



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

The Guardian

Issue 1 Volume 1 January 2006

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

When I first got clean in 2001, I found a home group and supported it - and just it - for a little over three years. I thought because it was my home group, that's what I was supposed to do. I didn't know anything about the Traditions and what I was doing to NA as a whole, let alone what I was doing to myself and my recovery. That's it. I was just clean and really had no recovery.

The bottom line is I don't have to be a part of that "fishbowl recovery" anymore and always swimming

upstream against NA. I was "stuck on stupid" and had to go back out and almost died.

This time, I'm taking responsibility for my recovery today and I can't tell you in words how wonderful it feels.

I don't have to break the Traditions anymore, and by taking a stand and actually picking up and reading the literature and visiting various groups that apply spiritual principles, I do believe that I am part of NA as a whole.

I can relax and swim down stream today. Coming to believe, really believe. What a spiritual feeling that is!

The literature tells us that it's a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. NA is life or death for me and today I choose to live by doing the right thing for the right reason S.

I do believe that by standing on the spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous I don't have to die, and I don't have to swim up stream against the current. I can step out of the way and swim down stream with the current and live today.

- Love you.
"Traditions Believer"

WELCOME TO THE GUARDIAN

Welcome to the first issue of the Guardian. We would like to thank you for picking up a copy of the newsletter. Of course, we can't help but hope that you like it and enjoy it, but more importantly, we hope we can reach someone through this newsletter who perhaps is undecided about whether or not this program is for them, for that is really all we have to offer anyone, the

message of Narcotics Anonymous.

We are really excited about this newsletter and it's potential, but we also know that this is a "we" thing, and that means we need your help and support. This is meant to be the voice of the Upper Cumberland Area, so we need you. Your experience, strength and hope can help to make this newsletter successful.

As we begin this journey together, let's remember the

love and acceptance that others showed us when we walked in the rooms that allowed us to hear the message of NA and realize we needed help and were not alone. If we can take that same love and acceptance and put it into written words, we can truly allow this newsletter to be another effective tool we can use to further our primary purpose.

In loving service,
The UCA Newsletter Subcommittee

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GOOD OR BAD DAYS

"A lot happens in one day, both negative and positive. If we do not take the time to appreciate both, perhaps we will miss something that will help us grow." - (IP #8, Just For Today)

There are times I tend to make a rash and hasty judgment on my day based on one or two "bad" things happening. I then spend the rest of the day wishing it would just hurry up and get over with, missing out on all the blessings the day had in store for me.

I may miss out on the joy of being with my family, because I am too stuck on how horrible this day is. I may end up sulking through a meeting that night and miss out on some wonderful things that were shared. Perhaps a sponsee calls me with a real problem and I'm too stuck in my "bad" day to give them the support they need.

I could allow myself to miss out on many wonderful things by simply writing off the day as bad. And once that day is gone, it's gone. It's a day wasted that I can't get back, and those lessons I could have experienced that could help me in my recovery may be gone for good.

So how do I keep from creating a bad day for myself? One important thing I must remember is that there are no such things as "good days" and "bad days". A day is just a day, nothing more and nothing less. One day can have many events happening in it, some positive, some negative and some neither. For me to pigeonhole all of those events as a "bad day" is not only oversimplification, it is also being ungrateful for another day my Higher

Power has blessed me with.

Another important factor I need to remember is that, as a recovering addict, I am no longer just living today. I am experiencing life. So these things that happen over the course of a day can either be lessons for me to learn from, obstacles I need to overcome, or lives I am being allowed to touch. Either way, I need to be grateful for the opportunity to have these life experiences, because it is only through them that I can grow and learn.

Life is precious today, and each day should be treated as a gift, for that is what it truly is. I need to stay in the positive today and dismissing all of the blessings I receive during the course of a day and only dwell on what I perceive to be the bad will cause me to stay in the negative, and that's definitely not a good place for a recovering addict to be.

So for me today, I need to stay in the positive and remember what I have to be grateful for. And if I am in such a bad place that nothing in the course of the day seems good, at least I can be grateful that I have been able to stay clean for another day, despite whatever bad experiences I may be having that day, and that will be enough to ensure that I can keep going for another day, until I can get back into a good frame of mind by following the suggestions given to me.

So, good day or bad day? Let's just call it a day and be grateful for the opportunity to live it clean and recovering and be allowed to learn and grow from it.

- Ken H.

The Guardian is a free monthly publication serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous.

