

THE

RAINBOW

CONNECTION

## HOW IT WORKS

If you want what we have to offer, and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are suggested only, but they are the principles that made our recovery possible.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of those steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This sounds like a big order, and we can't do it all at once, we didn't become addicted in one day, so remember — EASY DOES IT.

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INDIVIDUAL OPINIONS EXPRESSED  
DO NOT NECESSARILY EXPRESS THOSE OF NA AS  
A WHOLE. ADDRESS: RAINBOW CONNECTION 890 B  
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# *Six Months & Counting*

## STORY OF THE MONTH

It's been six months now--an eternity to some, the merest blink of the eye to others. To this recovery addict it has been a period of so many changes in my life that I find it very difficult to sort out some of the feelings that I am beginning to be in touch with for the first time I can remember.

I had almost two years of total abstinence from all mood-altering drugs when the relapse began--slowly at first and, to my very sick way of thinking, handled very well indeed. But it caught up with me very rapidly and in a period of just a few weeks I had managed to return to the living hell in which I had spent such a lengthy part of my life before my first period of hospitalization.

How I lasted two years is a mystery to me. I guess it was the result of one of my major defects of character--pride. I had always managed to screw up everything that mattered to me in the past and I vigilantly clutched my abstinence, gritting my teeth and growing more and more bitter with the world around me as the second year of drug-free existence drew near its end. I was so proud of my ability to cope drug-free!

Naturally I had forgotten, or more accurately, never really learned, that I am powerless over my addiction. Two years were long enough for a "cure" to take hold I convincingly told myself.

What had I done during these two years? Not a damned thing. I had knocked out the Twelve Steps while I was in the hospital, so they were out of the way. Since I had no intention of "getting involved," I didn't have to worry about the Traditions. For the first year, I went to meetings when it was time to be awarded another well-earned chip and the last thing I needed on earth was a sponsor to pry into my life. Now it was time to sit back and enjoy this wonderful "sobriety" I had heard so much about.

levels at home? Have you read the Approval Form of our book, the Stories and the proposed revision of the Service Manual for N.A.? Have you contributed directly or indirectly to the cost of your regional or state representative attending this year's WS Conference?

For over twenty years our Program awaited the growth and initiative which has been taking place in the last seven. We waited for our service structure, for our literature to grow and for our Fellowship in general to begin to coalesce into a meaningful whole. The widespread understanding and increasingly participatory nature of N.A. members in service to addicts seeking recovery is growing daily. Never before have so many had access to the basic information needed to discover that problems we face in our home groups and areas are shared in most cases by the rest of the Fellowship. Addicts that we are, in the old days when we were cut off from one another, we used to think we were the only ones facing our problems and that members elsewhere really had it together. This is true to an extent but nowhere near as much as was once thought. Now that the goal of an awakened, informed and unified Fellowship is fast becoming a reality through our representatives in the World Service Conference we find ourselves with a handful of new problems! Wouldn't you just know it! We prayed for a Cadillac and now we need gasoline! Over twenty new regions have been formed in the last year and no telling how many new areas and groups. (This is up from two or three regions a year ago.) The Sub-Committees of the World Service Conference are becoming active, one by one, and holding major unprecedented Service Conferences so that the day can sooner come that our basic service needs Fellowship-wide will be met. Have you seen the new service manual for Hospitals and Institutions or the updated manual for literature and public information, yet. Thanks for being honest. That's right, folks, there isn't one of these items even on the drawing boards yet. You, some of you, will find that almost any effort to address these

needs will be supported and unchallenged by the existing service structure. The Service Structure is designed to support these things. You will be opposed by those who have a vested interest in the past, but from my own experience, there will always be those who will help you and the work actually gets done by other new persons to service. This is because old-timers either oppose change or would rather act as resources than to corner the market on opportunities to serve. Even a small role in our coming of age is an extraordinary opportunity.

Reading all the material now available is the best thing you can do to make yourself aware of what is happening now. IN almost every case you will be reading about very basic moves being made or initiated. This is because somehow we have come through all these years with so little done. If you are involved or become involved you will be approached at some point and told that what's happening is bad and not "really" spiritual. This is because we have not yet become homogenized into one thing. There are many among us who can't stay clean on N.A. alone and get part of what they get elsewhere. Through a curious quirk of human nature of the disease of addiction, they oppose the growth process and view innovations to meet our needs with concern and reservations. Even now, nearly three years after the first World Literature Conference at Wichita, you will meet people who will tell you we are moving too fast. This is the "conservative element" which opposes all change. They are the ones who hold the ground gained by the concerned members who break the ground. This is how we keep it together. God gives divine insight to a few members to address one of our needs, with spirit and dedication an advance guard of members will seek out others like themselves and work to meet the need. When their work has progressed quite a ways, they will be protected from problems of ego and pride and the thing they have been working on will come to pass. Through it all, we have to keep two things in mind and heart: Our efforts should directly as possibly benefit addicts seeking recovery and that Our Ultimate Authority works the miracles, not we (A)

For teaching me that I can't and WE can  
and for the love you have given me I thank  
you. And I love you.



