazine, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409-9999.



# From the editor



## To those we serve

The word from the fellowship is that there's some confusion about just who does what out here in California, especially when it comes to *The NA Way*. I guess that's not too surprising, considering we've got two women named Cindy assigned to work on the magazine at WSO and have our subscription records and customer service department located at our fulfillment house, separate from other WSO operations. Perhaps it's time we explained things.

The subscriber services address and telephone number printed on the subscription form in the back of every issue of *The NA Way* is only for subscription inquiries. The people at that location cannot fill NA literature orders or provide information about any other aspect of NA. If your magazine hasn't arrived, your address has changed, or you've paid and are still receiving renewal notices, call subscriber services. For anything else, call the World Service Office.

The *NA Way* staff at your World Service Office wants to provide the best possible service to our subscribers, literary contributors, and anyone else who has any interest in the magazine. We're available to help you develop an article for *The NA Way*. We want to hear your ideas and

suggestions for the magazine. If you're on a committee that publishes a local NA newsletter and want to talk about options, we're here to share information about what others do and help you think about what might better serve the groups in your area. If you'd like to do some service work as an advocate for *The NA Way*, we can put you on the *NA Way* Networker list and give you some ideas for getting started.

We believe that the most important thing we do at the World Service Office is help members of our fellowship in any way possible. We never want to lose sight of that. Please help us in our mission to be of maximum service by keeping in touch with us and letting us know what you think.

## Comin' Up

About a year ago we made some changes to the "Comin' Up" section that allowed—we had hoped—for all NA events to be listed. We increased the number of pages devoted to "Comin' Up" and eliminated some of the nonessential details such as the event's theme, etc. At the same time we finally succeeded in getting our production schedule on track, preparing each issue two full months before its mailing date.

In theory, this should make things easier for those who want to list events in "Comin' Up." In reality, many variables can influence exactly when we go to press—holidays, vacations, etc.—and we'll always opt for beating the deadline by a few days or weeks rather than missing the deadline by even one day.

This means that if your event is in July, you must notify us before 25 May to ensure that your event appears in the July issue. If you want your event to run in more than one issue, you must add a month of lead time. Always plan for at least five weeks of lead time before the beginning of the month during which your event is scheduled.

If you are preparing to mail your event information to us and have any doubt that it will reach us in time, please call us or fax the information to us at (818) 785-0923.

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.



# UNSHAKABLE

**M**y bed jolted hard, waking me up. Then came the thunderous roar of the earthquake, shaking the house so hard I thought I was going to be thrown on the floor. The rattle of windows, the sounds of things hitting the floor, the crash of things breaking, my wife screaming out in fear, everything mingled together to form a truly hellish wake-up call.

Once the major shaking subsided, the surreal hours after the quake began. It was pitch dark, and we didn't have electricity or water. Later there would be no gas for heat or cooking or for boiling water to make it drinkable. I had been awakened by earthquakes before, so this was not totally unfamiliar territory, but I knew this one was worse than anything I'd ever seen. I thought of my kids in the other room and immediately got out of bed to go to them.

Halfway down the hall in the dark, I came to my senses enough to remember that they were staying over at a friend's house that night. I had no flashlight handy and began groping for a match in the bathroom cabinet where I knew we kept some, but there was nothing left in the cabinet. I went back to my bedroom in the

dark and picked up the phone. It was dead. I had no way to check on my kids. The house they were staying in was one of those LA-style cliffhanger homes with a forty-foot drop from the living room balcony to the mountainside below.

Amid the sound of car alarms going off, neighbors coming out and talking in the street, and the incessant rumble of the aftershocks that began immediately, I experienced a sense of powerlessness like I hadn't known in years. And I had no idea yet, sitting in the dark, of the destruction I was going to find in my house and in the city around us. I thought about my two Angeleno NA friends who were in China during this quake, and their wives home alone, one with a baby. Should I go to them to see if they were okay?

We eventually got a match, then a flashlight, and walked through the house to assess the damages. Everything was on the floor. The cupboards were mostly emptied, and broken things were mingled in with unbroken things strewn all over the floor in every room. Both my kids' dressers were tipped over. The aquarium was smashed on the floor in the family room. Both televisions

were face down on the floor. Pictures were off the wall, some with their glass broken.

We went outside and walked to the nearest major street. Glass from broken windows was all over the sidewalks. The sounds of sirens and helicopters were starting to fill the air. The horizon was lit up by fires in all directions, one shooting flames eighty feet in the air, leading me to think it

was the sun coming up. People in a panic had been driving wildly down the streets, which were made particularly dangerous by the total lack of any working traffic lights. We wondered when the looting

would start. All this took place in the context of nearly constant aftershocks. It was a frightening scene. With the magnitude of this quake really starting to sink in, we went back home.

By the time the sun came up, we had been able to make a few calls, find out that the kids were okay, and let our folks know that we were alright. We began trying to figure out where to start cleaning up the mess and how to go on. As members of NA both my wife and I had stood on this emotional ground before, feeling totally powerless and faced with a huge mess.

I share all this to set the scene, to convey a sense of what it was like on that particular "just for today." What

I want to share about is the way the NA community has rallied in this disaster. What a gift it is to be a part of this fellowship at a time like this. The first knock on my door that morning was from a friend in NA who was out checking on people. He had been at the house of a few other members already, and was making sure we were okay. "Come on over to our house if you want to," he said. "Let's

all get together." We then agreed that I should go over to the house of one of our friends who had gone to China. No one had been able to make contact with his wife and daughter yet.

Driving over cracks in the road with water gushing through them, past destroyed buildings and crumbled cinder-block walls, around one geyser of fire from a leaking gas line in the street, we finally got to her house. We ended up meeting up with our kids there and staying for the day and overnight. My family of four all slept together in the same bed, and an NA newcomer slept on the couch. With only candlelight and flashlights, and with the earth shaking regularly throughout the night, we got through to Tuesday together.

Tuesday is the night of my home group meeting. We went by the park where the meeting is usually held and found it had been converted into a Red Cross shelter. A couple thou-

**Our meeting hall  
would be a  
refugee shelter  
for months**



sand people were sleeping in that park in tents, cars, and campers, and the park building where we hold our meeting was full of cots and people in crisis. We gathered up our coffee pot and our meeting materials and got together to discuss our situation.

Our group has always had a firm commitment never to black out the meeting, and in this time of crisis for members all over the city, we knew we had to have a meeting. Two members, one the same man had knocked on my door the day before, offered their back yard. They threw a cake in the oven. We began calling people, not forgetting the NA hotline, and prepared to hold the meeting in their back yard.

That night about thirty addicts with jittery nerves, some traumatized, some with small injuries, others with injured family members, gathered together outside and held a meeting. The NA community was doing what it does best: giving its members the opportunity to give and receive from one another. Newcomers were there who had called the hotline. Residents of a halfway house were there. Our American Sign Language interpreter was there. Members celebrated their NA birthdays. Recovery was alive.

For the next week we realized just what we were up against as a group. Our meeting hall would be a refugee shelter perhaps for the next few months. Many other potential meeting halls had sustained damage and could not take in a new group. Groups of all kinds were displaced and knocking on doors. Another couple in re-

covery offered their back yard, and we held the meeting there the following Tuesday. We compiled a list of members who wanted to be contacted for an update on where we would be meeting next.

The following week we made over fifty calls to members. We held the meeting in a back yard again, and this time it was cold. I didn't expect many members to come that night. By the time the meeting started, however, I was truly amazed by the spirit that came through. Almost forty members showed up, huddling together with jackets and blankets to keep warm, and had an excellent meeting. During the sharing members had a chance once again to air their feelings and their progress in this crisis, help the newcomers find hope, and provide one another with an atmosphere of support and recovery.

