

# New Awakenings

## Alternatives? ¿Alternativas?

When at the end of the road we can no longer go on with or without the current service structure.....

The history of N.A. points to a very clear path of change for what direction this fellowship takes. This is a path that is always changing.. Since we, as recovering addicts, are about change this should be considered as par for the course. Why, at the current time, there seems to be a period where one side of the issues has to be right and everything else is considered to be dis-unifying, only God knows. If what we seek are better ways in which to reach the still-suffering addict (this includes me) then varied approaches must be allowed for and different methods tried.

We are about to see something new in the structure. Its final form has not been decided, but the latest name picked was THE PRIMARY SERVICE COMMITTEE or BOARD. I have an understanding that works for many, that one addict helping another was our foundation, that we had learned that the best place to provide services was closest to the addict in need. The addict is told to keep it simple. What would be wrong with this being true in our services? Every year it seems to get more difficult to actually do anything in service.

There was a time in my experience when the groups did the work. That if they didn't supply the willingness and person power then the project waited until it was felt by more people to be worth their efforts. Then as good intentioned individuals we became trusted servants and began deciding and doing what WE KNEW the groups needed and wanted. Somehow we came to believe that our power was greater and the groups were not capable or educated in the ways of N.A. well enough to do the task RIGHT. That original home group supplied much of the personnel and most of the cash for an area. It at one time held 17 meetings a week. Most of the committee for a state convention were members of that home group. This is how I learned to do service - close to the addict.

Then came all the lovely learning experiences. The training of how it was to be done. Then the inevitable began to happen: we all began to know

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Cuando al final del camino nosotros ya no podemos seguir con o sin la estructura de servicio actual.....

La historia de N.A. nos dirige a un camino bien claro de cambio para la dirección que toma esta fraternidad. Este es un camino que siempre está cambiando. Ya que nosotros, como adictos en recuperación, tenemos siempre que estar cambiando, esto tiene que ser considerado como algo bien natural. Por que, hoy en día, parecemos estar en un periodo cuando un bando de opinión tiene que estar correcto y todas las otras opiniones son consideradas a ser deunificantes, solo Dios sabe. Si lo que en realidad buscamos son mejores maneras para llegar al adicto que aun sufre (esto me incluye a mi) entonces tenemos que tolerar diferentes ideas y tenemos que probar métodos diferentes.

Nosotros estamos a punto de ver algo nuevo en la estructura. Su forma final no ha sido decidida, pero el último nombre escogido es EL PRIMER COMITÉ DE SERVICIO. Yo tengo un entendimiento que trabaja para muchos, que un adicto ayudando a otro fue nuestra fundación. Que nosotros habíamos aprendido que el mejor lugar para proveer los servicios era el más cercano al adicto en necesidad. Al adicto se le dice que lo mantenga simple. ¿Que tendría de mal con esto siendo verdad en nuestros servicios? Cada año parece que se nos hace más y más difícil el actualmente hacer cualquier cosa en nuestros servicios.

Hubo un tiempo en mi experiencia cuando los grupos hacían el trabajo. Que si ellos no suplían la buena voluntad y el poder personal entonces el proyecto esperaba hasta que fuera sentido por más personas que valían la pena esfuerzos. Entonces como individuales con buenas intenciones nos convertimos en servidores de confianza y empesabamos a decidir y a hacer lo que NOSOTROS SABIAMOS que los grupos necesitaban y querían. De alguna manera llegamos a la creencia que nuestro poder era más grande y que los grupos no eran capaces o educados suficientemente en los principios de N.A. para hacer el trabajo bien hecho.. Ese grupo de hogar original suplió mucho del personal y la mayoría del efectivo para una area. Hubo un tiempo cuando tuvo 17

*pasa a la p. 8*

# Pivotal Response

First I would like to express my gratitude for the article, "Pivotal Moment in History". It touched my heart. I wish the author had been available in 1984, '85, '86, '87, and the '88 Conference that I attended. Maybe with your help we could have made a difference. We still can. I don't believe creating a new service structure is running away. I believe it is running to.

When God decided it was time for me to get clean there was only A.A. where I am from. Then N.A. started so I decided to give N.A. a chance. The A.A. members told me that I would drink if I did not attend A.A. and that I was running away and that there was no reason to leave Alcoholics Anonymous, that I should fight for what I believe in. So I did. I stopped going to Alcoholics Anonymous and only attended N.A. What a concept. I surrendered to fight, so I could fight for my own life. I stopped putting energy into changing something for me to fit into. I stopped trying to change A.A. I started to participate in helping start N.A. in my area.

I was taught by my N.A. sponsor to stand for something or fall for anything. He told me to work the steps or die, motherfucker! And learn to apply the Traditions and get involved in service. So I did. I chaired seven meetings a week. I helped start a new Area at that time. I had a lot of hope for this Area, for it to be able to stand on principles, and it did for seven or eight years. Then the World influence reached them. My home Group continued to participate in this Area for two more years, constantly battling to see that the principles were to be carried out. It strained our membership from being able to carry the message. Then one day a miracle happened. Seven Groups walked out of that Area at the same time. What a relief to know we do not have to go back. We can start anew. What a concept. A new structure. The Traditions demand so. "Because we hear about 'suggested steps' and 'no musts' so often some of us make a mistake and assume that this applies to the groups the way it applies to the individual. The Traditions of N.A. are not negotiable. They are the guidelines that keep our fellowship alive and free." [Basic Text, First Ed. p. 53].

