



THE GUARDIAN

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LIVING IN FAITH, NOT RUNNING IN FEAR

We addicts are, by nature, very dishonest people. We lied, conned and manipulated others so much that it became second nature to us. We didn't know any other way to behave. But perhaps the person whom we were the most successful in conning and lying to was ourselves. "I don't have a drug problem, I can quit anytime I want to. Besides, I'm not hurting anyone else." This is the types of dishonesty many of us practiced on a daily basis. And even when no one else would believe it anymore, we continued to believe it, right up to the point of hitting our personal bottom.

Often, our self delusions are so ingrained in us, it can take quite awhile in recovery to get the truth sorted out from the lies. One such delusion many of us convinced ourselves of was the twisted idea of bravery that we had. We weren't afraid of anyone or anything. We walked around with a chip on our shoulder and dared anyone to knock it off. However, once we come into recovery and work the first step, those delusions of being "bigger and badder"

begin disappearing, and that's when the fear becomes apparent. Once we start developing a concept of a Higher Power, we find that fear starts turning to faith, slowly, a little at a time. We become more assured of ourselves and start seeing the miracles of a Higher Power working in our lives, and that faith becomes even stronger.

Once we start our inventory, however, that fear can easily return. We are visiting those old memories of the things we did, and that were done to us, that we tried so hard to keep buried deep inside ourselves. We then begin to see how, instead of being the big and bad people we had convinced ourselves we were, we had actually been scared and lost children, running in fear for most of our lives. Fear of responsibility, fear of commitment, fear of losing the crutch that drugs had become to us. We are totally amazed at the amount of fear we actually had within us, and usually without even knowing it. Then, when we admit these fears and turn them over to

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A New Year

Well it's a new year meaning this addict will start a new trip through the steps, traditions, and concepts. This continued application and study of the principles of NA have brought me many gifts, all of which have been the ability to live life on life's terms.

My first step will again be a new level of surrender to recovery, selfless-service, sacred principles, and life. I have found a very practical gift of working steps through a dictionary monthly. It keeps this addict constantly centered in living an NA recovery oriented life. It keeps me out of complacency and helps me fulfill my responsibilities to my-self, NA, and the rest of the world.

I like to start the year out with surrender. I remember the first day of January, the feeling of gratitude that I had to get to concede my power through step one once again. I can't wait to see what this year will bring in my recovery; so many changes have already taken place.

This also means it is a new year for studying the Traditions. January means I get to focus on unity and our common welfare. This brings me to something that is on my mind about my recent readings in the NA Way and other NA literature. I'm confused by all the special interest group talk. I fully understand the benefit of talking with recovering addicts with similar life situations and lifestyles, I never new that NA had an opinion on that. The first readings that I ever heard led me to believe that the disease of addiction was our common bond and that race, creed, sex, religion, or lack of was an outside issue. So I really can't see or understand special interest NA meetings. An addict is an addict whether they are man, woman, white, black, gay, or straight. Will I have to go to white male heterosexual meetings to stay clean, or can I just go to an NA meeting and share

about recovery, try to fulfill our primary purpose, and love each addict that enters the door? Our steps, traditions, and the principles that are the foundation of NA should allow us to grow together no matter what. "That is if they are the foundation of our groups."

I also believe that one of the other issues that is affecting our unity and my recovery is this new PR push in NA. Now Public Relations rings of being politically correct and as well rings of a business nature, although not stated but heavily implied. Public Information on the other hand speaks of faith and trust in the NA message. We simply give our information to those who need it and let our Higher Power and our message do the work. Instead we have entered what seems to be promotion through public relations or advertisement. We took the responsibility off of ourselves by implying in bulletin 31 that treatment centers and drug courts were a life line for addicts to NA. Shame on us. In our rural communities this hit very hard and now meetings are either over-whelmed by affiliations with court systems or blurred by treatment center language and the "and a" mentality. Instead of trying to rewrite NA, why can't we just stop negotiating the traditions that we have and let our message, the principles, and the spiritual nature of NA continue to allow addicts to come in and make what is supposed to be their admission of being an addict.

I'm tired of being called intolerant because I only attend closed NA meetings that focus on NA recovery. Why do I feel that way? Maybe because newcomers are led to believe that closed NA meetings that do not sign court cards must be filled with NA Nazis. Now being termed this is quite offensive when I'm actually just an addict. I still remember the young man who never participated in a meeting, showed up late, and then asked me to sign his court card so

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Meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous:

Crossville NA Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Daily Reprieve
Wartburg, Tennessee

Getting Started
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

Primary Purpose Group
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Who Are You Group
Pikeville, Tennessee
(Note: This meeting is held in a correctional facility and is only accessible to those with clearance and approval.)

A New Year

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he could get his kids back. That was the last card I ever signed because as I was driving home it hit me that he might just get his kids back, that I would be somewhat responsible for children being returned to someone who really didn't care about recovery. Don't call that judgmental either, within a month of this moment of clarity a woman who was in the court system drove her kids off into the lake, killing one of them, and my own cousin who was in the court system and just had his kids returned committed murder. So I'm not intolerant I just don't want to take the chance that my signature would inadvertently put children in that position.

I'm not intolerant because I get tired of hearing about other literature in NA meetings, or hearing that our key tags are markers in your sobriety. You see I wanted to be a part of a service committee but when we tried to build that service on traditions, guidelines, and base it out of our literature there was great dissension due to affiliation with, and the majority of the sponsorship being based in A.A. I'm not intolerant I just believe that our traditions "are not negotiable". My new life depends

on this. Forgive me for being so passionate about these issues but don't call me intolerant.

