



THE GUARDIAN

February 2010

A Power Greater Than...Me?

I remember sitting in a room full of people and thinking to myself; what kind of shit are these losers on? They were talking about having help from their “Higher Power” and going on and on about finding serenity in surrender. I was force fed all that happy horseshit in rehab, I learned to just nod my head and smile, and hope for a way out of the loony bin. I was having a hard time relating to admitted quitters, people who just “gave up the fight”. I wasn't like these people, I had will power, I could do anything I wanted, I just didn't want to. I was not a happy camper without dope, my whole world was shaking.

Things started changing for me when I finally came to a real Narcotics Anonymous meeting, it was different than the “meetings” I went to in rehab. In NA I met people who seemed to be happy, they were kind of at peace, and I could tell they had been down the same hard road as me. At first I wondered if they were really clean or if they had just found a way to use without all the consequences, either way I wanted to learn more about what was going on here.

I stuck it out long enough to find a sponsor and I worked on step one. I got a good dictionary and started looking up the meaning of words, words I thought I

knew, but didn't. My sponsor also had me look up these two words “spiritual principles”. I found out these words relate to a way of life, a sacred code of conduct. If I could somehow make a principle like honesty become sacred, so sacred to me that I would try my best make honesty a way of life. I had to try. All this honesty was taking a toll on me, I started to see what a mess my life was, and I could blame no one but myself.

When I got to the second step I struggled with the Higher Power concept, I wasn't sure if I wanted to get into all that. I still wanted to believe that I had the power to change my own life. I also had trouble asking for help, or even appearing to need any. I had to find out that self sufficiency was a lie. My brothers and sisters in the program were a big help, I saw them reaching out, asking other members for support when things got tough, and they weren't put down for it. I started thinking...this might just work...if I could open up my mind...I might have a chance...maybe. Finally some hope, all I had to do was allow it to be possible, my mind had been shut...locked up for so long...this feeling of hope feels so good. I want more...

Joe Addict

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Perseverance in Recovery

Recovery is not always an easy task, and is not for the scared and timid. Recovery takes courage. Having true courage does not mean without fear, as I once thought. I have learned that courage is facing our fears, continuing on even when we are afraid.

I have heard it said many times, "staying clean is the easy part". It was not so easy for me when I first came to the fellowship. After being here for a few days, I began to understand what was meant by that saying.

Many times since I came to the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, I have had to face the uncertainty of change. I was familiar with using, facing life while not using was frightening. I knew how to manipulate people to get my way, learning to trust the God of my understanding to help me through the rough spots took time. When I saw that my old survival skills were useless to me in recovery, I was afraid.

There have been times when I could not see where I was making any progress. I still acted out on my defects of character. I would try to run

on self will, or force things to be the way that I wanted them to be. These are the things that got me here in the first place. I began to see, if I was not willing to change, I would lose the gifts recovery had given me. I had to find a deeper level of surrender. I had to confront my fears of the unknown. Even though I had no idea what life would be like, I had to find the courage to give up, stop fighting, and let go.

Just for Today, that is how it works for this addict. When I finally realized that I could not change the outcome of tomorrow or undo what happened yesterday, I was able to live in the moment. When I do the next right thing, and leave the results up to my Higher Power, I have no reason to be afraid. I have found it easier to use the Spiritual Principles of NA, if I take life one moment at a time. I did not find out how this worked overnight, it took time, and I do not have all the answers, but thru perseverance, commitment, and courage I have made it this far.

Randy E

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Area Service Committee will be held on March 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
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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:

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.

PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR TRADITIONS

TRADITION TWO

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.”

Working the NA program helps us to form a relationship with a Higher Power. As we come to rely on this Power, living according to spiritual principles becomes a reality for us. We develop a personal conscience and become trustworthy in our interactions with others.

No longer operating from fear, we attach less importance to getting our way. We become less controlling and more willing to cooperate. It becomes easier to share our feelings openly and honestly, while being receptive and respectful to those of others. We learn when to yield in a conflict, laying aside our differences for the common good.

Read the chapter in the Basic Text on the second tradition.

Read the chapter in It Works: How & Why on the second tradition.

Write the answers to the following:

1. What does this tradition mean to you?
2. What does this tradition mean to NA?
3. How does the Higher Power we found when we began working Step 3 relate to this tradition?
4. What is “Group Conscience”? How can it be measured?
5. Is “Group Conscience” always right?
6. What is a trusted servant? How do they serve? Who do they serve?
7. What does "govern" mean? How does it apply to this tradition?
8. The spiritual principles of this tradition are surrender, faith, humility, open-mindedness, integrity, and anonymity. Define in your own words the 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.