We got tired of fighting so we surrendered to the Traditions. If we were to be an N.A. Group, there was no clear answer except to create a service structure to serve us. It does not matter what the name is, A.S.I.S.N.A., Healthy Change, or parallel structure. There has been a new awakening. The old structure does not exist in our minds. Parallel lines run side by side but never touch. We need to go back to the basics - steps and traditions are the path. God's will will lead us if we let Him. Search your hearts. Ask God and He will answer you. We will support you but won't join you in the fight for change within the known structure.

It is like when we were using. We didn't change our fear of the unknown. "When the student is ready,

## Daily Definition ☺

from Webster's New World Dictionary,  
College Edition

**radical** (rad'i-k'l), **adj.** 1. of or from the root or roots; going to the center, foundation, or source of something; fundamental; basic: as, a *radical* principle.

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## identity crisis

For many years I pondered the philosophical question; "Who am I?" I searched for meaning in life through fantasy after fantasy. I sought purpose for my existence in cause after cause. Finally, desperate for an identity to reconcile my diverse personality, I began to expand my consciousness through drugs, from hippie to hype. I searched the world over for stories about drugs and the culture surrounding them. I scoured the realm of pills from doctors, the best and the worst of liquid potions. I went from upholstered sewers full of disco-glitter to cribs cluttered with filth on the nod. Nowhere could I find me. Not in the dealer, not in the jetsetter, not in the biker, nor in the burn-out. I came to this Fellowship totally lost. Not knowing who or what I was. I knew that I'd tried to be many things and had failed. I knew who and what I wasn't. My life only got worse when I used drugs - I wanted to stop.

My would-be helpers tried to convince me that I was an "alcoholic", but I knew alcohol was only an occasional substitute. They tried to appease me by suggesting that I was a cross-addict, but I didn't have any splinters in my shoulders from carrying crosses - I wasn't addicted to crosses. Well, maybe then I might be a dual addict (they were truly trying to help me surrender), but my possessions didn't include matched swords or pistols - I wasn't addicted to dueling at all. In exasperation they put it to me that I must be a

poly-addict. However, to the best of my memory, I'd never smoked or shot or swallowed a bit of plastic. I survived the psychology and the would-be helpers caught up in their own chemical denial. I came to an N.A. meeting and finally heard something that made sense. I was a person whose whole life and thinking had become centered in drugs in one form or another. Very simply...an addict! Now I knew what all that mumbo-jumbo about keeping it simple meant.

Eventually I was able to surrender to the idea of being powerless over my addiction, my life had become unmanageable. Today I realize that chemical identities are just a very insidious form of denial. My recovery is based on powerlessness over addiction, not powerlessness over drugs. I'm sick, getting well the N.A. way, recovering from addiction. I don't think that I can recover from drugs. My body, and maybe my mind can get over their effects. Drugs are not incurable; addiction is. I can recover from my disease if I accept my powerlessness over it and work the steps on that basis. My denial is strong, the strongest part of my addictive thinking. I'm sure that my denial could lead me to say that I'm a drug addict, an addict-alcoholic, a cross addict, a chemically dependent pill head, or any one of a number of complex chemical/personality labels.

The Fellowship of N.A. taught me to identify myself according to my condition. I am an addict. None of the chemical symptoms of my disease; none of the drugs I used are any more important than the others. As an addict, I am addicted to all mood

changing chemicals whether I used them moderately, excessively, and even if I never used them at all. I'm an addict, recovering from addiction through the N.A. Program. The chemicals I used are not even the most important symptoms of the disease that I'm powerless over...today.

Total surrender can lead to unlimited recovery. To participate in my disease through denial of it would be to reserve a place for relapse: to limit my recovery. I need to participate in my recovery at meetings where addicts help each other recover from addiction. I'm grateful for the gift of knowing who and what I am. I'm no longer caught up in the aura of drugs. I've surrendered to the N.A. Program and don't need to participate in any denial based on a chemical hierarchy. I choose unconfused recovery expressed through my simple identity.

I am, very simply, an addict.

### "IDENTITY CRISIS"

WAS THE FIRST ARTICLE  
IN THE FIRST  
N.A.WAY MAGAZINE

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for info. on reprints for your  
N.A. GROUP ... write-

HEALTHY CHANGE  
PO BOX 42  
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44408

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shared and the work was underway.

The Celebration Of History II was held in Montgomery, Al. in August. The focus was on early history. The final draft of the Handbook was completed. The archival material was added to and complete sets were sent to Pa., Mi., and Al. Discussion began on the holding of the first working weekend for the history project. Workshops were held. Interviews were done with several individuals.

