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**No. 10 Aug./Sept. 97**

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**C.N.A.G.**

What is The Confederation Of N.A. Groups? Before we can answer that we have to understand what Service in NA is, and what it is not doing. We must free ourselves of the preconceived notions that have been foisted on members of NA by the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation and go back to the Steps and Traditions to find out the ideas and principles that form the bases and need for service to and in NA. Before anyone can voluntarily serve something or someone they must know what or who they are serving. If that is true, then we need to know Who is NA for?

The simple answer is NA is for Drug Addicts. NA is not Addicts Anonymous. Some members after they have found a new way to live in NA without the use of drugs ask; Why is NA not about caffeine, or sugar, or cigarette addiction, or co-dependence, or gambling, or any one of a thousand other problems that may be helped by working a program based on the Twelve steps. The answer is simple and can be found in the principles that underlie the Fifth Tradition.

The main principle that underlies the Fifth Tradition is that if we are all things to all people, we are nothing to any person. Loss of Focus! We know from the principles of the Fifth Tradition, and the state of affairs of the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation, that if we lose focus on what service is about, we will not be able to do any effective service. That is why the Steps and Traditions limit what service inside the

fellowship is about and what it is not about. This same principle is the main reason service in NA is not about informing the universe about NA because IT MIGHT get back to an addict. Members, recovering addicts are a limited and precious resource, that must be used wisely. One addict to another addict, One on One, that is where the heart of NA beats. Others, non-addicts can carry the message of NA to non-addicts.

The lack of focus by the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation is also the reason that "NA Service Positions" are not filled. Members turn up, suit up, and show up for most anything to do with Step or Tradition based service to the fellowship. They don't do that for the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment corporation, which is also known to CNAG members as the default Service Structure (S.S.). Most addicts stay away from things like Amway, but some do like to be a part of such things.

We, members of NA(CNAG) do not want to get rid of the S.S.--we want them to print lit, distribute lit, sell key tags and medallions, and put on dances and conventions, all the things that have nothing to do with carrying the message. We in NA need at least one outside organization to do those things for us. A Group still must, for the sake of each members own program, provide an atmosphere of recovery.

Part of providing an atmosphere of recovery is helping to provide a place for addicts to have a chance to work the twelfth step. We believe that many in NA today are under a basic misunderstanding. They believe, because they have been lead to believe by other members and the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation, that service is about helping others, doing "GOOD," that NA is some sort of a social service organization. It makes addicts feel good to think of themselves as being philanthropic. It gives an addicts ego and pride a lift. This is false! Service in NA is not about doing "good," nor is NA some sort of Social Services organization.

Service in NA is about the addict doing service--for his own good--not for the good of the still suffering addict! To remain abstinent and to work a program of recovery an addict MUST freely give away to another addict what he has received. It is part of the treatment for the dis-ease of addiction. What ever "GOOD" comes from doing service is a by-product of doing service and is not, nor should it be, the primary motivation for doing service.

The primary reason for doing service is the same as the primary reason to practice a program of recovery. And the same as the primary reason to stay clean, and that is not to do good or help others. The primary reason to do service is to live. It is simply a matter of enlightened self-interest. The "Do-Gooder" attitude that somehow helping others is the goal of service in NA, or that NA is about something other than helping its members recover, leads NA members down the path that helps to kills them and keeps the average clean time in NA so low. We hold that service is failing to achieve its twin goal's of:

1. "Carrying the message to the still suffering addict."
2. "Providing a place for members to take the steps, especially the Twelfth Step!"

Is repeating the same actions and expecting different results insanity? If the default Service Structure repeatedly tries to inform the groups in the same way and it never works, is it insane? Or is that the true goal of the default Service Structure? Is it recovery to try a new way to inform groups? Isn't about time to THINK about a new way to do service. Is it time for a new way? Is it time for CNAG? What is CNAG?

CNAG is a Service Structure for NA Groups that shares Experience, Strength and Hope in the area of recovery known as service. Our Vision statement is simple: That No addict anywhere, need die from the horrors of addiction without first having a chance to find a better way of life. Our Mission statement is simple: To help our vision statement become a reality.

