

THE N.A. Way[®]

M A G A Z I N E

March 1989

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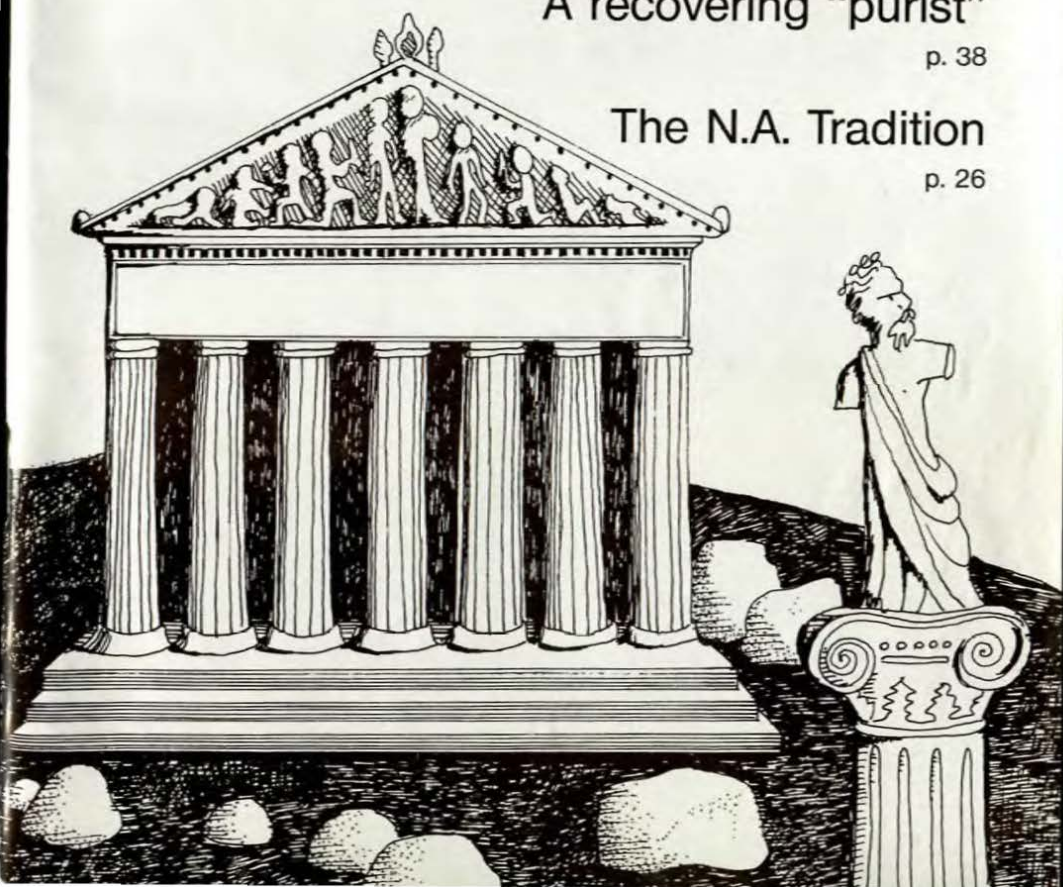
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ANNUAL CLASSICS ISSUE

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The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous

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 these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

THE N.A. Way®

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meeting in print

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The N.A. Way magazine welcomes the participation of its readers. You are invited to share with the entire N.A. Fellowship in our monthly international journal. Send us your experience in recovery, your views on N.A. matters, and feature items. All manuscripts submitted become the property of World Service Office, Inc.

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Memories of Joey

JULY 1986

It's early afternoon on a gray November day, and the world is in transition. The collage of ever-changing fall colors is slowly yielding—yielding to winter and all of her wondrous miracles. And me, I'm just an observer watching from an apartment in Newark, New Jersey. I feel safe and warm, wrapped in the memories of an old friend, and secure in the feeling of a new one (hello K—).

Sometimes I find it difficult to translate memories into words as they come and spill onto paper. They sometimes just seem so inadequate, so empty. "Dear Lord, may you guide my pen as I write of Joey."

Joe R. was an addict and he died. You say, "So what? Addicts die every day!" It's not how Joe died that I want to share, it's how Joe lived. Boy, how he did live!

Packing the truck, we made ready for the return trip. It was decided before K— came down that I would go back with her to visit, to share, and to write. We made plans to leave late Sunday night after the meeting, about ten. I was looking forward to the four-hour journey that lay before us.

We left on time, believe it or not! As we headed toward the Beltway and toward New Jersey, we began to talk. The stars cut brightly through the clear night sky as we reached the highway. The sharing got so intense at times that we inadvertently took an exit lane three different times before leaving Baltimore. When we saw the traffic lights on the beltway we began to laugh at ourselves. Realizing what we had done, we found our path once again and safely tucked ourselves away in the far left lane for the rest of the trip. As we continued to share, this little black truck became filled—filled with the memories of Joe.

He was small in size as far as men go. A neatly trimmed beard tightly hugged his face. It was graying. His hair lay in ringlets closely curled atop his head. This was new, and it looked good. Joe always kept a small grin handy, and wore it often. When meeting you, first time or not, this grin would give way to a big smile and then words would come.

The words that I heard so many times before: "Hi, my name's Joe, I'm an addict from Jersey." Saying this, his brown eyes so full of life began to dance and twinkle with pride. At first he seemed quiet and shy. Shy even to the point of being isolated and withdrawn. If you were fortunate enough, however, to be graced with his friendship, you were truly given a gift from God.

I was Joey's friend, and I experienced that gift. I was witness to a miracle. I was part of a transformation. I watched as this small, shy, withdrawn guy changed. It seemed to me he became a giant. He gave freely

and openly of himself with unconditional love.

It's true that Joe was an addict and that he did die; but not before experiencing recovery. Recovery from the disease of addiction in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. He loved this fellowship and this fellowship loved him in return. The principles of Narcotics Anonymous not only gave him almost four additional years of life, they gave him the freedom to live and enjoy those additional years.

Recently my friend became ill. I began to question his illness, asking, "Why? Why Joey? What has he done?" My faith had been replaced by fear. Terrifying fear! Fear of loss. I

may lose Joe? I remember the night that I got a phone call, and I remember K— telling me, "Joe's in the hospital."

"Again? Oh no, not again."

The next morning I made a phone call sharing the news. The voice on the other end replied, "How soon can you be ready?"

"I'm ready now!"

"I'll be there as soon as possible, be ready."

It was about six that evening before we left. That trip up the Jersey turnpike was long and full of questions. Many questions! We arrived at the hospital in Newark about 10:30 that night. The door to Joe's room was ajar. As we pushed it open Joe was



sleeping. His back was turned toward us. Approaching his bedside we whispered, "Wake up, sweetheart."

As my friend turned, now facing us, I now knew how sick he really was. Even as sick as he was, his spirit could not be dimmed. We were still greeted with that smile. We stayed over that night.

I remember. It was late. I was physically exhausted from the trip and still couldn't sleep. My spirit was spent. My mind full of questions. As I

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lay on the couch, my eyes filled with tears and silent prayer began to trickle down my cheeks. I fell asleep that night crying and praying. The next day was Sunday. It was back to see Joe, then home.

Arriving home I shared my faith, my fears, and my feelings for my friend. My friend who was dying. Dying in a Newark hospital and I couldn't stop it. I felt helpless. The only thing I could do, I did. I stayed in daily contact with God as I understand Him, with K—, and with Narcotics Anonymous.

With the tools granted me by this program and God's grace, I began to rebuild my faith. I surrendered my fear, my powerlessness, and my helplessness. I came to believe that God

had my friend, that Joey was safe in his arms. So when that day came I would be ready. Sure enough, that day did come.

The phone rang. It was Friday morning, the 13th day of September, 1985. As I picked up the phone, I knew. Don't ask me how, but I knew. It was K—.

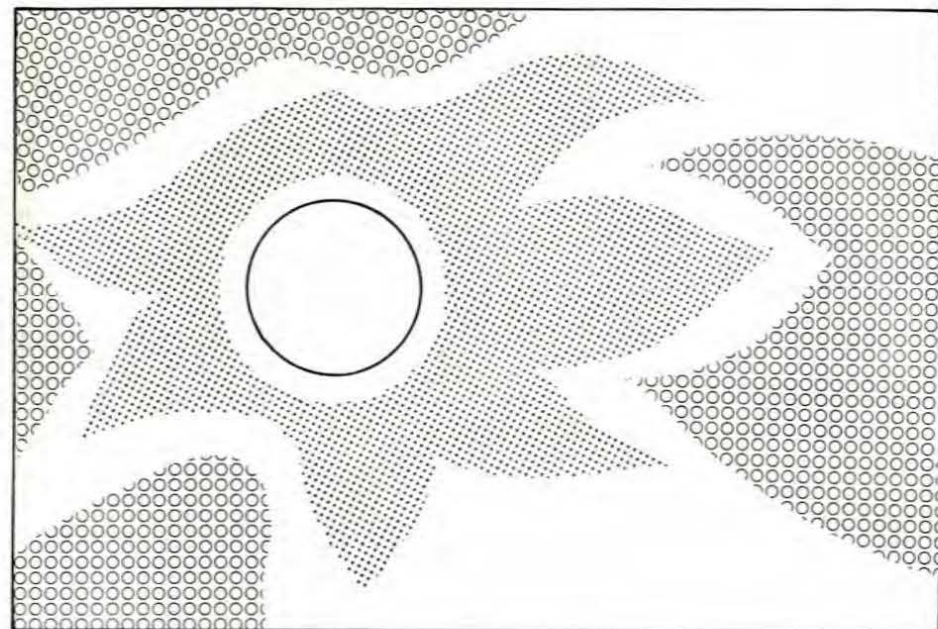
"B—, B—, Joe's gone."

We did our best to console each other. The next few days were spent on the phone making plans and calling people. Plans for a trip that I had to make. A trip to say good-bye and I love you! It's not easy to say goodbye.

I get up early. I'm dressing, preparing myself for the trip which lies before me. Fall's coming, I feel her chill in the early morning air. As I grab a warm shirt from the closet, I feel safe—safe in the darkness of pre-dawn. Very soon now a car will be in my driveway. The car that is to carry us to say goodbye.

The sun was shining that day. It was to be warmer than I had first thought. The services were to be at 11:00 that morning, and it was already after 7:00. It was one of those days. We left around 7:30. We spent the next few hours playing tag all over the state of New Jersey, just missing people and unable to make contact. Our last chance was the church. Pulling up just as the line was forming to leave for the cemetery, we found our place and followed.

Driving through the city where Joey grew up, it was good to be a part of his last goodbye. As the line of thanks passed through the iron gates and down the narrow, winding road, I was



at peace. My friend was home. I was whole again. Returning to the car, the sun was shining, and I felt Joey's smile inside of me. We had first made plans to visit with the family and to pay our

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respects; however our plans were changed. Having no one to follow, and no directions that we trusted, we decided to drive into the city.

We crossed the George Washington Bridge and entered the city. The feel of death was in the air in many parts of the city, as the disease of addiction filled the streets. Junkies clinging tightly to street corners, willingly waiting to die. For us in the car it was a real fix of gratitude. We are alive! Today we know recovery from our disease. And so did Joey. He did not have to die here, like this. He died clean. Thanks to Narcotics Anonymous, so can we, you and I.

That was almost two months ago now. Today I am full. I am alive. Living and enjoying life. Today I am grateful. Grateful to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous for the ability to be a friend.

I will carry with me always the gift of Joe. The memory of his smile will light my soul on a daily basis.

Thanks, Joe. I love you!

B.Z., Maryland

N.A. magic

NOVEMBER 1985

I believe there is a three-part process that the "winners" go through in becoming winners. I don't know about anyone else, but after I had detoxed, I wanted what those people I now call "winners" had. We all know the ones I'm referring to—the ones with that special shine in their eyes, the friendliness, the true demonstrated concern, that "at peace" attitude. These were the things I wanted; that was recovery!

