The New/Old NAWay

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Volume 17



Our latest edition of the New/Old NA Way

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Grizzly Bear

Tears do not come easily nor very often for me. Well, they are here now! The passing of Greg Pierce April 29th is a loss to both N.A. and myself personally. For over ten years Greg has been my Sponsor, Confidant, Guide and Spiritual Mentor. With few exceptions, every Monday night I would call and "check-in with Spons." This was my commitment to an active sponsor/sponsee relationship. With each call I made written notes and today I am looking at a pile of pads and journal books with entries dating back to October, 1988. Now he won't be there.

When I asked Greg to be my sponsor I was mostly unaware of Greg's extensive contributions to Narcotics Anonymous. What I knew is that Greg was like the proverbial Eskimo who was often at the events and places my recovery and service took me. Greg was able to answer my questions and explain things better than anyone else. I started calling once in a while and at a WSO workshop in Atlanta formally talked about sponsorship and made it "official". We built our relationship on trust and understanding of spiritual principals. As he showed me his originals of the N.A. Tree, The Triangle of Self Obsession, Living The Program and parts of the Basic Text; I then became familiar with the Greg Pierce others knew. Anytime Greg came within 200 miles, I would go see him.

When he was a Trustee, the BOT met every other month, mostly in Van Nuys. A favorite routine of ours was to have dinner at Hamburger Hamlet/Heaven and enjoy the Lobster Bisque. I remember the night Bob Stone was fired we had Sushi with Stretch (non-addict Trustee). Other visits included excursions to locations from Greg's childhood in L.A. And sites notable in the early N.A. Fellowship . Greg introduced me to Vedanta and took me to the Ashram in La Cresenta where Jimmy K's. Memorial service was held. Other sites included Jimmy K's house, the 1953 Dad's Club property where the first stand alone meeting was established, the house where the original NA committee formed, the original Survivor's Club, the Moorpark meeting place, Greg's original homegroup on Gower in Hollywood and others. Copies of Greg's extensive NA archive material have graced mine and many others NA history workshops.

One time Greg visited my home when I lived in Oceanside and we visited the widow of his first sponsor, Don Z. Another time, Greg stayed at my place in San Diego and spoke at the Baja California Convention. My visits to Greg's abodes included the apartment in Atlanta and the house in the cowfield in Greeneville, Tenn. One of my favorite photos of Greg was taken in Atlanta around 1990. Sitting in his Rover, smiling out the side window -- he looks just like a grizzly bear, and that became my nickname for him. In the near future I'll be seeing Acorn Hill where he was hoping to build a new chapter in his saga. Greg collected rocks and it always amazed me how he would pack-up and setup the many glass cabinets with his extensive collection. The last time I saw Greg in person was at WCNA-26 in Saint Louis. Greg and Lois shared a hotel suite with me and my (now) ex. I was glad for the private time with him then since it was the last time we hugged.

When I spoke with Greg four days ago (Monday 26 April '99) he sounded like he believed he had weathered the storm and was past the worst of it. Last night when I spoke with Lois, his loving wife, things had changed dramatically. Part of me is grateful that Greg was not in a lot of physical pain, the other part of me insists that it was not Greg's time yet. Talk about bewildered, confused and not knowing what to do!

Yes I accept God's will, though understanding takes me a lot longer.

This was neither a case of casualty nor random accident. To his credit, Greg had calmed earlier fears and was truly looking forward to a new era of creativity and fulfillment of dreams. This will take a while to sort out and in my heart, I know it should be Greg doing the sorting, not anyone else.

Very rarely has one person touched and inspired the lives of so many people. My recovery and my daily living owe much to Greg. For many of us, Greg is a true Hero of N.A. We All Miss him.



Greg Pierce 1947- 1999

Greg got clean in L.A. on October 25, 1970 when there was hardly any NA outside Southern California. He found a tiny fellowship; and as he always said, he "*Bet his life*" on NA. Greg quickly got involved in service; he wrote the NA Tree, our first service manual; he wrote virtually the entire Traditions chapter in the Basic Text; and he chaired the first World Service

Conference in 1976. Greg was elected the chairman of the World Board of Trustees February 1978.