In October the first working was held in Ripley, West Virginia. Work began on a newsletter for the history effort. The regional information that had been collected was put in order. The archival items were put into chronological order. Printing and distribution was discussed. Format of the book was discussed and a new chronology was begun.

In January 1992 the first newsletter was finished and mailed. This contained the flier for the next working weekend to be held at Ripley.

The end of February Ripley II was held. This weekend the working group made formats for the regional history information, a sheet to cover the conferences and one for world conventions. The 35 regional histories were put into the new formats. The first five conferences were put into the info sheets. Our first donations to the committee were also received. Further discussion on the book and format etc. took place. This was by far the major work effort to have taken place so far. Dedication and long hours accomplished a large amount of work. There were also introduction, preface and dedication drafts written. Discussion began for the next meeting to be held at Add-a-thon IV in Allentown.

Add-a-thon IV was held over the Fourth of July weekend once again. A lot of work was done on the conferences. A major archive was brought and put into useable order. A pre-history review was brought by a member. Discussion on the committees direction and form took place. Working assignments were taken by about a dozen members. Talk about the next meeting began.

Two members, at their own expense, went to California in August. Archival information was collected. Several interviews with members were done. The WSO was visited and copies of some of the material in their files was received. Additional information from the history file at the WSO was requested.

The WSCLC at its September meeting discussed the history project. At that time a letter was drafted to encourage co-operation on the ongoing work of writing a history. Sadly, it implied that the work being done over the last few years was slanted or biased in some manner and that by joining with the WSCLC in their efforts, somehow the work would then be accurate and unbiased. All well and good for a first contact (sort of) yet out of character for what they would decide only a month later.

The WSCLC, in it's meeting at the fall quarterly, decided that the History project was not a piece of recovery literature and that the idea should be passed to the BOT for their consideration. As this article is being finished in early May the only input this writer has had is that the history project remains in the hands of the WSO who will continue to collect information until such time as the fellowship desires the work to be done.

The work continues and the next planned meeting is for Allentown, Pa. over the 4th of July weekend.

Watch for a flier in this newsletter. The committee has dedicated itself to the preservation of archives and is in the process of putting all available documents on computer. This will soon allow access nationwide to all materials through a bulletin board system yet to be set up. Regional histories are being worked on and several states are currently involved in writing their state histories.

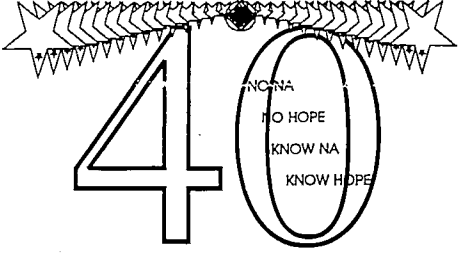
Some persistent thoughts are that this material would allow us to see where we have been so that we can see our future. This seems to fit with the idea of an inventory year and some discussion has taken place with a member of the BOT.

I can not stress enough the importance of getting on with the project. Many of the early members are now dead or difficult to find. Many more are in poor health and need to be interviewed before the glimpses are gone forever. Without a historical perspective of what we do we can assume that what has happened before will happen again.

EVERYONE IN NA HAS THE RIGHT  
TO KNOW OUR HISTORY

..... TO BURY OUR HEADS IN THE SAND,  
LEAVES OUR ASS IN THE AIR

**Celebration**  
And Working Weekend



**YEARS of NA HISTORY**  
Learn Your History - Know Your Roots

Allentown, Pa  
Cedar Church

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Midwest 616-644-5165

Northeast 215-398-6534  
Group Conscience Area Helpline 215-439-6440

U.K. 0480-451-082  
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Northwest 907-456-1222

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## ...We MAY...

Most members, especially with less than 5 years, are easily manipulated by fear through these cries of "disunity". Many are quick to see disunity in a lack of conformity and look no further for the sources of our unity. Our Ninth Tradition states we MAY create service boards or committees. That is a choice every autonomous NA Group makes with their Fourth Tradition freedom: whether or not to create service boards or committees. If a Group does decide to do that then it becomes their responsibility to continue to supply that service board or committee with willing and able members to serve. That was the original idea behind the 9th tradition in our (or any) fellowship.

What has evolved is a fellowship or society where Traditional freedoms are being eroded administratively. Along with freedom, enthusiasm and creativity are sacrificed (the very spirit of the spiritual program). The wording of the first concept "...the NA groups have joined together to create a structure..." contradicts the Ninth Tradition.

What we are doing here is exercising our Fourth and Ninth Tradition freedoms as groups to create service boards or committees. We can make them directly responsible. There's a radical idea! Nowhere is it stated that we cannot create a service structure PARALLEL where service work can be done. Only lack of faith can stand in our way. What people fear is this "disunity". Our real unity is in our diversity. Our common welfare is recovery from the disease of addiction through the 12 Steps of NA - no one seems to disagree with this.

