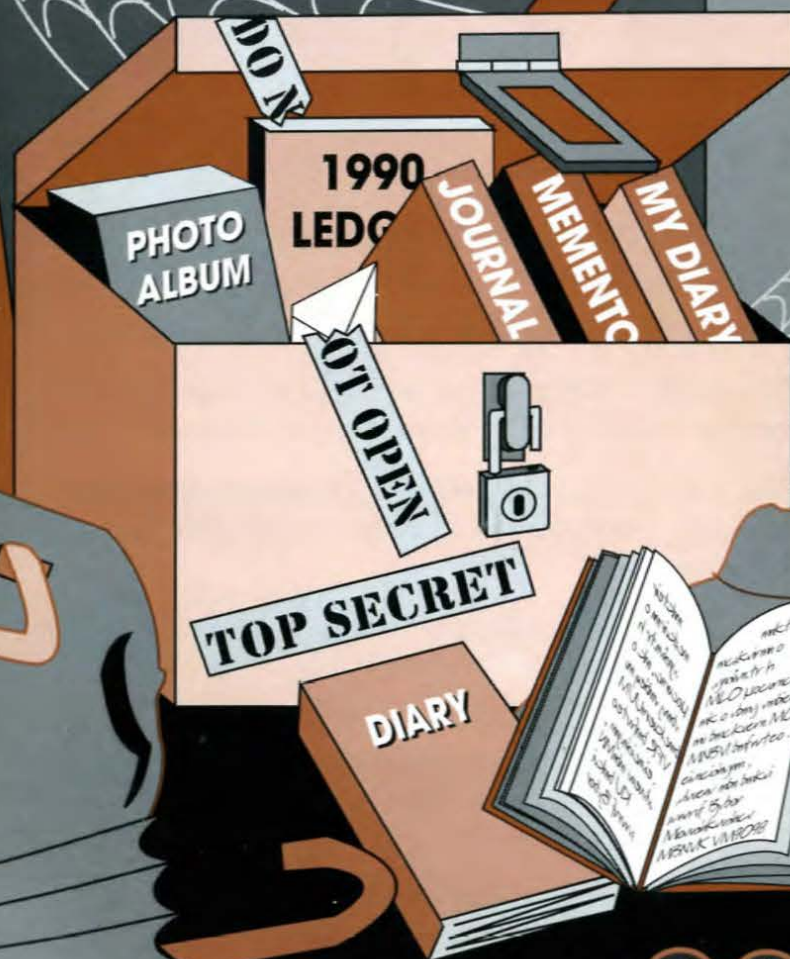


What is Narcotics Anonymous?
NA is a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. 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.

*My Gratitude Speaks...
When I Care
and When I Share
With Others
The NA Way*

THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

May 1997 \$1.75 US \$2.50 Canadian



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.

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THE NA Way[®] MAGAZINE

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

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From the editor



Our editorial policy

Some questions about our editorial policy have arisen, so I decided it was time to publish that policy again. It is:

Explicit sexual references and obscene language are generally cut as a courtesy to our readers. We make other cuts in keeping with NA's collective understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Where "sober," "sobriety," "addict/alcoholic," and other similar terms are used, we substitute standard NA language such as "clean," "recovery," and "addict." Implied endorsements of outside enterprises, including other twelve-step organizations, are usually deleted. In addition, we do grammatical editing so that our articles are easily understood by as many readers as possible.

We do not, and have never, cut opinions we don't agree with. In fact, we usually go to great lengths to make sure those are printed. We're also more than willing to print articles that address problems our members, groups, and service committees are experiencing. However, we will not provide a forum for any member to say anything he or she wants about another member, whether in the context of recovery, sponsorship, or service.

For instance, if a member was slandered by members of his home group and wrote an article about it, we prob-

ably wouldn't print the article. Doing so could result in many problems. First, even if the story were absolutely true, we usually wouldn't have a way of proving that. Second, we always avoid causing harm to a member through public disclosure of private facts. It's just not ethical, and completely outside the bounds of our spiritual principles. Third, we strongly believe that some problems are best handled at the local level. It's when a solution is found, and shared with the fellowship in print, that we truly perform a service to our fellow addicts.

We may make other cuts in order to fit an article into a certain space, but only in certain cases. If there are an extra few lines, we'll try to shorten some of the sentences without compromising the unique voice of the author. We may cut the "thank you for letting me share, I'm grateful to be clean" type of openings and closings of articles, but only if it doesn't leave an awkward closing.

Finally, there are times when we feel part of an article detracts from an article's strength, or that a certain statement is problematic. In those cases, we will contact the author and discuss the changes we want to make. If we can't contact the author, or the author is unwilling to allow offensive

or untruthful statements to be removed (no one has ever been unwilling), we'd rather reject the piece outright than impose our own voice on it.

These policies have been in place since Ron H became the editor of the magazine in 1985. All successive editors, including myself, have followed them. We place a high value on the written contributions of our readers. We couldn't publish the same kind of magazine without them. At the same time, we must always be responsible to our readers and the fellowship as a whole.

If the new publication is approved, our editorial policy will remain similar to that outlined above.

NA Way status update

By the time you receive this, the fellowship will have decided at the annual meeting of the World Service Conference whether or not the format of *The NA Way* is to change.

If the answer is yes, you will receive, along with your June issue, a notice explaining what will happen from that point.

The notice will provide information about the new *NA Way* format and what will happen with manuscripts, event announcements, and featured trusted servant submissions. There will also be a process outlined for either reclaiming the unused portion of your subscription money or donating that money to world services.

It is our strongest hope that the fellowship approves the new *NA Way* format. We, the staff and trusted servants who work on the magazine, along with the WSO Board of Direc-

tors, believe that we need a new way of communicating. Furthermore, we believe that the proposed new format for *The NA Way* will go a long, long way toward solving some of the communication problems we have, give voice to a broader base of the fellowship, and save a great deal of money. It won't change the world, but it might change world services.

If you have any questions at all, please feel free to call me.

Cindy T, Editor

Inside the picket fence of recovery

If you think the Big Sur coastline is jagged and rocky, then you haven't laid eyes on a long-term marriage in recovery. Throw in unemployment, borderline insanity, two people without a clue, and a couple of know-it-all kids, and you'd find a shore so sharp, unpolished, and rough that oddsmakers wouldn't dare lay a bet down on survival. Yet here we are, one day at a time, nearly nine years later, happy (most of the time), content (most of the time), as much together (all of the time) as we were in the beginning, like a pair of unbalanced Kewpie Dolls just dangling by strings.

We met early in recovery, almost too early. We married the day after I had one year clean time. Having both taken our diseases to late stages, our dope fiend behaviors were very much present even after completing long-term drug rehabilitation programs. Jealousy, envy, lust, self-centeredness, self-pity, financial insecurity, and many other forms of fear were some of our character defects, which became, and occasionally still do become, frequent obstructions to an otherwise smooth and trusting relationship. All

too often these old, negative behavioral traits would assert themselves, leaving us bewildered and perplexed, almost to the point where we would find ourselves asking if we really hated each other more than we loved each other.

Fortunately for us, we both had sponsors who were married and quite happy in their long-term, committed relationships. Confiding in them over continuous difficulties helped considerably in paving bumpy patches to our connected paths. I remember distinctly three critical conflicts over the years where if an improper decision (based on resentment, guilt, or anger) were made by either one of us, the relationship would have no doubt been terminated. By our passage through each serious scrape, our bond strengthened, our friendship widened, and our love for each other grew richer and deepened.