Maybe the most significant contribution Greg made was to encourage, shepherd, and perhaps serve as "godfather" to the effort for the writing and development of our Basic Text. Had Greg not been there to champion the project, it could not have borne fruit at that time. (Greg's story appears both in the Little White Book and in the Basic Text book 2, Chapter 35: " I Was Different." If you've heard him speak, you'll recognize his story of showing up for his first meeting in a 3-piece black suit and tie) The modesty of the story doesn't hint at the greater contribution he was making to the Basic Text. One day when he was self obsessed, he sat and wrote the triangle of self obsession, How many of us have taken great solace and peace from this little IP.

On a road trip from Oregon to Trenton ,NJ to speak at the 2nd East Coast Convention, Greg stopped in Tennessee to see World Literature Treasurer Joseph Proctor, Greg had been writing along the way on a draft for a guide to step 4 in Narcotics Anonymous. Joseph asked if he could borrow it and Greg said sure. Joseph arrived at the Convention with a box of several hundred copies marked, A Guide To Step 4 in Narcotics Anonymous, Review Draft. This became "An Approach to writing the Fourth Step" Greg's other works include "Living the Program", our daily inventory IP, a simple 10th step . His Paths of Recovery Booklet and Practicing the Principles of our Traditions Guide .

Circumstances brought Greg first to Georgia, then to Tennessee. For some years he was the director of treatment for a juvenile facility for the state of Tennessee, and was much loved and respected for his work. He expressed his love and gratitude for his loyal and loving wife and kids.

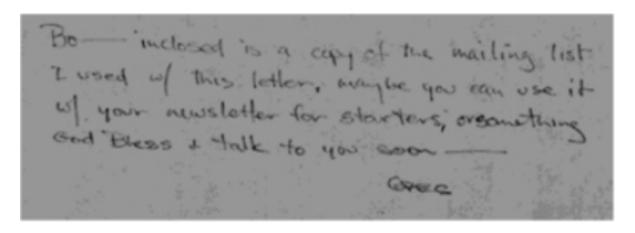
Through all his journeys and trials, Greg never stopped loving and serving Narcotics Anonymous, and caring deeply about his fellow addicts. In a fellowship of bright people, he was outstandingly intelligent, yet always down to earth and approachable. He traveled as one of NA's finest speakers; sponsored 20 addicts; collected an archive of NA material that may only be rivaled by WSO's collection; and in spite of all these

accomplishments and the love and admiration of thousands, he remained humble, kindly, God-centered and gentle-natured.

Even though NA so often departed from his vision of a fellowship fully guided by spiritual principles, Greg continually offered principle-based rather than personality-based suggestions and corrections to the problems he saw. He was one of the best listeners I ever met. He never sought to control, "rule, censor, decide or dictate." His level of acceptance, even in the face of a terminal illness, was cool, and sometimes uncanny.

Greg P. Was one of those rare sponsors: living the program, still in love with NA after all these years, the kind of man you want to emulate as well as admire. It was an honor to know him. I will miss him. I am consoled by the knowledge that he is now on an even better journey.

Greg's talk Missouri Regional 1993 http://archive.org/details/GregP < Click open



In Between WLCNA 2 and 3

I was on a train heading for home. It was 9/14 / 1980. I had just left the 2nd World Literature Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in Lincoln, Nebraska. I had about a day and a half ride back to Levittown, Pennsylvania. I was physically, mentally, and spiritually spent. I was also hungry and broke. I was trying to process my feelings from the last 10 days. There were so many new experiences. I went to the 10th World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous in Wichita, Kansas and then the 2nd WLCNA in Lincoln,

Nebraska. The 10th WCNA was enough to blow my mind. People from all over the country. The amount of recovery and clean time at the convention was inspiring. I then attended the 2nd WLCNA and was blessed to witness and participate in the miracle of our Basic Text while in its infancy. The 2nd WLCNA started with written material from a couple of foot lockers that were saved over many years written by addicts from all over. The writings were sorted into an outline that had chapters and subheadings. The "cut and paste" technique was trialed at the end of the conference and a rough draft of the 1st six pages of our book were completed. This work was accomplished by praying often for God's will with the dedication of many Selfless Servants.

I hadn't slept much the past 10 days. I was very hungry but the worst thing was I had no one to share this experience with for the next 30 hours. There was so much to share with everyone back home. There was so much to do. I couldn't wait to share the 1st page of the "NA Big Book" (that's what we called it) with the Bristol Literature Committee.

