

THE **N.A. Way**<sup>®</sup>  
MAGAZINE

**Narcotics**  
*Anonymous*



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## The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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

## THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

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# From the editor



## A tribute

Excerpts from it are read at virtually every NA meeting throughout the world. It's usually the first piece of literature a recovering addict buys. Our members have produced T-shirts, coffee mugs, calendars, and what-have-you that look like its cover. And now, here it is on the cover of *The NA Way*.

What is it? The Basic Text, of course. It's the book written by addicts for addicts, and is perhaps the only book in the world that contains such a beautiful invitation as, "If you are an addict and have found this book, please give yourself a break and read it."

The Basic Text has been translated into five languages and is being translated into many more. It has sold more than 2½ million copies in English and almost 50,000 in other languages. The first translation to be produced and printed was the French-language version in 1989. Spanish followed in 1991, then Portuguese in 1991, then German in 1993, then Brazilian in 1993.

This month, *The NA Way* is pleased to present "A Tribute to the Basic Text." As you will see, the stories in the "Meeting in Print" section all start off with a quote from the Basic Text. Our contributors supplied some of them, and we added

others because the articles so clearly exemplified certain quotes, those veins of pure gold that run through our recovery text.

As always, we'd love to hear your reaction to this issue of *The NA Way*. We got a lot of complimentary and positive mail in response to the March "Classics" issue, and we want to thank those who wrote.

# Letters to the editor

## More on "Banned!"

I am writing in response to "Banned!" by RE and the accompanying editor's note in the November 1994 issue. The subject was *The NA Way's* manuscript review process.

To begin with, my own experience with *The NA Way* during the few years I've been clean is very favorable. The tone of the articles and letters I've read has ranged from very humble and brimming with gratitude, to highly opinionated and angry, to arrogant and spiteful. Topics addressed have been wide-ranging and viewpoints varied, and sometimes controversial.

I've witnessed articles from *The NA Way* being quoted, referenced, and paraphrased in both recovery meetings and service committee meetings and functions. I've seen reprints of *NA Way* articles posted on area and group bulletin boards. I've observed one of those same reprints being ripped down by an irate addict, only to be smoothed out and reposted by the same addict when the angry impulse had passed.

Like RE, some of my beliefs are "controversial," not "mainstream NA." At times I've felt like the only

individual in my own very special home group who did not believe a certain way. Even though our Basic Text has assured me of the right to develop my own beliefs and to express, when appropriate, my own personal conscience, I have sometimes found myself feeling very alone and apart from.

During some of these difficult times, my sense of belonging and being a part of has been restored by what I read in *The NA Way*. The diversity of viewpoints expressed in its pages has reminded me that NA is much more than me, my home group, my area, or even my region. It has reminded me of the beauty in all our individual qualities and differences united toward a common, overall goal.

But what about RE? While the existing editorial process seems to work for me, my interpretation of "Banned!" is that its author feels seriously wronged. I believe a workable solution may lie not in changing the existing review process, but in applying our own Twelve Concepts for NA Service.

Contained in these concepts is a provision by which any member who feels that he or she has been wronged may ask for redress of a personal grievance. The service body is obligated to review the situation in a thorough and open-minded fashion. Should its collective conscience be that, as a body, it has been wrong, it attempts to rectify that wrong. Given the principles in which I believe NA is firmly rooted, I feel that the *NA Way* review panel should formally adopt as stated policy such a



measure—perhaps even the Twelve Concepts as a whole.

In closing, I once read something in our *Just For Today* book. It suggested that when an NA member shares from the heart, other addicts listen with theirs. Based on the many times while reading *The NA Way* that I've found myself listening with my heart, I think the review panelists must be doing a pretty good job of listening with theirs.

KW, Texas



*Editor's response:*

*Like the rest of NA, we're new at applying the Twelve Concepts to our efforts, but we do consider it our responsibility to uphold them.*

*Your suggestion raises a question: Is the rejection of an article that goes through an established review process a personal grievance against the author?*

*We invite you to tell us what you think about this issue. Please write us at:*

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

## Convention insert crosses line

I was reading and enjoying the March 1995 classics issue of *The NA Way*, when I came upon the information about the September 1995 world convention. I believe this notice crosses the line between informing members about an event and endorsing an outside business.

In this case, the business is a travel agency. This advertisement starts out by telling the fellowship of special discount travel packages available through "our official travel agency." I am upset that NA has an official travel agency, but I am even more upset that the World Convention Corporation, in conjunction with *The NA Way*, is violating our Sixth Tradition. The tradition states that "An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

This full-page ad with the words, "our official travel agency," is an endorsement of an outside enterprise.

I realize that the WCC has been telling members of NA about hotels that are available at the convention site for a number of years, but each year the hotels are in a different city. It is not the same hotel year-round, and these hotels are not our "official" hotels.

I'm very troubled by the words "our official travel agency" and the endorsement these words imply.

MH, California

# Helping Us Grow Spiritually

*"Recovery becomes a contact process; we lose the fear of touching and of being touched. We learn that a simple, loving hug can make all the difference in the world when we feel alone."*

Basic Text, page 88



That person is coming toward me. I better step out of the way. He is moving back and forth with me as I attempt escape. Is he trying to be funny? I do not know this person who is coming my way. He is bigger than I am. He doesn't look anything like I do. Does he know who I am?

This is my first time here. What are these people talking about? Keep coming back where? What more can be revealed?

I'm sitting here by myself with my head down; I don't want to be in this place. Why are the people so happy? They seem to be enjoying each other. They have a cup in one hand and a keytag in the other.

I sure wish this place was bigger; I would have more room to run. What if I have to say something? What if they tell the law what I did? I think I will just stay in this corner and watch everyone else.

These people don't understand the getting and using, hustling, stealing to get more. How would they know how I feel?

Oh, no! Now there are two of them coming my way. They are probably going to throw me out the door. I'll leave before that happens. I don't belong here, anyway.

Oh, God, here they are! Okay, here goes nothing. I hold my breath and wait to see what they'll say.

"Hello. Our names are N\_\_ and A\_\_, and we're addicts. We want to welcome you here; you're in the right place. Here's some coffee. We would like you to have this welcome chip. Would you like to meet some other people? We're sure glad you came. We're going to start the meeting in a few minutes. One more thing—we would like to give you a hug."

I stare, thinking, a hug? I say, "Well, okay." They open their arms. I fall right in. I feel warm and loved. They tell me that one day I'll learn to love myself, but they will love me first. They tell me that I don't have to use anymore, just for today. They say, "Welcome home!"

No one has ever hugged me before, unless I had something they wanted. All these people wanted was a simple hug in return.

MG, Indiana



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## The risks we take

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*"Sharing is risky at times, but by becoming vulnerable we are able to grow."*

Basic Text, page 95



When I came to this program I was ashamed of the street Spanish I spoke, the language I was mostly raised with.

I was told to go to a Spanish-speaking meeting and share that part of me with the addicts at the meeting, and to listen to what they had to say. So I did it once, but I never went back. I had no idea that HP had some other plan for me.

