



# THE GUARDIAN

January 2010

## FREEDOM FROM THE STORM

Man, what a wreck I was when I walked into my "last" first NA meeting. I say my "last" first NA meeting because back in the 90's I attended meetings and managed to put together a little clean time. Anyway, when I came back into the rooms this time I expected the meetings to be like I remembered them, a place to come and cry about all my problems, and believe me I had multiple problems to cry about. Boy, was I in for a surprise!

The first several meetings I attended, instead of talking about problems, people were talking about solutions. Members were talking about steps and, something I don't ever remember hearing before, spiritual principles. I kept coming back and listening for two reasons. One, I liked what I was hearing, and, two, the only other place I had to go was jail, again!

Well, okay, let's get away from the unpleasant thoughts and try to return to the topic. After a few meetings I somehow gathered up enough balls to ask someone to be my sponsor. After receiving a "yes" response I was given a homework assignment and given only a week to complete it! Damn! I was told to get a dictionary and look up the definitions to every word in the Serenity Prayer! Damn! (I never dreamed the word "the" could have so many definitions). When I got to the word

"serenity" one of the definitions I found was "freedom from the storms". Now, I know it was referring to a ship at sea, but it couldn't have been more appropriate for me. My life had become a perfect storm. Like a tornado I was destroying anything and anybody that crossed my path. Not only was I destroying my own life but it seemed I was going out of my way to destroy my mother's, brother's, and children's lives. A category five hurricane didn't have anything on the condition my nervous system was in. Switching from drug to drug, I was either bouncing off the walls or drooling in my food. The thought of going in a store or talking to people physically petrified me and I was coming to grips with the fact that this was the way it would be for the rest of my life.

Anyway, I finished my homework on time (only to receive a new assignment) and kept going to meetings and listening to the other members. I want to say this story has a happy ending, but there is no "ending", so it is a happy ongoing story. By working the steps and trying to live by spiritual principles, over time, I have found freedom from the storm.

Rudy R.

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## 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 reasons.

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"

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The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Area Service Committee will be held on February 21, 2010 At 2:30 pm CST in Crossville, Tennessee at the Crossville NA facility. We are always in need of addicts that want to be of service to our fellowship, come and check it out to see what the service committee is doing for the Upper Cumberland Area, and your group, to help us fulfill our primary purpose, carrying the message of recovery to the still suffering addict. We have many positions that need to be filled, come and experience the many benefits of service.

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

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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:**

New Way To Live Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

Crossville NA Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

New Beginnings  
Oneida, Tennessee

Getting Started  
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group  
Allardt, Tennessee

Unity Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

\* Who Are You Group  
Pikeville, Tennessee

\* Free And Clean Group  
Pikeville, Tennessee

\* This meeting is held in a correctional facility and is only accessible to those with clearance and approval.

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## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR TRADITIONS

The program of Narcotics Anonymous is based on the spiritual principles embodied in the Twelve Traditions. Working the Steps forms the basis of our personal recovery and leads to a spiritual awakening. Part of our spiritual awakening may involve being of service to our fellowship. It is through service to Narcotics Anonymous that we begin to understand our Traditions.

Gradually, we learn we can use the Traditions in our everyday lives. The Traditions have much to teach us about simply getting along with one another. When we practice the principles of our Traditions in dealing with all people, our lives become more manageable.

This pamphlet represents the collective experience of a group of addicts trying to "practice these principles in all our affairs." We would like to share our experience with you.

### TRADITION ONE:

*"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon NA unity."*

Our personal recovery begins with an admission that we can no longer make it on our own. We come to recognize that our survival now depends on being part of a fellowship of recovering addicts. We begin to see how each of us is part of a greater whole, both in and outside the fellowship. The focus of our lives shifts from "me" and "mine" to "us" and "ours".

As we experience sharing and caring for other people, our wall of isolation and false self-sufficiency crumbles. We find strength, hope and fulfillment in acknowledging our interdependence. Growing spiritually, we no longer base our actions on purely selfish motives. Our choices reflect the greater interest we take in the welfare of those around us.