Almost always after any kind of heavy or petty disagreement, the importance of maintaining a solid Twelve Step program is immediately revealed. Once we are able to decipher our part in any confrontation and make amends, the weaknesses in our programs are clearly exposed. Sometimes they're centered around the First Step where we refuse to admit powerlessness over some person, place, thing, or situation. Other times they are rooted in the Second or Third Steps where the conscious contact with a Higher Power is lacking and insanity has returned with the driving and destructive force of self-will.

Tenth Steps are mandatory in relationships, regardless of the methods in which they are worked. The Elev-

enth Step, too, when diligently used, takes an addict to a deeper level of acceptance, giving the addict more understanding, patience, and tolerance to deal with troubles when and if they arise.

Having developed an abundance of trust for one another has become one of our cherished attributes. We no longer need to trip too much on what the other is doing when off alone or with other friends enjoying their own existence and experiences as a separate individual. Early on in our relationship, I had a tendency to constantly smother my wife. Either I would never let her out of my sight or I would bombard her with a million questions when she returned from a trip to the store or from a visit to a friend's house. Many times my sponsor pointed out to me that I would never learn to trust my wife in any area of her life until I first learned (in every area of my existence) to trust myself. Needless to say, it took tons of internal pain, a lot of inventories, a lot of prayer and amends, and quite a few years, an hour at a time, replacing boulders of fear with tiny pebbles of faith.

My wife reminds me often that God does for us what we are unable to do for ourselves. No clearer do I see that ancient cliché than in my own household. There is light in our home. We have been blessed. Our financial needs have always been met (beyond our comprehension), our kids are healthy and relatively happy, we have friends, we have hobbies, we laugh together, we cry together, we respect each other's feelings and personal as well as social and political beliefs. This is not to say that darkness no

longer drops down upon us. We remain aware that our diseases are alive and well and still are out not only to kill us, but to destroy every bit of goodness that has grown in our home.

Not too terribly long ago one of our teenage children needed to pack up his things and leave because it was more important for him to practice his active addiction than to make an attempt at finding abstinence and recovery. His behavior rubbed off on all of us. His two sisters, his mother, and myself—all were in some way affected. It took many family meetings before we were able to release him together with absolute love. Like recovery, marriage and family life obviously isn't for everyone. A lot of sacrifice is necessary. Self-centeredness and self-seeking ways must be eliminated if there is to be some semblance of peace and harmony. Receiving the gift of acceptance as well as letting go of controls are absolutes to a peaceful relationship. We are like everyone else; we have our moments. Our spiritual turbulence is no greater or no worse than that of any other spiritual beings dealing with tough human conditions.

We came to Narcotics Anonymous alone and desperate because we had nowhere else to go and knew nothing else would work for us. And miracles have occurred. Souls of individuals and of families can eventually heal and relationships can be productive and lasting. Life is dear and love is precious and anything within the realm of this universe is obtainable.

KL & RL, California

My secret place

My secret place is a box in the back of my closet. It's a sturdy blue case with a padlock on it. I've stored my personal written journals, which I've kept for the past twenty years, in there. I started my journal as an assignment in a high school creative writing class, and, to my surprise, have continued them since. When I got clean, I became afraid of these journals. They contained written accounts of many years of insanity and from a few short glances, I felt my pain and despair as if it were the day the words were written. It's as if this box contained my past and I was afraid to look at it.

My secret place was also where I hid the drugs I continued to get after hitting bottom. For four months while abstinent, I stashed away a mother lode just in case this program didn't work. By the grace of God and the fellowship of NA, I unlocked it and threw it all away.

Now, at this point in my recovery, I'm thinking of going back to school. Fifteen years ago I turned down the opportunity to go to college in order to "do it my way." Recovery has truly offered me a new start. I believe I can do anything I put my mind to. The application called for copies of past school records. I knew they were also

in my box. I opened it up and dug out the papers. I read all my old report cards from first grade on up. I read a comment from my second grade teacher which said, "Larry shows great enthusiasm when he starts something, but seems to lose his drive toward the end." I thought to myself, "Ain't that the truth . . . and it's only taken thirty years for me to see this in myself and take positive action!" Then I read another report card in which my father wrote, "Larry has great potential; he just needs prodding, and I intend to do just that." I saw those words and felt rage and then sadness.

I was truly staring face to face with my past. My mood changed when I saw the next things: my high school diploma, another certificate from high school which acknowledged my honor roll status for three years, another certificate from the outpatient program I'd completed three and a half years ago. I had pushed my accomplishments so far into the background that it was impossible to feel good about them. I looked at all these things with a wonderful feeling of self-discovery.

Although he's gone, I've since forgiven my father for trying to make me into the person he thought I should be, as well as making amends for the part I played over the years. Facing my fear has shown me what I've heard so often around NA: I'm neither as bad nor as good as I thought I was. I have nothing else to hide now. I've exposed my secret place to the light of recovery.

LF, New York

Looking ahead with hope

It was a long road that led to my recovery. After over twenty years of using daily, I entered my third drug treatment center. However, this time was different. This time I was on my knees. I had finally begun to believe that I would die if I kept doing things my way. I was willing to shut up, listen, and follow the simple direc-

tions of my sponsor and the NA text. I was willing to take that direction to heart, rather than "to head." Intellectualizing the recovery process had always been my problem in prior attempts to get clean.

After leaving treatment, I rented a small room and lived there with other clean addicts. I had very little money, no income, and few material possessions, yet I felt content for the first time in my life. Even though I didn't have my career, wonderful home, and beautiful wife and children, I had a sense of hope. I just believed that everything would, in time, work out like it was supposed to. I accepted that I was right where I should be.

Things are continuously changing for the better. My wife just told me recently that she noticed me sincerely trying my best to live the program. I had always talked about wanting to



live the program, but now she sees me doing it. She sees changes in me and my commitment to the program. In the past 4½ years in and out of this program, I've just put together the most clean time I've ever had. Maybe because of her faith in my sincerity, or maybe because I'm truly sincere this time, my wife just asked if I wanted to move back in with her and the children. I have so much hope that she and I can have a healthy relationship.

In the few weeks I've been back at the house, both of us and others have commented on the positive changes we've seen in our children and their behavior. I believe my children will have a chance to grow up in a healthier environment than what I experienced as a child as long as I continue to live the principles of the NA program.

I thank my Higher Power and the NA program for all of this. I have a chance to start my life over at the age of thirty-one, without the bondage of my active addiction and self-obsessive behavior.

I'm trying to rebuild my life in accordance with my Higher Power's wishes. I'm still looking for a job, doing the footwork, leaving the results up to my Higher Power. I'm also taking advantage of the free time I have by going to lots of meetings and trying to apply the tools I'm learning to building a solid foundation for my recovery to grow upon. I'm learning what it is to feel life, accept life on life's terms, and actually enjoy it.

In a couple days I'll be celebrating four months clean at the Western States Unity Convention (my first convention) and chairing one of the

marathon meeting time slots. I don't know if anyone can imagine just how much a simple thing like chairing a meeting at an NA convention means to me.

God is definitely working in my life as long as I continue to allow it. I'm changing and growing. I'm applying this simple program of NA to my life. Yes, there's pain, but it's not pointless. It always leads to growth. I'm just beginning in what I hope will be a lifelong journey in the process called recovery. This is truly a miracle.

DB, Washington

There will come a time

There will come a time when no human power can keep us from using, but God can and will if we let Him.

After ten and a half years clean, I had to have surgery. This particular type of surgery was extremely scary for me. It was akin to putting me in a burning building and telling me to just relax and stay put while the building burned. I just knew what was going to happen, and of course it was the worst case imaginable.

