



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

# The Guardian

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## YOUR GREATEST FEAR

Your greatest fear is exactly where your addiction was taking you.

To say that we lived fear-filled lives in our active addiction is probably an understatement. Our disease needed to be fed in order to survive, so it lied to us. It promised us happiness if we kept it nourished, and it came through on its threats of pain and sickness if we didn't meet it's demands. That kind of misery, the fear of never having enough to satisfy our addiction, took us straight down a brimstone path into a hell of our own making.

Our disease didn't stop with our addiction alone. It created fear in many other areas of our lives as well. We

feared for our personal relationships, our living situations, our jobs/careers and finances, our freedom and our future. We feared for our very lives. So we killed all of those fears by practicing our addiction, with our disease in control.

Then one day, for whatever reason, each of us discovered that we couldn't live our lives that way any longer. Still full of fear, we attended our first support-group meeting. For the first time in a long while (if ever) we found a place where we belong and where we are accepted just as we are.

After a little time, the support from our friends in the Fellowship helped to ease our fears. They had what we desperately needed in our lives: hope. They told us what their lives were like, what they

did to change, and how their lives are today. Most importantly, they gave us the gift of hope freely, just as freely as it was given to them.

Now, today, I don't have to live my life in fear. I can get the help I need from my friends in the program, through whom my Higher Power speaks. Over time, my fear will be replaced by faith that my life will get better each day. The God of my understanding will diminish the fear in my life through working the 12-Steps with my friends in the Fellowship.

Am I ready to let go of the fear that was ruining my life?

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

## MEET THE HOME GROUP

Are you proud of your home group? You should be. After all, it is the group you decided to attend regularly and support, and where you help make the decisions that will guide both the group and NA as a whole.

We are starting a new regular column beginning next issue called "Meet the Home Group" and really need your contribution to make it happen. This will be a column where you get to tell others about your home group and what makes it so special to you. Give meeting times and

days, location, type of meeting, and what it was about this particular meeting that made you want to call it home.

Send submissions to [ucguardian@hotmail.com](mailto:ucguardian@hotmail.com) or snail mail the Guardian 166 Tami Kay Rd Dowelltown, Tenn 37059.

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## UNITY AND THE FIRST TRADITION

(What follows is a summary of the "Tradition One" presentation from our 1<sup>st</sup> quarter southern Zonal Forum, 01/2005. 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".)

### Tradition One

Idea is to give our perception and what we see as being the primary concept behind Tradition One.

"Our primary purpose should come first; personal recovery depends on NA Unity."

*What do we define as our common welfare?*

- Safe environment
- Carrying the message
- The greater good for the greater number
- Survival of our fellowship
- One addict helping another
- Our infrastructure
- Addict friendly
- "I can't do it alone"
- Staying clean & willing to go to any lengths
- Strength through diversity
- Anonymity
- Self sufficiency
- Going to any lengths
- Honesty, open-mindedness & willingness
- Inclusiveness

None of these things are possible without unity. We must be unified to achieve these.

At this time participants were broken up into four groups, and each given one of the following questions for their interpretation.

#### 1. Why is unity in Narcotics Anonymous so important?

Unity in NA is so important because it is the source of our strength. Our diversity allows us to share common experience and to show everyone there is hope in changing the way we live. We close the door on isolation, learn to communicate, seek a common goal and have fun in recovery.

#### 2. How can lack of unity affect my personal recovery?

Lack of unity affects our recovery in a great many ways. Sometimes it makes us feel uncomfortable sharing in meetings or unwilling to listen to others share. That in turn totally isolates us and separates us from the fellowship. Lack of unity causes us to avoid meetings, and service commitments. Some people relapse and some die. If unity is not maintained, the fellowship will not sur-

vive and our personal recovery is doomed.

#### 3. What responsibility do I share in the unity of Narcotics Anonymous?

Our responsibilities in the unity of NA are to live in the solution by staying clean and carrying the message. We take appropriate action by practicing humility, integrity and commitment, which allow us to see the good in others. We must take personal, as well as group inventory, to stay positive and active in participation. By remaining teachable and approachable through sponsorship, we are better able to practice these principles.

#### 4. What part do I play in the overall picture?

The part we play in the overall picture is being involved and helping others through sponsorship. We can practice being a productive member of society by leading by example, walking the walk and stepping out of our comfort zone. By agreeing to disagree and accepting God's conscience, we can have empathy for others.

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**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

## UNITY AND THE FIRST TRADITION

(Continued from page two)

### The spiritual principles:

These are the spiritual principles that embody why unity is so important:

- Hope - What we share to get better
- Open-mindedness - Allows us to be teachable
- Integrity - A standard to live by - a spiritual goal to strive for and to lead by example

Lack of unity compromises what spiritual principles?