-- Michael M.  
Smyrna, GA



### WHAT WORKED FOR ME

Thank God that I am powerless over my  
addiction and my life has become unmanagable;  
or at least, thank you God that by your Grace  
I cop to the fact that I can't handle it. When  
I try to handle it, I feel totally inadequate.  
When I feel hopeless and doomed I just say,  
"Hey, my life is unmanagable. I'm powerless  
over my addiction."

Also, when I got a sponsor, I got one who had  
the guts to tell me when I was dishonest, even  
if I felt that I was in honest disagreement with  
him. I have such a subtly devious line of reason-  
ing at times that I can think my way right back  
into active addiction. Then I tell my sponsor  
what I am doing for that day and how I feel about  
it.

Many times when I have had the most angry  
reaction to what my sponsor says, I may be con-  
vinced "I'm right" until he says, "Ego trip...  
do this."

I have to be willing to do what my sponsor  
suggests and I can't say I've been near perfect  
in this. But, as my recovery has progressed, I  
have had to cultivate more and more willingness.  
I am paranoid about writing this because I fear  
an ego trip. I am definitely wrong a lot of  
the time. No matter how stubborn I try to be  
about it, I can't make it on my own. I have to  
be taught.

Lately I have prayed, "God, help me feel a part  
of N.A., help me work my steps and do what my spon-  
sor says." I still glare at others, I am funny  
about that. I have more work to do on myself.  
Fear makes me glare at you. My fear tells me  
that I know how to do it and these other people  
only interrupt me and make it hard for me to get  
recovery--they are the problem.

I treat this sick thinking by loosening up a trusting you; by being honest, and by surrender a loving God as He expresses Himself in group consciousness. Writing is one thing, living it another. I get a lot out of reading about other experience, strength and hope.

For example, I was downtown one day, going to college. I was really uptight, my bones hurt and did my head. What I did to feel better was I got outside of just thinking of myself. I started repeating mentally, "Take an interest in others." Soon I was absorbed in the fascinating variety of people. I was tickled to be a part of the parade of life. I made a new friend that day just by taking an interest in that certain person. This all goes back to something I heard in N.A.--"Why is it when I think about me I feel bad; when I think about you I feel good?"

--Name withheld by request

## RESENTMENTS

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I'm finding it harder and harder to hang on to resentments since I've gotten sober. In my addiction, I could harbor resentments against people for a long time, often with the attitude that I was superior to them or that I wasn't good enough to confront them.

Today I know resentments are what build walls between myself and others; the only person who really suffers by my resentments is me. If someone does something that hurts me or angers me, I have to let them know. Otherwise, it will sit inside me and grow, causing unnecessary pain and discomfort, and possibly affect my sobriety. By letting that person know, I don't have to go through this. Often they didn't realize they were hurting me. By letting them know, making them aware, they will usually stop or change. But most important, it's no longer inside me, it's with them.

-- Pete B.

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## GROOVIN' ON STEP NINE



I had been clean for a year and a half. My sanity had returned and I had become a productive person. I was making meetings every night, going to conventions and service conferences and trying to help the suffering addict on a regular basis. However, the past continued to plague me day and night.

I come from an exceptionally good and loving family who suffered tremendously through my addiction. After years of turmoil, they finally had to disown me.

Just before I came into Narcotics Anonymous, I moved 900 miles away from my family. Three years had gone by since I had seen them.

After taking my Fourth and Fifth Steps, I consulted my sponsor, who agreed that the time had come to go see my family and make amends to them.

Having not been around to watch me grow during my recovery, my family was quite pessimistic, to say the least. However, they still consented to see me. Words could not possibly express how scared I was. I knew that they had a totally negative image of me and that I was going to have to completely level with them. I knew that I couldn't do this without God's help.

After continuous prayer and meditation, my Higher Power gave me the courage and guidance to carry out this difficult task.

After a three-hour, gut-level rap in which I spilled my guts, an indescribable glow came across their faces. For the first time in over a decade, they became excited to be in the same room with me and made me feel welcome. All of a sudden, our relationship had taken on a new meaning that it never had before, based on honesty.

What was also amazing was that my parents were speaking of God again for the first time in years. Previously, my addiction had driven them to a loss of faith altogether.

It was a wonderful experience. Not only did I bring happiness back into the family that I almost succeeded in destroying years ago, but I also

rectified my past. Due to the beauty of Step Nine, I will never have to allow the past to plague me again.