I am now working on my tenth year in recovery and, lo and behold, a guy came to our program who is as ashamed of his poor English as I was.

I bought him a Spanish-language Basic Text, and when he reached milestones of clean time I would write something in Spanish to him and sign it. Then one wonderful home group meeting, he had his one-year birthday. And guess what? He asked me to give him his medallion. I started to shake as if I were to talk in front of a thousand people. I am still

shaking as I write this. It was the most powerful thing I had ever felt in all my time in this wonderful NA program.

You see, I never told my home group about this part of me—I felt too ashamed of it. So there I was, standing up to give a medallion to a person I didn't know very well, but I wanted him to feel loved and accepted. I understood how he felt, and I didn't want him to go back out and die.

So I stood up, as is usually done, and told these people who have become my family that I was going to do something a little different. I gave my friend his medallion, speaking to him in Spanish. We both cried, and I shook for about ten minutes. I couldn't look anyone in the eyes for fear of rejection.

We have a "hugs not drugs" break halfway through our meeting, where we hug everyone in the room. When we broke that night, no one said anything except, "Good job!"

I cried again, thinking how grateful I was to NA for letting me be myself. I know now that I just might make it to my ten years. I love you all. Thanks, NA.

RM, Idaho

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## Profoundly changed

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*One of the most profound changes in our lives is in the realm of personal relationships.*

Basic Text, page 55



Relationships are what make my recovery precious. It is the relationships I have built with people that are the true indicators of the quality of my recovery.

Before I came to NA, the only reason I even *had* relationships was to exercise my control issues on other people. All my relationships were built on the shifting sands of addiction, which left me pretty unstable.

Prior to recovery, my relationships with women were shallow, superficial, and competitive. I had girlfriends only in between boyfriends. When a new man came into my life, my girlfriends were no longer important, and I often exited their lives without even saying good-bye. And when the man left, I rarely went back to pick up relationships with those girlfriends, much less to make amends. I just found new people to use.

Relationships with my family were based on duty, responsibility, and resentment. I spent as little time as possible with them, and never out of the simple desire for their company. I either wanted something from them, or I felt obligated to go home for a visit.

My relationships with men were based on fear, insecurity, and mistrust. They were characterized by infidelity, resentment, and an inability to express my needs or even the least complex of my feelings. I entered relationships motivated by lust and greed. Of course, I lied to them about my motives. I'd say I wanted to share my life, but then I'd adopt his lifestyle, his friends, his tastes, his everything. My life wasn't worth living, much less sharing. The problem with that was that I chose men who were exactly like me. What we wound up having together was a life no one would have wanted, and the relationships always ended with pain and more resentment.

The relationship I had with myself was distant and tentative. I didn't understand my own feelings; I hid them from myself just as I hid my feelings from everyone else. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. I stood for made-up virtues, so I didn't really stand for anything. I convinced myself that I didn't want anything. I was afraid I couldn't achieve. My fear of failure was so great I didn't even try. I had no respect for my surroundings and lived in squalor. I had no respect for myself or anyone else. I didn't love myself, and I mistrusted anyone who claimed to love me.



I believed in a Higher Power, but never felt worthy of grace. I considered myself lucky, never worthy. I rarely called upon a Higher Power to help me, and then only when I was up against a wall. Then I found ways to explain or discount having my prayers answered.

*Before I came to NA, the only reason I even had relationships was to exercise my control issues over other people.*

I came into recovery frightened, lonely, suspicious, isolated, and desperate to either live or die, but unable to continue the existence I had created for myself. I began to reach out and say my name. I learned how to use the telephone. I learned how to open my mouth and tell the truth. I learned to write and discovered what was really going on with me. I learned to look honestly at my behavior and my attitudes, and to identify my feelings.

I didn't start out wanting to change my relationships for myself. For example, I wanted to change so my son could have a mother who was loving, caring, and giving. Today, I want those things for myself, and my son is only one of the grateful recipients.

I learned about relationships first with my sponsor and the people I met in early recovery. We were a frightened group holding onto one another, looking with hope to the future because we were all too afraid to look back. We grew up together. I found peers in recovery and learned to care about them and for them. My sponsor was a source of inspiration, constantly assuring me that I, too, could change.

In my second year of recovery, I was whining, "I just want a healthy relationship." I didn't like the response from my sponsor, but I've never forgotten it: "You have healthy relationships today. You have a healthy relationship with me, with your son, with your roommate, with your parents. You have lots of healthy relationships, and until you learn to appreciate them, you won't get any more because you aren't ready for it yet!" I listened.

I spent the next several years learning to appreciate the relationships in my life; learning to build and make them stronger; learning how to nurture and sustain them.

Today, my relationships are based on the solid foundation of recovery. I have a life I thoroughly enjoy, filled with people I love and genuinely care about.

**T**oday, I'm engaged to be married to a wonderful man in recovery. We both have lives worth sharing, and together we have a life I never dreamed possible. I can communicate my needs and my feelings. I can be vulnerable without being afraid. I can disagree without being disagree-

able. I haven't lost myself just because I found him. We have both spent years learning to value the relationships in our lives. It is part of a conscious effort, not something that just happened. Today we are building a family, not just with one another, but with our three children.

How did I get from a life characterized by loneliness and despair to one filled with joy and anticipation? I worked hard. The principles of the Twelve Steps taught me how to change. The principles of the Twelve Traditions taught me how to change my relationships, and they are the basis of our family life.

I didn't learn how to have a healthy romantic relationship by going through a series of unhealthy relationships in recovery. I learned how to have this healthy relationship by staying out of romantic relationships until I had learned how to be a loving, giving, caring, non-judgmental, trusting, open, and honest friend, mother, daughter, sister, employee, and addict in recovery. I changed from an isolated, frightened, defensive, and tough little "bitch" into a generous, caring, soft woman in recovery.

I learned to be honest with my sponsor, with myself, with my Higher Power, and also with the rest of you. I've learned to love and to be loving. I learned to trust men by first learning to trust women. I learned that we sometimes hurt one another, but that doesn't mean I have to run away and hide forever. I can share my hurt. I can forgive, and we can grow closer because of the pain. I've learned to ask for forgiveness and

really have a desire to change and amend my behavior. I learned that relationships need attention, and I have to put forth the effort to sustain and nurture them. Good relationships don't just happen.

I've learned to allow people to overcome their past, and somehow I've forgiven myself in the process. I don't judge people by their past; I allow them to change and grow. I no longer live in guilt and shame over what I have done. I accept my past and don't ever want to forget how bad it was, but it doesn't haunt me today.

**N**arcotics Anonymous has given me freedom from active addiction, that one promise that gives me life. It's not just freedom from using drugs; it's freedom from using people. I've learned to be alone without being lonely. Until I reached that point (over six years into my recovery), I wasn't ready for a romantic relationship. Now I can reach out my hand and welcome a man into my life, not pull him in to fill a desperate need. I can fall in love instead of falling in lust or falling into pain. I find I want to be honest and not keep my feelings secret. Because I've learned to be honest with my sponsor, I don't have any secrets any more. I willingly share my pain, without the fear that it will be turned against me to further hurt me.