So I went to as many meetings as I could during the two weeks preceding my surgery. I let people know I was scared. I listened to everything that everyone had to say. I let people know that I'm prone to isolating. When I wasn't in a meeting, I was on the phone with my sponsor or one of my sponsees. If I wasn't doing that, I was reading my Basic Text. I prayed and meditated every morning. I thanked my Higher Power every night for the NA Fellowship and the ability to stay clean.

The day for my surgery came, and as I was going under, I remember thinking it was the wrong kind of music for the high I felt. The next three days were lost. I know I was conscious and watched a lot of movies,

but I can't recall any of the details. By the fourth day the pain was gone and I no longer needed to take pain medication. But I wasn't well. My disease had kicked in and told me that I should take another pain pill. I wasn't in physical pain, but I was in emotional pain. Part of my body had been taken from me and replaced with a foreign object. I didn't like it. It was uncomfortable to wear, but I couldn't go without it. The committee took over and told me that if I took the pills, I wouldn't care about the discomfort or how bad I looked. I could just go on with life, but not care so much.

I was scared! I reached for the phone. My sponsor wasn't there. Oh God, what was I going to do? I didn't want to use, and I knew if I took that pill that I didn't need, I would be using. Ten and a half years down the tube. I called someone who had relapsed after seven years. "Yes, Pam," she told me. "They do talk to you. Flush it! Watch a movie. Get out of your head."

The program has taught me to do what I'm told at moments like that. I did. My sponsor told me later that people sometimes relapse so others of us don't have to. No one else could have gotten through to me at that moment, only her.

The movie was over; the committee was in session again. God took over. I didn't even have to ask this time. I just had to be willing. My son came home with a crashed computer, and I had to call the guy who programs it for me. It so happens this man has thirteen years in recovery, and I spilled my guts to him. He was great. He



helped me understand that I'm an addict, still an addict, and want everything to happen immediately. The message got through. I began to accept that it would take time for my body to heal. I had no sooner gotten off the phone with him than one of my sponsees called. She asked if I had eaten, and got my daughter on the phone when I told her I hadn't. She made sure that my daughter fixed me something to eat. More twelfth-stepping, more willingness. God kept me in contact with a member of this

program until my husband came home from work. God did for me what I couldn't do for myself. I only had to be willing to let Him. And I was. This program works if you let it. I didn't have to use. God did for me what no human power could have. He took the obsession away.

Thank you, NA, from the bottom of my heart. You were there for me when I needed you most. You got me through and I didn't use. It works if you work it.

PH, Utah

Even here

My name is Bruce and I'm an addict. That's what I said at my first NA meeting because that's what everybody else in the room said. You know, that was the first time I ever admitted being an addict to myself, let alone in front of about ten other people, my wife included. By "included," I mean my wife was there, too, but when it was her turn, she just said, "Hi, my name is Donna."

It took her about two more meetings until she also said she was an addict. It felt so good finally facing, accepting, and admitting we were both addicts, and we both needed to explore the world of recovery. Recovery was something out of reach before we came to a small group in our hometown of Sheridan, Wyoming.

I was out on bond for drug charges. I was guilty of using drugs. I wasn't told to go to treatment or anything else. This was working Step One. Talk about unmanageable! After about 180 meetings in a row, I was sent through the wheels of justice. I found out what my so-called friends were all about as I ended up doing time for them.

I thank the God of my understanding for letting me live and guiding my wife and myself to the doors of Narcotics Anonymous. I am now in a

federal prison. They hadn't had NA meetings here for some time. They do now! I started one. Out of the whole population here, about 600 addicts, five came to the first meeting. The second drew six. The third meeting had five people again. I've used the Twelfth Step and brought the meeting to the attention of many more, so I really have great hope that it will flourish in the future.

The word "recovery" is rarely heard here. All you hear mostly is, "When I get out..." What I've learned here is that yes, this is a correctional institution. The ones, the few who walk through the door to discover a twelve-step program are the fortunate ones. Twelve Steps to a new way of life. I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't try. NA has given me the tools to do that.

I have it in my head that even if I can't get more people interested, I've still helped six other addicts, and that strengthens my program and my recovery. My wife sends me the daily reading from *Just for Today* every day. It comes four days late, but when I take the time to read it again, with her letters, there's something new happening each time.

By the way, my hometown group is called the New Freedom group. And that's just what I get from that group—freedom. Even here in prison.

BH, Wyoming

Feeling like a real person

I'm an addict, and my name is Mike. I'm living clean and enjoying my new way of life, the NA way of life. There are so many benefits that I have reaped. The benefits come from working the steps. I'm not the same as I was when I came here for help, thank God. Today I am a loving and caring person.

Part of my amends to myself, to my family, and to the world are fulfilled by being a loving and caring person with my eyes open, looking for ways to help others with their lives.

My grandfather died on 15 July. My middle name was his first name, my dad's first name, and my youngest son's middle name. I am proud to have his name as part of my name. It's part of what makes me who I am.

Toward the end of June, when my grandfather had been in the hospital for about a month, I went to my grandmother's in Connecticut to help her and be with her and see my grandfather. I brought my twenty-month-old daughter with me. My grandfa-

ther meant a lot to me, and I had to show it.

Grandma and I went to see grandpa three times that weekend. When we went, I wasn't sure what I had to give. I had been a taker for so long. But because of NA, I do have experience in giving of myself.

When we got there and he was in a condition that wasn't part of my fond memories of him, I realized I was there to share my beautiful daughter, to make him as comfortable as possible, and possibly to cheer him up. God—that's my higher power—was with me the whole time.

Others came over the course of our visits and I introduced Hailey, my daughter, to all of them. Part of the fun was in having her point out all the people. "Who is Grandpa? Where is Grandma?" And so on. She pointed them all out, and Grandpa smiled through his pain and discomfort. She made barnyard animal noises and counted and tried her ABCs. All the joy in my heart and how proud I was still overwhelms me. And Grandpa smiled.

On our third visit, Sunday morning, I still had not found a way that satisfied me to make Grandpa comfortable. I had adjusted his oxygen tubes, but when the nurse bumped his foot, I realized that his feet hurt. I decided to massage them, and asked first if he would like that. He kind of shrugged. "What's the difference?" he seemed to be saying.

I carefully removed the egg-carton cushion from his foot. It was swollen to two or three times its normal size. Probably pretty normal for someone who's been in bed for a month. I

rubbed his feet until my hands ached. We all kissed Grandpa good-bye.

Grandma took us to her house for lunch. "Michael, eat up. You're skinny," she told me. Boy, do I love her. I left Connecticut having shared of myself, having cared to the best of my ability. I left with Grandpa's smile.

I shared my weekend with my mom. That's a real healing. She went up the next weekend and made a report to me that Grandpa's feet were normal in size. I cried tears of joy and gratitude for my new way of life. I feel like a real person. Thank you, God, NA, and Grandpa for what you have given me. I will always remember.

MR, Maryland



The gift in disguise

I have received many gifts from Narcotics Anonymous—many more than I could ever express in one story. The steps, a belief in a loving higher power, and the close work with my sponsor (as inconsistent as that is sometimes) have changed my life. All these have given me the ability to be of service to someone other than myself. I believe my recovery is what allowed me to experience the death of my grandmother in an unbelievably beautiful way.

Before, all of my experiences with death were so brutal, dark, gloomy, *tragic*. I always felt full of the disease, hopelessness, and despair.

My grandmother raised me for several years while my parents couldn't. She was like a mother to me. Aside from typical childhood resentments, I felt nothing but love for and from my grandma. I always knew she was there. I didn't always want her to be, but somewhere in my heart I knew she was.

