



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

The Guardian

Issue 6 Volume 1 June 2006

SOWING SEEDS IN SERVICE

We hear a lot about apathy in service, and it is a big problem in NA. Ten percent of the people doing one hundred percent of the work. Others unwilling to get involved in service for whatever reason. We know it all too well.

Well, this article isn't intended for those who don't do service work. I want to address those of us who do service. Before we start complaining too loud about others who won't get involved, let's take a good long look at ourselves.

When was the last time you talked to others about getting involved in service. When was the last time you volunteered to give someone

a ride to a service meeting, to help them learn a new service position, or even offer to be their alternate if they were willing to take on a service position?

How many sponsees do you have? How many of them are actively involved in service? What about the ones who aren't? My sponsor has a requirement: to be his sponsee you must be involved in service. "What? I can't put requirements like that on my sponsees!" Who says you can't? Your sponsees?

Service is more than just sitting on a chair and giving reports. It is also my duty as a service member to be proactive in searching for the person who will replace me when I leave the service position.

After all, who better to

know what characteristics will work best for the service position then the person who is currently filling it? Who better to train the next person to fill the position than the person who currently holds it?

Too often we see someone finish up a service position and leave their replacement clueless as to what to do - or even worse, leave the spot vacant without even attempting to help find a replacement.

As recovering addicts, we are here to carry the message and to sow seeds. What better way to start than to do our best to make sure that service positions are in capable hands when we leave them, to insure that the message of NA will carry on.

- Anonymous

MEET THE HOME GROUP

My home group is the Primary Purpose Group, which meets at the First United Methodist Church in Smithville Tenn on Sunday nights at 8:00.

We have been meeting there for two years and it has been a real blessing being a part of this.

If you are looking for a meeting based on the Traditions where recovery is openly shared, we would love to have you visit

us. Hope to see you soon!

Send submissions for "Meet The Home Group" to ucaguardian@hotmail.com or snail mail the Guardian 166 Tami Kay Rd Dowelltown, Tenn 37059.

In This Issue:

Sowing Seeds In Service
page 1

Meet The Home Group
page 1

12 Qualities of
Sponsorship
page 2

Are We There yet?
page 2

The Most Destructive of
Defects
page 3

I am Only Limited By The
Degree Of My
Unwillingness
page 4

Being a Part Of, Not Apart
From
page 4

12 QUALITIES OF SPONSORSHIP

1. I will not help you to stay and wallow in limbo.
2. I will help you to grow, to become more productive, by your definition.
3. I will help you become more autonomous, more loving of yourself, more excited, less sensitive, more free to become the authority for your own living.
4. I can not give you dreams or "fix you up" simply because I can not.
5. I can not give you growth, or grow for you. You must grow for yourself

by facing reality, grim as it may be at times.

6. I can not take away your loneliness or your pain.
7. I can not sense your world for you, evaluate your goals for you, or tell you what is best for your world, because you have your own world you must live in.
8. I can not convince you of the necessity to make the vital decision of choosing the frightening uncertainty of growing over the safe misery of remaining static.
9. I want to be with you and know you as a rich and growing friend, yet I can not get close to you when you choose not to grow.

10. When I begin to take care of you out of pity, or when I begin to lose faith in you, then I am inhibiting for both you and me.

11. You must know and understand my help is conditional. I will be with you and "hang in there" with you so long as I continue to get even the slightest hint that you are still trying to grow.

12. If you can accept this, then perhaps we can help each other to become what God meant us to be, mature adults, leaving childishness forever to the children of the world.

- Author Unknown

ARE WE THERE YET?

If you've ever gone on a long trip with young children, then I'm sure you're very familiar with the refrain "Are we there yet?". The children are so excited about the prospect of where it is they're going, that they are totally oblivious of all the wonder and beauty surrounding them.

There are times in my recovery when I can be just like that. I get so caught up in where I think I need to

be, or where I want to be, that I lose sight of where I'm at. I miss out on the blessings that come from being in the moment because I'm too busy chanting "Am I there yet?".

Maybe I can't share in a meeting as eloquently as someone else, or perhaps I didn't handle a situation as well as I know someone else would. And all because I'm not "there yet". So then I get resentful about the fact that I'm not where I feel I should be and don't pay any attention to where I am

right now.

That's when I need to take a deep breath, pray for acceptance and get back into the moment. The ironic part about those times when I want to hurry up and get there instead of being in the moment, is that the only way I can "get there" is by being in the moment, a moment at a time.

So, today, I plan on staying in today and not worry about "being there" until I "get there".

- Ken H.

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

Newsletter Subcommittee

Vice-chair: Ken H.

Email: ucaguardian@hotmail.com

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

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

New Beginnings
Huntsville, Tennessee

Primary Purpose Group
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE OF DEFECTS

"There is something in our self-destructive personalities that cries for failure. Most of us feel that we do not deserve to succeed. This is a common theme with addicts. Self-pity is one of the most destructive of defects; it will drain us of all positive energy." - Basic Text, p. 77.