-- Glenn R.  
Macon, GA

DEAR ADDICT...

Tonight you allowed me to share your birthday and for this I am grateful. You told me that it was my birthday as well and for this I am hopeful--hopeful that one day I will have your freedom and total happiness.

You planned your big day just for me, although you did not know it at the time. You called up many of those whom I have admiringly observed and from whom I draw inspiration. You had them tell me about Freedom, Trust, Honesty, Empathy, Acceptance, Gratitude, Spirituality--the list goes on and on. You did not know that you drew your topics from my list of needs, but you did and I am indebted to you for this unknown consideration.

You had those around you prove to me that we can only keep what we have by giving it away, for their gifts to you were immediately passed on to me. I hungrily watched and patiently waited as you unwrapped each of their gifts with the sparkle in your eye and the love in your smile and then I grasped what you had been given from you.

That you would so willingly share is of no surprise to me, for you have shared with me many times before. When I attended my first N.A. meeting outside of the hospital, you were the first to welcome me. You told me that I was where I should be and you were right. You told me that things would get better, and they have. You told me that the Twelve Steps are a prescription for life and they have been. You hugged me and told me that you love me and you do.



All of this should have been enough, but the addict in me keeps searching for new highs and I find them at each meeting I attend; in every Step that I realize I have somehow struggled through, and during those countless moments of the day and night when I silently offer the Serenity Prayer to the God of my understanding.

And now you have give me your birthday party. I can't repay you immediately, but if you will continue to guide me through the months ahead One Day At A Time, the day will come when I can give my birthday to you.



-- Michael M.  
Smyrna, GA



### MONSTROSITY

God, grant me release from self-obsession and use me as a tool of your will.

"...We tried to carry this message to addicts...." Those of us who want this new life of recovery have found that sharing the gift of release from our disease is the only way to stay free. We gather in small groups to do what we cannot do in isolation--recover. Together we establish and maintain an atmosphere in our groups that provides recovery to those who seek it and this sustains our personal recovery.

The humbly courageous among us teach us the principles that make this all possible--the Steps and Traditions. They read. They see beyond apparent impossibilities. They show us the way. They inspire us. N.A. seems an obsession with them because they are uncompromising in principle. We learn from them but are somewhat intimidated by their zeal. They become our idols. We copy them and accept the responsibility they share so freely.

Now we become part of the structure that is supposed to maintain this atmosphere of recovery in our groups. Our predecessors move on to address other needs, often losing their anonymity through our worship and respect and envy. Their service seems so impressive, their information endless, and their impact so

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vast. Our inventories, so filled with self will, lust for power, inadequacy and jealousy lead us to honestly believe that they must be stopped. We share our fears with our groups. The member, after all, has the final say. Our leaders taught us that. Our ultimate authority is the group consciousness, we believe. We teach the group to fear and blindly reject any input from our predecessors. We must not allow them to motivate us with their ideas. They are power crazed. They would manipulate us with their minds. They are trying to lead us.

"What Is The N.A. Program" tells us that we have no leaders. The group has entrusted us with its service. We feel good. We have guided the group to a wise decision. We have blocked the ideas of those who can read. We are free to float in our confused status quo. We have hidden the truth. Power is the enemy. Now the group consciousness knows that the POWER is in them. They savor it and flex their muscles on every issue.

"SLOW DOWN" says the group. The group has become their own fear. The Black Magic of jealousy, gossip and paranoia has won again, and the addict seeking recovery is the loser. Yes, power and prestige do force us to lose sight of our primary purpose.

In N.A. today the power-trip is group consciousness. Our loving, ultimate authority may express Himself only through a group's CONSCIENCE. Power-crazed group opinions, prompted by information deficient prestige seekers, kill ideas that could save addicts' lives. A loving God can also express Himself through our leaders, and we do have leaders. They don't govern us, but their long time, hard-core dedication to N.A. has provided the atmosphere in which we may recover. We know that we can block their ideas. Our negativity has proved itself.

But what worked for them, freely shared, has given us a new life. A spiritual base in lived Steps and applied Traditions, fed by prayer for freedom from self-obsession, can give our groups back their conscience. We need your help. Our

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groups have lost their conscience and gone on a power trip, and this monster is killing addicts daily. Please, please pray and meditate and go to a business meeting.

--Anonym1



#### RECOVERY IN TOKYO

(The following is a letter received by an N.A. member in Marietta, GA)

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your letter. Nice to know you.

I'm a 40-year-old man. I've been free of drugs for six years, one day at a time.

Seven years ago A.A. started in Tokyo. I recovered from addiction with the A. A. program. Last September I went to Hawaii and learned about the N.A. program and fellowship. Just three months ago we were able to start our own N.A. group here in Tokyo.