At this writing, we still have no meeting place. We have adapted to our nomadic state with our growing phone list, our heavy jackets, our blankets, and our lawn chairs. This is a home group. In the hearts and minds of a bunch of addicts is the vision—a way of life in which members can truly count on the group to be there and deliver that nourishing atmosphere of recovery, to provide a place where newcomers can show up and be loved until they can love themselves.

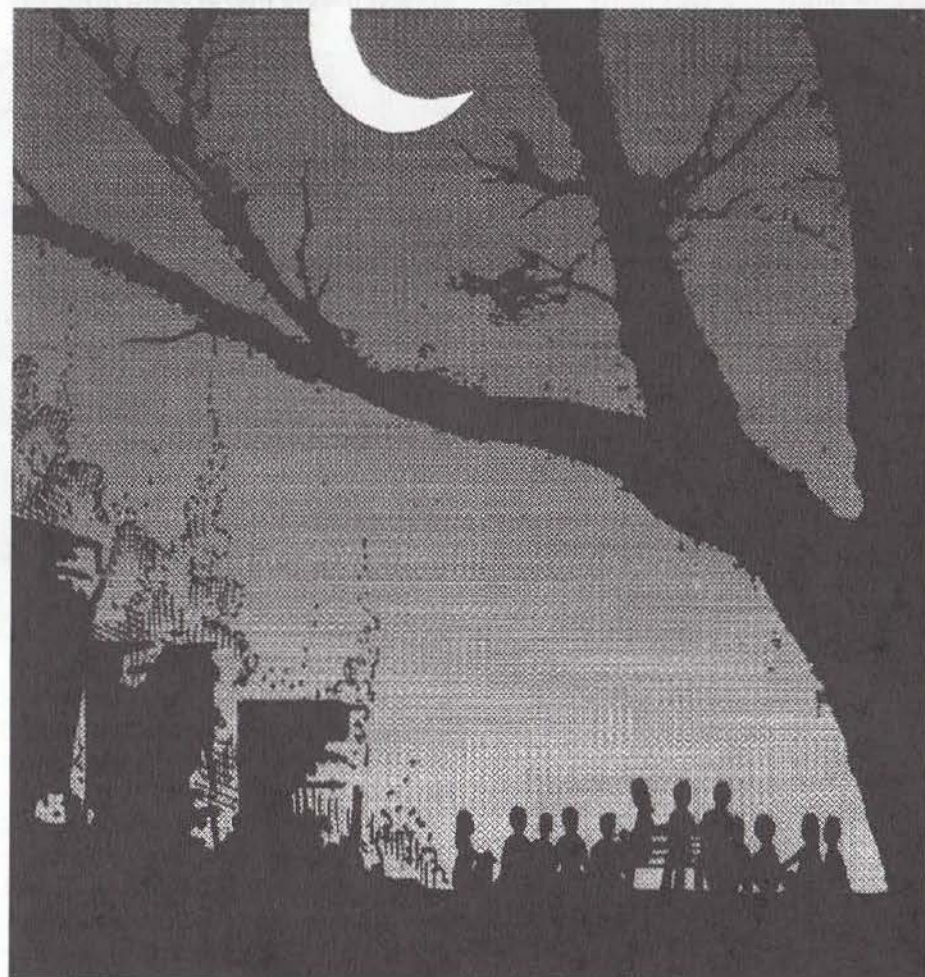
The earthquake has helped many of us clarify what is really important in our lives. This is a theme heard at nearly every meeting around here lately. Things that break when they

fall off shelves, material possessions, these things do have a certain value for us, but they are not the most important thing. Some of us have lost these. But friends, commitment, a common vision of community backed up by committed action—these things were not shaken by this earthquake. In fact, by having the opportunity to test these and find them holding up solidly, the earthquake has strengthened our recovery. Just like we re-

bounded from the disaster of addiction a day at a time, we can rise from these ashes too.

We'll find a new meeting place, and in the meantime we will meet regularly in our home group and other meetings, one way or another. If we stay together, we'll be fine. Like addicts in NA communities all over the world, we'll keep cleaning up, and we'll keep coming back. Count on it.

*RH, California*





## If not for you

In May I will celebrate two major milestones in my life: ten years clean, and my graduation from school with a master's degree. Ten years ago I couldn't have imagined in my wildest dreams that this could be happening to me. I wanted to somehow express my gratitude for what NA has given to me over these years.

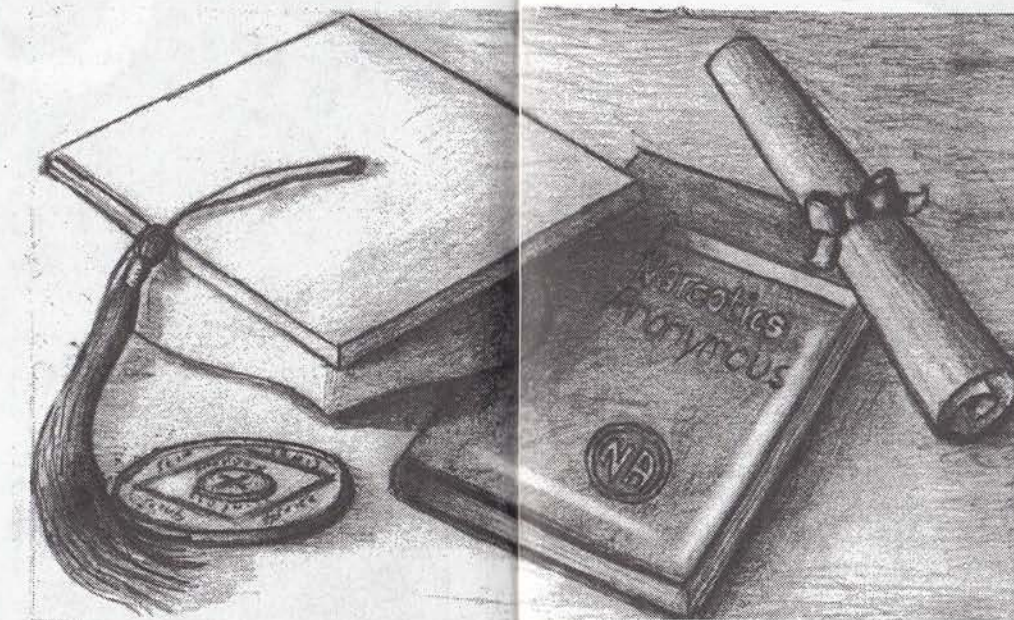
This letter is to honor NA for being there for me and to honor myself for being there for NA. When I wrote it I cried through the entire letter. I took a humble and positive inventory of all of the wonderful things that have happened to me because of the Fellowship of NA. I hope you will print this. It would be yet another wonderful gift to me.

Thank you NA. You opened your doors and invited me in. You even asked me to come back when I told you how angry I was about having to stay clean. I thought it was your choice, not mine.

Thank you NA. When my sister reached out for help, I was able to be there to take her to her first meeting. I learned that I could tell the truth and be a friend to my sister. Together we got to explore recovery within a family.

Thank you NA. When I wanted to kill myself or just go crazy, you gave me a sponsor. She loved and accepted me as no other woman had done before. She guided me through the steps and never flinched at what I had to share. She taught me how to trust, and eventually I learned to trust myself.

Thank you NA. When I was floundering and feeling alone, you gave me the opportunity to be of service. I got to meet people who are still in my life



today. You gave me people who depended on me to be there for them. I learned how to walk through my fears because of it.

Thank you NA. You suggested that there were different and better ways to raise my son. I didn't know how to be a mother so I watched what you did and took it home. My son may

not know it, but he got his mom back because of you. In return I have a healthy and happy son who openly loves his mom.

Thank you NA. You put women in my life who love me, trust me, and cherish me. I never had that before. These women are there for me whenever I may need them; I no longer question that. You gave me my soul sister and playmate, and through them I experience friendship on an intimate level.