CNAG is not a replacement for the default service structure. The default service structure, more rightly called a Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation, is like all such corporations. It has its "Management Structure," a political structure dedicated to the procurement, distribution, and sale of Products and Entertainment to generate revenue for the survival of the corporation. We are not saying that the default service structure was not at one time radically different in scope and goals. We are speaking only of the current active default service structure of the now.

CNAG does not want to replace the current corporation because, first, and most importantly, CNAG has no opinions on outside enterprises. Secondly, CNAG has no desire to be in competition with the default service structure of NA, such competition would reduce our effectiveness in providing the services necessary for providing an atmosphere of recovery to addicts. Thirdly, CNAG has absolutely no desire to be a revenue generating anything. CNAG wishes for the current system, the Multi-Level Marketing Entertainment Corporation - a.k.a. the default service structure, to distribute, and sell literature, provide medallions and key tags, put on conventions, dances and other entertainment activities for recovering addicts, etc. Oh yes, also to lobby various governments and the medical communities, as they see fit. In fact, to do all those things that have nothing to do with carrying the message addict to addict.

CNAG is only interested in Service as defined in the Twelfth Step and Fifth Tradition of NA. CNAG believes that service in its simplest form is the sharing of experience, strength, and hope. The giving of oneself. This may be expressed by things we do, or things we say. Taking the time to pick up after the meeting, or setting up before, are just some of the first things we do to be of service in CNAG. These early expressions of service prepare us for later work.

CNAG contributes to the growth of Narcotics Anonymous in a variety of ways. The Ninth Tradition: "NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve," provides for the creation of a service structure while protecting the integrity of the group setting, so that Groups can concentrate their efforts towards the personal recovery of members. CNAG tries to bring the message of NA within reach of suffering addicts who may otherwise never hear

it. CNAG also provides a way for NA Groups to be consistent and continuous in our efforts to bring the message to others.

CNAG is dedicated to the ideal that Recovery is the primary Goal of each member of NA, and that each group must provide a way for its members to carry the message to still suffering addicts and work the steps of N.A.

*This is the foundation document of the Confederation of N.A. Groups as approved on July 4, 1996:*

WHEN IN THE COURSE OF GROUP EVENTS it becomes necessary for one set of groups to dissolve the political bands which have connected them another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Twelve Steps of NA, the Twelve Traditions of NA, and the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Groups are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with a certain unalienable purpose, that of carrying the message to the addict who still suffers.

That, to secure this purpose, service structures are instituted among groups, deriving their just powers from the consent of the groups. That, whenever any form of service structure becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the groups to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new service structure, laying its foundation on the spiritual principles embodied in the Twelve Steps and organizing its powers in accord with the Twelve Traditions of NA into such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their purpose.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that service structures long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience has shown, that groups are more disposed, to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpation pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such a service structure, and to provide new standard of vigilance for the Traditions of NA.

Such has been the patient of these groups, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of service. The history of the present System of service is a history of repeated injuries and usurpation, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these groups. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. It has called together service bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from, the depository of their records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with its measures. It has vilified representatives repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, its invasions on the rights of the groups. It has prevented the message from being carried to the populations of far lying groups; for that purpose it has created policies obstructing the translation of literature by individual members; refusing to allow others to write in non-English tongues, and raising the

Many years ago...

In a Fellowship FAR, FAR away...

There were service boards and committees that were governed by the 12 Traditions...

But a dark shadow now covers the land of Recovery...

And the name of that shadow is "CONCEPTS"...

Still, in small rooms around the world, recovering addicts continued to share Experience, Strength, and Hope with each other...

They just could not share the profits from emblems and trinkets that represented the spirit of E,S&H...

Bold Knights from the past may yet be called upon to clean the rust off their Baby Blues and dispense them to the masses at COST!!!-----

AHHHHH...The children are asleep now, shhhhhhhhh.....

MOTHER GSR

conditions of a non-public committee the right of approval of new translations. It has obstructed the administration by the groups, by refusing to establish an archives of common public documents as the groups have granted it the power to do. It has made representatives dependent on its will alone, for the timing and release of documents, events and other matters. It has erected a multitude of offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to usurp from our members, the substance of their service. It has affected to render the service structure independent of, and superior to, the groups power.

