



## N.A.W.O.L. NEWS VOL. 3 ED. 1

Apr. 19<sup>th</sup> 2009

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*(Please pass this Newsletter on to your friends in recovery and have them contact me if they would like to be on our mailing list.)*

### 1. N.A.W.O.L. NEWS:

Here is the link (for viewing) the nawolnews group

<http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

Doing this also allows me to keep all input and membership lists centrally located in a single place. It also allows me to email all newsletters at once instead of doing so in groups of 30. I am currently sending Newsletters to 130 people in over 10 countries. As to proof reading of the NA Way of Life we still need someone to proof –read Ch's. 6-13: Ch's 15 & 17 along with Ch's 19-24 and the entire section on the 12 steps. We currently have 8 people and 2 groups actively working on input and/or proof reading.

\*NA Society Journal\*

Social Characteristics - NA as a society requires identification within our membership and certain customs embraced and embodied in our 12 Traditions - the same spirit of generosity that prompted AA to give us the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions includes their 12 Concepts as well as the Long Form of the Traditions. NA is not a business. NA is not a cult. We grow by developing our strengths while protecting ourselves from our weaknesses by having the good sense to surrender and get help! Like all societies, we have positive and negative sanctions. Positive sanctions are like group recognition, applause and expressions of gratitude. Negative sanctions are like ignoring certain behaviors, taking time to talk in private, and learning days to keep personality disorders from coming out while chairing a meeting, service and politics: the taking of sides. Our Society must always be the life of the Spirit. As we trade in our fears and grow in our faith, we have to carefully arrange our message of hope so that each person gets what he or she needs at each stage of their recovery. This, our message, is the miracle of NA.

NA also has rights to the Long Form of the AA 12 Traditions and we need to act on this as a Fellowship to deepen our understanding of the 12 Traditions.

Yours in Service,  
Lester O.

Unlike the nawolnews group, the NA Society Journal will be a web site in lieu of a news group. Here is the link.

<http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

The N.A. Society Journal is a current N.A.W.O.L. Project. This is a site for Journaling your thoughts concerning the N.A. Society. This site will provide space for Journals on N.A.W.O.L. Projects, both past and present as well as the History of N.A. and hopefully expand to cover the entire NA. Society.

Anyone can view this site,

<http://sites.google.com/site/nasocietyjournalproject/>

but only Owners and Collaborators can post. You can become an Owner or Collaborator only by invitation. This is to help reduce spam and/or prevent the site from becoming a chat room with unrelated post. To become an Owner or Collaborator. Please send me an Email at

[Lester1444@hotmail.com](mailto:Lester1444@hotmail.com) . You must be a member of N.A. and state why you want to be an owner or collaborator.

### **Some Upcoming Events:**

# **MAY 30<sup>TH</sup> 2009**

# **A “CELEBRATION OF RECOVERY”**

## **SPEAKER JAM**

*Recovery from Addiction*

the NA program ... has  
worked in our lives for 30 Yrs.

These members will be  
asked to speak...

Bob P, Dennis H, Bo S, Ed C, Joseph P, Page C, Carole I, Jim B, Keith S, Gary T, Dale A, Tuffy, Charlie, Kathleen M, Connie Y, Jo C, Dave S, Bill A, Marc B, John A, Ivan F, & Jim M – 30th Anniversary

*Presented by the  
Columbiana Group of NA*

**Fox Hollow Banquet Center**

**3759 Silliman St.**

**New Waterford, Ohio**

**10 AM – 11 PM**

...please bring a covered dish  
for dinner; lunch also will be  
served...

**E-mail for questions: [metzrd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:metzrd@sbcglobal.net)**

### **Updates from Some of Our Members:**

**1. Tim H. The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Ad Hoc Literature Group:**

Sent from my iPhone Feb. 7, 2009

We are working from scratch on an ip on spiritual principles like the NA way of life. We greatly appreciate your input and plan to bring our literature to the next New England regional lit conference

Sent 3/25, 2009:

Greetings To The No Limits Adhoc Lit. Group and Other Brothers and Sisters Helping via the internet!

Location: Middlesex Hospital, North One Conference Room, Middletown, Connecticut (Friday night at 9:00p.m)

Adhoc Purpose: To create an informational pamphlet that encompasses the 12 spiritual principles found in the 12th step of our Basic Text.

Time Line: The first draft of the IP is due on April 25th (The Time of the East Coast Literature Conference)

Completed: The group conscience has voted on a final version of the introduction (attached) and a final version of Hope (attached). As we all know, these will still go through several other group conscience settings prior to being sent to world. It is our Hope that this new literature written by addicts for addicts will eventually help the still sick and suffering addict.