My experience over the last twenty-eight hundred days of abstinence led to the following conclusion about this type of N.A. recovery. All these members seemed to have three things in common—the three things I have come to call "the trilogy of N.A."

1. They worked the personal program of recovery, the Twelve Steps of N.A., in their entirety.
2. They were involved in the fellowship (meetings, functions) of N.A.
3. They were involved in the N.A. service structure.

Pretty simple, huh? Well, for my first four years of clean time I refused to accept that these were ways to recovery. Sure, I worked the steps, but all of them? Come on man! I also participated in the N.A. Fellowship, but I

participated in other Twelve Step fellowships too. And hey! I was secretary of the recovery house meeting I went through for fourteen months! Only missed five meetings!

More would be revealed.

It wasn't enough (I hope you guessed that). I wasn't at peace, I wasn't happy with myself—or anyone else for that matter.

In other fellowships I couldn't talk about my addiction freely, and I couldn't relate to the literature. I looked at my secretary job as an ego builder for a while, but it then became a chore. I hadn't worked the steps in their entirety because I rationalized that the one-hundred-plus hours I spent in group was an ample substitute for a Fourth and Fifth Step. I wasn't taking direction from anyone; I was too selfish, scared, egotistical and ashamed (all at once!) to ask another man to get close to me.

Then a miracle happened. One of those recovering people called me during one of my routine clean crises. He asked me, "Who is your sponsor? Have you done your Fourth and Fifth? Are you carrying the message to the addict who still suffers? Do you feel good about yourself? Are you happy?"

To all these questions I had to answer, "No."

Needless to say, the man became my sponsor immediately. Since then, my life has changed, from the inside out. I learned to work the steps as they are written. I got involved in N.A. service. And most importantly for me, I began to recover solely in N.A., the only Twelve Step fellowship that offered me recovery from the disease I suffered from, the disease of addiction.



Since then I have made what I believe to be spiritual progress. Not that my life is a bed of roses, but that

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the way I react to life has changed. The process of working on my insides via "the trilogy of N.A." has enabled me to better handle all outside situations.

I have had the opportunity to experience the magic of Narcotics Anonymous! I know that it has dramatically changed my recovery, and has enabled me to better carry the message to the addict who still suffers. I hope that you who are reading this will also be able to experience the magic I'm talking about—the ability to feel good about myself and my friends, the ability to be responsible. The simple *natural* calmness that comes from no longer thinking that I am the center of the universe. The complete freedom of having a choice today! These are just a few of the benefits that the magic of N.A. has allowed me to experience, and I am grateful.

I hope that you can come to know the magic I speak of, which is almost impossible to describe. Keep coming back—to N.A.!! Try the "trilogy." The magic is waiting.

C.G., California

A thought on oldtimers

MAY 1985

Oldtimers in Narcotics Anonymous are strange folks. Their eyes aren't bloodshot, their arms aren't marked up, their hands don't shake as much as they used to, they can speak without stuttering, and some even look like regular people! They can, however, be hard to find. Even when we think we have one, it is sometimes hard to tell for sure.

Having devoted a lot of thought to this matter, I would like to share some things with the fellowship. These are simply my thoughts, but I think they might have some value.

I used to be hesitant to write about this topic because I was afraid that the "Ancient Ones" might change if they thought we understood them. Addicts can be that way, you know! More on this later.

I can say straight out that one characteristic which qualifies an N.A. member as a possible oldtimer is the way they part with their wisdom. Yes! Just pick out someone who you think might be an oldtimer, and ask that person a question. Depending on what they do, you can tell right away if they are

faking it.

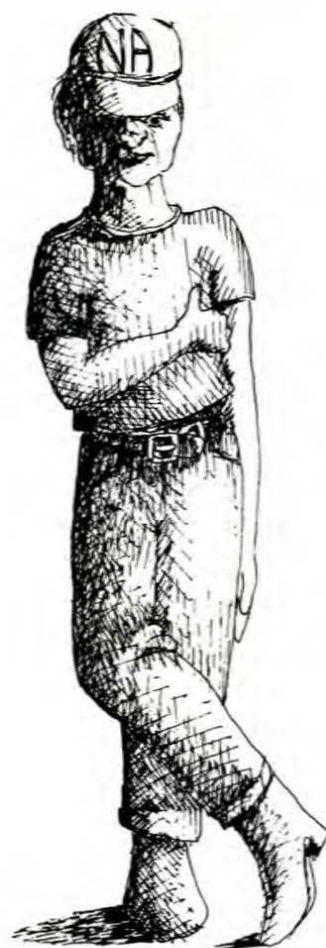
If we get a bunch of advice, we can tell the person is faking it. This isn't too dangerous, though, because we wouldn't listen anyway. We all know that advice is cheap and worthless. After all, if advice worked, we could all have been cured long ago!

Bona-fide oldtimers will always share about themselves when we ask for answers. I know it sounds crazy, but that is what they do. It can be very frustrating to ask one of these old fossils how to get through a crisis, or how to get rid of a character defect, and have to listen instead to how they worked their program and what happened.

Anyway, if we find a person who passes this preliminary test, we must keep watching them! You see, in 1983, I accidentally discovered the absolutely indisputable quality which gives away

I expected those people to just throw a tantrum like the rest of us would. Instead, they excused themselves to go work the steps!

an oldtimer. The most valuable of these strange folks will actually show us how they work the program if we wait long enough. It happens eventually, so we must be alert!



It seems that I had to attend the 1983 World Service Conference because nobody else could go and everyone wondered what all the initials stood for. Also, I was curious to see one of those "California addicts" that we always hear about. Well, while I was trying to figure out what all the fuss was about, I noticed a very unnatural phenomenon. More than once, some seemingly intelligent RSR or committee chairman would get upset, mad, or

full of resentment over not getting his or her way with some issue before the conference.

This appeared normal to me, and I expected those people to just throw a tantrum or start a fist fight like the rest of us usually do. Instead, they would excuse themselves to go work steps immediately! Upon their return, I noticed that they were ready to accept the wishes of the fellowship and go on to the next issue. Amazing!

Another time, a fellow whom I respect very much shared with me his experience of that particular day. It seems that the opportunity had arisen to rip off a company and the desire to do it was totally absent. It was the first time in several years of clean time that overcoming the desire wasn't a problem in that circumstance. This change in his integrity was so startling as to be troublesome to him. He had never shared this with me before because he didn't want me to think that oldtimers still had problems! This incident made my knees go weak! I was witnessing the transition from one of "us" to one of "them."

Until recently, I had never told any of these people how they had given me renewed faith and commitment by simply allowing me to be present while they worked their program. As I said before, I always thought it would create change or even resentment. Today I know that oldtimers won't change simply because I stole some insight from them. You see, I think that this type of behavior is somehow at the very core of our program of recovery. It is spiritual and it is what works—at least for me.

S.S., Colorado

What's greater than recovery

OCTOBER 1987

Believe me when I tell you that N.A. saved my life. Just when all was dark and I thought I was really cooked, I found N.A. and the miracle of recovery from the disease of addiction. But this article is about something more than that.

Has anybody else ever heard about this "it's a family illness" business? I know I heard that said all the time, and when I did, it conjured up images of old alcoholics and their enabling wives, the kids all doing time in their roles as "family mascot," "the scapegoat," etc.

In fact, sometimes after meetings during coffee shop discussions, the topic of our sick families came up. I know I would take my family's inventory with astonishing ease and move on to the next topic. I wanted to write this article as an affirmation of the fact that yes, *addiction kills families* as well as individuals. But more than that, just as individuals can recover, so too can families.

It all sort of snuck up on me. I have older and younger brothers and a

younger sister. Ten years ago, I could paint a picture familiar to many of you, about how all four of us were traveling down the pathway of active drug addiction. The level of insanity was incredible. To say that we had no healthy family structure is an enormous understatement. All six of us were trapped in a vicious and insane world.

Well, my older brother got clean and I followed him a few years later. Then my sister and younger brother got clean, Mom and Dad were divorced, and Mom got help. In and of itself, this is a miracle for which I could not possibly express my gratitude in words alone. But there is more to this story than just telling how happy I am that my brothers, my

The word "family" used to mean an ugly black space in my life. Today, my family has a beautiful and alive personal recovery.

sister and I all have more than three years clean.

As we have progressed in our personal recoveries, so too has our ability to love each other and communicate grown. A family gathering, which for me used to be a terribly painful thing, something to be avoided if at all possible, has now become something

that I love, something I look forward to.

Today, my family, like me, has a beautiful and alive personal recovery. Today I feel like I have "backing." I never, ever, ever could have believed that there was a chance to have what I have today. The word "family" used to mean an ugly black space in my life that I sort of ignored or covered up.

Like it says in the Twelfth Step, though, I have learned that the spiritual principles that I am supposed to be applying in my life apply to *all* my affairs. When I took an honest inventory, I found that I had sort of put my family in a different category.

I am hoping with all my heart that someone out there who is reading this can reach the faith and hope that their family *can* recover from the horrors of addiction just as much as an individual can. Today I know that the strength of my experiences, as part of a growing family, will help me to see what a healthy family is like, and better yet, what I have to do to be a contributing member.

I hear a lot of talk about being a responsible, productive member of society. For me, that began by becoming a responsible, productive member of a family!

R.L., North Dakota



Sharing with empathy

MARCH 1983

I was talking to a suffering addict today in a detox unit. For a few moments while sharing intensely, answering questions about surrender and coming to believe, I lost my ego, just briefly. Before I knew it, two hours had passed and we were both still talking enthusiastically.

This new person asked me what empathy was, and I attempted to explain it using a quote from "We Do Recover" in the White Booklet. Empathy is "a wordless language of recognition, belief, and faith," I told him. I knew from our earlier conversation that "Faith and God" turned him off or at least made him uncomfortable. I wanted to be careful to explain simply and truthfully what I believe, hoping that he would understand.

Empathy, to me, is being able to feel someone else's pain or joy. It begins with recognition or identification. Identification is knowing the sincerity and truth of another person's words or actions because we've "been there." Identification is what you and I share that allows us to talk so freely, even

though we barely know each other's names.

We identify with each other at a deep level. We recognize each other's pain, self-loathing and self-disgust. We've both experienced the horror of addiction, the terror of finding out that we've failed to stay clean once again even though we knew we could do it this time.

We knew we had to keep off dope, yet after a short time, we'd find some reason to take the first one (ignoring or denying what we knew about the results). We share that terror, the kind of terror that non-addicted people do not understand.

For us, empathy starts here with recognition of each other as kindred spirits. Okay, so take recognition and identification one step further and it becomes belief. We lack belief when we isolate ourselves, listen to ourselves and get caught in our own traps. We begin to believe "once an addict, always an addict." There's no hope, I'll always be either strung out or coming down or getting ready for the next run. All of our efforts, all of our solutions fail.

Then we meet a clean addict. Identification tells me he's just like me, thinks like I do, has had experiences like mine...and he's clean, he says he's been clean for some time. He says he has a plan for staying clean and growing up. I know he's telling the truth about addiction because it's my life story he's telling.



I begin to think, maybe, that some of the things he says about this "recovery" might just work—maybe. Belief sparks that jump from identification to accepting some unknown

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possibility. This spark of belief is something that happens to me, I didn't do it, it just happens or occurs to me.

Faith is acting on my belief. I exercise faith when I try to follow some of the directions from this other human being who I have identified with and who has sparked some belief that I didn't have before sharing together.

Empathy sometimes feels like magic. It allows me to share those parts of my story that the person I'm sharing with can most relate to. Empathy is directly related to my spiritual growth and conscious contact with my God. It allows me a space of selflessness from which to share recovery.

Anonymous



Back to the basics

OCTOBER 1985

I began my progress toward recovery almost four years ago, and I remember the excitement and relief I felt when I found that there was hope for this lost soul. I found that I wasn't hopelessly insane or unreachable. After a short stay in an institution where my addiction was diagnosed, I began to diligently work the steps that would save my life. I was desperately lonely and my life was in total turmoil. I learned about a Higher Power and began putting the steps of this program to work in my life. Especially the first Three Steps. I learned to trust the will of a power greater than myself. My life began to change.