Two years ago the A.A. Big Book was translated and published in Japanese. It will probably take some time before the N.A. book is translated and made available in Japanese.

We are filled with gratitude that the N.A. movement is in fact a world-wide movement and that it has at long last come here to Japan. We are filled with hope that a new and fresh breeze will bring the clean air



of N.A. life to Tokyo.

We now have three N.A. meetings a week in Tokyo--one Step, two closed. There are about 15 members in our fellowship. Drug abuse is a big problem these days in Japan and every day our membership is increasing. Next week there are three people in the snowy land of Hokkaido who will start their own N.A. meetings.

Please watch over the growth of our group.  
In the Fellowship,

Kiyoshi

### SERVICE WORK

When I got enough time in the program to start doing service work, I noticed that there was a definite lack of people with time in the program who were willing to do much needed service work. With six months clean time, I was serving three groups and was a discussion leader and a chairperson at least once a week. Being the secretary of three groups, I had the responsibility of getting a chair and leader for the groups and I noticed that a great many addicts seemed to a large degree to be recovered. I say this because many times when I asked relative old-timers to lead a discussion or chair a meeting, they had to work or go to church or had a date or were going out dancing at a nightclub. I soon started noticing that different addicts had different levels of dedication to the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

I was somewhat distressed, especially after a meeting when there would be some newcomers and all the people with more time than me would leave without talking to them. It was at this point that I realized the old saying, "If you want something done right, do it yourself" still held true. I began doing what I could and decided that when ask to do something, I would. I began respecting the people with two, four and six months clean who still had time to do small things and weren't on an ego-recovery.



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trip. I still liked and admired the other old-timers, but I just didn't want what they had to offer. I remember one old-timer saying that this program needed "Power Junkies." I thank the God of my understanding that that statement is a horrendous misconception. I found that this program needs LOVE JUNKIES and that if you are a "Power Junkie," you are in the wrong place.

Another misconception that some people seem to suffer from is the idea that Narcotics Anonymous is a supplemental program to other Twelve Step programs. I've heard people say, "I go to one program to get and come to N.A. to give." Well, we don't need that kind of service. I get my recovery solely in N.A. and I keep it in N.A. I don't go around preaching or bearing witness of the fruits of the N.A. program. I let my recovery and the recovery of other hardcore N.A. members speak for itself. We are a complete and total program in ourselves.

What I'm saying is that the program of Narcotics Anonymous has proven itself to be effective and the real members of the program have proven themselves. Based on that concept, I'm sure that you can see why I disapprove of the non-members or people who have not surrendered to the program of N.A., or people who have made a dual surrender, doing service work for us. Or worse yet, people who have time in another program who think that they are over-qualified for the lower levels of service work and want to go straight to the top. And, for the sake of humility, I feel obliged to remind everyone that service work is exactly what it sounds like. It is not an ego trip, it is not a power trip, it is not sharing your infinite wisdom with some poor, ignorant dope fiend--it is the selfless giving of love, unconditionally.

I don't want to take cheap shots at anyone and I realize that many areas are very new and very small. However, small areas do not have to stay small. The Serenity Prayer says, "The courage to change the things I can."

Small or remote areas don't have to practice acceptance and, as far as that goes, neither do large areas. If you are a drug addict and found your initial recovery in a hospital or another program, then you may owe your life to that hospital or program. But if you have found on-going recovery in Narcotics Anonymous then you owe it to the millions of suffering drug addicts who are literally dying for recovery to do what you can to promote unity and strengthen the program in your area.



--Dedicated in Loving Service,  
Page C.

### A NOTE OF GRATITUDE



Dear God,

I thought I would take this opportunity to thank you for all the wonderful things that have happened to me since you brought me to Narcotics Anonymous.

I first would like to thank you for the level of sanity that you have restored me to in the last 20 months. I know I still have a long way to go, but you have brought me so far from my pre-N.A. days of constant institutionalization. It is truly a thrill to live my life without any suicidal thoughts, without the so-called help of psychiatrists and without having to completely withdraw from society. This is indeed a true gift.

Secondly, I just can't get over the fact that you have made me a productive person for the first time in my life. For 27 years, I tried to become productive, but without any success, of course. After I made a decision to turn my life and will over to your loving care, you did the job overnight. Thank you so much for giving me the college education that I always dreamed of for so long. And thank you, my Higher Power, for exposing marketable skills in me that were concealed for so many years. You have sincerely given me a sense of worth.

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But, of most importance, thank you for giving me the wonderful fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. This has meant more to me than anything else ever has. I just can't get over the unconditional acceptance and love that I have received from the start. It has just been absolutely dynamite. Before you brought me here, I never was able to keep any friends. Today, however, I have brothers and sisters all over the world with whom I can share on the most intimate level. I can now travel anywhere I please, as I already have, and feel comfortable that I will be taken care of, and loved as well.

