



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

The Guardian

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TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND TAKE CONTROL

Does it feel at times, that although you're in recovery, going to meetings and talking to your sponsor, your life is still careening out of control? Are you still acting out on character defects on a regular basis? Are you still going from one sick relationship to another? Are you still living the same way you did in active addiction, just not putting the drugs in your system?

I know that for me, the inability to live a spiritual life can, at times, be because of one simple reason: I won't take responsibility for my actions.

Recovery is all about responsibility. I couldn't get

clean until I took responsibility for my using, and I couldn't start recovering until I took responsibility for my actions. To continue recovering, I must continue taking responsibility.

When I'm honest about my mistakes and admit them, then I can change, do something different, and grow in my recovery.

However, when I refuse to admit my mistakes and don't take responsibility for my actions, then instead of change, all there is is justification and rationalization. Then there's no growth, no recovery, and I will just keep on making the same mistakes over and over, and living in the same constant chaos as I did when I was using.

Honesty, open mindedness

and willingness are three spiritual principles that are indispensable, according to our literature. In order to continue growing in my recovery, I need to be honest enough to admit I made a mistake, open minded enough to hear suggestions from others, and willing enough to do something different.

Without the ability to do those three things, I will become stagnant in my recovery, and we all know what happens to things that become stagnant.

They die.

I choose to live today. I choose to take responsibility for my actions, so that I can change, grow and recover.

- Ken H.

BASIC TEXT READY FOR REVIEW

The moment we have all been waiting for is here. You can now sign up for the review/input draft of the 6th Edition of the Basic Text. The review period will be from September 2006 to

February 2007. If you would like a review copy, you can email NA World services at worldboard@na.org, or request a hard copy by mail at NAWS, Inc. PO Box 9999 Van Nuys, CA. 91409.

Once you receive and read your draft copy, you can then

post any input you may have concerning the 6th Edition on a form that will be posted on the web site at <http://www.na.org>.

This is your Basic Text, so your input is strongly encouraged and will be greatly appreciated.

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USING THE SLOGANS

In our 12-Step program, we hear and read a lot of slogans. "Easy Does It". "Live And Let Live". "Keep It Simple", "One Day At A Time", "Let Go And Let God". At first we may be confused about some of these sayings, or they seem like "just words", but all of them are available to be used in our daily lives.

"Easy Does It" reminds us that there are no schedules or time limits on working the 12 Steps - just so we don't become complacent with our recovery "Easy Does It" also tells us to stop punishing ourselves for our past acts; what really matters now is our present behaviors. It's a good idea to remember where we came from so we don't repeat our past mistakes.

"Live And Let Live" reminds us that we are recovering together. Although we may not agree with (or even like) everyone

in the Fellowship, we should at least be open-minded and willing to listen to ALL of our fellow members because what they say or do may just be what we need for that day.

"Keep It Simple" reminds us about honesty, and means that we don't have to complicate our recovery like the mess we made of our lives in our active addiction. The 12 Step program really is simple, it's just not easy because it goes against just about everything that our disease lied to us about in the past.

"One Day At A Time" tells us that we can only live in today. Yesterday's problems and tomorrow's worries aren't important compared to how we work our program and live our lives today. Also, we have to remember that we didn't get sick in one day, so we won't get well in one day either. Most importantly, we don't have to pick up "One Day At A Time."

"Let Go And Let God"

means exactly that. Our Higher Power, in working through other members in the Fellowship, saved us from our active addiction. With that in mind, each of us can turn our other problems over to the God of our understanding for the solutions we need. Remember that letting go MEANS letting go! No take-backs as God can't help us with our problems if we're still holding onto them.

Now, today, there are many tools at hand, ready for me to use on my path of recovery. And if I'm having a problem finding what I need, I can always borrow from the toolbox of a friend in the Fellowship, just like they can borrow from my kit when they need to.

Will I open my toolbox today, or will I just keep my tools sitting in a corner and let them rust?

- Submitted by
Joe A.,
a grateful recovering addict in Central PA

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 web site: <http://www.nauca.org>

Meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous:

Crossville NA Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Daily Reprieve
Wartburg, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

New Beginnings
Huntsville, Tennessee

Primary Purpose Group
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

JIMMY K. ON SERVICE

"Mostly, anyone who takes a position or any kind of leader (whether it's Chairman of a Group, Representative of a Group, GSO Representative, Trustee, or anything else regarding this organization) just lets himself in for a lot of work, a lot of criticism, and a lot of those things that go on. But you see, we have to grow, and our shoulders get broad enough to carry these things because the life that is given to us makes everything worthwhile. If it wasn't meaningful and worthwhile, I wouldn't be here tonight. If this program didn't lift me higher, carry me further, and make me feel better than anything else ever did in my life, I wouldn't be here. That's for damn sure."

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN NA SERVICE

What follows is a group effort on the part of all members attending the August, '02 SZF. A workshop session held during the forum focused on these topics and formulated the possible solutions that follow.

These are not the expressed conscious of the entire forum as a whole. Nor are they the expressed opinions of the Regions that are part of the forum. The solutions provided below are part of randomly chosen groups and their effort to brainstorm, prioritize, show relationship to, formulate, and summarize the potential solutions that came up in those same groups. The entire forum reviewed each of the completed summaries. No one person strongly disagreed with any of the "Solutions" that were presented.