*"so if you...  
don't do any work  
at the Group level  
you've got  
yourself caught in  
a contradiction."*

Now the way we proceed is not to sit back and say God's gonna do it, God's gonna take care of us, whatever happens is "God's will". The intricate thing about that is the only place God appears in our Traditions is Tradition Two. The basic unit of NA is the Group, so if you bypass this idea and don't do any work at the Group level you've got yourself caught in a contradiction. So as a Group of NA members, or better yet as a number of NA Groups, we can seek the will of a loving God through group conscience and certainly have the faith to go ahead and do what we decide to do. Its the people who stand back and say God's gonna do it that lack faith (the faith to act exists only in an act of faith). These folks are afraid to go forward, they're afraid that anything different is going to shatter the Fellowship (Stepford addicts) and this is the furthest thing from the truth.

That's where we're at with traditions: we can create any service board or committee we want. Whether we choose to participate in it or not is another choice of the NA Group. Proof of the validity of this is an Area functioning successfully in Allentown, Pa., printing their own literature, doing their own PI with their own helpline, they don't belong to a region, they don't participate in the existing structure. They are a working model for us. Because their funds aren't being siphoned off in various ways they have the money they need to perform the services the Groups approve. We can do the same thing.

## WSC '93

I was anticipating writing about the World Service Conference immediately after. I was thinking maybe I would list the motions 1-43 with a "passed", "failed", "amended" or "tabled to" description. I was predicting that all administrative motions would pass and all regional motions would fail, and offering to my friends that I would not be wrong on more than 3 counts (no one argued otherwise, my insight is not uncommon). I would then pose the rhetorical question, "Is this unity or effective administration?" As it turned out no such report seems possible because more motions were added to the 43, and almost everything passed was newly addendum-ed or amended one or more times.

While the first draft minutes from the Conference have not yet arrived, here are some highlights.

Two World Servants were immediately removed in a credit card scandal. The Literature Trust Document was approved and the Use document altered. History was returned to the Office and a World inventory was given a two year life-span. "It Works" will soon be available for sale by your local franchise while the Guide to Service was put off beyond the inventory. The Australian motion to alter the Steps and Traditions was sent to the Trustees for study.

The remark of the Office that "the war is over" leaves me scratching my head. Who was authorized to start a war? Maybe this is one of those overtures for reconciliation we've been hearing lately. Unfortunately we're also hearing that purists in England are being increasingly harassed and threatened. I keep thinking of the story of Becket. Our own royalty needs to make amends for what it has fostered.

The clearest message I get from WSC '93 is that the conscience you sent is subject to full renegotiation on the floor and in the back rooms.

## AN APPROACH TO THE FOURTH STEP INVENTORY

*[This Fourth Step Guide was written by the Fellowship and widely used for years. The second half will be printed in the next issue. Input to the guide may be sent to Recovery First Group, POB 4504 Allentown PA 18105.]*

The purpose of a searching and fearless moral inventory is to sort through the confusion and the contradiction of our lives so that we can find out who we really are. We are starting a new way of life and need to be rid of the burdens and traps which have controlled us and prevented growth.

As we approach this step, most of us are afraid that there's a monster inside of us that, if released, will destroy us. This fear can cause us to put off our inventory or may even prevent us from taking this crucial step at all. We need to remember that fear is lack of faith; and now that we have found a loving, personal god to turn to we no longer need to be afraid.

We have been experts at self-deception and rationalization; by writing our inventory we can overcome these obstacles. A thorough written inventory will unlock parts of our subconscious which remain hidden when we simply think about or talk about who we are. Once it's all down on paper it's much easier to see, and much harder to deny our true nature. Self-honesty is one of the keys to our new way of life.

The only way to get clean is to stop using and the only way to take an inventory is to sit down and do it. Many specific inventory methods have been used successfully by our members. This inventory method has worked for some of us and can work for you if you'll follow through. Remember, you cannot write a bad inventory - only a better one, and you can write too little - but never too much.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. You will need a pad of lined paper or a theme book, a pen, and a good dictionary.
2. Sit at a table or desk to write, make sure you have plenty of room and that you will not be unnecessarily interrupted.
3. In going through this guide look up the definition of any words that you do not know the meaning of.
4. When you are actually writing, leave a wide margin so that you can add or comment later.
5. Try to write down what comes to you first and don't edit your inventory.
6. Don't worry about spelling or neatness; your inventory should be readable but it doesn't have to be a work of art.
7. Do not erase or obliterate anything you write.  
Strike out "wrong" words or errors with a single line that can be read through.
8. If something "pops" into your head when you are working on something else write it down or make a note on a separate sheet so that you can return to it later. Then get back to what you were doing before.
9. You are writing your inventory for you. At this point the fifth step does not exist. Write down everything, even the things that you are unwilling to share. You can always take out something later, but by writing it down at least you will have a chance to see it more clearly.
10. Write until you have nothing left to write. Your inventory will probably take more than one sitting to write. Try to stop at the end of a section and start again as soon as possible.

I. Begin your inventory by taking the first three steps in writing: what do they mean to you and how do you work them.

- a. Admit your powerlessness in writing and discuss how your life is unmanageable.
- b. Write about the "Power greater than yourself" that you have come to believe in, and what you hope this power can do for you.
- c. Write about your decision to turn your will and your life over to the care of God, and make this commitment in writing.