Assignments:

Dave S.-Unconditional Love

Rik F. - Faith

Marissa (Rockville)-? Acceptance? (e-mail please-I forgot)

Stacey-Open Mindedness

Joe M.-Honesty

Tim H. Willingness and Humility

We are still missing a few principles and will assign them on Friday night.

Task: Please help our group and make edits on the 'Surrender' attachment. The more addicts involved, the stronger our 12th step. Please also send this message to any addict you think might be willing to help.

In Loving Service,

Tim H. and the No Limits Group of NA Adhoc Lit. Group

Contact Information for the Literature Group:

Rik F: (860) 759-2650

Tim H. (860) 581-3007

## Spiritual Principles

### *Introduction*

The fifth tradition of Narcotics Anonymous clearly states that the primary purpose of our fellowship is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Our traditions are the ties that bind us together. Members who have found this new way of life can be heard sharing our fifth tradition at Narcotics Anonymous meetings. They share with sincerity and humility that any addict can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. Since the beginning, Narcotics Anonymous has been saving the lives of addicts who would otherwise continue to suffer from the disease of addiction. Our hope is that you too can experience the freedom found through practicing the spiritual principles contained in the 12<sup>th</sup> step of our basic text.

## Principle Number One; Hope (draft)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Hope is a spiritual principle that can be given away to any addict. **Any addict can** find the life saving principle of hope when they walk into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. In Narcotics Anonymous, our fifth tradition can be heard from members who have found a new way of life. The fifth tradition clearly states that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. **Our message in Narcotics Anonymous is one of hope and our promise is freedom.**

Since the first meeting of Narcotics Anonymous in 1953, hope has been saving the lives of addicts who **would otherwise likely die** from the disease of addiction. Hope is the feeling in our spirit that tells us that maybe we too can get clean, loose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. We get this hope in many different ways.

After coming to Narcotics Anonymous, seeing is believing! **We watched** members as their despair turned to hope. **We saw** other addicts smile, **perhaps** for the first time, when they picked up a thirty day key tag. Day by day, meeting by meeting, and step by step, **we noticed** others members finding a new way of life. **We heard** addicts share about loosing family members, receiving a bad break at work, or watching a best friend go back out and use yet they **do not** pick up! **They seem to have found a solution to life's everyday problems. Their empathy seemed to give us Hope, perhaps, at first, we could not recognize what it was but that feeling we would get after a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous was undeniable.** The feeling that maybe, **just maybe**, we too could be happy and enjoy life for the first time in a long time has us asking questions about how addicts stay clean. We begin to dream.

**Hope became our new vision of the future. We began to want what those who had come before us had found in Recovery. We continue to Dream.** Hope gave us the ability to believe in our dreams without having lived them. How do we make dreams driven by hope become reality? We surrender to the solution of all of our problems. **With our new found hope we become willing to take certain steps. We're now ready to get a sponsor, trust in others, take direction and learn to live the program of N.A.**

**Sent Yesterday Apr.10,2009:**

Tim \_\_>

No Limits Adhoc Lit. Group:

Here are the latest edits to be voted on tonight, April 10, 2009 at 9:00 (Middlesex Hospital, Middletown, Connecticut, North One Conference Room) Thank you all for your willingness!

In Loving Service,

Tim H.

## **2. Update from Boyd:**

Hey Family,

As some of you may or may know, Chris B. and I have been on quite the exciting and rewarding adventure this past year of digitizing the archives that Joseph P. gave Kermit O.

Chris and I then gave Bo S. a copy, and he passed it on to Chris M. to be posted on the [magshare.magnaws.com/narchive](http://magshare.magnaws.com/narchive) website.

In Dec. 08, I picked Bo up at the Atlanta Airport, he flew in after speaking in Canada, and we proceeded to pick-up 20 boxes of his Archives from his Mom's home and transport them to my home in Raleigh, NC. When we got to Raleigh, we took a quick inventory of the Archives and sadly we discovered that the WLC minuets and the microfiche were not there. Major Bummer.

So, I am asking all NA Society members that if you have copies of the WLC minuets from the 7 Lit. Conferences from 79 thru 82 or if you know anyone who might have a copy, whether in part or in whole, contact Chris and I at [NAHistorylovers@gmail.com](mailto:NAHistorylovers@gmail.com).

What Bo did have were pictures of the Memphis Conference and the taped recordings of the Progress Meetings and Group Conscience Meetings at Memphis. Chris immediately digitized the pictures and then started on the tapes. We now have most of the tapes digitized for preservation. Yea!

From the information of Bo's and Joseph's archives, we then created a PowerPoint Presentation which we showed at the USCCNA in Greenville SC in February. About 75 people attended and it was well received. We hope to be showing at the Durham Convention in July.