Relationships are a powerful force in our lives. I'm glad my sponsor shook my world all those years ago and told me to get grateful and appreciate them. Today I do—all of them.

*CE, California*



# On my feet once again

*"We eventually have to stand on our own feet and face life on its own terms. . . ."*

Basic Text, page 85



The first NA meeting I walked into was in a small town in Central Alberta, Canada, approximately five months ago. I was an extremely depressed and lost soul. I hadn't been able to find full-time work for a year and a half. I had no friends. I was not eating or taking care of myself, and my boyfriend—an addict like me—had decided we were not making any progress in attempting recovery together.

So I sent my one and only child to live with his father and moved in with my mother in a small town in the middle of nowhere. As I struggled to get back on my feet, my depression, my low self-esteem, and the violent reaction I had to even one miserable little bit of drugs, all drove me closer to believing death was the only escape.

A crisis line passed my call on to a recovering addict's wife, who recommended an NA meeting that night in

a small town not far from my mother's home.

The things I heard that night had me crying, hiding, feeling safe and a part of, and totally confused, all at the same time. I was home. I was with people who could validate my feelings, who understood, who offered me friendship without even knowing who I was. And at that very first meeting I started learning about staying clean, expressing feelings, how I am powerless and my life is unmanageable, and so much more.

It isn't always easy. I couldn't sleep for a while—then all I did was sleep. My depression would resurface off and on during my first three months clean. I had trouble reaching out to others. I had to be hurting and really confused before I would pick up the telephone and ask for help. But once I started doing that, I learned that I had choices. And suddenly, I was presented with other options.

I needed to find the willingness to communicate with my higher power, and to find faith in its ability to provide me with everything I needed. And I needed my faith and my gratitude to accept all the painful, ugly, and abusive stuff, because that's what led me toward the greatest insights into myself and my needs.

Well, I found those things and more. Today I live in a house with another recovering addict and attend as many meetings and connect with as many addicts as I can every week. I take one day at a time and try to be honest, open, and willing. I am starting some incest counselling, and I have recovered a lot of my self-es-

teem. I have the unconditional love of my higher power.

I trust that power to be with me, shelter me, and guide me in my life. I have friends. I am forming healthy relationships with others. I am beginning to laugh again, see the sky, hear the birds, feel the wind, touch the snow, and rejoice in the brilliance of a sunny winter's day. I celebrate my life—my birth, my daily experience, and my future.

This week started off with a pajama party—the very first one I have

ever been to. Last week I was asked to interview for a position I have dreamed about most of my life, and yesterday I was offered a position that I would be more than happy with if not for the chance at fulfilling my lifelong dream. Yet I know the job offer will still be there if the time is not right. My higher power is taking care of me and will let me know in which direction I need to go. The way is brightly lit—all I have to do is stay on my feet and follow the path.

*JW, Canada*





## Groundwork for freedom

*"After a member has had some involvement in our fellowship, a relapse may be the jarring experience that brings about a more rigorous application of the program."*

Basic Text, page 74



My name is Bryan, and I am an addict. I've been coming to meetings for about two years now, and I really love being a part of the NA family that gives so much love and support to its members.

Although I've been in this fellowship for the past two years, I am only five months clean. Still, I refuse to quit or give up on myself, this program, or God.

The longest I stayed clean before was eleven and a half months. I was doing a lot of service work and a lot of work with my sponsor, who I love like a dad. I was going to meetings every day and sometimes two or three a day. But what I was doing had little to do with my relapse; that came about because of what I *wasn't* doing. What I'm doing now is sitting in a county jail, thinking about what I have to do this time in recovery.

When I first got to the jail, I was in a lot of pain, and this being my first time in jail, I really went crazy for a long time, as you can probably imagine. So from the time I got here, I've called my sponsor every day and shared with him what I'm dealing with.

I've learned that no matter how good things are going for me in life and in this program, I can't use will-power or self-reliance to stay clean. I have to rely on my Higher Power and build a relationship with that power.

Before my relapse, I thought I was getting well and that not all of the suggestions the program offers were for me. I thought that things were going too good for me to relapse. I guess I was way too bold and cocky; my disease saw fit to bring me back down to Earth.

Well, as hard and painful as it has been for me in here, I believe I'll be okay. I try to think of this as a storm that will eventually blow over. I have a good sponsor, a good support group, and the love and support of NA to help me make it through.

I'm facing a lot of time, and it'll probably be a long time before I get to go home, but while I'm away I'll do my best to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. I don't know what my purpose in life is, but if I can help other people by sharing my mistakes, they will have been worth it. I will have made a difference.

Honestly, I hadn't felt serene until this past week. Today, I'm clean and serene. Jail or no jail, I haven't found a reason to pick up in the last twenty-four hours.

I have let myself down too many times, and today I believe I deserve better. I now realize we all pretty much walk down the same road, but we each wear different shoes. Some of our walks may be longer or

through rougher territory than others, but we all know how each other feels about the walk. I'm in pain now, but it's going to be okay until it gets better.

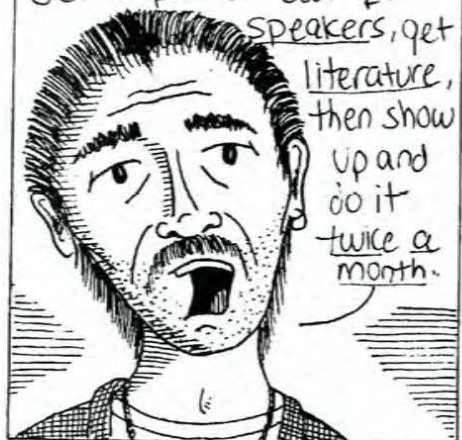
PB, North Carolina





## Home Group

I want to join H&I - but I'd have to attend seven area H&I committee meetings - Get a panel - call for



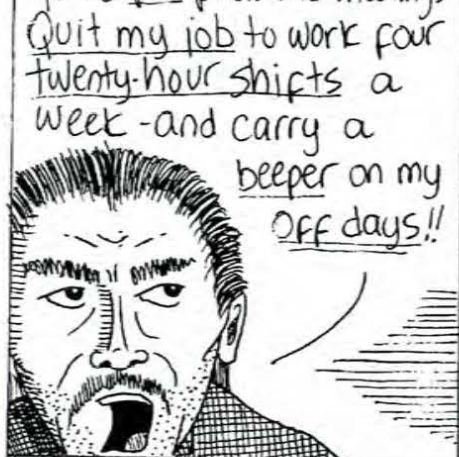
speakers, get literature, then show up and do it twice a month.

I want to join the Activities Committee...but I'd have to go to five activities meetings a month... Go to



twenty-five stores to buy supplies, then be up till four A.M. on a Saturday night... smopping up tired addicts.