II. RESENTMENT is the way most of us have reacted to the past. It is the reliving of past experiences again and again in our lives. The more often you have relived an event or gotten into "should have" and "if only" then the more significant that event probably is.

- a. Write about each incident in your life which you have had to relive in your mind at some later date. This includes both "good" and "bad" experiences.
- b. Write about past actions that you would change if you had the opportunity.
- c. Write about any events in your life which you feel caused a change in you.
- d. Write a dictionary definition and at least three sentences on each of the following feelings as they applied to people, places, things and ideas.

self-pity  
pride  
contempt  
dishonesty  
envy

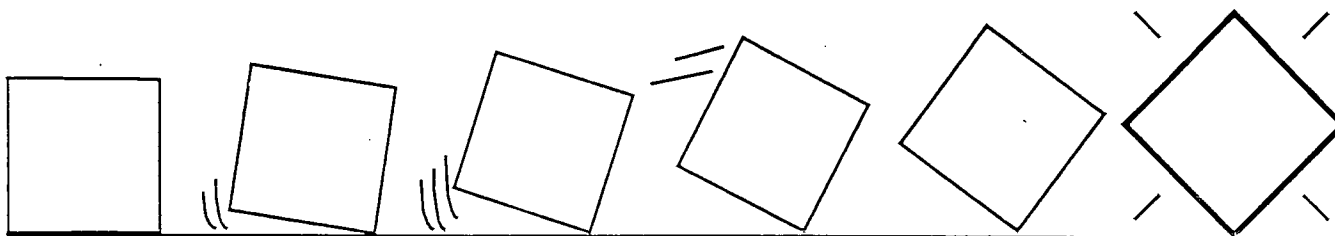
intolerance  
lust  
hatred  
apathy

selfishness  
greed  
jealousy  
inertia

III. ANGER is the way most of us have reacted to the present. It is our reaction to and denial of reality.

Write about the things that make you angry, irritate you, or make you feel uncomfortable. What are your "buttons" and how do they get "pushed"? Are there any key words, phrases, actions, or situations which are sure to "set you off"? The following is a list of some of the things that we often react to with anger. Some of these will apply to you and some will not. Use this list as a starting point and to get you thinking in terms of anger.

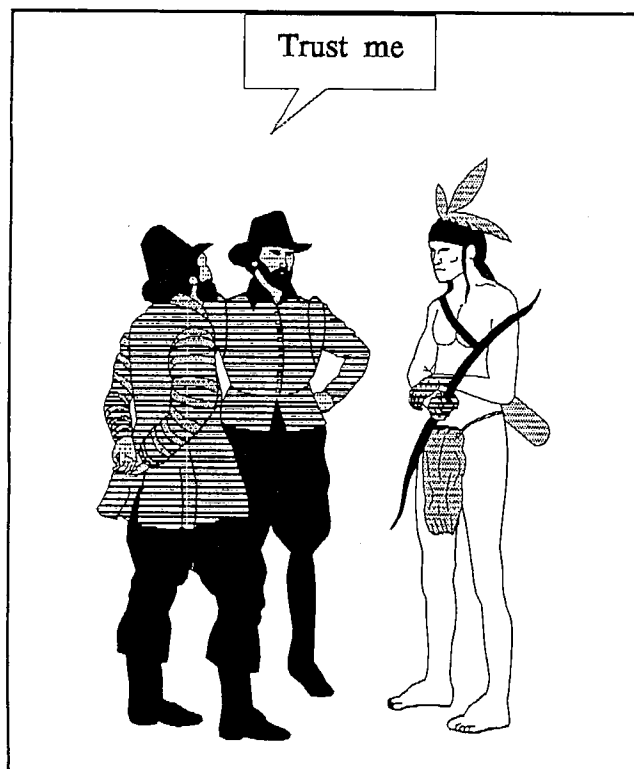
being criticized	being contradicted
being kidded	being ignored
being touched	practical jokes
being praised	being laughed at
being gossiped about or talked about	
being called names (stupid, fat, skinny, asshole, bitch, whore, bastard, etc.)	
being stood too close to	



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better than everyone else and resentments began to build. What wisdom that is. It has taken time to accept my part in this. It is not pretty to see the thing we nurtured and helped grow, hurting and struggling over the things that in our good intention we dumped on it.

Slowly some sort of overview is coming to the front from several different directions. One seems to want to copy a structure and procedure used in another fellowship. Hence the CON-conpts and the proposed TRUSTme committees. (After all, the contact with A.A. in the not too distant past said their



mistake was giving the groups too much autonomy.) Yet there is an expanding group of members that feel that there are other choices here. They believe that the groups should maintain their autonomy, that a variety of approaches to recovery attract the greatest number of individuals.

Discussion on this has taken place for many years and last summer a group of members decided that we would begin to spread the word, that it is okay for you to have different ideas on what works in your groups. We propose that this be a right that no one should have the right to take from your group. That we will support each other even under the concerted effort to make unity uniform. There has been an increasing interest and participation in this discussion and now comes the time to broaden that discussion.