Thank you NA. When you thought that I might be getting bored, you gave me a partner. I got to experience staying instead of leaving. I got to experience commitment and healthy communication. I even got to feel how it was to depend on a man and feel safe with him.

Thank you NA. You gave me a new

type of relationship with my family. I made a commitment to no longer lose who I am with them. I learned to speak my mind without having to raise my voice. My sister, who was my codependent when I was using, cleaned up so she wouldn't lose sight of me. I realized that my family had taught me values and that I was living by them now.

Thank you NA. You gave me the freedom and confidence to go back to school. When I screamed and whined that I didn't know if I could make it, you encouraged me to continue. You told me to keep going no matter what, just like you had told me to keep coming back so long ago. You helped me to take charge of my life and make it what I wanted. When I graduate, you will be there with me.

Thank you NA. You have been with me down this long, confusing, rewarding, and wonderful road of recovery. You never faltered or left my side. You taught me how to love, how to play, how to be angry, and how to be sad. You have given me so many gifts that I couldn't begin to pretend to tell you about them all. I lost my mind and you helped me to regain it. I lost my will to live and you gave me a newfound passion for life. For these things, I am forever in your debt.

Thank you NA. After my graduation I will be doing what I love to do for my life's work. Who could ask for more? Who would have thought that this junkie could do that? Who would have thought that this dope fiend could have so many gifts brought into her life? You gave me those gifts, and I thank you NA.

*TN, California*



## Just checking

Friday afternoon I left work early. I felt like I was coming down with the flu or something akin to it. I went straight home and went to bed.

Saturday morning I received a phone call from one of the regulars at the Friday night meeting I usually attend. "You weren't at the meeting last night. I thought I'd call to check on you. Are you okay?"

Wow! Whether or not I was okay completely slipped my mind; I was impressed by the fact that I had been missed. How good it felt to know that someone cared, and how special I felt to have friends like this one!

The person that called has been around over ten years. I've been around over five years. We talked about how, when she got clean and even when I got clean, calling "just to check" was the rule, not the exception. Maybe it was because there were fewer meetings and/or fewer addicts going to those meetings. "The group" seemed close. We knew each other's schedule and the meetings

that we went to. The group was aware of changes in the routine (new job, new something). We were aware of how the routine of attending the same meetings and seeing the same faces gave consistency and stability to our recovery. It was these same elements that led to unity and intimacy within the group and turned "I's" into "we's."

So when a regular at the Friday night meeting didn't show, it meant that something was not normal. Other regulars who were accustomed to seeing the same faces would be concerned and check up on the missing addict.

When a group member isn't there, he or she is missed. I know I may still enjoy the meeting, but I feel I've missed someone's sharing.

It's so automatic now to assume they're okay. It's easy to say other addicts are their own responsibility and if they aren't okay, they need to reach out. It isn't my responsibility to reach out to see if others are okay.

This is such a hard line, and I know it's the stance I have most often chosen. How many times, though, has a phone call from a concerned friend in recovery been the one thing I needed when I was isolating or dwelling on the crisis of the week? How many times has a fellow addict reached out and pulled me back on to the path of my recovery? How many times have I called one of my peers to find them in need?

Yes, it's my responsibility to reach out when I'm struggling, but it's equally my responsibility to reach out to those who might need me. The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is wasted if I don't actively seek to help.

It's only with arms outstretched, holding on for dear life to others in the process of recovery, that we as a group are able to make miracles possible. At each meeting I go to, I see many of the same faces week after week. At each meeting we form a group. There are some I am closer to

than others. Some aren't as regular as others. Some, this might be the only time I see them for six months, but together we form a group. The group is the primary vehicle for the message of recovery. How can any one member of such an important vehicle become so unimportant that I simply assume they're okay? How can I not feel responsible for reaching out—just to make sure?

So here I go making one of those promises that six months from now I may need my friends or my sponsor to remind me of. I promise that if I usually see you at the meeting and you're not there, I'm going to call to make sure that we're both okay.

*DH, Virginia*



## In the grip of recovery

I'm thirty-one years old. I was first introduced to a twelve-step fellowship in 1984 through the judicial system. I came back in on my own in November 1989. But I do not have four years clean, I have had four one-night relapses since November 1989. The most clean time I ever put together was about twenty-two months. But that's all I really had, twenty-two months of abstinence and very little knowledge of recovery.

My last relapse was 13 September 1993. I have come a long way since then, at least that's what I'm told. Instead of making NA part of my life, I've made my life part of NA. Recovery used to be painful, until I fully surrendered and turned my will and life over to the care of God. Today, it's a lack of recovery that is painful to me.

In gratitude for my recovery, I've written a paraphrase of "Who is an Addict?" Here it is:

### Who is a recovering addict?

Some of us do not have to think twice about this question. We know! Our whole life and thinking is centered in NA in one form or another—the sharing and recovering and finding ways and means to get more. We live to recover and recover to live. Very simply, a recovering addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by God. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive life whose ends are always the same: serenity, courage, and wisdom.

*TC, Florida*

## Sex, secrets, and staying clean

When I came into NA I wanted one thing: to stop using cocaine. I thought I had a problem with that one drug. The alcohol, weed, pills, and various opiate derivatives were not really a problem, I thought. I was disappointed to find out I had to stop taking all drugs. I went back out for some more pain and torment, thinking everything would be okay if I just abstained from that one drug. Needless to say, one led to the other.

I have not relapsed since that February 1990 because I did some things differently. The first thing I did was get a sponsor. She put me on Step One immediately. I had a willingness this time like never before—willingness to do whatever was asked of me, whatever it took to stay clean. Ever since that day, my first twenty-four hours clean, I've been using that same willingness and same desire to stay clean.

After some time clean, I realized drugs had nothing to do with my problem. The really important thing was for me to face myself and admit the exact nature of my wrongs. I pressed forward doing whatever my sponsor suggested. Sure, I kicked and yelled at times, slamming the

phone down but it never took more than a few days for me to see that she was right.

Just before I had three years clean I started a relationship with a married man and that's when I threw a monkey wrench into my own program. I knew that I wasn't likely to blindly obey my addiction when it screamed "Use!" at me; my disease had to find a sneakier way to take my life.

I am aware that the word sex makes many uncomfortable and I hope we in the fellowship, as open-minded people, don't fall into that stereotype. There are so many of us using this painful unrewarding "fix" to skirt whatever is really bothering us. For me, I was not dealing with something that was forcing its way up and out of me—something that was objectionable to my Higher Power I suppose. After all, I have been asking Him in prayer to heal me and make me a better person. "Sexing it off," as I had done for so many years and so many times, gave me instant gratification much like drugs (when they did their job, that is). It took the pain away oh so temporarily (like five minutes), and there I was with my original problem plus more guilt and shame and the "I did it again" feeling of hopelessness.

My peace and serenity were slipping away quickly. I was practicing dishonesty by seeing this man, and it was affecting me; my life and my recovery became so bad that I saw what was coming next. Naturally, when I started Step Seven, I literally thought I had to humbly ask my Higher Power to remove this particular character defect, so I was extra



humble in prayer. When I kept acting out I began to get mad at my Higher Power. I thought I wasn't being heard or that HP would surely come to my rescue and miraculously lift this defect with no other work on my part. As I felt more pain and started mentally relapsing, I started to plan how I would get high. I thought Step Seven wasn't working.

It was thirteen days before my third recovery anniversary. I was too frightened to share about my situation in meetings because I thought recovering people with three years clean didn't do such unspiritual things. I didn't want you to know how sick I was. It was an embarrassing and painful situation but when you're about to use, that's when you have to make a decision. I would do anything to keep from using and going back to hell. I had experienced enough of that! My sponsor is the one who suggested that I start sharing the exact nature of what I was going through. The threat of getting high made me willing to act. I finally let it rip!