Read the chapter in the Basic Text for the first tradition.

Read the chapter in It Works How & Why on the first tradition. Write answers to the following:

1. What does this tradition mean to you?
2. What does this tradition mean to NA?
3. What is unity?
4. How is unity the practical foundation of our traditions?
5. Should we place "our common welfare" before our personal welfare? If so why?
6. What are some of the common causes of disunity?
7. How do you fit into NA unity?
8. How does personal recovery depend on NA unity?
9. What are some of the benefits we receive from living this tradition?
10. The spiritual principles of this tradition are acceptance, surrender, and honesty. Define in your own words spiritual principles in this tradition. Look up, and write the definition from the dictionary.

### 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.

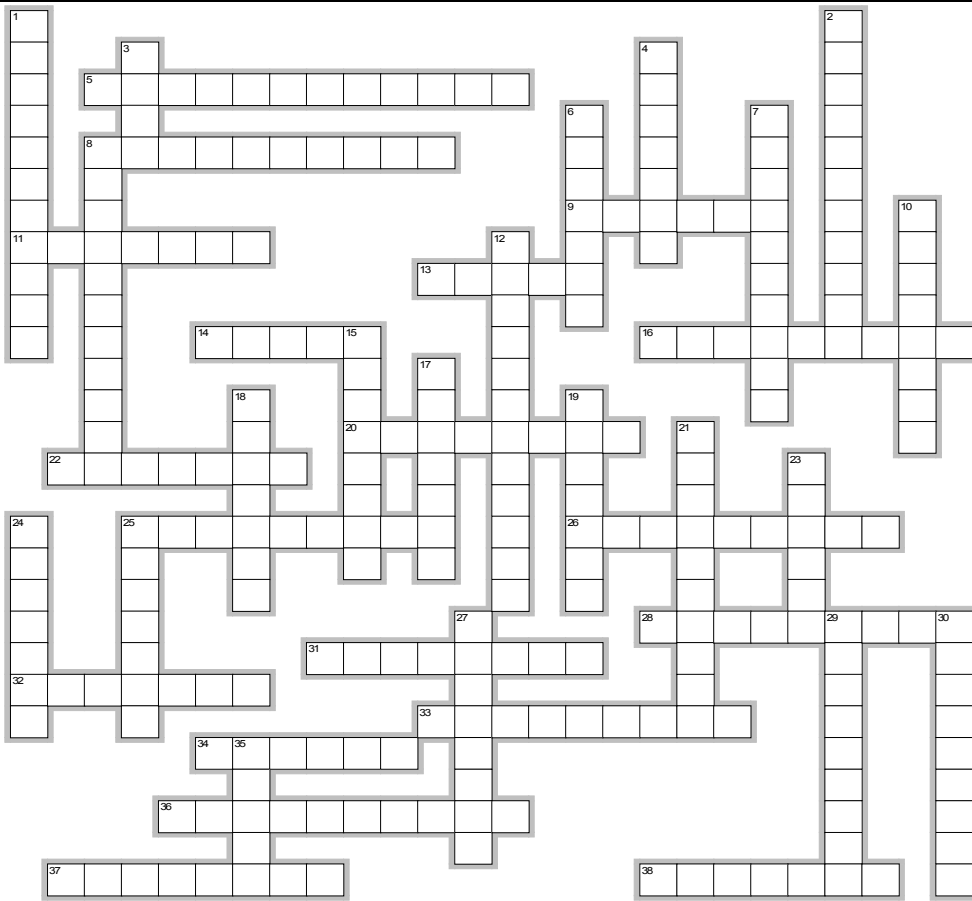
Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't 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](mailto:ucaguardian@hotmail.com)

Thank you for your support.