When I got back everyone was excited about the 1st page of our "Na Big Book". We still continued writing on the "NA Steps" in our literature committee. It was an exciting time in our area. We were hosting the 2nd East Coast Convention. We had formed a clubhouse committee to try and have an NA clubhouse in our area. We had a working Public Relations Committee who had a television public service announcement for Narcotics Anonymous during the Philadelphia Phillies World Series game in 1980. The amount of meetings in our area had almost doubled in the last year. Meetings were starting in Allentown at this time. The whole NA community was fired up. We all participated in everything.

I announced in every meeting that I attended that we had a lit committee and we were writing the NA Steps. I also announced the 2nd East Coast Convention Committee, and the public relations committee. On Friday night I used to go to the Oxford Circle meeting. It was a large meeting with mostly young recovering addicts. After the meeting we would hang out at a diner or bowling alley near the meeting. I would hang out until 11:00 then I would head out to the midnight meeting in Doylestown on Pebble Hill Road. This meeting would have addicts from Upper Bucks and Lower Bucks County. I would often meet an addict from Allentown there. He had started a new meeting at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday in Allentown that needed

support. After the meeting we would go to his house and crash out until it was time for the meeting.

Two weeks after the 2nd WLCNA Bo (WLCNA Chairperson) called to discuss how to prepare for the next conference. He suggested that each local literature committee could work on a chapter of the "NA Big Book" prior to the next world literature conference. We could use the "cut and paste" technique in our local literature committees. We could start with editing at the next conference. He wanted to give our local literature committee (Bristol Literature Committee) Chapter 8 "We Do Recover" to work on. I thought that was a great idea. It would give so many more addicts a chance to participate in the "NA Big Book". I started announcing in meetings that the Bristol Literature Committee was working on chapter 8 of the "NA Big Book".

One Friday after the Oxford Circle meeting. A few addicts approached me about the literature committee. They wanted to know why the literature committee met in Bristol. Most of the addicts in Northeast Philadelphia travelled by way of public transportation. They couldn't take public transportation to the meeting but they wanted to participate. Was it possible to move the meeting to Philadelphia? I told them I would approach the group about it.

I asked the Bristol Literature Committee about moving to a Philadelphia location for better access. The committee had been meeting for about 6 months now and had an identity in the NA Community. We were also writing articles for newsletters like the "Rainbow Connection" and articles for possible starting our own newsletter. Things were going well. If it's not broke don't fix it! There was some pride also. What are they going to want next? To change the name to the Philly Lit Committee? Why don't they start their own committee?

I approached the addicts from Philly the next week. What do you think about forming a Philadelphia Literature Committee? They thought that was great. I asked who was going to be their chairperson. Their answered surprised me. They wanted me to chair their committee because I was the only one in the area had been to a NA World Literature Committee. I had the experience. They wanted to meet on Tuesday night. Would I be willing to do it?

The night they picked happened to be the same night as a meeting I started in Bristol. We didn't have the term home group yet but that would

be its equivalent to me. I attended it every week. It was a tough choice but I agreed to chair the Philly Literature Committee. The meeting in Bristol folded shortly after I left. I was upset about the meeting folding but I felt like I was following God's Will and I had made the right choice.

The Philadelphia Literature Committee met at Debbie S apartment. I was shocked at how many people showed up at the 1st meeting. The enthusiasm in the meeting to participate in the "NA Big Book" was electric. I chaired the meeting from the doorway into the next room. There was no room anywhere. I suggested we start on chapter 8 where the Bristol Literature Committee had left off from their last meeting. The committee wanted Philadelphia to have its own mark The "NA Big Book" The Philadelphia Literature Committee asked if they could work on their own chapter of the "NA Big Book". I told them I would call Bo. We decided to write articles about NA recovery and see if they could be published in the "Rainbow Connection"

I called Bo that night. I told him we had a new NA Literature Committee in Philadelphia. The committee wanted to work on their own chapter of the "NA Big Book". Bo had some questions as to why there was 2 different committees. We were from the same NA Area. (Philadelphia Area of NA) After a long discussion Bo agreed to Send the Philadelphia Literature Committee the 10th chapter "More Will Be Revealed" of The "NA Big Book".