Newsletter Subcommittee

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Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous Helpline:
866-454-3784 24 hours toll free

Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous web site:
<http://www.nauca.org>

Meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous:

Crossville NA Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Daily Reprieve
Wartburg, Tennessee

End of the Road Group
Woodbury, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

New Beginnings
Huntsville, Tennessee

Primary Purpose Group
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY-Part One

(What follows is a solutions summary of the "Atmosphere of Recovery" presentation from our Dallas forum, 7/2004, presented by John S. (Show-me Region). These solutions are not an expressed conscious of the southern forum as a whole, nor are they the expressed opinions of Regions participating in the SZF. No one person strongly disagreed with any of the "Solutions".)

What is an atmosphere of recovery?

Atmosphere: "A particular environment or surrounding influence"

Recovery: "Return to an original state", "Gradual healing", "The regaining or saving of something lost"

An environment, specifically at meetings or functions associated with Narcotics Anonymous, which encourages and nurtures individual addicts seeking recovery from the disease of addiction.

What can detract from an atmosphere of recovery?

Side conversations during readings and sharing, Prejudice, Being under surveillance during meetings, Carrying drugs or weapons into a meeting space, Unruly children, Off-topic sharing, Verbal and physical confrontation, Discussing outside issues during a meeting, Provocative dress or actions. Predators in meetings, Issues of complete abstinence, Discussing a specific religion instead of spirituality

What can we do to ensure an atmosphere of recovery and deal with issues mentioned in this document?

Keep your eye on the prize - our primary purpose. Make it a part of every meeting to remind everyone in attendance of the group's primary purpose and specifically what that means. Focusing on creating a safe haven of recovery for the addict who still suffers whether they're on day 1 or 2,05. Show respect

for people during the readings and when sharing; if you must hold a side conversation take it into another room or outside. Keep your sharing on-topic and recovery focused, present a clear NA message. Discuss ways to promote an atmosphere of recovery at group business meetings. Create a welcoming committee, members whose job is to greet newcomers, answer questions, encourage them to get phone numbers, etc. Create a reading for leaders in each meeting that outlines the specific things that encourage a recovery atmosphere. Have an orientation sheet for meeting leaders that explains ways in which they can maintain an atmosphere of recovery and how to deal with difficult situations that may arise.

Deal with prejudice head-on

Make a statement in meeting formats that reiterates that everyone is welcome regardless . . . Reach out to members or newcomers who are the target of prejudice. Make it a point to hug everyone at the meeting, especially those who are different from yourself. Invite a diverse range of recovery speakers for open meetings and at area, regional and world conventions. Discuss prejudice and solutions as a topic at workshops or conventions. Reach out to those groups in your area and region that appear to be isolating because they feel unwelcome in the current service structure. Support functions and meetings all over your area and region; take carloads of addicts with you to visit different meetings and do outreach. Contact your area or regional outreach chair if you feel groups that are isolating from others in the area no matter what the Reason.

To be continued next issue

(reprinted from Volume 3 Issue 3 of the Solutions pamphlet presented by the southern Zonal Forum of Narcotics Anonymous)

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 more than 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 is 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 166 Tami Kay Rd Dowelltown, Tenn 37059, or emailed to ucaguardian@hotmail.com.

Thank you for your help and support.

GETTING WHAT I DESERVE

This is my stuff, I know, but I really find it irritating when recovering addicts go on at length about how undeserving they are. I assume that they are either repeating what they heard others say because it sounds like the right thing to say, or else they think it's unspiritual to actually feel like you deserve what you have.

Just to make a point here, self worth

is a spiritual principle. We are taught that we are no better than anyone else, but we are no worse either, so I am worthy today.

Reciprocity is also a spiritual principle. I get what I give. If I live right today, then I get good things in return. In active addiction, I did bad things, and in turn I got exactly what I deserved, so why should I find it so hard to accept that, now that I live right, I still get what I deserve?

I believe that it is unfair of me to accept the blessings that my Higher Power allows me to have because of trying to be an asset and not a burden today, then turn around and show my gratitude by saying I don't deserve it.

If I truly feel undeserving, then maybe I should look at how I work my program a little closer, to see if maybe there's an unresolved issue that's makes me feel that way. Just a thought.

- Anonymous

Help Wanted:

Volunteer Regional Inventory
Why should you attend?

Because we need you and the still-suffering addict needs you!

January 28-29, 2006
Sat. 8-5 and Sun. 8-12

Inventory held at Ramada Inn. Rooms available across the street at La Quinta for \$59.99
Flat rate for up to 4 people.

La Quinta
Exit 317, 4038 Hwy 127N
Crossville, TN 38555

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