I want to be on the phone-lines - but I'd have to go to four phoneline meetings. Quit my job to work four



twenty-hour shifts a week - and carry a beeper on my off days!!

I want more out of recovery...



But less in it!





# NA in Iran

*The following is taken from a report submitted by several people on NA's beginning in Iran. The original report was too lengthy to be published here, and contained much material on the discussions between officials at the Iranian-government-run Organization for Welfare and Rehabilitation. We have left some of that material intact, so as to give our readers an idea of what it's like to start NA in a country where permission to hold meetings must be obtained from the government.*

This is a brief history of how our fellowship was born in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran. This Islamic country views substance use, let alone abuse, as a sinful act punishable by flogging or imprisonment. It's a nation governed by a constitutional law that calls an addict a criminal, and a society that views an addict as a menace who should be ostracized and locked up. The true aspiration of a few recovering addicts who wanted to reach out and help others is worthy of praise. Their courage to proclaim, with a proud voice, "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am an addict," despite all the risks of doing so in Iran, is admirable.

NA was introduced in Iran in 1990. Two brothers met with officials from the Organization for Welfare and Rehabilitation to get permission to have NA meetings, as is required in Iran. One of the brothers, Mohsen, described their efforts this way:

"With much effort and perseverance, in an atmosphere which was not only unfriendly, but at times even hostile and suspicious, we began explaining NA's Twelve Step program of recovery. We finally succeeded in getting the organization's approval to start meetings in one of their rehabilitation facilities. At first, it was only my brother and I." His brother, Majid, traveled fifty kilometers on foot each week to open the meetings.

Mohsen continued, "After a few months, as many as eighteen members, all newcomers who had just left the rehabilitation centers, joined our meetings. A room was provided by the welfare organization for our meetings.

In the same room, we celebrated our one-year anniversary of NA meetings in Iran. We received word that another rehabilitation center wanted to have meetings.

For months, we went to the two rehab centers. One of our contributions was to print 'newsletters.' We would print the weaknesses and strengths of recovering addicts and the story of their recovery, together with our address and contact number for meetings and support outside the centers. We distributed brochures and asked parents, relatives, and children who came as visitors to the

rehab to promote the idea of their addict calling us and coming to our meetings.

After several months, we felt a lot of pressure from the welfare organization. We sensed that they wanted us under their reign. As this was against our Twelve Traditions, we slowly pulled away, and our meetings gradually disintegrated.

For my brother and I, what this meant was that we drew much strength for our own recovery. It was a way of appreciating what we had gained from recovery and a vivid reminder of where we came from."

**M**ohsen and Majid continued their efforts on behalf of NA. Some time later, members of another Twelve Step program arrived in Iran, eager to start meetings. They, too, encountered problems in dealing with the Organization for Welfare and Rehabilitation. A series of meetings were held, wherein members of both Twelve Step groups joined forces to plead for a chance to carry the message in Iran. These meetings eventually resulted in Narcotics Anonymous being given permission to hold meetings at the rehabilitation center once again.

The center is located on flat and barren land just outside Tehran. On a clear day, the snow-covered peak of Damavand can be seen in the distance. The center is enclosed with unfriendly-looking barbed-wire fences and four guard posts on each corner of the property.

At first, the armed guards were provided by the government; how-

ever, they have been replaced with unarmed volunteers from the rehabilitation center.

The building has bunker-like construction. Some of the construction work was done by residents of the rehab. It is a huge rectangular place surrounded by tall brick walls and covered with corrugated iron sheets. At the entrance, there is a heavy solid metal door. Inside is a long corridor with rooms on each side. The doorways are covered only by torn curtains.

*His brother,  
Majid, traveled  
fifty kilometers on  
foot each week to  
open the  
meetings.*

Inside the rooms, four rows of beds, set right next to each other, extend across the room. Each room is shared by two hundred addicts. The center can house as many as two thousand people. The rooms are bright and, despite their high ceilings, are filled with cigarette smoke. The male residents have their heads shaved.

According to rehabilitation center staff, ninety-eight percent of the residents are brought in by law-enforcement officers. The other two percent



come in voluntarily. They are mostly addicted to opium and heroin.

When they are brought to the center, they spend one week in quarantine for detoxification under medical supervision. They then join the others in the main complex. They are generally detained from two to six months. After serving their terms, they are released. According to a psychiatrist at the center, "Most of the addicts take up their addiction upon release. Only a few are saved." One official said, "This is not really a treatment center; it is a detention center. We keep the addicts clean and away from society for at least two months. Once they are released, they are completely on their own. We have nothing to offer them." It is not difficult to guess at the behavior of an addict who has been kept clean by force for two months, and then suddenly hits the streets!

One of the welfare officials said, "We really want to do more for the addicts. . . . We like the idea of organizing support groups. This is why we have accepted the Twelve Step programs. We are working hard on separating the issue of drug-dealing and pushing from drug addiction. We are seriously focusing on the root causes of addiction, trying desperately to forward the idea of it being an illness rather than a crime. But please remember that we are operating within a legal framework and a society who at times thinks the addict is better off dead."

There are meetings at the rehabilitation center every Wednesday. There are now seventy to eighty addicts who come to the meeting regu-

larly. We are happy to say that they are sharing and opening up with us.

One of them once told us, "You guys are rich. You had means of staying clean. You went to America and had a great time. We are miserable here. You do not know us; you do not know that we have no means and no hope." We replied, "This fellowship goes far beyond class, creed, rich, poor, intelligent, dull, literate, illiterate, Muslim, or Christian. We are all suffering from the same deadly disease."

**NA** members who visit Iran have always been a major source of inspiration to us. The fellowship in Iran is now growing. There are regular meetings at the rehabilitation center. The most striking feature has always been the attendance of newcomers. They truly are the lifeline of our program.

*Anonymous, Iran*



## Newsletters



## Letting go

**From *The Bottom Line*, the Gold Coast, Florida area newsletter:** "Letting go" is a much discussed topic in our fellowship for many good reasons, not the least of which is that not letting go can certainly lead us back to using.

For me, letting go helps me keep it simple, and that has taken me far in recovery. I find that if I let go of all my concerns and fears about a given problem or situation, a solution is much easier to reach.

In my using days I allowed fear—of failure, of honesty, of rejection—to rule my relationships with people. My methods of coping with these fears included people pleasing, selfish manipulation, and dishonest behavior designed to get me what I wanted when I wanted it. Allowing myself to wallow in self-pity ensured that I wouldn't let go.

To begin to let go, I have to examine my motives for holding on. I have to take my own inventory and discover what I am trying to gain by holding onto something: a bad situa-

tion, bad feelings, a problem, or a painful and sick relationship. I ask myself, "Why am I doing this?" Then I must choose a course of action that will benefit me in my recovery.

