



How Personal is Our Inventory?

“We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it”

(Step Ten)

Recovery, for this addict, is about more than not doing drugs. I only had to get clean once. What I needed was to learn how to live. I want to live my life in a more spiritual manner, in a way that is not in conflict with the rest of humanity. I’ve been told that working the Steps in a consistent and ongoing method helps me learn to apply spiritual principles in all areas of my life. Doing this has helped me to be a much more productive and spiritually minded person, but there are still times when I get resentful or depressed. It is in these times when our Tenth Step helps me to take a good look at myself to find the source of any problem I’m having.

“Continuing to take a personal inventory means that we form a habit of looking at ourselves, our actions, attitudes, and relationships on a regular basis. “

(Basic text, pg 41)

When I was out there using, the last thing I wanted to do was look at my behavior. I preferred to put the blame for my problems on others, it made it easier for me to keep doing what I was doing. In recovery I can’t afford to allow myself to have a negative attitude for very long. When I do, bumps in the road of life tend to turn into major obstacles that could land me in a ditch.

Just because we get clean and work a few Steps does not make us immune to bad days. I bet I’m not the only person who finds myself snapping at my family members for no good reason. What about those times when we stay busy taking everyone else’s inventory? We all have days when everything seems to go wrong, but there is something we can do.

Anytime during the day we can stop and take our inventory, we examine our actions, and our motives. We may ask ourselves if we have harmed anyone as a result of our actions, if we have, do

(Continued on page three)

In This Issue:

Page 1

How Personal is Our Inventory?

Page 2

Freedom From The Storm

Page 3

New Possibilities Arise

Page 4

Closed Meetings

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.

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

Newsletter Subcommittee
Vice-chair: Randy E.
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

Getting Started
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

Primary Purpose Group
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Who Are You Group
Pikeville, Tennessee
(Note: This meeting is held in a correctional facility and is only accessible to those with clearance and approval.)

NEW POSSIBILITIES ARISE

"When the drugs go and the addict works the program, wonderful things happen.

Lost dreams awaken and new possibilities arise." - Basic Text p.88

This is one of my favorite quotes from the Basic Text, because it says so much in just a couple of lines. Lost dreams awakening is a wonderful feeling. I know many people in the program who have had dreams they thought were gone forever finally realized, and I have had a few myself. However, for me, the new possibilities arising is where the growth and understanding of this spiritual way of life called recovery comes from.

Lost dreams being realized is great, but the things you need to do to realize those dreams are usually things you want to do anyway. But the new possibilities is the kicker. I have thoroughly examined that paragraph and I don't see anywhere that it says that I have to like the new possibilities. But I have found that, as with everything else in this

program, when those new possibilities arise, it usually means there's something I need to learn from this experience that will help me as I continue this journey.

I had a new possibility arise for me two years ago and it's is now done. My Higher Power had a job for me to do and I did it. Not willingly at first, because I didn't want to do it. And there were times when I asked "why me". But I did it. And now I'm glad I did. It helped me to grow tremendously in my recovery, and the spiritual awakenings are unbelievable. From this moment forth, I will see things differently. I will feel things differently. and I will understand things differently. But the most important gift it has given me, is I finished the task my Higher Power gave me with my clean time and recovery intact, so now I have an understanding for others who are going through a similar situation.

Yes, lost dreams awakening are really cool, but it's the new possibilities arising that I find my growth in.

- Ken H.

How Personal is Our Inventory?

(Continued from pg. 1)

we need to make amends? We can use this time to check our spiritual condition as well; asking ourselves if we have prayed for our Higher Power's will for us, and the power to carry that out? We use the Tenth Step as a maintenance step. We must stay spiritually grounded in order to stay comfortable in recovery. An honest look at how we are working our program helps us

to improve our attitudes by finding out what is really working and what is not.

Most of the time, when I find myself acting out on some of my less desirable traits it's because I'm not looking for the solution. I can find myself copping a attitude, and trying to justify it by looking at what others are doing. It's taken me a while, but I'm starting to see that I'm the source of most of my problems, and by looking inward I can find some solutions.

Randy E.

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

Thank you for your support.

Closed Meetings

There is something that continues to really confuse me. Why are so many people bothered by closed NA meetings?

A rough definition is simply a meeting open to only addicts or those who think they may have a drug problem. This also provides a very intimate sharing atmosphere, so why the uproar from so many when a group of addicts want to have a closed meeting?

With a closed meeting there is an understanding that the focus will be on NA recovery. Out-side issues will be left outside and the sharing will get real. There are no outsiders, no moms, dads, law enforcement, community members, or college students. This allows the members to speak openly, from their heart. So my question is why would anyone be bothered by this?

When there is a close affiliation with an outside issue, people take a closed meeting personal. Those affiliations could be another fellowship, the court system, treatment centers, or simply a lack of a foundation built on the spiritual principles of NA's Twelve Traditions.

The attitudes that follow are detrimental to our fellowship. It separates us. It leaves newcomers confused and many who love this fellowship and it's members in awe.

I want to share a scenario that may put this in perspective. A young addict comes to a meeting with a parent. She stays silent but the parent becomes an active member of the group as well as an area service member. (The parent was not an addict.) The young lady never shares unless she is there without her parent. She's not there anymore.

NA meetings are the last place addicts go to find a new way to live. It is where I go to hear and share the things that will keep me clean. I won't go to the doctor for cancer and settle for a flu shot, so why go to an NA meeting that is about anything other than NA recovery.

Last but not least, there is laughter, love, and recovery in closed meetings.

Anonymous

There will be a Conference Agenda Report (CAR) Workshop on January 26th 2008 in Nashville, Tennessee at the Crieewood United Methodist Church 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm with a speaker meeting at 7:00 pm and a dance to follow. Four Area's are involved. For more info contact Craig G (207-2530) or Anne B (424-8488).

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on February 17, 2008 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.