She always loved me regardless of what I did. When I was older, through all the times of getting loaded on visits to see her, being in the bathroom for extended periods of time, strange smoke smells coming from the room I

was staying in, she loved me. Through all the erratic behavior, hostile temper tantrums, lying when asked if I was doing drugs in her house, she loved me. She was so proud and excited for me when I got clean.

This disease is powerful and so unbelievably cunning. It took me 3½ years to even crack the denial I had about large parts of my disease. I did the best I could, but still, when I look back, it seems like the bare minimum: Just don't use no matter what, rationalize and justify insanity, avoid responsibility at all costs, and always, always, blame others.

All of which my grandmother got to witness, and unfailingly responded to with unconditional love, support, and faith that my life would turn out all right. When I had four years clean, I ended my two-year marriage and left with my one-year-old baby. I had very little faith; I had only been working with my new sponsor for about six months.

I lived every day in self-pity, pain, and fear of living life. My sponsor would ask me, "Where is your faith?" and "Where are your first three steps?" She continued to work with me in these areas and I got a little better. I also remember my grandmother always telling me, "Just pray, my darling, and ask God to help you."

I know that sounds like a typical religious statement, but my grandmother was as open-minded as they come. When she was younger she was wild! Smoking, drinking, dancing, going on trips to the lake at night with boys! (In the 1920's that was big stuff.)

Anyway, she would always tell me, "If you aren't getting along with

someone and they're not acting right, just send them thoughts of love and they will straighten right out." I know now that my grandmother lived her faith.

Last December, just before her birthday, she started to feel "not right." I took off time from work to go see her on her birthday. She was turning ninety-three, and she wanted an ice cream cake. She got it.

She had congestive heart disease and, well, she was dying of old age. The weeks to follow went very quickly for all of us. On January 8th she went "on hospice" and was now confined to her bed in her room. It really irked her. She was still so spunky and fiery. I would drive down to see her whenever I could. That last weekend, when I arrived, my mother greeted me to try to prepare me for my grandmother's frail condition. She had declined so fast.

When I walked into her bedroom, my heart was so full of love, much like the love I have for my son. Even with the tubes, funky odors, and the unmistakable smell of death in the room, I couldn't wait to hold her, love her, be there for her. Just as she had done for me my whole life. For those five glorious, tiring, draining, painful, beautiful days, my sister, my mother, and I cared for her. We would read to her, brush her hair, prop her up, reposition her in the bed, feed her, brush her teeth, massage her feet. We just took care of her and tried to make her as comfortable as possible.

Even the task of crushing the pain pills to a fine powder to mix in the baby food we fed her didn't give me a second's pause. It was for her, for her

comfort, to ease her pain, not mine. Praying with her to her God, reading to her about the angel of death, "how gentle, compassionate, and kind" it has to be because it's so hard to leave. As she shared aloud about what visions she saw each day, we knew death was approaching quickly.

She died on January 18, 1996, and I wasn't there. I had known somehow that I wouldn't be. I had been home with my son. I arrived a few hours later. Before the people came to get her, my mother, my sister, and I gathered around her and sang her a song about life and death. We sent her spirit off with love and excitement, for we believe that her journey is just starting and she will be going on ahead and will welcome us when we arrive.

If it wasn't for my recovery, I wouldn't have been there. I would have missed it, all of it. The miracle is the unbelievable, unmistakable, overwhelming power of love through acceptance, and the gift of peace that comes for those who have the courage to change.

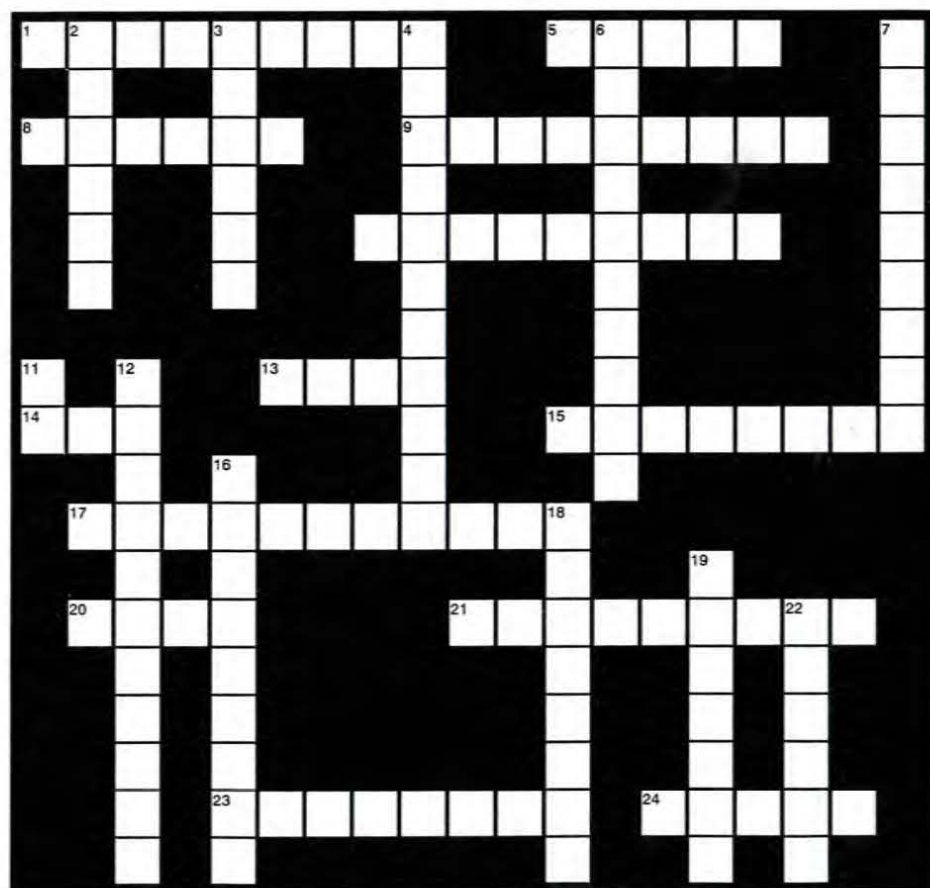
Don't misunderstand me. I cry. It still hurts. I miss her terribly. It's hard to believe she is really gone. I still battle with shutting down from the grief and shutting everyone out. I continually fight to refocus, get vulnerable, and open back up. I am so very grateful for the many beautiful gifts in my recovery—disguised or not. Thank you for letting me share just for today.

