



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

The Guardian

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AM I A SPECTATOR OR A PARTICIPANT?

Too many times, it seems to me as if some recovering addicts think that recovery is a spectator sport. They seem to get all of their enjoyment from watching others fulfill service commitments. Personally, I don't know how they can do it, nor do I want to know.

It was made clear to me when I first came into these rooms that the rate of my recovery was directly related to my involvement in service, and my own experience has proven that to be true.

I can't count the times that my service obligations have gotten me out of myself long enough to make me forget about why I was

feeling so badly in the first place.

You see, my mind is a terrible place to be at times, and the more I hang out there, the sicker I become. My disease runs rampant and the crazy things it tells me actually start making sense to me.

That's when I need to get out of myself. I need to do something for someone else, unselfishly and lovingly. That's where service work comes in. Service allows me to work with other recovering addicts with one goal in mind: to get the message of Narcotics Anonymous to the still suffering addict.

I have to be a participant in my recovery, or I won't recover. And one good way for me to participate in my recovery is to participate in service.

Tradition One tells us that "personal recovery depends on NA unity." That's not only talking about the recovery of the newcomer. It's also talking about my recovery, and yours.

When we unite together to work towards carrying the message of NA to others, we are all strengthened because of it. It's no longer a "me" thing. But now becomes a "we" thing, and I feel a part of the fellowship, and don't take the time to listen to the crazy thoughts that still pop up in my head from time to time.

I need to be a participant in my recovery today and not a spectator, because without constant cultivation my recovery will wither and die.

- Ken H.

in This Issue:

Am I A Spectator Or A Participant?
page 1

The Answer
page 2

Subtleties Of Preserving NA Traditions
page 3

Letter To The Editor
page 3

New NA Group Joins Area
page 4

Allowing Miracles To Happen
page 4

THE ANSWER

For a long time many of us felt as though we didn't fit in with the people and the world around us. Sometimes it seemed like there was some universal truth out there that everyone else was in on but us. As much as we tried, we never seemed to discover "the answer" to life. However, when we hooked up with that first pill, fix or drink, "the answer" was right there in front of us. It seemed like we found that universal truth which was elusive to us for so long.

Eventually, each of us discovered that "the answer" was no longer working. Through whatever path we individually took, we all ended up in a hell of our own making, with no obvious way out of our sad existence.

So we tried to find yet another universal truth that would get us back to a life worth living; eventually we found the NA program.

It took some time, courage and effort on our part, but that glimmer of hope rose in our individual souls. We felt better about ourselves, which was spread to us from other members in the program, which we, in turn, spread to others. We worked the Steps, and more importantly developed a relationship with a loving Higher Power.

After some time in recovery, our thoughts may return to finding "the answer" to life. And what we discovered was something of a disappointment; there wasn't one! The Basic Text states, "Everything we know is subject to revision, especially what we

know about the truth" (p.91).

Now, today, each of us can realize that just as there is no universal truth that applies to everyone, we may also come to understand that we CAN find "the answer" in our own lives. When we are honest about what we NEED (and not necessarily want) in our lives, are open to those possibilities no matter how they present themselves, and are willing to put forth the effort to fulfill those needs, we can have faith in God as each of us understands Him to take care of things, IF WE LET HIM.

- Will I seek out "the answer" that I need in my life today?

- Joe A.
- grateful recovering addict in central Pennsylvania

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

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.)

SUBTLETIES OF PRESERVING NA TRADITIONS

I attended a subcommittee meeting recently during which an NA member from another area offered to distribute NA literature, including Upper Cumberland meeting schedules, while they were meeting with public officials on behalf of the treatment industry.

Although this offer was not accepted, I was surprised that no mention was made that this would be a violation of NA's

Traditions. As a relative newcomer who had never attended this subcommittee meeting before, I did not feel secure enough in my understanding of the Traditions to speak up. I apologize for this.

On the other hand, I am troubled by the silence of my elders regarding this matter. I am grateful that the offer was not taken up. However, I believe the matter should have been handled more explicitly by someone saying that this would be in violation of our 6th Tradition.

It seems to this addict that upholding our traditions requires more than making the appropriate decision when such issues come up. To this addict, a "clear NA message" in this context, means explicit reference to the specific tradition, followed by discussion on the matter if necessary. Again, to this addict, such an approach would represent the heart of the Traditions being followed in present time.

- Anonymous

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In response to the Oct. 2006 article entitled **FUN IN RECOVERY**, I would like to weigh in with a big shout out to Anonymous! I definitely want to have fun in recovery and I want to have that fun with other ad-

dicts in recovery. I don't think that having fun together would in anyway detract from the seriousness of my recovery, neither need it require any large amount of funds. Potlucks don't cost anything. Playing a guitar and singing is free. Card games are free as well, etc.

It was wonderful when we all did that together after our recent Area Inventory meeting. I felt closer to my brothers and sisters in recovery and I look forward to the next opportunity to spend time together in a similar fashion.

- Anonymous

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.

NEW NA GROUP JOINS AREA

The Upper Cumberland Area welcomes a new Narcotics Anonymous group into the Area. The Who Are You Group meets in Pikeville, Tennessee on Fridays at 1:30

pm at the Southeastern Tennessee State Correctional Facility at 1046 Horsehead Road.

This is not an H&I meeting. It is an actual NA group whose members are incarcerated and have meetings within the

correctional facility. This is the first group of this type to be a part of the Upper Cumberland Area, and the committee here at the Guardian want the members of the Who Are You Group to know that you have our support and prayers and we hope you only the best in your endeavors.

ALLOWING MIRACLES TO HAPPEN

“It is our actions that are important. We leave the results to our Higher Power.” - Basic text p. 88

It is very hard for me at times to live in the here and now where my actions are concerned. My mind wants to zoom ahead and try to figure out the what the results are going to be before I even perform the action. And that is when I usually get myself in trouble.

I either decide what the results are going to be and, when they don't turn out that way become disappointed and resentful - or else I get so

scared of what I believe the results will be that I don't do it at all.

Recovery is about living in the present, and doing the next right thing without trying to figure out how it will turn out.

Now, that is not to say that I don't need to worry about the consequences of my actions. Of course I do. But what I don't have to worry about is how others will react to my actions.

For instance, if I feel the overpowering need to take someone aside after a meeting and get some coffee and talk, there's a reason I'm having those feelings and I need to pay attention to them.

What I don't need to do is to decide what's going to happen. Whether it's that the other person is going to be offended by my offer and punch me, or that they will be totally enthralled by my oozing spirituality and will get fixed right on the spot.

What happens where the other person is concerned is really none of my business at this point in time. Doing the right thing for the right reason is.

The only thing that matters for me today is that miracles can and do happen in this program, but to allow them to happen I need to do the next right thing today.

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on December 17 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.