# Step Five "It Works"



All of the words in the puzzle can be found in "It Works How And Why" Step Five pg 49 - 58

## Across

5. "The positive \_\_\_\_\_ we are building with a Higher Power carries over into our relationships with others as well." pg 54
8. "Praying with the person hearing our Fifth Step can be a \_\_\_\_\_ intimate experience." pg 53
9. "We start to realize that there is a difference between our actions and the exact \_\_\_\_\_ of our wrongs." pg 54
11. "Through working the Fifth Step, we find that few of our \_\_\_\_\_ deserve exaggerated attention." pg 51
13. "Our self-esteem increases as we realize that what we have to \_\_\_\_\_ is worth such close attention." pg 54
14. "Our belief and our \_\_\_\_\_ grew as a result." pg 57
16. "The \_\_\_\_\_ we are about to make to ourselves in Step Five is especially important." pg 50
20. "It is very important that we resist such \_\_\_\_\_." pg 56
22. "We may call our \_\_\_\_\_ for reassurance." pg 49

## Down

1. "After working our Fifth Step, we may feel a little raw or \_\_\_\_\_ vulnerable." pg 56
2. "We take our \_\_\_\_\_ a step further, thereby renewing the decision we made in Step Three." pg 50
3. "This \_\_\_\_\_ is only natural." pg 49
4. "We've seen the whole spectrum of our \_\_\_\_\_ and are ready for something new." pg 58
6. "Our self-obsession \_\_\_\_\_ us to this, making us feel unique." pg 55
7. "After all, who can better understand what we are \_\_\_\_\_ than those who have done it for themselves?" pg 52
8. "We may be surprised by the intensity of the \_\_\_\_\_ we are developing with our sponsor as we share our inventory." pg 54
10. "As we share our most \_\_\_\_\_ feelings and our most carefully guarded secrets, we may experience anguish." pg 51
12. "The nature of these wrongs is the dishonesty and \_\_\_\_\_ we were demonstrating each time we lied." pg 55
15. "We gain a new understanding of the principle of \_\_\_\_\_ as we work this step." pg 51
17. "We will need \_\_\_\_\_ and understanding to

cope with our feelings." pg 52

18. "Because this is a spiritual \_\_\_\_\_, and our whole purpose is to awaken spiritually." pg 53
19. "The first thing we must \_\_\_\_\_ is that the Fifth Step is not a quick fix for a painful situation." pg 52
21. "Such people can share with us their \_\_\_\_\_ and the solutions they have found through working this step." pg 52
23. "We start to realize that there is a difference between our actions and the exact nature of our \_\_\_\_\_." pg 54
24. "To invite God into this \_\_\_\_\_, we may want to say a prayer." pg 53
25. "Another action which requires \_\_\_\_\_ is our admission to ourselves." pg 51
27. "We are \_\_\_\_\_ someone entry to those places we've never before opened to another person." pg 55
29. "Why is it so \_\_\_\_\_ that we also make our admission to God?" pg 53
30. "Our understanding of the \_\_\_\_\_ principles we have practiced in the first four steps will be enhanced by working the Fifth Step." pg 50
35. "We're \_\_\_\_\_ beings, nothing more, nothing less." pg 55

25. "The exact nature of those wrongs is our \_\_\_\_\_ defects." pg 57
26. "Now that we have completed our written \_\_\_\_\_, it is essential that we share it promptly." pg 49
28. "That decision, like most \_\_\_\_\_ we make, must be followed with action." pg 50
31. "We may be surprised at the closeness that \_\_\_\_\_ between us and our sponsor" pg 56
32. "This process could be thought of as "\_\_\_\_\_ of the spirit." pg 56
33. "As we share our inventory, our sponsor will \_\_\_\_\_ share some of his or her own experience with us." pg 55
34. "Our relationships begin to \_\_\_\_\_ after this step, including the one we have with the God of our understanding." pg 57
36. "We reaffirm our \_\_\_\_\_ to recovery by immediately working Step Five." pg 49
37. "We've dropped our masks in the \_\_\_\_\_ of another person." pg 56
38. "We've risked trusting one person with our \_\_\_\_\_ and our feelings, and we haven't been rejected." pg 57