By the very nature of our disease, we addicts are never happy. In active addiction it was always more, more, more: "Well, that drug didn't give me the feelings I wanted, so I'll try a different one, or maybe I'll try two this time". We were always on a quest for happiness, but looked in the wrong places. While we stayed screwed up on the inside, we searched for outside sources that would make us happy, all the while making ourselves more miserable.

In recovery, we are still able to fall into the same trap. If we are not applying the spiritual principles to our lives, and quit seeking the guidance of our Higher Power, we will once again start running on self will. That's when we once again start feeling those old fa-

miliar feelings: inadequacy, fear, and resentment. We then go to the next logical step for our diseased thinking - we try once again to find happiness and fulfillment through outside sources.

Instead of praying, sharing in meetings and talking to our sponsor, we begin looking for that new "quick fix". "Maybe a new job will make me happier", we think to ourselves, "or maybe buying more stuff, or maybe a new relationship." We just know that something will fix us!

But let's look at this from another angle: "Is my life really that bad? Did I use today? Do I have a job today? Was I able to clothe and feed my kids? Did I wake up in jail or the hospital this morning?"

It's when we get in these self pitying moods that we need to do a gratitude list. Our disease wants us to dwell on all the "bad" things, so instead, we need to take time to remind ourselves of everything we have to be grateful for. Working with newcomers is also a good way to remember that we don't have

it so bad after all.

It is also vital during this time that we rediscover the spiritual principles and apply them to our lives on a daily basis. The more we practice spiritual principles and have a conscious contact with our Higher Power, we will find that we become more accepting of situations we find ourselves in and will become more aware of the blessings we receive from those situations. Likewise, the less we practice the spiritual principles and have a conscious contact with our Higher Power, the more likely we are to go back to that old way of thinking.

Self pity is a trap set by our disease that we can't afford to wallow in for too long. Eventually we will get so depressed and feeling so inadequate, the best possible solution we will be able to come up with, once again, will be to use.

If you're wanting to wallow in a little self pity, stop and ask yourself: "What do I have to be grateful for today?"

- Ken H.

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.

I AM ONLY LIMITED BY THE DEGREE OF MY UNWILLINGNESS

In our program, we learn that recovery is a process and not an event. Or, if you prefer, recovery is a journey and not a destination. A key part of the process or journey is change. In order to become free from our disease of addiction, to stop listening to the lies that our disease tells us, we have to make changes in our lives beyond not picking up on our addiction of choice. We have to change our old ways of thinking, and our old behaviors. In doing so, we no longer need to have our disease making decisions for us; we can make our own choices.

We were all to varying degrees spiritually bankrupt. We did what our disease told us to do, disregarding the consequences. Being self-centered to the extreme, we always listened to our disease, never hearing what the spirit inside each of us implored us to do; to stop feeding our addiction and start feeding our souls.

So the first change we had to make was to not feed our addiction a day, an hour, or a minute at a time; without that, we could go no further. We discovered we could manage that, and it worked. We began to feel a little better each day.

Then we were told that this is a simple program, it's just not easy. Even though we may not understand this concept, it means that the Steps are simple to understand, but may not be so pleasant to experience because now, we are growing past our addiction of choice, and moving towards the root of our problem: the disease and it's accompanying insanity.

Over time we see a number of people who once shared the misery we feel, who are now growing into a fuller life. Did they do this as easily or pleasantly as a walk on the beach? Probably not. And if you ask any one of them where they needed to begin, they likely will say that they not had to only surrender to their disease, but they had to acquire the willingness to change. Once they had the willingness, they could

continue to develop, becoming more and more who they wanted to be, and more importantly, the person that God intended them to become.

They made mistakes along the way, and continue to make them, probably on a daily basis. But in their hearts and spirits they kept their willingness alive, allowing them more possibilities in life than they ever dreamed about when in their active addiction. They stopped limiting themselves by their unwillingness.

Now, today, there are many opportunities for me in my life, Each day can bring a new experience, or allow me to understand a perspective different from my own. However, it's my responsibility to find those opportunities.

Am I willing to discover the new possibilities in my life today?

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

BEING A PART OF, NOT APART FROM

There are times when i just feel like I don't belong. I feel alone, even when I'm around others. It doesn't matter how friendly and loving others are toward me, I still feel as if they don't understand me and I still feel as if no one really cares.

These feelings of self pity, low self-

esteem and isolation are my diseases way to keep me from reaching out to others. And it's not just to keep me from reaching out for the help I need.

It's also to keep me from being there for others. After all, I can't help someone else who's having a hard time if I'm too busy feeling sorry for myself.

Those are the times when I literally have to force myself to get up and do

something for someone else. Get out of myself and remember that it's not all about me today. As a matter of fact, very little of it is about me.

What it is about is being there for others so i can, in turn, get what I need.

Being a part of is helping each other so we can all make it. Being apart from is suicide.

- Anonymous

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on July 16, 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.