Perhaps the problem is my ego; I may not be willing to risk presenting myself honestly to others and so gain approval at the expense of my own self-respect. Maybe I'm being impatient and expecting too much of someone. Sometimes I pass judgment on people and form resentments by taking their inventory and not my own. Often I place expectations on myself that I cannot meet and then become disappointed with myself. Frequently, I am selfish and uncaring about the happiness or needs of others.

Through NA, I have learned that holding on to a resentment hurts me more than anyone else.

Letting go is an act of faith, and with faith I began to work the steps. As I did this I came to believe in a Higher Power, and I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him. In my life, God provides the management and I supply the labor. If I can own my selfish motives, I can let go. I have faith in my Higher Power and the fellowship, and I've not been disappointed.



By sharing and listening in meetings and working with a sponsor, I have begun to have a better understanding of myself and my motivations, and slowly I am beginning to better understand other people. As my faith grows, so does my ability to let go.

*Anonymous*

## Thanks for the freedom

**From *Free Spirit*, the Calgary, Alberta area newsletter:** Well, the time has come for me to express my gratitude to NA for the wonderful life I now live. Never before have I been able to get out of bed in the morning and actually, on occasion, look forward to a new day. I am, for the first time, somewhat happy to be alive.

After being a practicing addict for seventeen years, it was hard for me to imagine how different I might be some day. These days my life is so much better in all regards. I am closer to the spirituality I always desired than ever before; I have more balance in my life; my priorities are much more in order; my life runs more on an even keel than I ever dreamed; I have real friends; I accept who I am and who I used to be; my tolerance, acceptance and under-

standing of people are growing in immeasurable proportions (though I still have plenty of work to do in this regard). I could go on endlessly. Which brings me back to the subject I wanted to write about: gratitude.

I find it important in my recovery to recall how I was and how I am now, especially when life gets tough. This enables me to reaffirm my hopes and then pray for the strength and courage never to go back to the life I had before. I now know I will never be the perfect being that I strived to be most of my life. I am far from perfect, except in God's eyes. Yes, I do have character defects that I will quite likely always have to some degree, but I can work at lessening the frequency with which I act on them.

NA has taught me always to be true to myself in all my affairs, never acting the way I might be expected to do, unless I honestly feel that way. I am now free to be and free to live. As long as I continue to show up in these rooms and remain open-minded enough to listen, I will never stop growing and changing for the better.

*MG, Calgary*

## What Tradition Twelve means to me

**From *In Step*, the Bay Cities, California area newsletter:** My first experience with the Twelfth Tradition was at a step and tradition study meeting. Way back when I attended this meeting, I was awakened to a totally different lifestyle than I had ever before known.

I could see the merit in studying the steps, because they were personal. In order to stay clean, I needed to learn how to work them, or so I was told. I felt a little different when it came to the traditions, but when I heard that the traditions are to the group as the steps are to the individual, I became curious. I wanted to hear and learn more about the steps and the traditions and NA as a whole.

Over the years, the traditions have become more personal to me because their foundation has my undying interest. The traditions have a spiritual foundation, the same foundation I needed in my personal recovery.

Anonymity is a principle that has great spiritual integrity; it is based

on humility. What I have learned is that my life without some form of humility is just smoke. Tradition Twelve says to me that we must really practice genuine humility. Until the principle of humility was present in my personal recovery, I was suffering from a great deal of ego-driven ways.

There was a time in my recovery when I was trying to get an "A" in NA. I was doing the right thing with the wrong attitude. I lacked the all-encompassing spiritual quality of anonymity. I know now that Tradition Twelve means more than just lip-service, more than a chant when it is read at a meeting.

With my continued practice of the steps and the traditions, I've learned to give up my personal desires in the interest of the common good. There is a great deal of sacrifice in the NA way of life. But for the first time, my sacrifices are really made from the spiritual foundation of anonymity.

The second half of Tradition Twelve, "ever reminding us to place principles before personalities," has been the other way around. At times, it seems as though we are running a popularity contest. Just check out the next election of a GSR, treasurer, or secretary.

Tradition Twelve says to me that genuine humility and a spirit of sacrifice are the keys to a true understanding of God's will in action. It keeps pure our main purpose, which is to carry the message to the addict who is still-suffering.

*Anonymous*





## Viewpoint

# The Cult of Self

*"Hi. My name's \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm an addict. I'm suffering today. I think there's something in our literature about that making me the most important person in the room. I'm just not getting what I need from my sponsor. She isn't meeting my needs and that's not acceptable. I need nurturing because I didn't get it as a child. My therapist says I need to confront her, so I did. I told her that she has to be more available. I've really tried to whip her into shape, but she's a hypocrite. I feel so resentful, and I have the right to be. I have to remember that. But I'm in so much pain and no one wants to hear it. No one ever calls me to see how I'm doing. I thought you people were supposed to reach out. Work's okay, I guess. I don't get along with my boss or co-workers, but I've been confronting them and telling them their behavior is inappropriate. I left early today and I feel guilty, but*

*I'm not sure why. I'd like some feedback on that. I guess I always beat myself up. I abused myself more than I ever hurt anyone else in my addiction. I was the only person on my Eighth Step list. . . ."*

Sound familiar? Then you must attend the Cult of Self meeting of NA. This group has been around for a while—at least as long as I have been—but it's grown in the last four or five years. Its meetings have some common characteristics. They are all open discussion format. There are no newcomers. They're usually held by candlelight. They make me sick—literally—or “in the disease” as the Selfers would put it. Self-obsession is the core of our disease, right?

I know. I'm being a bit sarcastic. Okay, I'll stop. I really want to write about what's happened to many NA meetings and how that can affect our growth. You see, I'm frightened. Most newcomers instinctively know that they won't find what they're looking for—recovery—in a room where everyone is obsessed with themselves. They may not come back. If that keeps happening, well...

NA is supposed to be NA, not group therapy, not an encounter session. I know that a lot of our members have been exposed to therapy, and this is not a bad thing in itself,

but many of our meetings have been overly influenced by group therapy techniques. For example, participants in group therapy sessions often give each other "feedback." The concept of feedback is based on the idea that other people can see us more clearly than we can see ourselves. Unfortunately, without a professional—and NA doesn't have them—giving feedback in a group usually degenerates into several wannabe analysts spouting the latest pop psychology.

Group therapy practices have also crept into our meetings when they are treated as a place to "dump your problems." Proponents of this practice say that "people should be able to say anything they want at an NA meeting." I don't agree. It's so easy for us to use anything to feed our self-obsession.

**I** think there are quite a few things that are not appropriate for discussion in meetings: graphic details of the abuse we inflicted in our addiction, criticism of our sponsor, and—I'm adamant about this—stream-of-consciousness-style outpourings of feelings without relating them in any way, shape, or form to the principles of recovery.

There are other places for the appropriate airing of these topics. For instance, the graphic details of harm we inflicted in our addiction could be included in our Fourth Step writing, shared with our sponsor, and amended in our Eighth and Ninth Step work. The criticism of our sponsor, well, first we may want to read

the Basic Text and the pamphlet on sponsorship to see if our expectations are reasonable. If they are, we can talk to our sponsor in private about what we expect. The outpouring of feelings should go first to our sponsor. Working the steps with our sponsor will reduce the sense of high drama and bring to light the self-centered craving for attention that is usually the cause of wanting to "dump" in a meeting.