After the convention in Greenville and the favorable response, we then got the bright idea to put this on DVD so all the fellowship could view this information. The transferring of PowerPoint to DVD has become a huge challenge for Chris. Technical problem after technical problem keeps rearing its ugly head. Chris has logged in over 125 hours in the creating and attempting to convert to DVD the PowerPoint Presentation. So when he gets it finished, he deserves Big Kudos for all the hard work he has put it.

So Family, that's where we are now. I'm looking forward to starting the organizing and scanning of Bo's Archives. I'll leave with one last story.

My girlfriend Amy K. and I were looking for a Booklet in Bo's Archives the other weekend and she was looking thru this particular box when she just stopped and stared for the longest time. "Honey are you alright?" was my question. "Better than alright, look what I have found. Its copies of the Cut and Paste that became our Basic Text. What I'm looking at is the birth of our Book." And she just stared for the longest time. "Kinda AWE inspiring isn't it." I said. Amy followed with "More than AWE inspiring, it chills me to the bone. This, for all practical purposes, is the birth of our fellowship." It sends me goose bumps as I'm writing this. I hope you feel the same way when you view it on the website. Until next time.

In Very Loving Service,  
Boyd P.

PS The name of the PowerPoint Presentation is "The History of the Basic Text"  
"How We Got Our Book".

Editor's Note: here is a link to the NArchive at

<http://magshare.magnaws.com/narchive/>

Open NArchive folder then open the 1980 folder and then open Folder on the [2nd World Literature Conference - Lincoln, NE 1980](#) many of the cut and paste items can be found here. Boyd and/or Chris can be contacted at [nahistorylovers@gmail.com](mailto:nahistorylovers@gmail.com) info regarding the PowerPoint presentation they did.

### **3. Submitted by Dalin A on April 7,2009**

April 7

The Value of The Past

"This firsthand experience in all phases of illness and recovery is of unparalleled therapeutic value. We are here to share it freely with any addict who wants to recover."

Basic Text p. 10

Most of us came into the program with some serious regrets. We had never finished high school, or we had missed going to college. We had destroyed friendships and marriages. We had lost jobs. And we knew that we couldn't change any of it. We may have thought that we'd always be regretful and simply have to find a way to live with our regrets.

On the contrary, we find that our past represents an untapped gold mine the first time we are called on to share it with a struggling newcomer. As we listen to someone share their Fifth Step with us, we can give a special form of comfort that no one else could provide - our own experience. We've done the same things. We've had the same feelings of shame and remorse. We've suffered in the ways only an addict can suffer. We can relate - and so can they.

Our past is valuable - in fact, priceless - because we can use all of it to help the addict who still suffers. Our Higher Power can work through us when we share our past. That possibility is why we are here, and its fulfillment is the most important goal we have to accomplish.

Just for today: I no longer regret my past because, with it, I can share with other addicts, perhaps averting the pain or even death of another.

pg. 101

Part of recovery is becoming whole and that includes relationships. But we must be a whole person seeking a whole person, not a broken person seeking another to become whole.

*It's not a question of me finding the right person, but  
Becoming the right person. (Especially if I'm  
Already with someone!)*

## Positivity

When faced with the consequences of past choices,  
See the gift of a lesson rather than the curse of a fall.

# New to NA

Narcotics Anonymous meetings are a gathering of recovering addicts, who meet regularly for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction.

### What to expect at an NA meeting:

- ? Although meetings may be located at a variety of publicly accessible buildings, meeting locations do not imply affiliation.
- ? Meetings use a variety of formats such as Participation, Speaker, Topic Discussion, Book Study, New Comer, Question and Answer, etc. [Find a meeting that fits your needs.](#)
- ? There are no attendance monitors at meetings and we are under no surveillance at any time. Most meetings last from 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- ? When you arrive at your first meeting you can expect to see recovering addicts welcoming each other and socializing. It is not uncommon for new members to be warmly welcomed.
- ? You may see information pamphlets, books and activity flyers. Feel free to take pamphlets and flyers. Books are for sale at cost.
- ? The leader typically will open the meeting with a moment of silence followed by readings, and announcements. The leader will then ask if newcomers and visitors would like to introduce themselves. Participation in meetings is voluntary.
- ? The leader opens up the meeting for members to speak on any subject related to recovery. Members will speak, sharing their experience, strength and hope. Sharing is voluntary. We do not respond to other people's shares (as in conversation) but from his or her own experience.
- ? While members are sharing we refrain from side conversations and other distracting activities that may disrupt the meeting.
- ? There are no fees or dues to attend a NA meeting. We are self supporting through our own contributions. You will see a basket being passed, to collect donations from members to pay rent for the meeting place, purchase literature, refreshments, etc.