Both committees had consistent support and worked hard to complete their work prior to the 3rd NA World Literature Conference in Memphis (that's another story) on January 31, 1981 - February 8, 1981. The committees learned how to do "cut and paste" technique that was developed at the 2nd NA World Literature Conference. This is how we used the "cut and paste" technique in our committee. We looked at the outline for each chapter. We then distributed all the written material that was sorted into the 1st part of the outline from the Lincoln Conference. We each had one or two pages of written material. We then read them so we could be familiar with the material. After everyone was finished reading I asked who had an opening paragraph or sentence for this part of the outline. Someone would raise their hand and read what they thought was a good start. If everyone agreed we cut that part out and pasted on the top of a piece of paper. Someone else might would raise their hand and say I have something that follows that nicely. There might be a couple different people

with their hands up and we would read both. Some discussion would follow. One of the readers might withdraw their reading based on the other reading being more pertinent or we could determine that both pieces were important. Once we had a page full of the "cut and paste" someone would read the page. If it sounded good we continued on to page two. When we had nothing left for 1st part of the outline we collected any unused material. We then handed out the sorted material from 2nd part of the outline. Each of us having one or two pages of written material again . We would read our work. I would then ask who has the opening sentence or paragraph for this part of the outline. We continued this way until both committees had completed their respective chapters.

This is the prayer we said before every meeting:

"GOD GRANT US YOUR KNOWLEDGE THAT WE MAY WRITE ACCORDING TO YOUR DIVINE PRECEPTS. INSTILL IN US A SENSE OF YOUR PURPOSE. MAKE US SERVANTS OF YOUR WILL AND GRANT US A BOND OF SELFLESSNESS, THAT THIS TRULY MAY BE YOUR WORK, NOT OURS-IN ORDER THAT NO ADDICT, ANYWHERE, NEED DIE FROM THE HORRORS FROM ADDICTION."

If we got bogged down or argumentative We said the Literature Review Prayer again. Every time we said the prayer I got goose bumps because I could feel my Higher Powers presence. The atmosphere in the room became spiritual and we realized why we were there. It was a miracle watching addicts who appeared to have little skill and/or experience transform into selfless servants with distinct skills and purpose. At times it appeared effortless. Addicts were almost always respectful and helpful. We all understood that our efforts weren't just for today's addicts but it was also for the addicts in the future.

Both committees completed the "cut and paste" work on their chapters. They were ready for editing at Memphis. An addict from each committee committed to going with me to the 3rd World Literature Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in Memphis on 1/31/1981. We were all very grateful for the opportunity to be able serve the NA Fellowship.

MEDICATION: AN OUTSIDE ISSUE?

The 10th tradition of our program has been used to escape the responsibility of dealing with the Medication issue. Our 10th tradition is referring to outside issues like Politics, or should we invade Iraq, ect. They are the social issues that we do not have an opinion about. However, as a fellowship of recovering addicts, we do have an opinion on abstinence from mind changing and mood altering drugs. All through our literature, it is written in every way conceivable so that there would be no confusion. Chapter 2 WHAT IS THE NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS PROGRAM? " This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only "One" requirement for membership, the honest desire to stop using."

Chapter 3 WHY ARE WE HERE? "Before coming to the fellowship of N.A.we could not manage our own lives, we could not live and enjoy life as other people do. We had to have something different and we thought we had found it in drugs. Most of us realized, that in our addiction, we were slowly committing suicide, but such cunning enemies of life are narcotics and sedation that we had lost the power to do anything about it. Jail did not help us at all. MEDICINE, religion and psychiatry seemed to have No answers for us that we could use. All these methods having failed for us, In Desperation we sought Help from each other in Narcotics Anonymous"

Yet, our denial keeps us confused so we do not have to become responsible to the principle of abstinence.

Abstinence is the very first spiritual principle that we come in contact with when we enter the program of NA. Every 12 step program on the face of the earth has had the principle of abstinence as one of its fundamental principles and practices. In NA, it is called a 1st step.

Why do these NA members coddle newcomers on DRT Drug replacement? We are not doctors, they say. Yes, this is true; we are not doctors. However, we are a program of complete and total abstinence.

We have developed in our fellowship what is known as a Euphemism The use of a word that is less Expressive or direct but considered less distasteful, less offensive, than another. Instead of using Drugs, these

people are on Medication. Wake Up! Isn't that what we used to do; self medicate ourselves so we would not feel.

Let's stop playing games with words. Let's stop letting our fear guide Us, that we will lose Newcomers if we get honest and Tell the truth. The truth is this:

- 1.) Medication is Mind and mood altering which equals drugs.
- 2.) These people are not clean.
- 3.) They are not abstinent from drugs.
- 4.) They should never be allowed to serve in the N.A. Service structure at any level, especially outside the group.
- 5.) These people need to keep coming back to our meetings.
- 6.) We need to be honest enough with them to let them know how N.A. Deals with the Physical, Mental & Spiritual aspect of our disease, which is complete and total abstinence.