For wasting NA resources, for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of any services at all, for wasting countless member hours in useless meeting that produce nothing of service to the fellowship, for establishing therein an arbitrary service structure, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for destroying the absolute autonomy of the groups.

It has abdicated service here, by declaring us out of its protection, and not registering us. It has plundered our members, ravaged our seventh tradition, burnt out our members, and destroyed the lives of other members in opposition to it. In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.

A service structure, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the

service structure of free independent groups. Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their service structure to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the fundamental nature of service in our fellowship. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpation, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity.

We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them in peace friends. We, therefore, the representatives of the Confederation Of Narcotics Anonymous Groups, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good members of these groups, solemnly publish and declare, that this Confederation

*We shall attempt to print all articles promoting a change in our intolerance and indifference towards spiritual principles. We seek any and all ideas for this publication to become a venue for change. All materials shall be printed in a spirit of anonymity.*

*We encourage the use of humor and lampoon to stimulate thought and levity. Our hope is to find ways to transgress the perceived separation that exists amongst members of our society.*

of Groups are, and of right ought to be free and Autonomous Groups; that they are absolved from all allegiance, all political connection between them and any other bodies; and that, as free and Autonomous Groups, they have full power to do all acts and things which Autonomous Groups may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

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## HOW TO SAVE NA

Have you ever thought that maybe you have been spiritually singled out to lead the masses in Narcotics Anonymous? If you feel it's your chosen destiny to better the NA fellowship in spite of its pure simplicity and mundane loving nature, this note is for you.

Over the years I have seen many personalities in the rooms of NA acting in the alleged behalf for the betterment of all addicts in recovery. All of whom have helped me to come to these conclusions. The following is a list of some "things to do" when you've come to the conclusion that you need to "Save The Fellowship":

Join as many subcommittees as humanly possible (with the exception of H&I because it will not bring you the limelight you will need) in order to quickly move up to the top of the food chain in the service structure so that others will recognize you as an authority figure addict.

Memorize the traditions, concepts, and the principles of the steps so that you can twist them to fit what ever agenda or debate you are having on a moments notice and to lecture newcomers on their misguided ways.

Take a firm stand against all other 12 step programs and do not allow your sponsee's to converse with others who have not yet seen the light.

Feel free to lump all people into categories as you see fit.

Forget where you came from, it will do you no good where you are going and it will only make you weak.

Share at ALL meetings you attend, after all, what YOU have to say is for the benefit of the fellowship and is spoken through you, directly from God. Besides, what YOU have to say is probably more important than what someone else has to say.

Never take on meaningless responsibilities like making coffee, setting up chairs, or being a secretary. As these positions will not offer the recognition you deserve, nor will they supply that platform you need to begin your rise to power.

Carefully manage all those you sponsor! Direct them to the joint subcommittees that most need your impact. This next part may be difficult..... MAKE SURE they know exactly what your opinion is before they get to the meeting so you can have an impact even though you are not there.

As a bonus feel free to tell them and those they sponsor what to do in all relationships and if they go against you FIRE them!

Collect and wear loving t-shirts with sayings on them like "One program, One Disease Mine!" You should be able to get a color for every day of the week.

Don't have sex with newcomers in THIS program. I know you hate this one (we all do) but you have to make the sacrifice in order to get the program back on track. Try this: Hook up with someone who has some time, but considerably less than you, that way they will have to do as you say just like your sponsees.

If you manage to work up to the world service level, although you won't be considered the way you should be at the WSC, the folks back home will think you are the big cheese and you may be able to steer your region/area in the right direction.

Sponsor everyone you can, even if you don't have time for them.

Make a list of do's and don'ts and just hand it to them when they need something.

Do not waste time on anything other than being a high ranking soldier in the field of NA, i.e. don't go to school or have hobbies. This way you will remain vigilant in service and know what is happening and you will be able to nip it in the bud before it gets out of control.