I exposed myself entirely. I took a risk. Humility was definitely the secret ingredient. It was a humbling experience, talking about what I was doing and the pain it had gotten me into. I didn't just stop with sharing it at one meeting. I did it several times at several meetings. It felt like I was taking my clothes off in front of a large crowd. I exposed myself entirely, leaving nothing untold.

It has now been ten months since I've seen the married man. This character defect served me well out on the streets, but it doesn't work for me in recovery. I saw how much the Second

Step played a part in my recovery once I surrendered, got humble, and hung onto these words: "Something can help us with our sense of powerlessness, uselessness, and hopelessness."

I feel like I'm getting stronger in the program and less self-destructive. It was a learning experience that taught me a lot but also nearly took me out. I'm certain that by sharing this while I was going through it I have helped other addicts. We don't have to remain sick with this kind of secret.

The "How It Works" group reading talks about spiritual principles. There's a line that says, "Three of these that are indispensable are honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness." I looked up the word indispensable and found that it meant "absolutely necessary." To me, that says I can't choose which two out of three I'll adhere to. It tells me if I don't practice all three, I don't have the same chance at living and staying clean as everyone else who is adhering to the suggestions and guidelines of Narcotics Anonymous. If I am involved in a relationship with a man who has a commitment to his wife at home, I am being dishonest. It's cheating, robbing, and stealing—no getting around it, kids!

The only thing that can fill the void I still have is God. I try to the best of my ability, one day at a time, to keep seeking after that God, that truth where I won't get pulled off the path of recovery. I have both good and bad days while I'm learning, but there is never a reason to use. Just for today, I will not give up my fight against addiction. With you I have a chance.

*Anonymous*

## Home Group

GOD'S TRUE NATURE WAS REVEALED TO ME AT THE WORLD'S MOST MISERABLE MEETING: "WHINING BY CANDLELIGHT"



AS EVERYBODY GUMMED EACH OTHER OUT, I COULD JUST PICTURE THE DOGS OF THEIR DISEASE BITING THEIR BUTTS AS THEY WERE CHASED DOWN THE SPIRALING PATH TO THE PITS OF SELF-OBSESSION...



MEANWHILE SOMEONE'S BEAUTIFUL CHILD WAS RUNNING AROUND THE ROOM CRADLING HER NEW BABY CHICK IN HER HANDS—EXUBERANT WITH THE SHEER JOY OF JUST BEING ALIVE...



...OF COURSE HER DOG ATE THAT CHICK THAT SAME NIGHT WHILE SHE SLEPT...







# Newsletters

## Children in meetings

**From *The Clean Sheet*, the Dallas, Texas area newsletter:** There is just nil written on this subject in our Basic Text, *It Works*, or *Just for Today*. Our regional service office wouldn't comment on the subject (thereby leaving the groups to struggle with it on their own). The World Service Office shook when I asked the question (or maybe it was the earthquake).

This topic is as hotly debated as Motion #39. It seems that everyone has an opinion on this issue and easily voices it, though no one seems to have a solution to this problem. What about the presence of children during an NA meeting?

I am sharing what has been my personal experience, gained over the past five years of recovery, attending meetings with an infant and a teenage son.

I believe what the Basic Text says happens during an NA meeting, "Recovery is what happens at our meetings . . . our lives are at stake." During a closed meeting, an atmosphere in which addicts can feel more certain that those attending will be able to identify with them is essential. I feel strongly that children can be a distraction to that process, much in the same manner as the presence of someone who is not an addict—say, a policeman who came into one of our closed meetings to just "check out these drug meetings"—would detract from the group's ability to provide a clear NA recovery message. I cannot foresee many reasons to take my child to a closed meeting of Narcotics Anonymous.

At open discussion meetings in our area, the atmosphere is looser and we, as a family, have ventured forth many times to test the conditions and learn what works for us. In the beginning of my recovery my toddler son, now almost six years old, was more than a handful or an earful for anyone sitting close by. I have learned a lot about expectations, abilities, acceptance, and compromise. My experiences have enabled me to obtain a level of satisfaction for my children, my home group, and myself.

During those early years, what I experienced at times was wrestling

around with a toddler, trying to get him to be quiet, sit still, not distract me or others—in general, trying to get him to act much better than most of us do in our first year—with us making more noise than he alone could ever have made. It did not take too many of these escapades for me to realize that while his behavior was appropriate for a toddler, I was off base in expecting him to live up to adult standards and expecting the group to put up with everything, all in the name of "mom needs a meeting." Clearly change was the order of the day, and change we did.

I started taking better care of my recovery needs. This included getting and using women's phone numbers, calling other mothers in the fellowship, asking a friend who was already at the meeting to watch my son for fifteen minutes outside the meeting while I got a taste of recovery, and talking to my sponsor before I became overwhelmed by life's problems. As a parent in recovery I realized that I could not afford to put all my "staying clean" eggs into the one basket of meeting attendance. I came to the clear understanding that when I had my sons, attending meetings in which I actually got to be mentally and emotionally present was not going to happen. The sooner I quit setting myself up with those expectations, the sooner we would be able to find a solution. More was revealed.

These days, I know that I'll probably miss most of the actual meeting when I take my sons to a meeting. I spend the meeting time in fellowship with other addicts who are at the

"meeting outside the meeting," while my sons play or visit with other people in recovery who have come to know us over the years. Lots of times we go to coffee with the other addicts and, all in all, a much better time is had by both my children and myself. Recovery and fellowship, with children in tow, has become a reality. My recovery life is better because of this ability to change the things I can. Parents have and continue to recover in our fellowship; families heal and groups grow. I have come to believe strongly in that part of the Twelfth Step that says, "practice these principles in all our affairs." NA has taught me beautiful, meaningful principles. It is my responsibility to lay these principles before my children.

In my past, I set active addiction before my children in a family setting. Since finding recovery and working the steps of Narcotics Anonymous, I have tried to set the examples of recovery, by my behavior, before my children. I can no longer expect the group to bear the burden of responsibility for my inability to realize what is appropriate behavior, nor can I expect the group to be the responsible monitor of my child's behavior. Any monitoring of that behavior needs to be done outside the meeting and stay outside until my child and myself are calmed down.

It's been a wonderful journey so far. Thanks to Narcotics Anonymous, I am healing from the ravages of the disease of addiction, and my family is healing with me. The gift is in the giving.

SF



---

## Open for recovery

---

**From *The Clean Sheet*, the Dallas, Texas area newsletter:** What's happening to our meetings? Not to be an alarmist; maybe everything is fine and I just need to be clued in on this new trend. No, I'm not talking about special interest meetings. Such meetings fulfill a vital role in our fellowship.

My problem is with the so-called "open discussion" meetings that predominate in my area. Who left the comma out, anyway? There's supposed to be a comma between the word "open" and the word "discussion." Not having a comma there changes the meaning completely.

"Open discussion" implies that the meeting is open to talk about whatever you want to, whereas "open, discussion" identifies two distinguishing characteristics that meeting-goers should be aware of before they take a seat. "Open" means that the meeting is open to the public instead of "for addicts only," as in a closed meeting. "Discussion" means that the meeting is an exchange or, as we call it, "a sharing time" as opposed to a speaker or a book study meeting. In keeping

with the primary purpose of our groups—to carry the message of NA to the addict who still suffers—discussion meetings are focused on a topic that would fulfill that purpose.

Yet, to my dismay, time after time I find myself in "open, blathering, whining, ninety-day-wonder dominated, dumping, don't have a sponsor, need to get it off my chest, no mention of the steps, discussion" meetings. Since none of these are mentioned in our Basic Text as recommendations or suggestions for recovery, one must conclude that such meetings are not NA meetings at all but rather outside-issues meetings or group-therapy sessions.