"Barriers to contacting trusted servants in the fellowship"

Barriers to contacting trusted servants in the fellowship can sometimes generate an atmosphere of 'personalities before principals'. Some solutions might include:

- Help addicts that we sponsor to understand principals before personalities.
- Exercises in conflict resolution with each other using dialogue and people to facilitate the activity so that people are accustomed to these behaviors
- Having a responsibility for updating contact information and placing it (group, area, regional, world contact lists) in an easily accessible location and in the same place every time.

Miscommunication and misinformation can also cause barriers to contacting trusted servants within the fellowship. Through repetition and consistency of effective communications and the act of holding a trusted servant accountable for clear dissemination of information we can remedy these types of situations.

Unattractive service and an "us and them" attitude can also result from the barriers that exist in contacting trusted servants. Having a trusted servant list that is all-inclusive (all areas of service on one list) and making it accessible to all members of the fellowship opens the lines of communication consequently bringing addicts to the area, regional, and world (e.g. regional assemblies, Zonals) arenas of service functions. This fosters an atmosphere of attraction.

The barriers that have come as a result of the rapidly changing methods of communication can be dealt with by:

- Using email when possible but not leaving out those without email

Not looking down upon or talking down to those that don't have email. (Things to consider in this regard are; people may not have access to computers in their community, economic hardship may not allow for computer access, or there may be a reason that a person does not want a computer.)

"Lack of focus in communication about NA service"

To prevent lack of focus in communication about NA service, the following solutions can be considered:

- Create reports that are focused, using concise and simple language
- Make sure that the reports are as widely distributed as possible
- When giving verbal reports, take your time
- Ask questions and/or ask for help
- Consider using visual aids
- Use an agenda and/or outlines and plan ahead
- Utilize the principals of empathy, responsibility, love and honesty

To prevent lack of participation in communication about NA service consider leading by

example and sharing with others about how doing service has helped you personally.

Also consider inviting someone to attend service events with you and show them the full range of NA service opportunities that exist so they can discover their own niche.

Consider sharing how many people can be helped through service. Finally, consider attending the fun events that are normally included with service events. Utilize the principals of love and courage.

To mentor someone in service to better communicate about service you can consider leading with a good example and stay available after you have finished a service commitment. Also consider sharing with others how service has allowed you to make friends and its fundamental part of the recovery process. Utilize the principals of accountability, empathy, love, patience, responsibility, and hope.

"Information gets lost or doesn't get to the home-groups and its members"

In NA, information gets lost or doesn't get to the home-groups as a result of information being filtered through different layers of service. Some of the solutions to be considered are simple and as follows:

- Practicing the concepts when electing trusted servants (e.g. communication, service history, education, responsibility, single point of accountability)
- Create an atmosphere of fun so members will come to workshops, meet people and get involved.

Practical ideas may include posting minutes on websites, taping service meetings, bring food, and creating more links of communication between the service bodies and the addicts.

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN NA SERVICE

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“Awareness of news, reports, bulletins, and periodicals in the fellowship”

Awareness of news, reports, bulletins, and periodicals in the fellowship is low and the access to these pieces of information is very high. Lack of knowledge is the highest priority problem when considering this issue. The following solutions can be considered:

- Education of group members about what exists and how to get it.
- Participation of group members in the review and discussion of such periodicals.
- Providing these pieces of information on a regular basis if you have them.

Illiteracy is the next highest priority problem on the list. The following solutions can be considered:

- First and foremost, we must practice compassion and tolerance for those that come into the fellowship with poor reading and comprehension skills.
- These addicts should be assisted in whichever way possible in order for them to also

hear the message communicated in these sorts of periodicals.

Consider making speaker tapes available to the group as well as NA literature in the form of audio. (All periodicals will have to be communicated through other addicts.

“Lack of communication in NA”

In NA, Addicts experience that a lack of communication results in groups being cut-off from the solutions that are evolving within the fellowship. Some solutions to this problem are

- Practicing principals from the 8th concept *“Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communication”*
- Appointing an individual with clear responsibilities to provide updated information to groups and their members.

Addicts often experience frustration in getting involved in the NA fellowship as a result of the help-line contact numbers not working. Possible solutions to this problem are;

- Keep guidelines as to when to update help-line contact information
- Operate under those guidelines and visit them often

- Invite participation on the help-line committee by making it fun

The CTF, as a result of the service-wide inventory, identified Lack of effective communication as being a primary obstacle that the fellowship faces today. We strive to talk to each other, to remember our primary purpose, to utilize every avenue of resources, every tool possible; to better communicate with each other and carry the message to the addict.

Please remember that all of the information contained in this document is based on Experience, Strength, and Hope. There is no written rule that says this information is the appropriate way for your Area/Region/Zone to operate.

All information in this pamphlet has come from input received. Members of the SZF believe there are no boundaries to information. This is only a sampling of the information available to all addicts, anywhere. We must trust the process and know that all service done by the SZF is based on the fundamental principle of trying to better carry the message of Recovery to any and all addicts everywhere.

Thank you in advance for the opportunity to serve.

(Reprinted from Solutions pamphlet, vol.1 no. 2 published by the Southern Zonal Forum)

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.

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.

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on August 20 2006 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.

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