Things didn't go very fast, and at times I became impatient, but I began to get well. I began to look the world in the eyes instead of the shoelaces. The chaos and shambles that my eleven years of using had given me began to fall neatly into order. Joy began to emerge, replacing the thoughts of suicide that used to dominate my moods. Miracles began to happen to me.

My father and I began to rebuild a long-destroyed relationship. We be-

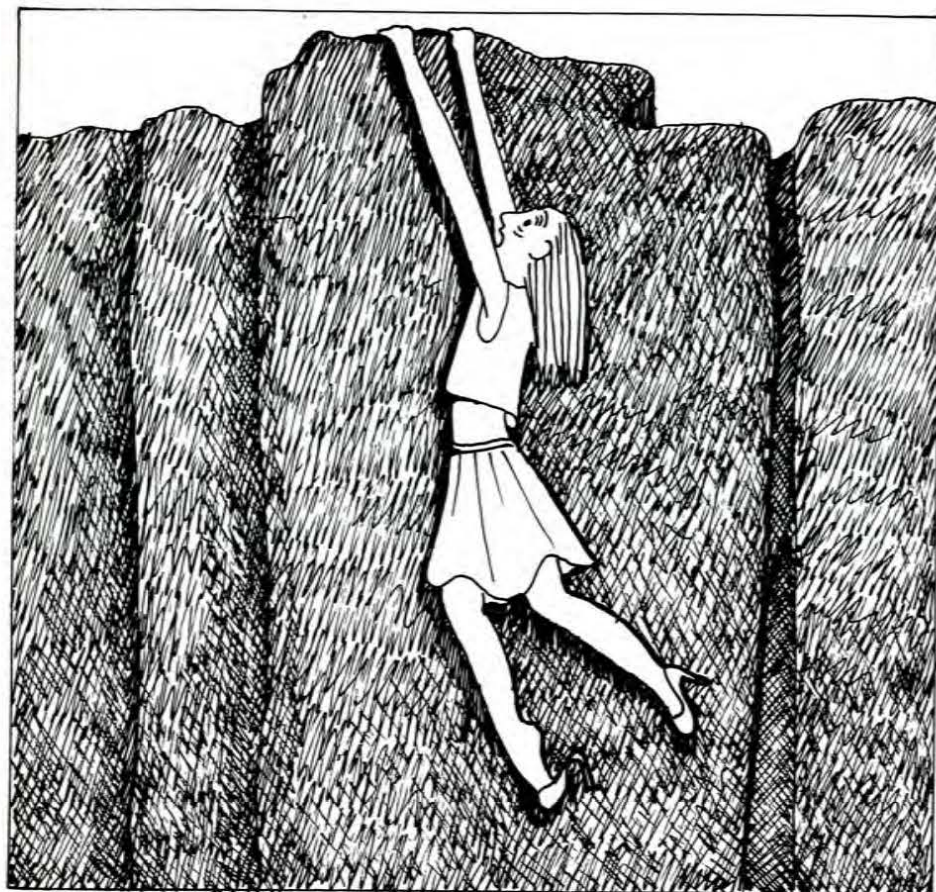
came friends. This from the hate and utter disgust we used to feel for each other. I was happy realizing that I had been given a new chance at life. I had friends and a huge extended family of addicts. I had a job that I liked, and became a consistent name on the dean's list of our local college.

I began to get so involved in becoming a responsible, productive member of our society that I became complacent about working the steps and doing the other things that had saved my life. I would be so busy keeping up my dean's list image that I would stay home and work on a paper instead of making my regular meeting. I missed my daily meditation using my busy life for an excuse. I began to feel that I didn't need the program, as the

I didn't want to use; but I thought there was little left for me in the smoke-filled meeting rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

occasional weekly meeting missing stretched into months.

I didn't want to use; I still connected that with the pain and loneliness of former years. I thought, however that there was little left for me in the smoke-filled meeting rooms of N.A. Last March I came to the edge



of a cliff that made me look at all of this. I thank my Higher Power for this.

I was burned out with my job, dissatisfied with school and alone. For a time before this there were other signs that I missed somehow. My relationships began to become less important to me and broke down. Friends tried to reach me and asked me about my depression that I didn't think existed. I found myself in March running down a dark and restless tunnel. I was forced to change.

I was fortunate to have the chance to take a break from it all. During the next few months I was given a lot of

time to think about my responsibilities to myself and to the program. I found across the country a caring and loving community of addicts willing to help me rebuild my sense of self. I looked at other communities and found a home nowhere but with the family of addicts in N.A.

I am again grateful that I have been given the opportunity to give back a little of the life that N.A. has given me. I didn't even know that I had become apathetic and ungrateful, but I know again the excitement that comes from new growth in the program.

M.D., North Dakota

Relationships in recovery

OCTOBER 1984

Women in the Fellowship of N.A. are very special in my life today. This was not so when I first started coming to meetings. Since then, I've come to believe that God wants us to do more than just survive. He wants us to have victory over our daily struggles, and to have respect and dignity. I've found a new freedom through working the steps—freedom from guilt, and from that feeling that I owe someone something because they were nice to me. The program gives me a way of dealing with these thoughts and feelings.

I thought that the love and companionship of women was the last thing I needed, but deep in my heart I always longed for a female friend. I think it was partly my own self-esteem that kept me away, and partly the feeling of having to compete for the attention of men.

I came to N.A. at first for the wrong reasons. I had a sentencing coming up in three months, and I was scared to death about spending any time in jail, so I thought I'd attend meetings to show the judge that I was trying. Never for a minute did I think that this

would work for me; that my life would change and I'd be clean.

I thought I was unique. The few women I saw at meetings didn't literally live on the streets like I did. They *couldn't* know the pain I felt.

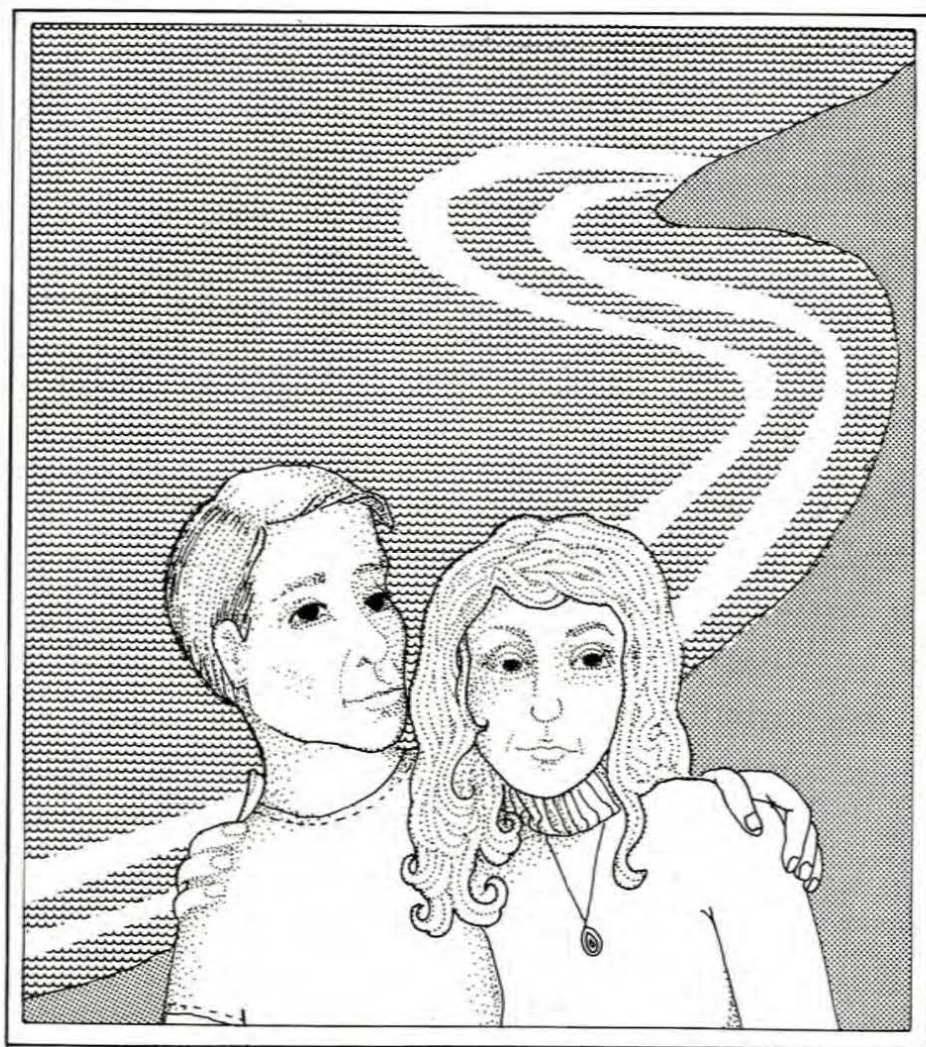
I can remember how the drugs had taken their toll on me physically. I knew about the mental collapse; I was miserable inside. I had no hope, I didn't believe that I deserved anything better than death. I carried these feelings inside me to and from meetings.

It took a few months for me to actually get clean. I had to go back and find out that I couldn't run the street

Lust, flirtation, the games that go along with those—I had difficulty accepting that I was that type of woman.

like I did, and I had to experience the feeling of not belonging with old acquaintances, so now I didn't belong anywhere! But the pain of not feeling like I belonged in N.A. was less than the pain I felt on the streets, so I kept on coming.

When I celebrated thirty days, I felt a sense of accomplishment. That was new for me. I liked it, and wanted more. At one meeting someone suggested that I get a sponsor, so right



after the meeting I asked a man who sounded good when he talked. He told me he couldn't, and suggested that I ask a woman. There were three, and I asked one after the other. All refused for one reason or another.

Finally I found a woman who was willing to sponsor me. She took time out on her job to listen, and to share with me. One thing she told me a few times that stuck was, "Give yourself

some time; you owe it to yourself." I held on to those thoughts—even though I didn't really believe it, I trusted my sponsor. Just maybe she was right; she sounded so soft, kind, loving and understanding, while I was rough, tough and defiant.

When I had made a decision to try to stay clean, another member suggested that I go to a women's meeting. "Are you kidding?" I thought, "Me go to a women's meeting?" But I went,

and I shared honestly for the first time. I listened to some suggestions that were given, and when I went home, I tried to follow them. It was then that I began to understand the Second and Third Steps. I prayed for God's help, and put genuine effort into working them.

After five or six months, I moved on to the Fourth Step, and then the fifth.

Deep in my heart,
I longed for a
female friend. But
my low self-esteem
combined with the
sense of
competition kept
me away.

Again I prayed for God's help, and with my sponsor's guidance, I got through it. It was almost a year before I moved on to the next steps. During that time I grew more and more aware of my defects. I held that pain inside, letting other people think I was OK.

One day, shortly after celebrating nine months, I had an argument with my boyfriend. To my surprise, for the first time, I had a strong urge to use. It was very hard to be honest about that, but after quite a struggle, I opened up about it. I had to, or I would have used eventually. Since that time, I have begun to practice sharing more honestly at meetings. That was difficult at first, but I knew I had to do it.

When I was clean seventeen months, I became increasingly aware of the defects that were stunting my growth. Lust, flirtation, the games that go along with those—I had difficulty accepting that I was that type of woman, so I suffered with these defects alone for three months. The pain then became so unbearable that I became entirely ready to change—to move on to my Sixth Step.

I began to better understand the word "surrender" after asking God to help me, discussing it with my sponsor, and sharing about it at meetings. My faith in God had grown through working the steps. Now at times I feel almost overwhelmed by recovery, and I'm so grateful to God and to N.A.

When I celebrated two years clean, my boyfriend and I became engaged—another commitment that came with hard work. I'm glad we didn't rush the relationship. We didn't shack up or marry after we knew each other just a few months. I see so many relationships in distress because people try to advance their lives at the expense of other things. With us, recovery has always come first. I thank God we've had the willingness to keep it that way.