If you find yourself in such a meeting you may feel that anything you share would be off-topic, because there isn't one. You may also discover that the old NA adage about always being in a better space after a meeting is not entirely based in reality. If you're like me, you'll likely take your chances that a better meeting is going on in the parking lot.

JH

---

## A fellowship forum on Motion #39

---

### What is Motion #39?

At the 1993 World Service Conference, Motion #39 was presented by the Australian Region. 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."

A conference 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.

### Argument for Motion #39

With the consideration of Motion #39 we have reached a defining moment in the life of Narcotics Anonymous. Motion #39 strikes at the very heart of who we are and what we believe. It is more than simply removing gender bias from the literature, although that should be justification in itself—our society now recognizes the need to avoid gender bias. The issue addressed in Motion #39 highlights the conflict caused by reference to religious concepts of a higher power. Putting a higher power into a specific form with specific characteristics is a religious practice. In a nonreligious program, this is a contradiction and confusing to many addicts.

Many addicts do have deeply felt religious beliefs and a distinct understanding of a higher power. When NA says that we are a simple spiritual, not religious, program, we are promising those addicts that their religious beliefs will not be a barrier to their recovery.

Many addicts come to NA without a religious background and no clear idea of a higher power. We guarantee those addicts that their lack of a religious understanding of a god will not prevent progress in their recovery.

But let's not make any mistake: in Narcotics Anonymous the "official" higher power is a single male god. The wording of the steps leaves no room for



opposition to the claim that "we" of Narcotics Anonymous believe in a single male god.

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." That tradition is the highest of ideals, but is it a reality—a worldwide reality? Narcotics Anonymous is now a worldwide fellowship with addicts whose beliefs are extremely diverse. Some addicts from other cultures have beliefs that simply are not compatible with belief in a single male god. Some addicts, even here in Indiana, cannot believe in a single male god. The impression given by the current wording of the steps is that this is what "we" believe, even if individual addicts have other beliefs.

Motion #39 would not require any addict to change or compromise his or her existing beliefs. More importantly, potential members, wherever they are in the world, would never be forced to decide if NA is compatible in their lives or not. Passing Motion #39 would stop many addicts from feeling that because their beliefs are different they cannot be fully accepted in NA. Many addicts' religious beliefs (or their absolute rejection of religious beliefs) are tightly held, deeply felt, and fundamental to who they are. They simply are not capable of giving them up. We should never force addicts to make accommodations and compromises about religion. We say we don't, but in fact we do.

Motion #39 is a search for common ground. It is an attempt to end the exclusion of addicts. Motion #39 is necessary for worldwide growth. Motion #39 would have no impact on current NA members, whatever their image of a god may be, and their personal beliefs would not be affected. Most arguments against Motion #39 come from a reluctance to tamper with the fellowship we love and a fear of what would happen to us if we do.

This is an emotional issue and many are feeling threatened by the thought of such change. We know that the steps change an addict's life. We should consider if that would, in any way, be made different by motion #39. If we change the steps in the way that has been suggested in Motion #39, will we diminish their integrity? The answer is no. The essence of the steps, their spiritual principles, will remain.

Will eliminating religious references diminish the spiritual impact of the steps? Already, we say that we do not believe that; why not put it into action? The impact of our spiritual principles can only be enhanced by any effort that makes divisive elements, such as religion, nonissues in Narcotics Anonymous.

Motion #39 is not trying to fix something that is broken; it is an attempt to move ahead in our continual effort to reach all addicts, everywhere. Narcotics Anonymous has a tradition of significant and fundamental change from the established approach to recovery. It is in the tradition of NA to welcome change that meets the needs of addicts and ends the exclusion of addicts from recovery. Our emphasis on addiction rather than particular drugs represents a fundamental and profound change from the older approaches to recovery. The intent of the change was to create a fellowship in which all addicts could be included in finding recovery by virtue of the one thing they have in common—addiction. Starting our steps with "we" also represents a fundamental change from other approaches to recovery. It is a recognition that we need each other to recover and are committed to helping each other. Motion #39 continues the tradition of changing to embrace all addicts everywhere.

Over the years we've grown geographically, in numbers, and in diversity of beliefs. That diversity needs to be addressed. Motion #39's one fault is that it may not go far enough in addressing this issue. There is no good reason for the word "god" to be preferable to "higher power" or "power greater than one's self."

GR, Indiana

### It works—leave it alone

As our literature says, "If you want what we have to offer and are willing to go to any lengths to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are the principles that make our recovery possible." The *principles* make our recovery possible, not the words "He," or "Him," or even "She."

As it says in the piece in the Motion #39 forum in the December 1993 *NA Way*, "God is probably laughing at us." I'm sure He is. We are given a new way of life, a new set of principles to follow, principles that give us the ability to live life on life's terms, principles that give us the ability to live without drugs. All of these principles are God-given, and now someone must pick apart whether God is a He, or She, or Him.

I've seen addicts focus on this thing or that thing so they can avoid focusing on their own personal recovery and their relationship with God. Someone who wrote in the Motion #39 forum in the December issue said that, "If addicts are dying because our steps say God is a Him, we should change them." I find this hard to believe. In fact, I find this impossible to believe. What I do believe is that addicts are dying because of the disease of addiction and their inability to surrender to our principles.

It seems that addicts will find anything they can and tear it apart so it suits them. These steps are the solu-

tion; they make recovery possible. Nothing, absolutely nothing, needs to be changed about them. It's we who need to change. It works, why fix it!

BS, Pennsylvania

### Let the steps change you

Today I went to an area service meeting and heard for the first time about this so-called Motion #39. What are these people thinking? Changing our steps . . . our traditions? I don't get it! Our program is based on these; why do they want to change them? I don't know about anyone else, but the God of my understanding is not a He or a She, although I may refer to God as He in my personal writings or when discussing God with someone. All I know is that a loving God saved my life, saved my spirit, and saved my soul. I will be forever grateful to God for that. I really don't think God minds if we refer to God as Higher Power, He, She, It, Buddha, or whatever.

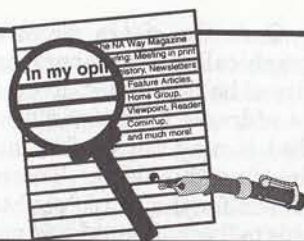
I think these people need to reread "What is the NA Program?" It says, "Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that *they work!*"

I was actually surprised at the intensity of my anger when I was told about Motion #39. Then I started to feel very grateful because I realized how precious Narcotics Anonymous is to me and how protective I feel of our steps and traditions. Please don't change the words! It was hard enough to start coming to meetings and to start listening and to start changing and accepting that change. But people said, "Keep coming back! It Works! The steps will change you!" That's what I love about this program: It changed me. I certainly don't want to change it!

ST, Pennsylvania



## Viewpoint



### Is NA tolerating intolerance?

I feel compelled to write this letter because there is something happening in the fellowship that is very disturbing to me. It hurts and bothers me very much that we have to even contemplate studying the problem of intolerance within our fellowship.

I was going to write a letter a few weeks ago saying that I do understand the need for some groups within our fellowship to have their own meetings. It distresses me because I want to know and love these people. However, when they do not feel safe enough in a regular meeting to discuss whatever is bothering them, it is understandable that they want to start a meeting where they do feel safe.

But this makes me ask why they don't feel safe in a regular meeting. If it is because of their own feelings,

they need to stay in regular meetings until they can learn that it is a safe place. If, on the other hand, it is because they have been made to feel different or unwelcome in a regular meeting, the problem then belongs to the meeting, the area, or NA as a whole. Unfortunately, I have heard some comments that, if they were directed at me, would make me feel unwelcome a particular meeting. It is in practically all of our material that our differences don't matter but, unfortunately, sometimes we allow them to.