It has been discussed that services return or evolve to a point that if the group does not or will not do the work that is needed then it is not time for that project to be done. That we have a structure beyond the

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reuniones a la semana. La mayoría del comité para una convención estatal fueron miembros de ese grupo de hogar. Así fue como yo aprendí a ser de servicio. Bien cerca al adicto.

Entonces vinieron todas las bellas experiencias de aprender. El entrenamiento de como tenía que ser hecho. Entonces lo inevitable empesó a pasar: todos nosotros empesamos a tener más sabiduría que todos los demás y los resentamientos empesaron a crecer. ¿Que sabiduría era esta? Ha tomado tiempo para yo poder aceptar mi parte en esto. No es lindo el ver la cosa que nosotros cuidabamos y ayudabamos a crecer sufriendo y pasando apuros a causa de las cosas que con todas nuestras buenas intenciones nosotros le hicimos arriba.

Lentamente alguna clase de vista completa está saliendo adelante desde varias direcciones. Una de ellas parece querer copiar una estructura y procedimientos usados en otra confraternidad. De ahí los. Conceptos y los propuestos de Confía en mi. (Después de todo el contacto con A.A. en el pasado no muy lejano dijo que su error fue el darle a los grupos demasiada autonomía). Pero todavía hay un creciente grupo de miembros que sienten que todavía tenemos otras posibilidades. Ellos creen que los grupos deben mantener su autonomía, que una variedad de enfoques hacia la recuperación atraera el máximo de individuales.

La discusión sobre este tema viene de muchos años y el verano pasado un grupo de miembros decidió de empesaríamos a diseminar la palabra, que está bien que tengas diferentes ideas sobre lo que trabaja en tú grupo. Nosotros proponemos que este sea un derecho que nadie tenga el derecho de quitarle a tú grupo. Que nos apoyaremos uno a otro aun bajo el esfuerzo concentrado de hacer la unidad uniforme. Ha habido creciente interés y participación en éstas discusiones y ahora viene la hora de aumentar esta discusión.

Ha sido discutido que los servicios vuelven o evolucionan a un punto que si el grupo no hace el trabajo que es necesario entonces no es tiempo para que ese proyecto fructifique. Que tengamos una estructura fuera de nivel de el grupo que sea informacional solamente. Que esta estructura trate de no hacer decisiones por el grupo. Si el grupo ha identificado un proyecto que está dispuesto a apoyar entonces la estructura solamente les traera al grupo el entendimiento del enfoque de N.A. hacia ese proyecto. No tratar de mandar cuando, por que y como el proyecto será hecho. Si el proyecto es demasiado grande para un grupo la estructura tratara solamente de ayudar a recoger, aprender y trabajar juntos.

Sugeremos esta alternativa porque sentimos que esto mantendrá la libertad que todos nosotros necesitamos sentir. Que pensamos como individuales nos preocupara a todos. Parece haber un lugar para todas las ideas que tenemos para llevar el mensaje.

próxima página



group level that is informational only. That this structure attempt to make no decisions for the group. If a group has identified an effort that they are willing to support then the structure will only bring to them the understanding of N.A.'s approach to that effort. Not to try and mandate when, why, and how the project will be done. If a project is too large for one group to accomplish the structure will attempt only to help them gather, learn and work together.

We suggest this alternative because we feel that this will maintain the freedom that we all need to feel. That what we think as individuals will be of great concern to all. There seems to be a place for all the ideas that we have for carrying the message. We need to realize only that "If it is not practical it is not spiritual". This can take care of much of the current bitterness that many feel toward those with a different view on the directions needed in our fellowship.

There is already one region, several areas and a growing number of groups that operate with this freedom and disconnection from the old service structure. The fear was dealt with and support has come from across the nation for this sort of effort. We have hopes that this will restart the effort of addicts writing for addicts as it was done in the past. That new literature will help us all to grow and attract new members and keep those with time involved.

It all sounds so simple. The argument that the few will always do the work of the many is wrong. We are, each and everyone, challenged to carry the message to the addict that still suffers and to practice these principles in all our affairs. This is perhaps the most important lesson, after not using, that we learn here. That we will be concerned about the next person. Learning how to give can make us the more fully human beings we strive to be.

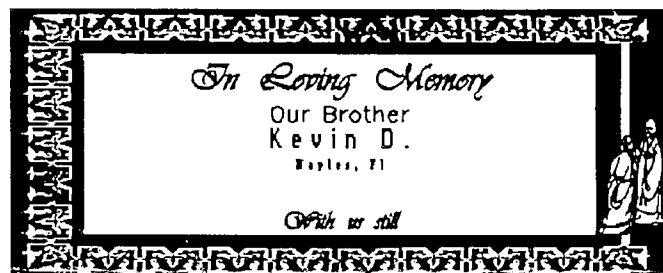
We pray that as this effort goes forward, we never assume we are the only ones who are right. We simply have a way that can work and we go forward in the attempt to always seek better ways to carry the message.

Tenemos que realizar solamente que "Si no es practico no es espiritual". Esto podrá resolver los corrientes resentimientos que muchos sienten hacia aquellos que tienen opiniones diferentes sobre las direcciones necesarias en nuestra confraternidad.