Sharing intensely personal details of our lives or "dumping" in meetings is a disservice to newcomers. They receive the message that such sharing is desirable. This often makes them feel as though they should share about personal and humiliating secrets before a group, often long before they're ready to deal with such things. For instance, I really do not see anything healthy about a newcomer who was molested as a child being encouraged to share such a painful thing with a mixed bag of people whose varying levels of recovery and sickness hardly qualifies them to respond appropriately.

Yet I hear it said over and over again that we're supposed to be vulnerable in meetings. Sponsees keep telling me of the problems they're having trusting everyone in the meetings. Well, of course they are. I certainly don't trust everyone in a meeting, nor should I. Not everyone is trustworthy. Where exactly did this rumor start, that NA is supposed to be some kind of love-fest, replete with teddy bears and periodic outbursts of "we love you"?

The idea that NA meetings exist for us to unload pain and negativity



misses the whole point of our Fifth Tradition. Meetings exist to provide a regularly scheduled event where we can carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. Newcomers are the most important people in our meetings, not just because that's good for them, *it's good for us*. In fact, the full quotation from our Basic Text is this: "The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting, *because we can only keep what we have by giving it away*." I added the italics because I think that's the most significant part of the quotation, albeit the one I hear referred to the least. If it's true that we can only keep what we have by giving it away, and I believe it is, then why would anyone choose to give away pain and negativity in a meeting, rather than recovery?

The preceding Basic Text quotation, our Twelfth Step, and the Fifth Tradition all tell us something: that we are responsible. We don't have to let our meetings turn into playgrounds where inner children squabble and compete for attention. We don't have to light candles and get "deep." All we have to do is take the focus off "the big me" and turn it toward the newest person in the meeting.

That person is waiting to hear that he or she never has to use drugs again, that recovery is a beautiful process of growth, that our obsession with ourselves can turn into a positive concern for others, and personal freedom.

There are some practical things we can do to help our meetings carry out their primary purpose. Pick a

recovery-oriented topic such as a spiritual principle or one of the Twelve Steps at your discussion meetings. Stay away from pseudo-therapy topics such as "setting boundaries," "claiming the self," and "breaking the shame cycle." Add reading the essay on the Fifth Tradition from either the Basic Text or *It Works: How and Why* to your meeting format.

When your head is running with your own personal melodrama, sit back, be quiet, and listen. When you're feeling positive about recovery, focus on the newcomers and tell them how good recovery is. The next time your group has a business meeting, don't just figure out how much literature to buy; talk about how well your group is carrying the message. Teach the principles of recovery to the newcomers you work with. At meetings, remember what you most wanted to know about NA when you were new, and share that.

I'm sure there are many other things we can do as individuals and as a fellowship. The preceding are things I've tried. Believe me, I would never attempt to share solutions, even in the "Viewpoint" section of *The NA Way*, without having tried them myself. I am responsible. I have chosen to call myself a member of Narcotics Anonymous, and I'm grateful.

Anonymous

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## Help!

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I've been clean since 1991 and have been involved in service work ever since. I started coming to NA meetings in 1988, and for some reason couldn't stay clean until I got involved in service, either cleaning up after a meeting or doing H&I work or anything else that would help.

When I got to NA, which, by the way, was only through the grace of my God as I understand him, there were people here already who started my area. My area was the ideal place to go to learn how to set up and run an NA meeting.

Today I am involved at the area level, and it's so sad to know that while our area now has thirty-seven meetings, when we hold our ASC meeting, only a fourth to half of the group service representatives show up. I've been coming to the area meetings since 1992 and have never seen close to half of our meetings represented by GSRs.

Maybe I'm a little slow. I've burnt out too many brain cells in my active addiction, but NA is the only place in the world where I can go and cry, or laugh, or be happy, just okay, or sad, be understood, and not be judged by anyone. It's the only place I can go anytime of the day or night, or any holiday, or any birthday, and share

my feelings and actually have people understand and relate to what I'm going through. Why would I not want to get involved? NA is the only place I have left to go. It is my life.

HS, Michigan

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## Editorial reply

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**In response to "Freely Giving"**  
**June 1994:** I've been re-reading the June 1994 NA Way magazine where the topic of court cards was discussed. After some consideration, I decided to write and share my personal experience, strength, and hope regarding court cards.

I personally will not sign a court card unless the person has stayed for the entire meeting and arrives at least close to being on time.

There is a fine line between affiliation and cooperation, as stated in our Sixth Tradition. NA and court cards come together out of cooperation. NA members do not enforce meeting attendance; it's the court that orders people to NA hoping for a different and better life for them. Issuing a court card is not a punishment, but an opportunity for hope and freedom from active addiction.

I have been a dedicated member of the hospitals and institutions sub-



committee during my four years as a member of NA. I have been in jails and lock-down treatment centers, and none of the people in those facilities were allowed the full freedom the NA Fellowship has to offer—to go to meetings as they please.

Yet I have seen some of these people again at NA meetings outside of these facilities. We know that there is no hope for any addict if no one takes the time to share. Why should this be any different with an addict carrying a court card? I would not want to rob another of the same opportunities that were so freely shared with me.

I try very hard to remember that if my Higher Power is doing an excellent job of taking care of me, your Higher Power is doing an excellent job of taking care of you. I have met many people who have become NA members because of court cards. It is not up to us to decide who "gets" the message of hope and the promise of freedom; our only responsibility is that they get to hear this message. This isn't possible if court cards are signed before the meeting. Do we trust in a power greater than ourselves? Or is it self-will that we should decide the only way another will hear the message is when NA becomes perfect?

I know that I didn't come to NA to get clean. I just wanted something different when I was growing up. After my father got his seventh drunk-driving charge, the court finally ordered him to a Twelve-Step fellowship on a court card. He was absolutely sure that NA wasn't the place for him; he found a member of AA who signed the court card, with-

out him ever setting foot in the doors. Eventually, he did achieve all the "promises" that active addiction makes: jails, institutions, and finally death. We buried him wearing his favorite gold coke spoon around his neck. He never had the chance to hear another perspective, hear about another kind of lifestyle, or get clean and stay clean.

There have been plenty of missed opportunities in my past, but I will not miss out on this opportunity to share how strongly I feel about NA and court cards. There is never going to be a perfect way for NA to deal with the courts, but how many addicts will die from the disunity and controversy within the NA Fellowship? Do we view the court as the enemy, or do we trust that the power greater than ourselves is taking good care of us? NA isn't about looking good; it's about carrying a message of hope and the promise of freedom from active addiction to the addict who still suffers. Eventually, each person has to decide if he or she is an addict with the desire to stop using. A court card may just help someone find his or her way!