Ok boys and girls, go get em! Remember NA needs you, you don't need it

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This Newsletter is being provided to any and all interested members of N.A. at COST please feel free to copy and give out as many of these as you like. We will be printing bi-monthly. Our cost is \$0.64 (includes postage) each so 1 yr, subscription would be \$3.84 (.64x6) Please send articles and newsletter money to:

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Vestaburg MI 48891

please make checks payable to:

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P.S. We also deal in the barter system if you would like to send supplies instead of \$, we need stamps, paper (#20 8 x 11), ink cartridges for Lexmark WinWriter 150C.

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## **The STAND**

We have to make a stand as a Fellowship! It is not healthy to have each new generation completely rewrite our program. Certain basic values and themes need to endure. The course of recovery from tumultuous beginnings, emotional and cerebral surrender, re-evaluation of our relationship with God, ourselves and other human beings, until we reach a point of openness, honesty and willingness to change and grow should always be our focus. Individual members, outside organizations and the random flow of events will always supply plenty of variety and new slants on the 'how to' of recovery. We need to provide the continuity and focus on the internal reality of our addictive need for trusting, for acceptance and for the many various forms of love and personal support it takes to see us through each step of our recovery. This is what we do! It is our ground and recovery is not a fad, subject to the ebbs and flows of science, religion or any outside force or organization. To have this kind of coherence as an organization, we have to stand together on certain issues. This may sound like a directive or like an authoritarian dictate but think about it, isn't it true? Isn't it more of a general perception among members that has a reality and force all its own? Just as not stating it doesn't lessen its truth, so stating it and bringing out into the area of open discussion doesn't actually change the reality. It just gives us a good feeling to know that there are many members who are grateful and intense enough about their NA membership to take a stand when need be.

One of the wonderful things about watching NA for a long time is getting to see this marvelous thing we call 'group conscience' in action. When it sees the need for a change, the change will come. If members want to bolt off into different directions, willies nilly, group conscience can wait for them to regain their senses and sense of reverence and respect. What will distinguish us now as a Fellowship is the emergence of a pattern that reflects all the best of our NA basics and still manages to meet a world subjected to the most intense and disruptive changes a society can bear without being torn apart. By comparison, our NA world of recovery is a relatively pedestrian melange of application and re application of principles that seem to work in a broad range of situations. The thrill of discovery is still a big part of it for me but there is also a comfort in seeing what works in recovery working in other areas of my life and the lives of those with whom I share my existence.



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## OUR HERITAGE

The heritage of the NA way of life is to live at ease with our fellow humans, enjoy living and express the will of our God. We look with gratitude to those who have come before, respect for our fellows and affection for those to come. If you have done your personal best, continue to work your steps and enjoy the Spiritual awakening, you will be guided into the life you always knew was possible for you but could only aspire to before recovery. The Twelve Step recovery process leads addicts like us out of the pain of active addiction into an acceptance of goodness and joy in our lives. The defective character traits that had us enthralled are removed, our broken ties to humanity are restored and we are given spiritual guidance and principles to go forth and live life on life's terms. If you have found regret, seek positive things that you can do to balance the scales. If recovery has seemed a little beyond your reach, step all the way into recovery. Not one member of NA exists who has not felt your pain and hopelessness - and found a way through!

We show our gratitude to those who have gone before by closely examining our history seeking knowledge of their sacrifice and dedication. There are countless brave men and women who cut the path to recovery through mountains of ignorance and superstition. Their honesty, amends and courage has not been wasted! We find neither heroes nor villains but addict doing their best, often in difficult circumstances. Our awareness does them honor.

Respect allows us to accept all addicts seeking recovery as members of our Fellowship. Respect allows us to stop and pay attention when they come to us hurting. It allows us to ask them for help when we need it and to give it when it is needed by those around us. Our common welfare is shared through an opening made in the heart by our surrender. Respect allows us to wait until someone asks for help but we can make ourselves present!

Our affection allows us to prepare a place for addicts to come together and share recovery. it allows us to carry our message into jails, hospitals and part of the world where our way of life is unknown. We can foresee the time when any addict, anywhere, will be able to reach for recovery and find it! By being there for those people, we have stepped out of addiction into a new life. Our heritage is courageous peace.