As Narcotics Anonymous continues to grow as a worldwide fellowship we have found it difficult to obtain and keep suitable meeting locations. With that in mind we ask that members please:

- ? Be quiet when arriving and departing from meeting facilities
- ? Remember that others may be offended by our tone and language.
- ? Dispose of trash and cigarette butts appropriately.



Before we got clean, most of our actions were guided by impulse. Today, we are not locked into this type of thinking.” Basic Text p. 87

How did impulsive behavior affect you in active addiction? How has impulsive behavior affected you in recovery? What have you done to eliminate this behavior in your recovery?

Learning to live life one day at a time...."

My girlfriend went into her office a couple hours late today because of an early doctor's appointment and found that 14 people in her department had been laid off that morning. I'm home recovering from a gallbladder operation and may need an additional three surgeries - painful ones at that - for other things. It's easy to get overwhelmed with what's going on in the world and in our lives, and that's when I remember that I can get through anything as long as I take it one day at a time.

It didn't always used to be like this. Before I had the tools of the program, even the smallest things would overwhelm me. I constantly lived in a state of anxiety and when something did happen, panic wasn't far behind. I have a mind that is good at painting dark scenarios, and I have lived each imagined one to its bitter end. My life used to be pretty unmanageable.

One of the gifts of recovery has been learning to live in the present. When I can keep my mind in the same place as my feet, then I always find I'm alright. I'm taken care of; I have everything I need; I'm safe, and I can even find things to be grateful for. Once I focus my attention on what is happening now, I can even experience the peace and joy in my life that is always present when I acknowledge them.

*And it all comes from learning to live one day at a time*

You have to listen more than you talk.  
You have to give more than you get.  
You have to smile more than you frown.  
You have to think "we" more than you think "me."  
You have to agree more than you disagree.  
You have to compliment more than you criticize.  
You have to laugh more than you cry.  
You have to clean up more than you mess up.

You have to be positive more than you're negative.  
You have to be fascinated more than you're frustrated.  
You have to "walk the talk"  
more than you "talk the talk."  
You have to be accepting more than rejecting.  
You have to see the cup "half-full" more  
than you see it "half-empty."  
You have to help more than you hinder.

You have to believe in yourself  
more than you doubt yourself.  
You have to work more than you whine.  
You have to do more than you don't.  
You have to act more than you react.  
You have to save more than you squander.  
You have to care more than you ever have.  
You have to love more than you ever have.

If you want what we have – do what we do

By following the lead of old timers, you can learn to be one, if you can allow yourself to become teachable.

Here's one example. "Old timers" attend business meetings regularly and vote that we eliminate smoke breaks from meetings. Next month, Newcomers decide to attend JUST to vote it back in. Let me say that again – old timers vote it out, newcomers vote it back in. Can you read between the lines there? Just in case not, I'll explain. Follow the lead of people trying to show you how to get some clean time. People with significant clean time are attempting to show newer members how to resist cravings, an hour at a time, 5 minutes at a time. But newcomers ALWAYS know better and think smoke breaks are necessary. We have a name for this – it's called self-will run riot. We come here not having a clue how to do life, yet we tell the people that do, that we know better than them how meetings should run. I've seen this happen over and over again in the course of my recovery. Here we are in a room, learning how to resist our obsessive compulsions, and we choose to stop, break the continuity of our recovery meetings, to go out and practice our addictions. (Many old timers also smoke by the way...yet are able to resist urges for an hour or so). We don't lock the door - you're free to go out and smoke at any time, so why make people who want to resist cravings stop to indulge YOUR addiction, at the cost of a quality meeting with continuity. You want more fellowship time? Come early and stay late. I can't even begin to count the newcomers who bailed at smoke break, never to return. Many many times, there will be 20 people in the meeting at the start, and only 6 or 8 after the break. Had they stayed another 30 minutes they just may have heard what they needed to save their lives. I think they left 5 minutes before the miracle happened. This is not fulfilling our primary purpose.

"We're not interested in what you have done in the past...ONLY in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help." The past includes today and yesterday's drama; Recovery includes today and yesterdays solutions, which lead us into how to live tomorrow. Experience, strength and hope, experience is only a small part of how we get to the strength and hope, the important part. IF you don't get there, you WILL repeat the (bad) experiences. Keep doing what you're doing you will keep getting what you are getting. If you MUST talk about the experience, please keep it short and move directly into what you want to do about it and how we can help. We all know how to use and run unmanageable lives; we don't need any more examples or stories about that.

Atmosphere of recovery?