Our Basic Text and In Times of Illness refer to using drugs for extreme physical pain due to physical illness or surgery. No where is it written it's permissible to take prescribed medication to starve off withdrawals commonly know as DRT.

It's time for this fellowship to stand up for Total Abstinence. Make it clear, make it black and white, keep It simple, but we have to stand together. We don't have to stand tall, but we do have to stand. Are you willing?

N.A. Deals with a disease of the Spirit that is expressed physically and affects us mentally. The way to treat our disease is with spiritual principles. Drugs have never been able to help us when it comes to the disease of addiction. In N.A, we do not Use medication.

Theirs No Substitute for SURRENDER, Our Solution's Spiritual in Nature. "STAND FOR SOMETHING, OR YOU'LL FALL FOR ANYTHING"

In Loving Service, An N.A. Clearist

Steps 4, 5 and 6

Last issue we did the foundation steps 1, 2 and 3. This issue we are beginning the first half of the cleansing steps 4, 5 and 6. Last issue I said the first three steps will keep you clean for a while. Without moving forward through the steps a relapsed can become a reality. Steps 4 through 9 will keep us clean emotionally, mentally and spiritually. However as we said last issue it is not okay to be physically clean and spiritually dirty.

Step Four: We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. We do this step to find out who we really are. Many people approach this step as if it was a confession or a history of their life. Although part of that is true however it goes much deeper than that surface stuff. Part of the fourth step is to look at our moral values in our addiction and also to look at them in our recovery today.

Before we start we must acquire The Guide to the Fourth Step in NA which is a current NA publication. When doing the fourth step do not use It Works How and Why Workbook commonly referred to as the Flat Book. That is a preparation book not the Fourth Step Guide.

The guide will start by telling you to rewrite the first three steps. You will go over those steps again with your sponsor at the beginning of the fourth step. After that the guide will tell you to proceed to a number of topics to write on such as relationships and resentments. As I said earlier you are not to write your history or make this a confession. On each one of the topics you are to write your moral inventory and history during your addiction to the best your memory, and then on how you felt about it at the time it was happening. Next write about the same things but how you feel about those things today. This will allow your sponsor to know where you were in your addiction and by writing in the present it will allow your sponsor to know where you are today. It will also you make you aware of your growth in

recovery. This is important because many times others see our growth and we don't.

It is important that you be 100% honest in your writing. If you are not, the only person that will be hurt is yourself. If you can't be honest in the fourth step it will not benefit you.

There is no rush to complete the fourth step however you must communicate with your sponsor to determine whether you are procrastinating or just stuck. During the fourth step there may be times that you may feel uncomfortable and may even have thoughts of using, that is normal. When that happens call your support group and your sponsor immediately. They will assure you that those feelings are normal and you don't have to use. When you're fourth step is finished call your sponsor and make an appointment to do the fifth step.

The fifth step: We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. The fifth step is the key to freedom. The first thing that must be understood is that your sponsor has probably heard everything that you are going to share before and also has probably done almost everything that you have. With that knowledge alone should take away your fear. Many addicts believe that they should just read their fourth step to their Sponsors. That is not true for several reasons. First just reading it does not get to the exact nature of the wrongs. The writing of the fourth step was to introduce you to you. The writing was for you to loosen all the baggage inside of you. Now that that baggage is loosened it's time to get to the exact nature. You have your fourth step there to glance at and refer to it. For instance let's say you are suffering from jealousy. Jealousy is not the exact nature but a symptom of a deeper cause. (The Exact Nature) So how do we get to the exact nature? Simply by looking at our writings and allow ourselves to share from deep within all the feelings associated with what we have written. For instance the jealousy may come from a deep feeling of insecurity. You may not feel worthy of anybody loving you and your fear of losing that love. That would be the exact nature of jealousy. The jealousy will not subside until you work on the insecurity under the guidance of your sponsor. You continue throughout the fifth step identifying the exact nature of your wrongs. When your sponsor is satisfied with your fifth step your sponsor will move you on to the sixth step.

Sixth Step: We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. Willingness is what we are striving for in this step. With the knowledge that you gained from doing a fifth step you are ready to begin your sixth step. Many years ago it was customary to burn your fourth step however today many addicts believe you should keep it as a reference when doing steps six through nine. However you should follow the guidance of your sponsor in this matter because that is the person that you have put your trust in.