I've been able to develop those friendships with other women, and to keep those relationships as a top priority. As a result, people respect me today, and maybe more importantly, I respect myself. I know that this is all a gift from the God of my understanding. My part was the willingness to follow the suggestions that I heard in N.A. The quality of my relationships in recovery has made it all worth it.

H.H., New Jersey

Cliche collection

APRIL 1986

A few years ago I was running around like a chicken with my head cut off. From the crack of dawn till the dead of night I raised hell, and I tried to paint the town red. Drunker than a skunk and high as a kite was the only life I knew. It seemed I was facing a fate worse than death. I found myself up to my neck in hot water, because all hell was breaking loose.

I was mad as a wet hen when I was sent to a treatment center. The naked truth of the matter is that it was a

blessing in disguise, a gift from God. It was not a bed of roses, nor was it a barrel of laughs. I was truly in the depths of despair sitting on my pity pot crying my eyes out. Like a bolt of lightning I jumped to a conclusion: I must change my evil ways.

Today, beyond a shadow of a doubt, I am the best me I can be. I remember the good old days but I don't dwell in the past. I have a new freedom, a freedom from bondage. I've learned to let go and let God run my life, because I'm powerless over people, places and things. I have to live and let live one day at a time. Sometimes I try to get ahead of myself, and I have to remember, easy does it.

Living clean and serene is not a piece of cake, but like they say, "no pain, no gain." Today I'm not what I want to be, and I'm not what I ought to be, but I thank God I'm not what I used to be. I strive for progress, not perfection. Just for today I'm happy, joyous and free.

R.C., Florida



Coming into my own through Him

MARCH 1985

The word "God" is only a word. It is but a symbol that must correspond to some reality before it has true substance. To say that I fully understand that word would be to claim that I am superhuman. But to say that my understanding of God is growing and developing is to say that I am recovering from addiction through the Twelve Steps of N.A.

The phrase, "God, as we understood Him," can seem like a stumbling block when you know inside that you don't understand God at all. My sponsor helped me through that by explaining that an honest desire to develop an understanding was all I needed. None of us has complete understanding of God, so my hazy understanding was enough for a beginning.

That desire has since blossomed into a concept of God that is very real to me. It is my source of inner daily life. How did I go from seeing "God" as just an empty word to having a relationship with the reality beyond

the symbol? By practicing the principles of N.A. with honesty, open-mindedness and willingness.

I believe today that my spiritual awakening began when I expressed the willingness to grow in my understanding of God. From there, God nurtured me along. He gave me the freedom of choice, and the ability to learn from the consequences of my choices. Sometimes that's great, other times it's painful, but with each choice comes an opportunity for growth.

Those "coincidences" that seem to keep happening in recovery have always enriched my concept of God. As so many others have said, I now see those as little miracles. My faith and trust are reinforced each time I see the hand of a Higher Power in the circumstances of my life.

Another important source of my growing understanding of God is all the other members of N.A. My spon-

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sor, my friends, people who share at meetings, newcomers, oldtimers—everyone who is trying to grow spiritually and is willing to share honestly about it—all play a role in teaching me

more about God. As long as I stay teachable, I grow.

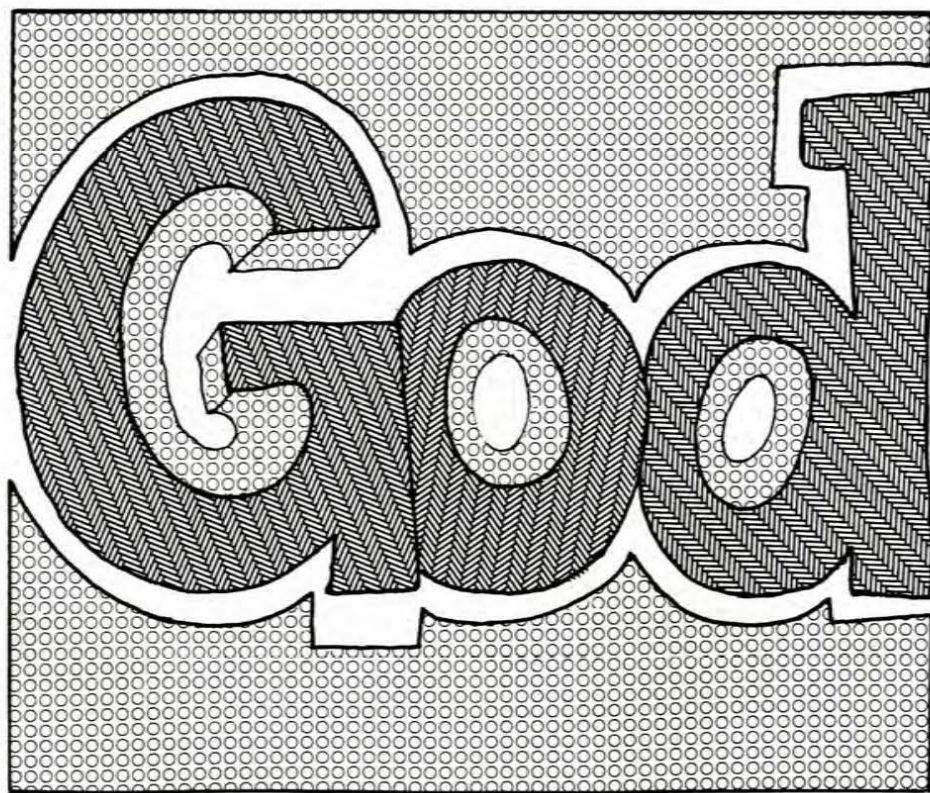
Maybe the hardest obstacle to get over in my spiritual awakening was that I tended to blame God for my living problems. My father left me when I was seven, my mother died when I was eighteen, I felt abandoned and isolated; how could a loving God allow all that?

Today that whole issue has simply lost its importance for me. God is not some vengeful being bringing bad stuff down on people, he is a loving Power who offers relief from all that. I take responsibility for my own behavior today, and I choose thoughts and actions that give me a greater freedom. It's all in the Twelve Steps.

I thank God today that I was taught that stopping using isn't enough. Stopping using is only the beginning. For me this program is about grasping and developing a spiritual way of life. That quest gets richer as time goes by.

The word "God" becomes full of rich meaning. I now see that there is a harmony to all things that I either choose by my thoughts and actions to flow with, or I choose to violate. If I choose not to harmonize with what I deeply know is right, then my misery is my own problem. What a simple lesson! Someone once said, "If God is the answer, what is the question?" I may not have the words for it, but I know. Do you?

R.H., New Jersey



My love affair with N.A.

OCTOBER 1984

From the time I was a little girl I was always trying to be someone other than myself. I did have parents who gave me love, but the feelings of self-love and self-worth were not there. I searched for those feelings for many years through broken relationships, and I thought I had found the answer in drugs. The time came, as it always does, when the drugs stopped working; I found myself praying for death—it seemed the only way out of the hellish nightmare.

I was put in treatment against my will. That wasn't as surprising as it might seem, because as a using addict I had no real control over my own life. I was in treatment for three and a half months. During that time I heard the message of recovery. The only thing I was capable of doing at first was going to the meetings and not using.

When I had about six months clean, I had the opportunity to go to an N.A. convention. That was the beginning of a new life for me. I somehow knew that the genuine caring and concern—the real honest love—that the people at that convention showed both for me

and for themselves wasn't any kind of false front.

As the addicts had in my hometown, these addicts loved me until I could love myself. During that three days a miracle happened in my life—the desire to stay clean and to be a part of this fellowship was born within me.

I came home and began to share in meetings and reach out for help. I began doing service work by helping set up the meetings and by sharing with frightened newcomers.

Narcotics Anonymous became my Higher Power. By doing service work I found self-worth and love for myself—the things that I had been searching for all my life!

It was very obvious to me that in order to stay clean I had to decide to give N.A. the same love and allegiance

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that I had given drugs. To this very day I have never regretted that decision. Slowly, I began to apply the steps in my life, and through them I found a Higher Power.

The love still burns within me for this beautiful fellowship. I have an



N.A. family, and am secure in the love of this fellowship. I am proud of who I am today!

I just had my three-year birthday, and I realize that the things that applied in the beginning still apply today. I am very active in service work—the backbone of my recovery. Giving has helped me become a part of society.

There are no words to describe the

love I have for N.A. By living the principles of this program, I can carry to the still-suffering addict the message that there is indeed a better way of life.

Each day clean shatters any doubts that N.A. does work. Thank you, N.A., for giving me back my life, and for helping me each day to learn how to live.

C.M., Louisiana

Words of thanks

NOVEMBER 1986

I have always been hopelessly optimistic. Even in the pits of despair, with an avalanche behind me, a tornado beside me, a hurricane inside me, and hail stones beating down on the top of my head, I would declare, "Tomorrow, everything will be all right." Thank God for that attitude, which I still have, with one or two small adjustments. Today, with God's help, everything will be okay.

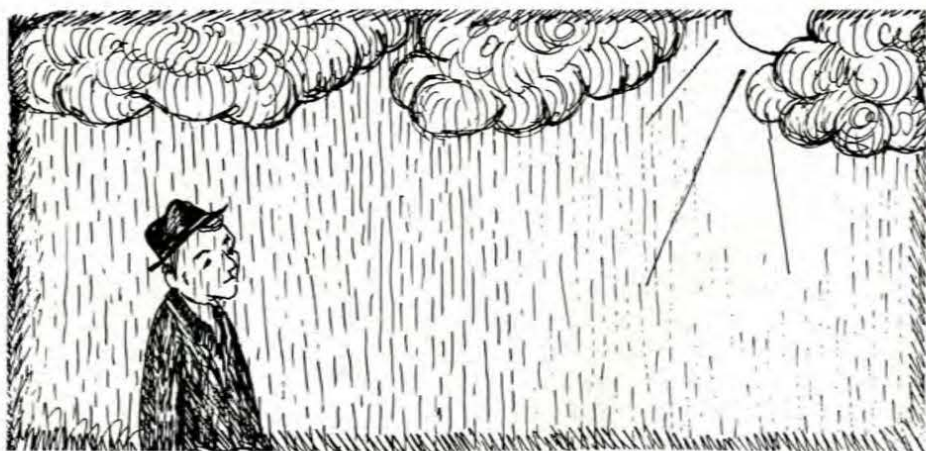
For many years I was totally confused and without direction. I had no purpose, no values, no principles. Only situation after situation, seemingly unrelated. It's sometimes hard to

understand the reasons for our pain, why we suffer so much at the mercy of unrelated situations that don't seem to mean anything. But today, on the other side of the horizon, I know why I suffered.

I suffered to find N.A.; to find the love and fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous; to find the peace of knowing, loving and trusting my own Higher Power to guide me through; to help someone else, the experience of my pain behind me; to watch myself and the world around me with different eyes; to live each day to the best of my ability, in tune with God; to reach out for help; to ask for and use advice; to have self-respect; to make mistakes and learn from them; to be able to feel someone else's pain, or joy, from being able to feel my own; to be able to make decisions and live by them—or to change my mind and live by that.

I am free from the bondage of active addiction today. Free to grow, learn, love, laugh, hope, enjoy and pray. Today I am so grateful to N.A., for you have changed my life.

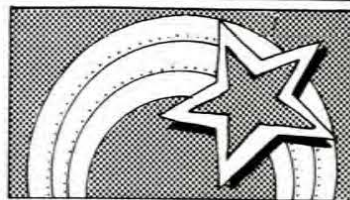
T.V., Canada



Home Group "Poor Slugg"



Feature



The ties that bind

JANUARY 1985

"As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well." What are those "ties that bind?" The answer to that question seems to change as we grow into a greater awareness. I have some thoughts to share about those ties as I see them today.

One important tie that binds us together is our personal tolerance of individual differences. We come to this program from active addiction still often carrying the old baggage of prejudice, mistrust, insecurity and warped values. In such a state, our tendency has been to become pre-occupied with flushing out the defects of character in other members.

We need some time to practice the new values we adopt in N.A. After a period of recovery, this tension eases. We come to see many of our former states of mind as insanity, which recovery gradually replaces with new

levels of open-mindedness. We accept with gratitude every "growing experience" along that path.