Some of our meetings have been a mess lately. Our personal recovery depends upon NA unity. We come here with a disease as serious as a heart attack. It is important that we are not grim faced white knuckled

serious people, yet an atmosphere of recovery must prevail in our meetings. We come here to save our lives, not to play games, play grab ass, chit chat, cross talk, gossip, get laid, tell war stories, and point out the differences. When you do this, it sets the example to others and more do it. Sometimes we have the inmates running the asylum here, and the atmosphere of recovery deteriorates. Newcomers leave, old-timers leave, and that is sad. Saving our lives is not a game, and this is not just a “new playground”. As members of Narcotics Anonymous, we have a responsibility to newcomers to show them a new way of life. We come here in Unity, sharing a common bond. We don’t know how to live life and enjoy it, yet our actions often alienate the very people capable of showing us how to do so. If you can’t engage in appropriate behavior, and help us to fulfill our primary purpose, please come back when you’re willing to learn.

I’m saddened, no ashamed that many old timers no longer come around our meetings. Many go elsewhere seeking recovery. This program gave them their wonderful lives, yet they are not here to share it. Why? I’ve been told that NA meetings are too “dysfunctional”. I am here to tell you that it works just fine, but we have strength in numbers. And I can also tell you that those disruptive members who are here only to take don’t stay. Only about 10% of the people who walk in the doors stay. Which ones? Well,

We ONLY keep what we have by giving it away, if that gives you a clue. Do you contribute to the atmosphere of recovery?

If you’re chairing a meeting, Please try to “steer” the meeting and keep the focus on recovery. This includes telling people when they have gone on too long, and bringing the topic back to recovery when it drifts. Uncomfortable, yes, vital, yes, if we want to stay. Remember this; part of sharing is sharing time. Try to monitor yourself as to when your 5 minutes is up.

Do you choose to be part of the solution, or part of the problem? Are you carrying the message or spreading the disease? War stories are the disease, talking about your problem and how we can help takes us to the solution.

“You have to learn to Listen, cuz you have to Listen to Learn”. We have a step study meeting, with the intent of helping one another understand and work steps. Do you share about the steps, or about daily drama? In the step study meeting, if you don’t know anything about the step, just ask. You’ll certainly find someone who has been where you are and will help you to the solution. If you have nothing to share about the step or steps, learn to listen. I know when I am talking I am not learning. Yet I know I have to share what I have, so I can keep it. Sometimes there isn’t a lot of time to do that if the meeting time is wasted listening to drama. There’s a time to take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth. If you can’t talk about the steps, this would be one of those times. You most likely WILL hear things that will help you live your recovery.

I love this program and am dedicated to never turning my back on the program that saved my life. I have a very strong desire for quality recovery meetings. I never want to have the crap that goes on in our meetings drive me or anyone else out of the rooms. Follow the lead of old timers; you just may turn into one. The problem is Me, the Solution is WE. You can be part of the solution. Please help us to fulfill our primary purpose so our beloved program thrives.

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing, that we could manage our lives perfectly and those of anyone else who would allow us.

2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves and the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones turn their wills and their lives over to our care even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world at large the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others straighten up and do right.
7. Demanded that others either shape up or ship out.
8. Made a list of all persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any lengths to get even with them all.
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible except when to do so would cost us our lives or at the very least, jail.
10. Continued to take inventory of others and when they were wrong promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through bitching and nagging to improve our relations with others as we could not understand them at all, asking only that they knuckle under and do things our way.
12. Having had a complete mental, emotional, spiritual and physical breakdown as a result of these steps we tried to blame everyone else and continued to practice these principles in all our affairs, until death, jails or institutions intervened and kicked our asses real good.

#### **4. Input from Bo submitted April 11<sup>th</sup> 2009:**

Dear Lester,

NA Society

I began my recovery back in the middle seventies and so got to watch and help the WSC grow. We went from 3 regions in the whole world to 28 in one year! Got to participate in 1982 (?) with the WSC Policy Committee re-write of the service structure to include a WSC Committee with double checks and safe guards between the WSB, WSC and WSO. The WSC Committee is sorta like NAWS except for the report accountability and the safe guards. We always predicated a large and well-informed body of membership to make the big decisions. Like the AA structure, we saw NAWS as a service center that would stay out of NA politics. Ah, the beauty of hind sight. Where did we put the money, property and prestige?

"NA is a Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem." We have all become aware of how quickly money, property and prestige are associated with greed, lust (for more!) and prestige. Fame, pride and power over others are major mood altering conditions. It takes a degree of spiritual growth to be able to turn these things over to a loving, ultimate authority and go our way in peace. Working on the NA Way of Life book which has involved hundreds of members so far, it became obvious to a working group in Dalton, Georgia that the NA Society was the key to understanding real NA. The societal connections reach out into every individual and gathering of members world-wide. With wide-open communications like we are developing today among the general Fellowship, any member can become as informed as they care to and in time, this should steady out our ship some. It is useless to condemn individuals who just happened to be walking in a part of the sidewalk where there was a big hole left there in the 1980's. My personal belief is that the more members are involved with something, the more they will support it later on. Yeah, it takes some discipline and restraint on the part of the leadership but this is a spiritual Fellowship, not a kindergarten. Recovery turns the world on its head. This is what was never going to happen - for addicts to get together and work out a way to stay clean, help others and grow spiritually. National armies, governments and modern medicine cannot do

what we do. So, let's be grateful and look for ways to do our part in making it better - better for all of us. We have so much to be grateful for and so many resources.