*JM, Washington*

## From our readers



### Perseverance in recovery

I read in the Basic Text that we sometimes come to a time in our recovery that staying clean doesn't seem to be paying off, but we stay clean anyway.

For me, learning how to stay clean through the hard times is important, because I need to build faith in the program and learn that I *can* stay clean. I find out that I'm not in control. If I gave up on recovery every time me and my disease screwed up my life, I would never grow.

With the help of my Higher Power and NA, I have worked for, and been given as a gift, eleven years clean. I was twenty-two when I got clean; now I'm thirty-four. Thank you, God, for the honesty to look at who I am.

Today I have changed almost everything: why I attend meetings; the way I see my Higher Power; how and why we (Higher Power and me) work the steps; relationships, sexual or not, including sponsorship; and understanding my actions and how I act on my character defects. My recovery is a gift.

I used to attend meetings because I had no hope, and they told me there was hope in the meetings. Now I go to meetings because it is a place I can see the growth in all of us. It is a place where I trust people because they understand my disease.

I've gone from having an understanding of my Higher Power based only on my own confusion and hope, to a loving and trusting relationship with that power.

I used to write the steps because they told me to. Now I work them in my daily life because my Higher Power has given me the awareness to see changes, and I want more.

Relationships, whether sexual or not, and including sponsorship, is an area of so much change, yet so much is still needed. I'll keep coming back.

I am aware of how I act on many of my character defects today. I am grateful to my Higher Power for this awareness.

Today I look back and see the awareness and growth I have been through in recovery as a gift. "If I do what I have always done, I will get what I have always gotten." For the past several years I have been recovering, not just abstinent, because of this program. That is my plan for the future, one moment at a time.

*JC, Wyoming*



## After a tough battle, total surrender

My name is Joe, and I'm an addict. I'm grateful that I know I'm an addict so I can live again. The type of addict I am is one who lived to use and used to live. I used drugs against my will at the end of my run.

The first time I went into treatment and heard about NA, I stayed clean two months, but I knew I was going to use again. I just needed someone to blame it on. So I found someone to blame it on, and I used for about a year. I ended up in detox again, but I wasn't ready to surrender yet. The day I got out of detox I used again, this time for about three months, straight down to the pits of hell.

Finally, on 8 December 1988, I surrendered to the reality of my addiction, God, and the NA program. My disease had taken me on a four-day, non-stop, unlimited-supply binge that brought me one hit away from insanity or death. This addict will admit that I'm afraid to die, and so I reached out to a higher power and asked him to help me, please. He did. I believe my HP is what keeps me clean today.

When I get out of bed in the morning, I hit my knees. When I go to bed at night, I hit my knees and thank my HP for another day. Today in my recovery I'm involved in a men's detox meeting through H&I. I work the helpline once a month and fill in when needed. I attend two meetings a week. In the first year and a half of my recovery I went to a meeting every day, two on my days off. I live the steps and traditions in my life to the

best of my ability. I'm not perfect. I strive for progress, not perfection. I take some suggestions today, and I apply the program in and out of the rooms.

NA meetings teach me to live again. I love this way of life. I love the freedom to choose. I love my wife and family. It's great to be part of their lives and for them to be part of my life. I thank HP that I have no obsession to use today. I live all areas of my life one day at a time. All I need to do is get out of the way, let HP work, and ask him for the knowledge of his will for me and the power to carry it out.

I help other people whenever I can, and I treat others as I want to be treated. In closing, I would like to say: Give yourself a break. You're the only one who can. The NA program works. Keep coming back; I will.

*JJ, Illinois*

## 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 |    |    |

### CANADA

**Alberta:** 14-16 July; 4th Northern Lights Area Campout; info: (403) 790-0426 or (403) 790-9187; Campout, PO Box 5813, Fort McMurray, Alberta T9J 4V9

**British Columbia:** 21-23 July; 6th Central Vancouver Island Campout; Taylor Arm Provincial Park, Port Alberni; info: (604) 752-1418; Campout, 1678 Admiral Tyron Blvd., Parksville, BC V9P 1Y1

2) 1-3 Sept. 1995; 4th Oh-Yah-Man Campout; Oyama; info: (604) 549-4693; OAC, PO Box 1928, Vernon, BC, Canada, V1T 7G8

**Nova Scotia:** 4-6 Aug.; 6th Nova Scotia Area Convention; Teuro; info: (902) 477-1983 or (902) 457-3014; NSACNA-6, PO Box 65, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2L4

**Saskatchewan:** 7-9 July; Freedom Campout; Estevan; info: Estevan Dragline Group, Box 299, Estevan, Saskatchewan S4A 2A3

### FRANCE

**Paris:** 14-17 Sept.; 25th World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous; info: (818) 773-9999, extension 120

### GERMANY

**Hesse:** 21-23 July; 12th European Convention and Conference; Burgerhaus Nordweststadt, Walter-Moller-Platz 2; 60439 Frankfurt am Main; rsvns: 49/69/580 930; fax: 49/69/582 447; info: 49/6198/28 58; ECCNA-12, Postfach 10 16 62, Frankfurt 60016

**Nordrhein-Westfalen:** 18-20 Aug.; 5 Years of NA in Bochum, Germany Celebration; info: (49) 0234/3 40 53; Narcotics Anonymous, c/o Haus der Begegnung, Alsenstrasse 19A, Bochum, Germany 44789

### UNITED STATES

**California:** 15 July; 11th Sonoma County Unity Day; Sebastopol; info: (707) 528-8221; Unity Day, Box 1365, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

2) 4-6 Aug.; 16th Southern California Regional Convention; Palm Springs; rsvns: (619) 322-6000, ext. 2708 or (800) 872-4335; info: (818) 396-1882 or (909) 824-9104; SCRCNA-16, 1935 S Myrtle, Monrovia, CA 91016

**Connecticut:** 21-23 July; GDANA Campout; Camp Farnum, Durham; info: (203) 744-6240; GDANA, Box 2253, Danbury, CT 06813

2) 18-21 Aug.; 3rd Greater New Haven Area Campout; Camp Farnham, Durham; info: (203) 230-8265; Campout, Box 808, North Haven, CT 06573

3) 29-30 Sept. to 1 Oct.; 7th United Shoreline Area Spiritual Weekend; Enders Island, Mystic; info: (203) 767-3299; Spiritual Weekend, Box 354, Centerbrook, CT 06409

**Florida:** 4-6 Aug.; 4th South Dade Area Unity Weekend; Miami Beach; rsvns: (800) 327-6656; info: (305) 667-8948; Unity Weekend, Box 141514, Coral Gables, FL 33114

2) 18-20 Aug.; 1st Uncoast Area Convention; Daytona Beach; rsvns: (800) 767-4471; info: (904) 375-9624; Convention, Box 12151, Gainesville, FL 32604

**Georgia:** 7-9 July; 13th Piedmont Area Anniversary; Macon; rsvns: (800) 222-2222; info: (912) 956-5533; PASC, Box 4362, Macon, GA 31208