Maybe we need some guidance on how to tell other members that their actions are not okay and what options we have in dealing with members who display intolerant behavior. One of the greatest things I have learned in recovery is to accept members who are different than I am. Actually, I love them for their differences. Before I got into recovery I believed that if everyone was like me and thought the way I did the world would be a much better place because, obviously, I knew what was right and proper. Thank God, when I got into the program, I found out that if everybody was like me the world would probably stop functioning. The humility that I have learned in recovery has taught me that it is

not only okay to be different than I am, it is a good thing nobody is exactly like me.

I have felt the sting of bigotry from some people outside the fellowship because I am a drug addict and they don't think I should be one. I don't have a choice about whether I am a drug addict any more than anyone has a choice about their skin color, sexual orientation, or many other things that some people might find offensive. How much more it must hurt when someone is not made to feel welcome in the first place many of us have ever felt we belonged—and this from people you thought would be your friends. I am glad that today I have the capacity to love everyone, and I wish everyone in the fellowship could have this love and acceptance. We need to find a way to lovingly help people in our program who are intolerant. Perhaps we can point out that prejudice isn't part of recovery. Maybe we can even say that it won't be tolerated in NA, though that would mean changing the Third Tradition to say that the only requirements for membership are a desire to stop using and a willingness to treat all other members with respect.

WC, Tennessee

## On making a commitment only to NA

I have just received the November 1993 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*, and I am compelled to write and express my feelings and opinions, hopefully without being harsh or judgmental. I live in a small rural community, and the recovering community is growing at a remarkable pace. When I first came into recovery, NA was not available. I shall be forever grateful to another fellowship that opened the door for me to recover.

When the first NA meetings began in our area, I was confused and unsure of which direction my recovery should take. Was I destined to be an "addict-alcoholic" forever? No! As a result of working steps, attending meetings, sharing with my sponsor, listening to recovery tapes, and having had a spiritual awakening as a result of this process, I found that in order for me to continue to recover I needed to make a commitment to NA only. I must admit that at first I was insane about the singleness of purpose issue. I ranted and raved about those who were not as "enlightened" as I was, and soon became labeled a "Nazi." For a time I continued to be self-centered and even enjoyed the



label. I was not aware of the fact that my obsession was a detriment to the fellowship I was try to "rescue."

As I continue to grow I realize that bullying others is not the way to attract addicts to recovery. I have learned that I need to focus on my own program and live the principles I believe in. I have to accept those who choose to switch back and forth between several fellowships. However, I continue to worry about newcomers who are being confused about mixed messages. I am still angered by those who attend two or three fellowships for social reasons, or to look good and be thought of as open-minded individuals who can embrace all twelve-step programs. I think that switching programs can be as deadly as switching drugs. Our Basic Text tells us "one is too many and a thousand never enough." I believe this applies to joining fellowships also. I feel for those whose meetings are being diluted by addicts who can't make a commitment to a program of recovery.

I am grateful to have found a home in NA and know it is not necessary for me to spread my recovery in the same self-obsessed way I did my active addiction. I don't always agree with my fellow addicts but I don't have to cut and run and switch fellowships to justify resentments. I know every meeting is not going to be a fantastic spiritual experience. I know that sometimes my faith will falter, but as long as I rely on the strength given to me by my HP and hang on to my ass and my principles, everything will be okay.

I don't know if this is a widespread problem in other areas, but I would appreciate hearing from other addicts who have experience, strength, and hope to share in dealing with it. Thank you for letting me express my feelings on this matter.

*BR, Idaho*

## Stay for the solution

Don't you love it when someone, usually at the beginning of the meeting, goes into a long-winded monologue about how much they're suffering? Ten minutes later they're out the door. Others sharing their experience, strength, and hope look around, bewildered, to see the suffering addict gone.

Where's this person's recovery? In the parking lot? Is this the core of our disease, self-centeredness, in full bloom? Is this inconsiderate, taking up valuable time from others? Is it right to dump and leave? And these people wonder why they're in pain.

I realize I must pray for them or perhaps offer a few suggestions. It's hard to do this when a person has left the meeting. Oh, well, praying for them can be done anytime.

Hopefully, the pain will go away to leave room for newer, more refreshing pain. Between the periods of pain will come periods of joy. Enjoy the moments while you can, and live on.

*SJ, New Jersey*

## Pure hope

Experience, strength, and hope—how many times have we heard this concept in our meetings and literature and dismissed it as an introduction to what we have to share? How many times have we stopped our relentless pursuit of spiritual growth long enough to realize and remember the true experience of hope? How many times, without our being aware of it, has the strength from that hope given us the means for that relentless pursuit? What's most important is how many times have we contaminated the simple, spiritual, God-given gift of hope with self-centeredness?

Most of us came to meetings and witnessed people like ourselves staying clean. We realized that maybe, just maybe, we could do the same. There in our innocence, fresh from the battlefields of active addiction, still in the grip of isolation and pain, came our first, simple, uncontaminated experience with hope. From the desperation and that initial experience with hope came the strength to make another one of those meetings. We kept coming back with that hope, got a sponsor, worked steps, shared, and found relief from the obsession to use.

Gradually, we lose touch with that first, simple, uncontaminated experience

with hope. It is at the moment we begin to lose touch that the contamination process begins. We cross the line between God and hope over to self and expectation. We hope we never relapse. We hope our friends never relapse. We hope we get the trust back from our families, and hope we get our jobs back. We hope we are understood, liked, and respected. We hope our amends are well received. We hope this, we hope that. We hope, we hope, we hope, until we hope ourselves right back into self-centeredness, expectation, projection, fear, disappointment, anger, and resentment. As a result, we often hope ourselves right back out the door to what we needed hope for in the first place: active addiction and all that comes with it.

Granted, all these "hopes" are indeed some of the best things that could happen to us. However, isn't what we thought was best for us what got us in the hopeless existence of living in the disease of addiction? Our concept of right or wrong, what is best or worse, is what the text tells us "almost killed us." What we perceived to be the best brought us all the answers—all the answers that made our lives unmanageable and in need of Narcotics Anonymous.

If we are to prevent ourselves from the contamination of hope, we must rely on and accept the guidance of a higher power. We must practice humility, that honest inventory of our liabilities and our assets. We must focus on our spiritual capacities in the realm of today. We must leave the results to our higher power and



dedicate ourselves only to our own footwork.

We must ever remind ourselves that hope is not a conviction, a proposition, a promise, or an expectation that we'll get what we think is best. Hope is instead an understanding, a faith, a trust, and an acceptance that with the help of Narcotics Anonymous and a higher power, things will always work out the way they are supposed to.

*RA, Florida*

## On freedom of expression

My name is Alex, and I am an addict. It has been only through the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous that I understand what that statement means to me.

The reason I have a pen and paper at hand is because of the debate that has been going on over the use of "NA language." I have been to meetings where it has been "suggested" that if you care to share that you do so in a certain way.

Aside from constitutional rights of free speech, our Third Tradition states, "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." Being a member allows me and other members to share at meetings.

I have been blessed to realize who I am. Not everyone is so fortunate.

What about newcomers who want to express their gratitude by sharing at a meeting, only to be admonished that their sharing isn't "right"? It's hard enough to share as a newcomer, and I need to hear what they have to say.

How far away is it before there is no place in NA for me to swear, rage, or dress in a way I choose? We are talking freedom here. NA has given me freedom and open-mindedness. Let's not take it away from anyone.

The argument for "NA language" seems to be to "promote unity." What I have seen and felt has done anything but. Let's concentrate on helping addicts who still suffer, not driving them away. Allow them to stay around long enough to find out who they are. Given enough time they will be able to tell us who they are, through their own choice, not by coercion, coaxing, or control.