Before I forget it, I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity you have given me to work with the suffering addict. Prior to my recovery, my whole life was characterized by my selfishness. I only knew how to take from others. Giving was not a part of my vocabulary. Today, you have given me a great opportunity to not just redeem myself, but to help several other people, while saving my own ass. Who could possibly ask for more?

I know that I still do some pretty rotten things at times, dear God, but you have been patient with me, giving me courage to bounce back and to be of service to you as well as my fellow man. For this, I am grateful.

--Glenn R.  
Macon, GA



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The fears that I've had, could drive me insane.  
The rationalizations, I refused to change.  
I built up my fortress, keeping You out.  
Cause I had the power, carried all of the clout.  
And my editions, of knowledge and fame.  
Dusty books about wisdom, the friendship game.  
I had no problems, cause I knew it all.  
But nothing prepared me, for my eventual fall.  
Once in the darkness, I cried out for You.  
I wanted to die, but was afraid of that, too.

It was a risqué situation,  
full of mind-game contemplation  
including self-infactuation  
and loss of concentration  
on living.

I wanted no vulnerability  
no addictive personality  
no weak spot for my enemies  
just people to please  
please me.

Soon though, it came to me, in the dead of night  
I could lose control I would be alright.  
I made a decision, to change myself  
To use good qualities, I stored on the shelf.  
Yet to admit my defects, was a hard thing to do.  
But I found it easier, when I could share them with  
You.  
I'm just beginning, to find someone new.  
Out of the darkness, someone finally grew.  
And now in the light, I have something to say.  
I don't fear tomorrow, instead I live for today.

-Janelle

REWARDS



I am a recovering addict and a member of  
Narcotics Anonymous. A member because I say I am,  
an addict because I have a disease and recovering  
because I work the Twelve Steps in my life. (16)

I would like to share some of the rewards that I have reaped from working the steps as well as being an active part of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

Last summer, while attending a conference in a northern state, a phone call was received at the house where a lot of us were staying. It was from a member in a city about 350 miles away. This member told me that they had NA there for a few months, but had no personal contact with any members from other places, almost no literature and no knowledge of the service structure. He wanted to know if some people could come down and share their experience, strength and hope with them. I talked to two friends about it and we said we would be glad to come down the next weekend.

It was about a seven hour drive, and when we got there we found out that they had booked us in a hotel. Now, this was a trip, because we had brought our sleeping bags, and all we expected was a piece of floor.

The next day we had breakfast with a few folks and the weekend started. We did workshops on meeting formats, the Twelve Traditions, group, area, regional and world service, public information, H&I, fund-raising, and just about anything else we or they could think of. The first reward was that they were grateful for the information and were drinking it in like people dying of thirst.

These workshops/question and answer sessions were held in three main places; in a church basement, in a state park in the country, and in a city park overlooking a major river.

On Saturday afternoon/evening we had the first major get together at the state park. It was very informal with alot of sharing of feeling and ideas. As it started to get dark, we built a large bonfire and broke out the guitars and harmonicas and jammed long into the night. Sometime after dark I found myself standing in front of the bonfire (17)

talking with a heroin addict who had been clean for a week or two. I was talking about total surrender, about having tried every last thing before coming to Narcotics Anonymous and how nothing else worked for me. Abruptly, he walked away and I thought he was tired of hearing what I had to say. I hoped that maybe next time he would be more openminded. I really learned a lesson in not being presumptuous, for a few minutes later he came back with something in his hand. It was a couple of syringes and a rubber tourniquet that he had been saving in his car, "just in case." He threw them into the bonfire!

The rest of the weekend went really well also. The next morning, after camping in the state park, we met in a city park on the banks of a major river that carried boats back and forth slowly as we talked. That evening we had a formal workshop and a speaker/ discussion meeting in a church whose pastor seemed very grateful for Narcotics Anonymous.

After the meeting, my friends and I headed back to the conference. It had been really rewarding having all those people yearning for the NA message. We had many new friends and we knew that maybe a few more addicts might not have to die, but that's not the end of the story.

I did not see my friend who threw the syringes into the fire until five months later, at a Halloween Party, dressed as a clown and taking the donations; a trusted servant!

I decided to hitchhike to the convention in Atlanta last February because I was laid off work, and as I stood on an entrance ramp to an interstate highway, a car pulled up and I heard a voice say, "Sure, we got room for you, Tom!" Yes it was my friend from the bonfire. He had a newcomer in the car with him and had just been telling him about total surrender. They took me a hundred miles down the road

18 I love you and please, keep coming back.

-TOM M.