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## Status Quo

One of the comments that has stuck with me in listening to members in the last few months had to do with a perception that we have exchanged 'group conscience' for the 'status quo'. I'm not sure I understand all this might mean but it seems like instead of informing everyone about something important coming up, allowing for discussion and evaluation to inform a sufficient number of members to consider the subject carefully before any voting or polling takes place that would make major or minor changes in the way we do things as a Fellowship. Then, however the voting goes, everyone abides by the decision because they support the common welfare, they are surrendered as members and feel that all sides of the question was considered by all concerned prior to the voting. The voting is not legislation that sets up rules and regulations for others to follow. In our case it is more like polling where we find out which way the majority of members want to go on a question with the option to create something to meet the unmet needs of members not covered by the final version of the question approved.

Now, status quo is where a bunch of people agree to keep things 'as they are' and generally oppose any tendency to think or question the rulings made by others on issues that will affect us. It is as if questioning was disloyal or somehow out of place. Fear of a negative sanction in some form holds us in check. It is easy to dive on someone who is going ahead into areas which may be uncertain or seemingly different from what others are doing or have done. Status quo keeps things set in a certain pattern or form and is stabilizing. Excessive use of 'statue quo' practices results in strangulation and death to new ideas and approaches without even giving them honest consideration. Not only are the ideas and approaches rejected but also the members who proposed or supported them in the first place. So, under status quo rules, good is where everything chugs along without much significant change. Group conscience, where it is working, allows for changes and adjustments to be made as we go and makes more members feel a part of N.A.

Simply tricking members into voting on issues about which they are uninformed or under-informed simply confuses issues and allows for the passage of motions that have no clear direction as far as the home area or region is concerned. By the time members find out what has happened, many members have left in disgust and others have gotten clean, never suspecting the measure of improprieties taken in the recent past by members who are still allowed to fulfill their terms of office. For me it is very damaging to the spirit of any organization to allow such motions to be presented, much less become the subject and focus of thought and concern. Once passed, such motions are hard to overthrow because they seem so inane to the informed members and may seem spiritual and carefully worded to someone new. These two groups - there may be more! - rarely talk directly with one another.

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**RELAPSE CITY**

If we see someone running wild, unable to take criticism or supportive suggestions, it may be relapse city. When this happens we can help newcomers understand that this is what happens when we forget that no matter who we are, we addicts are all subject to the same rules of recovery. If we forget to surrender, pray and do our part, we will begin to move closer to the next usage. The three great areas of human life: sex, security and society will begin to exhibit some degree of desperation. We will begin to want more than our share. Those who represent obstacles or roadblocks to fulfilling our wants will appear malevolent and hateful. Those who try to help us may appear demented, intrusive or judgmental. We may find ourselves reacting with resentment and negative projection.

If we are very, very lucky, some insightful, sensitive person may point out what they see us doing in such a way that we can hear them or see the point of their concern. By snapping out of the ring of collapsing supports, we can lock onto the positive focus and pull ourselves out of the sequence before it goes any further. While each of us works his or her own individual program, we are also each others eyes and ears. Helping each other perceive and process life in a real manner may be the greatest service we perform in NA.

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## **CHARACTER**

We all have a basic understanding of the recovery process in NA - and we understand that this process should go on as long as we are clean. I know each time I renew my recovery by sincere admission of powerlessness or honestly acting to assist an addict seeking recovery, I am being true to the best in me. While I may remain imperfect and in need of help, I find that real human character is the result of accepting my human condition, the divinity within and making adjustments for whatever limitations and strengths I am subject to, for instance my addictive tendency toward obsession and compulsion.

My attitude can be positive or negative. It will then filter out certain reality as if it were not there, giving me much less than a complete view of things. Then, when things go wrong, how can I act surprised? One of the ways recovery works is to make me aware of how I'm going wrong. Then I have a choice about correcting the error or not. This freedom is important to me because while I don't mind changing, I hate feeling trapped and choice-less! I have learned my beliefs control what I can see, hear and feel. While I don't try to dwell on it, the power my beliefs have over the quality and content of my life is terrifying. My goals today involve states of mind rather than things. As long as my spiritual condition is right, I can generally arrange things to my satisfaction, eventually. If my attitudes and beliefs are in the right place, other people who agree with me can give me the thrill of discovery by pointing out things that deepen or expand my living experience. I am not afraid to let them into my life. People who are indifferent to me don't arouse any impulse to convert or change them. I can just relax and try to see the



world through their eyes or hear the world as it sounds to them. People who for whatever reason disagree with me or see things very differently, no longer appear a threat to me.