DB, California

CROSSWORD

P U Z Z L E

THE BASICS



A basic crossword puzzle

Across

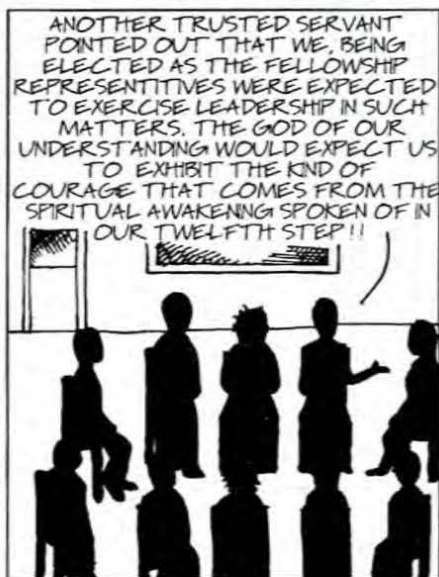
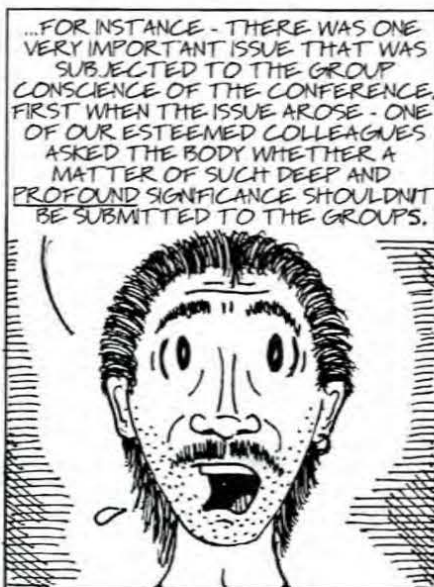
- 1) We have to _____ to win.
- 5) We need to _____ these spiritual principles in our lives.
- 8) _____ comes from working the steps.
- 9) NA is a _____, not religious program.
- 10) The outer circle of our symbol denotes a _____ and total program.
- 13) A river in Egypt.
- 14) Acronym for Easing God Out.
- 15) Many of our meetings open and close with the _____ Prayer.
- 17) _____ is a two-way street.
- 20) "My gratitude speaks when I _____ and when I share. . . ."
- 21) Higher mental and _____ functions were sharply affected by our use of drugs.
- 23) _____ honesty.
- 24) Not the elevator, the _____.

Down

- 2) We learn to lead _____ lives through application of the steps.
- 3) If we put as much of this into our recovery as we did into using, the program works better.
- 4) These will lead to relapse if we don't deal with them.
- 6) We have to keep our _____ in order.
- 7) The spiritual foundation of all our traditions.
- 11) This word adds unity to our steps.
- 12) A danger in later recovery.
- 16) It must be searching and fearless and moral.
- 18) As we make _____ in our recovery, we can see that we've grown and changed.
- 19) One of the indispensable spiritual principles.
- 22) Through our inability to _____ personal responsibility, we were actually creating our own problems.

Thanks to DF, Mississippi

Home Group



Newsletters



My lifeguard, my sponsor

From the Inside Connection, American River Area

I suppose it was my doing. I just had to tell her I was feeling distant from my Higher Power. I felt another homework assignment coming. My sponsor said we needed to start meeting more regularly, and yes, she happened to have every Monday free. I looked around for the journal that she had given me for my birthday. I dusted it off.

"Write this down," she said, smiling. "Daily meditation, reading your *Just For Today*, and writing in your journal." I grinned; oh yeah, the Eleventh Step. How easily my life had become full, and I forgot. Today's meditation: "Only in acknowledging my powerlessness can I begin to heal."

That week she told me to write about the difference between admittance and acceptance. I'd never really thought about it before. My first thought was that they were one and the same. It was when I started to write that I realized how different they were. When I came into Narcotics Anonymous, I was ready to admit that I was an addict. In fact, I think I had admitted it to myself, silently, for quite some time. I looked up "admittance" in the dictionary: "to concede as true or valid; permission to enter a place." Both worked for me. It was when I started to write about acceptance that I really began to struggle. My sponsor asked me to write about my interpretation of the word. I wrote that to accept was to "believe everything in God's world is as it should be." This is a concept that has always been difficult for me. If it's as it should be, then why is it sometimes so difficult? Why is there pain, sadness, or regret?

Oh yeah, the steps. The steps help us through all that stuff. That's where we get the coping skills that they talk about around here. I got out the dictionary again and turned to "accept." It said "to regard as normal or inevitable; to recognize as true; to give admittance." I was beginning to think this Merriam-Webster character was in the program. My sponsor

then asked me what I do in my daily life to practice admittance and acceptance.

At first, that sounded easy. I admit I'm an addict every time I walk into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous and every time I open the Basic Text, call a sponsee, or offer my gratitude to my Higher Power in prayer. But once again, when I got to the acceptance part, I stumbled all over my words. I began to question whether I only accepted things when they went my way. You know, that "self-will" thing.

My sponsor told me that in doing my homework, I had come to realize exactly what she wanted me to see and become aware of and to see that acceptance was the issue I needed to work on. I didn't feel so alone with this issue anymore: I knew she would help me, and we would work on this together. She reminded me that nowhere is it written that to accept means to approve of, or like. It was very simple. Suddenly it didn't sound so intimidating. I always thought I had to like it in order to accept it. I'm so glad we have sponsors in our life to simplify things.

Well, for me, it was gonna be back to basics. Back to the Basic Text, back to my journal, back to prayer and meditation, and back to meetings. I began to realize as the years have passed how comfortable, or uncomfortable, I had become. How I had drifted so far away. I'm grateful for my lifeguard, my sponsor, who always seems to know when I need to be pulled back in for resuscitation. Anyway, guess I better get on it. I've got some pencils to sharpen.

Anonymous

We need stories!

Remember, the meeting in print section of the *NA Way Magazine* is your section. Like any other meeting you're a part of, you'll get the most out of this one by participating.

Who writes stories?

You do!

The stories you see in this magazine are written by NA members like you. You don't need to be a "great writer." All you need is your personal experience in recovery, and the willingness to share it. Without it, we don't have a message to carry. In every sense, that's the *NA Way*.

What do I write?

Share as you would at any other meeting. Is there a topic you've enjoyed hearing or sharing about at a recent meeting? Are you on a particular step and having some eye-opening experiences? Has there been a recent turning point in your personal recovery? Share it with your fellow *NA Way* readers. We'd love to hear from you. Write us at:

The NA Way Magazine

PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409

Viewpoint



No requirements, and that's final!

Our area service committee recently held an all-services learning day. There was a forum near the end of the day that we used to discuss a very controversial issue that has been brought to the regional floor this year. The following statement was one of those expressed at the forum.

Recently, a motion was made at our region that the Greater New York Region forbid the use of a paragraph that the majority of the groups in our region use in their opening statement and break.

Paraphrased, the paragraph tells addicts that they should not share if they have used any mind- or mood-altering chemicals in the last twenty-four hours.

When we first read our Third Tradition, we see that "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." Our literature tells us that because we can't assess whether someone meets our sole requirement for membership, we are encouraged to open wide the doors of our meetings to any addict who wishes to join. As groups, we must always be mindful that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, not to judge who is entitled to share. The group is not the jury of desire. We cannot measure or arbitrate willingness. Any addict's willingness to come to a meeting ought to be a sufficient indication of desire.

I have heard a number of reasons given for reading the paragraph under discussion: "If they really want to share, they can wait until they are clean for twenty-four hours." "I had to shut up until I earned the right to share." "What can I learn from someone who is using?" I have heard these things said since I came into recovery, and I accepted them as being true, just as I thought the statement in the opening was NA policy. After all, I had heard it read in meetings since I got clean. It wasn't until I started performing service and learning about the traditions from my sponsor that I realized I was looking at things entirely wrong. As it says in *It Works*:

How and Why, "Any addict who walks into a meeting, even a using addict, displays a level of willingness that cannot be discounted. While maintaining an emphasis on the importance of total abstinence, still-using addicts are welcomed into our meetings with special encouragement to keep coming back."

Another issue that I became aware of when I started with service was that of recovering addicts having to take medication. I'm sure that some of us in this room have been to a meeting where a member of our fellowship has shared about his or her medication issues. I, for one, have heard others in those meetings state their belief that people could not take medication and consider themselves clean. They must be high; they should not share. I also know of instances where members have been persuaded—or persuaded themselves because of this attitude in others around them—that they should stop taking their medications so they could consider themselves clean. Some of these people have paid disastrous consequences for such a decision: loss of mental and physical health, and even loss of life.