Just acknowledging the NA Society - which includes everyone in NA today - we cut on a light switch. World services can retire with honor and the creative juices within NA can flow once more. Getting good, accurate and fresh information is the first step to improving a system. We know there are only a few steps between monarchy and anarchy. The middle ground is a republic based on democratic principles. A monarchy is dependent on the ministers who tell the king what the heck is going on. Anarchy only exists until someone has to ask what to do next, then it becomes an oligarchy again. Republic as a word is based on representation of a body of people in an organized setting for the purpose of working out solutions that are both fair and workable to all concerned. That is probably the best we can do, with God's help. What have we got now? How is it responsible to those who are supposed to be served? Think about these questions. They form the base upon which we build.

In Loving Service,

Bo S.

My Observation's:

Recently, when I was talking with Bo, after his move to Atlanta, he mentioned that he had run into an old friend (one of the old timers in Atlanta), a man who had spent years and years doing Service work in the Atlanta Area for NA. and was well known and respected in the community. Bo then said that when he ran into this person that some of the 1<sup>st</sup> words out his mouth was that He was he was now ready to start working on NAWOL projects. The reason I mention this is that there are many of us who have grown up in NA. and we all have our stories and experiences in NA. A funny thing about history is that it is usually presented as the view of a few likeminded people when two or three of us could experience the same thing and all have different interpretations of what we witnessed. It is for this reason that I think that in order to get good over all view we need to examine our history from all of the different perspectives.

To me the NA Society gives us the format in which to do this while our main function is seeking out new ways to better serve our fellowship. No matter where wear at on the scale of time in NA we all have our personal experiences in NA. and we need to share them with others. This along with our Steps and Traditions is how we grow in our Recovery.

Are work on the NA Way of life is nearing its completion. We have written most of what can be written. What we need to do now is some final editing for a 2009 or 2010 version and then group conscience the book. What we have left is work on the NA Society. We need personal stories of recovery and related experiences. Even World Services and the WB are beginning to see the need to get more fellowship evolvment as evidenced by their "Living Clean Project". At N.A.W.O.L. We have several Projects that are in need of work.

Projects:

NA Twenty Plus [http://nawol.org/2008\\_NA%20Twenty%20Plus.htm](http://nawol.org/2008_NA%20Twenty%20Plus.htm)

The Spirit of NA [http://www.nawol.org/2008\\_The%20Spirit%20of%20NA.htm](http://www.nawol.org/2008_The%20Spirit%20of%20NA.htm)

Letters Of support [http://nawol.org/2008\\_letters.htm](http://nawol.org/2008_letters.htm)

The NA Society Journal <http://sites.google.com/site/nasocietyjournalprojectgroup/>

Other Links:

The NAWOL News <http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

NAWOL <http://nawol.org/> (Beginning next week ,look for updates to the NAWOL Site, Bo, has been without a computer for a short time due to his mrecent move but should have everything back up and running sometime this week.

Also if anyone has any Archives that we can submit to the NArchve site <http://magshare.magnaws.com/narchive/> please scans a copy and send it to me and I will forward it the site owner posting.

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Below is a letter of Support and the Story from the NA Twenty Plus Project. That generated the letter.

### **Appleton, WI USA**

I wanted to thank the NA Way of Life for adding my story to NA Twenty Plus. I am not a reader or writer. I had left NA for ten years. I had come back and ran across the website and decided to write my story. Not still feeling a part of NA – I did it anyway. I understood the need and cause but I never understood how it would make me feel.

When I found out that my story was published on the website – I dropped to my knees. Wow! Someone just gave me affirmations. I started telling people about the website and I told them its like sharing in a meeting and someone walks up to you and says, “What you had to share helped me allot.”

It’s a warm and loving feeling that maybe I am worth something and I do need to be here. Now the story is being printed in my area newsletter from the NA Way of Life website under Experience, Strength and Hope.

This is a man that does not read or write but now I do read most days. I am currently reading the *Tradition Wars* at home. I bought a local newspaper and read some of that while I was working. I found it really boring compared to the *Tradition Wars*. I am hooked on reading NA literature today. I am still in love with NA.

David D.