This "growing clean by growing together" is definitely a factor that binds our fellowship together. Resistance to recovery gradually fades in the light of the openness and acceptance shining at N.A. meetings. We are a diverse fellowship. Our common survival depends upon valuing this diversity. Our love cannot be selective. It must grow beyond the fetters of selfishness to become unconditional.

A second "tie that binds us together" lies in our phrase, "principles before personalities." Individually we must learn principled living so that collectively we can experience harmony. The key to understanding this point, as our Twelfth Tradition states, will be to grasp the spiritual significance of anonymity.

Anonymity is much more than confidentiality, and far less than secrecy. The "spiritual foundation" of our fellowship lies in an inner current of spirituality flowing in the heart of each member in equal measure. By stripping away the outer layers of self-centeredness, this "inner sanctum" of serenity can be reached.

In this light, there is a simple core to the principle of anonymity: it is not my name or status that defines success in N.A., nor is it my employment, my

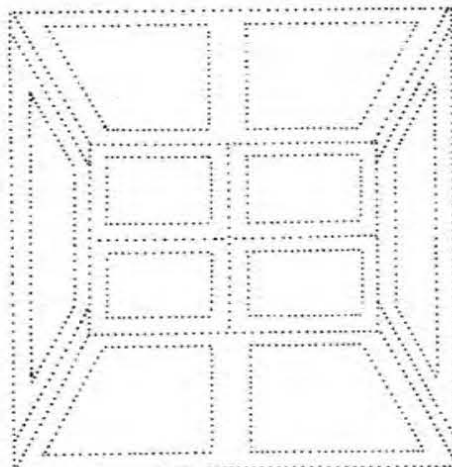
record or my story; what really counts in N.A. is my willingness to surrender my self-serving, self-willed impulses and tendencies, and become guided by that inner, calm connection to the universal spirit of our Second Tradition. In our discussion of anonymity, that point is often missed.

A third tie, which flows naturally from the first two, is service. When service is a "labor of love" which springs from our spiritual foundation, as described in the previous paragraph, it becomes a vital and necessary part of our common survival. When we are free of envy and personal power struggles, we are free to allow each member to do what he or she does best.

Our feelings of uniqueness or differentness used to alienate us from the world and keep us sick. In service to N.A., individual differences are our

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greatest strength. When the feelings of isolation and separateness have been eliminated by our growing sense of our universal spirit, service highlights our individual strengths and teaches competence and self-esteem.



We must be cautious, though, of allowing our desire to serve eclipse our need to recover. It would seem to me that the first priority is the reduction of "self," and the growth of spirit (the Twelve Steps). Only then are we ready to serve N.A. without bringing with us a hidden agenda of selfish motives. If service is to be a "tie that binds," it must be a flow of spirit, not of self. Service, in its healthiest form, is gratitude made visible.

What happens when we are bound together in spirit? We provide an arena into which a suffering addict can step and find recovery. We have no higher priority than that.

For the first time in history, there is a program of recovery for addicts that unifies us all under a single umbrella of spirit. We are that program! We must rise to this historic call by surrendering self-centeredness and striving for an always greater unity. We're well on our way now to the maturity of spirit we'll need to pull this off. I hope you're in there pitching. We need you.

Anonymous, Iowa

Tradition Three

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using."

MARCH 1985

At my first meeting I had the misfortune of meeting a couple of overzealous members who ridiculed the way I was dressed—I was wearing a business suit. I felt intimidated; maybe I was not ready to clean up, maybe I hadn't lost enough yet, or hit my bottom. In any case, I took the comments of these addicts at face value. Therefore, I did not feel entirely welcome at my first meeting.

It got a little better at meetings after that, but because I had no understanding of the differences between financial and emotional bottoms, I wasn't sure that my life had become unmanageable. I began excluding myself from the fellowship. I had unconsciously bought what those two members had said, and had created some unwritten requirements for membership.

I'm sure I was suffering from a loser complex, but nevertheless, I believed that I wasn't as bad as those I'd met at

my first meeting. I hadn't been to prison or an asylum, nor had I been a prostitute or committed any felonious acts. On the other hand, I had gone far beyond the level of pothead or pill freak, and took great pride in being a street junkie. I was caught in the trap of seeing only the differences, and none of the similarities with other addicts.

It seemed obvious to me that I didn't belong in N.A., because I had little desire to be like some of the people I had met in there. In retrospect, I realize that I wasn't ready at that time. I guess I wasn't desperate enough.

It was only after a few more years of doing it my way that I got to a point where my way just didn't work anymore. I knew there must be more to

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life than the meager existence I was living.

An accident got me back to meetings. It was at a time when fear and self-loathing made it easy for me to accept any offer of help or friendship. I was greedy for acceptance, and I found it at my next first meeting.

I was surrounded this time by addicts who didn't seem to care how I was dressed, what I had used or how much. They only wanted to know if I had a ride home, or if I needed a ride to the next meeting. In their introductions and offers of phone numbers and assistance, they accepted me at face value. Through their tone and manner, they demonstrated a desire to help me which I had not experienced the first time around.

I felt the first faint hope for myself, and felt that someone cared. In fact, it wasn't just some one, but three people—three people like myself. They weren't tough guys hung up on their past, but rather three addicts trying to change. They were trying to deal with the disease of addiction in all of their affairs, and to accept life after drugs.

In their behavior there was no hint of requirements for membership or acceptance. For them, my simple act of being present was enough. Now it becomes obvious why we have no written rules or requirements for membership in the fellowship.

However, we must always guard against those subtle requirements created through being insensitive to the newcomer, especially the newcomer who appears to be different. First impressions are so important. I know I will never forget my two first meetings.

The one requirement we do have in N.A. is difficult to fulfill. Desire doesn't come easily. How many times have we wished someone we cared for would have a desire to stop using? The desire to quit is the greatest gift of all, for without it we have no starting

place.

Who would take the Twelve Steps without some sort of desire? I will never question another person's desire to stop using. When I'm sharing with other addicts, I must always remember that my actions speak louder than my words.

S.B., California

Passing the basket

Tradition Seven: "Every N.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

JANUARY 1987

For me, Narcotics Anonymous is a program of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. I have to learn how to apply the Twelve Traditions in my personal life, just as I have had to apply our Twelve Steps.

I felt a lot of guilt about Tradition Seven the first few years I was clean in N.A. The first ten months, I lived at home with my mother. Thanks to my lawyer, I also found myself in Narcotics Anonymous. As I tried to "get my life together," I was more incapable than ever of supporting my-

self in early recovery. I was unemployed and unemployable for sixteen out of my first twenty-four months clean.

At the time, I felt so guilty that I was not fully self-supporting. You see, I knew what the basket was for, but usually didn't have money to put in it. I was grateful that there are no dues or fees for N.A. membership, but I still felt guilt that crippled my developing sense of self-esteem.

In my recovery, thanks to good sponsorship, I have participated actively in service and have become a responsible, productive member of society. When I started going to area service committee meetings, I saw that contributions from the many areas working together provided services that would have been impossible alone—regional meeting directories and the regional convention, for example.

Attending my first World Service Conference in 1983, I saw with my own eyes how excess group contributions worldwide ended up carrying our message to the addict who still suffers through services that no group, area or region could ever provide alone. Services like our Basic Text, which was published that year along with twelve new pamphlets. It deepened my spiritual awakening to see how it all led back to the basket passed at every meeting.

As the fellowship has grown, I have seen steady progress in all of the services we are able to provide. As an addict, however, the progress has not always been fast enough for me. I want it all now, and it kills me sometimes to have to see Narcotics Anonymous

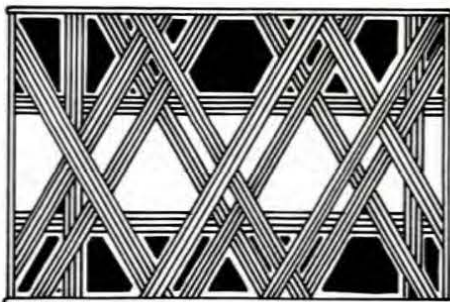
unable to provide services which would contribute to the growth and development of the fellowship as a whole.

I pray to God that we are able to live up to our responsibility. I know that if every member knew the need as I have seen it and felt it, that they would be touched as I have been touched. "The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel."

Today, I am fully self-supporting through my own contributions, and it's a good feeling. I know external chaos is typical of the first couple of years of recovery for many of us. For the first time in my life, I have enough money to make ends meet and settle past debts (extending our tradition of self-support and Step Nine into the past). My self-esteem has grown.

So these are some of the things I think about when the basket is going 'round, and the dream I have for Narcotics Anonymous. Today I see that the basket is the *vehicle* which drives our Seventh Tradition; the best way for us to provide necessary funds to support our individual Twelve Step work and our group primary purpose of carrying the message to the addict who still suffers so that no addict, anywhere, need die from the horrors of addiction.

C.I., West Virginia



Tradition Ten

"Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

OCTOBER 1987

Not long ago I attended a speaker meeting at which the main speaker talked about our Twelve Traditions. He made the point that any time someone compromises the principles of our traditions, it threatens the recovery of us all. It was an excellent meeting, and as often happens I thought more about the topic the next few days.

In my beginning period in N.A., I didn't consider the traditions much. After my first N.A. convention, however, I became involved in group level service for the first time, and I was very excited about my participation in the fellowship as a trusted servant. I still feel today that active involvement in service, as long as I first develop and maintain a good foundation in the Twelve Steps, makes my recovery stronger and the quality of my life better.

Somewhere during that process I found myself looking at this wonderful, large group of people in N.A. and thinking, "If a group like this got behind something, we could change the world!" I felt very strong emotions about all kinds of issues going on in the world, and I started taking up these issues with my N.A. friends. I wanted everybody to listen to me, and to focus on what I thought was important.

The issues ranged from world peace and local elections to various things taking place within N.A. I was running amok. Thank goodness, for my sake, that my friends in the fellowship tolerated my obnoxious behavior.

Fortunately, I was able to hear constructive confrontation after a while, and to see that no matter what the issue, my emotionally charged harangues were always a turn-off for others, did more harm than good, and had no place in N.A.

I was also very lucky, after experiencing much personal discomfort, to see that it was necessary for me to back off from service, assume a much lower profile and start looking with renewed vigilance at the Twelve Steps and my personal recovery.

After a couple years of doing only quiet forms of service like making coffee at the meetings, and learning to shut my mouth and listen, I was asked to again get involved on a service committee. I said yes.

Eventually I was privileged to be able to participate in a wide variety of types of service, and to gain more understanding of the meaning of the Twelve Traditions. I learned that the

traditions are important in my own personal recovery as well as in the life of the fellowship.

I found that my initial view of the traditions was a very legalistic, technical one. Without even being fully aware of it, I had used the words of the traditions to try to get around the spirit of the traditions. I learned that setting aside my personal agenda, my

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I have gained the confidence and understanding to take part freely, outside the fellowship, in many issues that have nothing to do with N.A. I have become very involved and have expressed myself in the proper place on many matters I care about.

For example, I have served as a state delegate several times in a political party, and have participated in many community activities. I know now, however, that neither I nor any group of my friends in N.A. have any business dragging N.A. into outside issues.

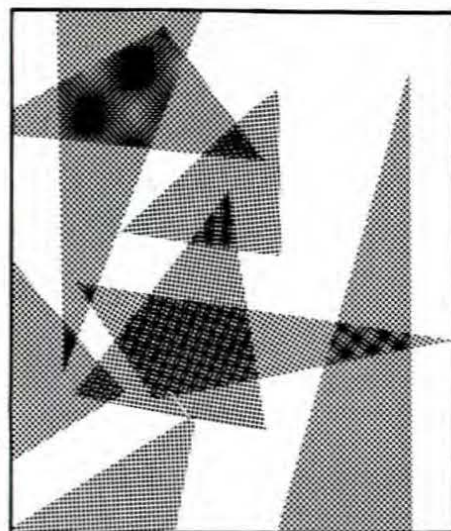
I found this out through coming to an understanding of Tradition Ten.

