

# Happy, Joyous and Free Times!

## Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

<http://www.nauca.org>

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## WHEN AT THE END OF THE ROAD

*(When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best as we can to the bitter ends - jails, institutions or death - or find a new way to live. - Basic Text p.84)*

If you have spent anytime at all in Narcotics Anonymous meetings then you are at least familiar with the third paragraph of "We Do Recover". Not only is it in both the Basic Text and the white booklet we normally hand to newcomers when they pick up their white tag, it is also read at the beginning of many N.A. meetings. Most of us get to where we can whisper it under our breaths as it is being read, and some can even quote it word for word. Surely you would be hard pressed to find a recovering addict who doesn't believe in the truth of this well-known paragraph.

We repeat the message of the third paragraph over and over to newcomers, especially the ominous "go on as best as we can to the bitter ends - jails, institutions and death". For many addicts, that one startling phrase is just the wake up call that they need. I know when this addict first heard it. It sent shivers down my spine, just hearing what I already knew to be true laid out in plain, simple words that could not be misconstrued. The third paragraph truly is a powerful message to give to the newcomer when they reach the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

But is the third paragraph just for newcomers? Is not the message contained in it just as true for those with time in recovery as the one just walking in the door, strung out and feeling hopeless? Even after time spent in the program, can we not reflect on this simple yet powerful message to remind us of why we need to daily work the program of Narcotics Anonymous in our lives?

None of us, regardless of our time and "stature" in N.A., are immune to the "bitter ends - jails, institutions or death" when we forget to apply the program daily in our lives and instead try to once again live our lives on self-will. If we continue on this downward path, we will once again find ourselves no longer able to function with or without drugs and facing a choice: "either go on as best as we can to the bitter ends... or find a new way to live."

For us, the "new" way may not be so new at all. It may simply be a matter of remembering and re-applying the spiritual principles that we had lost time for in our busy lives. The good news is that if I find myself running on self-will and once again surrounded by chaos, I don't have to continue to the bitter ends. I just need to put the focus back on my recovery and get back to the basics of the program. We do recover.

- Ken H.

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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> .

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# **SOMEONE CARED**

I am not an afterthought,  
Or a last minute choice.  
I am not an "end of the day",  
Or a toy with a voice.

I am a vibrant child of God,  
With love and hope and strength.  
I am a recovering addict.  
Willing to go to any length.

So if you see a gift in me,  
It's because it's been freely shared.  
Just for today I know I'm loved.  
I am blessed because someone cared.

- Meg M.

# **THE FIGHT**

I'm trying to fight a battle and hoping I can win  
But it seems like there's just no end  
The mountains gets a lot harder sometimes to climb  
But I know I can make it in all due time  
The rivers run like they're deep and wide  
But I know I can make it if I keep looking for the other side

My main goal is always look forward and never look behind  
Now I know my family and friends are on my side  
So now I'm going to hang in here and give it my best  
Because really I feel that this is all only a test  
I can hold my head up high and win this fight  
Because I know I gave it my best

- Carole H.

# **TOMORROW'S RESENTMENTS**

*(Anger is our reaction to our present reality. Resentments are reliving past experiences again and again, and fear is our response to the future. - Basic Text p.94)*

In recovery, we are warned over and over again about resentments and how destructive they can be in our lives. Other recovering addicts share in meetings of how resentments caused them to act out on character defects, some even relapsed over it. Our literature warns us repeatedly that recovery will cease if we continue to hold resentments.

So, when a resentment takes hold, we try to get rid of it as soon as possible. We share about it in meetings, we talk to our sponsor, we pray until we are blue in the face, yet sometimes those resentments just don't seem to go away. What are we doing wrong?

Often, we are so caught up in the resentment itself that we fail to see the simple solution that is there to help us. The only way to fully rid ourselves of a resentment is simple, but it is not always easy, because it takes a great deal of willingness on our part.

So what is this simple solution? Acceptance. That's it. Pretty simple, huh? You see, there are three stages to a resentment: fear, anger and resentment. The fear can come from any of a multitude of events. Perhaps I am afraid that my spouse will leave me because of my time spent away from home doing service work. This may be a purely imagined fear or it may actually have a basis in reality. It doesn't matter. The devastating effects any fear, real or imagined, can have on me are the same, if left unchecked.

So, to alleviate this fear, we quit all our service obligations. Now everything will be okay because we won't be gone from home all the time. There is still a problem, however. We love service work and it is a vital part of our program. Now we become angry at our spouse for "making" us quit doing service work. The next logical step in our regression, then is that the anger causes us to get a resentment towards our spouse for doing this terrible thing to us.

How could we better handle this situation? Perhaps talk to our spouse and explain to him or her why service work is so important to us, and come to a compromise. We could possibly drop some of our service commitments in order to spend more time with our family, and still do the service work that is so vital to our recovery. In doing this, we come to some acceptance. Acceptance that our responsibilities to our family are also important and acceptance that, while service work is very important, we shouldn't take on so much that our personal lives become unmanageable.

While your particular situation may not be just like this example, the cycle is the same. If we face fear with prayer, open-mindedness and acceptance, we can save ourselves from at least some of tomorrow's resentments.

- Anonymous

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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.

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# 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 Nine:

"N.A., as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

"Without this tradition, our Fellowship would be in opposition to spiritual principles. A loving God, as He may express Himself in our group conscience, is our ultimate authority." - Basic Text, p.70

Some thoughts to ponder concerning Tradition Nine:

- 1) What does Tradition Nine mean by "N.A.. as such, ought never be organized"?
- 2) What are service boards?
- 3) Exactly who are service boards and committees directly responsible to?
- 4) Does this tradition mean that service boards and committees can't make decisions for themselves?
- 5) How would our fellowship be in opposition to spiritual principles without Tradition Nine?
- 6) How does the principle of anonymity apply to this tradition?
- 7) How does this tradition relate to Tradition Two?
- 8) How does this tradition relate to Tradition Five?
- 9) How does Tradition Nine help groups fulfill the primary purpose?
- 10) How does tradition Nine foster unity?

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## **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. Dowlletown, Tenn 37059. Or email [hjnftimes@hotmail.com](mailto:hjnftimes@hotmail.com).

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