This addict will surrender again this year to NA recovery. I always remember the agreement that I made. It comes with the first paragraph of How It Works, "If you want what we have to offer and are willing to make the effort to get it". I'm so afraid that our World Board has lost the true meaning of NA recovery or simply entered a world of being politically correct. Is this what property and prestige brings. Maybe they should concentrate on an inventory of their actions. I like a fellowship based in anonymity much better.

Although I am contrary in much of this my heart and loyalty lays with the principles of NA and NA recovery. I'm simply tired of having to tiptoe around what I say to try to keep from offending people who either are centered in self or really have no working knowledge of our literature in the first place. P.S. Sponsorship families speak of prestige and separation. Knock it off.

Our purpose is addicts carrying an NA message of recovery to other addicts. To do this we have to be unified in our purpose and it has to be based on anonymity. Thank you to all those who stand on principles no matter what.

Living in Faith not Running in Fear

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our Higher Power, a wondrous thing begins to happen. Our faith becomes that much stronger, to the point to where fear no longer has the control over us that it once had. Sure, we still get scared. After all, we are human. But fear no longer consumes us. We no longer run in fear from each new challenge or obstacle as we

once were likely to. Instead, we walk in faith, strengthened by the assurance that our Higher Power will guide and protect us, and that no matter what circumstances arise, the outcome will be okay, and will be okay, as long as we continue to have faith that everything happens for a reason, and that we will come out of each challenge that much stronger in our recovery and that much closer to our Higher Power.

- Ken H.

We need your help!

We need your help. The Guardian is in need of submissions. It can be a personal story of how you used the Fellowship or your Higher Power to get through a tough time, your views on a particular quote from the Narcotics Anonymous literature that you happen to like, Or a simple expression of gratitude.

Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't very important either, just remember that shorter is better.

The only real criteria for submissions are that they reflect the message of Narcotics Anonymous and stick to the identification of ourselves as addicts suffering from the disease of addiction.

Submissions can be brought to the Upper Cumberland Area Service meeting, sent to The Guardian, 140 Cottle Ln, Jamestown, Tenn. 38556 or E-mailed to: ucaguardian@hotmail.com

Thank you for your support.

Thanks to our friends in the recovering community of the Southwest Area in the California Inland Region we now have these wonderful Word Find puzzles. We hope to have one each month, enjoy.

STEP TWO

P	S	F	N	I	N	G	N	I	V	O	L	V	B	J	Y	G	M	E	N		ACCEPT	HELP	PROGRAM
R	O	F	B	M	J	H	N	I	E	C	O	M	M	O	N	I	A	F	O		ACTION	HIGHER	PROGRESSIVE
O	U	W	R	I	A	P	S	E	D	K	P	W	Q	O	R	H	A	F	I		AGREE	IDEA	PURPOSE
C	R	D	E	G	N	I	R	A	C	R	R	P	I	A	N	T	H	O	T		BEGIN	INCURABLE	RECOVERY
E	C	B	G	R	E	A	T	E	R	E	R	S	C	F	A	L	H	R	C		BELIEVE	INSANE	RELIEVE
S	E	D	E	K	C	A	L	O	V	O	S	L	A	L	P	V	Y	T	A		CARING	JUNKIE	RESTORE
S	E	J	Y	N	Q	B	A	H	G	E	E	S	P	N	A	M	M	S	D		COMMON	LACKED	ROAD
A	G	V	E	Y	A	D	J	R	S	S	T	T	A	L	I	V	I	N	G		DECIDE	LIVING	SANITY
K	G	P	I	R	V	U	A	B	E	O	A	E	V	R	N	T	H	L	D		DESPAIR	LOVING	SAW
B	O	R	U	S	N	M	O	C	P	E	N	P	H	J	Y	H	Y	L	E		EFFORTS	MIRACLES	SOURCE
E	D	C	E	K	S	G	N	Q	D	J	U	H	E	L	P	J	E	X	C		EVIDENCE	MISTAKES	STEP
L	N	X	I	E	M	E	X	I	S	O	W	Z	E	D	C	S	I	K	I		EXISTENCE	NECESSARY	STOP
I	P	E	K	R	D	R	R	E	R	O	W	T	Z	A	O	S	M	J	D		FAITH	NEED	TALKED
E	P	H	A	I	E	E	K	G	R	J	A	W	C	P	T	G	R	V	E		FATAL	OBSESSION	TRUST
V	B	E	V	S	T	A	E	K	O	M	S	C	R	E	R	E	L	M	T		FEAR	ONLY	TWO
E	F	E	T	M	T	R	I	N	I	R	E	U	N	O	H	J	J	U	E		GOD	OPEN	ULTIMATELY
W	Q	O	G	S	V	N	U	T	E	P	P	C	W	G	Q	T	K	U	W		GREATER	PAIN	VACUUM
C	R	M	I	I	G	O	L	S	T	R	E	L	I	E	V	E	I	C	Q		GROUP	POWER	VOID
E	V	M	B	C	N	U	I	Z	T	L	A	H	B	D	E	K	L	A	T		GROW	PROCESS	WORKING
Y	R	E	V	O	C	E	R	D	K	I	N	S	A	N	E	F	X	V	F				

By 

All of the words are taken from Step 2 in the Basic Text pages 22-24

The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups. Because the groups have created the service structure, they have final authority over all it's affairs.
(Concept Two)

This is just food for thought; if we as group members are not involved in the service structure, how can our trusted servants be aware of our group, area, and regional needs?

In Narcotics Anonymous we all have a voice, but we have to get involved to be heard.

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on March 16, 2008 At 2:30 pm CST in Crossville, Tennessee at the Crossville NA facility. Come check it out to see what the service committee is doing for the Upper Cumberland Area and your group to aid in better carrying the message to the still suffering addict.