Tradition Ten protects us from harming N.A.'s reputation by keeping us out of public controversies. Now of course, in my self-willed mind, I can find at least a few outside issues where the "right" or "correct" position seems so obvious that N.A. certainly should take a stand! But what if an addict is alienated by that point of view? What if an addict is looking for recovery and instead finds discussion of some other issue going on at a meeting?

Tradition Ten protects us from the inevitable divisions within N.A. that would be caused by involvement in any outside issue. Tradition Ten protects us from losing the focus of our primary purpose and confusing the point of why our fellowship exists. The Tenth Tradition also protects us from creating enemies in the public at large by taking stands or making statements that would pit us against some of the people involved with that particular issue.

In various P.I. activities and experiences within the fellowship, I have run into several outside issues that frequently confront us. Some of these I will mention specifically:

- * Often N.A. members find themselves in a position of being asked for opinions about particular treatment programs, techniques, styles, practices, agencies or counselors.
- * Sometimes we are asked how we think the law should treat addicts, how drug laws should be enforced, what the laws on drugs should be, how long terms of incarceration or parole should be, etc.



- * Sometimes we are in a position where comments we make might be seen as N.A. endorsements of a particular program or method for dealing with the family or friend of an addict.
- * Occasionally someone with a certain political philosophy or agenda will look for some support from Narcotics Anonymous.
- * Often questions related to religion or morality, drug-related illness, preferred lifestyles, or definitions of what is considered "right" or "wrong" are encountered.

As a fellowship, Tradition Ten tells us, we have no opinion on these outside issues.

Any time we place our emphasis in N.A. on debate and position-taking around any outside issue, the newcomer and personal recovery from addiction take a back seat. The addict seeking recovery is the whole focus of Narcotics Anonymous. The Tenth Tradition keeps us from abandoning our primary purpose. It insures that

any addict seeking recovery in N.A. will have a program to come to.

At one time I had a mystical concept of the traditions, as if they were sacred laws. I thought that if one of the traditions were "violated," something big would happen to correct it—maybe an alarm would sound, a big flashing light would go off and some kind of enforcement squad would move in to fix the error.

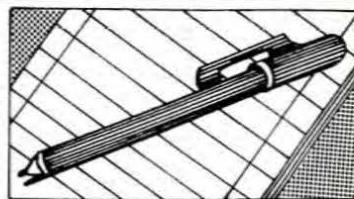
With some experience, the sense of mystery has been replaced by a feeling of great respect and trust. I've learned that all the traditions actually

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do get compromised to varying degrees more often than I like to admit, and that I have been the guilty party at times.

I've come to understand that when the traditions are transgressed, no alarm or lights go off. It just hurts N.A. It's that simple. Observing and practicing the traditions leads to health and growth for N.A. Breaking any of the traditions hurts N.A.

Anonymous, North Dakota



Viewpoint

Still alive and well

MAY 1983

Despite the rumors, facts and speculations which you may have heard recently, *Narcotics Anonymous is alive and well*; in fact, it seems to me that N.A. is doing better and growing more than ever.

At this point, you're probably thinking, "Where's this person coming from? They must be naive or uninformed; don't they know about what's happening?" Well, maybe you're right, I probably am naive because I choose to live my life as positively as I can instead of focusing on the negative and becoming panicky like I used to. I probably am uninformed and misinformed.

I've heard and read about problems in our WSO, our WSB, our WSC and our conference committees. I've heard about regional problems, area problems and group problems. I've heard about service structure problems, problems with other programs and problems caused by members off on some tangent or caught up in people,

places, things or self. I've heard bushel baskets full of problems from here, there and everywhere. However, most of what I hear is second-, third-, fourth- or tenth-hand information.

I'm not saying that we don't have any problems or that the things I've heard are just paranoia or overactive imaginations. In fact, I believe that most of what I've heard is probably very real and that there's probably a whole lot of problems we're not even aware of yet. What I am saying is that maybe I don't look at these problems the same way some of the people I've talked to lately seem to. *I'm grateful for our problems.*

When we have problems in our fellowship, I don't get upset the way I used to. I'm actually more concerned when everything seems to be going too smoothly. My big concern about our problems is that they so often cause panic and blind our members (new and old) to the joy and hope of recovery.

For me, problems have usually motivated or accompanied growth. I'm an addict, and problems seem to be a part of my addiction. Whenever I'm put in a situation with another human being, I've automatically got a problem: My inability to cope with, deal with, accept, trust and communicate with others. I see these same problems within our fellowship and ser-

vices, but I also see them growing the same way we grow as individuals, slowly and with a lot of faltering steps, but growing still.

When I came to this program, there were probably less than twenty N.A. meetings in the world, and maybe one hundred or two hundred N.A. members. Today there are probably twenty local N.A. communities this size or larger [written in 1983].

When I was new, our service structure consisted of two or three committees and whoever had the litera-

ture in the trunk of their car. Today, there are literally hundreds of service committees working to help make our fellowship better.

No wonder it sometimes seems that we have so many more problems today; after all, we've only grown one-hundred times in the last ten years or so. Things seem bigger and more complicated because there are a lot more people.

Communication is a lot harder because three-fourths of the members of N.A. don't see each other and share with each other in meetings on a daily or at least weekly basis. Many of the things which we see only as problems may really be symptoms of our fantastic growth.

There is one more thing that convinces me that N.A. is alive and well, and that I need have no fear about our fellowship. This is: N.A. is a spiritual program, and ultimately very personal in nature; our program is principles and people. Spiritual principles are indestructible, and attacks on spiritual principles are futile.

Narcotics Anonymous is something that each of us carries within. So long as any of us are clean and living life based on our principles, Narcotics Anonymous will be alive and flourishing. It can't be any other way; the success and growth of our program is built into the principles upon which it is based.

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Anonymous

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I'm an addict, my name is...

JUNE 1985

This is the way I've introduced myself at meetings for the past couple of months. I heard someone else use this introduction some time back and thought there was something about it I liked, but I kept introducing myself the other way around. The reason I've made the decision to identify myself as an addict before I say my name is that I feel this can help create an awareness of N.A. language, and because I feel grateful that the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has given so much to this addict.

The rapid growth our fellowship is going through is fantastic. But our quest for unity becomes burdened by mixed and misleading language used throughout our fellowship. When newcomers walk into our meetings and hear so many cross-references to "specialty" addictions, they can easily become confused about whether N.A. is truly where they should be. This addict found out the hard way there is absolutely no place in N.A. for "specialty addictions."

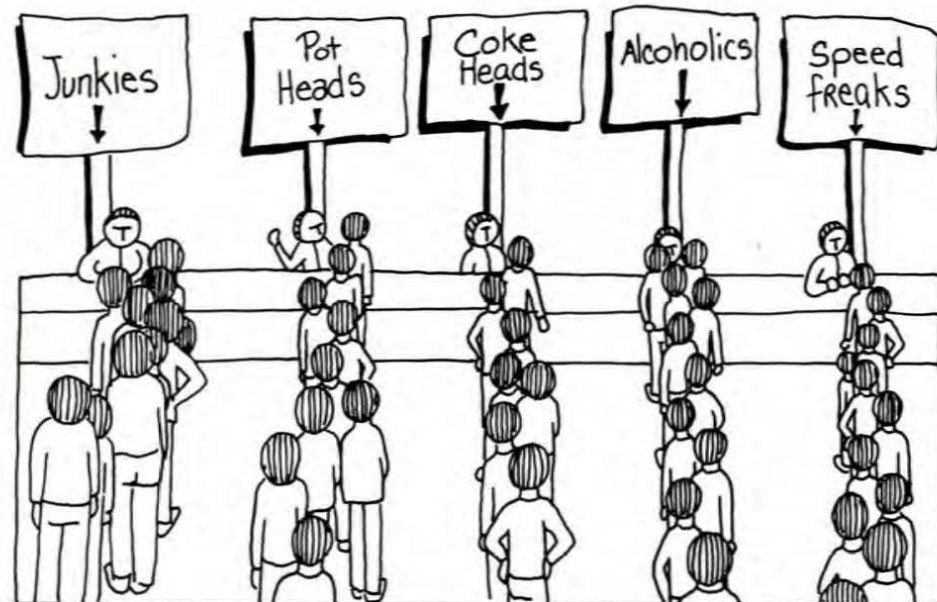
I have yet to see the First Step of N.A. (the hub of our principles) read, "We admitted we were powerless over our addiction to (insert drug or drugs of choice here), that our lives had become unmanageable." This step quite clearly points to our disease, "addiction."

Our Fifth Tradition states that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the "addict" who still suffers. Also, our Third Tradition states that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. These two traditions certainly don't point to any specialty addictions, but rather to addiction to all mood-altering drugs.

After looking at some of the principles, it appears to me that in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous

We eventually found out that N.A. unity is where our group's growth and strength lies—not at the doorstep of another fellowship.

we have no such beings as junkies, pot heads, coke heads, speed freaks, alcoholics, etc., because those terms refer to drugs of choice, not addiction. There is only one disease that we come to N.A. to recover from, and that is "addiction." When we accept our powerlessness over any drug, then according to our principles we are



accepting powerlessness over all drugs, and are therefore addicts.

I consider this an important issue, because when I first began an honest attempt at cleaning up there wasn't any N.A. in my area; I went to a fellowship whose very name signifies a one-drug addiction. Going in as a sick addict, I found myself time after time proving how "cunning, baffling and powerful" my addiction really was.

As a sick addict I wanted to hear that the unmanageability in my life could be directly related to the use of certain drugs. As a sick addict, that concentration on "specialty addiction" allowed me to downplay those other mood-altering drugs that I considered to be more manageable. I found myself justifying their use, because "they weren't really a problem." The point is, they were the biggest problem because they kept me from ever growing and enjoying a life free of all mood-altering drugs.

After five years of trying to recover, I finally came to the realization that I had to stay clean from all drugs. I went to another fellowship and finally started to have some success at staying clean.

About six months into my recovery I came into possession of the N.A. White Booklet (the only basic text in 1980), and for the first time I saw something that seemed to address me and my addiction. Some of us got together and formed the first N.A. group here.

We went through many, many growing pains due to the lack of awareness of the traditions, and because we were trying to be a supplement to another fellowship. We eventually found out that N.A. unity is where our group's growth and strength lies—not at the doorstep of any other fellowship or organization.

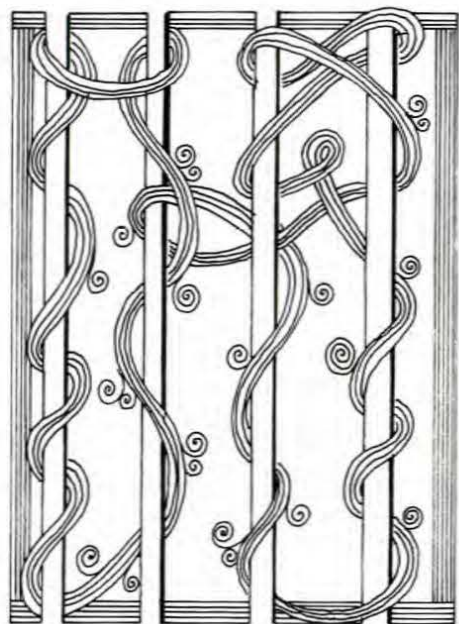
This is why I now identify my addiction first, so that it is clear to the

newcomer that they are in an N.A. meeting with addicts. When we follow the same status quo of introduction as other recovery fellowships, it is easy for those who choose to frequent those fellowships to bring those specialty identities into N.A., and therefore divert us from our primary purpose.

I would hope that a status quo of introducing addiction first would also eliminate introductions that describe old using behavior (loadie, dope fiend, toker, user, etc.). These terms are also contrary to the principles of recovery because they emphasize the sick, not the recovering—the drug, not the disease. The talk we talk is only important if it's consistent with the walk we walk.

I hope others will decide to identify themselves in this manner, but either way, please keep the message of N.A. clear—for all our sakes. Thanks.