ANONYMI

ATTN: TRUSTED SERVANTS

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I am not always at best with words, especially verbally expressed. At this time I feel it necessary to communicate by writing. With the warmth and feelings that this letter has been composed, it is hoped to be received. After our latest Area Service Meeting I left feeling more serene and somewhat different than I had from the prior meeting. This time there were feelings of teamwork and a strong sense of accomplishment that I hadn't felt before. Although I lived through the previous frustration, hurt, and resentment, it was hard to accept and apply to my daily program at the time.

I feel we are all starting to learn the value of communication and a positive means of self-expression that we have needed in these committee gatherings for a long time. However, we still have a lot to learn, believe me. It is very important for us to realize that we are equals in our service efforts. Our Service Structure designates certain areas of more responsibility to some elected individuals. This has been done for the maintenance, growth, and survival of the combined effort we are striving to put forth for the welfare of our area. We will gain few results amidst the confusion, frustration, and destruction of a power struggle. We already have the Power greater than ourselves and that Power should prevail throughout our endeavors no matter how each of us may understand our God of choice.

Where would we be if the dedicated Trusted Servants who carried on while others grew and became ready and willing to get involved in service work had given up? Faith, determination and a lot of hope gave them strength in that phase of our development. They cannot simply step back all at once. Deep down they know that they must be willing to share what now has grown out of the old capacities that used to be simple when we just had two meetings in the heart of this area. We all know it is not easy to let go of things. Slowly the work must be divided and given to the best possible persons that can handle and follow-

on their new found (and needed) responsibilities in the program. We all must be patient with our people and remember that we all are addicts. Let us not forget our primary purpose!

Amidst the "flying personalities" that prevail in the discussion sessions emotions can sometimes get away from us. Unfortunately, a lot of us can still be stubborn--asses at times. Through the Power of prayer and love we need to get each other through those trying times, we can still deal with the business of NA and learn valuable communication lessons for our daily programs.

There are few, if any, "can'ts" or "dont's" printed in our Service Literature. This is purposely done with regards to our own area's autonomy and for our well-being through the respect of the Traditions. Our Area Service Committee is a group in itself as are the Groups and Meetings that we are intended to serve.

The Representatives of these Groups play a major role in the purpose of the Committee that they are a vital part of. These gatherings provide them with the opportunity to convey and share how the message of recovery is being carried, along with the results and growth that they have been able to be a part of on a General (Group) Service level. Also they should be willing to accept any loving guidance from each other and the Officers of their Committee that functions as part of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. Cooperation and openmindedness are also important tools in our Service Structure.

As we become more dedicated and willing to serve, we find it necessary to sacrifice a few meetings here and there to get the physical labor and brainwork accomplished (and sometimes to simply rest!). This work includes many specific tasks, not to mention the footwork that has to be done. At these times we find we have to "isolate" ourselves, it is helpful for us to remember that our loving Power will help us through these times..God's will for the Program surely is good. We must have faith that we will get what we truly

need when the need becomes a furtherance of our development, not simply a selfish want.

In my service work, both at home and away, I have been fortunate to have gained new tools and insight. While I was away at my first Conference, a fellow addict gave me a small card which helped me a great deal. It was truly a Godsend at that confused and frustrated moment of the Conference. I was enlightened tremendously on the Twelfth Tradition that I was losing sight of. When you receive a card like this from someone, it must surely be a sign that the giver has a great deal of love, understanding for, and faith in you. I will always be grateful to that addict.

Anonymi is the plural of Anonymous. I had never seen the card before and I don't know if or where this World-Wide Home Group actually exists. I was so overwhelmed I forgot to ask. I know though that it does exist in my heart, especially when I'm working with others in the name of Service for Narcotics Anonymous. In closing I would like to share with you what I have. The cream-colored card that I have has signs of wear and a great deal of character. It surely will be one of my most cherished keepsakes from any of the NA functions I have attended. I will share it with you, the members of our Committee with an actual photo-copy instead of merely retyping it. Whether you feel better or not by reading this, I do in writing it. Thank you, HP. C'est la vie!

# ANONYMI

*A world-wide NA Home Group designed to provide our trusted servants (whose service has sometimes isolated them from their local groups) with the love and understanding they need to survive.*

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In Love and Fellowship,  
I Remain Your Fellow Trusted Servant.

COMMUNICATION:

If I Don't Ask; How Else Can I Learn?

When I came into this fellowship, I was one of those intellectual smart-asses that had all the answers. Actually, I had just enough information to be dangerous. I was one of those people, it seems, that was educated beyond my capacity.

One of the first gems of information I picked up on was that there are no stupid questions. From the beginning, the very first meeting, I was told to ask a lot of questions--find out! Unfortunately, I suffer from a great deal of pride and arrogance. It was very difficult for me to get humble enough to admit that I just didn't have all the answers. I would far rather be harmed physically than embarrassed or humiliated. You could beat on me, but don't dare laugh at me.