I try to listen very carefully to what they are saying and feel like I enjoy an advantage in the situation because unless they are exhibiting some signs of attentiveness or openness, they are going through fear strategies and appear oblivious to some rather key points. Because I am happier with myself and content with God's Will for me, it is either an interesting experience or gives me some insight into the blessings that I might otherwise take for granted.

Greed, lust and pride still play a role in my life but recovery allows me to make adjustments. For one thing, I don't have to be perfect. For another I don't have to live up to the standards of others, especially those who have very deep variances from what I like, love and enjoy. The thing about my relationship with my Higher Power is that much if not all of my sense of lacking or wanting something to complete me has gone out the window. I am just a human being, God is the source of all perfection. I don't need to be God or God like, just a good man who is paying attention and willing to do what is before me. God takes care of the rest while giving me the strength and guidance I need. Sex, security and social recognition are wonderful, happy parts of my life now instead of unattainable goals. Without desperation, sex doesn't accelerate into lust, security doesn't accelerate into greed, and social needs don't enfold into painful clusters of pride.

Through the Twelve Steps of NA, I have discovered how the past has gotten a grip on us. I had the idea that pain is linked to change when the opposite proved to be true.

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## **DISTANCE MAKING BEHAVIOR**

While attending a regional lit workshop in the TriState Region, I stumbled on a simple idea that won't go away. It is so obvious that what's happening may not seem that important on the surface. There was a biker type H&I person there and another member turned out to be a lawyer. At some point in the discussion, I pointed out that both had ways of distancing people and that this restricted their access to others and resulted in some degree of undesired loneliness. Whether it is a pretty girl wearing unattractive clothes or a competent worker screwing up a simple assignment, it is occurring to me that people make distance between them and others out of fear of the other making demands they cannot meet or rejection of their basic identity as human beings. Distance making behavior is a fact of life and everyone needs their space. An exception may be when we addicts are suffering, we may try to make distance between ourselves and those we have asked for help directly as friends or sponsors. We also may be rejecting offers of help or sincere concern from other members who have come to know us as members.

While some of this can be very functional and real, God wants me to be happy and extend my joy in life today. There are new opportunities unfolding in my direction that are astonishing. The clean life never ceases to amaze me. I have the uneasy feeling that we lose many of our members because they don't know it is okay to keep on reaching out even though they have been around awhile. We all still send out signals and indicate our readiness to play, share or give attention to the people we encounter in our day to day life. I feel lucky whenever I can jump out of a track and view the broader horizons that real life has to offer.

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### **What is an Old-timer?**

An Old-timer is someone who hasn't quite achieved dinosaur status, and when you ask him (or her) a question about recovery that they don't know the answer to, they answer "I don't know."

They've worked the steps in order at least 100 times, verified by their sponsor, and have had the subsequent number of spiritual awakenings. They attend a minimum of five meetings per week and are called on to share before they raise their hands in at least three of these meetings. After the meeting they must be approached by at least 10% of the group's members and thanked for their sharing (must be verified by the group secretary).

When they arrive at a meeting, the person next to you says, "Do you know who that is?"

Those who have achieved oldtimers status enjoy special privileges; they are allowed to sit in the padded Old-timer chairs that line the back of the room at area service committee meetings, they may make motions that don't need to be seconded. When two addicts arrive at an empty coffeepot simultaneously, the Old-timer gets first tilt privileges. They are permitted to leave their empty coffee cups out for the newcomers to clean up. And in a meeting after someone with seven years shares too long, oldtimers are allowed are allowed to tell them to shut up and sit down cause they're full of shit.

NEW ATTITUDES  
P O BOX 447  
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