**David D.**  
Appleton, Wisconsin USA

NA Purist

My name is David D and I am an Addict. I grew up in Sheboygan WI, a town of 50,000 people. Growing up I had my name and picture in the newspaper for something good one day and then the police would be at the door the next day for something bad. My first drug deal was going to Boy Scout camp. With me, I took two packs of cigs, one pack of menthol and one pack of non-menthol, and half a bottle of vodka I had found on the side of the road. My friend was going to get me some weed. The plan was to get drunk away from home so my parents would not know. But they found the cigs and vodka before I left and they were not going to let me go. They could not understand why I had two packs of different cigs. At this point I never smoked or did any drugs. The troop leader talked them into letting me go. When I was at camp my friend had gotten the weed. I paid him for it and then smoked it. And boy did I cough. I said I don't feel any different and he said the first time you don't. I found out that it was weed and not marijuana. Yes, weed from the field. I got my picture in the paper from that camp. It was another five years before I would use. When I did start using it went from 0 to 60 in seconds. My using was alcohol, real weed, speed and LSD.

When I got married I would go out for a pack of cigs and come home two days later and no cigs. Six months after I got married I went in to treatment for 29 days. I got out and relapsed many times. My sponsor would say "Well you had two weeks clean before you went out. Don't you see what a miracle that is?"

I thought that I needed some discipline so I signed up with United States Army Reserves. That did not help me to stop using. I went to basic training and got my divorce papers while in basic training. When I got out of basic training I came home and had to move in with my parents. I could only stay clean for weeks at a time then went back out. And when I did use I would not come home. I went to a friend's house to use for three days at 11:30 pm and he finally said "David, you're going to have to leave." I told him that I had no place to go.

I left my friend's house and walked two blocks, climbed over a wall and curled up in the snow and tried to sleep. I could only keep part of my body warm at a time. It was hell all night long. I was shaking violently. The sun came up and I sat on the wall feeling the warmth of it. It felt so good. Here I am on a street that goes nowhere. There was no reason for anyone to drive down this street. At this time in my life I had no job, no money, no friends, no car, and recovery did not work. I was thinking "How will I kill myself?" I thought of many ways and decided that this is what I am going to do. Then my parents show up in the car. What the hell. They asked me, "David what are you doing?" I told them that I just went for a walk. They said "Get in the car, we will take you home."

I went with them and I took a shower. I had not had one in three days. In the shower I was thinking what do I do? I had tried meetings for alcohol. Then I remembered the drug meetings that I had gone to while in treatment. So I got on the phone looking for a drug meeting. They told me where there was one and I walked two miles to get to that meeting.

The meeting started and the people started to share and each time I thought "Wow, are you messed up." I listened to one story after another and I was thinking that I should leave. Then a man had shared that the drugs were a symptom of the disease. I thought well he must never have had a problem with drugs. I could not wait to get away from those freaks. The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer and I tried to run out of there as fast as I could. This was not for me. But they kept hugging me. Finally I thought that I was out of there and oh no here comes that man that does not have a drug problem. He gave me a hug and puts his hand on my shoulder and says "We need you here." Instantly I felt I was home. The man bends over and showed me a meeting list and where the next meeting was held and I told him that this was the best meeting that I was ever at and that I will definitely be at the next meeting. That day was January 8, 1985, and I have been clean ever since. This year I gave that man my 23 year NA medallion and thanked him

for my 23 years of being clean. If he would not have said that we need you here I would never have come back to NA.

I went to 89 meetings in 90 days and on day 90 I felt like using mentally and physically. I was trying to not think about using. I had spent the day with my sponsor. We went to a NA meeting that night. When I came home and was in bed I had thought “why did I have such a bad urge to use?” I did all the right things and went to meetings. I had a sponsor and did use him and did all the right things to stay clean. Then it hit me – it was because I am an addict. This was a turning point for me. I still had no job, no money, and no car. I went to functions all over the Midwest. Another addict drove us all over and said if you have gas money or not, I am going and you can come along. It was a great time. Every function that I went to I would talk to someone that I never met. Then I got a job in a foundry. I got a car and spent three years paying it forward by driving other addicts to functions and meetings. At the time there were only one or two functions within three states. I remember working on the NA 3<sup>rd</sup> edition revised basic text at workshops and then voting on it in meetings. At the time, I did not know how important that this was.

You see for me, when I started service work, I did this at 90 days clean. Someone had asked me if I wanted to go along with them to area service. I asked them what they did there. He told me and I asked him, “do you take lunch?” He said yes that we go out to eat.

Coffee and fries are what kept me clean. After the Friday night meeting we would go out for coffee and fries. Meetings were awesome but I needed something to do after the meetings and this made me feel part of that group. Those people had become my friends for 23 years. I did service work back then but did not want to be there. But somewhere it says to do the things we don't want to do. But the coffee and fellowship were always great.