- Open-mindedness - Lack of unity closes our minds to other recovering voices
- Integrity - Because it goes against what we believe
- Anonymity - Lack of unity causes us to focus on personalities over principles
- Commitment when we do it no matter what - which allows us to be of service

What part do I play in the overall picture?

Honesty, open-mindedness and willingness.

We would not be able to practice these remaining spiritual principles that are embodied in this tradition without help

(reprinted from Volume 4 Issue 1 of the Solutions pamphlet presented by the southern Zonal Forum of Narcotics)

What responsibility do I share in the unity of NA?

- Responsibility is practiced through doing what we say we will do - responsibility becomes

## WHAT CAN YOU HANDLE?

*"We begin to pray only for god's will for us. That way, we get only what we are capable of handling."* - Basic Text p. 47

Do you really know what you need? We tend to think at times that we know what is best for us, but do we really? My wants and needs can get confused in my mind very easily, and it's hard to distinguish between what I want (outside stuff to try and make me feel better about myself) and what I need (the basics that help me to function as a human being).

That's why it is strongly suggested that, when I pray, my prayers should be only for God's will for me and the power to carry that out. It isn't very spiritual if my prayers become no more than a wish list, telling God what I want and waiting for my order to be filled. Faith comes in asking for God's will for me and knowing that, no matter what that happens to be, he will also provide me with the means and the ability to follow through with it.

My Higher Power knows a lot better than I do what I can handle. After all, my egotistical mind wants to think that I can handle

anything, until I'm right in the middle of it. Then I'm praying (begging) for God to bail me out. But if I let God decide what is best for me, He won't give me anymore than I can handle, and won't give it to me until I'm ready for it.

So what can you handle? Is your Higher Power's will for you to be happy, to live one day at a time without having to use drugs, to not harm yourself or anyone else today, and be able to provide for yourself and your family? Is that enough for now? Is that all you can handle at the moment?

- 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](mailto:ucaguardian@hotmail.com).

Thank you for your help and support.

## THE FEAR OF LETTING GO

"It seems safer to embrace what we know than to let go of it for the unknown." - Basic Text p. 33

In active addiction, I did a lot of stupid things, as well as things that were dangerous to me and others. The most obvious, of course, using drugs. But it went much deeper than that. My tendency to stick with what was familiar to me, regardless of the harm it may cause, went to the very core of my existence. It not only controlled me physically, but spiritually and mentally also.

When I became a member of Narcotics Anonymous and began working the program, I learned that the addict tends to stick with what is perceived to be safe, things that are familiar, regardless of what pain and misery they may cause, because the other option - change - is unknown territory, and can seem very scary.

I could relate to that. After all, that is

why I continued using long after the drugs quit working. It was safe. It was what I was familiar with. And the only other option - not using - was unknown to me. As an addict, I needed to feel I was in control, and if I stepped out into unknown territory and walked on faith alone, all illusions of my being in control were gone

In recovery, I may find myself feeling much the same way. I may know that what I'm doing, or the situation I have allowed myself to be in, isn't working. It's not where God wants me to be. But I will sometimes resist the change necessary to get me where I need to be. Even if I know that the change I need to make is what's best for me. That's when I just have to let go of my fears and step out on faith. My recovery depends on it. Recovery is a process, a spiritual journey, and if I don't take the necessary steps to continue this journey, I will lose what I have.

The changes I find I need to make in recovery can be very traumatic at times. I

may have to leave friends or family that I love and care very deeply about. I may have to leave a job where I feel very comfortable and secure. I may have to leave the town I live in and go to someplace that is new and unfamiliar to me.

But no matter what changes I am asked to make, my disease will try use feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure against me. The same as it did when I realized that using was no longer working and I needed to try something different.

There is one thing I can be sure of when those old fears of change creep up, however: my Higher Power will not have me do anything that will harm me in any way. If I follow His will - even though I don't know where it may lead me - I will not only be okay, but I will grow from it, and my life and recovery will be richer because of it.

- Anonymous

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## RESENTMENTS AND FORGIVENESS

Resentments are the one guaranteed formula for smothering your spirituality.

When you have been wronged, a poor memory is your best response.

Never carry a resentment, because, while you're straining under its weight, the other guy feels no discomfort at all.

Forgive those who have wronged you - nothing annoys them more. There

is no revenge so sweet as forgiveness. The only people you should try to get even with are those who have helped you.

Never is God operating in your life so strong as when you forget a resentment and dare to forgive an injury.

Forgiveness heals; resentment wounds.

You can't get ahead when you're trying to get even.

Being offended is your disease's way of getting you out of the will of God.

When you don't forgive, you are ignoring it's impact on your destiny. Resentment is a prolonged form of suicide. How much worse are the consequences of resentment than the causes of it!

People need love most when they deserve it the least, so forgive someone every day.

- Anonymous

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The neat meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on June 18, 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.