M.H., North Dakota



From a recovering purist

MAY 1987

I am an addict, and one of the problems I have as an addict is interacting with other people. There are two personalities inside me: The spiritual recovering person and the diseased addict person. I can be compassionate, understanding and nurturing. I can also be insensitive, obnoxious and judgmental.

How well I am working the N.A. program is what determines my words and my actions. I have learned to check my motives, and I try to keep in my mind to seek to understand rather than to be understood.

In my love for and pride in N.A., I have been a big pain in some of our members' behinds. In dealing with what I have considered tradition violations, and in differences about opinion of N.A. philosophies, I have been confrontive, agonizingly persistent and overbearing.

At these times I considered myself vigilant and concerned about the well-being of N.A. as a whole. Looking back now, I can see that I was self-righteous and radical. This letter is not a confession or admission of guilt, it is

simply the truth as I see it today. Hindsight is 20/20.

I have calmed down a lot, much to the dismay of some of my radical friends. My beliefs have not changed, but my methods have become refined. I have found that tact and diplomacy work much better than threats and antagonistic confrontation. I have learned these lessons painfully by making many mistakes and some enemies within our fellowship.

I still believe in carrying a pure, undiluted N.A. message, I believe in using N.A. language, I believe in the concept of "one disease—one program," and I believe that N.A. is the only place I need to go for my recovery.

Today, however, I am willing to let other members have their own opinion. I still cringe when I hear someone in an N.A. meeting talking about their "sobriety" or about their gratitude to another fellowship, but I do not verbally take their inventory during the meeting nor do I tell them after the meeting that if they can't share the N.A. way then please do not come back. I have done both of these things in the past.

Today, I do not have to "protect" N.A. from anyone. I am not responsible for what anyone says at a meeting. At one point in my recovery, if someone said that they needed to go to another fellowship for any reason, I would give a number of reasons why I did not need to go anywhere but N.A. for my recovery. I would not allow any newcomer to leave any N.A. meeting that I was at thinking that they had two diseases or that they needed

anything else but N.A. to recover. I could be brutal in my sharing and I often was.

When I first got wrapped up in this "purist movement," it was at a time when there were very few N.A. mem-

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bers that I knew about who only went to N.A. for their recovery. None of these members were near me. There were only two N.A. meetings in my area when I first came around, and I helped start three more within the next year. I was going to all five of them and traveling around the state going to others.

I knew that I did not need to go anywhere else but N.A., but no one else in my area believed that they could. For me, making that decision to go only to N.A. when no one else believed in it was very scary.

In my fear I became very proud and very self-righteous. I became extremely outspoken about N.A. and extremely critical of other members who went to the meetings of other fellowships.

I intentionally tried and in a few cases succeeded in driving certain "cross-addicted" and "sober" N.A. members out of N.A. I don't feel good about the way I acted but I am not sorry for what I did. I did what I did because I thought it was for the good of N.A. I do not know where those addicts are now; I hope that they are still clean and recovering somewhere.

I designed the "purist" T-shirts and bandanas. I had them printed up and sold them at conventions. I printed the *Purist Newsletter* and the *ODOP* (One Disease, One Program) newsletter.

I did these things because at the time I needed to do them for my recovery. I did these things because I thought that they needed to get done. Somebody had to stand up for N.A. and this was my way of doing it. Thank God that I don't have to do these things anymore!

Today I can be a member of N.A. instead of being one of the "guardians of our traditions." My message hasn't changed; the way I share it has. I find that my message is much more accepted when I share it in a loving and caring way.

I don't waste my time trying to get anyone to do things or to say things that I consider are the N.A. way of doing and saying things. I share my experience before, during and after meetings with whoever will listen to me. I try to focus on newcomers.

The purist movement is not over, and it will never be over. There will always be newcomers, fresh out of rehabs talking all the "cross addicted" language and concepts that they were taught in rehab. They don't know any

better, and it is our responsibility as N.A. members to share with them about N.A. language, N.A. philosophy and N.A. recovery.

There will always be members from other fellowships who will find their way into N.A. They will be using terminology from whatever fellowships they come from and they don't know any better either. It is our job as N.A. members to share with them about N.A. and our program of re-

Today I can be a member of N.A. instead a "guardian of our traditions."

covery in a loving, caring and non-combative way. I am trying to do this today.

I don't need to write purist newsletters anymore because I can write for the *N.A. Way* and our other fellowship newsletters. My articles are often viewed as antagonistic, and I am working on that.

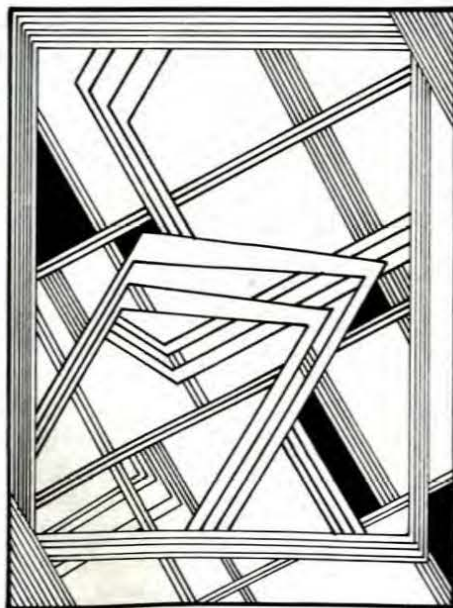
I don't need to wear purist T-shirts anymore because it doesn't help anyone; it only creates disunity within our fellowship. I do not intentionally try to drive anyone out of N.A. for any reason today. I am trying to accept all of our members as they are—as recovering addicts just like me.

I am deeply grateful to all those other N.A. purists throughout the world, because without them I doubt that I would be clean today. Without

their love and support, N.A. here in my hometown would not be where it is today. We have grown from two meetings per week to twenty-three meetings per week. I am grateful to be a part of the growth of N.A.

There are eight thousand N.A. meetings in the world today [written in May 1987—two years later, there are almost sixteen thousand]; when I got clean there were less than one thousand. Chances are that many of those who are reading this article got clean in a local N.A. community that was started by a purist, someone who believed in N.A. and was willing to go through the pain of keeping it alive when other recovering addicts were not.

There is nothing wrong with being a purist if you are one, and there is nothing wrong with going to other fellowships for recovery if that is what you choose to do. There is no right or



wrong when it comes to N.A. membership. We are all N.A. members and we are all equal. It took me a long time to realize that we all belong here regardless of how we identify ourselves or what terminology we use.

As we grow in recovery and in our understanding of the N.A. program, most members find themselves using N.A. language because that is what is most appropriate. We learn to separate the different messages that we carry and when we are in an N.A. meeting, we carry the N.A. message only. It is so simple to understand when we become open-minded. It is a matter of personal awareness and growth.

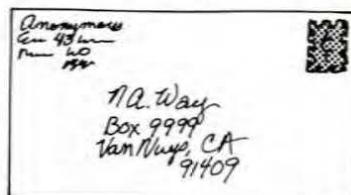
It is also easy to understand that none of us has the right to intimidate or criticize any other member. I understand this very well today. When I am sharing with other members about language or traditions, I keep in mind that no member ever intentionally tries to harm the fellowship. I really try to understand where this member is coming from and I share in the most loving and caring way that I can.

I have grown a lot since those first purist T-shirts made their debut in Chicago at WCNA-14, and so have many of us who call ourselves purists. We have been blessed (or cursed) with the burning desire to help N.A. grow. Sometimes our methods are wrong, but our motives are not. We are human and we are recovering addicts.

I have no regrets about the past, only hope for the future, and I intend to keep the N.A. message alive, pure and undiluted, just for today, where ever I am.

J.D., New Jersey

From our readers



The precious gifts of recovery

Recovery is a precious gift. Having faith where no faith existed is the greatest gift of all. Thank God for this program of recovery.

The serenity I feel today has replaced the anxiety and fear that came with my addiction. This program has calmed my troubled soul and given me peace.

Daily problems are no longer daily defeat, and facing feelings instead of using is now possible—if I work the steps and live one day at a time, the way this program has taught me.

N.A. unity and love are far better than the loneliness and isolation I felt during my active addiction. This program has shown me how to love and be loved.

Open-mindedness, faith, hope and happiness are just a few of the precious gifts I have received from this program of recovery God has given me.

L.S., Alabama

The pink cloud

After desperate attempts to stop my drug addiction on my own, one day in the spring of 1988 I called out to God for help. "I can no longer go on with this way of life!"

A week later I found myself in treatment for addiction, seeking the answers, willing to go to any lengths to

become well. I knew I had to listen and do whatever they suggested.

As a part of my treatment program, I was to attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings. I knew right away the Twelve Steps were for me. I worked the first three steps very intensely during my twenty-eight day stay, and found myself feeling spiritual and serene.

They told me this was sometimes referred to as a "pink cloud." I did feel lighter than air, and my problems seemed to be solved—only to discover ninety days later that reality was setting in, with the whole range of feelings that are a normal part of life.

I didn't know what to do with those feelings, so I became teachable. I knew that I had to deal with my reawakened feelings in a healthy, positive way. I had to stay clear of my old thinking patterns, for I was told that any type of rebellion can be fatal. I also knew that I could not use, no matter what.

The pink cloud had burst. I became aware of the rose-colored water vapors as they diminished, and I experienced a moment of clarity. I understood that clouds are here for a reason. They grow and collect until they become so full they must release, and the rain falls. Along with the storms come thunder and lightning, sometimes harsh winds and dark skies.

But, after the downpour, the birds

sing, the flowers bloom, the grass turns green, and the clouds filling the skies are replaced with rays of sunlight, for this is the law of nature. This is the will of God, my Higher Power.

If I am not willing to change and grow in the same way that storms evolve into sunny days, then I am defying the law of nature and am surely going against my Higher Power's will. All things have a purpose. Today, I accept the pink cloud and its passage, whether it be gloomy or bright. I can walk through it by "letting go" first.

I seek spiritual progress, rather than spiritual perfection. And, doing so to the best of my ability, I am receiving the awakenings.

R.C., California

Selfish program?

There are lots of members who believe ours is a selfish program. That has been disturbing me, and has prompted me to write. I have been hearing this for awhile now, yet do not remember ever reading it in any of our literature. I do believe at some time in the past at some meeting, some member said it, others liked the way it sounded and decided to pass it on.

To my knowledge, selfishness has always been considered a defect, not an asset, and neither N.A. nor its principles have been found defective. Even the dictionary describes selfish as "overly concerned with one's own interests; having little concern for others." This is not what the program teaches! Now how can "this is a selfish program" be something good to teach a newcomer when it very plainly contradicts spiritual principles? There must be some misunder-

standing here! This is a program of love; it can't be at once selfish and loving.

Although I'm aware of the fact that others may not agree, maybe some will see. Since I felt so strongly about this, what better thing for me to do than write?

H.A., New Jersey

Learning to value sponsorship

There have been many trials and tribulations in my recovery. Each time, like many others, I've found myself asking, "When is this gonna end?" Well, for me, most of my confusion, pain and uncertainty ended when I decided to use my sponsor and apply the Third Step.

I have always had a sponsor in N.A., and I have been pretty good with taking suggestions. But the longer I stay clean, the more I realize that a sponsor is a human being, an addict. I had forgotten that.

I had originally chosen her for guidance through our twenty-four principles. But I had fallen into thinking that a sponsor should be home twenty-four hours a day for me, and that she should be my psychiatrist, doctor, lawyer and best friend. Not too much to request of an addict!

But sponsorship is a two-way street. She is there to guide me through our steps, and I am there to avail myself of her guidance. By doing that, my life has become less of a mess. I listen to her—not Mary, Jane or Sue, but my own sponsor.

I've also somewhat come to understand how to allow God into my life. An illness with a family member taught me much about powerlessness

and acceptance. The God of my understanding helped me. The Third Step showed me. My sponsor guided me.

Anonymous

I love my sponsor

I love my sponsor, because she is so beautiful. She doesn't have to tell anyone that she is working a program, because it shows in her face, in what she says and in the way she lives.