As a result of that self-centered attitude, I made a lot of mistakes and literally hindered my own recovery for months. I tried the same scam I had used back out on the streets: just lay back and play it cool, and eventually you pick up just enough bullshit and half-knowledge, you can fake it so well that all but the real pro's will think you're a pro.

It did not work. We had a serious break-down in communication. You were using words and phrases I simply did not understand. We were coming from different sides of the spectrum altogether.

You talked to me in fairly standard English, and you used words that I didn't have to look up in the dictionary--but the context was so remote you might just as well have been speaking Albanian or Zwahili.

A good example is "Fifth." I knew what a "fifth" was. I had been intimately acquainted with literally hundreds of those little boogers. And you kept talking about taking your "fifth" with so-and-so, and asking me if I had taken my

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"fifth," or suggesting that I take a "fifth."  
O Actually, I was more than willing to take a  
"fifth". I was rather humbled when I finally  
S figured out the difference between The Fifth and  
' a "fifth".

All that seems rather silly today, but it was serious, life-and-death serious when I first got here.

A lot of the other misconceptions I had (and some that I still have) are life-and-death serious as well. If I hadn't had people around who were willing to lovingly "insult my intelligence" and suffer the brunt of my anger, I could have died from terminal misconceptions. I can still die from terminal misconceptions.

It took me a long time to scope out this ordered anarchy we call a fellowship. My mind wasn't clicking terribly fast and it seemed that my inductive reasoning capabilities were in storage (and I had lost the claim check).

o- The one misconception it took me a long time  
t to get rid of was the myriad misunderstandings  
I had in regard to "service and leadership"  
and "politics". It took a long time (and a  
lot of choler, anger and resentment) for me to  
figure out that I am a trusted servant, I truly am  
one of the leaders in the Fellowship of Narcotics  
Anonymous.

re You see, I believed all those lies the coffee  
pot politicians on the fringes of the fellowship  
told me. I was one of those angry young newcomers  
with a lot of phlegm and a loud mouth and I hadn't  
had a "real cause" since Vietnam ended and the  
Freedom Marches stopped.

I was ripe to make N.A. a tru haven of Jeffersonian  
Democracy. We needed us a grassroots revolution.  
We were going to overthrow those old mossbacks and  
establish a new order. I could see it all--a new  
Chairman of this committee and that committee, a  
new Central Office manager, a new Area Service  
Rep... 23

You see the program--well it was kind of important--but we needed some real leadership.

The difficulty with coffee pot politicians, like I was, is that I wasn't involved with either the program or the fellowship. My cronies and I were those half-informed, rumor-mongering gadflies that just had time to bitch and spread discontent (especially among others who were no better informed, and did we love to pick on newcomers). You see, we were too busy scheming to work steps (and obviously the traditions were idealistic and nice, but far from practical and couldn't be expected to work anyway). Of course, great strategy makers can't be expected to stoop to menial tasks like chairing meetings, emptying ashtrays, cleaning up, going to committee meetings, licking stamps, or whatever. We just showed up for the voting (en bloc) to bitch.

Thank God, I found out that in order to be "in" on what is going on, all I have to do is show up for group business meetings, committee meetings, or whatever is going on. I found out that all I need to be elected a trusted servant, is a willingness to serve and then SERVE.

I also found out that trusted servants serve the group conscience even IF I have a better idea. The best way to be deposed is to get haughty, just because the group has enough faith in me to elect me a representative. (And I have been deposed--I didn't need to stay in touch with the area, after all I AM THE TRUSTED SERVANT. I represent you, so don't bother me with grassroots petty problems, I have inter-planetary organizational datum on protocol to distribute.)

N.A SOLIDARITY 1982



Have you read the Fellowship Report which has been put out by the World Service Conference to inform and update concerned N.A. members who will either be attending or participating as voting members at the group, area, and regional

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I had gotten myself into a situation about as comfortable as a guy strapped in an electric chair waiting for the executioner to mercifully flip the switch. But my compulsive nature led me to flip the switch myself and it was back to another treatment center.

The second night I was in the hospital the place was stormed by a group of outsiders whose sole purpose in life seemed to be to hug and kiss everyone in sight. One particular guy caught my eye as he obviously sat through the entire meeting barbed out of his mind. How else could he sit there so happy and oblivious to the drivel being spouted all around him? He came up to me after the meeting and asked what had brought me to the hospital. When I told him it was a relapse, he had the nerve to give me a capsule summary of just what my life had been like since my last period of institutionalization.

Totally stunned, I thought about what he had said. Yes, I had failed to go to meetings (except, of course, when it was time to grab that chip); thoroughly work the Steps; condescend to any anyone to be my sponsor; find the time for daily prayer and meditation, and certainly never allow anyone to get close enough to me to try to help me. But how had this stranger known all of this about me?