**Hawaii:** 28-30 July; 3rd Annual Kauai Gathering; Kahili Mountain Park; info: (808) 823-6165; send speaker tapes to: Kauai Gathering, Box 1268, Kapaa, HI 96746

2) 25-27 Aug.; Maui Gathering; Camp Keanae YMCA, Maui; info: (808) 572-1299 or (808) 575-2122; Maui Gathering, Box 707, Makawao, HI 96768

3) 19-22 Oct.; 4th Hawaii Regional Convention; Turtle Bay Hilton, Oahu; rsvns: (800) HILTONS; info: (808) 236-3408; Convention Committee, 98-456 Hoomailani Place, Pearl City, HI 96782

**Idaho:** 28-30 July; Southern Idaho Regional Campout; Porcupine Springs; Twins; info: (208) 733-3835; SIRNA, Box 261, Twin Falls, ID 83301

**Illinois:** 15-17 Sept.; 5th Wilderness Retreat & Dance, Pig & Turkey Roast; 4H Campgrounds, Jacksonville; info: (217) 789-6519 or (708) 636-7906; Fresh Start Group, Box 6451, Springfield, IL 62708



**Maine:** 22-24 Sept.; 12th Southern Maine Area Convention; Alfred; info: SMACNA, Box 5309, Portland, ME 04101

**Maryland:** 4-6 Aug.; 3rd Free State Regional Convention; St. John's College, Annapolis; info: (410) 787-0086 or (410) 760-7643; Free State Region, Box 4321, Baltimore, MD 21223

**Massachusetts:** 28-30 July; 3rd Western Massachusetts Area Convention; Springfield; rsvns: (413) 781-7111; info: (413) 538-7479; Convention, Box 422, Chicopee, MA 01021

**Michigan:** 27-29 Oct.; 4th Annual Kalamazoo Area Conv.; Kalamazoo; info: (616) 649-4738; KACNA, Box 50822, Kalamazoo, MI 49005

**Missouri:** 28-30 July; 16th Annual Ozark Area Convention; Truman Lake, Clinton; info: (316) 856-4277; Send speaker tapes to: 16th Ozark Area Conv., 2038 Choctaw Street, Baxter Springs, KS 66713

**Nebraska:** 18-20 Aug.; Wyobaska Area Unity Days; Scotts Bluff; info: (308) 783-2560; Unity Day, Box 262, Minatare, NE 69356

**2) 13-15 Oct.; 12th Nebraska Regional Convention; Hastings; rsvns: (402) 463-6721; info: (402) 462-4852; NRC-12, Box 684, Hastings, NE 68902**

**Nevada:** 14-16 July; 4th California, Arizona, Nevada Area Convention; Laughline; rsvns: (800) 227-3849; info: (602) 754-4260; CANAC, Box 21975, Bullhead City, AZ 86439

**New York:** 28-30 July; 1st Finger Lakes Area Convention; Wells College, Aurora; info: (716) 394-7038 or (315) 462-7461; FLASCNA, Box 385, Geneva, NY 14456

**2) 26 Aug.; Greater New York Region's Music Fest; Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island; info: (718) 447-3961 or (718) 335-0652; SIASCNA, Box 246, Staten Island, NY 10306**

**North Carolina:** 21-23 July; 2nd New Hope Area Convention; Durham; rsvns: (919) 683-6664; info: (919) 682-3777; NHACNA, Box 25043, Durham, NC 27704

**2) 18-20 Aug.; 5th Carolina Regional Awareness Weekend; Raleigh; rsvns: (919) 782-8800; info: (803) 762-2471; Awareness Weekend, c/o RSO, 1327 Beaman Place #9, Greensboro, NC 27408**

**3) 8-10 Sept.; 4th Annual Central Piedmont Area Convention; Salisbury; info: (704) 875-3590 or (704) 663-0560 or (704) 637-6722; CPANA, Box 1294, Moolesville, NC 28115**

**Ohio:** 21-23 July; 7th Annual North Coast Recovery Roast; Tri-County Camp Inn, Thompson; info: (216) 585-0485

**2) 4-6 Aug.; 1st Tri-Area Convention; Cleveland; info: (216) 663-4025; send speaker tapes to: Tri-Area Convention, Box 33372, North Royalton, OH 44133**

**Oklahoma:** 11-13 Aug.; 10-1/2 Annual Northside Stroll and Troll Chicken Flyin' Contest; Greenleaf State Park, Braggs; info: (918) 744-0956

**Oregon:** 25-27 Aug.; 3rd Annual NA Campout and Fish-Fry; Canal Creek State Campground; info: (503) 265-9347 or (503) 574-9169; Campout and Fish-Fry, Box 811, Depoe Bay, OR 97341

**2) 29 Sept. - 1 Oct.; 18th Pacific Northwest Convention; info: PNWCNA-18, PO Box 80146, Portland, OR 97280**

**Pennsylvania:** 25-27 Aug.; Mason-Dixon Area Convention; Wilson College, Chambersburg; info: (717) 642-5023 or (717) 749-5815 or (717) 264-0529; MDACNA, Box 478, Fairfield, PA 17320

**Puerto Rico:** 21-23 July; 6th Unidos Podemos; Condado Plaza Hotel; San Juan; info: (809) 763-5919

**South Carolina:** 25-27 Aug.; 8th North Central Carolina Area Campout; Woodstick Campground, Spartanburg; info: (803) 591-1060; Box 1782, Spartanburg, SC 29304

**Texas:** 6-8 Oct.; 8th Best Little Regional Convention; Abilene; info: (915) 368-5663; BLRCNA, 1957 Vogel, Abilene, TX 79603

**Utah:** 21-23 July; 12th Utah Region Campvention; Granite Flats Campground, American Fork Canyon; info: (801) 399-3974; URC, Box 324, Clearfield, UT 84015

**Washington:** 21-23 July; Peace in the Pines; Lost Lake Campground; Lake Tokiwanee; Greater Cascade Loop, info: Box 3580, Omak, WA 98841

**2) 22-24 Sept.; 11th Spiritual Connection; Cornet Bay, Oak Harbor; info: (360) 428-7171; Convention, Box 1001, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273**

**Wisconsin:** 4-6 Aug.; Kettle Moraine Area Unity Jam Campout; Camp Y-Koda, Sheboygan; info: (414) 458-7078; KMASC, Box 1022, Sheboygan, WI 53082

**2) 1-4 Sept.; Campvention 95; Clearwater Camp, Minocqua; info: (715) 277-4141; Campvention, Box 383, Minocqua, WI 54548**

**3) 27-29 Oct.; 12th Wisconsin State Convention; Wisconsin Dells; rsvns: (800) 388-4782 or (608) 254-8366; info: (608) 788-0447; WSNAC, Box 652, Sauk City, WI 53583**

**Wyoming:** 7-9 July; 8th Gillette Serenity Seekers Campout; Keyhole State Park; info: (307) 687-2097 or (307) 686-4123

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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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### **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.

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