My sponsor has gone down this path of recovery before me and knows the way. It's hard to get lost with an experienced guide.

She's my teacher—and a real good teacher—even though I'm slow to learn. She's very patient with me, but she also can be stern when I need "tough love."

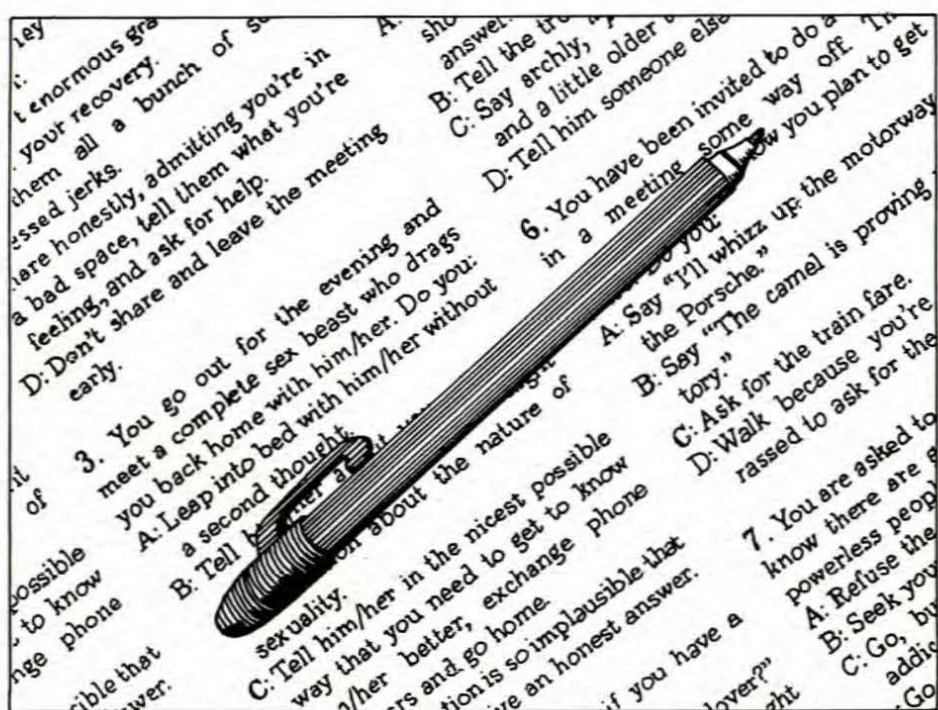
My sponsor is not just a friend, she's a *great* friend. I can share

anything with her. I share both good and bad times with her, and she's so understanding. She has the wisdom you only get when you live the steps. I'm not alone with my problems, because I have a sponsor who cares.

Our lifestyles are as different as night and day. She is happily married—I'm divorced. She's raised her children—I haven't yet. But we have one thing in common that bonds us to each other. We are two women in recovery with a powerful love for this Twelve Step program.

It's fantastic to have a wonderful sponsor. I've had many before her, but none just like her. She's my friend; she is family; she's my teacher and guide. And I thank God daily for sending her to me, because I need my sponsor, and I love her dearly.

L.S., Alabama



Comin' up



LET US KNOW! We'll be happy to announce your upcoming event. Just let us know at least three months in advance. Include dates, event name and location, N.A. office or phonenumber, and a post office box. (Sorry, but we can't print personal phone numbers or addresses.) Our mailing address is: **The N.A. Way Magazine, P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409.** Or call us at (818) 780-3951.

ALASKA: May 5-7, 1989; Fifth Alaska Regional Convention; Anchorage phonenumber (907) 277-5483

ARIZONA: May 26-28, 1989; Third Arizona Regional Convention; Holiday Inn Broadway, Tucson; reservations (602) 624-8711; Arizona RSC, P.O. Box 26404, Tempe, AZ 85222

AUSTRALIA: March 24-27, 1989; Australasian Regional Convention; Wollongong University, Wollongong, New South Wales; accommodations (042) 28 0300; Fellowship Service Office telephone 61 2 211 2445; ARCNA-89, P.O. Box 87, Fairy Meadow 2519, NSW Australia

CALIFORNIA: April 24-28, 1989; World Service Conference, Fourteenth Annual Meeting; AirTel Plaza Hotel, Van Nuys; reservations (818) 997-7676

2) June 16-18, 1989; Fifth San Diego-Imperial Regional Convention; Holiday Inn at the Embarcadero; reservations (619) 232-3861; regional office (619) 584-1007; San Diego RSO, P.O. Box 16505, San Diego, CA 92116

COLORADO: July 28-30, 1989; Second Annual "Standing on Higher Ground" Weekend; Telluride; reservations (800) 525-3455; regional office (303) 320-8323

FLORIDA: March 4, 1989; Public Information Learning Day; Surfside Community Center, 96th Street & Collins Ave., Miami; helpline (305) 949-8809

2) April 28-30, 1989; H&I Awareness Weekend; Rodeway Country Inn, 3620 West Silver Springs Boulevard, Ocala

HAWAII: May 26-29, 1989; Third Big Island Gathering; Mauna Kea State Park, Hilo; phonenumber (808) 969-6644; Big Island Gathering, P.O. Box 10842, Hilo, HI 96721

IDAHO: April 21-23, 1989; Fourth Washington/Northern Idaho Regional Convention; A Resort on the Lake, Coeur d'Alene ID 83814; reservations (206) 765-4000; helpline (509) 458-7767; WNIRCA-4, P.O. Box 807, Spokane, WA 99210

ILLINOIS: April 21-23, 1989; First Chicagoland Regional Convention; Ramada Inn O'Hare, 6600 North Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018; reservations (312) 827-5131; Chicago Service Office (312) 848-2211; CRC-1, P.O. Box 34525, Chicago, IL 60634-0525

IOWA: March 18, 1989; Multi-Regional Public Information Learning Day; East Ninth and Garfield, Des Moines; phonenumber (515) 244-2277

2) June 30-July 2, 1989; Sixth Iowa Regional Convention; Stouffer Five Seasons Hotel, 350 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids IA 52401; reservations (800) HOTELS-1; phonenumber (319) 398-9100; IRC-6, P.O. Box 2062, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

KENTUCKY: March 24-26, 1989; Third Kentuckiana Regional Convention; Hyatt Regency, 320 West Jefferson Street, Louisville KY 40202; phonenumber (502) 782-4029; KRCNA-3, P.O. Box 35063, Louisville, KY 40232

LOUISIANA: May 27-29, 1989; Seventh Louisiana Purchase Regional Convention; Landmark Hotel, 2601 Severn Avenue, Metairie LA 70002; reservations (800) 535-8840; LPRCNA-7, P.O. Box 750237, New Orleans, LA 70175-0237

MAINE: September 8-10, 1989; Sixth Southern Maine Area Convention; Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred; phoneline (207) 761-6695; Southern Maine ASC, P.O. Box 5309, Portland, ME 04101

MARYLAND: March 10-12, 1989; Third Chesapeake-Potomac Regional Convention; Hyatt Regency Bethesda, 1 Bethesda Metro Center, Bethesda MD 20814; reservations (800) 228-9000; Baltimore Office (301) 566-4022; CPRCA-3, P.O. Box 9145, Silver Spring, MD 20906

MISSISSIPPI: April 14-16, 1989; Seventh Mississippi Regional Convention; Royal d'Iberville Hotel, 1980 W. Beach Boulevard, Biloxi MS 39531; reservations (800) 647-3955; phonelines (601) 865-0699 or 875-1161; MRCNA-7, P.O. Box 6851, Biloxi, MS 39532

MISSOURI: June 9-11, 1989; Fourth Show Me Regional Convention; Hilton Inn of the Ozarks, 3050 North Kentwood Avenue, Springfield; regional office (417) 781-6770, phoneline (417) 866-7392; SMRCNA-4, c/o Show Me RSO, 610 Pearl #C, Joplin, MO 64801

MONTANA: April 29, 1989; First All-Montana Gathering; Helena, MT; Fellowship Gathering, P.O. Box 133, Jefferson City, MT 59638

NEVADA: July 28-30, 1989; Second Sierra Sage Regional Convention; John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks; phoneline (702) 322-4811; Sierra Sage RSC, P.O. Box 11913, Reno, NV 89510-1913

NEW JERSEY: May 19-21, 1989; Fourth New Jersey Regional Convention; Vista Hotel, Newark International Airport; phoneline (201) 462-9199; NJRC-4, P.O. Box 22091, Newark, NJ 07101

2) July 28-30; Quad State Unity Convention; Parsippany Hilton, 1 Hilton Court, Parsippany-Troy Hills NJ 07054; reservations (800) HIL-TONS; Bergen County ASC, P.O. Box 104, Northvale, NJ 07647-0104

NEW MEXICO: April 21-23, 1989; First New Mexico Regional Convention; Hilton Inn, Albuquerque; phoneline (505) 848-9195; NMRC-1, P.O. Box 4522, Albuquerque, NM 87196

NEW YORK: April 28-30, 1989; Fifth Greater New York Regional Convention; Concord Resort Hotel, Kiamesha Lake NY 12751; reservations (800) 431-3850; Greater NY RSO (718) 805-9835; GNYRC-5, c/o RSO, 119-20 94th Avenue, Richmond Hill, NY 11419

2) June 23-25, 1989; Tenth East Coast Convention; University of Buffalo, Amherst Campus; phoneline (716) 878-2316; ECCNA-10, P.O. Box 141, Buffalo, NY 14216-0141

3) July 28-30, 1989; Northern New York Regional Convention; Aurora, NY; Rochester Central Office (716) 232-2690; NNYC-89, 2605 Elmwood Avenue, Suite 135, Rochester, NY 14618

NORTH CAROLINA: March 10-12, 1989; Second Capital Area Convention; Sheraton Imperial, Exit 282 off I-40, between Raleigh and Durham; reservations (919) 941-5050; phoneline (919) 755-5391

2) April 28-30, 1989; Fourth Greater Charlotte Area Convention; Marriott Executive Park, 5700 Westpark Drive, Charlotte NC 28210, reservations (800) 228-9290; phoneline (704) 379-0440; Greater Charlotte ASC, P.O. Box 32262, Charlotte, NC 28232

OKLAHOMA: April 7-9, 1989; Third Oklahoma Regional Convention; Sunmark Hotel, Stillwater; Tulsa office (918) 747-0017; OKRC-3, Tulsa CSO, 4611 South Peoria, Tulsa, OK 74105

QUEBEC: March 31-April 2, 1989; Fifth French N.A. Convention; P.Q. Community Centre, 253 Third Street, Shawinigan; phoneline (819) 537-4667; L'Envol 5, C.P. 841, Shawinigan, PQ G9N 6W2

TENNESSEE: April 7-9, 1989; Nashville Tenth Anniversary Convention; Quality Inn, Briley Parkway, Nashville; reservations (615) 361-7666; phoneline (615) 297-9762; Tenth Anniversary, P.O. Box 24061, Nashville, TN 37202

TEXAS: March 24-26, 1989; Fourth Lone Star Regional Convention; Hyatt Regency Riverwalk, 123 Losoya, San Antonio 78205; reservations (512) 222-1234; phoneline (512) 434-0665; LSRCA-4, 2186 Jackson Keller, Suite 327, San Antonio, TX 78213

WASHINGTON: April 21-23, 1989; Fourth Washington/Northern Idaho Regional Convention; see IDAHO

WEST VIRGINIA: May 12-14 1989; Sixth West Virginia Convention; Cedar Lakes Resort, Ripley, WV; reservations (304) 372-7000; phoneline (304) 344-4442; Convention, P.O. Box 2381, Westover, WV 26502

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9TEA

The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

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 ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous 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.

*My gratitude speaks
when I care
and when I share with others
the N.A. way*

What Is Narcotics Anonymous?

N.A. is a worldwide fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. It doesn't matter which drugs you used, or what you have done in the past. We are concerned only with how we can help addicts recover.

It costs nothing to belong to N.A.—there are no fees or dues. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using drugs. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that they work.

For more information about N.A., see your local phone directory, or write us at the address inside.