The program works best by attraction, not promotion. We don't need to promote "NA language." We are attractive enough for addicts to want to be part of our fellowship without telling them how to speak. They will share by way of choice, not mandate. Give them a break!

This program was founded with the help of people from the "other language." Let's show our gratitude by allowing people to share the way they need to.

*AW, California*

## From our readers



### No matter what

Hello to my NA family around the world. I recently read an article in the January 1994 issue titled "Distant, Not Alone." The recovering addict wrote that no one is exempt from experiencing life on life's terms. That really struck home with me. When I first came to NA I was on a "pink cloud." I thought that since I was clean, all my problems would somehow vanish. However, as most of us know, it is the pink cloud that vanishes.

I had left treatment. My marriage ended in divorce. I was not sure where I was going and had no job at the time, but you all told me I didn't have to use no matter what. If I stayed clean, stayed close to the God I'd come to understand, prayed, worked the steps, and shared in meetings, it would get better, or at least different. I had no reason not to trust you, for you had not lied to me.

I soon began to feel better. I met a man who is also in recovery. I went back to work, got an apartment with the man who is now my husband, and went back to school to finish my degree.

I am learning that relationships, jobs, education, or whatever, will not bring happiness, joy, and freedom. Those things are an inside job. Any-

thing outside of staying clean is God's "extras." My husband lost his job. My job did not work out, though I did get a part-time job. I've had setbacks at school and loads of family problems. Our Basic Text states that "some of us, even after years of recovery, found ourselves jobless, homeless, or penniless." We must not use no matter what. This is life on life's terms.

Yes, there have been times when I felt like using—after all, I'm an addict—but I thought it through, talked to my sponsor, took it to meetings, and prayed. I have heard and read many stories of addicts getting through the impossible and not using. If you can do it, so can I.

*CS, West Virginia*

### Commitment

I'm a recovering addict from the Northeast Ohio region. I've only been around the rooms of NA for a few twenty-four-hour periods. When I first came around it was a new experience. I began to experience the freedom from addiction and loved to be around recovering addicts, oldtimers and newcomers alike. I began to hear about service, sponsorship, and keeping what we have by giving it away. I learned about the steps and the importance of working them. I also learned about our Twelve Traditions.



The traditions protect us from each other and outside issues. I started service when I first came to NA. I helped set up or break down a meeting, whether it was my home group or not. I made coffee, put out literature, gave newcomers my phone numbers. Later in my recovery I spoke at H&I meetings. I have been a chairperson and substitute chairperson. I had a treasurer's position on the group level, but I had to let this position go. I started job training so I can be a more productive and responsible member of society, and the treasurer's position was at a morning meeting. I was recently elected GSR at a Saturday afternoon meeting.

So I'm back in service on the area and group level. Recently, this supervisor where I'm training asked me if I wanted to work Saturday and make extra money. I told him I have a previous commitment and wouldn't be able to. I thanked him for giving me consideration. Just for today my recovery comes first. I have the trust and faith of my fellow addicts who elected me to this position. I want to keep this commitment for the full year. There was a time when I would have chosen money over this commitment, but not today. We do recover.

SG, Ohio

### Seasoned

*I wanted to share this letter with the fellowship. It was written by a member of my home group who gave me a sweatshirt from our convention that was no longer available and told me to pass it on to a newcomer. When she gave me the sweatshirt, she had*

*this letter with it. It made me smile, cry, and remember why I keep coming back.*

My name is Tanya, and I am an addict. I have been in and out of the rooms of NA for the last five years. Right now, I have a little over two months clean. I have a home group, a sponsor, and, most of all, I have a desire to stop using. I'm learning a lot about myself and discovering the kind of person I want to be today. That person is unselfish. That is why I am passing this sweatshirt along to you. I really wanted to hold on to it for myself, but where would I be if everyone had decided to hold on to what they had gained through the rooms of NA?

I know that when I see you at the Almost Heaven Area Convention with "our" sweatshirt on, that will mean more to me than holding on to it. It's not perfect, but neither am I. It has a few stains, but so do I. It's bright, pretty, and warm, and so am I. I love you, wish you lots of good times wearing this shirt, and hope that someday you too will be able to part with it and pass it on. God bless, and I hope to see you in July!

Anonymous

## 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		

### AUSTRALIA

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

### CANADA

**Alberta:** July 29 - Aug. 1; 5th Summer Campout; Innisfail; info. (403) 342-1444  
**British Columbia:** Oct. 28-30; 17th Pacific Northwest Convention; Vancouver; rsvns. (604) 689-9211; info. (604) 876-4055; PNWCNA-17, PO Box 43066, Burnaby, British Columbia V6G 4S2

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

**Quebec:** Oct. 7-9; 7th Quebec Regional Convention; rsvns. (819) 822-1989; info. (819) 563-7809; QRCNA-7, CP 463, Sherbrooke, Quebec J1H 5J7

**Saskatchewan:** Aug. 19-21; 10th South Saskatchewan Area Convention; Regina; info. (306) 522-2937 or 924-0984

2) Sep. 2-4; 8th Central Saskatchewan Area Convention; info. (306) 652-5216; CSANA-8, PO Box 9718, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 7G5

### IRELAND

**Dublin:** Nov. 11-13; 10th Irish Convention; Hotel Kilkenny; info. Irish Convention, c/o Service Office, 4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2

### MEXICO

**Baja California Norte:** Oct. 14-16; 2nd Baja California Convention; Tijuana; rsvns. (800) 333-3333; info. US 011-52 (66) 80-90-80 or in Mexico (66) 80-90-80; CBCNA-11, 1329 3rd Ave #116, Chula Vista, CA 91911

### UNITED KINGDOM

**England:** Aug. 26-28; 8th UK Convention; England; info. 071-272-9040; UKCNA-8, PO Box 1980, London, UK N19 3LS

### UNITED STATES

**Alabama:** Sep. 8-11; 1st Greater Birmingham Area Convention; Guntersville; rsvns. (205) 571-5444; info. GBACNA-1, PO Box 320818, Birmingham, AL 35232  
**Alaska:** Sep. 23-25; 10th Alaska Regional Convention; Anchorage; info. (907) 248-7955 or (907) 345-5864; Convention Committee, 401 W International #18, Anchorage, AK 99518

**California:** Aug. 20; 2nd Eastern Inland Empire Unity Day; San Bernardino; info. (909) 881-2361 or (909) 686-3164; Unity Day, PO Box 328, Colton, CA 92324

**Florida:** Aug. 12-14; 3rd Unity Weekend; Miami Beach; rsvns. (800) 327-6363; info. (305) 225-9250; Unity Weekend-3, PO Box 141514, Coral Gables, FL 33114  
 2) Sep. 30-Oct. 3; 10th Year Anniversary; Tampa; rsvns. (813) 623-6363; info. helpline (813) 875-4357 or (813) 265-2694; Anniversary, PO Box 9730, Tampa, FL 33674

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

4) Nov. 3-6; 13th Serenity in the Sun Convention; info. (407) 547-0590; PCNA-13, 314 Plymouth Rd, W Palm Beach, FL 33405

**Georgia:** Aug. 4-7; Midtown Atlanta Conference; rsvns. (800) 228-3000; info. (404) 438-6504; MACNA-5, PO Box 1194, Stone Mountain, GA 30086



**Hawaii:** Oct. 27-30; 3rd Hawaii Regional Convention; Maui; info. (808) 878-3444; Hawaii Convention, 190 Ali'iolani Street, Pukalani, HI 96768

**Idaho:** Aug. 5-7; 5th Snake River Valley Area Campout; Massacre Rocks State Park; info. Snake River Area, PO Box 4342, Pocatello, ID 83204

**Iowa:** Sep. 2-5; 9th SWINA; Red Oak; info. (712) 323-2309 or (712) 243-1628

**Kansas:** Aug. 12-14; 6th Just For Today Campout; Thunderbird Marina; rsvns. (913) 238-5696; info. (913) 762-5108; Crossroads NA, 119 W 7th, Junction City, KS 66441