Ya existen una región, varias areas y un creciente número de grupos que operon con esta libertad y desprendimiento de la vieja estructura de servicio. El miedo ha sido trabajado y apoya ha llegado desde toda la nación por este esfuerzo. Tenemos esperanzas que esto re-empesara los esfuerzos de adictos escribiendo para adictos como hemos hecho en el pasado. La nueva literatura nos ayudara a todos a crecer y a atraer nuevos miembros y mantener a aquellos con tiempo envueltos.

Todo suena muy simple. El argumento que los pocos siempre hacen el trabajo de los muchos está equivocado. Nosotros somos, uno y todos empujados a llevar el mensaje al adicto que aun sufre y a practicar los principios en todos nuestros asuntos. Esta es a lo mejor la lección más importante, después de no usar, que aprendemos aquí. Que nos preocuparemos sobre la próxima persona. Aprendiendo a dar nos puede convertir en los seres humanos más completos que queremos ser.

Nosotros rezamos que este esfuerzo salga adelante, que nunca asumamos que somos los únicos que estamos correctos. Nosotros simplemente tenemos una manera que puede trabajar y salimos adelante siempre intentando encontrar mejores maneras de llevar el mensaje.



## I Ain't Leaving

I got your news letter off my sponsor and the SOS news letters; at this present writing I'm over 5 years clean. I came into NA thru AA and one of the things I found strange about NA was the different editions they kept turning out.

I felt it lacked credibility, the style and tone of the 4 and 5 editions seemed to me to have been written for treatment centers. They were too professional in comparison to the AA text. I had never seen a third edition revised copy.

The first third edition I have seen was the baby blue and its fine by me.

Thru talking with my sponser and the letters he has given me, at first I found it all unbelievable that WSO could take David to court, that members would discredit other members, that an attitude of us and them would develop. I thought to myself well in America anything is possible but not here in England.

So off I went to my home group to give some new people the baby blue thinking this is great free texts, they'll love it. And I was right the new people loved it. What I did not perceive was that 99% of the members who had served at area and region hated it and I found myself alone and frightened with thoughts of what's wrong with giving away a book and most of all what's wrong with me; this has all passed with the love of my

## Ain't Leaving *continued...*

sponsor and members who do care for me and I for them.

I now understand why those members who are discrediting me are the way they are and I can be the same way, its the disease of addiction.

To me its right that the text is returned to its original and not changed; like the AA text we need consistency and patience.

We need NA to be a fellowship in its own right. We need to believe in a loving God not some addicts sitting in an office with the same disease as me. I now do service at area and I see the difference. At area the newcomer is not equal. The newcomer cannot vote, the same goes for the newcomer at region. These services are not NA.

I've felt it in myself. I've wanted recognition. I've wanted to be a paid 12-stepper and be flown to America to speak at conventions and be applauded. Screw me, I've wanted it all.

What I did not want was to start a meeting in my home town and sit there on my own. I did not want to keep giving the Baby Blue away when my friends or so called friends discredited me. I did not want to do just NA and come to believe in the therapeutic value. I did not want to go to that extra meeting with the newcomer or phone my sponser or the new person.

Today the things I don't want to do, I want to do. I have had to change. All I've got is NA and I ain't leaving and NA has given God and me a working relationship and I know that the most beautiful people in the world haven't yet found NA and when they do we'll be waiting, strong in our love. I thank those people for the blue book.

Yours in the Spirit of NA

## Out of the Mud

I have just received the second issue of "New Awakenings" and I feel compelled to write to you all who are suffering so. I know the struggle you are engaged in, I have fought this struggle. I committed "servicide" in NA a few years ago as a self-preservation technique, and now, when I read your newsletter, all I can do is urge you to win the war by disengaging from the fight. The corrupt and the unjust and the power hungry power brokers will defeat themselves, if you will just have the patience to let them do it.

The war you are waging, the rage you are displaying, is not worth winning unless you play the game on spiritual terms. By spiritual, I mean one thing and one thing only: in a loving manner. It is obvious that you cannot deal in a loving manner with the problems that torment you, and therefore I urge you all to allow the power brokers to have the power, and simply stop supporting them. There's an old saying that goes something like, "when you roll around in the mud with pigs, you have a tendency to get dirty."

I think the people at the top of the power pyramid in N.A. are lost - they really have no idea what the populace of N.A. want or who they are, but unfortunately, these are the dope fiends who have proved best at accumulating power and they have every inclination to keep it. DON'T KID YOURSELF: You are not going to defeat them with your newsletters and the anger you feel at what they are doing is going to kill you if you don't find a way to let it go. It will either kill you or give your disease a good shot at getting you to relapse. The people you are angry at are heavy into relapse, only they are using power instead of drugs. Don't join them in their relapse. Resist them by not resisting.