I decided to wait a week to see if this guy returned and if the group seemed as happy then as they had been that first night. Maybe it was just a full moon.

The following week I was in a better frame of mind, withdrawal having passed for the most part. Sure enough, in charged this group once again, smiling, hugging and bubbling over with what appeared to be genuine happiness. I knew then that I wanted what they had to offer and that I would go to any lengths to get it.

That was my introduction to Narcotics Anonymous--that "other" Twelve Step group of burned-out Flower Children, hanging-in-there Hippies and motorcycle terrorists I had so carefully managed to avoid in the past. I even mustered up the courage to ask my barbed-out acquaintance from the week before to be my temporary sponsor while I was in the hospital. For me to ask ANYONE for

for ANYTHING was totally against my nature.

Six months have passed since that second N.A. meeting, a lot of changes have occurred in my life and I've had a lot of new experiences --the most important of which has been getting to know what love is all about. You people have given me love and even more important, you have taught me to return it.

Somehow I am learning to take it easy, keep it simple and to live one day at a time. You have led me more than halfway through the Steps and reminded me that I need to take the first three on a daily basis.

Since this time around I am getting involved, you have taught me how important our Traditions are. I have also learned the importance of prayer and meditation in my life. But even more important is that you have taught me to surrender and to turn it over. For this, and for so much more, I cannot adequately thank you.

The N.A. convention in Atlanta was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Never have I felt totally surrounded by love, as I did during the three days I spent with so many of you there.

At this point in my life-long process of recovering I find that each meeting I attend teaches me more and more about myself and more about this miraculous program. A big comfort to me is the feeling of finally having real friends on whom I can count for help and who have taught me to ask for help when I need it. I haven't yet told my sponsor that the "temporary" job he took has become permanent. I hope that he knows this by now.

I certainly can't say that my life is filled with nothing but happiness after only six months in the program, but it's sure getting a hell of a lot better than it ever was before. Today I finally know the difference between fist-clenching "abstinence" and "clean and sober" and I realize just how dry my two-year "dry drunk" was.

I really believe that as long as I keep surrendering, keep turning it over, keep coming to meetings and keep reminding myself just how powerless I am, I have an excellent chance, with your help, of making it this time.

ourselves. The only things we can do are to surrender and attempt to do our part to serve and support the efforts of others. In this way our Growth and Continuance is assured.

The only thing I can add is that service is fun and feels good. I thank God that it is happening.

ME

Scared and shy  
Afraid to talk  
Wondering if I will be liked.

People pleasing  
Procrastination  
And things like putting on a front.

Self pity and  
Selfishness  
Gets you nowhere in this world.

Loving and  
Considerate  
Of others feelings.

Caring and  
Sharing  
To help others out.

Being myself  
Counts most of all.  
That's why I have more friends now.



So now little man, you've grown tired of grass  
LSD, Goofballs, cocaine and hash,  
And someone pretending to be a true friend  
Said "I'll introduce you to Miss Heroin".  
Well Honey, before you start fooling with me,  
Just let me inform you of how it will be.  
For I will seduce you and make you my slave;  
I've sent men much stronger than you to their grave.

You think you could never become a disgrace  
And end up addicted to poppy seed waste.  
So you'll start inhaling me one afternoon;  
You'll take me into your arms very soon.  
And once I have entered down deep in your veins,  
The craving will nearly drive you insane.  
You'll need lots of money (as you have been told)  
For darling, I'm much more expensive than gold.  
You'll swindle your Mother, and just for a buck  
You'll turn into something vile and corrupt.  
You'll mug and you'll steal for my narcotic charm,  
And feel contentment when I'm in your arms.

The day when you realize the monster you've grown  
You'll solemnly promise to leave me alone. .  
If you think you've got the mystical knack,  
Then sweetie, just try getting me off of your back.  
The vomit, the cramps, your guts tied in a knot,  
The jangling nerves screaming for just one more shot.  
The hot chills, the cold sweats, the withdrawal pains,  
Can only be saved by my little white grains.  
There's no other way, there's no need to look,  
For deep down inside you, you know you are hooked.  
You'll desperatly run to the pusher and then,  
You'll welcome me back to your arms once again.

And when you return (Just as I have foretold)  
I know you'll give me your're body and soul.  
You'll give up your morals, your conscience, your heart,  
And you will be mine, until "Death do us part".



THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE  
THIS ISSUE POSSIBLE.

RAINBOW CONNECTION STAFF

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

We keep what we have only with vigilance and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps so freedom for the groups springs from our traditions.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A., as a whole.
5. Each Group has but one primary purpose — to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An N.A. Group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every N.A. Group out to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our Service Centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such ought never be organized; but we create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. N.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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