Years went by and at around eight years clean I was doing all the right things and I found a church and attended it for a few years. I found God but a couple of addicts at the church said that God removed there addiction and that I don't need recovery. They went back to using. Red flag! I am out of here. I left the church but did not leave God.

I woke up one morning and turned the bathroom light on and looked in the mirror and spit at myself. Welcome to the next phase of recovery. I spent the next four months in therapy dealing with my feelings. What a kick in the butt that was. I got done with therapy and people said “Wow, you had changed and I like it.” This gave me the self esteem to move forward in life. I worked on many things. Perfectionism was one thing I was working on at this time. I did not like to speak in front of big crowds. I probably went to 15 conventions and never went up to the podium to share. So I asked the Wisconsin Convention Committee if I could chair a workshop on perfectionism and they said yes. So I did the work shop and I did not do a great job. It was not perfect. That's what made it perfect.

I was inactive in the United States Army Reserves for three years and the 1<sup>st</sup> golf war had started and I went to the recruiter to go back in to the Reserves. I was in formation one week later and got inspected buy a 3 star general my first day back. I completed my last year and got out.

Then I went to truck driving school and started driving over the road. I look back and this is where I started missing meetings. I was out for four to five weeks at a time. I would get to a state and have time to call the 800# hotline for a meeting and a ride. I had to go to another fellowship because NA did not have contact info out there. I did this a few times and got off the road a year later. I got a local driving job and I went to NA meetings once in a while. Then, I went three years before I went to another NA meeting and someone came up to me and asked me to speak at a dance. Being an NA purist I said “did you not hear



what I had said that I have not been to a meeting for 3 years?" I told them no, that this would not be a good message of recovery. I went to another NA meeting about three months later and someone asked me if I would speak at a treatment center and I said "so you can use me as how not to work a recovery program?" My next NA meeting had 65 people at it and the topic was the 12 promises of AA. I was sick to my stomach. I was going to say something but what hurt was that they all loved the idea.

I had gotten into a relationship with another recovering addict at this time. I had got promoted to dock supervisor and then to operations manager at my job. I said to my self that this is because of NA. Then I bought my own semi-truck and became an owner operator for 10 years. I made a lot of money but made very little NA meetings. What hurt the most were the NA anniversaries. I was high-fiving myself but I missed being with other addicts. Sometimes I would make a function or convention.

And then I found the casinos and this was to become the next symptom of my addiction to make my life insane and unmanageable. During the next phase of my recovery I went through a lot of money and kept doing a mental check to see if it had made my life unmanageable and the answer was no. Well, the answer ended up being yes. I had thought that I was working a program when I did not attend NA meetings. I don't know what had kept me clean. The relationship that I was in was a big thing. Without that relationship I don't think I would be clean. The Serenity Prayer was - can I change it? That's it. Where things did go bad for me was not attending NA meetings and not having a home group. What's funny is that I was still grateful and I am forever grateful for NA for giving me a great life.

I have cars today, a great relationship of 15 years, a place to live and some toys. And so on. This is it. I am going back to meetings to give back to NA. They need my help. They need to see you can have clean time and get a great life. So I made it back home after 10 years to give it away.

My first function back I made was the 20<sup>th</sup> Live the Steps or Freeze. This is the area function that I had started and had put on the first two. I started looking at all the things I had done in NA that became a part of NA history. So I was looking at NA history and started looking for a NA text 2<sup>nd</sup> edition because I had one given to me while I was in treatment. I went online looking for one and came up with things signed by Jimmy K and other people. I called up a friend that's more in touch with the NA history than me and I told him that I knew who Jimmy K is but who the hell is this Bo guy? My friend reminded me of whom Bo was and that we had spent the weekend with him at a convention in the late 80s. My friend had put Bo up on a pedestal and then I remembered who Bo was and I saw him as just another recovering addict. What these men, my recovering friends and I did was that we played a part of NA history. We started areas and regions and so many other wonderful things. But I never looked at it as NA history. We were just doing our job to help another suffering addict.

I have a home group today. I got a sponsor today. I recently went back to visit a regional meeting and I have decided to be a GSR for my home group. I have been reaching out for help. Funny thing is I came back to NA wanting to give back and help you because my life was good and it all backed fired right in my face. I have gotten more from NA than I can ever give back. I have never loved myself more. I have never loved my life more. The lady I am going to marry I have never loved more and today I am in love with NA. Thank you NA for 23 years of being clean.

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Survey Question:

SurveyQuestion:

1 Do you wish to be a collaborator (member of the NA Society Journal Website ? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

<http://sites.google.com/site/nasocietyjournalprojectgroup/>

2. Do You Wish to be a contributing member of the Google Group NAWOLNEWS? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

<http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

This form and any and all suggestions can be emailed to me at:

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