We must remember that Narcotics Anonymous as a whole has no opinion on outside issues, including health issues. We are concerned with recovery from the disease of addiction. The ultimate responsibility for making medical decisions rests with each individual. Still, if we choose to accept it, a great deal of support is available to us to make such decisions. For instance, we can work the Twelve Steps, maintain frequent contact with our sponsor, write about our

feelings and motives, and share at meetings.

It Works: How and Why tells us exactly what we should do about any medication issue. "Tradition Three asks us to set aside our self-righteousness. Our attitude ought to be one of loving acceptance toward *all* addicts, regardless of any other problems they might experience."

If we believe that you are a member when you say you are, we must also believe that certain rights come with membership. One of these rights is being able to share at a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. When we ask certain addicts not to share, we are denying them that right. We are creating another class of membership—members who aren't entitled to share.

When we look at the essay on Tradition Four in *It Works: How and Why*, and we read about autonomy, we see the promise of freedom at the group level. For some of us, this is our first glimpse of this type of freedom and it can be very exhilarating. However, "autonomy does not relieve groups of their obligation to observe and apply the spiritual principles embodied in the traditions." We must realize that with freedom comes responsibility. "The responsibility that balances our autonomy reflects the principles expressed in the first three traditions. Preserving the unity of our fellowship comes first. Next, we seek direction from a loving Higher Power. Then, we hold meetings that welcome everyone with a desire to stop using."

Now we are able to see the logical progression from our First Tradition up through Tradition Four, and how

they are interdependent. If anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, unity is the practical foundation of all our traditions. We build our membership from the ranks of those sick and suffering addicts who have yet to find this new way of life we learn to seek one day at a time; they are predominantly still active. "As a fellowship, our ability to reach still-using addicts is tied to our willingness to offer meetings that are accessible and attractive to these addicts."

When we consider our unity, we acknowledge our membership in a worldwide community; we are part of a whole.

The Greater New York Region is very large and dynamic, having the largest number of recovery meetings of any region in the world. However, we are relative newcomers to the NA community, being in existence for about fifteen years, and we are one of the only regions to use this statement about sharing in meetings. I and others who travel extensively have never heard such a statement elsewhere. I think that we must look, in the spirit of unity, to other regions that have been established longer, and take guidance from their example. We must be able to learn from those who came before us. We must also consider when our actions "affect other groups or NA as a whole."

It is a fact that some of our H&I panels must continue to carry the message to institutions where the residents are able to go to outside meetings. They, however, were intimidated by the "don't share" statement and felt unwelcome. This, in turn, deprives the H&I panel from

taking commitments at other facilities for lack of qualified trusted servants. Does that affect NA as a whole? I think the answer is obvious.

I would like to clarify one point about the motion on the regional floor. The intention of this motion was never to tell any group to remove that statement if they use it. The GNYRSC cannot dictate to any group what statements they should or should not use. That would be a violation of our traditions, literally and spiritually.

I firmly believe that the role of the GNYRSC is to serve—first the groups, and ultimately the individual recovering addict. One of the ways we serve is by providing guidance and information, and I have faith that an informed fellowship, seeking the guidance of a loving Power greater than themselves, will come to a spiritual and unanimous decision.

MP, New York

Tell it exactly how it is

I am writing this article in response to a viewpoint written in the July 1996 edition of *The NA Way*, titled "Driven Away." The article was about an NA member who left the fellowship. Man, I get so disappointed when a member leaves the fellowship

after some time in recovery. Since NA is the fellowship that saved my life, I am assuming that it probably saved this addict's life as well.

What I want to write about is the "editing" of our message, which happens in our meetings, in our service structure, and in our literature.

I, too, have experienced many of the same occurrences that the author of "Driven Away" discussed. The apathy about our newcomers at meetings, the discussion of active addiction instead of recovery, gossip, selling and using drugs at our meetings, and step work being dismissed as foolish were but a few of the grievances expressed in this article. I relate! But recovery happens when NA members stay in the fellowship and find solutions to these highly disturbing problems. We learn to live life on life's terms, and we learn to tell it just like it is.

I often hear that we need to share for the newcomer. What we need to do is to tell the newcomer just what our recovery is like. We share that we have problems in our fellowship, that the sickness of the world is not suspended just because we're at an NA meeting. We also share that we have solutions to our addiction and the problems that result from it in the steps of this program. Our members are then not shocked and disillusioned after a few years, opting to leave the fellowship. Abandonment is old behavior for me; sticking around is recovery, and it's been real hard for me sometimes.

I would like to share some of my solutions to the above-stated situations. First, I have inventoried myself and found out what my spiritual prin-

ciples are, ones that I wish to live by. This is a principle found in our steps. I found that carrying the message to the newcomer is important to me. So no matter who comes, goes, lives, or dies, this is my spiritual path. I share this message in meetings and, depending on who's in the fellowship at the time, this can be a very unpopular message. But I keep coming back. Sometimes just being in the fellowship is enough, and change is something that will happen eventually. Sometimes it takes years to become willing to change. While we're waiting, we'll keep getting opportunities to practice patience and tolerance for each other.

In the inventory process, I have had to discover why I am here. Am I here to get popular? No. I have discovered that I got as popular as I am ever going to get when I was using and that popularity almost killed me. I have sometimes had to choose between being popular and keeping my self-respect. I know how to be compliant, obedient, and reliant. My recovery calls on me to find some integrity, to speak my own truth and be responsible for that. The only thing I ever stood up for before NA was drugs.

I envy people who live in an area where NA is strong, and at the same time I am very grateful that I have met so many people outside my area. The area where I live is very young. My solution has been to go where I find recovery that suits me. There are meetings for youth, special interest meetings, and all of these meetings serve a need in our community or they eventually fold. I have been given the fantastic opportunity to have a home

group in my area, and the other groups I attend are outside my area. The fellowship has introduced me to the great freedom of traveling to Seattle, Everett, Bellingham, all over Washington, to Oregon and California, even to Canada. I have had to look, search, and find those who will help me to grow in grace in recovery, who support me, whose recovery that I admire, and who will tell it like it is, exactly how it is. Sure, there are people who are not for me in NA, but they too teach me.

In addition to personalities in meetings, I have learned that in service it is not the subcommittee that carries the message, it is the individual who carries the message into the subcommittee. I have learned the value of having recovery-based service, not service-based recovery.

In another article I submitted, every single problem that I wrote about was edited out. The article printed was nothing like what I wrote. It made NA sound totally free of any kind of life circumstance. I have to say that this kind of editorial policy does more harm than good. We do experience dilemmas, and how we find our solutions is what makes recovery. Sure, it is easy to get along when it's all good, but a bond is formed in what we do when it is not all good. All in all, having a service position in NA is an extreme privilege and I am very, very grateful to be able to do service to this fellowship. Instead of editing our words, NA people need a place to express our concerns about our fellowship.

Some of the more recent concerns I have heard expressed are: What do we

do when someone is no longer in the fellowship and treats us like the plague? I know I feel very badly when this has happened to me. What do we do when other people use or go to another fellowship and talk bad about us? This is the nature of addiction. It is not the solution of recovery!

When we do some of the suggestions and more, all we get is a day clean. We get a daily reprieve and nothing more. A day clean is a miracle for any drug addict. I have learned that coming to NA is practice for how I will treat others. If I am accustomed to rejection, abandonment, and betrayal (all words of what others do to us), I set my life up for that to happen. When I get in the solution and practice at being in a home group that is satisfying, putting my NA service where I am appreciated, attending meetings where I am free to grow and am supported, practicing the spiritual principles that my sponsor is teaching me by working the Twelve Steps, sponsoring others, finding a Higher Power of my own understanding, then I have very little time to worry about the actions of others. I can allow others to be exactly what they are, and I become freer to become who I want to become.