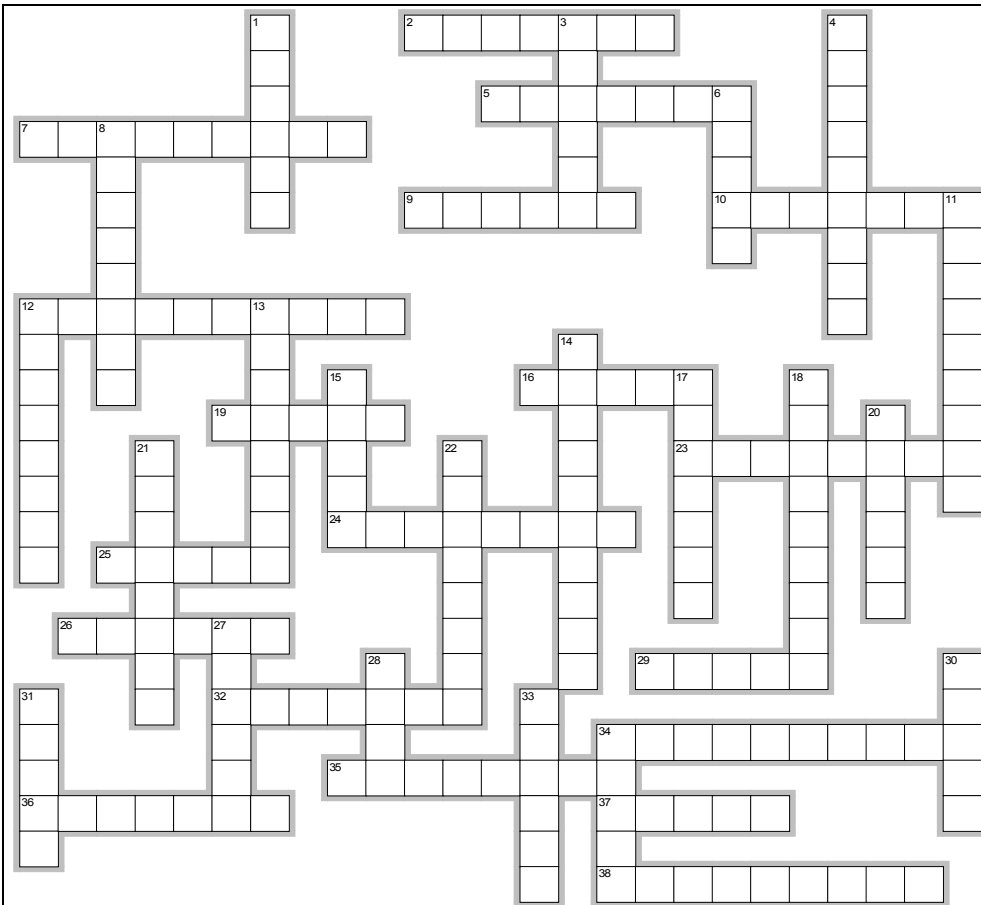
Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't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

Thank you for your support.

Tradition Two "It Works"



Learning to use our literature helps us stay clean, the solutions are always in there.

Down

1. "Faith is our reliance on a loving Higher Power put into _____." pg 141
3. "As our groups grow and _____, our resources change and so do our needs." pg 138
4. "The spiritual principle of _____ reminds us that we are all equal in Narcotics Anonymous." pg 142
6. "We _____ our commitment to the common welfare..." pg 141
8. "However, as we become more _____, we realize that the group is directed by a loving Higher Power." pg 137
11. "We _____ our trusted servants to remain open to new ideas..." pg 140
12. "These changes may not always feel like _____." pg 138
13. "Hearing group conscience may take time and _____." pg 138
14. "We begin with unity, founded on the strength of our _____ to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous." pg 134
15. "We have _____ that they will apply principles in their actions..." pg 139
17. "Each member draws upon his or her relationship with a Higher Power when _____ with the group." pg 136
18. "_____ to problems become apparent..." pg 136

20. "Only when we _____ for the direction of a Higher Power are we able to hear it." pg 138
21. "Members chosen to serve are asked to do so with dedication and _____." pg 139
22. "Whenever we come together, we seek the presence and _____ of this loving Higher Power." pg 134
27. "It's not reasonable to _____ that today's solution to one group's needs will always be sufficient for every group..." pg 137
28. "The resulting solution may be so obvious that no _____ is needed." pg 136
30. "Something happens when we practice the _____ and learn to apply principles in our individual lives." pg 135
31. "Group conscience is not _____ and inflexible." pg 136
33. "...as trusted servants, we carry a continuous flow of information that is _____ and open..." pg 140
34. "Leadership in NA is a service, not a _____ of membership." pg 139

All of the words in the puzzle can be found in "It Works How And Why" Tradition Two pg 134 - 143

Across

2. That conscience reflects the relationship of our _____ to a loving Higher Power." pg 135
5. "We talk to our _____, share with our NA friends, and listen for a Higher Power's guidance." pg 140
7. "_____ is the consistent application of spiritual principles, no matter what the circumstances." pg 142
9. "With the guidance of a loving Higher Power, we become _____ able to help others." pg 143
10. "Our trusted servants lead us best when they lead by personal _____." pg 140
12. "The _____ embodied in the traditions apply to all our actions." pg 139
16. "A Higher Power _____ through all of us, regardless of clean time or experience." pg 138
19. "Who has the _____ say in our discussions?" pg 135
23. "By _____ these principles, we learn to seek direction." pg 140
24. "_____ in practice is the honest assessment of our strengths and weaknesses." pg 141
25. "When we choose a member to _____ us in some capacity, we exercise mutual trust." pg 139
26. "Personal service _____ from the application of principles." pg 134
29. "...it's important to _____ our attention on the principles of the program and the solutions they point toward..." pg 137
32. "As groups, too, our _____ is to serve, to carry the message." pg 134
34. "The mechanism we use is group _____." pg 135
35. "Group conscience can be thought of in much the same way as _____ conscience." pg 136
36. "By practicing humility in our _____ to serve, we make room for open-mindedness." pg 141
37. "Application of this principle teaches us to set _____ our prejudices..." pg 142
38. "A _____ to group conscience means we allow our fellowship to be shaped by a loving Higher Power." pg 137