

# Happy, Joyous and Free Times!

## Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

<http://www.nauca.org>

---

April 2005

Volume 2, Issue 28

---

## **WAKING UP TO A NEW BEGINNING**

"All spiritual awakenings have some things in common. Common elements include an end to loneliness and a sense of direction in our lives." (Basic Text p.28)

We hear a lot of talk in recovery about spiritual awakenings. As newcomers, we sometimes wait with anxious anticipation as we work through each step, eager to get to the spiritual awakening promised in the twelfth step. We sat in meetings hearing others share about the spiritual awakenings they have had. We wonder if our awakening will be like their's. Or if it will be different. If it is different, then how will we know that we have truly had a spiritual awakening? And exactly what is a spiritual wakening?

Perhaps one of the most wonderful aspects of this program, and one of the main factors that allows it to work for anyone who is willing to work it, is the fact that the personal aspects of this program are not carved in stone. They are just that. Personal. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. No one can decide whether or not another has the desire to stop. Only that individual can decide for his or her self. There are many ways to work the steps. We are encouraged to work them in order, write them down, and allow ourselves to be guided by someone who has experience and knowledge in working the steps. Beyond that, it's our choice how we choose to go about it, as long as we learn to apply what the principles of the steps to our lives. We are also encouraged to find a God of our understanding. A Higher Power that is revealed to us personally.

All of these things are of a personal nature. And should be kept to the individual to experience on a personal level. Otherwise, they will simply be mimicking what has been dictated to them, and will not allow the spirituality of the program to reveal itself to them. Each of us must experience these moments of clarity on our own. We can share them with others, we can even use them as a basis for our guiding of others through their own awakening. But we should never compare our spiritual wakening with that of someone else, whether it's feeling jealousy because our awakening experience doesn't seem as grand as their's, or feeling superior because we think our experience is much better than their's.

A spiritual awakening is not a one time event. It is a series of personal moments throughout our recovery that enlighten us and bring us closer to an understanding of the true spiritual nature of our own personal program. I should be grateful for each "awakening" I have, for that means I am still moving forward in my recovery.

- Ken H.

---

The Purpose of Happy, Joyous and Free Times is to help share the message of Narcotics Anonymous to the Upper Cumberland Area. Narcotics Anonymous 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. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. A meeting schedule can be found at <http://www.nauca.org> .

---

# SHOWING MY THANKS BY GIVING

For me to express on paper my gratitude for what the NA program and you - the members of the fellowship - have done for me is difficult. My words seem too weak to say "Thanks" for something that saved my life. I came into NA bankrupt in every way. Every bridge I had crossed was in flames. I had lost all hope. Slowly you showed me how to live.

You shared with me before, during, and after meetings. You showed me your Higher Power and invited me to find my Own. You showed me by being there when I had nowhere else to turn. You showed me that the promise is freedom and the message is hope. You showed me that, no matter how flawed my character was, I could change. You showed me through the 12 Steps how I could change. You showed me that the old lie - once an addict, always an addict - is truly dead. WE DO RECOVER!

The way you showed me how to keep what I have is by giving it away. I show my gratitude by caring and sharing the NA Way. You showed me through the 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts that I could serve others before serving my self. You showed me about WE not ME. You showed me that one addict can and will make a difference.

Today, I am a productive, responsible member of society. I am respected among my circle of friends, my family, and society as a whole. I am a better son, brother, father, and friend. The person who was reduced to the animal level by this disease is now a new man. How can you say "Thanks" for something of that magnitude? The only way I can scratch the surface of repaying that debt is by giving back. It is the least I can do.

Scott W.  
Nashville, TN

## "MY GRATITUDE SPEAKS..."

If you would like to show your gratitude to Narcotics Anonymous for the gift of recovery you have received, why not give back by through service work? The Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous has a number of open service positions, and could always use the services of recovering addicts who share a love for this program that has given us back our lives, as well as a desire to reach out to that still suffering addict who has yet to hear our message of recovery. If you would like to get involved, or just come to check it out, the Area Service Committee meets at 2:30 pm on the third Sunday of every month at St. Michael's Church in Cookeville. Your homegroups's GSR should be able to answer any other questions ou may have. Come and be a part of, we'd love to have you!