JM, Washington

Editor's Note: Please see "From the Editor," page 2 of this issue, for an explanation of our editorial policy.

From our readers



Sharing in recovery

I look forward to my magazine every month, and I'm sorry to hear that the magazine is probably going to be reduced to four times a year. I would gladly pay more for it if that would keep it a monthly magazine, but I guess change is inevitable, and that doesn't exclude us in NA. I am interested in seeing how these changes work.

I feel very strongly about this magazine, as it has been an important part of my recovery for the last couple of years. I travel frequently (yet another gift recovery has afforded me), and I always bring at least one issue of *The NA Way* with me. On a long train ride, the magazine is a welcome companion.

Because of this magazine, I have had the joy of sharing in other members' lives. People I would never have met otherwise have spoken to my heart through the pages of this magazine. I have shared in the joy of newly developing NA communities in Prague, in the People's Republic of China, and in other places. The experiences of many addicts are now mine, too. For this I am grateful.

At my home group, we have a chairperson's choice meeting, which means that the chair can choose from a list of topics and readings. Often we choose articles from *The NA Way* to discuss and share about. This has brought new ideas to our small group,

and given us some great meetings full of enthusiasm. Last month we read an article titled, "Is More Better?" It was the inspiration for a loving discussion about what it means to find recovery in NA, do service in NA, and stay in NA.

I recommend the magazine to people who are unable to get to a lot of regular meetings because of incarceration, illness, or geographic isolation. In fact, I wish someone had told me about the magazine when I first got clean in Vermont. There was only one NA meeting a week in St. Johnsbury and I had no car to drive the seventy-five miles or whatever it was to get to other meetings.

I am writing this to express my thanks and offer my encouragement to all those involved in the writing, reading, editing, and production of this wonderful expression of our fellowship.

PW, New York



Comin' up

Calendar											
		1	2	3	4	5					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
13	14	15	16	17	18	19					
20	21	22	23	24	25	26					
27	28	29	30	31							

CANADA

Alberta: 2-4 May; Chinook Area Convention; Calgary; info: (403) 590-1550 or (403) 235-0990; CACNA, 2607 60th St. NE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T1Y 2G6

British Columbia: 30 May - 1 June; H&I Awareness Weekend, Nanaimo; info: (250) 754-0156 or (250) 755-1195

2) 25-27 July; British Columbia Regional Convention; Campbell River's Sportsplex; info: (250) 923-0787; email: msale@oberon.ark.com; BCRCNA, PO Box 912, Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada V9W 6Y4

Manitoba: 13-15 June; Winnipeg Area Convention; Broadway Community Center; Winnipeg; info: (204) 774-2440 or (204) 775-9241; WACNA, Box 25173, 1650 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2V 4C8

New Brunswick: 13-15 June; New Brunswick Area Convention; Keddy's Inn and Convention Centre, Fredericton; rsvns: (506) 454-4461 or (800) 561-7666; NBACC, PO Box 20064, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada E3B 6Y8

Nova Scotia: 15-17 Aug.; Annapolis Valley Area Pig Roast and Campout, Blomidon Provincial Park; info: (902) 582-3037 or (902) 680-0326; AVANA, Box 522, Kentville, Nova Scotia, Canada B4N 3X3

Ontario: 9-11 May; Ontario Regional Convention; Ramada Inn City Center, Sudbury; rsvns: (800) 2-RAMADA or (705) 675-1123; info: ORCNA-10, 1942 Regent St. South, PO Box 248, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada P3E 5V5

2) 29-31 Aug.; Canadian Convention; Ottawa; Citadel Hotel, Ottawa; rsvns: (800) 567-3600; info: (613) 829-3231 or (613) 526-5937; CCNA, Box 929, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5P9

DENMARK

Copenhagen: 16-18 May; Copenhagen Area Convention; Vibenhuss Skole, Copenhagen East; info: 45/31858268 or 45/31917978; NA Kbh. Konvent, PO Box 3, DK-2000 F, Denmark

GERMANY

Hesse: 16-18 May; Germanspeaking Regional Convention; Burgerhaus Wixhausen, Darmstadt; info: 49/6151/597640 or 49/6151/351879

NORWAY

Buskerud: 8-10 Aug.; Area East Convention; info: 47/32751637; OØKNA-97, PO Box 2399, Strømsø 3003, Drammen, N-Norway

SWEDEN

Sundsvall: 20-22 June; 9th Swedish Midsummer Convention; info: 46/60/170420; email: aka.helborg@sundsvall.mail.telia.com

UNITED STATES

Alabama: 30 May - 1 June; Freedom on the Lake Campout; Guntersville State Park; info: (205) 582-7579; Freedom Group, Box 1794, Albertville, AL 35950

Arizona: 23-25 May; Arizona Regional Convention; Tempe Mission Palms Hotel, Tempe; rsvns: (602) 894-1400; info: (602) 985-4342 or (602) 433-7746; website: <http://tucson.com/seazna/arcnaxi.html>; ARCNA, PO Box 30655, Mesa, AZ 85213

Arkansas: 20-22 June; 13th Beaver Round-Up; Buffalo Point National Park, Yellville; info: (501) 925-1123 or (501) 587-9628

2) 4-6 July; Central Arkansas Area Convention; Riverfront Hilton Inn, North Little Rock; rsvns: (501) 371-9000; info: (501) 221-1909; CAACNA, Box 250516, Little Rock, AR 72225

California: 10 May; Southern California Regional H&I Learning Day; Covina; info: (310) 324-1547

2) 17 May; Marin County Unity Day; San Raphael Community Center; info: (415) 456-1292

3) 30 May - 1 June; In Pursuit of Unity Campout; Marysville Riverfront Park, Marysville; info: (916) 742-5167; email: mleahay@syx.com

4) 13-15 June; San Diego/Imperial Regional Convention; San Diego Concourse/Radisson Harbor View; rsvns: (800) 333-3333 or (619) 239-6800; info: (619) 465-7662 or (619) 696-9220; SDICRSO-CC, PO Box 16929, San Diego, CA 92176

5) 3-6 July; Western States Unity Convention; Riviera Resort, Palm Springs; info: (619) 320-4023 or (619) 367-5828; WSUC, PO Box 399, San Jacinto, CA 92581

Connecticut: 17 May; Pigs in Space; Lake Quassy Amusement Park, Waterbury; info: (860) 342-2595 or (860) 298-8951

Delaware: 4-6 July; Small Wonder Area Convention; University of Delaware; info: (302) 427-0151; SWACNA, Box 808, Wilmington, DE 19899

Florida: 15-18 May; Alabama/Northwest Florida Regional Convention; Holiday Inn, Ft. Walton Beach; rsvns: (800) 732-4853 or (904) 243-9181; info: (904) 478-8255; Box 10219, Pensacola, FL 32524

2) 23-26 May; Gold Coast Area Convention; Cypress Creek Marriott, Ft. Lauderdale; rsvns: (800) 343-2459; info: (954) 747-7387; GCACNA-7, PO Box 23325, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307

3) 3-6 July; Florida Regional Convention; Grenelefe Resort, Grenelefe; rsvns: (941) 422-7511 or (800) 237-9549; info: (904) 428-2939 or (941) 701-9233; FRCNA, c/o RSO, 2940 W. Columbus Drive, Tampa, FL 33607

Georgia: 1-4 May; Boardwalk Beach Resort, Panama City Beach; rsvns: (800) 224-4853; info: (770) 457-1280

Idaho: 25-27 July; High Desert Area's Serenity in the Wilderness; Sawtooth Mountain Wilderness, Chemeketa Group Site, 25 miles southeast of Stanley; email: branson@primenet.com