**Louisiana:** Oct. 21-23; 2nd New Orleans Area Convention; New Orleans; rsvns. (504) 523-0376; info. (800) 824-3859; NOACNA-2, PO Box 52212, New Orleans, LA 70152-2212

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

**Maryland:** Sep. 1-4; 24th World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous; info. WCNA-24, c/o WSO Inc., PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409

**Massachusetts:** Sep. 30-Oct. 2; 2nd Cape Cod Area Convention; info. (508) 255-1822; CCACNA-2, PO Box 684, Hyannis, MA 02601

**Missouri:** Sep. 9-11; 2nd Tri-Lakes and Branson Campout; Blue Eye; rsvns. (417) 779-4154; info. (417) 739-2550

**Nebraska:** Aug. 13; 1st Wyo-Braska Area Unity Day; info. (308) 783-2560; Unity Day, PO Box 262, Minatare, NE 69356

**2) Sep. 16-18; 11th Nebraska Regional Convention; Bellevue; rsvns. (800) 228-5151; info. (402) 346-7535; NRCNA-11, PO Box 886, Bellevue, NE 68005-0886**

**New Hampshire:** Aug. 12-14; 1st Canoe Camp Trip; info. Canoe Camp Trip, PO Box 652, Dover, NH 03820

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

**New York:** Aug. 26-28; 5th Mid-Hudson Area Conference; info. (212) 691-9748 or (212) 339-5827

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

**2) Sep. 30-Oct. 2; 3rd Central Piedmont Area Convention; Salisbury; rsvns. (704) 637-3100; info. (704) 892-7233; CPACNA-3, PO Box 282, Landis, NC 28088**

**Ohio:** Sep. 9-11; Hamilton Area Convention; info. (513) 829-3915 or (513) 422-3420; HAMASCNA, PO Box 8594, Middletown, OH 45042-8594

**Oklahoma:** Aug. 6-8; 9-1/2 Northside Stroll and Troll; Braggs; info. (918) 744-0956 or (918) 583-8225

**Oregon:** Nov. 11-13; 8th Western States Public Information Learning Days; Portland; info. (503) 224-8345 or (503) 947-4959; PIC-8, PO Box 262, Eugene, OR 97440

**Pennsylvania:** Aug. 19-21; 3rd Spiritual Retreat Campout; New Castle; info. (412) 287-4161; BASC-3, PO Box 2657, Butler, PA 16001-2657

**2) Nov. 18-20; 12th Tri State Area Convention; info. Call Collect (412) 322-5337; TSSO, 24 Woodville Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15220**

**Tennessee:** Nov. 24-27; 12th Volunteer Regional Convention; Knoxville; info. (615) 483-9427 or (800) 233-1234; VRC-12, PO Box 53244, Knoxville, TN 37950-3244

**Texas:** Sep. 16-18; 7th Best Little Region Convention

**Virginia:** Oct. 8; Annual Virginia Convention Golf Fundraiser; Richmond; rsvns. (804) 273-1611; info. (804) 756-7000; AVCNA Golf Fundraiser, PO Box 25244, Richmond, VA 23260-5244

**Washington:** Sep. 16-18; 11th Spiritual Connection; Oak Harbor; info. (206) 428-7171; NPSA, PO Box 1001, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

**Wisconsin:** Oct. 14-16; 11th Wisconsin State Convention; rsvns. (800) EM-BASSY; info. (414) 437-5664; WSNAC-11, PO Box 12503, Green Bay, WI 54303

**Wyoming:** Sep. 23-25; Unity Convention; info. (307) 789-7746; CUNA Convention, PO Box 2792, Rock Springs, WY 82901

## COPYRIGHT RELEASE FORM

Please fill out the following form and include it along with any article you submit to The NA Way Magazine.

AGREEMENT between WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, INC., dba THE NA WAY MAGAZINE, hereinafter referred to as "assignee," and (author's name):

hereinafter referred to as "assignor." Assignor is the owner of attached material described as the following (title of work):

The assignee is the publishing arm of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. The assignor hereby grants and transfers to assignee as a gift, without exception and without limitation, any and all of the assignor's interests and copyrights and rights to copyright and rights to publish, together with rights to secure renewals and extensions of such copyright, of said material.

Assignor hereby covenants, warrants, and represents to assignee, and this agreement is made in reliance thereof, that assignor is sole owner and has the exclusive right to use of said material, and that the material is free and clear of any liens, encumbrances, and claims which are in conflict with this agreement.

This agreement is binding on assignor's heirs, assigns, administrators, trustees, executors, and successors in interest, and such are directed to make and execute any instrument assignee may require to protect copyright for assignee.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this agreement at the assignor's address:

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE/PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE, COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Assignor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Assignor's spouse's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

for World Service Office, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Subscriber Services  
Box 15665  
No. Hollywood, CA 91615-5665  
(818) 760-8983

# NA Way

MAGAZINE®

## Subscription

\_\_\_\_\_ one year \$15 US or \$20 Canadian  
\_\_\_\_\_ two years \$28 US or \$37 Canadian  
\_\_\_\_\_ three years \$39 US or \$52 Canadian

## Payment

\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed  
\_\_\_\_\_ not enclosed

## Multiple orders

Bulk sales  
Subscription

Contact our office for details  
\_\_\_\_\_ 10 or more 1-year subscriptions to  
single address @ \$12 US or \$16 Canadian.  
Minimum order \$120 US or \$160 Canadian.  
Prepaid only.

California subscribers

Add 8.25% Sales Tax

Canadian subscribers

Add 7% for Goods and Services Tax

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

ALLOW FOUR TO SIX WEEKS FOR YOUR FIRST ISSUE TO ARRIVE CMBT

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

# NA Way

PRODUCTS®

## Slugg Mugg

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 5.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
QUANTITY TOTAL

## NA Way Mug

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 5.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
QUANTITY TOTAL

## Home Group Calendar

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 5.95 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
QUANTITY TOTAL

Calif. residents add 8.25% sales tax \_\_\_\_\_  
Shipping and handling fee (see schedule) \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

SHIPPING FEES \$.01-\$25.00 ADD \$2.50, \$25.01-\$50.00 ADD \$3.50, \$50.01-\$150.00 ADD 8%, \$150.01-\$500.00 ADD 7%, \$500.01-AND UP ADD 6%.

## 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.





de Speaks  
Care  
I Share

My Gratitude  
When I  
and When  
with Others  
The NA Way

### What is Narcotics Anonymous?

NA is a nonpr  
women for  
problem. We  
regular  
progra  
There is  
desire to stop u  
open mind and  
is a set of pri  
follow them i

profit fellowship or society of men and  
whom drugs had become a major  
are recovering addicts who meet  
y to help each other stay clean. This is a  
m of complete abstinence from all drugs.  
only one requirement for membership, the  
sing. We suggest that you keep an  
give yourself a break. Our program  
nciples written so simply that we can  
n our daily lives. The most important  
thing about them is that they work.



de Speaks  
Care  
I Share

My Gratitude  
When I  
and When  
with Others  
The NA Way

#### What is Narcotics Anonymous?

profit fellowship or society of men and  
whom drugs had become a major  
are recovering addicts who meet  
y to help each other stay clean. This is a  
m of complete abstinence from all drugs.  
only one requirement for membership, the  
sing. We suggest that you keep an  
give yourself a break. Our program  
nciples written so simply that we can  
n our daily lives. The most important  
thing about them is that they work.

NA is a nonpr  
women for  
problem. We  
regular  
progra  
There is  
desire to stop u  
open mind and  
is a set of pri  
follow them i

# THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

August 1994 US \$1.75, Canada \$2.25