---

Happy, Joyous and Free Times is a free publication carrying the message of Narcotics Anonymous to the Upper Cumberland Area. All quotes used in this publication that are taken from Narcotics Anonymous approved literature are property of WSO. All other articles, etc. are the opinions and personal experiences of the individual authors and are in no way endorsed by, nor reflect the opinion of, Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for size and content. Any submissions become the property of Happy, Joyous and Free Times.

---

# **GOD'S WILL OR SELF WILL?**

The question of God's will versus self will is one that comes up quiet often with recovering addicts. In active addiction, I ran totally on self will. I wanted what I wanted, when I wanted it, and didn't care who I had to hurt or what I had to do to get it. The consequences of my actions didn't matter because, in my self centered thinking, all that mattered was that in the end I got what I wanted. The ends justified the means.

In the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, you taught me that I needed to find a God of my understanding and rely on Him to guide my will and my life. You said I needed to let go of self will and follow God's will. Then, when I came into meetings confused about if what I was doing was my will or God's, you directed me to the Basic Text, which says that spiritual principles are never in conflict with one another. You then told me that if I worked the Steps and learned the spiritual principles and applied them to my life on a daily basis, then I would know. If anything I wanted to do conflicted with any of the spiritual principles, then it was my will, not God's, because spiritual principles are never in conflict. The God of my understanding will never have me do anything that is unspiritual.

Unfortunately, I have seen times when that doesn't seem to be the case where service work is concerned. I have seen times when one or more service members had a project or idea that they felt should be implemented and proceeded to use what was most certainly unspiritual actions to get what they wanted. Underhanded tactics, such as mismanaged funds, doctored reports, withholding information and outright lying have all been used at one time or another by service members, all in the name of Narcotics Anonymous.

It is not my place to decide what was in those member's hearts. I am sure they all loved NA dearly and wanted to help the still suffering addict as much as anyone else. But does that make unspiritual principles any less wrong? Do the ends truly justify the means?

If I decide to get involved in service to NA, then I have an obligation to the fellowship to behave responsibly and spiritually in that service. No matter how badly I want something, or how much I think it will benefit Narcotics Anonymous, if I find myself feeling the need to use underhanded and unspiritual tactics to get what I want, then I need to stop and look at my motives and ask myself "Is there a way to get this and still follow the spiritual principles?". If there is, then I need to follow that path and have faith that everything will be okay. If there isn't, then I need to admit to myself that what I wanted was self serving and that there is never a right time in recovery to do things the wrong way. In Narcotics Anonymous, the ends do not justify the means. Instead, the means define the ends.

- Anonymous

---

**If you have found this newsletter and think you may have a problem with drugs, Narcotics Anonymous can help. If you need a schedule of meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area, or if you would like to talk to a recovering addict, call 931-484-6384 or toll free 866-454-3784.**

---

# TRADITIONALLY SPEAKING

*(The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous truly are "the ties that bind us together". As important as the Steps are to personal recovery, so the Traditions are to group survival and to insure that our meetings fulfill their primary purpose. Each month, we will look a little closer at a particular Tradition, because we cannot implement a tool of recovery until we can begin to understand it.)*

Tradition Eleven:

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."

"Our public image consists of what we have to offer, a successful proven way of maintaining a drug-free lifestyle." " - Basic Text, p.72

Some thoughts to ponder concerning Tradition Eleven:

- 1) What are some ways to attract people to Narcotics Anonymous?
- 2) What would be some examples of promotion?
- 3) Does this tradition mean we can't place announcements about NA in newspapers or on radio or television?
- 4) What should I as a member of Narcotics Anonymous do if approached by the media for an interview about NA?
- 5) How does Tradition Eleven relate to our primary purpose?
- 6) Exactly how does anonymity play a part in Tradition Eleven?
- 7) Does this tradition mean I shouldn't let people know I'm in Narcotics Anonymous?
- 8) According to "It Works: How And Why", why should you never do PI work alone?
- 9) How can I as an individual affect NA's public image positively or negatively?
- 10) How does tradition Eleven help to foster unity in the Fellowship?

---

## **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

Do you have an article, poem or personal story you would like to share with other recovering addicts? Maybe you would like to share an interesting experience of how your Higher Power has intervened in your life. Or maybe you would like to tell how you have applied the principles of Narcotics Anonymous in your life to overcome a difficult situation. Any submissions you have can be sent to Happy, Joyous and Free Times 300 Neal Dr. Dowltown, Tenn 37059. Or email [hjnftimes@hotmail.com](mailto:hjnftimes@hotmail.com).