Illinois: 20-22 June; Joliet Area Convention; Holiday Inn Express, Joliet; info: (815) 774-0065 or (815) 729-0262; JACNA, Box 336, Joliet, IL 60434

2) 27-29 June; BANANAS Area Campout; Comiara Park, Evergreen Lake, Hudson; info: (309) 392-2602 or (309) 828-8705; email: ha13@aol.com; BANANAS, PO Box 3093, Bloomington, IL 61702-3093

3) 11-13 July; Greater Illinois Regional Campout; Weldon Springs State Recreation Area, Black Locust Group Camp Site, Clinton; info: (217) 493-2172 or (309) 392-2609; email: ha13@aol.com; GIRSCNA, Box 6326, Peoria, IL 61601

Indiana: 23-25 May; North Central Indiana Area Convention; Camp Mack, Waubee Lake, Milford; info: (616) 663-8267

Iowa: 4-6 July; Iowa Regional Convention; Best Western, Clearlake; rsvns: (515) 357-5253; info: (515) 424-5042 or (515) 423-6107; IRCNA, PO Box 53, Mason City, IA 50402

Kansas: 27-29 June; Mirror of Miracles; Sycamore Valley Resort, Wyandotte; info: (316) 232-1896 or (316) 429-5531

Louisiana: 23-25 May; Louisiana Regional Convention; New Orleans Marriott; rsvns: (800) 228-9280 or (504) 581-1000; info: (504) 887-7658 or (504) 899-2091

Massachusetts: 18-20 July; 5th Western Massachusetts Area Convention; Springfield Marriott; rsvns: (800) 228-9290; info: (413) 267-5099 or (413) 783-3644; email: Nooney@ix.netcom.com; Box 5914, Springfield, MA 01101

Michigan: 3-6 July; Michigan Regional Convention; Valley Plaza Resort, Midland; rsvns: (800) 825-2700, mention Group #G5275; info: (517) 548-4043; MRCNA, Box 7116, Novi, MI 48376

Minnesota: 23-26 May; Upper Midwest Regional Convention; Fair Hills Resort, Pelican Lake; info: (701) 235-0918 or (701) 232-0794; website: <http://www.rrnet.com/~umrna>

2) 13-15 June; Southern Minnesota Area Recovery Blast; Ramada Inn, Owatonna; rsvns: (800) 272-6232 or (507) 455-0606; info: (507) 444-9852; email: dans@ll.net; website: www.angelfire.com/narocks

Missouri: 16-18 May; United Kansas City Area's 9th Annual Smithville Lake Campout; Crow's Creek Campground, Smithville Lake; info: (816) 231-7518;

2) 6-8 June; 12th Show-Me Regional Convention; Hilton Airport Hotel, Kansas City; rsvns: (816) 891-8900; info: (913) 384-0772 or (816) 363-5368; email: woodyp@sound.net

Nebraska: 9-11 May; Close Encounters of the Clean Kind; Airport Ramada Inn, Omaha; rsvns: (800) 999-1240 or (402) 342-5100; info: (402) 344-2591 or (402) 553-0282

Nevada: 31 July - 3 Aug.; 1st Las Vegas Convention; Bally's; rsvns: (800) 833-3308; info: (702) 896-0130 or (702) 263-0336; email: elvana@lvnexus.net; Box 12717, Las Vegas, NV 89112

New Hampshire: 20-23 June; 7th Fellowship in the Field; Apple Hill Campground, Bethlehem; info: (603) 645-4777; Box 84, Tyngsboro, MA 01879

New Jersey: 23-25 May; New Jersey Regional Convention; Cherry Hill Hilton; rsvns: (609) 665-6666; info: (908) 826-2148; Box 605, Englishtown, NJ 07726

2) 13-15 June; United Area Convention; Governor Morris Hotel, Morristown; rsvns: (800) 221-0241; info: (201) 794-2364 or (201) 342-7084; Box 8286, Saddle Brook, NJ 07662

3) 25-27 July; 7th Northern New Jersey Regional Convention; Doubletree Hotel, Somerset; rsvns: (800) 222-8733; info: (201) 676-4481 or (201) 509-2926; Box 1019, Maplewood, NJ 07040

New York: 2-4 May; Greater New York Regional Convention; Concord Hotel, Kiamesha; rsvns: (800) 432-3850; info: (212) 242-8140; email: D666Storm@aol.com

2) 1-3 Aug.; Northern New York Regional Convention; Holiday Inn, East Syracuse; rsvns: (315) 437-2761; info: (716) 266-0221 or (716) 288-7232; NNYRCNA, PO Box 1425, Rochester, NY 14603

North Carolina: 18-20 July; New Hope Area Convention; Omni Durham Hotel & Convention Center; rsvns: (800) THE-OMNI or (919) 683-6664; info: (919) 479-1225 or (919) 220-8080; NHACNA, PO Box 25043, Durham, NC 27702

Ohio: 23-25 May; Ohio Regional Convention; Ramada Plaza Hotel at Cascade Plaza, Akron; rsvns: (800) 2RAMADA or (330) 384-1500; info: (330) 863-2400 or (330) 869-0536

2) 1-3 Aug.; Tri-Area Gateway to Freedom Convention; Sheraton City Center, Cleveland; rsvns: (216) 771-5129; info: (216) 663-2118 or (216) 295-2239; Tri-Area 3, PO Box 999, Shaker Heights, OH 44122

Oklahoma: 17 May; New Hope Group 12th Birthday Celebration; Lake Carl Blackwell, Stillwater; info: (800) 982-0242

Oregon: 16-18 May; Pacific Cascade Regional Convention; Chinook Winds Convention Center, Lincoln City; info: (541) 752-3860 or (541) 917-3265; email: klupengc@ucs.orst.edu

Puerto Rico: 11-13 July; Unidos Podemos 8; Isla Verde; rsvns: (800) 544-3008; info: (787) 274-0488 or (787) 749-9583; Comite de Convenciones, PO Box 362313, San Juan, PR 00936-2313

Tennessee: 13-15 June; Clean and Crazy Group Spiritual Retreat; Ft. Campbell Army Travel Camp, Clarksville; info: (615) 647-9043 or (615) 905-1428; Clean and Crazy, Box 1283, Clarksville, TN 37040

Utah: 6-8 June; 11th Annual Celebration of Recovery; American Legion Hall, Vernal; info: (801) 789-4836 or (801) 789-5504; Box 1476, Vernal, UT 84078

2) 18-20 July; 14th Utah Regional Campvention; Whittings Campground, Mapleton; info: (801) 476-7330 or (801) 491-9460; Campvention, PO Box 994, Springville, UT 84663

Vermont: 15-17 Aug.; Back to Basics 13; Walling Pond Boys Camp, Wallingford; info: (802) 773-5575

Virginia: 13-15 June; Piedmont Area Campout; Shenandoah Acres Resort, Stuarts Draft; Campground: (540) 337-1911; info: (804) 923-4544

2) 8-10 Aug.; Almost Heaven Area Convention; 4-H Center, Front Royal; info: (304) 262-2580 or (540) 888-3195

Washington: 16-18 May; Washington Northern Idaho Regional Convention; Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, Everett; rsvns: (206) 339-3333 or (800) 446-4656; info: (206) 382-0534

West Virginia: 9-11 May; Mountaineer Regional Convention; Cedar Lakes, Ripley; rsvns: (304) 372-7860; info: (304) 562-5835

Wisconsin: 11-13 July; Never Alone in the Woods Campout; Manitowoc; info: (414) 686-0263 or (414) 684-9233

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The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA 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 NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA 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. NA, 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 NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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