Now this step does not say that God removes these defects of character but says you became entirely ready to allow the God of your understanding to do this. In other words this is another surrender step. Is there a difference between our defects and our shortcomings? Although they are similar there is a difference. Our defects are part of us, like part of our character. Our shortcomings are the acting out of the defects. If we don't act out on the shortcoming then the defect is arrested. I like to look at the sixth step that it is like packing a suitcase and the seventh step is taking the trip. Many addicts find themselves confused between the sixth and seventh step. That is the difference. Hope this clears it up.

Years ago my sponsor told me that we were entirely ready when we take action. The action he told me to do was to take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the center of it. On the left side of the line he asked me to list my defects and number them in priority order. On the right side of the line list their opposites. For instance the defect is being judgmental - openmindedness is it opposite. By doing the list you are telling your sponsor that you are entirely ready to allow God to remove your defects of character. The sheet of paper then becomes your road map for recovery. The seventh step is where they are removed.

Next month we will talk about the process of God removing the defects by humbly asking him to remove our shortcomings. At that time we will continue the journey of the steps with 7, 8 and 9.



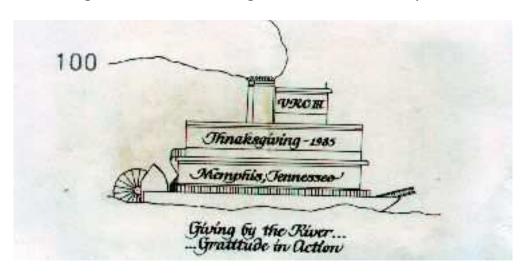
Humility

Humility is the opposite of Pride, which has been called the "deadliest sin" It is indeed the subtlest of My defects of character. I find acting out of Pride to be the most easily justified sick behavior. It creeps up on Me and I think I'm doing OK when I'm isolating from others in the Fellowship-still going to meetings, but not sharing My own feelings with others, still doing service, but out of Pride not Love.

According to our text, Humility is the necessary spiritual principle of step 7, which states "We Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings" Humility is the state of seeing yourself as You are, or Living in Truth. Pride weaves a matrix of lies and illusions around us, which we cannot see through when we are caught up in them. We can see these illusions quite clearly in the lives of others, especially those we know well. That is one reason why we need each other to survive our ongoing disease. My recovery often depends on Your vision.

I believe steps 6 and 7 are the real change steps of our program and I can't even begin to change if I'm living in Pride which will not allow Me to admit

the need for change. To maintain this illusion of being OK, I must isolate Myself from others in N.A. Because they will reveal the fallacy of My beliefs. The fellowship is a magic, multi faceted mirror which only reflects truth to Me never falsehood. N.A. Will not co-sign My bullshit, and for that I am Grateful, It gives Me a chance to grow and not die in My disease.



Pure Spirit Traditionalist Gathering

When: June 22 thru June 24, 2012

Where: Hamburg, PA

Place: Olivet Mountain Camp

1540 Mountain Ave. Hamburg, Pa 19526 Cost: \$85.00 per person

Price include all meals and {lodging if needed}

There is no registration fee all money goes directly to pay for the facility and food

Write checks payable to Historical Perspective Group for NA

A.S.I.S. for N.A. 7 Th. Annual Conference How to get involved:

Input what you want on the agenda

Projected Agenda:

History, Traditions, Writing Literature through Group

Conscience, and Setting up services directly accountable to the groups through the traditions.

<u>For More Information</u>: Contact Historical Perspective Group (610) 428-9923 Ask for Ray:or e-mail <u>BillAlln9@aol.com</u> - Send check to Historical Perspective group 3546 Broadway Allentown, Pa 18104 Write checks payable to <u>Historical Perspective Group</u> { Bring sheets, pillows, Towels and soap everything else provided }

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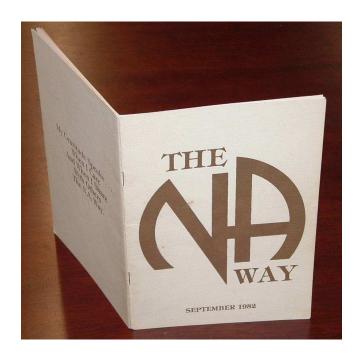
Your Fellowship Magazine

Share...and be shared with...

Like it was when NA was new and young and life-or-death intense:

You matter to us so we will tell you the truth as we know it with nothing held back.

"...so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die..."



We publish your input—the opinions presented are not necessarily those of the New/Old NA Way or Anonymi Foundation.