Instead of being angry, start loving the lost and confused souls who are still walking into the doors of NA who don't know the WSC from a crack in the sidewalk and couldn't care less. Stick to the principles of helping the newcomer and contribute to the quality of your home meetings and let the corruption in California take care of itself. If you truly believe that God is in charge of NA then you have to have faith that eventually God will deal with these people. Because as outraged and as informed as you are as to the "war crimes" that have gone on, you are not the judges, no matter how right you may be. Allow judgement to be God's domain, and continue with your lives and your recovery.

One last thought. One night, a few years ago, as I spent a good two hours on the telephone with Grateful Dave, discussing his upcoming legal battle with the WSC, he said to me that "us radicals" need a newsletter (much like yours) to get the message out. "But," he said, "if they do that, anyone who writes anything out to be required to sign their names so that everyone will know who wrote it, God included." If you are going to continue with your efforts then I concur with Grateful Dave - sign your names. Name names. Spend your money to hire independent accountants to have the books of the WSC audited and put the crooks in jail. Hire lawyers to fight with their lawyers. Pick up the phone and complain to the IRS that the WSC is ripping off what is supposed to be a non-profit group. Because if you're not going to get in the mud with the pigs you're not going to touch them, and all you're doing by venting your anger in your newsletter is, well, for self-satisfaction. If you can't love your enemies by walking away from the fray, then get down and dirty and fight, because the people you are fighting will use any method they can to quash all of you like dirty bugs. I have seen them do it over and over and over again. Sign your names. File complaints. Drop a dime. Or learn to love them. And please, get on with your lives.

*signed*

# Pivotal Response

First I would like to express my gratitude for the article, "Pivotal Moment in History". It touched my heart. I wish the author had been available in 1984, '85, '86, '87, and the '88 Conference that I attended. Maybe with your help we could have made a difference. We still can. I don't believe creating a new service structure is running away. I believe it is running to.

When God decided it was time for me to get clean there was only A.A. where I am from. Then N.A. started so I decided to give N.A. a chance. The A.A. members told me that I would drink if I did not attend A.A. and that I was running away and that there was no reason to leave Alcoholics Anonymous, that I should fight for what I believe in. So I did. I stopped going to Alcoholics Anonymous and only attended N.A. What a concept. I surrendered to fight, so I could fight for my own life. I stopped putting energy into changing something for me to fit into. I stopped trying to change A.A. I started to participate in helping start N.A. in my area.

I was taught by my N.A. sponsor to stand for something or fall for anything. He told me to work the steps or die, motherfucker! And learn to apply the Traditions and get involved in service. So I did. I chaired seven meetings a week. I helped start a new Area at that time. I had a lot of hope for this Area, for it to be able to stand on principles, and it did for seven or eight years. Then the World influence reached them. My home Group continued to participate in this Area for two more years, constantly battling to see that the principles were to be carried out. It strained our membership from being able to carry the message. Then one day a miracle happened. Seven Groups walked out of that Area at the same time. What a relief to know we do not have to go back. We can start anew. What a concept. A new structure. The Traditions demand so. "Because we hear about 'suggested steps' and 'no musts' so often some of us make a mistake and assume that this applies to the groups the way it applies to the individual. The Traditions of N.A. are not negotiable. They are the guidelines that keep our fellowship alive and free." [Basic Text, First Ed. p. 53].

We got tired of fighting so we surrendered to the Traditions. If we were to be an N.A. Group, there was no clear answer except to create a service structure to serve us. It does not matter what the name is, A.S.I.S.N.A., Healthy Change, or parallel structure. There has been a new awakening. The old structure does not exist in our minds. Parallel lines run side by side but never touch. We need to go back to the basics - steps and traditions are the path. God's will will lead us if we let Him. Search your hearts. Ask God and He will answer you. We will support you but won't join you in the fight for change within the known structure.

It is like when we were using. We didn't change our fear of the unknown. "When the student is ready,

## Daily Definition ☺

from Webster's New World Dictionary,  
College Edition

**radical** (rad'i-k'l), **adj.** 1. of or from the root or roots; going to the center, foundation, or source of something; fundamental; basic: as, a *radical* principle.

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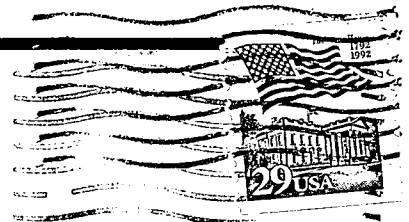
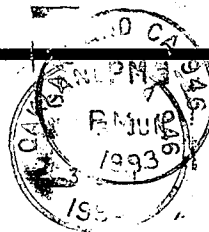
## Response

from p.11

the teacher will appear." When and if members get tired of the pain of fighting and feel like a healthy change, a new awakening, we'll be there. I hope it does not take others as long as it took me to make that decision. I hope our experience can help you. The statement, "I believe that effort would be doomed to failure" [re an alternative structure] - that is the way A.A. thought about us in 1979 in my home town and other places. It is the way they looked at us when we wrote the book, the Basic Text. A little bit of lack of faith? Second Step and then a Third Step to follow. What a concept (and not the twelve concepts for they violate the Twelve Traditions). We love you and keep writing.

-Loving Service Anonymous

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GOTTCHA